

# ATP Chair Retreat

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*Pasco School District No. 1  
Pasco, Washington*

The newest chairpersons from Pasco School District's Action Teams for Partnership (ATPs) received a primer on effective leadership last August during the annual ATP Chair Retreat.

District leaders had been in the practice of holding training sessions for ATP chairs since joining NNPS in 2005. In the past, they took time to introduce ATPs to the NNPS model, as this was a relatively new concept in the district. This year, with the NNPS model firmly in place, the district facilitators were able to focus the training for ATP chairs on their work as school leaders for family and community involvement.

New and veteran chairs attended the end-of-summer retreat. In addition to chairpersons, invitations were extended to all school principals, who are member of the ATP but not necessarily team chairs. District leaders also published an article about the retreat in a newsletter that specifically covers ATP happenings.

In all, 43 teachers, parents, and school administrators attended the retreat for ATP chairpersons held at a middle school. They reviewed the year's work and reflected on their schools' successes and challenges.

The day began at 8 a.m. with a buffet breakfast. Next, district administrators led the participants through a few ice breakers to promote active engagement. Throughout the rest of the day, veteran ATP chairs lead a series of workshops for new chairs. Topics included the "ABCs" of leadership from the NNPS *Handbook* and effective techniques for delegating responsibilities for major events in their schools' One-Year Action Plans for Partnerships. ATP members spent time in the afternoon learning more about their leadership roles and reviewing the district's calendar for major partnership events scheduled during the school year.

During the lunch break, ATP members

invited three community organizations to give 10-minute talks about how their organizations partnered with schools in the past. Representatives from the Mid-Columbia Library discussed services the organization provides for students after school. The Boys & Girls Club of Benton and Franklin Counties and the LIGO Hanford Observatory shared ideas about how they could support schools' partnership programs and the district's efforts. The day ended with a light-hearted game of NNPS Jeopardy, created by the district leaders.

Evaluations of the retreat reflected the overwhelming success of the workshops. The majority of ATP members rated the retreat as "very worthwhile."

"It was a great use of my time," one workshop participant said. "The community members made the meeting. The games were fun too," another participant added.

The retreat cost about \$3,000 and was supported, in part, by Title I funds. A retreat for reflection and planning will be held next year, either with the ATP chairpersons or with all members of the ATP. Regardless of their decision, Pasco's district leaders for partnerships know that on-going professional development is critical for building capacity of leaders at the school level.

*Liz Flynn / Lorraine Landon  
School and Family Partnership District Coordinators  
(509) 546-2683 / (509) 543-6714  
lflynn@psd1.org / llandon@psd1.org*