

type2

Fall, 1999 No. 7 **National Network of Partnership Schools**

Disney Learning Partnership Grant Will Expand and Improve the National Network

NOTE: This is a printer-friendly version of *Type 2*, downloadable from the National Network of Partnership Schools web site (www.partnershipschools.org). Some formatting has been changed from the original newsletter (e.g., graphics/photos may not appear). For hard copies of *Type 2*, please e-mail the Network staff at nnps@csos.jhu.edu or call 410-516-8800.



PARTNERSHIPSCHOOLS

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Disney Learning Partnership has launched a new program to support family and community connections with schools. In addition to its annual recognition of teachers and individual grants to schools for innovative teaching and learning programs, Disney Learning Partnership is collaborating with the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University through a grant to expand and improve the National Network of Partnership Schools.

"This exciting work with Disney Learning Partnership will enable more states and large school districts to join the National Network," said Center Director Joyce Epstein. "It means we will have the staff we need to guide a growing Network, and we will be able to develop many new products to assist all members." The grant will be used to develop innovative communications including videos for team training, TIPS interactive homework materials and guidelines, interactive web site features, new awards to recognize strong leaders and excellent programs of partnership in schools, districts, and states across the country, and other activities.

The Network's goal is capacity building. States, districts, and schools are assisted to

use research-based results and field-tested products to develop, implement, evaluate, and continually improve their programs of partnership.

Laurie Lang, Senior Vice President of Disney Learning Partnership, said, "We are excited about supporting a national network that will help all schools, families, and communities work collaboratively to support students' success in school." The Network, too, is enthusiastic about the new grant that will enable states, districts, and schools across the country to reach out to inform and involve hundreds of thousands of families in their children's education.

National Network Presents State and District Leadership Awards

The National Network of Partnership Schools presented its first annual state and district leadership awards for the 1998-99 school year. The 1999 State Leadership Award was shared by Jane Grinde, Director, Bright Beginnings/Family-School-Community Partnership Team, and Ruth Anne Landsverk, Coordinator of the Family-School-Community Partnership Team

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**PLEASE MAKE COPIES OF TYPE 2 FOR ALL MEMBERS
OF YOUR ACTION TEAM, LEADERSHIP OR IMPROVEMENT TEAM,
AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTNERS!**

Issues and Insights

New Partnership Awards Will Recognize Excellent *and* Permanent Programs

Joyce L. Epstein, Director

The National Network of Partnership Schools is helping schools, districts, and states turn policies into actions on school, family, and community partnerships. The Network has grown from 234 schools, 35 school districts, and 7 state departments of education in the fall of 1996 to over 1151 schools, 136 school districts, and 12 states this fall.

Most Network members are improving their partnership programs from year to year. Some are making dramatic progress toward *permanence*. Their programs are on-going, expected, and essential components of school organization and school improvement. The National Network of Partnership Schools will initiate annual Partnership Awards to recognize schools, districts, and states that demonstrate excellence *and* permanence in planning, implementing, supporting, evaluating, and continuing their programs of partnership.

Partnership School Awards will recognize *schools* in the Network that: have a well-functioning action team of teachers, parents, and an administrator; write and implement annual action plans for partnerships; include all six types of involvement and link activities to school improvement goals and student success; address challenges to reach all families; conduct end-of-year evaluations; increase support for partnerships in the school and community groups; create a welcoming school climate; demonstrate how partnership programs can be maintained through transitions in school or district leadership; and meet other criteria that will be specified in the call for applications.

Partnership District Awards will recognize *districts/areas/clusters* in the

Network that: have a clear leadership structure (e.g., district facilitator or coordinator); write and implement annual leadership plans for district/area/cluster-level activities; facilitate the work of schools' Action Teams for Partnerships; link family and community involvement to school improvement goals; increase support for partnerships among district, state, school, family, and community colleagues; conduct end-of year evaluations and activities; demonstrate increased and improved district policies, budgets, and practices of partnerships from year to year; and meet other criteria that will be specified in the call for applications.

