
CHANGING LEADERSHIP

Los Angeles Unified School District, Local District B North Hollywood, California

Two years ago the Los Angeles Unified School District reorganized, and Local District B went from a cluster of twenty-six schools to a district of over eighty schools. The superintendent of the newly formed local district had never worked with partnership programs. Eager to sustain the partnership programs that had been functioning for several years, the district Partnership Programs Team took steps to educate the new superintendent about the program and to garner her support.

The first step was to share an amazing amount of information with the new superintendent so that she understood the big picture. Information then continued to be shared on a weekly basis, breaking the big picture into smaller components. The Partnership Programs Team, consisting of nine members, still maintains weekly meetings with the superintendent to review progress, discuss issues, and plan for future implementation.

The second facet of the transition was the advocacy for partnership programs from credible stakeholders. The Director of Families In Schools, a well-respected outside organization that implements programs for parents in the community, emphasized to the new superintendent her high regard for the partnership programs. Administrators from local school sites who had experienced success with Action Teams for Partnerships and action plans also provided testimonials based on their positive experiences. Further advocacy for Local District B's partnership programs came from the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS).

In October 2001, the new superintendent accompanied the Director of Partnership Programs to the NNPS Fall Leadership Conference. The conference made a tangible difference in the superintendent's understanding of school, family, and community partnership programs. Subsequently, the superintendent began to publicly support the implementation of the six types of involvement. She made her expectations regarding implementation of the six types of involvement known at every level with principals, teachers, and parents.

As a result of the superintendent's support, the Partnership Programs Team has now participated in a two-day retreat to develop a three-year outline and a one-year action plan for the district for next year. The team has full support to scale up their efforts district-wide. The

superintendent intends to return to the National Network of Partnership Schools' conference again this fall, and has plans to fund four members of the Partnership Programs Team to accompany her.

Local District B, Los Angeles Unified School District, demonstrated that a change in leadership can enhance partnership programs when the right steps are implemented.

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