



Working Together

***School-Family-Community Partnerships
A Toolkit for New Mexico
School Communities***

**Module 6:
Collaborating With
the Community**



Background

- The *Toolkit* was sponsored by New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) and developed by the Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations (CESDP)
- It is based on the six national standards for family involvement of the National PTA
- It is available in hard copy, on CD, and on the web: www.ped.state.nm.us
www.cesdp.nmhu.edu



Overview of Six *Toolkit* Modules



1. *Improving Communication*



2. *Promoting Positive Parenting*



3. *Enhancing Student Learning*



4. *Increasing Volunteerism*



5. *Supporting Decision Making
and Advocacy*



6. *Collaborating with the Community*



Goals for Module 6

- Explore the benefits of developing partnerships with local business, community organizations, and service groups to advance learning and assist schools and families.
- Identify potential community partners and strategies to foster student participation in community service.
- Develop strategies to involve community members, institutions, and organizations in curricular activities.



New Mexico Teacher Competencies

- The *New Mexico 3-Tiered Licensure System* includes competencies and indicators that apply to
Module 6:
Collaborating with the Community
- This training can assist in fulfilling requirements for Teacher Professional Development Plans (PDP).



Competency 4

The teacher comprehends the principles of student growth, development, and learning and applies them appropriately.

Relevant Master Teacher Level III Indicator:

D. Integrates community resources, service agencies, other school personnel, parents, and community members into the curriculum.



Competency 7

The teacher recognizes student diversity and creates an atmosphere conducive to the promotion of positive student involvement and self-concept.

Relevant Master Teacher - Level III Indicator:

C. Demonstrates an awareness of the influences of context, disability, language, and culture on student learning.



Competency 9

The teacher works productively with colleagues, parents and community members.

Relevant Master Teacher – Level III Indicator:

B. Demonstrates knowledge of specific school, family, and community resources that can support student learning.

For more information and a complete listing of competencies and leveled performance indicators visit www.teachnm.org



Activity: Teacher Self-Assessment

- Divide into small groups of no more than six.
- Individually, complete and date the *Teacher Self-Assessment Rubric for Collaborating with the Community* included in the handouts.
- Discuss findings as a small group and record strengths and needs.
- Discuss how you may be able to use this rubric in a teacher PDP.
- Report out to the group.



Collaborating with the Community

Results for Students:

- Increased skills and talents through enriched curricular and extracurricular activities;
- Awareness of careers and options for future education and work; and
- Service learning opportunities that connect students to organizations and individuals in meaningful ways.



Collaborating with the Community

Results for Parents:

- Improved knowledge of local resources and services;
- Interactions with other families in community activities; and
- Awareness of the reciprocal relationship between the school and community.



Collaborating with the Community

Results for Teachers:

- Expanded awareness of community resources to enrich curriculum and instruction;
- Openness to and skills in using mentors, business partners, and volunteers to assist students and augment teaching practice; and
- Helpful referrals of families to needed services.

Adapted from Epstein et al., (2004)



Redefinitions of Familiar Terms

- “*Community*” means not only the neighborhoods where students’ homes and schools are located but also the neighborhoods that influence student learning.
- “*Community*” is rated not only by high or low economic or social status, but also by strengths and talents of families.
- “*Community*” includes all who are interested in or affected by the quality of education, not just families or children in schools.

Adapted from Epstein et al., (2004)



Why Partner with the Community

- The task of educating children is complex and is the shared responsibility of the whole community.
- Community resources can enrich curriculum and instruction.
- Children and families need to be connected to social services.
- Federal mandates require partnerships.



How to Form School-Community Partnerships

- Directly link school achievement to community development and community wellness in staff discussions, action planning, and grants.
- Seek school/community collaborations that are appropriate and unique to your respective community and school.
- Partnerships don't just happen. Structure and monitor school/community collaborations through careful planning and evaluation.



Activity: Understanding Partnerships

Handout: *Understanding Partnerships*

- Different Degrees of Resource Involvement
- Different Degrees of Power Sharing
- Moving From Cooperating to Collaborating



Stages for Partnership Collaborations

Planning and Development: Take time. Nurture partnerships through discussions and relationship-building. Define how the collaboration benefits the community *and* the school.

Implementation and Management: Address immediate and doable concerns. Be clear about the goals, objectives, and management responsibilities of the partnership.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Use locally relevant assessment criteria and participatory evaluation strategies. Partners should all understand and support desired outcomes.



Activity: Identifying Potential Community Partners/Collaborators

- Divide into small groups of no more than 6.
- Review the Handout: *How to Use “Community Assets Mapping” for Community Building.*
- *Complete exercises 2 and 3 in the handout.*
- Prepare to present out to the whole group after 15 minutes.



Sources for Identifying Community Partners

- Lists and resource guides such as the telephone book or social services guide.
- Lists of Board Members of local and regional non-profit organizations.
- Websites of civic and government entities such as the State Game and Fish or US Geological Service.
- Personal knowledge of community partners.
- Federal office directories for the Forest Service, USDA Extension Service, and National Parks.