Partnership State Awards will recognize *state departments of education* in the Network that: have a well-functioning Leadership Team for Partnerships including colleagues from various departments and state organizations; write and implement annual leadership plans for improving statewide partnership activities and for increasing the number and quality of district and school programs of partnership; link family and community involvement to state goals and state assessments; build support for partnerships among state, district, school, and family leaders; conduct end-of year evaluations and activities; and meet other criteria that will be specified in the call for applications.

Applications for Partnership Awards will be sent to all Network members in February 2000. The staff will review applications, check information, and select the Partnership Award winners for the 1999-2000 school year. Honorees will receive an award and will be celebrated in the fall 2000 issue of *Type 2*, on the

School Report

Minnesota High School Develops Two-Way Communications Program

South St. Paul High School in Minnesota has been a member of the National Network for over three years, led by Key Contact, Jill Bjorklund, with the support of Principal, Paul Durand.

The school's Communication Connections program includes postcards that encourage two-way communications between school and home, and a monthly Parent Involvement page in the principal's newsletter to parents. The activities support school improvement goals to increase family involvement and improve student attendance by making it easier for teachers and families to communicate.

The Postcards

- *Good News Notes* are designed for parents and students to receive positive communications from the school.
- *Something Special at South St. Paul High School* postcards are

designed for teachers and staff to receive positive communications from parents and students.

- *Student Performance Notes* are designed for parents to receive timely information regarding poor/failing student performance while there is still time for students to improve their work and grades.

The Process

Teachers write their comments on the postcards, and other school staff address, stamp, and mail them. The biggest challenge is getting teachers and families to use the postcards. The school has weekly drawings for teachers who send *Good News Notes*. E-mail reminders are sent to teachers at weeks 2 and 6 of the term, asking them to send a *Student Performance Note* to parents of students who are falling behind. The Parent Advocate includes the *Something Special* postcards each quarter in the principal's

newsletter, and has the postcards available at conferences so that parents and students can send positive comments and suggestions to the teachers.

The school's communications program has been very well received. Families like the *Good News Notes*, and parents also appreciate the *Student Performance Notes*. Teachers and staff appreciate positive feedback from families. Parents say that the Parent Involvement page of the principal's newsletter is the first page they read to see what is planned for parents or for a tip on how they can help their teens.

It is easy to implement this program if there is support for copying, printing, and mailing materials. The three note cards were designed by the district graphics department and printed by the district duplicating department. Postage is paid by the school's budget for partnerships.

From: *Promising Partnership Practices—1999*, National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University.

National Network of Partnership Schools

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Partnership Banner

Announce your commitment to strengthening school, family, and community partnerships with a Partnership Schools banner. These large vinyl banners are 2 1/2 feet tall and 5 feet wide and feature the NNPS logo with the words "Partnership Schools" in purple and black against a crisp white background. To order a durable, reusable banner, call Fast Signs at 410-825-1212 and refer to invoice number T18291. The price is \$77 plus shipping and handling.

District and State Leadership Awards

(Continued from page 1)

in the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). The 1999 District Leadership Award was presented to Dr. Gary Thrift, Area Executive Officer of the Direct Instruction Area of Baltimore City Public Schools. The awards recognize district and state leaders whose policies and practices not only contribute to the quality and progress of their own programs, but also add knowledge that strengthens and improves the Network nationwide.

Wisconsin Leadership

For more than five years, Jane Grinde and Ruth Anne Landsverk have helped the Network's researchers learn how states can support urban, rural, and suburban schools and districts in developing programs of partnership. At the Wisconsin DPI, Grinde and Landsverk used research to create a logo for the six types of involvement, and designed a checklist on partnerships for schools that influenced the Network's *Starting Points* inventory. They instituted an on-going small grants program, annual conferences for hundreds of educators and parents from across the state to share ideas and learn about partnerships, and a "Sharesheet" to communicate about

partnerships with schools and districts across the state. They have "scaled up" Wisconsin's work on partnerships by linking small grants to schools' One-Year Action Plans and helping schools join the National Network of Partnership Schools.

