



National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) 2024 February E-Brief for Schools in NNPS



February Is Love Month

February honors love, presidents, and black history, too.
We know that equity in family engagement is what we love to do!
Districts and schools welcome ALL families, all backgrounds, all cultures—
equally—
To create strong partnerships that celebrate our diversity.

NNPS will stay connected with you in our monthly *E-Briefs* as you design and implement partnership activities to increase student success. Check *E-Brief* each month for timely information to advance your leadership, plans, and practices of family and community engagement.

HEADS UP!

NNPS 2.0: Strengthening Leadership on Partnerships

Read why NNPS is taking a new approach to Professional Development on School, Family, and Community Partnerships to increase equity of family engagement and student success in school.

NNPS is updating our professional development “menu of services” to strengthen leadership for partnerships in districts, regions, and organizations across the country.

For over 25 years, NNPS has been the *homebase* for educators working to improve programs and practices of family and community engagement. Over 5000 schools and hundreds of districts and organizations contributed data and activities to help build a research base for the development of programs of school, family, and community partnerships. The results of our collaborations are shared in the NNPS guide: *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action, 4th Edition*, and in more than 100 publications.

Over the years, one of the most consistent results of our studies is the importance of thoughtful leadership. It is time for NNPS 2.0 to apply what we learned so that all leaders guide their schools to conduct strong and sustainable partnership programs.

Starting immediately for the 2024-25 school year, NNPS will contract with district, region, and organization partners for a “menu” of professional development services, resources, and support. Our mission is to help every leader succeed in implementing their official policy for effective and equitable family and community engagement—in ALL schools, with ALL families, and for ALL students.

Also, over the past few years, Johns Hopkins University and our School of Education strengthened requirements for professional development projects like NNPS. Instead of informal “renewal payments” each year, we must complete formal, easily renewable contracts with each district, region, and organization partner to register our work together.

NNPS is committed to strengthening partnership programs that are sustained over time. We will remain the *homebase* for professional development for a growing Network of Networks—each one—including YOURS— with a strong leader and a well-organized program of family and community engagement.

NNPS 2.0: Next Steps 2024-25 School Year

- 1. NNPS Co-Directors, Dr. Joyce Epstein and Dr. Steve Sheldon, will contact each district, region, and organization leader in NNPS to review our schedule of Professional Development activities, resources, and support that will be offered throughout the year, and to explain the new contract system at JHU.**
- 2. Starting this spring, we will provide all Leaders for Partnerships with NNPS research-based tools to enable them to take charge of important leadership activities in their own Network of Partnership Schools. These include evaluating progress and sharing best practices.**

Schools in NNPS will receive information on next steps from NNPS and from their district or organization leaders.

THEME FOR THE YEAR: Tools You Can Use.



SAMPLERS

Summary of Research & Sample Engagement Activities

READING, MATH
SCIENCE, WRITING
ARTS, HEALTH,
ATTENDANCE, BEHAVIOR,
HOMEWORK, TRANSITIONS,
FATHERS
COLLEGE and CAREERS,
PRESCHOOLS,
MIDDLE SCHOOLS,
HIGH SCHOOLS
GRANDPARENTS,
SUMMER LEARNING,
TESTS & ASSESSMENTS

The NNPS collection of *Samplers* includes 18 booklets that each feature ten basic or creative activities—e.g., family nights, workshops, volunteer activities, and student work—that have been implemented by members of NNPS over many years. You may *adopt* or *adapt* these GOAL-LINKED activities to meet goals for family engagement and student learning and development. The activities activate one or more of the six types of engagement in the NNPS framework: *parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community*. The activities may help your ATP meet the goals selected for the pages in your school's *One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships*.

Why is this a good tool to use? Each *Sampler* includes a readable, 1-page summary of research on what we know about the importance of family engagement for educators, families, and student success in school—or the questions that need to be addressed in new studies. The *Samplers* are free for all members of NNPS with the member log in code **memNNPS24**.

See: [NNPS Samplers-Goal-linked Engagement Activities](#).

