

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, 2010 No. 29

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NNPS Partnership Awards Recognize Excellent Progress and Practices in 27 Sites

Fourteen schools, nine districts, three organizations, and one state department of education were recognized by NNPS in 2010 for effectively applying research-based approaches in their plans and programs of school, family, and community partnerships. Award winning programs showed how they were working to meet challenges to involve more families this year and how they implemented involvement activities that contributed to student success in school. District, organization, and state leaders must provide information on their leadership strategies and their assistance to schools. Applications were read and rated on these program components.

District Leaders Guide Their Schools

Four district winners had schools that also won awards: **Chino Valley Unified School System** and **Alicia Cortez Elementary School**, CA; **Kennewick School District** and **Park Middle School**, WA; **Naperville Community School District 203** and **Highlands Elementary School**, IL; and **Pasco School District**, WA—with seven school award winners—**Ellen Ochoa Middle School**, **John McLoughlin Middle School**, **Longfellow Elementary School**, **Maya Angelou Elementary School**, **Robert Frost Elementary School**, **Ruth Livingston Elementary School**, and **Whittier Elementary School**.

The pattern in Pasco stands out. There, district leaders for partnerships,

with support from the Superintendent and other administrators, set standards for schools to meet the criteria for NNPS Partnership Awards from the outset. Then, they guided and supported all schools' ATPs to plan, implement, evaluate,

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MetLife Foundation Continues Grant to NNPS

MetLife Foundation awarded NNPS a new grant starting October 2010 that supports professional development and publications to scale up the number and quality of district and school programs of family and community involvement. This includes targeted attention to family and community involvement that will improve teacher quality, teacher satisfaction, and student learning.

A. Dennis White, President and CEO of MetLife Foundation, cited the foundation's "long commitment to encouraging stronger relationships among classrooms, schools, families, and communities". He noted that the award to NNPS should help many educators strengthen partnerships that contribute to student achievement.

Scaling Up Partnerships

NNPS's professional development sequence includes awareness, basic, and advanced workshops for district leaders and school teams on *how* to strengthen

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Issues and Insights

Joyce L. Epstein
Director

Beyond Bodies in the Building: How to Involve Parents with Students in Learning Activities *at Home*

The new edition of *Promising Partnership Practices 2010*—an inspiring collection—includes over 100 activities from schools, districts, states, and organizations to involve parents in their children’s education. Many activities are events conducted *at school*. Importantly, some Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) are finding new and better ways to:

- Include ideas, examples, learning games, and materials in workshops that parents can use at home to support their child’s learning and success in school.
- Share information from workshops with parents who could not attend so that they can work with their children at home.
- Develop practices that enable parents to support student learning at home *without having to come to the school building*.

A few examples from *Promising Partnership Practices 2010* illustrate how schools are using these strategies to engage parents with students in reading and math *at home*.*

Start at School—Continue at Home

Kindergarten Boot Camp, at **Alicia Cortez Elementary School** in Chino, CA, invited a group of parents to come one day each week during a summer session for preschool students to learn how to prepare their children for kindergarten by practicing reading and math readiness skills at home.

Ellen Ochoa Middle School in Pasco, WA, and **Highlands Elementary School** in Naperville, IL, helped families learn about the math curriculum in very different ways. At *Math Family Night*, Ochoa’s students and parents played math games and parents learned how students are taught math skills in the *Connected Math* curriculum. They took home guidelines to continue to play math games at home. At Highlands, students were

introduced at indoor recess to commercially-available games for increasing higher-level thinking skills (e.g., Blokus, Rumis), which families may purchase to play at home.

In reading, *Literacy Café* at **Ruth Livingston Elementary School** in Pasco, WA, provided parents with ideas on how to talk with their students at home about specific books. At *Literacy Night*, **River Woods Elementary School** in Naperville, IL, helped about 70 parents understand the school’s reading program, support children’s reading at home, and nurture students’ writing skills. Also see the NNPS book, *Family Reading Night*,* with follow-up activities to involve parents and students who cannot attend a reading night.

Start in the Community—Continue at Home

Family Night @ Bottom Dollar Food Store guided parents and students at **Lee Hall Elementary School** in Newport News, VA, to use grade-specific math skills at the grocery store. For example, while kindergarteners and their parents counted and recorded the number of different dog treats, fifth graders created healthy family menus for \$20. Parents learned how to “talk math” at different grade levels when food shopping.

Start at Home—Continue at School

Some schools put information from workshops on their websites for all parents. Others summarize workshops in school newsletters. Some ask parents who cannot attend a workshop to note if they want the workshop materials sent home with their student. Other innovations are needed to get important information from workshops to those who cannot come to the school building.

