

# 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, 2011 No. 31

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## 29 Earn NNPS Partnership Awards for Research-Based Progress on Partnerships

In 2011, 19 schools, 5 districts, and 5 organizations earned NNPS Partnership Awards for making noteworthy progress in their programs of family and community involvement. These programs applied NNPS research-based approaches and tools to meet the conditions, characteristics, and goals of their own schools, families, and communities.

### Schools

School-based Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) demonstrated creative ways to involve more and different families as partners in education and to engage them in ways that support student learning and development. School winners included 12 elementary, four middle-level, two high schools, and one multi-level school for deaf children. Several patterns of good practice stand out. This year, more schools provided information and materials from school-based events to parents who could not come. This is a difficult challenge that requires attention by all schools' ATPs.

Other award winning schools focused on engaging parents and community partners with students in academic and socio-emotional skill-building (e.g., in math, science, reading, nutrition and exercise, and in philanthropic and character development activities that required kindness or giving to others). Several schools gave extra effort this year to engage Latino families who were not involved before in leadership roles and as participants in activities with their children. The ATPs' plans and practices

showed that these schools know that improving programs of family and community involvement for student success is a continuous process, not one event!

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## MetLife Foundation Supports Scaling Up NNPS

MetLife Foundation awarded NNPS a new grant through September 2012. The funds enable NNPS to continue professional development to increase the number and quality of district and school programs of family and community involvement linked to student success in school. The grant also supports the development of new products that will assist members of NNPS.

"There is a need to help educators and schools involve parents and communities more effectively as an ongoing part of school culture and strategy for improving student achievement," noted A. Dennis White, President and CEO of MetLife Foundation. The grant gives needed attention to improving the homework process, focusing on math in the middle grades, and increasing the abilities of individual teachers to engage their own students' families in ways that increase student success in their classrooms.

### Scale Up

MetLife Foundation's support ensures that NNPS will continue to produce

*(Continued on page 10)*

# Issues and Insights

Joyce L. Epstein  
Director

## Can Do, Can't Do, or Won't Do? Replace Excuses with a CAN DO Spirit!

As the 11-12 school year began, NNPS happily reviewed work submitted by members of NNPS across the country and in Canada.

About 600 school, district, state, and organization members (and counting) evaluated their progress on UPDATE surveys and renewed their active membership in NNPS. Over 200 more new members joined NNPS to receive on-going professional development with research-based approaches and communications to strengthen their partnership programs.

About 200 submitted their best practices for review and over 100 activities were selected for the new edition of *Promising Partnership Practices 2011*.

More than 40 members submitted applications for 2011 NNPS Partnership Awards, and 29 awards were made to schools, districts, and organizations that documented excellent progress in program development.

In many ways, members of NNPS are showing that they CAN DO innovative and meaningful work to engage more families, create welcoming schools, and help more students achieve and succeed.

### Can't Do or Won't Do? Not a Valid Excuse!

Given evidence from NNPS members of their work and progress, why isn't every school, district, and state department of education working to strengthen and sustain effective and inclusive partnership programs? Here are some excuses we hear from time to time, along with the CAN DO steps that enable members of NNPS to improve their partnership programs from year to year.

### We can't add another team!

**Yes, we can!** The Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) ensures that teachers, parents,

administrators, and others work together to fulfill federal, state, and local policies to engage ALL families in their children's education. Your schools may already have a team of partners who just need training to organize effective plans and practices of family and community involvement for student success.

### We don't have time to train our ATP.

**Yes, we do. Professional development matters for school improvement.** Strong principals know that one day of solid training will ensure that their school's ATP is able to fulfill its responsibilities. At an NNPS workshop, ATPs gain the basics on partnerships and draft One-Year Action Plans for Partnerships linked to their own school improvement plans.