Activity: *Integrating Community Partners into the School or Classroom*

Work in small groups.

Refer to the Handout:

Integrating Community Partners into the School or Classroom

- Choose one partner organization example under each category in the middle column.
- In the third column, record ways you could integrate people or materials from each organization into your curriculum or the activities of the school.
- Present out to the whole group.



Activity: *Identifying School Assets*

- School/Community partnerships are two-way or reciprocal.
- Your schools have many human and material assets that can benefit community members and organizations.
- Identify the positive things your school is doing already.
- Identify what else can be done by the school to use its assets to serve the community.



Challenges of Collaborating with the Community

- Time to establish authentic relationships that benefit both school and community.
- Turf problems.
- Who funds collaborations?
- Ensuring equal opportunity for all students and families.
- Thinking “outside the box of the school” when developing curriculum and activities.
- Transportation issues.
- Developing place-based curriculum that connects the students to community members as intellectual resources.



Best Practice Recommendations

- Distribute information to staff and families about community resources that serve the cultural, recreational, academic, health, social, and other needs of families within the community.
- Develop partnerships with local business, community organizations, and service groups to advance student learning and assist schools and families.
- Foster student participation in community service and involve community members in school volunteer programs.
- View the *Toolkit* on the web or CD and utilize the resources in the *Teacher Tools* and *Family Tools* for this module.



Activity: Teacher Reflection

- Reflect on the workshop and the strategies you have learned to enhance student learning at school and home.
- Refer again to the *Teacher Self-Assessment Rubric*.
How would you rate yourself now?
- Take 10 minutes to *individually* complete the Plan for Improvement Column in the ***Teacher Reflection Tool*** for this module.



Inside the *Toolkit*

Teacher Tools Resources

- Worth a Click Links
- Understanding Partnerships
- Promoting Community Events and Resources
- Integrating Community Partners into the School
- Place-Based Learning Projects
- Creating a Desire to Go to College
- Life-Long Learning and Community Education
- Mapping School Assets
- Service-Learning Partnerships
- Organizing Oral History Projects



Inside the *Toolkit*

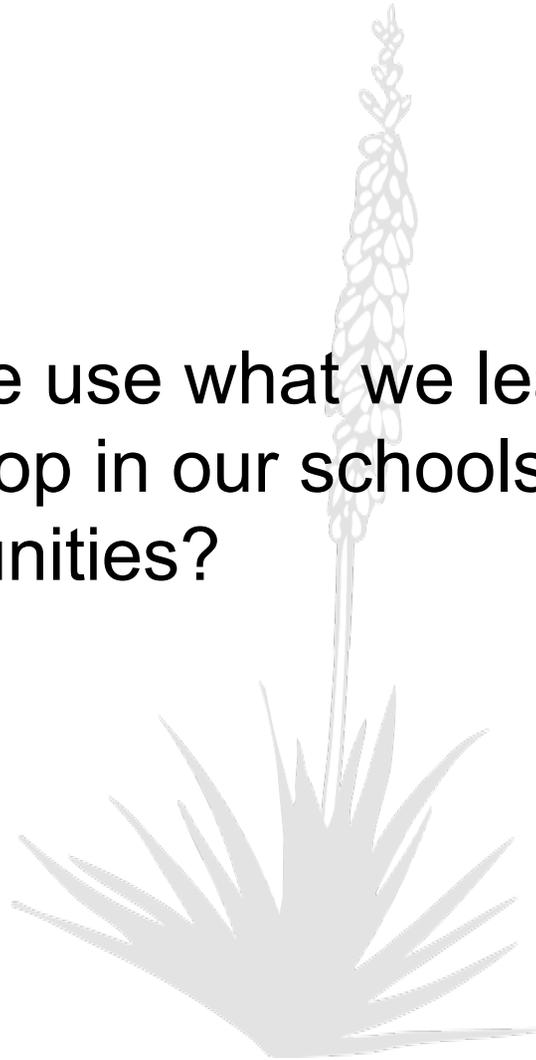
Family Tools Resources

- Worth a Click Links
- Out-of-School Learning Opportunities
- Fifteen Ways that Families Can Help School-Community Collaboration
- Promoting Community Events and Resources
- Community Service Ideas for Families
- Let's Use the Library



Activity: Where do we go from here?

How can we use what we learned in this workshop in our schools, homes, and communities?



To Learn More:

- Access the complete School-Family Partnerships Toolkit with resources, references, and websites at:

www.ped.state.nm.us

www.cesdp.nmhu.edu

- Complete Evaluation Form



CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

is hereby awarded to _____

***For the Completion of
Professional Development Workshop
Module 6: Collaborating with the Community***

***Working Together: School-Family-Community Partnerships
A Toolkit for New Mexico School Communities***

