

type 2

Communicating to Improve Partnerships for Student Success



NATIONAL NETWORK OF
Partnership Schools
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

Please make copies of Type 2
for all members of your
Action Team, Leadership Team,
Improvement Team, and
other interested partners!

Fall, 2003 No. 15

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Award Winners Implement Practices that Meet Requirements of NCLBA

The National Network of Partnership Schools 2003 Partnership Awards recognized excellent programs of school, family, and community partnerships in highly diverse locations across the country. The school, district, organization, and state winners demonstrated *teamwork, leadership, plans for action, implementation, evaluation, and networking*—all essential elements of high-quality partnership programs, according to NNPS research studies. Award winners also showed how to address major requirements for parental involvement in the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA)*.

Two key *NCLBA* requirements are to communicate clear and useful information *in a language the parents can understand* and to involve parents in ways that *help increase student achievement* and success in school. These are two of several challenges that NNPS helps members address. Described below are a few examples from the 2003 Partnership Award winners that show how to meet both *NCLBA* requirements.

Schools Involve Families to Support Student Learning
Educators, parents, and community partners on schools' Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) work together to meet *NCLBA* requirements to involve all families in supporting student learning. **Arminta Street Elementary School** in Local District B in Los Angeles Unified School District

(LAUSD) focuses its annual plans for partnerships on reading, math, attendance, and creating a climate for good partnerships. At Arminta, all activities are conducted in English and Spanish, because over 90% of the families are Latino. Some of the activities at school and at home include a family math night, astronomy night, and math and literacy workshops. For one successful activity, teachers and parents transformed a classroom into "The Arminta Café that

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Promising Partnership Practices Focuses on Reaching Goals

NNPS' *Promising Partnership Practices—2003* is organized this year to help schools' Action Teams for Partnerships and district and state leaders identify involvement activities to reach specific school improvement goals. The collection includes 75 activities from NNPS members in 15 states, Canada, and Germany. Practices focus on Academic Goals, Non-Academic Goals, Climate of Partnership Goals, District Leadership, and State Leadership.

Academic activities describe best practices for involving families and the community to help students improve reading, other literacy skills, math, and other academic subjects. Other activities focus on family and community support

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Issues and Insights

Joyce L. Epstein
Director

Emerging Issues in *NCLBA* Requirements for Parental Involvement

The *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA)* is on everyone's mind because of its sweeping attention to test scores in grades 3-8 and in high school. *NCLBA* also requires that educators give serious attention to parental involvement in (1) developing comprehensive partnership programs focused on improving student achievement and (2) communicating with parents about their own child's test scores and school's progress in making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). All SEAs, LEAs, and schools in NNPS are working to fulfill these mandates, but are facing new challenges.

Choosing to Stay in or Change Schools?

In all states, schools that fail to make AYP for two years are labeled "In Need of Improvement" or some other corrective action. Parents can elect to transfer their child to a more successful school within their district. However, educators and families are discovering that this is a complex process.

Why did the school fail? Does one subgroup or a few students have poor test scores? Or, do most students have poor test scores? Will changing schools provide the student with a better education? And, will a decision to transfer result in traveling great distances to the new school? Answers to some of these questions may be hard to find. Still, in some cases, the difficulties of changing schools may be outweighed by the chance to improve students' success.

All of this means that parents need good information about why their school was labeled as needing improvement, how the school plans to improve the curriculum and instruction, how their own child's needs will be met, how parents will be involved, and whether the alternative schools of choice have programs that will welcome and benefit their child. The best choice may be to stay in and help improve the original school.

Selecting Supplementary Services

In low-rated schools, students who fail state tests are eligible for tutoring and other help

to boost their achievement. Parents need to know how one service provider differs from another. Most importantly, parents need information on whether providers are expert in addressing their child's particular needs for extra help. Leaders for good partnerships need to translate the information about supplementary services into useful formats and languages for parents, especially for those who do not read English well.

Receiving Timely Information

When should parents receive information about their own child's test scores and whether their school made AYP? Some districts wait until August to report test scores. This is very late for parents and children to make thoughtful decisions about remaining in or changing schools before the start of school. Other districts contact parents in January or February to give them more time to review, discuss, and decide about changing or remaining in their children's schools. To give parents this time however, the district must use the *previous* year's test scores and AYP, which may not fully reflect the school's success in educating its students.

When should parents receive information on selecting supplementary services for eligible students? If the dissemination of this information is not well organized, many months of school may go by before students receive the extra help they need to improve their skills before the next achievement test is given.

Sharing Effective Strategies

As *NCLBA* enters its second full school year, many NNPS members will develop strategies to communicate with all parents in clear and timely ways about students' tests, schools' AYP, and parents' options to change schools and select supplementary services. We encourage members to share their successful strategies for the 2004 collection of *Promising Partnership Practices* so that we can all learn from one another.

NNPS Partnership Award Winners for the 2002-03 School Year

(Continued from page 1)

Celebrates Literacy,” and served coffee, tea, and cookies as parents listened to children read their writing aloud.

