



NATIONAL NETWORK OF
Partnership Schools
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

Lead and Succeed:

An Inventory of District Leadership & Facilitation Strategies

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In the National Network of Partnership Schools, district facilitators are working to help all schools in the district develop research-based partnership programs and improve the quality of these programs from year to year. To reach these goals, district facilitators must implement a leadership plan to provide ongoing direct facilitation to schools and enhance district-level support for goal-oriented school, family, and community partnerships.

This inventory assists district facilitators to identify strategies to lead and facilitate a district-wide program of school, family, and community partnerships. The objectives and strategies listed in this inventory are based on analyses of data and examples shared by district leaders with the National Network of Partnership Schools over many years.

District facilitators are not expected to implement all of the strategies listed. They should, however, consider which strategies to implement and how to improve activities over time to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of district-level and school-based programs of family and community involvement.

Lead and Succeed: An Inventory of Leadership & Facilitation Strategies is an initial step in crafting a research-based district leadership plan for partnerships.

Directions:

Work on one section at a time.

Check (✓) all strategies that presently are conducted in your district.

Star (★) the strategies that you might initiate in the future as you develop your program.

At the end of each section, add other activities that you presently conduct or may conduct in the future to develop your district's program of school, family, and community partnerships.

Use the information gathered in this inventory to write your district leadership plan for partnerships (see Chapter 7, "Developing State and District Leadership for Partnerships" in the *NNPS Handbook for Action, Second Edition* for examples and template).

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

- Convene a one-on-one meeting with the district superintendent to discuss the goals for the partnership program.
- Conduct presentations about the district's goals for its partnership program to the school board, parent advisory council, and/or other key leadership groups.
- Conduct awareness sessions for school principals on the partnership program, including the assistance that will be provided to all schools' Action Teams for Partnerships (ATP).
- Distribute an informational packet about the district's program and its affiliation with the National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University (NNPS).
- Accompany school principals and/or key district-level stakeholders to conferences related to program initiatives (e.g., NNPS Leadership Development Conference in Baltimore).
- Identify schools to participate in the district's partnership initiative.
- Announce the district's program on the school district Web site.
- Disseminate a press release announcing the launch of the district's partnership initiative.
- Conduct presentations in schools for school improvement teams, PTAs, faculties, and/or others to inform them of the district's program.
- Meet individually with each school principal at the start of the school year to clarify the work of the district facilitator(s) and how the principal will support the program in their school.

OTHER ACTIVITIES TO CREATE AWARENESS:

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- _____

Objective: Align program and policy. With support from district leadership, integrate the partnership program with district policies, requirements, and procedures.

- Obtain approval and support from the superintendent to officially require schools to establish Action Teams for Partnerships and to link the action plan for partnerships with the goals of their school improvement plans.
- Arrange a formal announcement from the district leadership that the school improvement plan and the action plan for partnerships will be integrated.
- Ensure that the district policy on partnerships refers to district-level actions and to assistance to all schools in developing their partnership programs, with an Action Team for Partnerships and comprehensive, goal-oriented action plans.
- Write a district leadership plan for partnerships that includes district-level actions and direct assistance to schools—use this inventory as a resource.
- Identify a budget to implement the district partnership program.
- Ensure that each school's policy on family involvement reflects the NNPS components.
- Assist schools to identify a school-based budget to implement partnership programs.

OTHER ACTIVITIES TO ALIGN PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM WITH DISTRICT POLICY:

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- _____

Objective: Guide learning and program development. Organize and conduct professional development activities to assist schools in developing their partnership programs.

- Assist schools with preliminary steps to begin the program (e.g., identify the members of the Action Team for Partnerships, arrange team-training workshops, etc.).
- Conduct a training workshop for all participating schools that includes support to schools on how to link the action plan for partnerships with the school improvement plan.
- Meet with ATP leaders and team members at least monthly at each participating school.
- Organize a clear process for the district facilitator to provide feedback and support for each school's program.
- Award small grants to schools as incentives to build their partnership programs using research-based approaches.
- Convene regularly scheduled cluster meetings for schools' ATP Chairs or Co-Chairs to share experiences and learn about specific program topics.
- Develop and implement professional development workshops and presentations for all teachers and school staff on partnerships.
- Conduct workshops for parents on ways to partner with the school to increase student success.
- Conduct a "refresher" workshop to help schools continue developing their partnership programs from year to year.

OTHER ACTIVITIES TO GUIDE LEARNING AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT:

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- _____

Objective: Share knowledge. Foster ongoing communication throughout the district to build knowledge about programs of school, family, and community partnerships.

- Share progress on the district's partnership program efforts with the superintendent, school board, principals, and others in leadership positions.
- Facilitate a mid-year meeting for schools to share best practices and solutions to challenges.
- Disseminate a weekly or monthly fax that shares important information, upcoming events, and specific school highlights connected with the district's partnership program.
- Disseminate an e-newsletter that shares information, events, and highlights.
- Write a regularly featured column on partnership programs for the district newsletter.
- Facilitate regularly scheduled meetings with other district departments working on family involvement issues (e.g., special education, ESOL/bilingual education, Title I).
- Moderate a bulletin board on the district Web site that enables schools to post information, events, and questions for others about partnerships.
- Assist schools to share information about their partnership activities through the local news media throughout the school year.

OTHER ACTIVITIES TO SHARE KNOWLEDGE:

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Objective: Celebrate milestones. Recognize school and district successes in partnership programs and practices and disseminate the successes widely.

- Host an end-of-year celebration for all schools' Action Teams for Partnerships.
- Edit and distribute a collection of promising partnership practices from each school.
- Send thank-you letters to schools for submitting promising partnership practices to the district collection.
- Send letters to principals thanking them for their support for partnerships.
- Write an annual progress report on the district's partnership program to share with key stakeholders.
- Organize a recognition program to celebrate schools for achieving milestones such as implementing their first partnership activity, increasing attendance at activities, etc.
- Video selected partnership activities to share with the school board, principals, community groups, district parent advisory council, and others.
- Assist schools to recognize and thank partnership leaders in their schools.

OTHER ACTIVITIES TO CELEBRATE MILESTONES:

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- _____

Objective: Document Progress and Evaluate Outcomes. Collect information to document activities and to assess progress in meeting district program goals, and assist each ATP to document and evaluate progress in implementing their action plans for partnerships.

- Provide schools with a recordkeeping system to document the work of the Action Team for Partnerships and the activities that are implemented.
- Collect schools' action plans for partnerships each year and use them to check schools' progress regularly.
- Establish a quarterly/monthly recordkeeping system for the district facilitator(s) to document visits to schools and technical assistance that is provided or requested.
- Use the *Summary of School Visits* (p. 287 of the *Handbook*, or similar document) for each visit to schools.
- Evaluate the district facilitator(s) for partnerships annually on established indicators.
- Assist schools to complete the annual School UPDATE survey that is required to maintain NNPS membership.
- Collect and review all schools' UPDATE surveys.
- Complete the annual District UPDATE survey that is required to maintain NNPS district membership.
- Assist schools with other NNPS evaluation tools including the End-of-Year Evaluation form (pp. 360-364 of the *Handbook*) and the Annual Review of Team Processes (p. 111 of the *Handbook*).

OTHER ACTIVITIES TO DOCUMENT PROGRESS AND EVALUATE OUTCOMES:

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