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The NNPS Annual Report provides a unique overview of the efforts of District Leaders for Partnerships to implement essential elements for effective programs at the district level and in their schools. On the 2014 District UPDATE, we repeated measures of leadership that have been shown to produce high-quality partnership programs. Each year, we also include a new topic of interest to members of NNPS. This year, we explored district and school outreach to engage parents with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

District members of NNPS should review this report to consider their own work on partnership program development and to answer the questions:

- How does your leadership of partnership programs at the district level and with your schools compare with others in NNPS?

- What do you want to improve this year and in your Leadership Action Plan for the 15-16 school year?

HEADLINES in 2014

- 39 District Leaders for Partnerships in NNPS assisted over 700 schools’ Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) in the 2013-14 school year in diverse communities across the country.

- District Leaders for Partnerships and their schools’ ATPs engaged over 136,000 families to improve the school climate and to increase student success in school.

- District Leaders for Partnerships who evaluated their district and schools’ partnership programs with NNPS assessments were significantly more likely to conduct other leadership activities, facilitate school ATPs, gain support from colleagues, and report other indicators of strong and sustainable partnership programs (see section on Evaluation and Table 1).

- District Leaders for Partnerships who did more to help ATPs understand family diversity were significantly more likely to serve families with more different languages (but had fewer students in poverty). These leaders also addressed more challenges, emphasized evaluation, used NNPS materials and services, and conducted other leadership and facilitative actions more than other district leaders (see section on Multicultural Partnerships and Table 2).
District Leaders for Partnerships in diverse communities across the country reported 2014 *UPDATE* data to NNPS and renewed district membership another year.¹ New members in NNPS were not required to assess progress, but will do so in 2015.

- Districts were located in large cities (26%), small cities (26%), suburban (34%), and rural (14%) areas. The districts varied in size from 1 school to over 150 schools serving from fewer than 50 to more than 67,000 students.

- Districts in the sample had been members of NNPS for 1 to 18 years. About half (50%) joined NNPS since 2008. About 10% were relatively new, joining NNPS in 2013.

- Districts served populations of students and families who spoke from 1 to over 150 languages and dialects at home, with an average of 45 languages spoken by students and families across districts.

- On average, 59% of students were eligible for free or reduced-price meals, ranging from 27% to 100% of students in these districts.

NNPS includes more urban and fewer rural districts than in a national sample. The districts in NNPS have more and larger schools, more students in poverty, and more families with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds than the average district in the U. S.

- Academically, about 46% of districts attained Average Yearly Progress (AYP at the district level) in 13-14, more than last year (33%). Student achievement remains the main goal in all schools within the districts in NNPS.

- Leaders for partnerships worked an average of 21 hours per week (just over half-time) on partnership program development. Most leaders, especially in larger districts, had at least one or two colleagues working with them full- or part-time to help schools improve their partnership programs.

- Most district Key Contacts to NNPS (84%) expected to continue in their positions in the 14-15 school year. Prior studies showed that stable district leadership is important for improving the quality of district and school partnership programs from one year to the next.

**What do the summary statistics tell us?** NNPS is a network of districts and schools in diverse communities that face common challenges in improving education. Because these districts are committed to improving family and community engagement at the district level and in their schools, they are a valuable resource for learning “what works” to produce strong leaders and high-quality partnership programs.

**NNPS GOAL FOR DISTRICTS:**
**DEVELOP HIGH-QUALITY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL AND IN ALL SCHOOLS**

Based on data from districts collected over many years, NNPS knows that strong and sustainable partnership programs can be developed over time as district leaders build their knowledge and skills about goal-linked family and community engagement. The annual UPDATE survey measures program quality overall and then “unpacks” this measure to understand two important responsibilities of district leaders (see Figures 2A, 2B, and 3).

