Business - School PARTNERSHIP

Adopt a School
State of Minnesota
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About the Business - School Partnership Manual

“Nothing is more essential to our state’s success than providing our students with the world’s best education.”

Governor Mark Dayton

Emphasizing that our student’s education is a shared responsibility, Governor Dayton has called on every business in Minnesota to “adopt a school. This manual is designed as a simple tool you can use to guide you through the steps of creating a successful school and business partnership. The information and activities chosen are those considered essential for a successful partnership: the commitments, the group structure, and the types of activities that create conditions for quality partnerships that will help improve student learning and enhance school climate.

A special thank you to Bloomington Public Schools and the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce, whose wonderful “Prepare Bloomington” model served as the inspiration for this manual.
Seven Steps to Partnership

1. Explore the idea.
2. Find a partner.
3. Prepare the foundation.
4. Hold organizational meetings.
5. Plan and implement activities.
6. Publicize, Evaluate and Recognize.
7. Maintain the partnership.

*(Based on NAPE’s 12-step partnership development process)*
1 Explore the Idea

Step one, Explore the Idea, includes an introduction to the process of School-Business Partnerships. Included are useful guidelines that will help you develop your partnership mission and objectives. Also explores the unique benefits and commitments of obtaining a School-Business Partnership.
Business-School Partnerships

Business-School Partnerships are designed to provide a direct link between the work world and the classroom. A partnership is created when a business and a school (or a grade/class within a school) mutually agree to work together on projects and activities that will enhance the quality of education for students while improving skills critical to success in the workplace. Business-School Partnerships promote cooperation and encourage the exchange of expertise, resources and services.

Business-School Partnership Mission
To enhance the quality of education in the schools and the quality of the workforce for business by establishing and maintaining high-caliber and creative partnerships between schools and business.

Business-School Partnership Objectives

• Promote cooperation, shared resources and the exchange of expertise and services between business and schools.
• Provide students with the opportunity to see the workplace firsthand and to relate their studies to experience outside the school environment.
• Create awareness and understanding of the opportunities available to work together towards a common goal.
• Encourage high self-esteem in students.
• Acknowledge and support teachers.
• Strengthen the business community’s commitment to education.
• Strengthen economic development by providing a source of talented, highly qualified employees.
Partnership Benefits for Business

For the Company:
• Offer opportunities to have contact with, and gain input from, a potential workforce.
• Offers opportunities for employee volunteerism.
• Increases employee performance, retention and productivity.
• Creates opportunities to receive positive recognition within the community.
• Enhances communication with the educational systems and increases understanding.
• Contributes to a healthy community.

For Employees:
• Improves leadership and interpersonal skills.
• Increases interaction with other segments of the company.
• Adds variety and sense of self-worth to job.
• Improves community services used by employee’s families.

For the Community:
• Gains new talent and energy for community volunteer pool.
• Increases understanding between business and nonprofits.
• Improves the quality of life.

Which of these benefits are important to your business? Use them to develop your partnership’s common vision.
Partnership Benefits for Schools

For Students:

• Increase understanding of how skills in school are relevant to work.
• Offer opportunities to learn what skills and availability are needed for various careers.
• Improve skills and motivations with the help of volunteer support.
• Offers opportunities to learn about challenges and goals of business.

For Teachers:

• Offer opportunities to receive training or technical assistance in new areas.
• Offer opportunities to receive curriculum support – skills, resources, people.
• Increase awareness of community businesses and enhance communication with business leaders.

Which of these benefits are important to your school? Use them to develop your partnership goals and activities.
Partnership Commitments

- **Time**
  …for frequent communication…for regular meetings… for organizing and implementing activities… for evaluation… for acknowledging your partner.

  *Tip:* Partnership coordination is often designated as a component of an employee’s work time. A typical coordinator spends an average of eight to 12 hours per month organizing an active, successful partnership, viewing it as a long-term commitment.

