



NATIONAL NETWORK OF
Partnership Schools
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

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Dear Colleague:

You are invited . . . You are invited to join the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins University. NNPS invites schools, districts, states, and organizations to work together to improve their leadership and programs of school, family, and community partnerships. Based on more than two decades of research and field tests, we know that this goal can be attained by all elementary, middle, and high schools, and that district, state, and organization leaders can play important roles in assisting schools to improve partnerships in ways that increase student success.

About NNPS . . . NNPS guides school teams of educators, parents, and community partners to use a research-based framework of six types of involvement (*parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community*) to plan and conduct comprehensive partnership programs. Researchers and facilitators at Johns Hopkins University train and assist school, district, state, and organization leaders to understand, implement, evaluate, and continually improve goal-oriented programs of partnerships. In NNPS, researchers, educators, families, and policy leaders work together to improve the effectiveness and effects of family and community involvement.

NNPS includes over 1000 schools, over 150 districts, 21 states, and many organizations that want to use research-based approaches to improve the quality of family and community involvement and results for students. The NNPS website, www.partnershipschools.org, includes information on key program components (see [NNPS Model](#)), research summaries, and examples of outstanding programs and practices (see [Success Stories](#)). Also view the [NNPS video, Working Together for Student Success](#), to learn about the components, services, and education leaders' experiences in NNPS, in the section Publications and Products.

Requirements . . . Schools, districts, states, and organizations that join the National Network of Partnership Schools must meet a few requirements described on the membership form. Our research identified 8 essential elements of successful programs: leadership, teamwork, written plans, implemented action, funding, collegial support, evaluation, and networking. You must be willing to meet (or work to establish) the basic requirements listed on the membership form to join NNPS. Then, NNPS will assist you to develop all of the essential elements for a research-based program that will improve from year to year.

One NNPS requirement is for all members to return an **annual UPDATE survey** to report progress and challenges during the school year. This exchange of information with members is so important that **NNPS waives the annual renewal fee for all members that return UPDATE** (see below).

Fees . . . NNPS charges very modest fees for many benefits and services.

- There is a **professional development/processing fee of \$200 for each school and \$300 for each district, state, or organization**, which must accompany each membership form. Districts are advised to join **along with** an initial set of schools or with all schools in the district.
- NNPS members are invited to attend a **2-day fall Leadership Development Conference** in Baltimore to prepare for their work on partnerships and to continually improve their knowledge, leadership, skills, and programs. Members receive a discount on the registration fee for the two-day conference. New district leaders are invited to attend a **District Leadership Institute (DLI)** to prepare for their work. The DLI is offered each spring.
- There is an annual renewal fee of \$200 per school and \$300 per district or state to continue membership benefits and services from year to year. **NNPS pays this fee for all members that return the annual UPDATE survey at the end of each school year.**

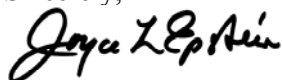
Benefits . . . The National Network of Partnership Schools offers many benefits and services to help members increase their knowledge and develop skills in developing effective programs of partnerships for student success. These are provided at no cost, as part of membership, except for conferences, as noted. To assist and guide your work, NNPS offers the following benefits:

- A **comprehensive handbook**. *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action, Second Edition* includes summaries of research, guidelines for workshops on partnerships, presentation overheads, an inventory of starting points, planning and evaluation forms, and other tools to help develop and strengthen your partnership program.
- A **certificate of membership**. This recognizes your commitment to developing a goal-oriented program of school, family, and community partnerships.
- Annual **Leadership Development Conference**. Sessions prepare new members to establish their partnership programs and help experienced members improve their knowledge and skills. The 2-day conference includes step-by-step training in how to use the *Handbook* and conduct team-training, and advanced workshops on several topics, including the Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS) interactive homework process. An intensive **District Leadership Institute for new district leaders** who will directly facilitate schools on partnerships is conducted each spring.
- **Type 2, the Network's semi-annual newsletter**. This informative newsletter (see archived issues on the website in the section Publications and Products) includes research summaries, examples of good practices, and guidelines for continuous progress in partnership program development. *Type 2* is e-mailed to all NNPS Key Contacts and may be copied and distributed to team members and other colleagues.
- **Promising Partnership Practices**. This annual book spotlights activities from schools, districts, states, and organizations in NNPS. Earlier editions are on the NNPS website in Success Stories.
- **On-call consultations with NNPS staff**. NNPS members may ask questions or request information about partnership program development from NNPS staff by phone, e-mail, and website.
- An interactive **website** – www.partnershipschools.org. The NNPS website is chock full of information on partnerships; research summaries; examples of best practices in elementary, middle, and high schools, districts, states, and organizations; and more.
- Annual **research and evaluation opportunities**. The annual *UPDATE* survey, required for renewal of membership, enables members to assess their progress each year. NNPS provides summaries of *UPDATE* data from schools and districts for members to compare their work with the network as a whole. Members may be invited to participate in projects to learn about the processes and results of partnerships. *UPDATE*, renewal certificates, and data reports are e-mailed each year.
- Annual **Partnership Awards**. NNPS recognizes schools, districts, states, and organizations that demonstrate excellence in implementing and improving their programs of school, family, and community partnerships for two or more years.
- **Other tools, materials, and programs**. NNPS designs and develops new guidelines and training activities each year to assist you with your work on school, family, and community partnerships.