In Chaska, Minnesota, the **Early Childhood Center**, a kindergarten-only school, helps English- and Spanish-speaking parents reinforce teachers’ efforts to prepare students to enter elementary school with positive attitudes and strong skills. Family involvement activities support enjoying picture books; using newspapers, signs, and labels; discussing numbers, colors, and shapes; conducting talking and questioning activities; and many other literacy and math activities.

The ATP at **Roosevelt Elementary School** in Saint Paul, Minnesota hosted African American Family Night, Hispanic Mom’s Night, Family Math, and monthly Second Cup of Coffee sessions to provide time for all parents to talk with teachers and administrators about the school’s academic program and children’s needs. Parents and children received culturally and linguistically relevant books to increase enjoyable reading and math activities at home.

Highlands Elementary School in Naperville, Illinois conducted a Writer’s Workshop Series for parents to help them understand the writing process that their children use in school. Videotapes were prepared for parents who could not attend to view at home. With feedback from parents, Highlands developed a workshop series on reading.

Districts and Organizations Help Schools Improve Programs
NNPS award-winning districts and organizations link partnership activities to school improvement goals for student learning, as required by **NCLBA. Local Districts B and F in**

LAUSD work with the organization **Families In Schools** to guide schools to involve all families in helping students meet targets for Adequate Yearly Progress for **NCLBA. Naperville Community Unit School District 203** in Illinois has a district-Core Team with representatives from all schools that provides annual training to new members of schools’ ATPs, and helps schools share ideas for goal-oriented partnership activities.

In District B, each district facilitator assists up to 16 schools with plans, meetings, activities, and evaluations of partnerships. Involvement activities are linked to the *Single School Plan*, and emphasize literacy, math, and postsecondary planning. For example, the *Mother-Daughter College Preparation Program* (also used in District F as Going On To (GOT) College), helps students and families think ahead to postsecondary education. By setting goals for the future, families help students choose courses and work more purposefully in middle and high school.

Leaders in District F provided training to over 360 teachers who involve families in *Read with Me/Lea Conmigo*—an early literacy program for parents and children to enjoy books at home in English and Spanish. Pre- and post-tests indicated that the program increased student vocabulary and comprehension, compared to other students.

In the **Saint Paul Public Schools**, about 40% of students come from families where English is not the first language. District facilitators for partnerships help schools communicate with Hmong, African American, Latino, white, and other families by providing translated materials and interpreters at parent-teacher conferences and other school events. They also work with non-English language

newspapers and radio stations in the community to enlist their support in sharing information with families about schools. School ATPs write plans to involve families in supporting student attendance, homework, summer activities for learning, starting the new school year, readiness to prepare students for kindergarten, and many other activities to support student success.

State Helps Districts and Schools

Wisconsin’s Department of Public Instruction (DPI) addresses the **NCLBA** requirement for state education agencies to have policies and practices that assist districts and schools to establish productive partnership programs. Among many activities, DPI leaders developed booklets to “Wisconsin-ize” NNPS guidelines to help all districts and schools strengthen their partnership programs. The DPI also assists schools directly. For example, the leaders for partnerships are implementing an innovative grant to train VISTA volunteers as school-based facilitators. The VISTAs will work with their schools’ ATPs on implementing family and community involvement activities to help students improve reading, literacy, math, and other skills that are part of school improvement plans and measured on state tests.

The 2003 Partnership School Award winners, like others in NNPS, demonstrate that places facing many academic challenges can implement family involvement activities that address two main requirements of **NCLBA**—communicating in languages that families understand and involving all families to support student achievement.

See pp. 6-7 for pictures of Award winners.

Meeting the Challenge

Steven B. Sheldon
Associate Research
Scientist

Improving Student Literacy and Reading Skills with Family and Community Involvement

Across the nation, schools are working to improve student literacy and reading achievement. One useful strategy involves collaborating with families and community members. After reviewing the research on family and community involvement to support preschool through high school students' reading and literacy development, Sheldon and Epstein confirmed that subject-specific partnership activities help improve students' literacy achievement (See Research Brief on p. 11). Many schools in NNPS implement the kinds of partnership practices that research shows are associated with improved reading and literacy achievement.

Workshops for Parents

Hosting family workshops is one strategy for improving students' reading and literacy skills. Vinedale and Camillia Avenue Elementary Schools in Los Angeles hosted workshops to help their families understand the newly adopted reading curriculum. At both schools, Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) collaborated with program coaches and others to design workshops that provide parents with information about how their children learn to read and guidance about what they can do at home to support their children's reading.

At Iowa Maple Elementary School in Cleveland, Ohio, the ATP organized a weekly family book club. Parents and children received free books, read aloud together, and learned literacy strategies. This activity expanded home libraries and encouraged greater parent-child interactions around reading.