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Increase Father Involvement: Four Elements for Success

Over the past few years, data collected by NNPS showed that schools are actively seeking ways to increase the involvement of fathers in their children's education at school and at home. On the 2009 UPDATE surveys, elementary schools reported that they were "making good progress" on meeting the challenge of involving fathers in partnership activities. The 2010 publication of *Promising Partnership Practices* highlights many excellent activities that have been implemented to increase the involvement of fathers and father figures in the elementary grades. The practices have four common elements of success.

Have a Broad Definition of "Father"

When schools conduct activities to increase the involvement of fathers, they invite fathers, grandfathers, uncles, neighbors, and other significant males in students' lives. **Main Street Elementary School**, serving mainly African American students in Lake City, South Carolina, conducted *Dedicated, Active, and Devoted in School (D.A.D.S.): College Bound or Left Behind*. The ATP scheduled a powerful speaker, targeted workshops, and other activities. The team wanted to ensure that all boys in grades 3-5 had a male companion at the event and that everyone—adults and students—understood the importance of doing well in school and planning for college. If fathers or other father figures were not available, college students, community members, and teachers served as surrogate "dads" for the evening. By broadening the definition of "father" and by organizing substitutes, 100 boys and 100 males attended this successful workshop.

Have Clear Goals in Mind

All partnership activities should be goal-oriented, whether for fathers or for all parents. In NNPS, schools are guided to write a One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships with activities that address four specific goals: two academic goals and one behavioral goal for student success and one overarching goal for a welcoming school climate of partnerships. **Ruth Livingston Elementary School's** ATP, in Pasco, Washington, helped fathers and father figures feel welcome at *Me and My Guy Night* with "guy favorites"—sports and pizza. Dads played various ball games with their children, including basketball, tetherball, and volleyball. The high turnout required 100 pizzas. With student involvement, good plans, and engaging activities, the ATP helped students' fathers feel more welcome in the building. The event is helping the school achieve its goal for sustaining a climate of partnerships.

Have Hands-On Activities

Successful father involvement activities often have a hands-on component. In the *D.A.D.S.* activity described above, males and students built bookcases together to take home. At *Me and My Guy Night*, they played sports. **Cooper Elementary School**, in Hampton, Virginia, conducted *Day with My Dad* to engage fathers (defined broadly) in another way. After a morning breakfast and keynote speaker, dads and their children built "mouse-trap" cars. Using parts distributed at school, every father-child team found one part was missing. They had to borrow parts from other teams and find other collaborative ways to make their cars race. The fastest cars won ribbons, but every participant went home with certificates and photos to

commemorate the event. Over 200 parents attended and dads were no longer a "disproportionately absent group" from the school building.

Have Food

All of the above activities enticed participants by offering engaging activities and some food. At **Brock Elementary School** in Slidell, Louisiana, dads also *cooked* the food. Every student with good behavior and no disciplinary reports during January were invited to the *Super Tailgaters' Rewards Day* held on the Saturday before the New Orleans Saints played (and won) Super Bowl. The ATP encouraged more male participation by charging dads, grandfathers, and other family members with flipping burgers and hot dogs. Over 50 dads volunteered to help with cooking and conducted many carnival-type games. Together, students, fathers, and others made the day rewarding good student behavior a success.

See the 2010 edition of *Promising Partnership Practices* for these and many more innovative and goal-oriented activities for schools to increase the involvement of fathers at www.partnershipschools.org in the section Success Stories.

Darcy J. Hutchins
dhutchins@csos.jhu.edu

NEW DISTRICT LEADERS FOR PARTNERSHIPS!

Register NOW for the DECEMBER 8
WEB CONFERENCE on
District Leadership in NNPS
Follow links from
www.partnershipschools.org
for content and fee.

Meeting the Challenge

Steven B. Sheldon
Director of Research

Design Innovative Workshops for Parents on Child and Adolescent Development

More students succeed in school when parents and other adult family members provide a home environment that promotes the value of education. Many elementary and secondary schools conduct workshops for parents to assist them in understanding child and adolescent development and how to set home conditions that support children (Type 1-Parenting). By increasing parents' understanding of their children's stages of development, educators believe that more families will value education and support their children as *students* across the grades. Elementary, middle, and high schools in NNPS are implementing innovative workshops to increase parenting skills, leadership, and support for students. The following examples illustrate a few innovative workshop designs.

Multi-Generational Workshops

At **Vechij Himdag Alternative School**, Sacaton, AZ, the Action Team for Partnerships worked with community partners to offer *Teen Parent Nights* four times in the school year. The workshops were planned to provide young mothers with information on completing their own education and to teach them skills to play learning games with their babies, read with their children, and understand height and weight calculations to monitor their children's health and development.

