

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, 2009 No. 27

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NNPS Makes 23 Partnership Awards in 2009 for Excellent Plans, Practices, and Progress

Twenty-three NNPS members earned 2009 Partnership Awards. Eleven schools, six districts, five organizations, and one state department of education—more sites than in past years—were recognized by NNPS for excellent work and clear progress in their plans and activities for school, family, and community partnerships.

Three district winners also had schools that won awards – a pattern that reflects the shared leadership and shared work of active district leaders and active school-based Action Teams for Partnerships. These were **Frances Howell School District**, MO, with **Frances Howell Middle School**; **Naperville Community Unit School District 203**, IL, with **Highlands** and **Prairie Elementary Schools**; and **Pasco School District**, WA with **James McGee**, **Longfellow**, **Mark Twain**, **Robert Frost**, and **Whittier Elementary Schools**. Other Partnership District Award winners were **Hampton City Schools**, VA, **Middletown Public Schools**, CT, and **Virginia Beach City Public Schools**, VA. Other Partnership School Awards were earned by **Thomas Jefferson Elementary School**, **Bellflower**, CA, **Roberts Elementary School**, Wayne, PA, and **Sudlersville Elementary School**, Sudlersville, MD.

This year, three Parental Information Resource Centers (PIRCs) and two other organizations earned awards for leadership in planning and guiding districts and/or schools in developing their partnership programs. The Partnership Organization Awards were earned by the **Arizona**

PIRC, **Maryland PIRC**, and **North Dakota PIRC**, and to **Frances Marion University Center of Excellence**, Florence, SC, and **Starting Point**, Cleveland, OH. The Partnership State Award for 2009 went to the **California Department**

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MetLife Foundation Continues Grant to NNPS

MetLife Foundation is continuing to support NNPS in 2010 to increase the number, quality, and results of programs of family and community partnerships. In announcing the grant, A. Dennis White, President and CEO of MetLife Foundation, noted that NNPS “bridges the significant divides in research, policy, and effective practice in ways that educators recognize, value, and use.”

The grant not only will enable NNPS to improve and disseminate its tools and training, but also help more districts and schools learn to implement programs of family and community involvement. “The funds will help NNPS turn MetLife Foundation’s strong interest in family and community involvement into on-the-ground programs in communities across the country,” explained Joyce Epstein, NNPS Director.

New Projects

Two new projects are planned this year. NNPS is developing a book for

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Issues and Insights

Joyce L. Epstein
Director

NNPS and NCLB: What IS the Connection?

The goal of NCLB, Section 1118, Parental Involvement, is very clear: Schools must have programs that engage all families in ways that support children's achievement and success in school. The law also directs districts (LEAs) to guide schools in building school and family capacities to implement these programs.

The law, now seven years old, tells educators to develop these programs. NNPS guides educators in *how* to use research-based approaches to design, conduct, evaluate, and sustain goal-linked partnership programs. With over 70% of schools and just about all districts in NNPS receiving Title I funds, we want to clarify confusing sections of the law and help members meet NCLB requirements. Here are three issues that have been raised.

1. **How is Monitoring for Compliance Different from Developing a Partnership Program?** NCLB, like all federally funded programs, must be monitored to ensure that funds are appropriately allocated. However, monitoring for compliance requires different skills, time, and talents from guiding programs to improve. A compliance review is like a snapshot – a rating made at a particular point in time. Facilitating a program is like a moving picture – it takes time for district and school leaders to write plans, implement activities, and evaluate practices to learn what worked or needs to improve. Both tasks are important. Federal, state, and district leaders will conduct compliance reviews. NNPS focuses on helping all members improve programs to involve more families and produce positive results for more students every year.
2. **Understanding Confusing Terms: What is a Policy, Plan, and Compact in NCLB?** Some problems arise because these three terms are used inconsistently in Section 1118. Of course, states, districts, and schools must define NCLB

terms in their own ways, but this is how NNPS views these documents.

Policy. NNPS believes that the district should write a short, clear policy on school, family, and community partnerships that is approved by the school board, reviewed and revised periodically, and adopted by all schools. This meets the NCLB rule that permits schools to adapt and adopt the district's policy on parental involvement [b(3)].

Plan or Compact. NCLB states that a school-parent compact outlines how educators, parents, and students will share responsibility for student success and "the means by which" they will work in partnership to help students achieve. NNPS recommends using the One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships as the school-parent compact because it provides details on the goals for partnerships and schedules the activities for the six types of involvement that are given as examples in the law [(d)(1)(2)].

In addition, districts and schools also may collect parallel pledges from parents, teachers, and students (see samples in the NNPS *Handbook*) to express everyone's good intentions to work as partners for students' success.