Classroom Volunteers

Westview Elementary School in Zanesville, Ohio created Partners in Literacy to train and organize parents and other community members to volunteer during language arts

instruction. Each day during the one-hour language arts block, the classroom teacher, the Title I reading specialist, and two volunteers divided students into smaller instructional groups. The teacher and Title I specialist each worked with a group. One volunteer listened to children read, and the second volunteer worked with students at a listening station. Groups rotated, so that all students had instructional time with the teacher.

Middle School Strategies

Although fewer studies have been conducted on family involvement in reading beyond third grade, some research indicates that partnerships boost students' skills through high school. Some NNPS schools encourage family involvement in students' literacy development in later grades. For example, the Literacy Council and reading intervention students at Thurmont Middle School in Thurmont, Maryland hosted a Book Buddies Celebration. The celebration was the culminating event of a yearlong program that encouraged students to read to younger siblings at home. After a presentation by a professional storyteller, the reading intervention students read books to the younger children and provided each family with a bag of carefully selected books received through donations.

These family and community involvement activities represent a small cross-section of literacy-related partnership activities. Literacy-specific practices from the six types of involvement, at any grade level, can have a meaningful impact on students' reading and literacy achievement. For more examples of partnership practices to improve students' literacy skills, refer to the annual collections of *Promising Partnership Practices* or visit www.partnershipschools.org and click on "In the Spotlight."

Middle and High School Report

NNPS Members Help Improve Teens' Health

According to the American Medical Association, 1 in 7 U.S. children and adolescents are obese. In addition, only 8% of boys and 5% of girls get enough physical activity to foster good health. In the past, childhood was filled with hours of bike riding and playing baseball or kickball in the neighborhood. Children played after school until called home for dinner. Unfortunately, those days are gone in many neighborhoods, because parents are legitimately concerned about their children's safety. And, for some children, homework, chores, family obligations, and other commitments leave little free time for physical activity. This decline in exercise and an increase in the amount of time spent in front of televisions and computers have put children at risk of life threatening diseases such as heart disease, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

Link Fitness and Achievement
Several schools in the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) conduct activities to improve students' health, particularly their physical fitness. For example, Lowndes Middle School in Valdosta, Georgia held a Family Fitness Fair called *Exercise Your Mind, Pump Up Your Grades*. The mother of a professional football player spoke to over two hundred parents and students about new research that demonstrates a link between physical fitness and academic achievement. After the presentation, families enjoyed an evening of salsa dancing, step aerobics, tennis, and rock climbing on the school's new climbing wall. Families also ate a delicious barbeque dinner and received door prizes donated by the community.

Increase Girls' Fitness

The Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) at Rosary School in Manning, Alberta, Canada added a goal to their One-Year Action Plan to increase the physical activity of seventh to ninth grade girls by 10%. ATP members collaborated with Health Promotions, a community partner, to create a one-day event called *You Go, Girl*. Seventy-nine girls participated in a wide variety of fitness activities such as Tae Bo and weight training. Nutritionists from the local hospital created a healthy lunch menu and snacks. The girls also met with the Sisters of Schmooze, a group of female mentors from the community, to set health-related goals.

Stop Student Smoking

North High School in Eau Claire, Wisconsin collaborated with the community to tackle a student smoking problem. When students were told they could no longer smoke on the corner of school property, they walked across the street to smoke in neighbors' yards. Together, the school and community developed a plan, organized their resources, and closed the Smoker's Corner. Police officers patrolled the area on bikes and ticketed students found smoking. Feedback from neighbors at the end of the year yielded only positive comments about the students and the school.

All of these activities to promote healthy living are the result of well-planned practices of school, family, and community partnerships focused on student success. Involving families and the community to improve students' health can have immediate and lifelong benefits.

By Katharine M. Gerne
Middle and High School Facilitator

Partnership Practices by Goal

(Continued from page 1)

for student attendance, health, postsecondary planning, and smooth transitions from one level of schooling to the next. The collection cross-references activities for the six types of involvement so that schools can select practices to strengthen home-school connections on parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community.

Editors Karen Clark Salinas and Natalie Rodriguez Jansorn note that the collection ranges from the tried and true to the very innovative. "There is something for everyone to learn," says Jansorn.

All schools, districts, states, and organizations in NNPS received one free copy of the new collection. Additional copies may be purchased for \$14.95 by contacting Diane Diggs at ddiggs@csos.jhu.edu or 410-516-8808.

Coming this fall . . . Focus on Results

Has your team planned partnership activities to improve student behavior?

Join with NNPS to investigate the impact of family and community involvement on

Student Behavior and Discipline

2003 Partnership Award Winners

Arminta Street Elementary School



Row 1: Martha Espinoza, John Dargahi, Amy Tindell, Maria Urrutia, Jennifer Moles, Marta Melchor, Alice Peraza, and Christine Martinez. Row 2: Julie Kane (Principal), Elvia Pelayo, Leticia Haro, Joey Safdeye, Karla Dearden, Angelica Gutierrez, Rosa Garcia, Blanca Martinez, Maria Pelayo (NNPS Key Contact), and Bettie Wilson (NNPS Key Contact). Not Pictured: Marcia Cholodenko (Previous Principal), Lucia Anguiano, Eledia Ramirez, Soccorro Vargas, and Lisa Humphrey.