Baltimore Leadership

Dr. Thrift's leadership in the Southern Area from 1994 to 1998, and his on-going efforts in the Direct Instruction Area, helped define the Network's guidelines for all school districts. For example, Dr. Thrift discusses partnerships at monthly principal meetings; evaluates principals and teachers on good partnerships; supports schools' Action Teams; supports the area facilitator, Paula Williams, who guides the school teams; participates in end-of-year celebrations of progress; and uses his "bully pulpit" to make all principals, teachers, parents, and students aware of the importance of partnerships for student success.

We congratulate the recipients of the National Network's 1999 State and District Leadership Awards, and we thank them for demonstrating how the National Network assists and learns from its partners in partnership.

School in Danbury, CT Implements Full Partnership Schools-Comprehensive School Reform Model

Park Avenue School in Danbury selected the National Network of Partnership Schools as its Comprehensive School Reform model (CSR) for whole school change. The school was awarded a three-year Obey-Porter Grant to use the Network's action team approach and planning tools to improve reading, writing, math, behavior, and connections and pathways for partnerships. Principal, Beverly White, social worker, Joyce Burns, and parent-outreach coordinator, Joanna León, are guiding the project. Five Action Teams were formed to focus on the five goals. Every faculty member selected *one* Action Team as an area of interest and expertise. The teams also include parents, administrators, paraprofessional staff, and members of the community so that all partners in education work together on all areas of school improvement.

The five Action Teams have written One-Year Action Plans for the 1999-2000 school year with specific activities to improve student success on Connecticut state tests and other school indicators. For example, math teachers are using the TIPS interactive homework process to increase family involvement in math, conducting other math partnerships, and making improvements in math instruction.

Other schools interested in using partnerships to organize whole school change should use Action Team Structure #2 in the Network's *Handbook* (pg. 102), and contact Network staff for information on the Partnership Schools-CSR model.

PHOTO HERE

Ruth Anne Landsverk (left) and Jane Grinde (right) of Wisconsin DPI, recipients of the Network's 1999 State Leadership Award.

PHOTO HERE

Dr. Gary Thrift (left) of Baltimore City Public Schools, recipient of the Network's 1999 District Leadership Award, with Paula Williams (right), Area Facilitator.

State Line

California's Initiatives Promote Family-School Partnerships

Delaine Eastin, California's Superintendent of Public Instruction, is a long-time advocate for family involvement programs in schools. She stated, "Increasing parent involvement is one of the top priorities of my administration." While a member of the California Legislature in 1995 she authored the Family-School Partnership Act, encouraging employers to give parents time off to visit their children's schools and meet with teachers. As chief of the California Department of Education (CDE), Eastin established a flexible policy for school volunteerism for CDE employees and opened a Parent Resource Center. In 1997, the CDE published the *Challenge Toolkit for Family-School Compacts*, and has produced public service announcements in three languages on the importance of family involvement in children's education.

California has demonstrated a long and strong commitment to family participation in schools. As early as 1989, and updated in 1994, the California State Board of Education was one of the first states with a comprehensive policy titled "Parent Involvement in the Education of Their Children." The policy, developed by educational leaders in California with the assistance of Joyce Epstein, recognizes the six types of involvement that guide the National Network of Partnership Schools, and that now are endorsed by the National PTA.

Cross-Branch Connections

In 1998, California joined the National Network as a state partner.

After joining the Network, CDE created a Family-School Partnerships Cross-Branch Forum which now meets quarterly. Participants from major programs have an opportunity to exchange information about effective strategies that promote family and school partnerships. For the 1999-2000 school year, Family Area Networks (FANs) are being developed regionally to extend CDE's capacity to share resources with and provide assistance to administrators and teachers.

Communicating on the Internet

Internet resources are a critical part of the CDE's information dissemination strategies. In the state's Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) program, CDE has a web site section titled "Resources for Partnerships among Families, Schools, and Communities" (www.cde.ca.gov/iasa/linkages.html). The Special Education Division is working with California State University-Sonoma to build an online resource directory, California Service for Technical Assistance and Training—CalSTAT, with information about family involvement in education (www.php.com/sonoma.htm). Finally, through CDE Press, the School Bag makes publications and brochures available to parents and family partnership advocates (www.cde.ca.gov/cdepress/schoolbag).