3. **How Can Title I Schools in NNPS Connect their Action Plans for Partnerships to NCLB Requirements?** Some NCLB monitors ask schools to write another, separate document to tell how they are addressing NCLB requirements. This should not be necessary. NNPS suggests that Title I schools adapt the One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships either by (a) adding one column on each page to tell how each activity fulfills an NCLB requirement or (b) adding a fifth page to the NNPS template with NCLB requirements on the left side and the activities in the plan that fulfill each requirement on the right side.

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Increase Multicultural Connections with the Six Types of Involvement

As the population in the United States becomes more diverse, schools are seeking new and better ways to involve all parents in their children's education. In *Promising Partnership Practices 2009* schools reported activities to involve families with diverse backgrounds using all six types of involvement in the NNPS framework. Here are a few examples.

Type 1-Parenting: Meet Your Neighbors

Although the boundaries of **Howe Elementary School**, Green Bay, Wisconsin, span only two miles, teachers found that many parents did not know their neighbors. At Get to Know Your Neighbor Night, families ate dinner with others from their neighborhoods and participated in activities led by some of the school's different ethnic groups. Teachers circulated to keep conversations lively. The school displayed a large map of the area so that families could see where others lived. Teachers used the map in class to teach reading and geography skills.

Type 2-Communicating: School Programs and Children's Progress

Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet School, Saint Paul, Minnesota, serves many new immigrant families and is one of first schools focused on Hmong culture. As one activity, the school combined two established practices – Hmong New Year and Hmong Studies Showcase (focused on the school's Core Knowledge curriculum). The team scheduled the event twice – day and evening – to accommodate busy parents. Each grade level presented a song, dance, poem, or skit that highlighted new knowledge about the Hmong culture to share what they were learning with over 700 attendees.

Type 3-Volunteering: School Helps Families

Staff, students, and families at **Bollman Bridge Elementary School** in Jessup, Maryland, worked together to help 25 families from Burma (now called Myanmar) acclimate to their new home and school. Volunteers helped with a drive for winter clothes, employment assistance, and information on the school system. Over six weeks, the ESOL program implemented Connecting Families to Communities. Burmese families learned the importance of helping children remain literate in their native language and to use their language to increase reading proficiency in English. By year's end, many Burmese families were ready to volunteer for future activities.

Type 4-Learning at Home: Learning Math, Reading, and Cultures

Shelton Park Elementary School, in Virginia Beach, Virginia, added a cultural twist to its traditional math-literacy night by focusing the theme on China. Families began Multicultural Math-Literacy Night with an enjoyable lesson on the history of China and a snack of egg rolls, rice, and fortune cookies. They participated in Chinese math and puzzle games and read from the book *Grandfather Tang's Story*. Every family who attended received a copy of the book to reread with their children at home.

Type 5-Decision Making: A Council for African American Families

To increase the involvement of all families, the Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) at **Roosevelt Elementary School** in Saint Paul, Minnesota developed Harambee, which means "all pull together" in Swahili. This

is a collaborative council for African American families to discuss and resolve issues concerning children's health, safety, and success in school. The forum promotes parents' leadership in school events and monthly discussions on children's needs and families' concerns. With Harambee, more African American parents also attended other school events, such as Back to School Night and parent conferences.

Type 6-Collaborating with the Community: Local and International Connections

Roberts Elementary School in Wayne, Pennsylvania, partnered with Temple University and the University of Kuwait on the Global Media Literacy Project. The project aimed to increase students' understanding of Middle Eastern countries and to dispel cultural stereotyping. For example, students in grades 2-4, corresponded with Kuwaiti college students via Wikispaces, shared digital videos of their daily lives, and teachers based lessons on some of these exchanges. Third graders completed a research project about their rights and responsibilities to promote peace as U.S. and world citizens. Students developed writing, video, geography and research skills.

These are a few of many examples of ways to promote multicultural awareness, appreciation, knowledge, and new partnerships by activating all six types of involvement.

For more ideas to involve families from diverse cultures, visit the NNPS website: www.partnershipschoools.org. Click on "Success Stories" to view these and other activities in *Promising Partnership Practices 2009* on this topic and more examples in earlier editions.

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Meeting the Challenge

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Director of Research

Develop Partnerships that Support Families of Students with Special Needs

Strong programs of school, family, and community partnerships select activities to involve all families in many different ways and to focus family and community engagement on academic and non-academic student outcomes. Too often, however, school-wide partnership efforts do not consider or include the families of special education students. Every school has some students with special needs who are receiving services. Therefore, every school needs to take stock of whether and how your partnership program involves families with children who have special needs. There are many ways to do this.

Check ATP Members and Action Plans for Partnerships. A simple step is to ensure that the members of the Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) include a teacher of students with special needs or a parent of a student receiving these services. This person can ensure that some activities in the One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships focus on the needs of these students and parents.

Ensure Access to Activities. It is important to remember that school-wide partnership activities should be accessible and welcoming to families with special needs children. Include information on flyers or other information so that students and parents know that they will, in fact, be able to attend. This may include information on physical facilities (e.g., ramps or elevators at particular locations at school) and support services (e.g., sign language interpreters at parent-teacher conferences).

