

Leadership Line



Number 5
January 28, 2025

Leadership Line is the NNPS newsletter for our Professional Development Partners. We will send summaries, recordings, and notes after NNPS institutes, workshops, and meetings to support and advance your program of family and community engagement.

Please share each issue of *Leadership Line* with your colleagues and partners who were not able to attend the live event.

Recent NNPS Professional Development

Awareness Session

Conducted January 23, 2025

The **NNPS Awareness Session** is Part 1 of our 3-Part Professional Development Series to strengthen leadership for partnerships at the state, region, district, and organization levels. This session orients leaders for partnerships to the basic components of research-based programs of family and community engagement. We contrast the “old way” of thinking about parent involvement to the “new way” of using research-based structures and processes to organize and continually improve programs of school, family, and community partnerships.

The new way is the NNPS way of planning and conducting effective and equitable partnership programs.

The *NNPS Awareness Session* is a good way to onboard your colleagues and partners and newly hired leaders for partnerships with “the basics” for effective and equitable programs of family and community engagement.

NNPS Professional Development Partners and their state, regional, and district colleagues from AR, CT, KY, LA, ME, MD, NJ, NH, OH, PA, SC, and WA attended or will review the recorded session.

Recording of the Awareness Session, January 23, 2025 on YouTube

<https://youtu.be/UWc6a82c2Ek>

Resources

Attached is a copy of the PowerPoint for the *Awareness Session*. You may share the recording and slides with colleagues who could not attend the live-online session.

Note: Due to a tech-challenge on the recording, please use information on Slides 1–8 of the attachment for the introductory comments to the Awareness Session.

If you plan to present the *Awareness Session*, contact NNPS for a copy of the slide deck.

Reflections

The awareness session introduces many topics that our studies show ensure strong and sustainable programs of family and community engagement. Attendees reflected on which component would most improve their programs. Of course, the answer to that question is “all of the topics we discussed,” but attendees identified particularly useful improvements for their state, region, or district. Here are a few typical comments.

What did NNPS Professional Development Partners say would most help their programs?

- The six types of involvement provided examples of the rich and diverse ways we should be thinking about family and community engagement to reach our goals to improve student achievement.
- Creating an action team is so important—work cannot be conducted by just one person. Creating an inclusive team with staff and families—it’s better practice.
- Linking parent involvement to school goals for students—this makes sense—it means intentional engagement—not busywork.
- I agree that “deficit thinking” only hinders our ability to connect meaningfully with families.
- It’s important that this is not a parent program, but a way to increase the academic success of students and decrease chronic absenteeism.
- Good overview. I guess information may come in the next session on how to actually get started.
- I am looking for information on the impact of family engagement on student learning.
- Most useful: Thanks for the wealth of information. Next needed: How to align program to goals for student success.

A few leaders explained their reactions:

Suzanne Andrews, Department Chair, New Milford, CT: It is very important to understand the change in mindset about family engagement. We should not leave it up to each parent to decide how and when to be involved. We can reach out in new ways to invite all parents to become engaged in their children’s education. Creating a welcoming school promotes greater equity of engagement. Every family is important for increasing their student’s success.

Rosa Fulmore, Coordinator, Family and Community Engagement, Charleston County School District, SC: I think that linking engagement activities to school goals and student learning is so important. So that's "number one" for us. Next in importance is supporting all families, including those with children with special needs—providing resources that are available to all families in our community. And, of course, you know that I'm a big fan of the *Action Plan for Partnerships*. Every school team needs to develop its plan to be productive in its work during a school year.

Gemma Joseph Lumpkin: Chief of Youth, Family and Community Engagement, New Haven School District, CT. All of the topics we discussed are important, but I want to talk about linking family engagement to goals for student learning and behavior. In New Haven, family engagement is one of the district's top 4 priorities in our *Strategic Plan*. We connect partnership practices to school goals. For example, in designing our *Math Arcade*, we made it fun to do math activities...tied to what we want students to achieve. Some parents may shy away from math ...but at the *Math Arcade*, parents and students worked together on math activities in fun ways—with games and innovative activities for students. About 100 families came to have fun with math on a frigid, cold night.

**COMING UP!
NNPS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

Wednesday, February 5 2 -4 p.m. (EST)

Quarterly Support: *Let's Talk about Partnerships*

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/91804184941?pwd=UeWW1xV1070B9L2KC8jSY2svPTU7YH.1>

Meeting ID: 918 0418 4941

Passcode: 123585

Thursday, February 20 2 - 5 p.m. (EST)

NNPS Leadership Institute

For State, Region, District, and Organization Leaders for Partnerships

Invite YOUR co-leaders, colleagues in other departments, supervisors, and other partners to attend with you.

This session will enable you to update your plans to "grow" your program(s) of school, family, and community partnerships in the 2025-26 school year.

Plan ahead for your school teams to attend the NNPS School Team-Training Workshop in March or April (alternative dates)

We will send a reminder of the *Zoom* link prior to each NNPS Professional Development activity

INPUT—INPUT—INPUT

1. Are you working to solve an emerging challenge that you want to discuss at the next NNPS *Let's Talk about Partnerships*? Send your challenging topic to us at nnps@jhu.edu.
2. Do you need NNPS materials, resources, references, or other assistance to help you with your work? Send your request to us at nnps@jhu.edu.
3. Do you have an idea or new information to share with other Professional Development Partners in the next *Leadership Line*? Send your *INPUT* to us at nnps@jhu.edu.

**We are walking the *Leadership Line* with you
on the path to partnerships!**

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