



MARYLAND LINKS

JANUARY 2009



Maryland Partnership Program Development Brenda G. Thomas, Director

Maryland Links is a special publication for the 24 school districts in Maryland. Its purpose is to provide districts with information to help them strengthen their partnership programs and practices. Information in Maryland Links will assist districts in using the National Network of Partnership Schools' (NNPS) research-based framework of six types of involvement and action team approach to build comprehensive programs of school, family and community partnerships linked to district and school goals and objectives for student success. Maryland Links also enable districts in the state share district-level leadership actions and family and community involvement practices that help schools increase student achievement and other indicators of success.

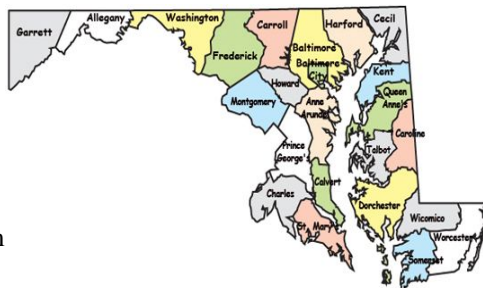
Maryland Partnership Program Development

Maryland State Parental Information and Resource Center (MD PIRC) collaborates with the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins University and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to support the development of effective, goal-linked programs of family and community involvement in districts and schools across the state. MD PIRC provides a comprehensive statewide system of information, training, and technical assistance to increase the number of families who are informed and involved in their children's education. One part of the PIRC's program with NNPS is to assist Maryland's district leaders and their schools to strengthen their programs of family and community involvement in ways that increase student achievement and success. This focus will help districts and schools fulfill state and local policies and goals for improving parental involvement, and meet the requirements for family involvement in the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)*. For information on MD PIRC, contact Susan Shaffer, Executive Director, (301) 657-7741, ext. 118 or visit the PIRC website: www.mdpirc.org.

Maryland Districts

19 of Maryland's 24 school systems and over 200 schools are active members of NNPS. It is not too late for the other *five* districts to benefit from the PIRC grant. **We welcome 3 new districts to the NNPS family: Prince George's, Wicomico and Worcester Counties.** We also welcome the assistance of Cecelia Martin, PIRC Associate Director, at this time, to work with selected districts. **Over the next two years, Maryland aims to be the first state in the nation in which ALL districts are strengthening and sustaining research-based partnership programs linked to school improvement goals for student success!**

- Allegany County Public Schools*
- Baltimore City Public Schools
- Baltimore County Public Schools
- Caroline County Public Schools
- Cecil County Public Schools
- Dorchester County Public Schools
- Garrett County Public Schools
- Harford County Public Schools
- Howard County Public School System
- Kent County Public Schools*



- Montgomery County Public Schools
 - Prince George's County Public Schools
 - Queen Anne's County Public Schools*
 - St. Mary's County Public Schools
 - Somerset County Public Schools*
 - Talbot County Public Schools
 - Washington County Public Schools
 - Wicomico County Public Schools
 - Worcester County Public Schools
- *Districts with 100% school participation!**

There is still time for your district to join the NNPS family!

Call Brenda to arrange a meeting time to discuss how the collaborative efforts of the MD PIRC and NNPS is designed to help your district and schools build comprehensive programs of partnerships that impacts academic achievement for all students and meets the requirements of No Child Left Behind.
If you are ready to benefit from the MD PIRC resources for this work, visit the NNPS website, www.partnershipschools.org, download, complete and return the membership form to NNPS as outlined.



MD PIRC to Sponsor a Regional Conference in Southern MD

Southern Maryland's Regional Parent and Community Conference is Saturday, March 28, 2009, 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the College of Southern Maryland, 8730 Mitchell RD, La Plata, MD 20646. Parents and educators in St. Mary's, Calvert, and Charles County are invited. Continuing Education Units (CEU) are offered for daycare providers. Childcare and lunch is provided. Check the PIRC website for more details: www.mdpirc.org. Families and educators from other districts are also welcomed.

Reflections
from 2008!

Maryland District Leadership Institute

The Maryland District Leadership Institute (MD DLI) was held May 29 – 30th, 2008 at the Columbia Hilton in Howard County. Maryland leaders for partnerships met to discuss district-level leadership on partnerships and strategies for direct facilitation of schools in support of the work of Action Teams for Partnerships. **We thank Howard County Public School System's Superintendent, Dr. Sydney L. Cousin and Jean Lewis, Family and Community Outreach Specialist, for hosting the Institute in their district.**

The Institute focused on the following:

- Sustaining district-level practices (including support to schools)
- Scaling-up district-level practices (including support to schools)
- Evaluating the district's work on partnerships (including support to schools)
- Discussing challenges and solutions
- Sharing best practices of leadership and facilitation

The Institute began with a networking dinner meeting the evening of May 29th. Dr. Wanda Grant and Dr. Johnetta Smith of Prince George's County Public Schools, Dr. Mary Bradford of St. Mary's County Public Schools, and Jean Lewis of Howard County Public School System shared partnership success stories and discussed challenges. As new NNPS members, the Prince George's County team explored ideas for getting started in their district and collaboration opportunities with their Title I Office. Howard and St. Mary's Counties reported how they started NNPS in their districts, as well as how they are sustaining the work of the district and scaling up each year.