Why should you join? NNPS will help your school, district, state, or organization become a national leader in connecting school, family, and community partnerships to school improvement goals. NNPS's research-based approaches help create a welcoming school environment, strengthen families, and increase student success in school. These approaches enable schools, LEAs, and SEAs to meet the requirements for family involvement in the *No Child Left Behind* act (NCLB). In NNPS, members network with each other to learn about and share successful partnership practices.

NNPS has learned that it takes at least three years to create and sustain a well-planned, goal-oriented partnership program. If you wish to make a commitment to improve family and community involvement, download and return the correct **Membership Form** (for school, district, state, or organization) to NNPS. My staff and I look forward to working with you on this important agenda to increase student success.

Sincerely,



Joyce L. Epstein, Ph.D.
Director and Principal Research Scientist



Working Together for Student Success

Membership Form for STATES

Please complete and return this form to register your State Department of Education as a member of the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins University. After NNPS receives this form, the Key Contact will be sent a handbook and other information to help your state organize and strengthen its program of school, family, and community partnerships.

State Department of Education : _____
Please write the name exactly as it should appear on the NNPS Certificate of Membership.

Name of State Coordinator(s) and Key Contact(s) to the National Network of Partnership Schools:

Position: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone: (____) _____ Fax: (____) _____

E-mail address: _____ Website: _____

ABOUT YOUR STATE'S SCHOOLS

How many school districts (LEAs)? _____

How many: _____ elementary schools _____ middle schools _____ high schools

_____ other (describe) _____

PLEASE ESTIMATE FOR YOUR STATE:

Number of students: _____ Number of classroom teachers: _____

Number of *districts* with Title I funds: _____ Number of *schools* with Title I funds: _____

Does your state have a PIRC and/or regional service agencies (e.g., intermediate units) that provide technical assistance to districts and schools to improve their programs? YES NO

Does your state have school districts that serve large numbers of children in military families?

NO YES If YES, about how many? _____ districts serve many military families.

How did you learn about the National Network of Partnership Schools?

- In an article or book On the Internet (www.partnershipschools.org)
 At a conference or workshop From a district leader
 From a colleague Other (describe) _____

FIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

To join the National Network of Partnership Schools, a state must be able to meet five membership requirements. NNPS will guide your state department of education in completing these requirements.

THIS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WILL . . .

Check YES or NO

1. **Create or identify an Office or Department for School, Family, and Community Partnerships.** YES NO
This office serves as a central leadership location for the state on school, family, and community partnerships; works with other departments and divisions; and becomes known to districts, schools, and the public as the place to contact for information and assistance on partnerships.
2. **Assign the equivalent of one full-time professional coordinator and adequate staff to conduct leadership activities on school, family, and community partnerships.** YES NO
The coordinator(s) write annual leadership plans for partnerships including ways to develop interdepartmental ties on partnerships; conduct conferences and training workshops for districts and/or schools; award small grants; recognize excellent practices of partnership; evaluate progress on partnerships; or other statewide leadership activities.
3. **Allocate an annual budget for the work and activities of the state's coordinator to advance districts' and schools' partnership programs.** YES NO
Funds for state coordinators' salaries and activities may come from federal and state programs that mandate or support family and community involvement, including Title I and other sources.
4. **Complete an annual UPDATE survey to renew district membership in the National Network of Partnership Schools.** YES NO
The state Key Contact must complete UPDATE, a progress report for the National Network of Partnership Schools to identify challenges faced and progress made each year. By returning UPDATE, the state renews membership in NNPS and continues to receive benefits and services. **Note: NNPS waives the annual renewal fee of \$300 for all states that return UPDATE.**
5. **Alert districts and schools to the research-based resources offered by the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins University.** YES NO
Districts that join NNPS are required to support FTE facilitators to assist from 15-30 schools; allocate a district-level budget for partnerships; complete an annual UPDATE survey; and assist schools to strengthen their programs of partnership. See the NNPS District Membership Form for details.