### We can't evaluate our program – no time. And, there's too much paperwork.

**Yes, we can and must evaluate our programs.** Educators know that what gets evaluated gets done. A 4-page NNPS membership form gives baseline data so that NNPS can provide new members with a *Handbook for Action*, materials, and on-going services. After a full school year, a 6-page UPDATE survey guides members to evaluate progress with reliable scales and measures so that each year's work is better than the last. These are essential--yet minimal--requirements. Other record keeping, assessments, or submissions are optional—up to each site.

### We can't find people for this team.

**Yes, we can!** The ATP is an enjoyable action-oriented team that teachers, parents, and community partners want to join to create a welcoming school climate and to help all families become involved with their children in productive ways. Just see the wonderful photos of award-winning teams in

(Continued on page 11)

# The Can-Do Spirit Enables Secondary Schools to Create Partnerships for Student Success

People with a *can do* attitude see every challenge as an opportunity and every failure as a chance to learn. In the same way, schools' Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) take a *can do* approach to improve their plans, teamwork, and activities for family and community involvement at their schools. This can be challenging at the secondary level, but ATPs in middle and high schools in NNPS are showing how to develop creative, goal-linked programs of family and community involvement linked to students' success in school.

### Can-Do Middle Schools

To provide students with additional support for academic and life skills, **Upper Merion Middle School** in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania created *Active Contributors As Tutors and Mentors*. Volunteers included family and community members who varied in age, ethnicity, skills, and talents. The tutors and mentors were screened, given training in the school's character education program, and paired with a teacher who assigned them individual or small groups of students. Over 40 volunteers assisted about 200 students before, during, and after school in over 1,000 tutoring and mentoring sessions last year. The result? Teachers reported more positive student attitudes and improved report card grades.

*Open Mic Poetry Café Night* at **Opelousas Junior High School** in Louisiana proves how engaging poetry can be. Teachers showcased students' writing at the annual book fair and literacy night. A local non-profit organization, Festival of Words, provided a local writer who read and taught poetry to students. An art teacher and other students transformed an empty

classroom into a *Poetry Café* with a stage for students' to share their work. Families, staff, community members, and other students enjoyed hearing the young poets' feelings and experiences. With family and community support, the school will continue to strengthen students' writing skills.

### Can-Do High Schools

The partnership team at **Naperville North High School** in Illinois created an Academic Integrity Committee to help students deal with school stress and teen pressures. The committee of parents, teachers, administrators, and students hosted two forums—*Meaningful Community Discussion: Student Stressors*—to discuss stress and its effects on students. The goal was to improve school practices and help more students make good decisions in stressful situations such as test-taking, temptations to cheat, and doing homework. Students, parents, and educators shared their views and set guidelines together. For example, they agreed that the purpose of homework should be clear and the quantity should be reasonable. Teachers agreed to review their homework policy and practices.

In *Multicultural Outreach*, **Northridge High School** in Layton, Utah worked to improve two-way communications with new families and Spanish-speaking families. The school has a diverse population, is near a military installation, and serves students from around the world, including a growing number of Spanish-speaking families. To help these families feel comfortable about communicating with teachers, the ATP invited them to an orientation program a week before school started. Also, a meeting was held—in

Spanish—to orient parents on how to help high school students succeed academically and solve common problems. Finally, a series of discussions about postsecondary planning and college visits was held for Spanish-speaking families. These activities gave more and different families several opportunities to learn more about the school and to focus on everyone's shared interest in student success.

Middle and high schools with *can do* ATPs are addressing challenges to improve school, family, and community partnerships and to encourage more teens to do their best in school, avoid risky behaviors, and graduate from high school.

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### More Ideas from NNPS Middle and High Schools

See several activities to involve families with students in math, such as Dairy Queen Math Night at Highlands Middle School, Kennewick, WA.

Read about service learning activities that benefit the community, including Hunger in our Community at Cox High School in Virginia Beach, VA.

Help students and parents transition to middle school in Parent-to-Parent Night at Jefferson Junior High in Naperville, IL and graduate from high school in Senior Honor Night at New Horizons High School in Pasco, WA.