In addition—in a two-generation design—the parents of pregnant teens and teen mothers were invited to the workshops to learn about the wide range of community services and supports available to their families to support good health, well-being, and education. Finally, the planning committee also invited the fathers' of the babies to learn more about parenting and the important roles they play in their babies' development and learning.

The workshops reinforced the importance of education, involved three generations (teen parents, their mothers, and their

babies), and helped get infants and toddlers off to a good start.

Workshops Conducted in Spanish

To mobilize more families in their children's education at school and at home, many schools in NNPS conduct leadership workshops for parents. **Lynbrook Elementary School** in Springfield, VA, for example, conducted workshops that helped more parents feel confident about guiding their own children's development and about conducting the same workshops to teach other families what they learned.

The school's Action Team for Partnerships conducted the workshops with mostly Hispanic families in Spanish. Parents completed a series of parenting workshops and leadership training, and then went on to teach the parenting curriculum to other parents of children in the school. In this way, more families gained information on how to support their own children's learning and development (Type 1-Parenting) and Lynbrook is developing parents' capacities to be advocates for education and parent leaders (Type 5-Decision Making).

Workshops at Transition Points

Workshops for parents also are effective at the high school level. At **Lincoln High School**, in Jersey City, NJ, the Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) recognized that the parents of ninth graders needed support to feel comfortable at their teens' new school. They also needed to understand how to help their teens succeed in high school and graduate on time. **Freshman Parent Support and Leadership** was organized as eight 90-minute breakfast meetings that discussed ways for parents of ninth graders to monitor homework, encourage their teens to study and read for pleasure, reduce parent-teen conflicts, and strengthen the relationships

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

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

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

Create Awareness

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

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

Guide Learning and Program Development

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

Document and Evaluate

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

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

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

Brenda G. Thomas
bthomas@csos.jhu.edu

Meet the Teams! 2010 PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL AWARD WINNERS

Alicia Cortez Elementary School, Chino, CA



East Midvale Elementary School, Midvale UT



Echo Mountain Primary School, Phoenix AZ



Ellen Ochoa Middle School, Pasco WA



Highlands Elementary School, IL



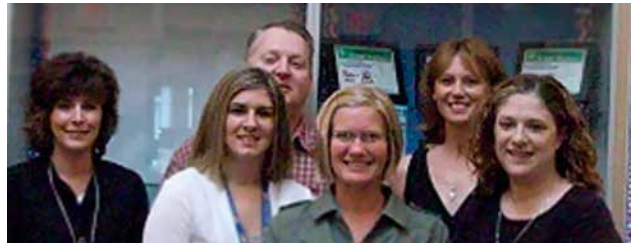
John McLoughlin Middle School, Pasco WA



Longfellow Elementary School, Pasco, WA



Maya Angelou Elementary School, Pasco WA



Murray Junior High School, Saint Paul MN



Park Middle School, Kennewick WA



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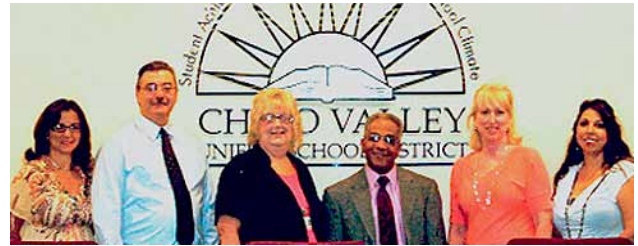
Read summaries of these programs at www.partnershipschools.org in Success Stories.

Meet the Teams! 2010 PARTNERSHIP DISTRICT AWARD WINNERS

Calcasieu Parish School System, LA



Chino Valley Unified School System, CA



Fort Worth Independent School District, TX



Francis Howell School District, MO



Hampton City Schools-Title I Department, VA



Kennewick School District, WA



Pasco School District, WA



Seattle Public Schools, WA



Naperville Community Unit School District 203, IL (not pictured)

Meet the Team! 2010 PARTNERSHIP STATE AWARD WINNER

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI)

(not pictured)

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

See 2010
Partnership Organization Award Winners
on page 11.