Next Steps for Partnerships

Currently, about 12 districts or clusters and over 90 schools in California are working with the National Network to develop comprehensive partnership programs

aligned with California's state policies. The CDE is taking steps to increase coordination and communication across state programs in order to better help districts and schools develop comprehensive strategies that involve parents as partners in their children's education. "My message to parents and families is that getting involved in your child's life is the most important job in the world," stated Superintendent Eastin.

For more information, contact Frank Wallace, Education Programs Consultant in CDE Family and Community Partnerships Office (fwallace@cde.ca.gov; 916-653-3426) or visit the CDE web site (<http://www.cde.ca.gov>).

New California Law Allocates \$20 Million for Family-School Partnership Programs

California Governor, Gray Davis, recently signed new legislation to implement the Nell Soto Parent/Teacher Involvement Program. This legislation allocates \$20 million to promote family-school partnerships through a competitive district grants program. Funding will be used to train teachers to conduct home visits and to organize family-school meetings. As a condition of participating, each district must complete home-school compacts with at least 50% of their participating families. The legislation will help California's districts and schools develop comprehensive partnership programs.

Meeting the Challenge

Schools in the National Network Develop Strong Community Connections

Mavis G. Sanders, Assistant Director

One of the key challenges for Type 6 – Collaborating with the Community is to match community contributions to school goals for student success. Schools in the National Network are showing how this challenge can be met as an integral part of their programs of school, family, and community partnerships.

Analyses of 1998 *UPDATE* data collected from over 400 schools uncovered a wide variety of community institutions with which schools can partner. These include: businesses/corporations; universities and educational institutions; health care organizations; government and military agencies; national service and volunteer organizations; faith organizations; senior citizen organizations; cultural and recreational institutions; and other community organizations and individuals. Each of the school-community activities that was implemented focused on students, schools, students' families, or the community.

Connecting Type 6 with all Types of Involvement

Many of the community activities that were implemented supported or strengthened the other types of involvement in the Epstein framework. For example, one school partnered with a nearby church that provided meeting space for parenting workshops (Type 1 – Parenting). Another school partnered with a local community organization to translate school flyers into different languages for its families, and to provide interpreters for school meetings with families (Type 2 – Communicating). A school partnered with AmeriCorps and a local university to provide reading tutors for students in grades 1 through 5 (Type 3 – Volunteering). Another school partnered with a local children's bookstore

to provide parents with information on books that they can read with their children at home (Type 4 – Learning at Home). And still another school partnered with McDonald's to provide meals to increase parents' attendance at school meetings on curricular goals and objectives (Type 5 – Decision Making).

Using Type 6 to Meet School Goals

Other schools partnered with their communities to provide a variety of services to promote student learning and development. One school, for example, partnered with its state department of environmental protection to help science faculty integrate local resources and environmental concerns into the existing science curriculum. Another school partnered with IBM to develop a computer center to promote computer literacy among members of the community. One school partnered with a local library to hold a community art exhibit of students' work. And still another school partnered with local hospitals, dentists, nurses, and dieticians to develop a low cost health care site at the school that provides preventative and maintenance health care for students, families, and community members.

These and other reported activities show how community partnerships can be developed to help meet school goals for student success. If your school has not yet met this challenge, why not make it a priority for the 1999-2000 school year?

From: Sanders, M. G. (April, 1999). *Collaborating for student success: A study of the role of "community" in comprehensive school, family, and community partnership programs*. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Montreal, Canada.

NEW MEMBERS GRAPHIC HERE

District Record

Howard County, MD Forms District Committee to Coordinate Family Involvement

Jean West Lewis, Key Contact for Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) to the National Network of Partnership Schools, has developed an “action team” approach at the central-office level. The objectives of the Family Involvement Coordinating Committee (FICC) are to: 1) gain an awareness of all family-linked services across departments; 2) identify and solve problems to better align family services; and 3) develop measures to evaluate the effectiveness of school, family, and community partnerships in HCPSS. FICC met three times in the 1998-99 school year.