Schools that join NNPS are required to create an Action Team for Partnerships; use the framework of six types of involvement to plan their partnership programs, identify a budget for their partnership activities, allocate time for team meetings, and complete an annual UPDATE survey. See the NNPS School Membership Form for details.

**If you cannot answer YES to these five requirements,
please postpone returning this form until these conditions can be met.**

HOW MANY DISTRICTS and SCHOOLS WILL YOU ASSIST ON PARTNERSHIPS?

One goal of NNPS is to help *states* help *districts* help *schools* develop comprehensive programs of school, family, and community partnerships. Although states work in different ways on this agenda, over time the number of districts and schools that develop goal-oriented partnership programs should increase.

Please estimate the number of districts and schools that the state plans to guide in developing their programs of school, family, and community partnerships over the next three years.

In year 1, the state plans to work with at least _____ districts and at least _____ schools

In year 2, the state plans to work with at least _____ districts and at least _____ schools

In year 3, the state plans to work with at least _____ districts and at least _____ schools

Please help us understand where your STATE is starting from in its work on partnerships.

POLICIES ON PARTNERSHIPS

Check (✓) one on each line.

	YES	NO
Does your STATE have a formal written policy about involving families? * If YES, please attach a copy of the state policy to this form.	<input type="checkbox"/> *	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does every DISTRICT have a formal written policy about involving families?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does every SCHOOL have a School Council or School Improvement Team or similar group? If YES, do parents serve on every School Council/School Improvement Team?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does every school write an annual school improvement plan? If YES, are these plans routinely collected and monitored by the districts? If YES, are these plans routinely collected and monitored by the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your STATE <i>presently</i> have an office or department dedicated to assisting all districts and schools to strengthen their partnership programs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

STATE ASSISTANCE FOR SCHOOLS

State Departments of Education are at different starting points in assisting districts and schools with partnerships. Please check (✓) if your state **presently** conducts the following activities or plans to start.

	YES	NO	Plan To
State or regional workshops on partnerships for district leaders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State or regional workshops on partnerships for school teams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small grants for district or school projects to improve partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dissemination of information to all districts and schools on effective practices of family and community involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognition and/or rewards for good partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newsletters for districts, schools, or families on partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other state assistance on partnerships (please describe)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

QUALITY OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

How would you rate the quality of partnerships in your state, on average, at this time?

Check (✓) one on each line.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Weak	Don't Know
Quality of family and community involvement plans and activities in most of this state's elementary schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality of family and community involvement plans and activities in most of this state's middle schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality of family and community involvement plans and activities in most of this state's high schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality of school and district connections with communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State leaders' commitment to improve partnership programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication among <u>state</u> programs that work on school-family-community connections and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
District leaders' commitment to improve partnership programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why is your State Department of Education joining NNPS? Please check (✓) the top THREE reasons.

This state wants to improve:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> How districts guide schools to plan partnerships | <input type="checkbox"/> Student attendance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How schools link partnerships to school goals | <input type="checkbox"/> Student academic test scores and grades |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How educators and families work together | <input type="checkbox"/> Homework completion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The number of families involved at each school | <input type="checkbox"/> Student behavior and discipline |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other main goal (describe) _____ | |

Think ahead three years. How might your state's leadership and activities on partnerships be different from today? Give two examples how your state wants to change and improve its program of family and community involvement over the next three years.

APPROVAL BY STATE SUPERINTENDENT/CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICER (REQUIRED)

I have reviewed and discussed this membership form with the Key Contact named above. I will support this state's work with the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins University to help our districts and schools develop and maintain strong programs of school, family, and community partnerships.

State Superintendent's Signature

State Superintendent's Name (please print)

Date

MEMBERSHIP FORM and PAYMENT

The processing fee for a State Department of Education to join the National Network of Partnership Schools is \$300. Upon receipt of this state's membership form, the Key Contact to NNPS will receive a comprehensive handbook; monthly e-briefs from an NNPS Facilitator; information on training workshops; on-call consultations with NNPS by telephone, e-mail, and website; annual collections of best practices; and other benefits and services.

Method of payment:

- Check Make check for \$300 payable to Johns Hopkins University. Mail check with this form.
- Purchase Order Include a hard copy. PO # _____ Vendor: Johns Hopkins University
-
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If you have any questions, contact Marsha D. Greenfeld at 410-516-4193.

Mail this membership form and payment to:

Dr. Joyce L. Epstein
Director, National Network of Partnership Schools
Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships
Johns Hopkins University
3003 N. Charles Street, Suite 200
Baltimore, MD 21218

Or, FAX all 4 pages of this membership form with a copy of the Purchase Order to: 410-516-8890.

PLEASE KEEP A COPY OF THIS MEMBERSHIP FORM FOR YOUR RECORDS.

THANK YOU!