Our Growing Network

New Members in NNPS since April 15, 2010

SCHOOLS (200 new members) ★ A. H. Vandenberg Elementary (Redford, MI) ★ A. Philip Randolph Career and Technical High School (Philadelphia, PA) ★ Academy Park (West Valley, UT) ★ Adams Elementary (Mesa, AZ) ★ Alexander Graham Bell PS (Ajax, Ontario, Canada) ★ Beech Tree Elementary School (Falls Church, VA) ★ Beehive Elementary (Kearns, UT) ★ Bluffdale Elementary School (Bluffdale, UT) ★ Bobby Orr Public School (Oshawa, Ontario, Canada) ★ Bridgeport Elementary School (Bridgeport, PA) ★ Bright Start Elementary School (Lakeview, MI) ★ Burlington-Des Lacs Elementary (Burlington, ND) ★ Butterfield Canyon Elementary (Herriman, UT) ★ Caldwell Elementary (Round Rock, TX) ★ Camden-Frontier School District (Camden, MI) ★ Canton School of Arts and Sciences (Canton, MS) ★ Canuthers Creek PS (Ajax, Ontario, Canada) ★ Centennial Middle School (Spokane, WA) ★ Central Elementary School (Vassar, MI) ★ Cheatham Elementary School (Laveen, AZ) ★ Chinle Junior High School (Chinle, AZ) ★ Columbia Elementary (West Jordan, UT) ★ Comm Tech HS (Philadelphia, PA) ★ Connally High School (Austin, TX) ★ Copper Canyon Academy/Desert Pointe Academy (Peoria, AZ) ★ Copper Canyon Elementary (West Jordan, UT) ★ Copper Hills High School (West Jordan, UT) ★ Copperfield Elementary (Austin, TX) ★ Crestview Middle School (Ellisville, MO) ★ Crestwood Elementary School (Springfield, VA) ★ David Gourley (Salt Lake City, UT) ★ Daybreak Elementary (South Jordan, UT) ★ Dayton Leadership Academies - Dayton Liberty Campus (Dayton, OH) ★ Dayton Leadership Academies - Dayton View Campus (Dayton, OH) ★ Delco Primary (Austin, TX) ★ Dessau Elementary (Austin, TX) ★ Dessau Middle School (Austin, TX) ★ Dogwood Elementary (Reston, VA) ★ Eastlake Elementary (South Jordan, UT) ★ Eisenhower Elementary School (Mesa, AZ) ★ El Sol Elementary School (Kalamazoo, MI) ★ Elk Meadows Elementary (South Jordan, UT) ★ Elk Ridge Middle School (South Jordan, UT) ★ Erik Ramstad Middle School (Minot, ND) ★ Euclid Elementary School (Ontario, CA) ★ Eugene Field Elementary (Mesa, AZ) ★ Falcon Ridge Elementary (West Jordan, UT) ★ Foothills Elementary (Riverton, UT) ★ Foxhill Elementary School (Kearns, UT) ★ Frank Church High School (Boise, ID) ★ Frasch Elementary School (Sulphur, LA) ★ Fremont Jr. High (Mesa, AZ) ★ G. W. Carver School (Yuma, AZ) ★ Garfield Elementary (Boise, ID) ★ George Sharswood School (Philadelphia, PA) ★ Glengrove Public School (Pickering, Ontario, Canada) ★ Grace Jordan Elementary (Boise, ID) ★ Grambling High School (Grambling, LA) ★ Granger Elementary (West Valley City, UT) ★ Greater Brunswick Charter School (New Brunswick, NJ) ★ Greenwood Elementary School (Newport News, VA) ★ Guerrero Elementary (Mesa, AZ) ★ Hawthorne Elementary (Mesa, AZ) ★ Hawthorne Elementary School (Boise, ID) ★ Hayden Peak Elementary (West Jordan, UT) ★ Heartland Elementary (West Jordan, UT) ★ Highland Park Elementary (Pflugerville, TX) ★ Hillcrest Elementary (Boise, ID) ★ Hillsdale (West Valley City, UT) ★ Hillside (West Valley City, UT) ★ Hollin Meadows Elementary (Alexandria, VA) ★ Holmes Elementary (Mesa, AZ) ★ Horizon Elementary School (Boise, ID) ★ Hybla Valley Elementary School (Alexandria, VA) ★ Ida Redbird Elementary School (Mesa, AZ) ★ Irving Elementary (Mesa, AZ) ★ J. Paul Truluck Middle School (Lake City, SC) ★ Jackling Elementary School (West Valley City, UT) ★ James E. Moss Elementary (Salt Lake City, UT) ★ Jefferson Elementary (Mesa, AZ) ★ Jefferson Elementary School (Boise, ID) ★ Jim Hill Middle School (Minot, ND) ★ Joel P. Jensen Middle School (West Jordan, UT) ★ John F. Kennedy Junior High School (West Valley City, UT) ★ Jordan Hills Elementary (West Jordan, UT) ★ Jordan Ridge Elementary (South Jordan, UT) ★ Kauri Sue Hamilton School (Riverton, UT) ★ Kearns High School (Kearns, UT) ★ Kearns Jr. High (Salt Lake City, UT) ★ Keifer Academy (Springfield, OH) ★ Kerr Elementary School (Mesa, AZ) ★ Kino Junior High School (Mesa, AZ) ★ Koelsch Elementary (Boise, ID) ★ Lakeview Elementary School (Lakeview, MI) ★ Lakeview Middle School (Lakeview, MI) ★ Lakewoods Public School (Oshawa, Ontario, Canada) ★ Lehi Elementary School (Mesa, AZ) ★ Lincoln Center (Ruston, LA) ★ Lincoln Elementary School (Mesa, AZ) ★ Lowell Elementary School (Boise, ID) ★ M. C. Cash Elementary School (Phoenix, AZ) ★ Madison Elementary (Mesa, AZ) ★ Martin Luther King High School (Philadelphia, PA) ★ McLaurin Elementary School (Florence, SC) ★ Michael Anderson School (Avondale, AZ) ★ Morley Nelson Elementary (Boise, ID) ★ Mountain View Elementary (Boise, ID) ★ Mt. Vernon Woods Elementary (Alexandria, VA) ★ Ness Elementary (Spokane, WA) ★ Nichols Middle School (Canton, MS) ★ Northeast High School (Philadelphia, PA) ★ Northwest Elementary (Austin, TX) ★ Nottingham PS (Ajax, Ontario, Canada) ★ Olanta Elementary School (Olanta, SC) ★ Oquirrh (Kearns, UT) ★ Oquirrh Elementary (West Jordan, UT) ★ Orchard Center Elementary School (Spokane, WA) ★ Oshawa Centra C.I. (Oshawa, Ontario, Canada) ★ Parmer Lane Elementary (Austin, TX) ★ Pflugerville Middle School (Pflugerville, TX) ★ Philo T. Farnsworth (West Valley City, UT) ★ Pierce Park Elementary School (Boise, ID) ★ Pima Vocational High School (Tucson, AZ) ★ Pioneer Elementary (West Valley City, UT) ★ Pomeroy Elementary School (Mesa, AZ) ★ Premier High School (Phoenix, AZ) ★ Rhodes Jr. High World Studies Academy (Mesa, AZ) ★ River Oaks Elementary (Austin, TX) ★ Riverside Elementary School (West Jordan, UT) ★ Robert Frost Elementary (West Valley, UT) ★ Robert Fulton Elementary School (Lancaster, PA) ★ Robson Elementary School (Mesa, AZ) ★ Roland Michener Public School (Ajax, Ontario, Canada) ★ Rolling Meadows Elementary (West Valley, UT) ★ Ronald E. McNair Middle School (Lake City, SC) ★ Roosevelt Elementary (Minot, ND) ★ Roosevelt Elementary School (Salt Lake City, UT) ★ Rose Creek Elementary (Riverton, UT) ★ Royall Elementary (Florence, SC) ★ S. A. Cawker PS (Port Perry, Ontario, Canada) ★ Samuel Gompers E. S. #4280 (Philadelphia, PA) ★ Sandra Day O'Connor Elementary School (Mesa, AZ) ★ Scott's Branch Middle (Summerton, SC) ★ Scranton Elementary (Scranton, SC) ★ Seth Woodard Elementary (Spokane, WA) ★ Silver Crest Elementary (Herriman, UT) ★ Sirrine Elementary (Chandler, AZ) ★ Sneed Middle School (Florence, SC) ★ Sousa Elementary (Mesa, AZ) ★ South Florence High School (Florence, SC) ★ South Jordan Middle School (South Jordan, UT) ★ South Kearns Elementary (Kearns, UT) ★ South Pointe High School (Phoenix, AZ) ★ Southland Elementary School (Riverton, UT) ★ Southside Middle School (Florence, SC) ★ Spring Hill Elementary (Pflugerville, TX) ★ St. Paul Elementary School (Summerton, SC) ★ Stansbury Elementary School (West Valley City, UT) ★ Stevenson Elementary (Mesa, AZ) ★ Summerton Early Childhood Center (Summerton, SC) ★ Sunnyside Elementary (Minot, ND) ★ Sunset Ridge Middle School (West Jordan, UT) ★ Taft Elementary School (Mesa, AZ) ★ Terra Linda Elementary (West Jordan, UT) ★ Thomas Warton Jr. Elementary School (Lancaster, PA) ★ Townsend North Elementary (Vassar, MI) ★ Turtle Mountain Elementary School (Belcourt, ND) ★ Valley Crest Elementary (West Valley City, UT) ★ Valley Junior High (West Valley City, UT) ★ Vassar Alt. Education (Vassar, MI) ★ Vassar High School (Vassar, MI) ★ Vassar Junior High School (Vassar, MI) ★ Vimy Ridge Public School (Ajax, Ontario, Canada) ★ Vincent Settlement Elementary (Sulphur, LA) ★ Vista Elementary (Taylorsville, UT) ★ W. H. Taft Elementary (Boise, ID) ★ Wadewitz Elementary School (Racine, WI) ★ Warner Robins High School (Warner Robins, GA) ★ Washington Mill Elementary School (Alexandria, VA) ★ Washington Writer's Academy (Kalamazoo, MI) ★ Webster Elementary (Mesa, AZ) ★ Welby Elementary (South Jordan, UT) ★ West Florence High School (Florence, SC) ★ West Hills Middle School (West Jordan, UT) ★ West Jordan Elementary (West Jordan, UT) ★ West Lake Jr. High (West Valley City, UT) ★ West Phoenix High School (Phoenix, AZ) ★ Western Hills Elementary (Kearns, UT) ★ Westney Heights Public School (Ajax, Ontario, Canada) ★ Westvale Elementary (West Jordan, UT) ★ Westview Middle School (Austin, TX) ★ Whitman Elementary (Mesa, AZ) ★ Whitney Elementary (Boise, ID) ★ Whittier Elementary (Mesa, AZ) ★ Whittier Elementary School (Boise, ID) ★ Wieland Elementary (Pflugerville, TX) ★ Wilson High School (Florence, SC) ★ Windermere Elementary (Pflugerville, TX) ★ Windermere Primary (Pflugerville, TX) ★ Woolfolk Middle School (Yazoo City, MS) ★