In January 1999, Ms. Lewis invited representatives from all central office programs to the first meeting of FICC. District administrators helped create the list of “invitees” from A to Z—or in this case from Busses to Testing. They also sent a questionnaire about each department’s family and community involvement practices to be returned before the meeting.

Creating Connections

Of the thirty people invited, 23 attended the first meeting, and an additional five returned their completed questionnaires. Many attendees did not know each other, even if they were familiar with a name or a face. After the objectives of the committee were discussed, an activity called “A Fascinating Family Service Fact!” helped participants introduce themselves and their work. Data from a survey of county customer satisfaction were presented,

along with results of focus group meetings with Korean, Latino, Haitian, African-American, and White communities.

Identifying Problems & Solutions

In small groups, FICC members identified their concerns about gaps in the delivery of services to all families. Next, the concerns were prioritized by the whole group. The top concerns included the need to improve communications with all families and to provide coordinated services to families across the grades, from kindergarten through high school.

At the March meeting, Ms. Lewis distributed a notebook that included a directory of FICC members and their services, family involvement resource materials, promising partnership practices from the National Network of Partnership Schools, and other useful materials. Strategies were developed to address the communication concerns.

Looking Ahead

In May, the committee formed task groups to focus on the remaining concerns. For the 1999-2000 school year, the committee plans to meet at least quarterly, and the task groups will meet more frequently. One task group will play a large role in organizing the first county-wide family involvement conference. Over time, the task groups should develop district-level leadership activities to involve all Howard County families in their children’s education.

From: *Promising Partnership Practices—1999*, National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University.

Questions and Answers

What Training Does the Network Offer for Action Teams?

In the 1999 *UPDATE* surveys, many members of the National Network had questions about how Action Teams for Partnerships can be prepared to plan and implement their partnership programs. Here are a few questions and answers.

Are new Network members expected to attend the spring training workshops at Johns Hopkins University? Network staff strongly encourage new school, district, and state leaders to attend an introductory spring training workshop at Johns Hopkins. The next workshop on April 6-7, 2000 will provide leaders with tools and materials to conduct their own training workshops for schools’ Action Teams.

Whom might we ask for training assistance? The NNPS staff is always available to answer questions. There also may be local or regional Network members who can assist with training. Contact Laurel Clark (410-516-2318; lclark@csos.jhu.edu) or Frances Van Voorhis (410-516-8061; francesv@csos.jhu.edu) for more information.

When is the best time to train Action Teams and write One-Year Action Plans? Spring is the best time to train new Action Teams and write One-Year Action Plans for the next school year. It also is important to replace Action Team members who leave, and provide training to new members to sustain your partnership program.

See the Network’s *Handbook* for training workshop agendas and planning tools.

Washington and Missouri Join National Network

The state departments of education in Washington and Missouri joined the National Network of Partnership Schools to strengthen their leadership activities, and in-state and national networking on school, family, and community partnerships.

Chris McElroy, Program Administrator for Readiness to Learn and Partnerships for Learning in the Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), is the Key Contact to the National Network. With support from Superintendent, Terry Bergeson, the State Board of Education adopted a position statement on partnerships. Washington has formed a broad Leadership Team for Partnerships including colleagues from several OSPI departments, the Washington State PTA, and other state professional organizations. The Leadership Team will work together and with regional Education Service Districts and others to help schools and districts build comprehensive programs of school, family, and community partnerships.

In Missouri's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Joan Solomon, Coordinator of Caring Communities and School Improvement Initiatives, serves as the Key Contact to the National Network. The state is strongly committed to improving family and community involvement in schools and in supporting students. With encouragement from State Superintendent, Robert Bartman, Missouri will help schools and districts develop school, family, and community partnerships across the grades. Solomon will begin to work with a set of pilot schools and will develop a state leadership team and plan for partnerships in the 1999-2000 school year.