For details on these and more involvement activities from middle and high schools, see Promising Partnership Practices 2011 on the NNPS website.

# Meeting the Challenge

Steven B. Sheldon  
Director of Research

## Close the Divide: Bring Home, School, and Community Together to Support Student Success

Educators are responsible for increasing student achievement every year, regardless of which family or community a student comes from. Rather than create a *family-proof* or *community-prohibited* school, members of the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) understand that positive school, family, and community connections help increase the quality of education for all students and the likelihood of students' success

### Keep School Doors Open.

One strategy that schools use to help close the divide is to make the school building a welcoming and active institution in and for the community. For example, **Kearns Junior High School** in Salt Lake City, Utah keeps its doors open after school in its program *FOCUSING on Student Success*. Students work on their homework for an hour and then select two, one-hour activities that interest them for the rest of the afternoon. Most of the students' families work during the day, are low-income, and/or are English Language Learners. To assist families, the after-school program serves students dinner twice a week. Kearns Junior High keeps the doors open so that its families know that their children are in a safe, supervised, friendly, and productive place after school.

### Conduct Home Visits.

Home visits are another strategy some NNPS schools use to close the distance between children's lives in and out of school. In Kennewick, WA, **Amistad Elementary School** designed a creative reason for the *principal* to conduct home visits. The Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) and teachers at Amistad knew how important it is for children to have a dedicated space at home for homework. To strengthen the partnership between home and school, the principal sent a letter to all families asking if they would create a space at home for their children to do homework. Those who agreed were given a backpack with school supplies for their *Blue Ribbon Homework Center*. The

principal scheduled visits with all of these families to see the homework space, talk about school and homework, hear parents' questions, and present the student and family with a blue ribbon to celebrate this partnership. According to the principal, the home visits were valuable and enjoyable for everyone, and gave him an opportunity to connect one-on-one with students' families. The community saw the value of project and covered the news in the media. Visit [www.ksd.org](http://www.ksd.org) and view the TV episode on *Blue Ribbon Homework Centers*.

### Visit the Community

Another boundary-crossing activity, *Community Outreach*, was conducted at **Rowena Chess Elementary School**, in Pasco, WA. Rather than visit individual homes, the ATP, teachers, and others visited a trailer park where many students lived and where parent involvement at school events was low. Although the school representatives met with initial resistance from the trailer park manager, they persisted and were able to organize special Saturday events such as a Halloween pumpkin carving. Teachers met families, talked with students, and handed out pumpkins. In school, students wrote about what they did with the pumpkins. Over time, the ATP worked with the manager on other activities, set up a lending library in the office, and distributed treats and books to students at holiday celebrations and other events. Visiting the families in their neighborhood was a way to close the divide between home and school and created new and stronger partnerships with students' families.

By extending the number of hours a school is open, visiting families, and going into the community, many NNPS schools are creating positive connections between school and students' lives outside of school. The featured practices and other examples in *Promising Partnership Practices 2011* may inspire *your school* to strengthen connections with families that produce important results for students.

## Elementary School Report

### Many Ways to Help Parents Support Student Learning at Home

NNPS has long been interested in ways that schools involve parents with students in learning activities at home to improve skills and attitudes in specific subjects. Some teachers guide parents, directly, on how to help students at home on homework, practice skills, or conduct interesting projects. Other teachers and school-based Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) conduct school meetings to provide information and demonstrate strategies that parents can, then, use at home with their own children. The new *Promising Partnership Practices 2011* includes many ways that elementary schools are helping parents feel more confident about interacting with their children on learning activities at home. Here are a few examples.

