

States Lead and Succeed:

An Inventory for Leadership on Partnerships

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State leaders for partnerships are working (1) to improve state-level policies and actions and (2) to encourage and guide districts and schools in developing effective programs of family and community involvement. To reach these goals, state leaders must write and implement an annual Leadership Action Plan for Partnerships.

This inventory is organized around six leadership strategies: *Create awareness, Align program and policy, Guide learning and program development, Share knowledge, Celebrate milestones, and Document progress and evaluate outcomes*. The inventory outlines over 40 activities that state leaders may select for state-wide initiatives on school, family, and community partnerships. The activities in this inventory are based on analyses of data from state leaders in NNPS over many years.^{1, 2}

State leaders are not expected to implement all of the activities listed. They should, however, consider which ones to include or adapt in their plans, and how increase the quality of partnership programs at the state, district, and school levels.

Directions:

Work on one section at a time.

Check (✓) all activities that your office or colleagues in other departments conduct now.

Star (★) the activities that you want to initiate in the future, as you develop your state's leadership on partnerships.

Add other activities that you conduct now or plan to conduct that are not listed in each section.

Use this information to write your office's Leadership Action Plan for Partnerships (See pp. 264-266 and CD in *Handbook*).

1) With input from state and organization leaders at the October 2007 Leadership Development Conference, Baltimore.

2) Also see: Jansorn, N. and Epstein, J.L. (2005). *Lead and Succeed: An Inventory of District Leadership and Facilitation Strategies for Partnerships*. Baltimore: National Network of Partnership Schools.

NOTE: In NNPS, a COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION and other intermediate professional development units are considered "mini states" to guide and support district leaders for partnerships who will, then, guide schools' ATPs to strengthen goal-linked programs of family and community engagement.

Strategy: Create awareness. Actively promote the state's partnership program to all key stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, families, and community groups.

- ☐ Identify a state leadership "core" of colleagues who work on partnerships across departments. Convene periodic meetings of this interdepartmental group to discuss their various activities and the state's partnership agenda.
- ☐ Convene periodic one-on-one meeting with the state superintendent (designee or supervisor) to discuss goals for the state's partnership programs, initiatives, and progress.
- ☐ Conduct presentations to promote the state's partnership program for the state board of education, councils, committees, conferences, and other key leadership groups.
- ☐ Conduct awareness sessions for district superintendents and district leaders for partnerships, specifying the assistance that the state will provide to districts and schools.
- ☐ Post information on the state's website on the state's policies, recommendations, leaders, and actions for partnerships.
- ☐ Identify districts and schools that will participate in the state's partnership initiative.
- ☐ Attend professional development conferences with state colleagues and/or selected district leaders to gain knowledge and skills on partnership program development.
- ☐ Convene and build collaborative projects with business, industry, and community groups.
- ☐ Disseminate press releases, periodically, on the state's accomplishments on partnerships.

OTHER STATE ACTIVITIES to create awareness of the state's partnership programs

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Strategy: Align program and policy. With support from state leaders, integrate the partnership program with other state policies, requirements, and procedures.

- ☐ Review, develop, or update state's policy on school, family, and community partnerships
- ☐ Identify a budget and other resources to implement the state partnership program.
- ☐ Obtain approval and support from the state superintendent to inform and encourage districts and schools to strengthen research-based programs of family and community involvement linked to state goals for school improvement.
- ☐ Obtain approval for districts and schools to include plans for partnerships as an official section or appendix of their annual school improvement plans.
- ☐ Develop a broad three-five year plan of state goals for partnerships and how your office will "scale up" outreach on partnerships to include more districts and their schools over time.
- ☐ Write an annual state Leadership Action Plan for Partnerships with a detailed schedule of state-level actions and activities to encourage districts and schools on partnerships. Include goals, strategies, activities, timelines, people responsible, budgets, and other resources.
- ☐ Establish a state advisory council or advisory group on state policies and practices for increasing and improving meaningful family and community involvement for student success.
- ☐ Develop strategies for the continuity of plans and actions in the event of changes in leaders.
- ☐ Work with colleges and universities to develop teaching and administrative courses or modules so that all educators are prepared to conduct effective programs of family and community involvement.

OTHER STATE-LEVEL ACTIVITIES to align partnership programs and policy

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Strategy: Guide learning and program development. Organize, conduct, or support professional development activities to assist state colleagues, and districts and schools in the state to develop and strengthen their partnership programs.