DISTRICTS (19 new members) ★ Charles County Public Schools (La Plata, MD) ★ Connecticut Technical High School System (Middletown, CT) ★ Granite School District (Salt Lake City, UT) ★ Madison Metropolitan School District (Madison, WI) ★ Perris Elementary School District (Perris, CA) ★ Pinellas County School Board (Largo, FL) ★ School District of Altoona (Altoona, WI) ★ Upper Merion Area School District (King of Prussia, PA) ★ West Allis-West Milwaukee School District (West Allis, WI) ★

ORGANIZATIONS/UNIVERSITY PARTNERS (3 new members) ★ 23rd District PTA/Riverside County Office of Education (Riverside, CA) ★ University of Wisconsin-Madison, Education Outreach and Partnerships (Madison, WI) ★ Youngstown State University (Youngstown, OH) ★

Current Active Membership in the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) as of September 30, 2010

Schools: 1411 Districts: 154 States: 22 Organizations: 67

Middle and High School Report

Wait A Second! It is Happening at the Secondary Level!

It is true that, on average, programs of school, family, and community partnerships are stronger in the younger grades than in high schools. Research is accumulating, however, that shows that, through high school, students whose parents remain involved in their education have higher achievement and more positive attitudes about school than do other students. Studies also show that middle and high schools that reach out to involve students' parents, have more parents who remain engaged at school and at home with their teens on educational matters. Further, although older students may not want their parents involved in the same ways as in the younger grades, middle and high school students report that they continue to look to their families for support and guidance to make school decisions, celebrate accomplishments, and solve problems.

What Is the Challenge?

Still, because middle and high school teachers have been educated in their specific subjects and teach many students in classes throughout the day, it is challenging for all teachers to connect with all families in ways that support student learning. NNPS's professional development on partnership program development is helping secondary teachers, administrators, parents, and students work as a team to plan and implement programs and practices that benefit students, parents, and teachers. The 2010 edition of *Promising Partnership Practices* includes best practices from 10 high schools, 15 middle schools, and several K-8 schools on how they are developing programs of family and community involvement across the grades. Here are a few practices that other secondary schools may adopt or adapt.

At **Francis Howell Middle School** in St. Charles, Missouri, the Parent Involvement Team planned a forum entitled *Are Everyone Else's Parents REALLY Letting Them Do That?* Because there is no "owner's manual" for parents of students in the middle grades, the school designed this forum for parents to feel comfortable about discussing the challenges inherent in raising early adolescents. The principal led the discussion of topics that parents suggested. Parents met and listened to each others' questions and concerns. Everyone was able to share opinions and tips for understanding the mysteries and excitement of raising successful middle school students. This Type 1-Parenting activity focused on increasing parents' understanding of early adolescent development.

In **Salem Middle School** in Virginia Beach, Virginia, the Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) wanted families to understand the day-to-day experiences of their students to strengthen the bonds between school and home. At *Parents' Day*, family members shadowed their own middle schoolers through a typical school day—complete with breakfast and lunch. At the end of the day, parents completed an evaluation. By seeing teachers and their students in class, parents gained an appreciation for the hard work that everyone does in school. This Type 2-Communicating activity provided information on school programs in a most active form.