#### Link to the Curriculum

In NNPS, ATPs are asked to plan and implement involvement activities that support learning goals in the School Improvement Plan. This includes helping parents learn about new curricula and instructional approaches that teachers are using with students in their classrooms. For example, when **Beebe Elementary School** in Naperville, Illinois adopted a new math curriculum that included the use of SMARTboards, the ATP held a *Math Night* to help parents understand how students were learning math during the school day. The workshop began with a 30-minute PowerPoint presentation on the curriculum and

instructional approaches, after which parents broke into smaller groups for grade-specific 20-minute SMART-board lessons. This activity gave many parents knowledge, strategies, and experiences that enabled them to talk with their children about math lessons and skills at home.

#### Replicate Activities at Home

Students are more likely to complete activities that are fun and parents are more likely to support learning at home if activities with their children are easy to conduct. **Alexander Mitchell Integrated Arts School** in Milwaukee, Wisconsin held *Silly Putty Family Night* to teach students and families about polymers and how to conduct science experiments with these materials. Children made silly putty with their parents and participated in hands-on experiments with their freshly made product. They left with their own silly putty and instructions to make it at home. Because the only two ingredients are starch and glue, families could make more at home and conduct other experiments with the goo. Not only did students and families learn more about science, but they also found that learning can be fun!

#### Involve Families Unable to Attend School-based Events

Very few school-based activities involve all families, although that may

be the stated goal. The gap between desired attendance and actual attendance at most meetings and events requires attention by every school.

**Edison Elementary School** in Kennewick, Washington took this challenge very seriously in developing its *Math Games at Home* initiative. To improve prior, popular family math nights, Edison's ATP wanted to make sure every family had an opportunity to be involved. At *Math Games at Home*, families played math games and received a bag to take home with the pieces and directions for all of the games they played. Then, the ATP distributed the same game bags to all students who could not attend the event.

#### Why Focus on Type 4?

Research suggests that Type 4-Learning at Home activities engage more parents in ways that increase students' learning and positive attitudes in specific subjects. Students benefit when they demonstrate skills they learned, discuss books they read, play learning games that reinforce classroom lessons, and talk about schoolwork with someone at home.

For more examples of Type-4 practices, visit [www.partnershipschoools.org](http://www.partnershipschoools.org) and click on Success Stories.

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## Introducing 2011 Partnership School Award Winners

### Amistad Elementary School, Kennewick, WA



### Becky-David Elementary School, St. Charles, MO



*Meet the Teams! 2011 PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL AWARD WINNERS*

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**Brock Elementary School, Slidell, LA**



**Edison Elementary School, Kennewick, WA**



**Highlands Elementary School, Naperville, IL**



**John McLoughlin Middle School, Pasco, WA**



**Park Middle School, Kennewick, WA**



**Eastern Greenbrier Middle School, Greenbrier, WV**



**Ellen Ochoa Middle School, Pasco, WA**



**James McGee Elementary School, Pasco, WA**



**Naperville North High School, Naperville, IL**



**Pasco High School, Pasco, WA**



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Read summaries of these programs at [www.partnershipschools.org](http://www.partnershipschools.org) in Success Stories.

*2011 PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL AND ORGANIZATION AWARD WINNERS*

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Robert Frost Elementary School, Pasco, WA



Rowena Chess Elementary School, Pasco, WA



Whittier Elementary School, Pasco, WA



FMU Center of Excellence, Florence, SC



NJ PIRC - Prevent Child Abuse, New Brunswick, NJ



Roberts Elementary School, Wayne, PA



Upper Merion Middle School, Upper Merion, PA



Arizona PIRC, Gilbert, AZ



MAS/FPS, Trenton, MI



Starting Point/Invest in Children, Cleveland, OH



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*See 2011 Partnership District Award Winners on page 9.*

