

District Leaders Use NNPS Leadership Strategies to Help Schools Strengthen Partnership Programs

NNPS guides district leaders to directly facilitate schools' ATPs in developing their goal-linked programs of school, family, and community partnerships. Several resources help district leaders with this work. In *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action, Third Edition* (Corwin Press, 2009), see the inventory: *Lead and Succeed* (pp. 248-251 and CD) for ideas on six leadership strategies: **Create Awareness, Align Program and Policy, Guide Learning and Program Development, Share Knowledge, Document Progress and Evaluate Outcomes, and Celebrate Milestones.** The *Handbook* also provides a template for district leaders to write a Leadership Action Plan for Partnerships (pp. 264-265 and CD) to schedule their work throughout the school year.

District leaders for partnerships in NNPS also will find useful strategies conducted by other leaders in the new collection of *Promising Partnership Practices 2010* and in prior editions.* Here are a few examples from NNPS district leaders that illustrate three of the leadership strategies listed above.

Create Awareness

District leaders *Create Awareness* of their commitment to family and community involvement by communicating with educators, parents, students, community members about the district's and schools' programs and the roles that all partners play in children's education and success in school. The Family and Community Involvement Coordinator, Christy Scott, and the Superintendent, Dr. Karen-Lee Brofee, in **Somerset County Public Schools** in Maryland worked together to organize and conduct *Coffee & Conversations with the Superinten-*

dent. This forum, held three times a year, gave parents an opportunity to share information, ask questions, pay compliments, and raise concerns in a relaxed setting. The Superintendent also discussed how parents can positively influence their children's education and attitudes toward school, and discussed what is happening in the district and schools. This helped to limit rumors, clarify facts, and raise awareness of the district's and schools' programs of family and community involvement. Dr. Brofee followed up the coffees with notes to school administrators on issues that were raised or called parents with answers to their questions or concerns.

Guide Learning and Program Development

To guide learning and program development, district leaders start by helping schools form their site-based Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) and continue with team-training. In the **Model Schools for Inner Cities** program in **Toronto School District**, Ontario, district leader Vicki Branco and the district's , Community Support Workers (CSWs) guided 109 schools in the program to organize their ATPs. The ATPs attended one of seven scheduled One-Day Team Training workshops to learn about the NNPS framework of six types of involvement and action team approach and to write their Action Plan for Partnerships for the 2010-11 school year. In NNPS, all district leaders for partnerships are asked to guide schools to form their teams, conduct team training, and provide ongoing support to help schools continue to improve their programs.

Document and Evaluate

When district leaders *Document Progress and Evaluate Outcomes*, they keep track of the activities that schools conduct and help the schools assess the quality of the activities, responses from parents, teachers, students, and others in the school community. District leaders Lorraine Landon and Jessica Wallace in **Pasco School District** in Washington developed the **Chair Binder for Success**, which provided the chairs and co-chairs of all schools' ATPs with all of the forms and information they need for a successful school year.

Three sections of the notebook—Documents and Forms Section; ATP Job Descriptions and Tools; and Common Use Forms—contain tools and forms from NNPS; evaluations, recruitment flyers, and other tools developed by Pasco's district leaders for partnerships; and ways to share best practices in the district and with NNPS. Forms that are turned in to the district leaders were placed in page protectors for easy copying by ATP Chairs. All schools in Pasco are members of NNPS and so all are helped to evaluate the quality and progress of their programs on the UPDATE survey at the end of each year.

See *Promising Partnership Practices 2010* and prior books for other excellent actions by district leaders that improve partnerships at the district level and in all schools at www.partnershipschools.org in the section Success Stories.

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