Early Childhood Center



Row 1: Karin Blomquist, Renee Van Bergen, and Karin Steine (NNPS Key Contact). Row 2: Sheree Drapp (NNPS Key Contact), Tina Jensen, Dawn Dammann (Co-Chair), Carolyn Kupahl, Becca McPherson (Co-Chair), and Jim Miller (Principal).

Highlands Elementary School



Row 1: Lisa Trychta (Co-Chair), Jane Wernette, Debbie Whang, Elaine Cosantino, Robin Moss, Lisa Margulis, Lynn Gissler, Kim McCue, Jessica Jozwiak (Co-Chair), Becky Fox, and Ana Fattore. Row 2: Jim Polites, Eric Nelson, Ann Vitek, Barb Svarz, Diane White, Susan Stuckey (Principal), Amy VanderVeen, Julie Stern-Young and Kathy Damianides.

Roosevelt Elementary School



Row 1: Josephine Elizondo, Eric Nybakken, and Debra Pridgen. Row 2: Maria Castro (Principal), Yia Thao, Cecilia Fogarty, and Christine Cardinal (Team Chair). Row 3: Dona Synstegard, Dorris McCarty, Michael Palmer, and Kao Her.

Local School District B, LAUSD



Row 1: Laura Gonzalez, and Beatrice Gutierrez. Row 2: Susana Martinez, Charlotte Castagnola (NNPS Key Contact), Sue Shannon (Superintendent), Rebeca Rodriguez, and Rhonda Bradley.



Local School District F, LAUSD



Row 1: Dr. Eve Sherman, Elaine Kinoshita, Richard Alonzo (Superintendent), Dr. Rosa Maria Hernandez, and Diane Ramirez. Row 2: Mary Kurzeka, Rocio Arriaga, Angie Cardenas, Virginia Lampson, Linda Ariyasu (NNPS Key Contact), Maria Gonzalez, and Bob Bilovsky.

Naperville Community Unit School District 203



Row 1: Denise Mitchell, Dean Reschke, Jane Wernette (Co-Chair), Don Weber (Superintendent), Gretchen Zelinski (Co-Chair), Sheila Verkamp, Jack Buller, and Meda Peterson. Row 2: Catherine Redford, Joyce Speer, Phyllis Kimmel, Mark Pasztor, Jackie Romberg, Patti Mau, Pat Larson and Ann Vitek. Not Pictured: Dr. Mary Ann Bobosky (NNPS Key Contact), Karen Currier, Maureen Dvorak, Lenore Johnson, Nina Menis, Bessma Shammass and Ross Truemper.

Saint Paul Public Schools



Row 1: Sylvia Perez, Lao Lee and Anna Young. Row 2: Kao Her, and Arty Dorman (NNPS Key Contact). Not Pictured: Sharon Briggs

Families In Schools



Row 1: Lucille Ignacio, Jessica Resendis, and Oralia Garza de Cortes. Row 2: Kelsy Tanaka, Mark Sullano, Ruth Yoon (NNPS Key Contact), Maria Casillas, and Don Ignacio. Row 3: Karen Massey, Susana Bonis, Alicia Sanchez, Mary Louise Silva, and Erin Delaney.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction



Jane Grinde (NNPS Key Contact) and Ruth Anne Landsverk (NNPS Key Contact).

Congratulations Award Winners!

Award winners received:

- a banner or plaque,
- one free registration for an NNPS Leadership Development Conference, and
- national recognition in the education media and on the NNPS web site.

See full program summaries of award winners at www.partnershipschoools.org "In the Spotlight."

Organization Gives Support to Schools to Increase Fathers' Involvement

According to the 1997 study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, "children do better in school when their fathers are involved in their school, whether their fathers live with them or their mothers are involved." In fact, even after controlling for confounding demographic factors, father involvement correlated with children getting more As in school. NNPS district, state, and organization members are working to guide schools to turn these research statistics into reality for their students.

Identifying the Challenges

FamiliesFORWARD, a private, non-profit organization, and NNPS member, provides comprehensive services to Cincinnati Public Schools. The organization developed the program MalesFORWARD to discover why men were not participating in school-related activities and to initiate a program to increase their involvement. MalesFORWARD began with a focus group of 22 fathers representing 11 different schools, the schools' principals, the district superintendent, and the school board president to address male involvement. The men identified challenges to male involvement, including: the acceptance of the stereotype that education is a female responsibility; the inability to get time off from work during the day; the tendency to feel uncomfortable in school settings; and the lack of male role models in schools. Some of the solutions identified during the focus group included offering more flexible hours for school events and activities; creating a more

male-friendly environment; and encouraging better communication with fathers and male caregivers.