District leaders were asked to describe their programs for an overall picture of their status and progress through the 2013-14 school year. Figure 1 shows that a few districts rated their program quality low (in a “planning year” or “just beginning”). About one-third of the district leaders (35%) rated their programs as average with a good start or good program in 2014. They worked with at least a few schools on partnership program development. Others (25%) reported a very good program in which the district leader used NNPS approaches with ATPs in most schools. A few (17%) reported an excellent program in which
they worked with ATPs in all schools in the district. These leaders stated that their programs were sustainable, even if district leaders changed.\textsuperscript{2}

**Figure 1: District Reports of Overall Partnership Program Quality in 2014**

![Graph showing percentages of district reports of overall partnership program quality in 2014.]

N = 39 Districts, 2014 District UPDATE

**NNPS GUIDES DISTRICT LEADERS TO FULFILL TWO RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1) **Organize and implement partnership activities at the district-level.**
2) **Facilitate school-based Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) so that every school conducts effective partnership practices with all of its students’ families.**

NNPS provides training, materials, tools, and on-going “on-call” communications to help district leaders become experts in partnership program development. Most district leaders already conduct various district-level leadership tasks. However, most benefit from NNPS training and tools to guide schools at all levels to form a school-based ATP that will write annual plans, implement goal-linked engagement activities for student success, evaluate progress, and continually improve the quality of its program.

UPDATE surveys assess how well District Leaders for Partnerships fulfill these two responsibilities. Reliable scales measure **leadership, facilitation, meeting challenges to engage all families, collegial support, adequate funding, evaluation, networking,** and other indicators of program quality and progress (Epstein, et al., 2009).

**DISTRICT-LEVEL LEADERSHIP**

Figures 2A and 2B report results for 10 items in a 14-item Leadership scale (\(\alpha = .66\))\textsuperscript{3} on whether district leaders took basic and advanced steps (respectively) to establish their leadership for partnerships. In 2014, District Leaders for Partnerships conducted an average of 10 of the 14 activities on this scale. This indicates that most districts in NNPS have active leaders at the district level on partnership program development.

Figure 2A shows that about 90% of district leaders in NNPS offered staff development on partnerships, workshops for parents, identified their budgets, and reviewed the district’s parental involvement policies. About 70% wrote a Leadership Action Plan for Partnerships in 2014. Others (86%) intend to write one for the 14-15 school year.

Figure 2B focuses on advanced actions of district leaders to work with others leaders and groups. Most disseminated information on best practices for family and community engagement (90%). Compared to last year, this year more district leaders met with their Superintendents or supervisors to build support for partnerships (76% vs. 62% in 2013). Fewer districts awarded grants to schools this year compared to last year (35% vs. 47% in 2013), perhaps reflecting tighter district budgets this year. It should be noted that even small grants to schools (e.g., $500 for planned activities or $200 to have NNPS evaluate programs and renew membership for the next year) is viewed by schools’ ATPs as evidence of district support for their work on goal-linked partnership programs.
In open-ended comments, district leaders explained how their work at the district level improved in the past year.4

We were able to include school family and community partnerships as one of the three goals in our new Strategic Plan: Strengthening Family and Community Engagement.

I presented our first district-wide Jam Sessions for ATPs, which were very well received and will be expanded upon next year.

Our inter-district focus became stronger on collaborating with community.

We had 3 new Reading/Math Coordinators working with the Parental Involvement Programs. The Action Plans and the Action Teams that were in place helped tremendously in this endeavor.

Increased online interactions.

We tried to be intentional about obtaining ATP chairs’ feedback to improve our district partnership program, and identified “veteran” chairs to report their experiences to assist current chairs.

We provided more workshops to parents and families, as well as training for district staff.