# *Our Growing Network*

New Members in NNPS since April 1, 2011

**SCHOOLS (74 new members)** ★ 100 Success Academy (Tallahassee, FL) ★ A. I. Prince Technical High School (Hartford, CT) ★ Abney Elementary Early Childhood Center (Slidell, LA) ★ Ann Reid Early Childhood Center (Naperville, IL) ★ Bailey's Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences (Falls Church, VA) ★ Bristol Technical Education Center (Bristol, CT) ★ Broadmoor Middle School (Baton Rouge, LA) ★ Bucknell Elementary School (Alexandria, VA) ★ Bullard Havens Regional Vocational Technical High School (Bridgeport, CT) ★ Capitol Middle School (Baton Rouge, LA) ★ Caroline Wenzel Elementary School (Sacramento, CA) ★ Clara E. Westropp (Cleveland, OH) ★ Clearwood Junior High School (Slidell, LA) ★ Copperview Elementary (Midvale, UT) ★ Craig High School (Janesville, WI) ★ E. C. Goodwin Technical High School (New Britain, CT) ★ E. T. Grasso Southeastern Technical High School (Groton, CT) ★ Earl Warren Elementary School (Sacramento, CA) ★ East Clark School (Cleveland, OH) ★ EAST Tech High School (Cleveland, OH) ★ Edison Middle School (Janesville, WI) ★ Edward Kemble Elementary School (Sacramento, CA) ★ Eli Whitney Technical High School (Hamden, CT) ★ Emerson Elementary (Madison, WI) ★ Emmett O'Brien Technical High School (Ansonia, CT) ★ Ethel Baker Elementary School (Sacramento, CA) ★ Fern Bacon Middle School (Sacramento, CA) ★ Frederick H. Tuttle Middle School (South Burlington, VT) ★ Glenville Academic Campus (Cleveland, OH) ★ H. C. Wilcox Technical High School (Meriden, CT) ★ H. H. Ellis Technical High School (Danielson, CT) ★ Halstead Academy of Science and the Arts (Baltimore, MD) ★ Henry Abbot Technical High School (Danbury, CT) ★ Hopkins Lloyd Community School (Milwaukee, WI) ★ Howell Cheney Technical High School (Manchester, CT) ★ Hubert Bancroft Elementary School (Sacramento, CA) ★ John Adams Campus (Cleveland, OH) ★ John J. Flynn Elementary School (Burlington, VT) ★ LaGrange High School (Lake Charles, LA) ★ Legacy School for Integrated Studies (New York, NY) ★ Lehigh Valley Academy Regional Charter School (Bethlehem, PA) ★ Leopold Elementary School (Madison, WI) ★ Leopold Elementary School (Madison, WI) ★ Maple Elementary School (Sacramento, CA) ★ Mayfield Elementary School (Slidell, LA) ★ Nathan Hale School (Cleveland, OH) ★ Nonpublic Schools - Basic Skills (Cleveland, OH) ★ Norwich Technical High School (Norwich, CT) ★ Oliver Wolcott Technical High School (Torrington, CT) ★ Pace Center for Girls (Tallahassee, FL) ★ Parker High School (Janesville, WI) ★ Peter Burnett Elementary School (Sacramento, CA) ★ Platt Technical High School (Milford, CT) ★ Resurrection Catholic School (Montgomery, AL) ★ Rio Rico High School (Rio Rico, AZ) ★ Riverside Elementary (Alexandria, VA) ★ Riverview Elementary (Baltimore, MD) ★ Scranton Elementary School (Cleveland, OH) ★ Second Chance at Ghasvini Learning Center (Tallahassee, FL) ★ St. Tammany Jr. High (Slidell, LA) ★ Susan B. Anthony Elementary School (Sacramento, CA) ★ Sustainability Academy at Lawrence Barnes (Burlington, VT) ★ Thomas Jefferson 9th Grade Academy (Cleveland, OH) ★ Thomas W. Holtzman, Jr. Elementary (Harrisburg, PA) ★ Vae View Elementary (Layton, UT) ★ Vinal Technical High School (Middletown, CT) ★ Warren Fox Kaynor Technical High School (Waterbury, CT) ★ Waverly (Cleveland, OH) ★ Wilbur Wright (Cleveland, OH) ★ Will C. Wood Middle School (Sacramento, CA) ★ William J. Clinton Middle School (Los Angeles, CA) ★ Willson School (Cleveland, OH) ★ Windham Technical High School (Willimantic, CT) ★ Woodley Hills Math and Science Focus School (Alexandria, VA)