Taking Action

During the focus group, the men decided to launch the MalesFORWARD initiative with kick-off events at each school designed by the focus group participants. Over 300 men attended the kick-off events and signed up for future involvement activities such as volunteering in the classrooms, eating lunch with their children during the school day, organizing father/student basketball games, and working at school on special projects. Since the program's inception, schools have reported a significant increase, up to 300%, in male involvement in school conferences, school decision-making committees, and other school activities. Over and over again, students reported on program assessments that they enjoy their fathers' presence in the classroom.

Leadership Program Development

The FamiliesFORWARD organization has played an integral leadership role in supporting the establishment and development of the school-based MalesFORWARD programs. The organization offered an incentive to the fathers, a gift certificate to a local store, to come to the initial meeting. The organization obtained a grant from the Hamilton County Family and Children First Council for approximately \$6000 to fund the kick-off events at 13 different schools. Funding to continue the project each year has been supplied by FamiliesFOR-

WARD, as well as from donations by community members. The organization also connects with a third-party evaluator to assess the impact of the MalesFORWARD program annually. Furthermore, FamiliesFORWARD has asked the school board to establish MalesFORWARD Day as a district-wide initiative so that more men can become involved in their neighborhood schools. As an organization partner, FamiliesFORWARD has empowered schools to promote family involvement, and particularly father involvement, by providing them leadership, advocacy, evaluation, and funding.

For other examples of how your organization, district, or state may support father involvement, see the annual collections of *Promising Partnership Practices* to read what other NNPS members are doing around the nation. Also, the following resources might be helpful:

- National Center on Fathers and Families (www.ncoff.gse.upenn.edu)
- National Fatherhood Initiative (www.fatherhood.org)
- National Center for Fathering (www.fathers.com)
- *Fathers' Involvement in Their Children's Schools* (1997 report), National Center for Education Statistics (nces.ed.gov/pubs98/fathers/)

Thank you to Julie Theodore, Program Director, FamiliesFORWARD, for her contributions to this article.

By Natalie Rodriguez Jansorn
State and District Facilitator

Elementary School Report

Involving Families to Improve Students' Writing

Students need to learn to write well in order to communicate well. The 2002 National Assessment on Educational Progress (NAEP) in Writing shows that children are writing better than they did when the test was first given in 1998. Nonetheless, U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige said, "We still have a lot of work to do; despite these significant gains, more than two-thirds of the nation's students still perform below the proficient level in writing." One strategy to help improve students' writing skills is to involve families. Research shows that guiding families to help their children with writing improves emergent and advanced writing skills. Several NNPS members have planned family and community involvement activities to help meet their school improvement goals of increased writing achievement.

Celebrate Student Writing

The Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) at Arminta Street Elementary School in North Hollywood, California planned an event to showcase student writing, promote family literacy, and increase parent support. ATP members converted the Parent Center into a coffee house and hosted an authors' night where students of all ages could share their creative writing. Parents set up tables with brightly colored table clothes and battery-operated lights to create ambience. Volunteers welcomed visitors, served refreshments, and played jazz music on a CD player in between student readings. About 400 students and family members attended. Parents were proud when the students read their work. Teachers and district staff were impressed by the quantity and quality of participation.

Parent Writing Workshops

A parent survey at Highlands Elementary School in Naperville, Illinois revealed an interest in learning more about the writing process. The School, Family, and Community Partnerships Literacy Committee decided on three teacher-led parent workshops that would familiarize parents with narrative, persuasive, and expository writing, and provide a greater understanding of the state writing test. All workshop sessions were videotaped for those parents who could not attend. On an exit survey, parents reported a better understanding of the writing process and how to support children's writing at home.

Many parents at Loreto Elementary School in Los Angeles are newly arrived immigrants with minimal schooling and/or writing ability. After a district teacher training focused on involving parents as authors, Loreto teachers invited all parents to a series of writing workshops. For about three months, the teachers and parents met one morning per week. Parents wrote books about themselves and poems about their children. When parents completed the books, they made a video presentation of their autobiographies and gave the video and their books to the children. The parents said they had a better understanding of using the writing process.

These family involvement activities demonstrate a few ways that families can help support and celebrate students' writing.

*By Karen Clark Salinas
Elementary School Facilitator*

Research Brief

Partnership Schools-CSR Model Improves Results for Students

The NNPS model of an action team for partnerships guiding a program of family and community involvement linked to student goals can be extended to help schools organize whole school change or comprehensive school reform (CSR). In the *Partnership Schools-CSR model*, four or five action teams are organized to address major school improvement goals. Each action team implements an annual action plan to improve curriculum, instruction, organizational procedures, and family and community involvement. For example, a school may have an Action Team for Reading (ATR) Math (ATM), Attendance (ATA), Behavior (ATB), and Partnerships (ATP) to help improve each of these areas.

In the *Partnership Schools-CSR model*, all teachers, administrators, and other staff in the school join only one action team for school improvement. Parents and community representatives also serve on each action team.

Pilot Test of Model

A three-year study of the feasibility and effects of the *Partnership Schools-CSR model* was conducted in collaboration with Park Avenue School in Danbury, Connecticut. Park Avenue formed five action teams to improve student test scores in math, reading, and writing, as well as student behavior and family and community involvement. The teams implemented numerous activities to address the school improvement goals.