**FACILITATE SCHOOLS’ ATPs**

Figure 3 displays eight items from an 18-item Facilitation scale (α = .95) that measured how effectively District Leaders for Partnerships guided school-based ATPs to organize their own plans and practices for family and community engagement. District Leaders for Partnerships conducted an average of 11 of the facilitative actions either OK or very well, ranging from 1 to 18 activities. They also noted activities where they need to improve to help more schools reach more families as partners in children’s education.
Figure 3 shows that about 70%-80% of district leaders guided schools’ ATPs to organize their programs and implement the activities in their plans. Over half of the district leaders communicated with the co-chairs of school ATPs at least monthly and conducted end-of-year celebrations to share progress and to guide ATPs to write their next One-Year Action Plans for Partnerships. These are important motivating activities that NNPS encourages all District Leaders for Partnerships to conduct.

NNPS studies of districts and their schools indicate that active District Leaders for Partnerships who expertly guide their schools’ ATPs make a difference in the quality of the schools’ programs and more equitable engagement of all students’ families (Epstein, Galindo, Sheldon, 2011). School programs improve from year to year as District Leaders for Partnerships encourage and enable schools to engage more and different families in activities linked to specific goals for student success.

In open-ended comments, district leaders explained how their guidance helped schools’ ATPs improve their programs in the 2013-14 school year.4

We are emphasizing that schools are the key contact point for parents and understanding their needs.

This year we added four new ATP schools!

Schools that participated in trainings showed evidence of partnerships and activities that were geared to school goals.

The high school identified how it can utilize an action team.

NNPS School Cluster Teams were formed to better engage parents and the community with the implementation of the six types of involvement.

Community outreach programs and activities continue to grow at the school level.

We are planning a one day ATP training in August for five schools on family engagement through NNPS. These five schools will also become members of NNPS following the training.

The data show that District Leaders for Partnerships in NNPS are aware that it is critical for their schools to plan, implement, and evaluate their own partnership programs. Data from schools indicate that ATPs respond positively to the professional development and technical assistance from their district leaders (Sheldon & Jung, 2015).
SUPPORT FOR PARTNERSHIPS

A 13-item Support scale (α = .84) measured how much support District Leaders for Partnerships received from district, school, family, and community colleagues for their work on partnership programs. Scored 1-4 for no support, a little, some, and a lot of support, district leaders had an average scale-score of 3.3, indicating strong support from most colleagues. Figure 4 reports only the percentages of a lot of support for family and community engagement in 2014—a goal that all district leaders work to attain.

The highest percentages of district leaders reported a lot of support from their superintendents, Title I administrators, principals and school-based ATPs. Many District Leaders for Partnerships have some work to do to meet with, inform, and earn the support of members of the school board, and to help their ATPs connect with all teachers and staff in a school so that they know that they are important partners in the school’s work on family and community engagement.

In open-ended comments, district leaders reported how they are strengthening collegial support for family and community engagement at the district level and in their schools.4

We started an Academic Partnerships Conference model with 17 school teams, and increased stakeholder engagement.

We are conducting more important parent and community partnership activities and more parents are beginning to attend workshops on topics that interest them.

Enhanced public relations by using our new PR officer- more events published in multiple outlets.

Parents across the district are looking for more ways to become involved. We are becoming known across the county as a forward-thinking district for parent engagement. Our principals are asking for more support.

When District Leaders for Partnerships connect with their supervisors and collaborate with colleagues in different departments, they increase knowledge about their work and strengthen the district’s mission to build a culture of school, family, and community partnerships in all schools and with all families.

SOLVE CHALLENGES TO INVOLVE ALL FAMILIES

Challenges are sure to arise when districts and schools work to engage all families in children’s education. Figure 5 shows items on a 8-item Meet the Challenges scale (α = .76) that measured whether or not District Leaders for Partnerships assisted schools to solve common challenges or left it up to schools’ ATPs to find solutions on their own. On average, district leaders assisted schools on 5 of the 8 challenges, but varied in which ones were addressed in 2014.
Most district leaders (74%) assisted schools’ ATPs to communicate clearly with families who spoke languages other than English at home, recruited volunteers for schools, identified community resources for schools, and worked with schools to help students and families transition successfully to the next school.

