



Leadership Line

Vol. 2 Number 5
January 27, 2026

Leadership Line is the newsletter for NNPS Professional Development Partners. It includes recordings, summaries, and resources from NNPS workshops and meetings to support and advance YOUR program of family and community engagement.

Currently, NNPS Professional Development Partners include state, region, organization, and/or district leaders from AR, CA, CT, LA, ME, NH, NJ, NY, OH, SC, and WA.

Please send copies of *Leadership Line* with your staff, colleagues, and partners who help you conduct and improve your partnership program.

NNPS Professional Development Activities – January

NNPS Awareness Session

January 22, 2026

Recording: <https://youtu.be/mmldNhuJIGk>

See the slides from the *Awareness Session* (attached) to review important information.

Are YOU implementing the “new way” of using research-based strategies to conduct and continually improve your partnership programs?

Pop Quiz!

The *Awareness Session* discussed 12 structures and processes that NNPS found help improve partnership programs and practices. We asked attendees: Which topic will be most important for improving YOUR program of family and community engagement?

Here are a few responses from leaders in Calcasieu Parish School Board, LA.; Charleston County, SC; Connecticut SFEC Regions and Districts; Oak Harbor, Ohio; Paterson Public Schools, NJ; Pasco School District, WA; San Bernadino City USD; Westbrook Schools, ME; and others.

Engage all families: *We will work to reach out to the most vulnerable and marginalized families in our schools to better support students at risk. Not just those who always come to school activities.*

Improve communications: *We will work to increase two-way communications with families. Too often connections have been one way—from school to home. We want to do more to listen to parents and ask for their input to important questions.*

We will be more active in using the district’s translation services to include the diverse families in our district.

Use the theory: *Overlapping Spheres of Influence—is a powerful concept. We have been working for 2 years now and will continue to improve our schools’ programs.*

Label: *We like the change from saying “parent involvement” to speaking about “school, family, and community partnerships.” We see this recognizes how everyone works together for student success. Our parents are involved even if they don’t come to the school building.*

Networking: *We can use internet, cell phones, and other apps to communicate better with all families in different ways.*

Networking among our schools will help them learn from each other and recognize the good work going on.

School Improvement Plans. *Our schools’ Action Teams for Partnerships will use their own School Improvement Plans to develop their plans for family and community engagement.*

All grade levels. *We need to help all grades build stronger connections with students’ families.*

Goal-linked partnerships. *The most important change for us is to conduct family and community engagement activities that will improve student outcomes—learning and behavior. This ensures our efforts will have results for students.*

Attendees’ Question: Do we have to subscribe to the NNPS newsletter or is it sent to all participants?

Answer: The NNPS newsletter, *Leadership Line*, is sent to all state, region, organization, and district leaders who are *NNPS Professional Development Partners*. NNPS asks them to forward copies to ALL of their district, school, and other partners.

If YOU want to receive NNPS notices, Zoom links, and copies of *Leadership Line*, just send your **name, location, position,** and **email address** to Brenda Thomas, nnps@jhu.edu. We will add your name to the NNPS communications list.

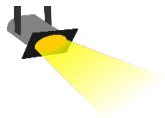
NEWS, NOTES, and NATIONAL RECOGNITION

This section of *Leadership Line* provides information on upcoming NNPS professional development activities, announcements, and questions from Professional Development Partners for each other, and a spotlight for National Recognition of Professional Development Partners who demonstrate excellent leadership on partnerships and noteworthy activities.

NEWS and NOTES

1. NNPS NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Each issue of *Leadership Line* will spotlight a state, region, and/or district that conducted an excellent leadership activity to strengthen its partnership program. We learn from each other by sharing good ideas and effective practices.



JANUARY Spotlight

NNPS shines a welcoming spotlight on NEW Professional Development Partners who joined leaders from across the country to work with NNPS on research-based programs of school, family, and community partnerships. New partners for the Spring Term (January-June 2026) include:

America Learns, Oak Harbor, Ohio
Paterson Public Schools, Paterson, New Jersey
San Bernadino City Unified School District, California

These leaders know that the SPRING TERM is a good time to help schools organize evidence-based partnership programs for the 2026-27 school year. Schools need time to form teams, write plans, and schedule their work. With NNPS workshops this spring, many schools will be “ready-to-go” in the fall.

2. COMING UP: NNPS Professional Development Activities

FEBRUARY is a busy month for NNPS activities. Mark your calendars:

FEBRUARY 3 – NNPS LET’S TALK ABOUT PARTNERSHIPS

Meet each other, share best practices, identify emerging challenges, and discuss solutions.

FEBRUARY 12 – LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Strengthen **LEADERSHIP** for partnerships at the state, region, and district levels. Invite staff, colleagues, and new leaders who support your work to attend with you.

FEBRUARY 26 – SCHOOL TEAM-TRAINING WORKSHOP

VERY IMPORTANT! Your schools will learn the research-base for partnership programs and will be prepared to write **GOAL-LINKED** partnership plans for the next school year.

- Identify your schools that will attend this workshop.
- Guide your schools to form their ATPs. Each ATP will “meet” **AS A TEAM** to work together at this workshop.
- Use or adapt the NNPS “RSVP” (registration form, attached) to learn **WHICH SCHOOLS** and **WHICH ATP MEMBERS** will attend the NNPS Team Training.



FEBRUARY TIME WITH BRENDA

YOU decide when to call to discuss your questions and next steps.

Talk Time with Brenda gives you individual time to ask a question or discuss an emerging challenge in your partnership work. Choose a time that is convenient for YOU. Here's what to do:

Send Brenda an email at nnps@jhu.edu.

- a) Briefly note your question or topic for discussion.
- b) List 2 days/dates/time (EST) that are good for you.

Brenda will confirm a day/time and provide a TEAMS link for your chat.

INPUT—INPUT—INPUT

1. Have you made good progress in your program of school, family, and community partnerships? Let NNPS know (nnps@jhu.edu). We will talk with you about your work for NNPS National Recognition.
2. Are you working to solve a challenge that you want to discuss at the next NNPS *Let's Talk about Partnerships*? Send a note that lists your challenging topic to nnps@jhu.edu.
3. Do you need NNPS materials, resources, or other assistance to help you with your work? Send your request to nnps@jhu.edu.
4. Do you have an idea, new information, or a question to share with other Professional Development Partners in the next **Leadership Line**? Send your idea to nnps@jhu.edu.

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

Joyce L. Epstein
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