The Maryland District Leadership Institute is open to all Maryland district leaders for partnerships, whether their district is a member of NNPS or not. The following districts were represented: Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore, Caroline, Carroll, Charles, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Kent, Prince George's, St. Mary's, and Worcester Counties.

A second meeting was a "Make-up District Leadership Institute" for district leaders who wanted the information, but were not able to attend institute in May. We held the second Maryland District Leadership Institute on the Eastern Shore. The following districts were represented: Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties.

We will convene another District Leadership Institute in 2009!

Comments from Maryland District Leaders about the Institute

Thanks again for two days of great training.
Christy (Somerset)

This District Leadership Institute helped me clear up my role and responsibilities in assisting my schools in using the NNPS approach to family and community involvement. It **strengthened that critical link** between family involvement and academic achievement. Faye (Wicomico)

This is a wonderful opportunity to share, compare, learn, and to be reaffirmed that the work we do does make a difference. The excellent leadership, materials provided, and strategies to assist us with our role is refreshing. Each year I come away refreshed and energized! Jean (Howard County)

This was a wonderful opportunity to network with other districts and share strategies that are working. We appreciate the fresh ideas that we can bring back to our districts. Michelle (Queen Anne's)

Reflections
from 2008!

Action Team for Partnerships Training

We conducted 2 One-Day Action Team for Partnerships Trainings for elementary through high schools on the Eastern Shore; one in June 2008 and the other in October 2008. Participating districts included: Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester Counties. Queen Anne's County had schools participate in both trainings. It should be noted and celebrated that Allegany County, Queen Anne's, Kent, and Somerset all have 100% of their schools as members of NNPS, using research-based approaches to increase family and community involvement and to evaluate their work every year! Wicomico County began with their middle schools as the first cohort of NNPS schools and invited Queen Anne's and Worcester Counties' middle schools to join in on the training. Before leaving the team-training workshop, all of the schools wrote a draft One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships to implement this year ('08 - '09).

We look forward to conducting more Action Team Training Workshops with YOUR schools, before the 2008 -09 school year ends!

ATP Follow-up Workshop

Queen Anne's County schools participated in an evening Action Team Follow-up Workshop in October 2008 and St. Mary's County schools participated in a Follow-Up Workshop in November 2008 during a professional development day. Teams had an opportunity to:

- + Discuss the NNPS model and assess how well they are implementing each component of the model.
- + Share successful practices and discuss challenges and solutions.
- + Identify next steps to improve current practices of partnerships

NOW is a good opportunity for schools to take time to evaluate their work mid-year. If your school teams need energizing, call Brenda to plan a Follow-Up Action Team Workshop.

2008 Promising Partnership Practices

It pays to return the UPDATE survey to NNPS each year! Returning UPDATE renews NNPS membership for your district and your schools AND continuing members receive the next edition of *Promising Partnership Practices* – a book of good ideas from NNPS members across the country. Maryland was well represented in this year's edition of *Promising Partnership Practices 2008*. The following state, district, and school partnership practices were selected for the 2008 collection:

State – Maryland State Department of Education
Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Awards
School, Family, and Community Partnership Trainings

District - Howard County Public Schools
The Village Empowerment Seminar: Be a Key-Maker

Maryland Schools in Promising Partnership Practices 2008.

Activity	School	District
Math Day	Cresaptown Elementary School	Allegany County
Community Connections	Flintstone Elementary School	Allegany County
Watch Dogs	John Humbird Elementary	Allegany County
Whistle Stop Tour	Maple Elementary School	Dorchester County
Family Math and Reading Night	Meadow Hall Elementary	Montgomery County
Parent/Teacher Collaboration Dinner	Deal Island Elementary School	Somerset County
Keys to Successful School, Family, and Community Partnerships	Leonardtwn Middle School	St. Mary's County
Tellin' Stories*	Lexington Park Elementary	St. Mary's County
Forming a PTA	E. Russell Hicks Middle School	Washington County

* MD PIRC and NNPS Collaborative Effort

National Leadership Conference

The National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) held its National Leadership Development Conference on November 4 - 5th, 2008 at the Sheraton Inner Harbor. Over 250 people from 35 states, District of Columbia, and Ontario, Canada were represented at the conference. Maryland leaders from the Maryland State Department of Education, Howard County and Washington County were in attendance. The next Leadership Conference will be October 27th - 28th, 2009 - so save the date.

What's your 2009
New Year's Resolution for
Family and Community
Involvement?



Do you have your copy of the new handbook? No! Go to: www.corwinpress.com or check our website: www.partnershipschools.org.

Note: NNPS members get a 20% discount!

- ✓ Use the NNPS research-based approaches to family and community involvement. (Not a member? Visit our website: www.partnershipschools.org to join NNPS.)
- ✓ Provide more direct facilitation to schools.
- ✓ Provide more district-level leadership.
- ✓ Help schools celebrate and share their S/F/C/P successes.
- ✓ Take advantage of the support offered by MD PIRC.
- ✓ Take advantage of NNPS benefits and services.
- ✓ Other???

Don't break THIS
resolution 😊!!

MARYLAND LINKS

Print copies of *Maryland Links* for others in your district from our website: www.partnershipschools.org. Click on *Professional Development* and then *Maryland Partnership Program Development*.



Until the next issue, remember...
"A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step."
Have you stepped forward on the path to good partnerships?



For on-going professional development and on-call assistance to strengthen programs of family and community involvement in districts and schools across the state, contact me:

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