At **McLoughlin Middle School** in Pasco, Washington, eighth graders culminated a unit on the Holocaust with individual and group projects turning their library into the *Vision of Hope Museum*. All eighth graders read *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* in their language arts class. After

reading and discussing the book, they worked individually and in groups to create projects that reflected what they learned, with support from their families. More than 375 families and community members visited the museum one evening, and everyone—students and adults—strengthened their understanding of the evils of intolerance. This Type 4—Learning at Home activity engaged students and parents in discussions about the school curriculum.

Chiawana High School in Pasco, Washington, wanted families to understand the importance of the school's goals for student learning in mathematics, literacy, and science. Chiawana's Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) and Gear-Up program worked together to conduct *Look What's Happening Here!* at which parents cycled through state-of-the-art labs at the high school to see the new resources their students' were using. In the cardio-lab, for example, parents experienced the fitness center and learned how the physical education department incorporates math into its curriculum. In the computer lab, parents learned how to help their students search the Internet for information on colleges, college planning, and financial aid, and how to use the Parent Portal—sometimes a mystery to parents—to access their children's grades and attendance. This Type 2-Communicating activity brought parents new and useful information on high school programs and their students' progress.

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.

Marsha D. Greenfeld
mgreenfeld@csos.jhu.edu

NNPS Partnership Awards

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and continually improve their programs, and some schools applied for awards. “The Pasco-process clearly fulfills NNPS’s goal for district leaders and school teams to use research to develop their leadership and sustain their programs of family and community involvement for student success,” explained Joyce Epstein, Director of NNPS.

Other 2010 Partnership District Award winners were **Calcasieu Parish School System, LA**; **Fort Worth Independent School District, TX**; **Hampton City Schools, VA**; **Frances Howell School District, MO**; and **Seattle Public Schools, WA**. Two Parental Information Resource Centers (PIRCs)—the **Arizona PIRC** and **New Jersey PIRC**, and the **Frances Marion University Center of Excellence, Florence, SC**, earned Partnership Organization Awards. **Wisconsin’s Department of Public Instruction** was the Partnership State Award winner. Leaders in these locations actively collaborated with colleagues and with school ATPs to inform and involve families and community partners in children’s education.

Other Partnership School Awards were earned by **East Midvale Elementary School, UT**; **Echo Mountain Primary School, Phoenix AZ**; **Murray Junior High School, Saint Paul, MN**; and **Parkway Elementary School, Virginia Beach, VA**. These schools’ ATPs extended their outreach to families and creatively involved families and the community in ways that contributed to student achievement, attendance, good behavior, and other indicators of school success.

Award Rewards

All awardees received a plaque, one free registration to an NNPS professional development conference. Seven

programs also received a \$500 Special Recognition prize for excellent progress. Three districts, Frances Howell, Kennewick, and Pasco were selected as NNPS Conference Partners. Their travel and expenses are covered by a grant to NNPS by MetLife Foundation. These leaders will co-facilitate three sessions at the conference and will participate in a plenary panel to talk with all attendees about their work on partnerships.

See pictures of the Partnership Award winners in this issue and read about their programs at www.partnershipschools.org in Success Stories. Also see the NNPS award criteria on the website.

Link **YOUR** web site
to **NNPS**
at

www.partnershipschools.org

Issues and Insights

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Ellen Ochoa Middle School wanted parents to encourage students to read for pleasure about 40 minutes a night. In *Reading at Home Awareness*, the ATP sent information to all families each month with magnets displaying reading tips for parents to talk with their children about the books they are reading, encourage students to read to younger siblings, and other ideas. Taking a different tack, **Machen Elementary School** in Hampton, VA, conducted *Home Reading Program* in which parents, students, and educators read the same books twice a year to encourage reading at home and parent-student discussions about the stories.

Teachers use other activities to engage parents with students at home, such as asking students to interview a family member on a school topic, conduct an oral history, and collect artifacts for school projects. Also see NNPS’s *Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS)** interactive homework process that helps elementary and middle grades teachers design homework for students to demonstrate and discuss skills they are learning in math, science, and language arts, without parents coming to the school building.

Data from several hundred schools in NNPS for the past two years showed that, compared to other challenges (e.g., communicate with parents who speak different languages), elementary, middle, and high schools were least likely to be working on *getting information from workshops and meetings to parents who could not attend*.^{1,2} NNPS urges school ATPs and district leaders to put their creative energies to work this year by testing feasible, affordable, and effective ideas to increase family involvement with students in learning activities at home and report the results in the next edition of *Promising Partnership Practices 2011*.

* See other examples of family involvement with students in reading, math, and science in the annual collections of *Promising Partnership Practices* and in the *NNPS Samplers* at www.partnershipschools.org in the section Success Stories. See information on the book, *Family Reading Night*, on the NNPS website. See the TIPS section on the website for interactive homework.

