



# *Leadership Line*



**Number 8**

**April 29, 2025**

***Leadership Line*** is the newsletter for NNPS Professional Development Partners that is sent to you at the end of each month. It includes summaries, recordings, and related notes from institutes, workshops, and quarterly meetings that NNPS conducts to support and advance your program of family and community engagement.

Currently, NNPS Professional Development Partners include state, region, organization, and district leaders from AR, CT, KY, LA, MD, ME, NJ, NH, OH, PA, SC, and WA.

Please share each issue of ***Leadership Line*** with your colleagues and partners who are helping you to continually improve your partnership program.

NNPS Professional Development Activities - April 2025

## Quarterly Meeting: Let's Learn More about Partnerships

### *Evaluate the Quality, Progress, and Results of School, Family, and Community Partnerships*

**Conducted April 16, 2025**

**Recording:** <https://youtu.be/9gdgTgAvMdM>

This quarterly Knowledge-building session discussed the importance of evaluating the quality and progress of partnership programs and practices at the end of each school year. We also identified NNPS resources that are “thrifty” and easy to use to monitor the quality and progress of district leadership (E-Z District UPDATE) and school teamwork (E-Z School UPDATE) to strengthen school, family, and community partnerships.

**Research and Reasons:** Dr. Steve Sheldon, Co-Director of NNPS, presented an overview of research on evaluation and what we have learned over the years about different kinds and reasons for evaluating programs of partnerships. Steve reported that in NNPS, evaluations are essential for developing high-quality partnership programs that improve from year to year. Our studies show that this association is significant even after accounting for the prior year’s program quality, school level, and other program factors.

Steve suggested that evaluations should help address four key questions about partnership programs:

- What are we trying to accomplish?
- How will we know if we are successful?
- Who is in the best position to tell us if we are successful?

- What is the most efficient and thrifty way to get their feedback or perspective?

**Tools You Can Use.** Dr. Joyce Epstein, Co-Director of NNPS, presented an overview of evaluation tools that are “built in” to the NNPS Handbook for Action. See the Annual Review of Team Processes in chapter 3; Starting Points--an inventory of current practices in chapter 5; and the Annual Evaluation of Activities (Chapter 9) to reflect on the quality of each engagement activity that is implemented.

If you need copies of these “built in” evaluations, contact Brenda at [nnps@jhu.edu](mailto:nnps@jhu.edu). Or, purchase: Epstein, J. L., et al.; ( 2019) *School, Family, and Community Partnerships Your Handbook for Action, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, or on Amazon.

She also introduced two tools that NNPS Professional Development Partners can use now—at the end of the 2024-25 school year—to check progress of district leaders for partnerships (E-Z District UPDATE) and/or to check progress of school teams (E-Z School UPDATE). These tools measure whether and how well programs implement basic and advanced structures and processes of research-based partnership programs. Leaders can use these measures to assess each program’s progress.

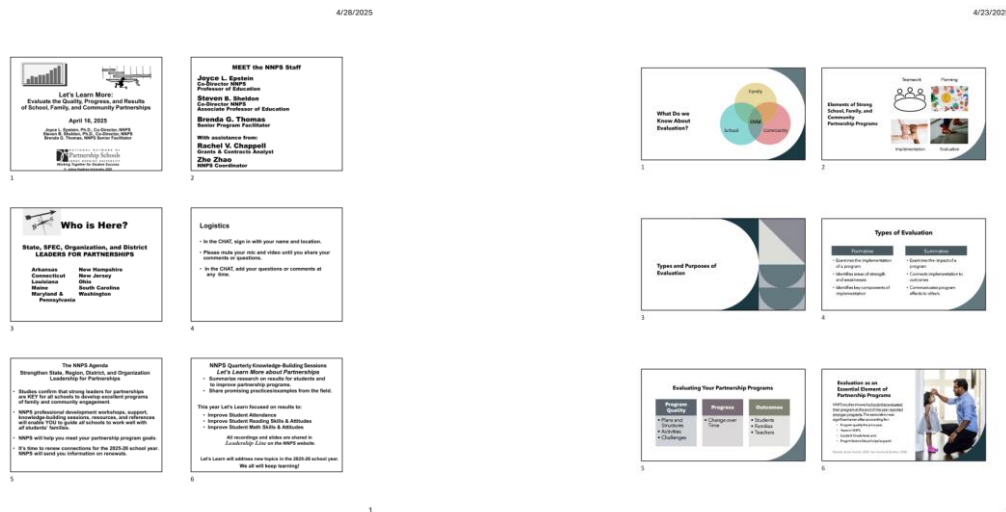
Attached below are slides for the two presentations. Click here for the E-Z UPDATES: [E-Z-School-UPDATE-fillable-4-25.pdf](#) and [E-Z-NNPS-District-UPDATE-2025.pdf](#) or check the NNPS website, [www.partnershipschoools.org](http://www.partnershipschoools.org).