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**DISTRICTS (4 new members)** ★ Eloy Elementary School District (Eloy, AZ) ★ Portland Public Schools (Portland, OR) ★ Racine Unified School District (Racine, WI) ★ South-Western City Schools (Columbus, OH) ★

**ORGANIZATIONS/UNIVERSITY PARTNERS (4 new members)** ★ Family Leadership, Inc. (Fresno, CA) ★ Milwaukee City Council PTA/PTAs, Inc. (Milwaukee, WI) ★ San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools (San Bernardino, CA) ★ Ventura County Office of Education (Camarillo, CA) ★

**Current Active Membership in the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) as of October 31, 2011**  
**Schools: 1374   Districts: 146   States: 22   Organizations: 58**

## Leadership Line

### District Leaders Help Schools Improve their Partnership Programs



The double arrow, above, is a simple outline for district leaders' work on partnerships. The top half recognizes that district Leaders for Partnerships conduct some family and community involvement activities that benefit all stakeholders in the district. The bottom half shows that Leaders for Partnerships must guide each school's Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) to organize its own, school-based program of family and community involvement. This balanced approach ensures that districts have leaders who become experts on partnership program development and each school has a permanent structure—the ATP—to plan, implement, and evaluate practices that engage all families in

ways that support students' success in school. Following are a few ways that winners of 2011 Partnership District Awards are guiding their schools' ATPs to increase the quality of their partnership programs.

#### Keep Improving Teamwork

In **Hampton City Schools** in Virginia, the district Leader for Partnerships works with Parent Involvement Facilitators who chair the Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) in many Title I schools. They guide their ATPs to continually improve their partnership programs and link activities to goals for student success in reading, math, and other subjects and school behaviors. This year, district leaders conducted professional development for the school-based facilitators in *Enhancing the Effectiveness of Teams*. At the workshop ATP members discussed how to clarify team goals, improve participation, share responsibilities, address ATP challenges, and conduct good meetings. Teams reflected on each topic and wrote a Team Effectiveness Plan.

*(Continued on page 10)*

## 2011 Partnership District Award Winners

### Calcasieu Parish School System, Lake Charles, LA



### Kennewick School District, Kennewick, WA



### Hampton City Schools, Hampton, VA



### Pasco School District, Pasco, WA



Read summaries of these programs at [www.partnershipschoools.org](http://www.partnershipschoools.org) in Success Stories.

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## MetLife Foundation Grant

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publications such as the annual books of *Promising Partnership Practices*, semi-annual *Type 2* newsletters, monthly E-briefs, professional development conferences, and projects such as annual Partnership Awards to recognize excellent leadership and programs across the country.

### New Products

The new grant will support the development of a new set of interactive homework materials—TIPS-Math in the Middle Grades for grades 6, 7, and 8. NNPS is working this year with the collaborating district—Calcasieu Parish School Board in Lake Charles, Louisiana—to develop and test the new math materials, which will be in sync with future Common Core Math Standards. Then, the new TIPS-Math in the Middle Grades will be distributed nationally to interested districts and middle schools.

Among other new products, NNPS will continue its series of *Samplers*, which provide school and district leaders with short research summaries and 10 feasible family and community involvement activities. This year, the first set of *Samplers* will focus on family and community involvement to improve students' Attendance, Behavior, College and Career Planning and to develop stronger partnership programs in Pre-schools and Middle, and High Schools. Next year, six more topics will be added by the end of 2012.

NNPS acknowledges MetLife Foundation as an important partner in improving goal-linked programs of family and community involvement.