(Continued on page 11)

Our Growing Network

New Members in NNPS since February 2003

SCHOOLS (145 new members) ★ A.W.E. Bassette Elementary School (Hampton, VA) ★ Aberdeen Elementary School (Hampton, VA) ★ Albert Einstein High School (Kensington, MD) ★ Antonio Del Buono (Gilroy, CA) ★ Argyle Middle School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Arlington Elementary School (Gastonia, NC) ★ Ascencion Solors Middle School (Gilroy, CA) ★ Augusta Circle Elementary School (Greenville, SC) ★ Bel Pre Elementary School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Belmont High School (Los Angeles, CA) ★ Berea Middle School (Greenville, SC) ★ Blackville-Hilda Junior High School (Blackville, SC) ★ Bloomington Hills Elementary (St. George, UT) ★ Brainard Avenue (Lake View Terrace, CA) ★ Brownell Middle School (Gilroy, CA) ★ Buena Vista Elementary (Greer, SC) ★ Burbank Elementary School (Hampton, VA) ★ Caddie Woodlawn Elementary School (Durand, WI) ★ Capital Hill Gifted and Talented Magnet School (St. Paul, MN) ★ Captain John Smith Elementary (Hampton, VA) ★ Cascade Elementary School (Cascade, WI) ★ Chappell Elementary School (Green Bay, WI) ★ City Terrace (Los Angeles, CA) ★ Columbus Elementary (Kenosha, WI) ★ Cumberland Elementary School (Cumberland, WI) ★ Denton Elementary School (Denton, MD) ★ Discovery Elementary School (Meridian, ID) ★ Downtown Business Magnet High School (Los Angeles, CA) ★ Dr. Benjamin Carson Academy of Science (Milwaukee, WI) ★ Durkee Elementary School (Kenesha, WI) ★ E. Brooke Lee Middle School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Eastern Heights Elementary School (St. Paul, MN) ★ Eastern Middle School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Ecole Varennes (Winnipeg, MB) ★ El Roble Elementary School (Gilroy, CA) ★ Eliot School (Gilroy, CA) ★ Elysian Heights Elementary School (Los Angeles, CA) ★ Esperanza Elementary School (Los Angeles, CA) ★ Expo Elementary Magnet School (St. Paul, MN) ★ Farmdale Elementary (Los Angeles, CA) ★ Federalsburg Elementary School (Federalsburg, MD) ★ Forest Home Avenue Elementary (Milwaukee, WI) ★ Forest Knolls Elementary School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Frances Starns Centers (Milwaukee, WI) ★ Francis Mallory Elementary School (Hampton, VA) ★ Frenchtown Elementary School (Trumbull, CT) ★ Georgian Forest Elementary School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Gilroy High School (Gilroy, CA) ★ Glen Alta Elementary School (Los Angeles, CA) ★ Glen Haven Elementary School (Bethesda, MD) ★ Glen View Elementary (Gilroy, CA) ★ Grandview Heights Middle School (Columbus, OH) ★ Greensboro Elementary School (Greensboro, MD) ★ Griffin Avenue Elementary School (Los Angeles, CA) ★ Guinyard-Butler Middle School (Barnwell, SC) ★ Haddon Avenue Elementary School (Pacoima, CA) ★ Hampton City Schools-Early Childhood Programs (Hampton, VA) ★ Hampton Harbour Academy (Hampton, VA) ★ Harding Street Elementary School (Sylmar, CA) ★ Harmony Hills Elementary School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Harrison School (Los Angeles, CA) ★ Hazel Park Middle School (St. Paul, MN) ★ Herrick Avenue Elementary (Sylmar, CA) ★ Highland Elementary School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Highland View Elementary School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Highland-Goffe's Falls School (Manchester, NH) ★ Hinkletown Mennonite School (Ephrata, PA) ★ Homecroft Elementary School (St. Paul, MN) ★ Homewood School (Ellicott City, MD) ★ Hoover Street Elementary (Los Angeles, CA) ★ Horace Mann Middle School (Sheboygan, WI) ★ Horizon Elementary School (Plymouth, WI) ★ Hubbard Street Elementary School (Sylmar, CA) ★ J. C. Orozco Community Academy School (Chicago, IL) ★ Jackson Elementary School (Sheboygan, WI) ★ Jackson Road Elementary School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Jane H. Bryan Elementary (Hampton, VA) ★ Jefferson Elementary School (Sheboygan, WI) ★ Jefferson Elementary School (Green Bay, WI) ★ Jefferson Elementary School (Beaver Dam, WI) ★ John B. Cary Elementary School (Hampton, VA) ★ John Tyler Elementary School (Hampton, VA) ★ Kemp Mill Elementary School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ La Grange Highlands (La Grange, IL) ★ LaFayette Park Primary Center (Los Angeles, CA) ★ Lake Forest Elementary School (Greenville, SC) ★ Las Animas Elementary School (Gilroy, CA) ★ Leo Politi Elementary (Los Angeles, CA) ★ Lincoln Elementary School (Appleton, WI) ★ Luigi Aprea Fundamental School (Gilroy, CA) ★ MacArthur Park Primary Center (Los Angeles, CA) ★ Machen Elementary School (Hampton, VA) ★ Manuel Perez Jr. Elementary School (Chicago, IL) ★ Maple Tree Elementary School (Milwaukee, WI) ★ Meadow Hall Elementary School (Rockville, MD) ★ Merrimack (Hampton, VA) ★ Millington Elementary School (Millington, MD) ★ Monaview Elementary School (Greenville, SC) ★ Moton Elementary (Hampton, VA) ★ Murray Junior High School (St. Paul, MN) ★ Newport Mill Middle School (Kensington, MD) ★ Oak View Elementary School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Oakland Terrace Elementary School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Octavio Paz Charter School (Chicago, IL) ★ Olive Vista MS (Sylmar, CA) ★ Pickard Elementary School (Chicago, IL) ★ Piney Branch Elementary School (Takoma Park, MD) ★ Preston Elementary School (Preston, MD) ★ Ridgely Elementary School (Ridgely, MD) ★ Riverview Middle School (Plymouth, WI) ★ Robert E. Lee (Hampton, VA) ★ Rock Hall Elementary School (Rock Hall, MD) ★ Rock Hall Middle School (Rock Hall, MD) ★ Rock View Elementary School (Kensington, MD) ★ Rod Kelley Elementary (Gilroy, CA) ★ Roger Wolcott Early Childhood Center (Windsor, CT) ★ Rolling Terrace Elementary School (Takoma Park, MD) ★ Rucker School (Gilroy, CA) ★ San Fernando Elementary (San Fernando, CA) ★ Sheridan Elementary School (Sheboygan, WI) ★ Sheridan Elementary School (St. Paul, MN) ★ Sligo Creek Elementary School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Sligo Middle School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ South Valley Middle School (Gilroy, CA) ★ Stephen Foster Elementary School (Appleton, WI) ★ Strathmore Elementary School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Summit Hall Elementary School (Gaithersburg, MD) ★ Superior High School (Superior, WI) ★ Tanglewood Middle School (Greenville, SC) ★ Tarrant Elementary School (Hampton, VA) ★ Telfair Avenue School (Pacoima, CA) ★ Thurgood Marshall Elementary School (Gaithersburg, MD) ★ Verdugo Hills High School (Tujunga, CA) ★ Vista La Mesa Elementary (La Mesa, CA) ★ W.M. Cooper Elementary Magnet School for Technology (Hampton, VA) ★ Washington Elementary (Whitewater, WI) ★ Watkins Mill Elementary School (Gaithersburg, MD) ★ Wilde Lake High School (Columbia, MD) ★ Williston-Elko Middle (Williston, SC) ★ Winchester Elementary School (Winchester, CA) ★ Winnisquam Regional Middle School (Tilton, NH) ★ Wood Creek Elementary School (Farmington Hills, MI) ★ Woodland Elementary School (Greer, SC) ★ Woodlin Elementary School (Silver Springs, MD) ★ Wythe Elementary School (Hampton, VA) ★