Tend to the Transition Period. High schools' ATPs should consider if and how they are helping special education students and families effectively transition out of high school and into future learning or vocational opportunities. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) requires schools to help students plan for this transition no later than age 16, as one part of the students' official Individual Educa-

tion Plan (IEP). To meet this challenge, schools may collaborate with community partners to provide special education students with job training and experience.¹ Schools also should prepare parents to guide their students' through the transition out of high school. Parents have the greatest insights into their own child's hopes and goals and are essential partners in students' successful transitions (Pleet & Wandry, 2009).

Complete the Big Picture. To help ATP members account for all of the partnership activities implemented by teachers and faculty throughout the school, NNPS developed a tool, "The Complete Picture." This tool is on the CD that accompanies *School, Family, and Community Partnerships Your Handbook for Action, Third Edition* (Epstein et al., 2009). With The Complete Picture tool, an ATP can compile all of the family and community involvement activities conducted by teachers at the school, including activities conducted by teachers of students with special needs. In this way the full range of activities for outreach and inclusion will be documented each year. This information also will help an ATP evaluate and improve the quality of the partnership program.

Build the Connections. Addressing this challenge requires genuine conversations and collaborations by school leaders, ATPs, and families of students with special needs. Check how well your school is doing to engage families of students with special needs in all family involvement activities and in particular activities that concern them most about the success of their children.

1) See Tallwood High School, Virginia Beach, VA. Vocational/work experience program – WINGS grant. Promising Partnership Practices 2008, page 49.

References:

Pleet, A. M. & Wandry, D. L. (2009). Introduction to the role of families in secondary transition. In D. L. Wandry & A. M. Pleet (Eds.), *Engaging and empowering families in secondary transition: A practitioner's guide*. Council for Exceptional Children: Arlington, VA.

Superintendents are Super Important for Superior Partnership Programs

In NNPS, district leaders for partnerships can assist all schools' Action Teams for Partnerships to conduct goal-linked programs of family and community involvement if they have strong support from their superintendent and other district leaders. Here are a few ways they build this support.

Shared leadership. District leaders do not work in "silos" or keep their work secret, but communicate their plans and progress on partnerships to their supervisor, superintendent, other district leaders, and school board. Some district leaders form a District Action Team with leaders from various departments who meet periodically to share their own work on partnerships. Others write a full District Leadership Action Plan that includes all of the district's activities on partnerships and the offices and people responsible.

Policy development. District leaders make sure that their work on partnerships is aligned with the district's policies and goals. If a written policy on family and community involvement does not exist, district leaders for partnerships may spearhead a committee to develop a short, clear policy for board approval, with input from educators, parent organizations, parents, and other partners.

Professional development. District leaders for partnerships may *obtain professional development* on partnerships. Some come with a new superintendent to NNPS's conferences in Baltimore to learn about the research-base for NNPS approaches and to meet other district leaders. Others arrange for NNPS to provide on-site professional development workshops for all district leaders and for school teams to increase knowledge and strengthen programs.

District leaders for partnerships

also must *provide professional development* on partnerships to their district leaders, colleagues, school Action Teams, and other audiences. They may use NNPS materials for workshops (e.g., see the CD in *Your Handbook for Action, Third Edition* for PowerPoint presentations).

Communication. Many district leaders for partnerships in NNPS issue periodic newsletters, faxes, and e-briefs to share information with school teams, superintendent, other district colleagues, and community contacts. Successful leaders ask for time on the superintendent's agenda at monthly principal meetings to keep partnership work on the front burner and to demonstrate superintendents' support for schools' programs.

Public support. Many district leaders for partnerships ask the superintendent to show support for schools' work on partnerships by giving greetings at team training workshops, special events, end-of-year celebrations, community forums to discuss school issues, and by signing certificates of appreciation for district and school ATP members and volunteers.

Funding. NNPS studies indicate that district and school partnership programs improve from year to year when there is adequate funding for planned activities. Leaders for partnerships need to know the district's budget cycle to request funds for district-level partnership activities and to help schools conduct practices that involve families in ways that contribute to student success. Some leaders work with colleagues in other departments to share funding and strengthen partnership programs. Others make sure that Title I "set aside" funds for parental involvement are allocated for school-based programs, as required.

Superintendents' Support. All 2009 NNPS Partnership District Award winners are conducting some or all of the activities outlined above. In addition to other actions to ensure the superintendent's support, **Frances Howell School District** formed a district-level Advisory Group that, last year, heard from the superintendent, CAO, and CFO about their support for the schools' work on partnerships. **Naperville School District's** long-standing Core Team organizes and conducts activities through the year, always with the superintendent's support, to advance school and district partnership programs. **Hampton City Schools'** district leader for partnerships connects her NNPS work with district policies and Title I requirements. **Middletown Public Schools** leader submitted a funding request to the superintendent to activate a program to involve parents in reading readiness with young children. **Virginia Beach City Public Schools** garnered the support of the superintendent and Title I office to link improvements to family and community involvement to the long-term strategic plan, *Compass* to 2015.