- ☐ Conduct or support periodic 2-day training workshops for district leaders for partnerships who are ready to guide their schools in developing comprehensive partnership programs.
- ☐ With district leaders, conduct or support periodic 1-day workshops for schools' Action Teams for Partnerships on developing effective programs linked to school goals for student success.
- ☐ Convene regularly-scheduled meetings for district (or regional) leaders for partnerships to share ideas, experiences, and to update knowledge on partnership topics.
- ☐ Develop and implement professional development workshops for teachers and school staff on partnerships. These may be on-line, in district offices, or in other locations.
- ☐ Develop information and training opportunities for parents and for business and community leaders. These may be on-line, in district offices, or in other locations.
- ☐ Conduct annual state or regional conferences with workshops to help district leaders for partnerships and school teams share best practices and continue to increase knowledge and skills on partnerships.
- ☐ Develop or identify and test useful tools, products, or materials to guide districts and schools in developing their partnership programs.
- ☐ Award small grants to districts and schools as incentives to build their partnership programs using research-based approaches.

OTHER STATE ACTIVITIES to guide learning and partnership program development

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Strategy: Share knowledge. Foster on-going communications throughout the state department of education, with state partners, and with district leaders to increase knowledge about programs of school, family, and community partnerships.

- ☐ Facilitate regularly scheduled meetings with state colleagues across departments working on family involvement issues (e.g., special education, ESOL/bilingual education, Title I) to share work and progress.
- ☐ Coordinate SEA actions on federal (Title I) requirements for parental involvement and guide districts to meet requirements for involvement in Section 1118 and other parts of the law.
- ☐ Disseminate a monthly e-mail, fax, or periodic newsletter to state colleagues and to district leaders for partnerships with important information, upcoming events, and highlights of work across the state on partnerships.
- ☐ Guide districts across the state to share information about district-level and school-based partnership activities throughout the school year.
- ☐ Develop and maintain an informative website on the state's program and actions on school, family, and community partnerships.
- ☐ Write a regular column on partnership programs for the state's education newsletter.
- ☐ Work with business and industry to create flexible leave policies so that parents can volunteer and/or attend conferences with teachers at their children's schools.

OTHER STATE ACTIVITIES to share knowledge at the state, district, and school levels

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Strategy: Celebrate milestones. Recognize state, district, and school successes in partnership programs and practices and disseminate information on the successes.

- ☐ Write an annual progress report on the state's partnership program to share with the superintendent, state board, and key stakeholders.
- ☐ Organize a recognition program to celebrate excellence in districts and schools on partnerships linked to school improvement goals. Spotlight these programs at the annual state conference on partnerships or other meetings.
- ☐ Encourage district leaders to collect and disseminate best practices across their own schools.
- ☐ Collect, edit, and disseminate (in print or online) promising partnership practices from the districts and schools in the state.
- ☐ Create videos or CDs of especially successful partnership activities in districts and schools across the state to highlight on the state's website section on partnerships.
- ☐ Guide districts and schools to recognize and thank those who assist them in strengthening their partnership programs.
- ☐ Hold an appreciation breakfast or event for state partners who assist your office in implementing activities in the state's annual plan for partnerships.

OTHER STATE ACTIVITIES to celebrate milestones

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Strategy: Document Progress and Evaluate Outcomes. Collect information to document your office's activities and progress in meeting state goals for partnerships. Guide districts and schools to document and evaluate progress in their partnership plans and programs.

- ☐ Establish procedures and identify tools (including those in this *Handbook*) to evaluate the quality and results of the state's work on partnerships, and the programs in districts and schools.
- ☐ Collect district policies and annual district leadership plans for partnerships. Check these for compliance with federal and state requirements for district leadership and research-based approaches on partnerships.
- ☐ Use evaluation tools to improve and sustain plans for partnerships from year to year.
- ☐ Guide districts to establish viable recordkeeping systems to document their work and their schools' work on partnerships.
- ☐ Conduct or sponsor periodic surveys of district, school, and parent leaders on the quality of their partnership programs and needed improvements, and services needed from your office.
- ☐ Support research and evaluation to learn which structures, processes, and practices help districts improve leadership on partnerships, and which practices enable schools to reach all families in ways that support student success.
- ☐ Complete the annual State UPDATE survey (required to maintain NNPS membership) to assess the quality of the state's work on partnerships and ways to improve.
- ☐ Guide districts and schools to complete the annual UPDATE survey (required to maintain NNPS membership) to assess the quality of their partnership programs and ways to improve.

OTHER STATE ACTIVITIES to document progress and evaluate outcomes

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