DISTRICTS (11 new members) ★ Birchwood School District (Birchwood, WI) ★ Caroline County Public Schools (Denton, MD) ★ Charleston County School District (Charleston, SC) ★ Corsicana I.S.D. (Corsicana, TX) ★ Dallas Independent School District (Dallas, TX) ★ District School Board of Pasco County (Land O' Lakes, FL) ★ Fosston Independent School District (Fosston, MN) ★ Gilroy Unified School District (Gilroy, CA) ★ Hampton City Schools (Hampton, VA) ★ Phillipsburg School District (Phillipsburg, NJ) ★ South Lake Schools (St. Clair Shores, MI) ★

ORGANIZATION/UNIVERSITY PARTNERS (9 new members) ★ California State PTA (Orange, CA) ★ CESA #1 (Brookfield, WI) ★ Oconto County UW-Extension Office (Oconto, WI) ★ Parents' Place at Federation for Children (Boston, MA) ★ Regional School Support Center (Cheektowaga, NY) ★ Rodel Charitable Foundation of DE (Wilmington, DE) ★ Roger Williams University Institute for Teaching and Learning (Bristol, RI) ★ Strategic Learning Initiatives (Chicago, IL) ★ The Alliance for SC's Children (Columbia, SC) ★

Current Active Membership in the National Network of Partnership Schools as of September 12, 2003

Schools: 1096 Districts: 104 States: 16 Organizations: 73

CSR Model

(Continued from page 9)

Implementation Effects

Data collected over the three years revealed that the school program included key *policy attributes*—specificity, consistency, authority, shared power, and stability—which have been found to explain the successful implementation of other CSR programs. The school also put in place *essential elements*—teamwork, leadership, action plans, implemented activities, evaluation, and networking—which NNPS studies have shown improve the quality of partnership programs. The action teams' activities greatly increased the number of families involved at school and at home, and strengthened community support.