When these kinds of actions are conducted, the superintendent's support is clear. For example, **Pasco School District's** partnership leaders note that the superintendent has made family and community involvement an expected part of school and district life – inherent to district policy. There is no doubt that these districts are award winners, in part, because they have super support from their superintendents.

See these and other examples of district award winners' leadership activities at www.partnershipschools.org in the section Success Stories.

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Meet the Teams! 2009 PARTNERSHIP AWARD WINNERS

James McGee Elementary School, Pasco, WA



Longfellow Elementary School, Pasco WA



Mark Twain Elementary School, Pasco, WA



Prairie Elementary School, Naperville, IL



Robert Frost Elementary School, Pasco, WA



Roberts Elementary School, Wayne, PA



Sudlersville Elementary School, Sudlersville, MD



Thomas Jefferson Elementary School, Bellflower, CA



Whittier Elementary School, Pasco, WA



California State Dept. of Education



Highlands Elementary School, Naperville, IL coming soon - see online.

Read summaries of these programs at www.partnershipschools.org in Success Stories.

Meet the Teams! 2009 PARTNERSHIP AWARD WINNERS

Hampton City Schools, VA



Arizona PIRC, Gilbert, AZ



Middletown Public Schools, CT



FMU Center of Excellence, Florence, SC



Naperville Community Unit School District 203, IL



Maryland PIRC, Bethesda, MD



Pasco School District, WA



North Dakota State PIRC, Minot, ND



Virginia Beach City Public Schools, VA



Starting Point, Cleveland, OH



See more 2009 Partnership Award Winners on page 9.