Los Angeles County Opens Resource Center on Family-School-Community Partnerships

The Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) opened a Family-School-Community Partnership Resource Center to serve families of students placed at risk and students with special needs. Barbara Wilson, Program Administrator, explained: "Parents of students with special needs and educational problems often have a difficult time finding resources in the community and school systems to help their children." The Center, located in San Pedro, is a clearinghouse with information on national, state, and local services for families of about 100,000 students in Special Education, Juvenile Court and Community Schools, and Alternative Education – three divisions of LACOE.

Ann Kinkor, LACOE Program Coordinator and Key Contact to the National Network, stated: "Family-school partnerships are essential for youth challenged with disabilities, delinquency, pregnancy, foster care, and other obstacles that may interfere with success in school."

At the resource center, Ann and her colleagues also train teams of parents, teachers, and administrators to work together as Action Teams for Partnerships. She explained, "The Network's six types of parent involvement have helped our Action Teams plan good programs. The six 'keys' to parent involvement also are the keys to student success."

The LACOE Action Teams are joining the National Network to obtain extra help and to share their work with others across the country. Five videos on students with special needs and special situations were produced by the LACOE Family-School-Community Partnership Resource Center. For information on ordering the videos, call Ann Kinkor at (310) 521-0334.

LACOE's FSCP Center, videos, and other partnership activities are supported, in part, by the Los Angeles-based Family-School-Community Business Partnership Foundation and by other organizations interested in school, family, and community partnerships for children with disabilities and youth at risk.

PHOTO HERE

At the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new LACOE Family-School-Community Partnership Resource Center is, left to right, Barbara Wilson, Program Administrator; Dr. Jennifer Hartman, Assistant Superintendent; Tony Coelho, Chair of President's Committee of the Employment of People with Disabilities; Sophia Waugh, LACOE Board Member; Gayle Johnson, Principal on FSCP Master Team; and Gertrude Gilbert Hughes, Bank Officer, and Treasurer of FSCP Foundation. Also participating were Stephanie Kennedy, President FSCP Business Partnership Foundation, and Ann Kinkor, Program Coordinator, and other LACOE colleagues.

Research Briefs

Network Members Report Low Costs for Quality Partnership Programs

How much do programs of school, family, and community partnerships cost, and what are the results of the investments? Using 1998 *UPDATE* data from 439 schools, 53 districts, and 8 state departments of education in the National Network of Partnership Schools, the following summarizes how programs of partnership are funded.

Levels and sources of funds.

Schools, districts, and states draw from a variety of sources including federal, state, local, and other funds to support their partnership programs and staff, including Title I, Goals 2000, Title VI, Title VII, and Safe and Drug Free Schools allocations.

School data. Reported “adequate” funding was more important than the absolute level of funding for improving the quality of schools’ partnership programs. Program quality improves when adequate funding persists for two years or grows from inadequate to

adequate levels. By contrast, program quality stalls when inadequate funding persists or when funding declines over time.

District data. Some districts in the sample are located in states that also joined the National Network. These districts reported significantly higher state technical assistance, general funds, and competitive grants for improving partnerships than districts in states that are not Network members.

Districts using Title I funds for partnerships have more full-time facilitators and support from educators and families to help schools improve their partnership programs.

Districts with a *line item* in their budgets for partnerships report higher quality programs with more district leadership activities, more facilitation of schools, and greater support from colleagues for partnerships.

Per Pupil Expenditure. The data from Network members helped estimate a “per pupil expenditure” that is needed to support staff and program costs for partnerships at the state, district, and school levels. On average, about \$10-\$12 per student covers program costs *at the school level*; about \$5-\$7 per student supports programs *at the district level*; and about \$0.15-\$0.25 per student supports leadership and programs *at the state level*. For less than \$20 per student per year, all states, districts, and schools could begin to build productive partnership programs. This remarkably reasonable level of funding is available from federal, state, and local programs that already emphasize the importance of school, family, and community partnerships for student success.