1. Hutchins, D. J., Sheldon, S. B., & Epstein, J.L. (2010). *Special Report: 2009 School UPDATE Data*. Baltimore, MD: National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University. Retrieved from: <http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/type2/issue26/type2-issue26-4.htm>
2. Sheldon, S. B. (2009). Meeting the Challenge. Get Information from Workshops and Meetings to ALL Families. *Type 2, #26, p. 4*. Retrieved from: <http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/type2/issue26/type2-issue26-4.html>

Meeting the Challenge

(Continued from page 4)

among parents, educators, community partners, and teenagers. Parents asked questions and exchanged ideas about raising teens and about attending high school. If the school staff did not have the needed expertise to answer questions, they provided information on community resources for families of new high school students.

These examples show how schools at any grade level serving diverse students and families can implement effective, innovative workshops for parents that affect student success in school. The workshops help many families create a supportive home environment, become advocates for their children, increase collaboration with educators at the school, and help families connect with community resources. If the information also is disseminated to parents who could not attend the school meetings—another needed innovation—the workshops can improve parental

involvement in important ways. For details about these and other parent workshop activities, visit *Promising Partnership Practices 2010* on the NNPS website at www.partnership-schools.org.

MetLife Foundation Grant

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and sustain effective programs of family and community involvement. MetLife Foundation supports NNPS's annual books of *Promising Partnership Practices*, semi-annual *Type 2* newsletters, monthly E-briefs, annual Partnership Awards, and other tools and training for program development.

New Priority

As part of the new grant, NNPS will work to advance MetLife Foundation's priority on improving the quality of classroom teaching. Our research indicates that teaching quality and student learning depend, in part, on highly

effective, goal-linked school, family, and community partnerships. This year, we will complete six new *NNPS Samplers* that pair a summary of research on family and community involvement linked to specific goals for student success (e.g., *Attendance, Behavior, College and Career Planning*) with 10 top-notch activities developed by NNPS members and reported in books of *Promising Partnership Practices* across years. The new *Samplers*, added to three on *Reading, Math, and Science*, will include a section on how the information contributes to improving teaching practice.

Call for middle school partners.

NNPS also will identify at least one district with at least two middle schools that will partner with NNPS to develop and test TIPS-Math interactive homework for grades 6, 7, and 8. This new project will directly help teachers connect with parents and students on the math curriculum. Interested district leaders and middle school ATPs should contact Dr. Joyce Epstein, NNPS Director, about this new project, which will start in 2011.

More 2010 Partnership Organization Award Winners (Continued from page 7)

Arizona State Parental Information Resource Center, AZ



Francis Marion University Center of Excellence, SC



New Jersey – Prevent Child Abuse, NJ



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



National Network of Partnership Schools
Johns Hopkins University
2701 North Charles Street, Suite 300
Baltimore, Maryland 21218
tel: 410-516-8800 fax: 410-516-8890
e-mail: nnps@csos.jhu.edu
website: www.partnershipschools.org

Director: Joyce L. Epstein
Director of Research: Steven B. Sheldon
Senior Program Facilitators:
Marsha D. Greenfeld, Darcy J. Hutchins
Brenda G. Thomas (with Maryland PIRC)
Senior Advisor: Mavis G. Sanders
Network Coordinator: Jenn Ganss
Website Developer & Type 2: Kane Clevenger and Christine Marsh

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Partnership Calendar

2010

October 26-27 **Leadership Development Conference** in Baltimore for new and experienced leaders in schools, districts, states, and organizations.

December 8 **Web Conference** for district leaders on program development and direct facilitation of schools. Registration and fee information will be available in e-briefs and at www.partnershipschools.org.

2011

January

Members will receive the **NNPS Annual Report**, summarizing data from schools and districts on the 2010 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 11-12 school year. Date TBA in e-brief and on website.

March

Spring issue of *Type 2*.

March/April

Invitation for NNPS members to contribute to *Promising Partnership Practices 2011*.

Due May 15.

Eligible members will be invited to apply for **NNPS Partnership Awards** for 2011. Due June 30.

March 24-25

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 **2011 UPDATE** in the mail. Due June 30 to renew NNPS membership for the 11-12 school year.

May 15

Promising partnership practices **submissions due** for review for the 2011 collection.

June 30

2011 UPDATE due to NNPS to renew membership for 11-12.

June 30

2011 Partnership Award Applications due.

October 20-21

Leadership Development Conference in Baltimore for school, district, state, and organization leaders.

NNPS gratefully acknowledges support from

MetLife Foundation

More 2010 Partnership Schools Award Winners (Continued from page 6)

Parkway Elementary School, VA



Robert Frost Elementary School, WA



Ruth Livingston Elementary, WA



Whittier Elementary School, WA