Our Growing Network

New Members in NNPS since February 20, 2009

SCHOOLS (147 new members) ★ A. C. Kiefer Educational Center (Wausau, WI) ★ Ajax High School (Ajax, Ontario, Canada) ★ Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh Charter (Coolidge, AZ) ★ Amos P. Godby High School (Tallahassee, FL) ★ Annapolis Road Academy (Bladensburg, MD) ★ Arizona Desert Elementary (San Luis, AZ) ★ Bala Avenue Community School (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) ★ Beaver Dam Elementary School (Beaver Dam, AZ) ★ Beverly Shores Elementary (Leesburg, FL) ★ Boze Elementary (Tacoma, WA) ★ Braddock Elementary (Annandale, VA) ★ Bradford School (Montclair, NJ) ★ Brock High School (Cannington, Ontario, Canada) ★ Brooklawn K-8 School (Cleveland, OH) ★ Brooklyn City Schools (Brooklyn, OH) ★ Buckeye Primary/Middle School (Buckeye, AZ) ★ Cameron Elementary School (Alexandria, VA) ★ Camp Verde Elementary School (Camp Verde, AZ) ★ Career Success High School - Coppersquare (Phoenix, AZ) ★ Career Success High School - Tech Campus (Phoenix, AZ) ★ Carl Sandburg Middle School (Alexandria, VA) ★ CDC Youth and Family Learning (WSEM) (Cleveland, OH) ★ Cesar Chavez Elementary School (San Luis, AZ) ★ Community Academy Public Charter School (Washington, DC) ★ Cooper Elementary School (Clayton, NC) ★ Cresecent Town School (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) ★ Crittenton Youth Academy (Phoenix, AZ) ★ Desert View Elementary School (San Luis, AZ) ★ Developmental Learning Center (Montclair, NJ) ★ Dr. C. F. Cannon Public School (Oshawa, Ontario, Canada) ★ Dunbarton High School (Pickering, Ontario, Canada) ★ Eagle Ridge Public School (Ajax, Ontario, Canada) ★ Easton Elementary School (Easton, MD) ★ Eau Claire Area School District Early Learning Programs (Eau Claire, WI) ★ Ecademie High School (Phoenix, AZ) ★ Edgemont School (Montclair, NJ) ★ Edison Elementary (Tacoma, WA) ★ Edmund F. Lindop School (Broadview, IL) ★ Elizabeth B. Phin School (Pickering, Ontario, Canada) ★ Etta J. Wilson Elementary School (Neward, DE) ★ Eyer Elementary School (Carleton, MI) ★ Family Life Child Care Center of Brook Park (Brook Park, OH) ★ Family Life Child Care Center of Middleburg Heights (Middleburg Heights, OH) ★ Firgrove Public School (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) ★ Fort Braden School (Tallahassee, FL) ★ G. L. Roberts CUI (Oshawa, Ontario, Canada) ★ Gadsden Elementary School (San Luis, AZ) ★ Gandatsetiagon Public School (Pickering, Ontario, Canada) ★ Genesis Academy (Phoenix, AZ) ★ George Syme Community School (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) ★ George Webster ES (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) ★ Glen Iris Primary School (Glen Iris, Melbourne, AUS) ★ Glen Street Public School (Oshawa, Ontario, Canada) ★ Glenfield Middle School (Montclair, NJ) ★ Grafton Public School/North Valley Career and Tech Center (Grafton, ND) ★ Greenbrier West High School (Charmco, WV) ★ Griffin Middle School (Tallahassee, FL) ★ Groveton Elementary School (Alexandria, VA) ★ Helen Bernstein High School (Hollywood, CA) ★ Highfield Junior School (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) ★ Hillside Elementary School-G/T (Montclair, NJ) ★ Hi-Mount Community School (Milwaukee, WI) ★ Howard B. Stroud Elementary School (Athens, GA) ★ Indian Community School (Franklin, WI) ★ Jacob J. McClain (Lexington, MS) ★ Jeannette Myre Elementary School (Bismarck, ND) ★ John F. Kennedy High School (Cheektowaga, NY) ★ John S. Baker Middle School (Tacoma, WA) ★ Joseph Gould Public School (Uxbridge, Ontario, Canada) ★ Judia Jackson Harris Elementary (Athens, GA) ★ Kiddie City Child Care Community Inc (Euclid, OH) ★ Kingsview Village Junior School (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) ★ Larchmont Elementary (Tacoma, WA) ★ Lincoln Alexander Public School (Ajax, Ontario, Canada) ★ Lincoln Avenue Public School (Ajax, Ontario, Canada) ★ Lincoln High School (Tacoma, WA) ★ Lutie Lewis Coates Elementary School (Herndon, VA) ★ Lynbrook Elementary School (Springfield, VA) ★ Maple Tree Elementary School (Milwaukee, WI) ★ Matapeake Middle School (Stevensville, MD) ★ McKinley (Cleveland, OH) ★ Mont Downing Elementary School (Tacoma, WA) ★ Montclair High School (Montclair, NJ) ★ Moses Elementary School (Bismarck, ND) ★ Mount Hebron Middle School (Montclair, NJ) ★ Naco Elementary School (Naco, AZ) ★ Nelson Mandela Park PS (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) ★ Niedermeier Elementary School (Newport, MI) ★ Nishuane School (Montclair, NJ) ★ North Forestville Elementary (Forestville, MD) ★ North Kipling Junior Middle School (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) ★ North Olmsted Horizon Activities Center (North Olmsted, OH) ★ Northeast Magnet School of Global Studies (Upper Montclair, NJ) ★ Page Middle School (Page, AZ) ★ Parkfield Junior School (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) ★ Peoria Accelerated High School (Peoria, AZ) ★ Phoenix Academy (Lancaster, PA) ★ Phoenix Advantage Charter School (Phoenix, AZ) ★ Pickering High School (Ajax, Ontario, Canada) ★ Pioneer Elementary School (Bismarck, ND) ★ PPEP TEC - Celestino Fernandez Learning Center (Tucson, AZ) ★ PPEP TEC - Cesar Chavez Learning Center (San Luis, AZ) ★ PPEP TEC - Jose Yopez Learning Center (Somerton, AZ) ★ Pulaski Elementary School (Wilmington, DE) ★ Pulaski Elementary School (Wilmington, DE) ★ Queen Victoria Public School (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) ★ R. A. Sennett Public School (Whitby, Ontario, Canada) ★ Rand Elementary School (Montclair, NJ) ★ Renaissance Middle School (Montclair, NJ) ★ Rice Primary School (San Carlos, AZ) ★ Rim Country Middle School (Payson, AZ) ★ Rio Colorado Elementary School (San Luis, AZ) ★ Ritter Elementary School (South Rockwood, MI) ★ Riverside Elementary School (Bismarck, ND) ★ Robert Place Miller Elementary (Bismarck, ND) ★ Roosevelt Elementary School (Bismarck, ND) ★ Sage K-8 Elementary (Phoenix, AZ) ★ San Cayetano Elementary (Rio Rico, AZ) ★ San Luis Middle School (San Luis, AZ) ★ Santa Cruz Valley Union High School (Eloy, AZ) ★ Saxvik Elementary School (Bismarck, ND) ★ Sherbourne Primary School (Briar Hill, Victoria) ★ Sinclair Secondary School (Whitby, Ontario, Canada) ★ Southwest Junior High School (San Luis, AZ) ★ Sterling Elementary School (Carleton, MI) ★ Stubbs Elementary School (Wilmington, DE) ★ Sunderland Public School (Sunderland, Ontario, Canada) ★ Tilghman Elementary School (Tilghman, MD) ★ Trygve I. Blix Elementary (Tacoma, WA) ★ Tucker Elementary School (Perry, GA) ★ Urban Day School - Head Start (Milwaukee, WI) ★ Wachter Middle School (Bismarck, ND) ★ Washington Elementary School (Bellflower, CA) ★ Watchung School (Montclair, NJ) ★ West Boulevard Elementary School (Boardman, OH) ★ West Glen Jr. School (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) ★ West Potomac High School (Alexandria, VA) ★ Western Greenbrier Middle School (Crawley, WV) ★ Wickenburg Academy for Achievement (Wickenburg, AZ) ★ William Dunbar Public School (Pickering, Ontario, Canada) ★ Williams-Sullivan Elementary School (Durant, MS) ★ Williams-Sullivan High School (Durant, MS) ★ Will-Moore Elementary (Bismarck, ND) ★ Willow Park Junior PS (Scarborough, Ontario, Canada) ★ Winterville Elementary School (Winterville, GA) ★ Woodlawn Elementary School (Alexandria, VA) ★ Yorkwoods Public School (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) ★