From: Epstein, J. L., Sanders, M. G., Clark, L. A., and Van Voorhis, F. E. (1999). *Costs and benefits: School, district, and state funding for programs of school, family, and community partnerships*. Paper presented at the 1999 annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Chicago.

Elementary, Middle, and High Schools Report Progress in 1998 *UPDATE*

Survey data collected from 375 elementary, middle, and high schools in the National Network of Partnership Schools were analyzed to identify differences and similarities in the development and quality of schools’ programs of school, family, and community partnerships. Middle schools in the sample were very similar to elementary schools in implementing partnership practices. Differences were primarily found between high schools and other school levels in four areas: 1) use of Network tools and services; 2) obstacles to partnerships; 3) meeting

challenges for the six types of involvement; and 4) program quality.

Use of Network Tools and Services.

At all school levels, respondents reported using the tools and services provided by the National Network, especially the Network’s handbook and newsletter. High school, and, to some degree, middle school respondents reported using or planning to use the Network’s web site and e-mail services more than did elementary school respondents.

Obstacles to Partnerships. Key Contacts to the Network at all school

levels reported a lack of funding and time as major obstacles to implementing and improving their partnership programs. High school respondents, more than those at the middle and elementary school levels, reported the lack of parent/family support as a major obstacle to their program development.

Meeting Challenges for the Six Types of Involvement.

Key Contacts at all school levels reported in large numbers that they have met key challenges or that they are

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Schools Report Progress

(Continued from page 10)

actively working to meet these challenges. However, more elementary and middle schools than high schools have been able to provide volunteer opportunities to families and community members, and implement regular schedules of interactive homework.

Program Quality. Schools at all levels are making progress in improving the quality of their school, family, and community partnerships, with one exception. High schools, perhaps due to more limited experience with partnerships, were less likely to report having implemented activities for all six types of involvement.

Analyses reveal three factors that contribute to the overall quality of schools' partnership programs: general support, Action Team support, and adequate funding. Regardless of level, schools that have widespread support from school personnel, community members, and district leaders, an effective Action Team for Partnerships that works well to plan, implement and evaluate partnership activities, and adequate funding to implement planned activities are more likely than schools without these resources to have higher quality partnership programs. These findings strongly suggest that with commitment and support, all elementary, middle, and high schools can develop comprehensive partnership programs to involve families and communities in productive ways.

From: Sanders, M. G. & Simon, B. S. (April 1999). *Progress and challenges: Comparing elementary, middle and high schools in the National Network of Partnership Schools*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Montreal, Canada.

Network Web Site is E-X-P-A-N-D-I-N-G

Visit www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000 to participate in the following new features.

Network Bulletin Board. Visitors to the Bulletin Board have exchanged questions and ideas about two-way newsletters, classroom volunteers, state support for partnerships, and other topics.

Quick Survey. NNPS introduced an interactive survey for web site visitors with topics changing each month. Last month, visitors were asked about their use of TIPS – Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork and other interactive homework designs. NNPS will tally and post the results.

Funding and Conference Notices. Follow the Member Services button for information about external funding sources and conferences on school, family, and community partnerships.

Link NNPS and Member Web Sites. Link your web site with the NNPS web site so that visitors can learn more about your work with the National Network. Contact Beth Simon (bsimon@csos.jhu.edu) or follow the directions on the Links button.

Need More Handbooks?

New members of the National Network of Partnership Schools receive one free copy of the handbook: *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action*. For additional copies, contact Corwin Press at tel: 805-499-9774; fax: 805-499-0871; or e-mail: order@corwin.sagepub.com. Paperback books are \$29.95 plus shipping and handling.

Washington Creates Notebook on Types of Involvement

Washington State School Director's Association (WSSDA) has published a 500 page loose-leaf binder which includes ready-to-print materials, and easy-to-follow guides for activities and projects for the National Network's six types of family and community involvement. The *Tool Kit for School-Family-Community Partnerships* may be ordered from WSSDA by calling (360) 493-9231. The price for a single copy is \$79 plus sales tax, postage, and handling. Washington state residents pay slightly less, and multiple copies may be ordered at a quantity discount.