NNPS Professional Development

NNPS Recap: February Webinar for School Leaders for Partnerships

School leaders on Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) and some district and organization leaders from Arkansas, Louisiana, Ohio, South Carolina, Washington and Wisconsin attended the NNPS free webinar for schools February 20, 2024. The group *Zoomed* with NNPS to better understand and strengthen NNPS “Basics” for strong partnership programs. Together, we worked to:

- Explore ATP efforts to activate Ten Steps to Partnership Success.
- Assess the strength and needed next steps of Action Team for Partnerships (ATPs).

- Discuss key strategies to write a *goal-linked* action plan for family engagement for the 2024-25 school year.

The free webinar is a benefit of membership. Leaders who could not attend live online, may contact NNPS for a copy of the PowerPoint presentation (nnps@jhu.edu). Include the words *February 2024 Webinar for School ATPs*.

YOUR SPACE

This is *YOUR SPACE* where we feature creative and important activities from *Promising Partnership Practice 2023*. Feel free to adopt or adapt these ideas. You also may send in a new activity to Brenda Thomas during the year (bthomas@jhu.edu), OR send a question to NNPS to solve an emerging challenge. We will address your question in *YOUR SPACE*.

DreamBox Challenge – March Madness was reported by **Davina Ward-Pink** and **Chenyn Johnson**, ATP Chairpersons at **Edwin Markham Elementary School** in **Pasco, WA**. The Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) and math teachers selected *DreamBox* to give students extra practice on math toward the end of the school year and to increase students' confidence about their math abilities. *DreamBox*, an online resource designed for students to learn math at their own speed and monitor their own progress, claims to help students at each grade level significantly increase math skills. The ATP and math teachers created a game—a kind of March Madness—to encourage students to continue practicing math skills at home, before taking the state achievement tests later in the year.

They built in incentives to encourage participation, which grew from 70 students participating to approximately 200 students! The *DreamBox Challenge* culminated with a tasty celebration that included the students, over 200 parents and community members, and the teachers. Some students kept on because they found that math was fun, profitable, and tasty!

Read more about [DreamBox Challenge](#) on page 28 of *Promising Partnership Practices 2023*.

NEW! Here is the Members-Only Access Code for 2024

The **MEMBERS-ONLY ACCESS CODE** changes each January to give special benefits and useful resources to active members of NNPS who renew membership for the new year. You may use the new code—**memNNPS24**—to explore many years' books of *Promising Partnership Practices* and all *18 NNPS Samplers* at

www.partnershipschools.org in the section *Success Stories*. We will remind you of this year's access code in every *E-Brief*.

NNPS and SOCIAL MEDIA

NNPS is on Facebook and Twitter. You will see other items – including members' newsletters and photos, and NNPS activities.

Like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/partnershipschools>.

Follow us on twitter at https://twitter.com/NNPS_JHU

NNPS Facebook is a networking tool. Send photos from the exciting partnership activities that your program conducts throughout the year with a short sentence description and your name to nnps@jhu.edu for the NNPS Facebook and Twitter pages.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Playful Notes -- March Activities Grades PreK-8

If your school's spring vacation is coming up, you can share this link with your students' families. They will see 19 simple, creative activities for elementary school-aged children to do while they are at home. The activities are outlined, or parents can download a printable poster and details about the activities.

For other ideas and resources, the NNPS collection of **Promising Partnership Practices** is a great start!

DONATE TO NNPS

If you make tax-deductible donations in 2024, please think of NNPS. Your donation supports NNPS's unique professional development services including workshops, attention to solving emerging challenges, and resources for Leaders for Partnerships, their schools, families, and students.

Here's how: Click the **Donate** link. Indicate your gift and scroll down through Research Centers to the **National Network of Partnership Schools**. Click **Continue as Guest** and complete your donation.

DONATE!

NNPS appreciates your support. The University and NNPS will send official acknowledgements of your donation for tax purposes. Thank you!

Keep partnerships equitable and strong for academic success for all students!



**In partnership,
Brenda, Steve, and
Joyce
*The NNPS Team***

The NNPS School E-Brief is disseminated once a month during the school year. The E-Brief is intended to:

1. Offer timely information to support your efforts to build comprehensive school, family, and community partnership programs.
2. Update you on available research, tools, materials, services, and training opportunities from the National Network of Partnership Schools.
3. Provide you with a vehicle to exchange ideas with, ask questions of, and share resources with other NNPS members and the NNPS staff.

To respond to NNPS about an E-Brief, click "Reply" and you will send your email only to me, Brenda Thomas.

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