DISTRICT (11 new members) ★ Altar Valley School District (Tucson, AZ) ★ Carroll County Public Schools (Westminster, MD) ★ Fairfax County Public Schools (Fairfax, VA) ★ Gadsden School District #32 (San Luis, AZ) ★ Halton District School Board (Ontario, Canada) ★ Hamilton County Department of Education (Chattanooga, TN) ★ Mabton School District #120 (Mabton, WA) ★ Richland-Bean Blossom Community School Corp. (Bloomington, IN) ★ Saint Tammany Parish School Board (Covington, LA) ★ San Carlos Unified School District (San Carlos, AZ) ★ Toronto District School Board (Ontario, Canada) ★

ORGANIZATION/UNIVERSITY PARTNERS (5 new members) ★ Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations (Albuquerque, NM) ★ Lakeland Family Resource Center (Spooner, WI) ★ Michican Association of State and Federal Project Specialist (Trenton, MI) ★ National Family Development Institute/Parents for Public Schools (Marrero, LA) ★ Vermont State PIRC (Williston, VT) ★

Current Active Membership in the National Network of Partnership Schools as of September 25, 2009

Schools: 1301 Districts: 156 States: 21 Organizations: 71

Middle and High School Report

Middle and High Schools CAN Organize Strong Partnership Programs

Middle and high schools face unique challenges in developing and maintaining comprehensive programs of school, family, and community partnerships.” So states the NNPS’s *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action, Third Edition* (Chapter 6, p. 193). There are several reasons that family involvement tends to drop off in the middle grades. Secondary schools are usually further from home than elementary schools, making it difficult for parents to attend school activities. Students feel more independent. Teachers have many students and must connect with many families. Most schools do not have an organized leadership team – e.g., an Action Team for Partnerships – to plan how to involve families and the community in ways that contribute to student attendance, behavior, and achievement.

Answers to Your Questions

Although there are real challenges to developing effective partnership programs, research shows that family and community involvement through high school is just as important as in

the early grades. Three articles in Chapter 6 (by Joyce Epstein, Beth Simon, and Natalie Jansorn) answer these questions:

- What is a comprehensive, goal-oriented program of school, family, and community partnerships in middle and high schools?
- How do school and family connections influence student success in middle and high school?
- How can any middle or high school develop and sustain a productive program of partnerships?

The NNPS *Handbook*—meant to be read cover to cover—is an important resource for developing partnership programs in middle and high schools.

Ideas for Your Programs

So is *Promising Partnership Practices 2009*. The new edition includes activities from 13 middle and 6 high schools on age-appropriate ways to engage parents and community partners. For example, **Stevens Middle School** in Pasco, WA, conducted A Night at the Oscars to involved families with students by linking reading with the movies and other entertainment.

Salisbury Middle School in Salisbury, MD, brought teachers, families, and students together at A Night Under the Milky Way, to increase the number of families familiar with and able to support students’ work in science. **Naperville North High School** increased leadership for partnerships by forming three action team committees focused on student advisors and mentors, internships in the community, and tours for incoming students.

Other schools described parent chats; subject specific games; motivating underachieving teens; choosing high school courses; and involving students with fashion experts, health experts, and safety services in the community. Middle and high schools in NNPS are showing that it is important and possible to design and implement effective partnership programs to support teens’ success in school. ♦

For these and other middle and high school practices in 2009 and prior books, visit www.partnershipschoools.org and click on Success Stories. Use the SEARCH function to call for activities in middle and high schools.

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More 2009 Partnership Award Winners

Francis Howell Middle School, St. Charles, MO



Francis Howell School District, St. Charles, MO



Read summaries of these programs at www.partnershipschoools.org in Success Stories.

Partnership Awards

(Continued from page 1)

of Education for its on-going efforts to improve policies and to organize state leadership to support and encourage districts and schools to conduct goal-linked partnership programs.

