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## National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) 2020 December E-Brief for Districts, States, and Organizations

***Students are studying—but they're glad it's December.  
Families say 2020 was a year to remember.  
Teachers are teaching students—some far and some near.  
All partners rejoice the end of this challenging year.***

The 20-21 school year will bring exciting new partnerships to all sites in NNPS, even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic! We are happy to continue monthly NNPS *E-Briefs* for school members and for districts, organizations, and states. Each month's *E-Brief* includes timely information to support leadership for partnerships and schools' programs of family and community engagement.

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### NNPS Online Leadership Institute on School, Family, and Community Partnerships—March 18, 19, and 26.

#### Register Now for this Live-Online Professional Development!

Join district, organization, and state leaders from across the country for the intensive institute on research-based partnership program development. The NNPS Leadership Institute will enable you to guide schools' Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) to strengthen their programs of family and community engagement for student success in school.

As in October, due to COVID-19 travel and meeting restrictions, NNPS will conduct the full March Leadership Institute LIVE ONLINE in three parts. The Institute is designed for:

(1) **new leaders** at the district, organization, and state level

- (2) **all leaders who are ready to start to work with school ATPs**, and
- (3) **new staff** working with ATPs.

Don't miss your opportunity to participate in this important professional development from NNPS. **Plan to attend: March 18, 19, and 26, 2021. Receive NNPS Certificate and letter certifying 16 hours of professional development on school, family, and community partnerships.**

Follow the links from [www.partnershipschoools.org](http://www.partnershipschoools.org) for the brochure, agenda, and registration materials for the fall NNPS Leadership Institute. Or click here: [NNPS Online Leadership Institute-March 2021](#)

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## Save the Dates!

### Free NNPS Webinar for District, Organization, and State Leaders for Partnerships

NNPS will conduct its annual **Free Webinar** for District Leaders on **Thursday, January 21, 2021 from 2:00-3:30 EST**. This session is designed for new district or organization leaders in NNPS or anyone who wants a quick “refresher” on the roles and responsibilities of leaders for partnerships. The webinar will discuss leaders’ responsibilities to guide and facilitate school-based Action Teams for Partnerships, best practices, and solutions to common challenges.

To register, contact Rachel Chappell at [nnps@jhu.edu](mailto:nnps@jhu.edu). Give your name, affiliation, e-mail address, and the words **Register for Free NNPS Leadership Webinar**. The webinar is a benefit of membership.

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### Free Webinar for Schools' Action Teams for Partnerships

NNPS will conduct its annual **Free Webinar** for schools' Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) on **Thursday, February 18, 2021 from 2:00-3:30 EST**. This webinar will address NNPS Basics for ATPs. Topics include ten steps to partnership success, strengthening the Action Team for Partnerships (ATP), and how to write a goal-linked action plan for the 21-22 school year. We encourage as many members of your ATP to participate together in this webinar.

To register, contact Rachel Chappell at [nnps@jhu.edu](mailto:nnps@jhu.edu). Give your name, affiliation, e-mail address, and the words **Register for Free NNPS School ATP Webinar**. The webinar is a benefit of membership.

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This year, this section of E-Brief invites members of NNPS to share how school

Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs), co-chairs of ATPs, or district or organization leaders are continuing to implement plans for family and community engagement activities during COVID-19. Your schools may be open for face-to-face classes, remote learning, and/or on a hybrid schedule. Send your good ideas and we will share them in E-Brief!

This month, we heard from **Mimi Badura** and **Ellen Larson**, consultants and NNPS Key Contacts and **Dr. Michael Roe**, Director, at the Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) in California. The RCOE consultants met with district leaders for partnerships in the Perris Union High School District (PUHSD) to discuss programs of family and community engagement and to identify the state's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) Priorities for districts and school goals for the 2020-21 school year. Due to COVID-19 closures, all schools are supporting students via distance learning.

RCOE provided workshops for the district leaders and school ATPs on key topics, including writing goal-linked One-Year Action Plans for Partnerships; LCAP priorities; and support from RCOE. PUHSD district leaders guided their high school ATPs to create clear informational videos for parents and students on school and district resources to help families and students succeed with distance learning.

Schools conducted online needs assessment surveys to learn what families wanted in their school's video on remote learning. Student ATP members took leadership for creating tutorials for their peers on helpful learning platforms. Parent ATP members applied their talents in video production and marketing. The district created web-based connections for distance learning resources at each school site: [Distance Learning Resources](#).

RCOE created google folders for all schools with NNPS templates for their One Year Action Plans for Partnerships and other guidelines for creating their videos and tutorials on virtual learning. At the end of the school year, district leaders will conduct a virtual recognition program to celebrate school ATPs for achieving these milestones. RCOE also will guide the district and schools to join NNPS for on-going benefits and contacts with other high schools working on partnerships.

This month, we also heard from **Eleanor Coner**, NNPS Key Contact with Connect, an organization in Edinburgh, Scotland, that serves parents and schools with good information on children's schools, and parents' roles in schooling. Scotland's schools have been addressing COVID-19 challenges, just as in the U. S. and other countries. For example, school exams in 2021 were cancelled to be fair to students who struggled with remote learning.