In 2014, more district leaders were providing some support to schools to solve these common challenges, with few leaving solutions solely up to the schools, themselves. These are advanced implementation activities that are conducted after schools form their team and write their initial partnership plans. Solving challenges indicates serious attention to reach all families—not just a few with good information and opportunities for engagement.

SCHOOLS’ PROGRESS ON PARTNERSHIPS

District Leaders for Partnerships rated the progress of 671 of the schools they assisted in 2013-14, as shown in Figure 6. About 65% of their schools made good progress in 2014, 27% made some progress, and 8% made little progress—mainly schools in early stages of work on partnerships.
ADEQUACY OF FUNDING FOR PARTNERSHIPS

A single item asked district leaders about the adequacy of funding for their work on partnerships. About 66% of the district leaders reported that they were adequately or well funded, as shown in Figure 7. This is lower than last year (77% in 2013) and may reflect a tightening of district budgets, or may reflect more districts in NNPS that are in early stages of work on partnerships.

We report the adequacy of funds because of the variation in the size of districts in NNPS, from one school to hundreds of schools. The size of budgets cannot be compared when the size of districts varies, but leaders’ views of the adequacy of funds and average per pupil expenditures for partnership programs can be compared across districts (see p.245 in Epstein, et al., 2009).

If funds are inadequate for the planned work, District Leaders for Partnerships and their supervisors must lobby for additional funds, using data to show their plans and accomplishments to date, and why more funds are needed for staff and/or program costs to engage more families in ways that support student success in school.

In 2014, Title I continued to be the primary source of funds for partnership programs for 64% of District Leaders for Partnerships. District general funds, donations, state funds, and other federal programs (i.e., Title II—professional development, and Title III—improving education for English Language Learners) were among three main sources of funds for partnership program development.

![Figure 7: District Reports of Funding for Partnership Program in 2014](image)

Nine District Leaders for Partnerships (24% of the sample) wrote proposals in 2013-14 for extra funds for their partnership programs. Eight of these (89%) were funded for $500 to $500,000. Omitting the unusual outlier, the average grant was close to $18,000. NNPS encourages districts to seek extra funds for advanced work on partnerships, and is pleased to write letters of support for members who submit proposals for funding.

USE OF NNPS PRODUCTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Figure 8 summarizes results of a 7-item NNPS Benefits scale (α = .87) that measured how District Leaders for Partnerships rated the usefulness of major NNPS tools and materials that are provided to all members throughout the year.
Coded from 1-4 for not helpful to very helpful, district leaders had an average scale-score of 3.5, indicating that they valued NNPS products and services. Some district leaders used additional NNPS services that are offered to members, including calling or e-mailing NNPS Facilitators for assistance, attending NNPS free web conferences, and attending the NNPS fall or spring leadership conferences in Baltimore. All (100%) who used these services rated them as helpful or very helpful. NNPS encourages members to take advantage of all of the on-going and on-call professional development activities. (See the list of NNPS benefits and services at www.partnershipschools.org in the section Join NNPS.)

IMPORTANCE OF ANNUAL EVALUATIONS

A seven-item scale (α = .66) reported districts’ Emphasis on Evaluation (i.e., whether the district leaders evaluated their own programs and their schools’ work on family and community engagement, and whether their state department of education evaluated progress on partnerships). Educators know that evaluating the quality and progress of any program is crucial for making improvements. This applies to assessing reading and math programs, and to measuring the quality and progress of partnership programs.

Historically, programs of family and community engagement were not evaluated to learn if they were well organized and engaging all students’ families. NNPS provides that essential service to all members with annual UPDATE assessments. NNPS collects, processes, and reports the data (as in this report), which leaders may use in their Title I and other evaluations and in plans for the next school year.