Award Rewards

All programs received an award plaque and one free registration to an NNPS professional development conference. Eight of the programs received cash prizes of \$500 for sustained work and progress. This year, with support from a grant to NNPS from the MetLife Foundation (see article on p. 1), three awardees, **Frances Howell** and **Pasco School Districts** and **Frances Marion Center of Excellence** were selected as NNPS 2009 Conference Partners, with their travel and expenses paid. The leaders of these programs will co-facilitate sessions at the fall Leadership Development Conference with NNPS Facilitators. Joyce Epstein, Director of NNPS, explained: "This is an exciting addition to our awards program, and will enable these leaders to serve as teachers and to share their expertise with other conference attendees."

Award Requirements

The award applications included information and artifacts that showed how each location was working to meet challenges to involve more families and produce results for students. Their work included essential elements of leadership, teamwork, written action plans, implementation of plans, adequate funding, evaluation, support from colleagues, funding, and networking. See pictures of the Partnership Award winners in this issue, and read about their programs at www.partnership-schools.org in Success Stories. Award criteria also are on the website. ♦

MetLife Foundation Grant

(Continued from page 1)

educators to increase the involvement of diverse families in their partnership programs. Many – if not most – schools serve students and families with diverse socioeconomic, racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. The book will provide educators and school teams with research-based guidelines and innovative practices to engage all families in ways that help their children succeed at high levels.

Over the next year, NNPS also will provide professional development to leaders for partnerships in organizations that want to expand their services on family and community involvement by linking to NNPS. Many organizations for administrators and teachers ask these educators to conduct goal-linked programs of family and community involvement. Some organizations are ready to have their own leaders who can offer professional development using NNPS-tested approaches and tools so that more of their constituents will meet goals for excellent partnership programs. ♦

Issues and Insights

(Continued from page 2)

[A template for (a) and (b) will be on the NNPS website in the NCLB section.] With either tool, a monitor could see a school's complete goal-linked partnership plan and how activities address NCLB requirements.

There are other "language loopholes" in the law. NNPS will be happy to discuss your questions about NCLB to ensure that all states, districts, and schools are "in compliance" and are developing strong and sustainable partnership programs that meet the letter and spirit of the law. ♦

1) Thanks to leaders in California, Connecticut, and several districts for ideas for this discussion.

What is black and white and "green"?

It is this issue of *Type 2*.

Watch for E-Alerts from NNPS for "green" publications by e-mail.

Type 2 is on the NNPS website in *Publications and Products* for you to print and share.

Are YOUR Schools Interested in TIPS Interactive Homework?

TIPS Interactive Homework helps teachers engage all parents at home in ways that contribute to students' homework completion and achievement in specific subjects.

READY NOW! TIPS assignments are available in **elementary math (K-5)**, **middle grades language arts and science (6-8)**, and **remedial math (6)**. See TIPS resources on the NNPS website <http://www.partnershipschools.org> in the TIPS section. Or, contact Dr. Frances Van Voorhis to match TIPS activities to YOUR curriculum, design new assignments in these subjects, train teachers to implement TIPS in schools in YOUR district. TIPS trainings require consulting agreements.

NEW TIPS SUBJECTS: BECOME A PARTNER WITH NNPS

Work with NNPS and your Curriculum and Instruction Department to develop:

K-5 TIPS in language arts, science, or other subjects in grades K-5.

High School TIPS in English, math, history, family life, postsecondary planning, or other subjects (starting with grade 9).

NNPS contribution: Free NNPS professional development, training, and guidance in 2010.

Your contribution: Travel costs to your location, curriculum leader and teachers' time for training, and materials for training and for implementing TIPS.

Contact Dr. Frances Van Voorhis, NNPS TIPS Coordinator, at francesv@csos.jhu.edu

District Leaders and a Community Organization Collaborate on Partnerships for Ten Years

Research suggests that schools' capacities to develop and implement programs for educational improvements depend, in part, on the district's guidance and support for these efforts. In a recently published article, Dr. Mavis G. Sanders, an NNPS research colleague, reported the results of an intensive case study on how one district's leaders improved their program in a large urban school district. Sanders found that the district's collaboration with a community parent involvement organization (CPIO) was important for strengthening and sustaining partnership programs at the district level, in schools, and in the community for over ten years.

In this district, the community-based organization's agenda focused explicitly on increasing parent and family engagement in schools. By working with this organization, the district's leaders for partnerships were able to keep attention focused on family and community involvement in the schools, despite budget

problems that resulted in cutbacks in funding for district staff and program activities.

Collaboration Counts

District and organization leaders worked together to conduct parent leadership training to increase the number of family members able to advocate for students and serve on schools' Action Teams for Partnerships. The two groups also planned and implemented district-wide activities to increase involvement. The organization sent advocacy messages to district leaders to continue supporting personnel and resources to improve partnerships in all schools and with all families.

The community-based organization began as an informal group of parent leaders. With support from the district's Title I office, the group established a formal organization with at least one parent leader from every school. The organization's purposes were to ensure that good

partnerships developed in the district and to monitor the implementation of the board of education's family involvement policy.