Results for Students

Longitudinal data were collected to study changes in student achievement on state tests in the pilot school, comparison schools, and the district as a whole. Students' test scores improved from 1999 to 2001 in math, reading, and writing at the pilot school more than at comparison schools. The pilot school closed the gap in test scores between its students and the district, despite the fact that the district includes several schools in more affluent neighborhoods whose test scores started at a higher level in the base year. The school also reported dramatically fewer student suspensions.

The pilot of the *Partnership Schools-CSR model* demonstrated that the action team approach is feasible for whole school change. The study also identified *transitioning* at the end of a grant as a challenge for all comprehensive school reform initiatives.

From: Epstein, J. L. (2003). *A New Model for Comprehensive School Reform: Results of the Partnership Schools -CSR Pilot Study*. Paper presented at the August 2003 Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Atlanta.

Research Brief

Partnerships to Support Children's Reading and Literacy Development

Researchers at NNPS conducted a review of the research on the impact of family and community involvement on students' reading and literacy achievement. Children's reading skills are influenced most by quality instruction from skilled teachers. According to Sheldon and Epstein, however, research shows the importance of school, family, and community partnership activities on students' reading and literacy development across the grades. Highlights of the research review follow.

Preschool and Kindergarten

Parent-child storybook reading is one of the most common involvement strategies encouraged by teachers and schools, however it is the quality of parent-child interactions around books that appears to matter most. Parent workshops are the main strategy educators use to help create these effective parent-child interactions. Consistently, and with a wide variety of groups, studies show that teaching parents ways to read with their children can produce improvements in children's language and reading skills.

Elementary Grades

Research shows that family storybook reading continues to benefit elementary students' literacy skills. Studies also show that students from low-income and minority families may experience less congruence between home and the classroom than their peers from middle- and upper-income families. One study suggests that teachers should maintain frequent and reciprocal communications with families to help them understand and use reading resources with their children. Other research suggests

incorporating culturally relevant resources in instruction to increase the congruency between school and home and help students develop and improve their literacy skills. Finally, programs using volunteers to help students practice reading have been shown to improve children's literacy achievement.

Secondary Grades

Research using nationally representative samples of older students indicates that parents continue to influence their children's reading achievement through high school graduation. Teachers' clear and positive communications with families may help more parents support their teens' learning in ways coordinated with the curriculum. Also, assigning homework that requires parent-student interactions has also been shown to predict higher levels of reading achievement.

Summary

Sheldon and Epstein reached four conclusions: (1) programs of school, family, and community partnerships can correct patterns that only some families become involved with their children's reading; (2) subject-specific family involvement activities are likely to improve students' literacy skills; (3) the quality of partnership programs matter in affecting students' reading and literacy skills; and (4) further in-depth research is needed to investigate the impact of family and community involvement on students' reading and literacy skills across the grades.

Sheldon, S.B. and Epstein, J.L. *School programs of family and community involvement to support children's reading and literacy development across the grades*. In press. For a preprint of the chapter, please contact the authors.



Partnership Calendar

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2003

November: Invitation to members to join the cross-site study, Focus on Results 2003-04: School, Family, and Community Partnerships to Improve Student Behavior and Discipline. Initial data collection.

2004

February: Invitation to school, district, and state members to apply for the National Network's *Partnership Awards 2003-2004* for excellence in programs of partnership.

March: Spring issue of *Type 2*

March: Invitation to school, district, and state members to contribute to the National Network's *Promising Partnership Practices—2004*.

March 12-13: Leadership Development Conference in Baltimore for school, district, state, and organization leaders to prepare for the 2003-2004 school year.

April 1: Members will receive 2004 *UPDATE* in the mail. Due June 30 to renew NNPS membership for the 2004-2005 school year.

May 17: Promising partnership practices from members due for the 2004 collection.

June 30: 2004 *UPDATE* must be returned to the National Network to renew membership for the 2004-2005 school year. NNPS will waive annual membership fees for all members who return *UPDATE*.

July 9: Applications due for *Partnership School Awards*, *Partnership District Awards*, *Partnership Organization Awards*, and *Partnership State Awards* for the 2003-2004 school year.

NNPS Communicates with Members Monthly by E-Brief

NNPS is working to help your team develop and sustain excellent partnership programs. NNPS Facilitators e-mail a monthly elementary, middle and high, or district, state, and organization E-Brief to Key Contacts who provide NNPS with their e-mail addresses. The E-Brief is intended to:

1. Offer timely information to support your efforts to build comprehensive school, family, and community partnership programs;
2. Update you on available research, tools, materials, services, and training opportunities from the National Network of Partnership Schools; and
3. Provide you with a vehicle to exchange ideas with, ask questions of, and share resources with other NNPS members and the NNPS staff.

If you have not received an E-Brief and would like to, please e-mail the appropriate NNPS Facilitator listed below. NNPS Facilitators are happy to answer any questions you have.

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