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## District Record

### Taunton, Massachusetts Builds Educational Success with Partnerships

Taunton Public School District's commitment to school, family, and community partnerships is not new. During the 1991-92 school year, under the leadership of its superintendent, Dr. Gerald Croteau, the district began a formal program designed to improve parental and community involvement in support of student achievement. This initiative is called Project B.E.S.T—Building Educational Success Together. In 1997, the District joined the National Network of Partnership Schools to enhance its partnership efforts, and to more broadly define and understand family and community involvement.

When completing the Network's district membership form, Kathleen Callahan, District Key Contact to the National Network, Coordinator of B. E.S.T, and Taunton Public Schools' Community Liaison, wrote that the limited involvement of some families

in the district, "stems from a sense that there is not a real need for them to be involved and a perception that schools do not really want their involvement."

To address these misperceptions, Ms. Callahan works with Action Teams at all 16 elementary, middle, and high schools as district facilitator. Among many responsibilities, she helps school Action Teams plan, implement, and evaluate activities for the six types of involvement. Ms. Callahan meets with each school's Action Team, as requested. During these visits, she reviews Teams' One-Year Action Plans to help clarify goals and suggest ways of improving or expanding partnership activities. She also troubleshoots so that different parent groups and organizations at the schools work together more productively and effi-

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## School Reform

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framework of six types of involvement; on-going staff development with training, handbook, newsletters, guidelines, e-mail and web site assistance; and research and evaluation opportunities enable schools to organize and implement comprehensive reform to meet school goals for student success in school. The National Network of Partnership Schools also can serve as the family and community component in other school reform models, and in other proposals for funds for school improvement.

CSRD funds may be used to support on-site facilitators who are Key Contacts to the Network, and who work with their Action Teams to plan, implement, evaluate, and continually improve activities linked to school improvement goals. Funds also may be used for staff development to help teachers, administrators, and parents on Action Teams work together to develop and implement clear action plans to meet school goals. Because there is no membership fee to join the National Network of Partnership Schools, all CSRD grant monies support staff and program costs at the school site, and related training on site or at Johns Hopkins University.

### Federal Funding Information

For more information on CSRD and other federal funding opportunities, see [www.ed.gov/funding.html](http://www.ed.gov/funding.html). Districts and schools should ask their state departments of education for information about CSRD requirements. *Tools for Schools* is available from the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), 555 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington DC 20208.

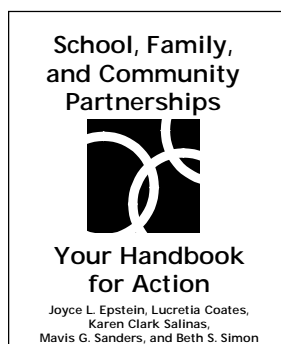
### National Network of Partnership Schools

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## Handbook Available from Corwin Press



All new members of the National Network in the U. S. receive one free copy of *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action*. The *Handbook* includes the information and tools needed to develop comprehensive programs of partnership. Additional copies are available from Corwin Press, 2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks, CA 91320-2218; tel: 805-499-8071; fax: 805-499-9774; or e-mail: [order@corwin.sagepub.com](mailto:order@corwin.sagepub.com).

## Focus on Results

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study, in case they want to coordinate the participation of their schools, or conduct parallel or related studies.

Participation in Focus on Results requires two short data collection activities, including base-line information in November and a short follow-up survey in the spring.

If good student behavior or improved school discipline is one of your school goals, we encourage you to join FOCUS ON RESULTS in 1998-99. This is one important way that members of the National Network of Partnership Schools are collaborating with researchers to increase knowledge about the design and results of school, family, and community partnerships.

## Partnering for Success in Taunton

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ciently to support students' learning. Ms. Callahan is responsible for several other district-level partnership activities. With Dr. Croteau's active support, she identifies and recruits business partners who work with schools in the district. Currently, each school in Taunton enjoys a partnership with an area business. Ms. Callahan also represents the school district on various community advisory boards, and works to promote greater collaboration with community agencies to maximize resources, and improve services to students and families.

She also oversees data collection for B.E.S.T. Data on rates of homework completion, volunteer hours—both on-site and off-site—and school-home compacts are presented in an annual report which helps schools review and chart progress in these areas, and develop strategies for improvement.

Two of Ms. Callahan's goals for the upcoming year include reaching "hard-to-reach" pockets of families in each school, and promoting parent-to-parent outreach. With the ever-growing support of families, students, teachers, district leaders, and the larger Taunton community, Ms. Callahan is confident that these goals will be realized.

## Update on *UPDATE*

MANY THANKS to the states, districts, and schools that returned the 1998 *UPDATE*. The annual *UPDATE* is the ONE communication that is required to *RENEW* membership in the Network. Its return keeps state, district, and school members on our mailing list to receive this newsletter, all other information and publications from our Center, and other Network benefits and services, including direct assistance from Network staff by phone, e-mail, and web site. If your school, district, or state joined the Network *before* December 1997, you received an *UPDATE* and a reminder. (New members did not receive an *UPDATE* this year, but will in April 1999.)

ATTENTION! Check the upper left corner of the first page of this newsletter. A label on the front page means that we have not received your *UPDATE*. Your membership in the Network will expire at the end of 1998 unless we receive your *UPDATE* or hear from you. If your membership expires, this will be your last *Type 2*, as well as other communications from the Network. **Please return *UPDATE* right away, in order to remain a member of the Network.** If you need a copy, contact Laurel Clark at 410-516-2318, or e-mail: [lclark@csos.jhu.edu](mailto:lclark@csos.jhu.edu). You may mail it back or fax all sides of your completed *UPDATE* to Laurel at 410-516-8890.

# [www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000](http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000)

Visit our web site for ideas about improving your school, family, and community partnership program. Click on **In the Spotlight** to read the first annual collection of *Promising Partnership Practices 1998*. Click on **Publications** and then *Type 2* to read earlier issues of the newsletter. Click on **Contact the Staff** to communicate with us. Click on **Publications** to find articles, reports, and materials in the List of Publications of the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships.

If you would like to establish a reciprocal link between your website and the Network's, please e-mail [bsimon@csos.jhu.edu](mailto:bsimon@csos.jhu.edu).