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## District Record

### Rush-Henrietta Supports Partnership Policy With Leadership and Action

In 1997, the Rush-Henrietta Central School District in New York issued a policy statement supporting school, family, and community partnerships:

The Board of Education believes that positive parental involvement is essential to student achievement, and . . . directs the Superintendent of Schools to develop a home-school communications program in an effort to encourage all forms of parental involvement. . .

To help enact the policy, Rush-Henrietta joined the National Network of Partnership Schools. Starting with three schools this year, the district will continue to add schools over the next two years until all nine schools in the district are members of the Network. Part-time District Facilitator for School, Family, and Community Partnerships, Kay Lyons, works with participating schools' Action Teams to develop quality programs of partnership that focus on student success.

To begin the program, Ms. Lyons and school board member James Starkweather, elementary school counselor Matt Kilgore, Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) school president Kathy Carleton, and elementary school principal E. Sue Mills attended the June 1997 training workshop at Johns Hopkins University. The workshop provided participants from Rush-Henrietta with the time and opportunity to learn more about the Network, the framework of six types of involvement, the roles and responsibilities of district and school leaders, and other topics related to partnership program development.

During the 1997-98 school year, Kay Lyons, with the support of the District Superintendent and the School Board, has been able to conduct a number of leadership activities that have strengthened Action Teams and their partnership programs. For example, she has met with schools' faculties, PTAs and PTOs, and shared-decision-making teams to provide information on the components of comprehensive partnerships.

Ms. Lyons also contributed to the National Network's 1997-98 Sharing Best Practices. She describes two district-level committees developed to foster stronger school, family, and community partnerships. One is the Space Study Committee made up of parents, administrators, teachers, school staff, and community members who study and advise on space issues and needs within the district. The group focuses on issues such as opening and closing schools, finding space for new programs and redrawing boundary lines. The other is the Budget Advisory Committee that encourages parental and community input in district budget decisions. Members of both committees are recognized in a variety of ways, including a spring appreciation dinner.

Rush-Henrietta is one of many school districts in the National Network that shows the importance of collaboration among district leaders, and support to school Action Teams for developing and improving school, family, and community partnership programs.

### Help Wanted: Display Shows Positions and Activities for Volunteers

Roth Middle School in Rush-Henrietta is joining the Network for the 1998-99 school year to develop a more comprehensive program of partnerships. One present Type 3 practice (see photo) organizes volunteers by displaying positions and specific activities. Parents can easily match their interests, talents, and time with the help that is needed at the school or in other locations.



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