Two Network Schools Recognized by *Working Mother* Magazine

Curtis Bay Elementary School in Baltimore, MD, and Max Leuchter Elementary School in Vineland, NJ, were chosen by *Working Mother* (September 1999) as schools that work for families. *Working Mother* talked to national education and child development experts, social policy professionals, and administrators at state and local levels to find 10 schools or districts that made great progress adapting to families' needs and enhancing the school-family relationship.

Curtis Bay Elementary was recognized for its volunteer program, and Max Leuchter Elementary was recognized for its Parent Resource Center and use of TIPS interactive homework. Congratulations to these Network schools!

Now Available!

Partnership Planner Helps Organize Annual Activities

The *Partnership Planner*, a new Network tool, provides a timeline and checklist to help schools organize a strong program of school, family, and community partnerships throughout the school year. The checklist helps school Action Teams for Partnerships plan when to select team members, write plans, schedule meetings, implement activities, conduct end-of-year evaluations and celebrations, and continue planning and improving partnerships for the next school year. The *Partnership Planner* also helps district facilitators and state leaders organize leadership activities and facilitate the work of schools' Action Teams.

Copies of the step-by-step planner were sent to all members of the Network in August. The *Partnership Planner* can be found on the Network's web site, www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000, by clicking on the Partnership Program button, and then Planning and Evaluation. For another copy of the *Partnership Planner*, contact Frances Van Voorhis, Network Facilitator, at 410-516-8061 or e-mail nnps@csos.jhu.edu.

National Network of Partnership Schools Calendar for the 1999-2000 School Year

November:	Invitation to members to join the cross-site study, Focus on Results 1999-2000: School-Family-Community Partnerships to Improve Reading Achievement. Initial data collection.
February:	Invitation to members to contribute to the Network's collection of <i>Promising Partnership Practices</i> at the school, district, and state levels.
February:	Invitation to members to apply for the Network's new <i>Partnership Awards</i> for excellence and permanence at the school, district, and state levels.
March:	Spring issue of <i>Type 2</i> .
April 3, 2000:	Members who joined the Network by 12/99 will receive 2000 <i>UPDATE</i> in the mail. Due May 15 to renew Network membership for the 2000-01 school year.
April 6-7, 2000:	Leadership Training Workshop at Johns Hopkins University for new members who want initial training to prepare for the 2000-01 school year.
April 8, 2000:	Optional training workshop at Johns Hopkins University open to all members for developing and implementing the interactive homework process <i>TIPS—Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork</i> for the 2000-01 school year.
May 15, 2000:	2000 <i>UPDATE</i> must be returned to National Network to renew membership for the 2000-01 school year.
May 15, 2000:	Applications due for <i>Partnership School Awards</i> , <i>Partnership District Awards</i> , and <i>Partnership State Awards</i> for the 1999-2000 school year.
May/June:	Final data collection for Focus on Results 1999-00: Reading Achievement.
June 30, 2000:	Promising partnership practices from members due for the Network's annual collection.

Last Call for 1999 UPDATE

If your school or district joined the National Network of Partnership Schools *before December 31, 1998*, you were sent a 1999 *UPDATE* survey last April. If you returned the survey, THANK YOU very much. *UPDATE* renews school, district, and state memberships in the National Network of Partnership Schools each year. It is the only required communication with the Network. The information updates our mailing lists, and helps us learn how members are progressing in their work on school, family, and community partnerships from year to year.

ATTENTION: Check the upper left corner of the front page of this newsletter. If you have a label reminding you to return *UPDATE* and have not returned it yet, **please do so NOW to renew membership** for the 1999-2000 school year. Schools and districts that do not return *UPDATE* by November 30 will be dropped from the membership list, and will *not* receive future *Type 2* newsletters, *Promising Partnership Practices*, new tools such as the *Partnership Planner*, and other invitations and communications about training, funding, and conferences from the Network. Contact Laurel Clark at 410-516-2318 or lclark@csos.jhu.edu with any questions. We look forward to hearing from all members of the Network and continuing to work with you on the path to partnerships.