Some good news emerged in Scotland's schools:

- Many parent leadership groups have found creative ways to reach out to all parents with online events, including a drive-in music night and group Christmas carol singing.
- Connect has an active Facebook Group where parents are sharing their ideas and concerns.
- Connect conducted a third survey of parents for additional information on challenges and successes during COVID-19 closures and remote learning. See the results of their surveys at [Survey Report](#). Also, see page 52 in *Promising Partnership Practices 2020* to learn more about Connect's first survey of parents and other useful links.

**Dariane LyJoi Mull, NNPS Key Contact at Pinnacle View Middle School in Little Rock, Arkansas** had a great idea, and asked **District Leader for Partnership, Kaye Rainey**, for her suggestions for implementation during COVID-19 requirements for remote learning.

The ATP plans an activity to help parents and students understand and master steps toward academic success and regular daily school attendance. The middle school aims to provide feasible strategies for parents to motivate their children's learning and completion of schoolwork during the pandemic. Recognizing that schools across the country have the same challenges, Ms. Mull and Ms. Rainey discussed the following information and suggestions for starters.

- Survey parents online to learn what their needs are.
- Conduct a short (15-30 minutes) weekly Zoom "Fireside Chat" for parents and students with the Principal to discuss successes, questions, and concerns.
- Conduct periodic one-on-one Teacher-Student-Parent Zoom sessions to check in with each family about individual progress and challenges.
- Review the NNPS *Handbook for Action* and *Promising Partnership Practices* for specific ideas to improve and recognize good attendance.
- E-mail questions to Brenda Thomas (NNPS) at [bthomas@jhu.edu](mailto:bthomas@jhu.edu). She will be happy to assist you and share ideas from other NNPS middle schools.

Is your school (or schools you guide) working during COVID-19 to help parents guide their children to attend school regularly and remain motivated to learn and complete assignments? **E-mail your suggestions to Brenda to share in the next edition of E-Brief.**

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## NNPS and SOCIAL MEDIA

The Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center (OhSFEC) December newsletter includes a helpful section on engaging grandparents in their children's education. Many children are being raised by their grandparents, who have questions about the schools, grade level requirements, and how to guide their grandchildren to succeed as students. Click here to explore the OhSFEC [GrandUnderstanding Resource Hub](#) useful tools and resources for Grandfamilies.

You may have photos from Zoom, social distancing, and other partnership activities to share with members of NNPS. Did one of your schools conduct a Virtual Mask Fashion Show with students and families or another creative activity? Send your *must see* Surviving COVID-19 photos to Rachel Chappell, [nnps@jhu.edu](mailto:nnps@jhu.edu)! We are a strong network and will continue to work together to get through this pandemic. That's what TEAMS do!

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## OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES

### 5 Radical Schooling Ideas for An Uncertain Fall and Beyond

There is no one answer for what the 20-21 school year will look like. If classrooms

are open for face-to-face learning, there will likely be some form of [social distancing and other hygiene measures](#) in place that challenge traditional teaching and learning. Future outbreaks will make for unpredictable waves of closures. Virtual learning will continue. See some strategies at: [5 Radical Schooling Ideas For An Uncertain Fall And Beyond](#)

## Activities for kids during COVID-19: CHOC Children's Blog

During the COVID-19 pandemic, children are spending more time at home than usual. CHOC (Children's Hospital of Orange County, linked to the University of California-Irvine), posted a podcast with many good ideas for parents and caregivers to keep all kids (including healthy children) occupied in activities that combine fun and learning. See Parenting TIPS (that NNPS members may share with families) at: [Parenting Tips](#).

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## Thanks for Returning the 2020 UPDATE

The 2020 NNPS UPDATE guides members to evaluate progress of their partnership programs and renew membership for the 20-21 school year. THANK YOU for taking time to assess your program's progress and for making plans to improve partnerships over this school year!

The work you do is so important that NNPS pays a matching fee for every site that renewed membership. Our research team will analyze the data and share Annual Reports later in the school year.

Remember, we are here to help you with your work. If your program renewed membership, you will continue to receive the monthly *E-Briefs*, on-going services, resources, and support through the 20-21 school year.

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## NNPS Members-Only Access Code

The MEMBERS ONLY section of the NNPS website provides active members with special benefits. Use your **Members-Only Access Code: mem20NNPS** to explore many years' books of *Promising Partnership Practices* and all 18 NNPS *Samplers* in the section Success Stories. **The code will change in January 2021** for members who sent in 2020 UPDATE and renewed membership for the 20-21 school year. Look for the new code next month. We will keep you posted in each E-Brief of the code to use.

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## DONATE TO NNPS

Tis the season for giving! If you plan to make an end-of-year tax-deductible donation to non-profit organizations in 2020, please consider NNPS. Your donation supports NNPS's unique projects—books of *Promising Partnership Practices*, *Partnership Awards*, monthly *E-Briefs*, Annual Evaluations, and our excellent website. Here's how: Click the Donate link. Then, click on "OTHER" in the Johns Hopkins School of Education DESIGNATION box. **Specify: National Network of Partnership Schools.**

## Donate!

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

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**Wishing YOU the MOST MERRY and HAPPIEST holiday!**



**In Partnership,  
The NNPS Team  
Brenda, Rachel, Steve, and Joyce**