This year, 87% of District Leaders for Partnerships evaluated their own programs and 82% evaluated their schools’ partnership programs. Most used the NNPS UPDATE as one measure and other NNPS tools (e.g., planning forms, evaluations of each implemented activity). We explored whether the Emphasis on Evaluation was linked to other indicators of program quality. Table 1 shows that this scale was associated with other indicators of program quality, creating a constellation of variables that contribute to district leadership for partnerships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Constellation of Variables Associated with Districts’ Emphasis on Evaluating Partnership Programs, 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essential Elements of Program Quality</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Program Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 39 Districts, 2014 District UPDATE
Zero-order correlations
*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05, ‡ p<.10
NS= Not significant
1 Facilitation Scale (17 items) without evaluation
District leaders who emphasized evaluating their own and schools’ partnership programs also reported more organized leadership plans, more active facilitation of school teams, greater attention to solving challenges to engage all families, and more support from district and school colleagues for improving partnerships. The far right column shows that leaders whose districts were members of NNPS for more years were more likely to place importance on evaluating the district and schools’ partnership programs.

In advanced analyses, we found that districts’ demographic characteristics explained 3% of the variation in the emphasis on evaluation, but the other program qualities increased the explanatory power of the equation to over 40% of the variance in evaluation. The most powerful explanatory variable for evaluation was the extent of district leaders’ facilitation of school ATPs. When district leaders actively help ATPs plan and implement their partnership programs, they are more likely to evaluate how things are progressing. The effort to conduct a good program may influence the need to assess progress.

Table 1 also shows that the demographics of the districts in NNPS were not significantly related to an emphasis on evaluation. This finding (confirmed over many years) indicates that districts in urban, rural, and suburban communities serving very diverse students and families can evaluate partnerships and have high-quality partnership programs.

SPECIAL TOPIC in 2014: MULTICULTURAL PARTNERSHIPS

How are District Leaders for Partnerships engaging families with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds?

Each year, NNPS explores a new UPDATE topic to learn more about the challenges that face most districts and their schools as they work to strengthen their partnership programs. In 2014, we examined what district leaders and their schools were doing to engage parents who speak languages other than English at home.

The districts included families and students who represented from 1-150 language groups, but some of these families speak English at home and in communications with teachers. The District Leaders for Partnerships estimated that, on average, about 25% of their families speak languages other than English at home—with up to 50% in some districts. The patterns across districts are complex (e.g., some families learn English over time; some read English and prefer school notices in English). Districts and schools must identify local statistics and develop strategies to engage all parents at school and at home to increase student success.

The 2014 UPDATE data indicate that, at the district level, about 70% of district leaders reported that English language classes, targeted group workshops, and assistance on school forms were very effective practices for engaging non-English speaking parents in their children’s education. Fewer (47%) reported that connecting parents with others who speak their languages (i.e., social networking) was very effective, but all others (53%) said this was a little effective for increasing family engagement. English language classes and other direct services to parents were more prevalent and more effective in districts that reported serving more non-English speaking families (r = .435, p<.05). Thus, the offerings were responding to a need.

District Leaders for Partnerships also reported the effectiveness of practices their schools conducted to engage diverse families in ways directly linked to students’ education. Over 65% of district leaders reported that their schools used very effective strategies to:

- send home invitations and communications translated to home languages;
- conduct multicultural fairs and events to celebrate the diversity in family backgrounds, and
- invite parents to present information in class on their cultures, customs, histories, and holidays.

Fewer districts (48%) reported that their schools were very effective in assigning homework that required students to interview or talk with a family member about their backgrounds or histories.
The statistics suggest that districts and their schools reported “work in progress”—indicating that improving outreach to families with diverse linguistic backgrounds is a continuous process. The 2014 UPDATE also asked, directly, if District Leader for Partnerships helped ATPs understand diverse cultures: 59% of the districts reported “yes,”—they worked with ATPs on this topic, whereas the others reported “no.” The two groups differed in other measures of program quality, as show in Table 2.