The district's partnership leaders and the community-based organization have worked together and with NNPS for over ten years, always trying to improve policies and practices. They have produced many parent leaders and stronger partnership programs in schools, despite changes in superintendents and partnership leaders, and despite financial cut backs. By working together, the community-based organization and the school district are continuing to meet their shared organizational goals and objectives. Their work has benefited many schools, students, families, and the community as a whole. ♦

From: Sanders, M. G. (2009). Collaborating for change: How an urban school district and community-based organization support and sustain school, family, and community partnerships. *Teachers College Record*, 111, 1693-1712

New NNPS Evaluation Services for Districts and States

Every year, NNPS members report that it is important to evaluate the quality of their partnership programs. They also note that they need help with these evaluations. In response, NNPS is offering three new services to help district and state leaders connect measures of the quality of partnership programs with school improvement goals and students' educational outcomes.

1. Use NNPS resources and data to identify program strengths and weaknesses.

- Schedule training in the use of NNPS evaluation tools and resulting data in your location.
- Request NNPS to prepare a

detailed one-year or multi-year summary of school UPDATE data from your location.

2. Combine NNPS resources and locally-collected data.

- Use NNPS surveys to collect parent, teacher, and/or student perceptions of school partnership programs, and request data analyses and a customized report of your survey results.
- Plan with NNPS and your district's evaluation office to connect schools' UPDATE data to longitudinal student achievement, attendance, or other data to learn if the quality of partnership programs contributes to student outcomes.

3. Add measures of partnerships to your comprehensive data system.

Learn how to add measures of the quality of schools' partnership programs to your state's or district's general data/accountability system. Evaluate all schools work on family and community involvement and integrate these measures into your assessments of schools and in reports to parents and the public.

For more information on the nature and costs of these services, visit the NNPS website or contact Dr. Steve Sheldon, NNPS Director of Research, at ssheldon@csos.jhu.edu or 410-516-5489.



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Type 2 is a semi-annual publication of the National Network of Partnership Schools. It is distributed via e-mail to members at no charge and may be copied for Action Teams for Partnerships, district or state staffs, and others. Research and development are supported, in part, by a grant from MetLife Foundation to the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University. The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the policies of the funding organization. © 2009

NNPS gratefully acknowledges
support from
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Partnership Calendar

2009

October 27-28 Leadership Development Conference in Baltimore for new and experienced leaders in schools, districts, states, and organizations.

December 9 Web conference for district leaders on program development and direct facilitation of schools. Registration information will be available in e-brief and at www.partnershipschools.org.

2010

January Members will receive the NNPS Annual Report, summarizing data from schools and districts on the 2009 UPDATE surveys.

Web conference for schools' Action Teams for Partnerships (ATP) in the start-up phase of program development for ideas on "Writing Goal-Oriented Action Plans" for 10-11 school year. Date TBA in e-brief.

March Spring issue of *Type 2*.

March/April Invitation for NNPS members to contribute to *Promising Partnership Practices 2010*. Due May 15.

Eligible members will be invited to apply for NNPS Partnership Awards for 2010. Due June 30.

March 18-19 District Leadership Institute in Baltimore for district leaders for partnerships in the start-up phase of program development. DLI prepares leaders to provide direct assistance to schools' ATPs and to establish district-wide leadership on partnerships.

April Members will receive 2010 UPDATE in the mail. Due June 30 to renew NNPS membership for the 10-11 school year.

May 15 Promising partnership practices submissions due for review for the 2010 collection.

June 30 2009 UPDATE due to NNPS to renew membership for 10-11. NNPS will waive annual membership fees for all members who return UPDATE.

June 30 Partnership Award Applications due.

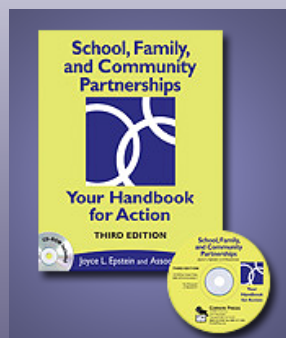
October 26-27 Leadership Development Conference in Baltimore for school, district, state, and organization leaders.

ARE YOU UP TO DATE WITH NNPS PUBLICATIONS?

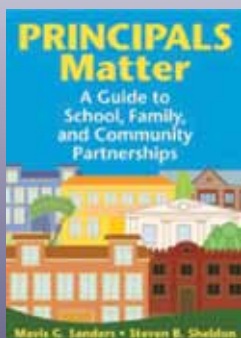
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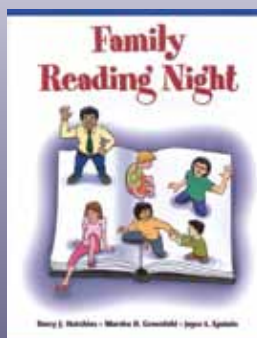


2009



Eye on Education

2008



NNPS

2009