### **What did NNPS Professional Development Partners say about this session?**

Attendees met in breakout rooms to discuss the kinds of evaluations they conducted on the quality or progress of their partnership program, and what they learned from their experiences. Typical comments about the presentations and breakout rooms included:

- Thanks to everyone in my breakout group! Steve, I'm looking forward to learning more and using the research you can share. Thanks to all!

- The breakout session was helpful in hearing ways in which others are evaluating progress—informally and formally.
- I learned about NNPS "Built-In" evaluations that I wasn't aware of. Will check these out!
- Thank you for the information! Most useful? The levels of complexity of different evaluations—(e.g., it is most complex and costly to study the results for students of family engagement).
- I asked my group if they shared results [of program evaluations] with the families who are/are not involved. Did the school's partnership work help them help their own child learn more successfully? One [leader in our group] did that and gave awards to successful schools! Yea for them!
- I always appreciate the breakout sessions.



## NNPS Professional Development Activities

March and April 2025

### NNPS School Team-Training Workshop

for Action Teams for Partnerships

**Conducted March 6 and April 2, 2025**

**Recording:** <https://youtu.be/90anD60DveA>

The NNPS School Team-Training Workshop for Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) presents the basic structures and processes for research-based programs of family and community engagement to Leaders for Partnerships and their schools' teams.

This year, NNPS conducted the Team-Training Workshop twice to meet the needs of Professional Development Partners across the country who had different spring testing and vacation schedules. Some leaders attended this workshop with their schools' teams. Others will bring school teams to the team-training workshop in the fall for the 2025-26 school year.

Topics included: Using the framework of six types of involvement; understanding challenges to reach all families; focusing partnership practices on academic and behavioral goals for students; creating a welcoming school climate; taking an action team approach; and writing a One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships. Each team's Action Plan will schedule family and community engagement activities linked to goals for students in their own School Improvement Plan.

District Leaders for Partnerships will give their schools a deadline to complete their One-Year Action Plan for the 2025-26 school year.

The link to the recording of this workshop is noted above.

**COMING UP!**

**NNPS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

**MAY 6, 2025 2 - 4 p.m. (EDT)**

- **Let's Talk about Partnerships**
- **End of School Year Celebrations**
- **YOUR Best Practices, Challenges, and Questions**

**Zoom Link for Let's Talk:**

**<https://zoom.us/j/97065732031?pwd=5km8QuuVyRPQ88ROprXavJaGDYiHsG.1>**

#### **TIME TO RENEW**

- **Professional Development Partners 1-Page AMENDMENT to current contract**

#### **JUNE**

- **NNPS Follow-up Interviews: Check back in with NNPS.**
- **Individual conversations with Brenda Thomas, Senior Facilitator, at a convenient time on your schedule.**
- **Review progress and discuss next steps in the 2025-26 school year.**

**Follow the link on the homepage of the NNPS website,  
[www.partnershipschoools.org](http://www.partnershipschoools.org), to all issues of *Leadership Line*.**

#### **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](mailto:nnps@jhu.edu).**

2. Do you need NNPS materials, resources, or other assistance to help you with your work? Send your request to us at [nnps@jhu.edu](mailto: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](mailto:nnps@jhu.edu).



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

Joyce Epstein

Steve Sheldon

Brenda Thomas

NNPS Co-Director

NNPS Co-Director

NNPS Senior Facilitator

The NNPS Leadership Line is disseminated quarterly during the school year. Leadership Line 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 Partners and the NNPS staff.

To respond to NNPS about a Leadership Line, click “Reply” and you will send your email only to me, Brenda Thomas.

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