### Table 2

**How are districts that help ATPs understand diverse families different from those who do not do this yet?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District-Level Partnership Program</th>
<th>Zero-order corrections (r)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Free or reduced-price lunch</td>
<td>-.375*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of languages of students and families</td>
<td>.397*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stronger District-Level Leadership (scale)</td>
<td>.371*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Facilitation of Schools’ ATPs (scale)</td>
<td>.337*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on Evaluation (scale)</td>
<td>.339*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention to Solve Challenges (scale)</td>
<td>.310#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of NNPS Benefits (scale)</td>
<td>.370*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 39 Districts, 2014 District UPDATE  
Zero-order correlations, * p<.05

District leaders were more likely to work with schools on issues of family diversity if they served fewer poor students, conducted more district-level actions (Leadership), did more to guide schools’ ATPs (Facilitation), helped schools solve more challenges, and more strongly emphasized evaluation. We see, again, a constellation of variables that reflect stronger partnership programs and greater attention to engaging diverse families in their children’s education.

District leaders in NNPS know that all parents—including new immigrant families and others who speak languages other than English at home—need to know that they are welcome, valued, and respected at their children’s schools. UPDATE asked for examples of effective district-level and school-level activities to strengthen partnerships with linguistically diverse families, reported in Table 3.

### Table 3.  How Do Districts and School in NNPS Engage Parents Who Speak Languages Other than English at Home?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools’ “best practices” to engage diverse families Reported by District Leaders</th>
<th>Overall program development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conduct multi-cultural celebrations, carnivals, and arts fairs for students and families to experience music, food, customs, literature, and the arts from many countries. Have bilingual staff and interpreters at events to ensure that all parents feel welcome. Translate printed invitations and other school documents to common home languages.</td>
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**Table 3, continued**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Targeted attention</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify “cultural ambassadors” from various countries/regions to connect with and guide new families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organize dinner and speaker events, workshops, and coffee/discussion sessions for specific populations (e.g., African American, Somali, Brazilian, Japanese, Latino, families of ELL students).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include sessions in Parent Universities/Academies/Conferences for specific language and cultural groups of parents to meet their interests and needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Districts’ best practices to engage diverse families in their children’s education</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall program development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer parenting classes to refugee families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner with the local community college to provide English classes for families and activities for their children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started home visit program for ELL families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invited ESL/ELL leader to provide a workshop for teachers on work with diverse families. Other speakers offered workshop on cultural competence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Targeted attention</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conducted annual African American Male Summit through the Office of Equity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided a 3-part series on working with Arabic refugee families with our multicultural department. Other workshops for staff about other groups (e.g., Somali, Burmese)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invited outside expert on Latino families to speak to all ATPs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See many other examples of effective practices in the NNPS books of *Promising Partnership Practices* (at www.partnershipschools.org in the section Success Stories).


**CONCLUSION**

There are no secrets to successful partnership programs in districts and in schools. The 2014 District UPDATE data confirm prior reports that districts succeed or fail in strengthening and sustaining successful goal-linked partnership programs based on:

(a) **strong leadership at the district level to guide or “shepherd” school teams with plans to engage all families in ways that support children’s success in school;**

(b) **willingness to use research-based structures and processes to organize plans and practices;**

(c) **ability to customize plans to meet school goals, and the needs and interests of the populations of families and students in the schools; and**

(d) **clear intentions to use evaluations to continually improve outreach and results.**

This work is being done by many districts in NNPS and can done in any district—large or small, urban or rural, economically advantaged or strapped, with more or fewer families who speak languages other than English at home. The 2014 District UPDATE data show that programs of school, family, and community partnership can be understood and implemented as important components of district leadership and school organization.
How to Use This Report

Ask: How are this district and its schools doing on partnership program development? Are we engaging all families and the community in ways that support student success?