## Leadership Line

(Continued from page 9)

Similarly, in **Mesa (Arizona) Unified School District**, the Title I Department helped about 40 schools' ATPs write action plans to engage families in purpose-driven activities linked to goals in their school improvement plans. District leaders met monthly with schools' PEEPS—Parent Educators Empowering Parents in Schools. They shared ways to improve teamwork, reach out to parents, collaborate with teachers, and produce results for students. They reviewed the six types of involvement, learned to design web pages and news feeds on parental involvement, and disseminated summer reading lists for students. Like many districts in NNPS, Mesa compiled a book of schools' best partnership practices to share throughout the district.

### Support ATPs Efforts

In 2011, the Leader for Partnerships in **Kennewick School District** emphasized three types of training and technical assistance for schools' ATPs: (1) assist ATP chairpersons to plan and conduct effective team meetings; (2) attend many ATP events to celebrate successes and identify ways to improve future activities; and (3) guide each ATP to complete its next One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships. The Leader for Partnerships attended over 30 activities in various schools last year. This showed principals and ATPs that she wanted to support their work on family and community involvement, and that she will help them improve their programs, evaluate progress, and engage more and different families in better ways from one year to the next.

### Integrate Family and Community Involvement

**Pasco School District #1** in Washington wants every school to engage

all parents in ways that support student learning and development. This year, the district Leaders for Partnerships gave special attention to integrating the schools' efforts to involve families with work done by the schools' PEAK business partners (Partners in Educating All Kids). Luncheons in August and February brought together PEAK businesses, school principals, district leaders for public affairs, and the Co-Chairs of the schools' Action Teams for Partnerships—along with their One-Year Action Plans for Partnerships. All partners discussed the goals for students and how the schools, families, and community partners could work together to contribute to positive results for the schools and for the students.

### Include All Teachers

The Leader for Partnerships in **Calcasieu Parish School Board** in Lake Charles, Louisiana wanted all teachers to know that, even if they were not members of the ATP, their connections to their own students' families were important for their school's partnership program. She conducted professional development sessions for over 50 elementary school teachers to help them use the framework of six types of involvement with their students' families. Sessions on *Parenting, Communicating, Volunteering, Learning at Home, Decision Making, and Collaborating with the Community* included activities for teachers to use each type of involvement for their own grade level, subject(s), students, and families. Attendees received "engagement rings" to note their new knowledge on engaging families in their children's education. The PowerPoint presentation and materials were added to the Calcasieu website to remind teachers of the concepts and content of the workshops.

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## Issues and Insights

(Continued from page 2)

this issue of *Type 2*.

### We can't find funds for this program.

**Yes, we can!** NNPS keeps its professional development costs very low. Across the country, leaders use Title I, II, III, IV, V and other federal, state, and local funds to support district Leaders for Partnerships and school-based activities to inform and engage all families.

NNPS helps leaders find funds and use funds wisely. See funding levels and sources of funds across NNPS in our *Handbook for Action*, Third Edition, p. 245.

### We cannot ask our principals to do another thing.

**Yes, we can!** Family and community involvement is not “extra” work it is “the” work that must be done to help more students do their best in school. The Action Plan for Partnerships is not “another” plan, but an official part of “the” school improvement plan. Teachers cannot work alone for student success. Well-organized programs of family and community involvement help more students achieve, improve attitudes about school, graduate from high school, and plan their futures.

Members of NNPS are showing that any school, district, state, and organization CAN DO excellent work on partnerships by planning, implementing, and evaluating their leadership, programs, and practices. NNPS is here to help the CAN DO spirit triumph.

## Partnership Awards

(Continued from page 1)

### Districts and Organizations

At the district and organization levels, the awardees reported leadership activities for family and community involvement, in general, and specific ways that they directly facilitated schools' ATPs to conduct their own partnership programs. Two patterns of leadership stand out.

Just about all of district and organization leaders conducted workshops for ATPs to increase their skills, confidence, and quality of their programs of family and community involvement. The professional development and technical assistance for ATPs addressed topics such as strengthening teamwork and team spirit, writing clear goals, solving team challenges, identifying and strengthening characteristics of leaders, and understanding how to engage more and different families.

