



NATIONAL NETWORK OF
Partnership Schools
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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.**

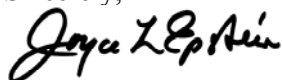
Benefits . . . The National Network of Partnership Schools offers many benefits and services to help members increase their knowledge and develop skills in developing effective programs of partnerships for student success. These are provided at no cost, as part of membership, except for conferences,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