- Review the charts and tables to identify actions that your district presently does better than average—better than the other districts in NNPS. Celebrate your progress!
- List important improvements that your district should make this year and in the 2015-16 school year. Check the data and comments on leadership, facilitation, collegial support, and the other topics in this report.
- Read the sections on Evaluations and Multicultural Partnerships, again. Consider the needs in your district and ways to proceed to meet those needs.
- Based on your review and reflections, refresh your Leadership Action Plan for Partnerships for 2014-15 and draft your plan for 2015-16.
- Read the companion report on 2014 School UPDATE data, including over 400 schools in NNPS (Sheldon & Jung, 2015).
- If your district has 8 schools or more in NNPS that completed the School UPDATE see the customized report from NNPS on your schools' data in 2015, and the graphs that compare your schools with all schools in NNPS. See where your schools are outstanding, and where they need to improve this year and in 2015-16.

Professional Development from NNPS

- Use the NNPS website, [www.partnershipschools.org](http://www.partnershipschools.org). Gather ideas for strengthening leadership and good practices at the district and school levels.
- Read the monthly NNPS E-Brief for news and ideas. Adapt and enhance the NNPS E-brief each month with local information for your own E-brief for your schools’ ATPs.
- Share this report with your supervisors to show how NNPS uses the UPDATE surveys from all sites in NNPS. Click on Research and Evaluation for copies of this report.\(^5,6\)
- Register for the NNPS professional development conferences.
  
  ✓ **Leadership Institute** – March 26-27, 2015 – for district and organization leaders who are new to NNPS or who are ready to conduct One-Day Team Training workshops with their schools’ Action Teams for Partnerships. To register, follow the path to the Leadership Institute from the NNPS home page.
  
  ✓ **Leadership Development Conference** – November 5-6, 2015 – (SAVE THE DATE) The agenda and early-bird registration materials will be posted in April. Join NNPS for outstanding professional development and celebrate the start of our 20\(^{th}\) anniversary year!

- Find good ideas in the annual collections of Promising Partnership Practices. On the website, click on Success Stories. The NNPS Members Only Code gives active members free access to all books of Promising Partnership Practices and all NNPS Samplers.\(^7\)

- See archived editions of Type 2 newsletters. Click on Publications and Products.
- Send an E-mail to an NNPS Facilitator with questions about YOUR next steps at the district level to strengthen your program and assist your schools. Click on Meet the Staff.
- Scaling up? See School Membership Forms in the section Join NNPS.
NOTES

1) In 2014, data are from NNPS districts in 20 states: AR, CA, CT, FL, GA, ID, IL, LA, MN, MO, NJ, NY, OH, PA, SC, TX, UT, VA, WA, and WV.

2) An “excellent” district program of partnerships is one where the leader writes an annual leadership plan; conducts important activities at the district level for all schools and/or all families; guides most or all schools’ Action Teams for Partnerships to work effectively with all families; and reports adequate funding, strong collegial support, and evidence that the program would be sustainable (or permanent) even if district leaders changed.

3) The internal reliability (α or alpha) of a scale indicates whether the items represent a common construct. Reliability coefficients of .6 or higher indicate that the items are related and consistent and that the scale is useful.

4) Open-ended comments were written by district leaders in response to a question on “what changed most?” over the past school year. Over 90% of the district leaders took time to respond to the question. This indicates that district leaders were willing to share their experiences with NNPS, even on the last page of the survey.

5) States and organizations in NNPS also are sent the summaries of school and district 2014 UPDATE data. There are too few states and too much diversity of organizations in NNPS to summarize their UPDATE data systematically. NNPS will continue to review the annual UPDATE surveys from states and organizations and tailor individual assistance to these members as they develop partnership policies and programs.

6) Copies of this report and summaries of past years’ UPDATE data are posted at www.partnershipschools.org. Click on Research and Evaluation for this year and for prior years’ reports.

7) See notable program reports and photos of districts that won NNPS Partnership District Awards and books of Promising Partnership Practices at www.partnershipschools.org. Click on Success Stories.

REFERENCES


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