Some district and organization Leaders for Partnerships select a theme each year that their schools may address in their own partnership plans. For example, the Starting Point organization selected Healthy Bodies/Healthy Minds to engage preschool parents and students in activities on nutrition, healthy foods, and family exercise. Several early education settings in the project adopted the theme to engage their students and families in health-related activities and, in doing so, learned more—together—about which activities worked well and why.

The 2011 district and organization leaders demonstrated how research-based structures and processes can be applied in many schools in very diverse communities.

### The Awards

NNPS awards are not competitive. They require members to demonstrate mastery in applying NNPS research-based structures and processes in practice in diverse communities. Awardees received a plaque and one free registration to an NNPS professional development conference. Seven programs also received \$500 Special Recognition prizes.

Three recipients—Upper Merion Area Middle School, Calcasieu Parish School Board, and Michigan Association of State and Federal Program Specialists (MAS/FPS)—were selected as the 2011 NNPS Fall Conference Partners supported by MetLife Foundation. Leaders of these programs facilitated a conference session to encourage others to apply for Partnership Awards. They also addressed a plenary session to share their “secrets” to success in their work on partnerships.

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### We also congratulate these Partnership Award Winners (without photos)

Ellen Ochoa Middle School,  
Pasco WA

Highlands Middle School,  
Kennewick WA

Pennsylvania School for the Deaf,  
Philadelphia

Mesa Unified School District, AZ



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## Partnership Calendar

### 2012

January	<b>Web conference</b> for district leaders on program development and direct facilitation of schools. Registration information will be available in E-brief and at <a href="http://www.partnershipschools.org">www.partnershipschools.org</a> .
January	Members will receive the <b>NNPS Annual Report</b> , summarizing data from schools and districts on the 2011 UPDATE surveys.
February	<b>Web conference</b> for schools' Action Teams for Partnerships (ATP) in the start-up phase of program development for ideas on "Writing Goal-Oriented Action Plans" for 12-13 school year. Registration information will be available in E-brief and at <a href="http://www.partnershipschools.org">www.partnershipschools.org</a> .
February	<b>New NNPS book</b> on <i>Multicultural Partnerships Involve All Families</i> due to be released. Publisher will give NNPS members discount on orders. Information will be in E-brief and on <a href="http://www.partnershipschools.org">www.partnershipschools.org</a> .
March 15-16	<b>District Leadership Institute</b> 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.
March	<b>Spring Issue</b> of <i>Type 2</i> . Sent by E-Alert and available online at <a href="http://www.partnershipschools.org">www.partnershipschools.org</a> .
March/April	Invitation for NNPS members to contribute to <i>Promising Partnership Practices 2012</i> . Due May 15.  Eligible members will be invited to apply for <b>NNPS Partnership Awards</b> for 2012. Due June 30..
April	Members will receive 2012 UPDATE in the mail. Due June 30.
May 1	Promising partnership practices <b>submissions due</b> for review for the 2012 collection.
June 30	<b>2012 UPDATE due</b> with \$200 fee to renew membership in NNPS for the 12-13 school year.  <b>2012 Partnership Award Applications due.</b>
October 11-12	<b>Save the Date.</b>  <b>Leadership Development Conference</b> in Baltimore for school, district, state, and organization leaders.

## STAY CONNECTED TO NNPS!

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- Ask your IT staff to make sure that all e-mail from NNPS (ending in @jhu.edu) is delivered to you. NNPS does not spell SPAM!
- If your e-mail changes or if new leaders join your team, send the new e-mail address to NNPS. Stay in touch and up-to-date with NNPS.
- Create a place on your website called School, Family, and Community Partnerships to report your programs' plans, activities, and leaders. Include a link to the NNPS website so that your visitors will learn about your connections with us. Link to: <http://www.partnershipschools.org>