- **People**
  …for communicating with the partners…for coordinating the partnership…for organizing resources…for planning activities…for participating…for supporting participants.

  *Tip:* A broad volunteer base insures widespread commitment, lasting energy, and the ability to implement many projects.

- **Resources**
  …for implementing activities …for sharing with the partner.

  *Tip:* These resources can be materials, people, skills and funds. All resources have costs associated with them. Keep this in mind as partnerships are explored and activities are planned.

- **Management**
  …for permission and support to share the time, people and resources of your organization in a useful way.

  *Tip:* Management approval is necessary to make the organization’s resources available for partnership activities.

Is your organization willing to make these commitments to the partnership? A successful partnership will depend on honoring these commitments.
2 Find a Partner

Step two, *Find a Partner*, includes useful guidelines that will help you develop your partnership mission and objectives. This section also explores the unique benefits and commitments of obtaining a School-Business Partnership.
Finding a Partner

If you need to find your own partner, here are some steps you can take to help you do it effectively.

1. **Define what you want in a partner.**
   Fill out the *Partner Profile* form and the Activities Checklist. Prioritize the benefits your group would most like to receive. From all this information, compile a list of the characteristics you would like in a partner. What kinds of resources and skills does your group want?

2. **Ask others for suggestions.**
   Share your criteria and characteristics with some of the following groups and ask for their suggestions.
   - Local Chamber of Commerce
   - Parents at your school or business
   - Staff/employees
   - Your community businesses

3. **Make an initial contact to determine interest.**
   When you have a few possibilities, ask the school principal or designated partnership coordinator to write or call the partner to see if they would be interested. Give them an idea of your expectations and criteria and the next steps you would like to take in exploring the possibilities.

4. **Share introductory information.**
   If your potential partner is interested in exploring the idea, share some of the initial information about partnerships contained in this manual—the benefits and Commitments, the Partner Profile form, and the Activities Checklist. This information should allow you all to assess if you want to proceed further. If you do, move along to the next steps in this manual.
Partner Profile Form

General Information
Organization Name:

Address:___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Phone:________________________Fax:__________________________________________

E-mail: ________________________________________________________________________

Demographic Overview
Number of people in your organization, subgroups (e.g., administration, support staff, students),
diversity of population, etc. ______________________________________________________

Activities/Primary Business Focus_____________________________________

For schools: What kinds of activities go on in your building? (Examples: teaching, lab work, classes for
English Language Learners, child care, training, student class work)

For Businesses: What is your primary business focus? ____________________________
Are there different divisions in your company and what does each do? __________________

Unique Qualities ___________________________________________________________
What makes your organization special or different from others? What are the business or school’s
character, history and mission? ___________________________________________________

Current Partnerships____________________________________________________
Provide a brief summary of your school or business’ current community involvement/volunteer
activities. __________________________________________________________________

Needs___________________________________________________
Which benefits or activity areas do you consider a high priority for your group? (Refer to your
responses on Partnership Benefits and the Activities Checklist.)

How will a partnership fit into your organization’s strategic plan?
3 Prepare the Foundation

Step three, *Prepare the Foundation*, includes strategies for developing Partnership teams that will development the best practices for creating a successful school-business partnership that enhances the education of students as well as provide them with benefits of interacting within the business world. Included are tips for planning a partner’s visit, an in-depth look at cultural differences that will aid in the relationship held with your partner, as well as examples of a collaborative partnership.
The Steering Committee

Who should be Involved?

Put together a team of at least three people from each partner that includes a variety of people:

- Big picture and detail-oriented
- Thinkers and doers
- Management and staff

On the business side, this may include people from:

- Human resources
- Executive representative
- Public relations
- Staff directly involved

On the school side, committee members may represent:

- The principal
- Teaching staff
- Parents
- The site council
- Youth and family coordinators
- Students

What Responsibilities are involved?

Business-based coordinator: Serves as primary contact between the business and the school. Responsible for recruiting employees for partnership activities, identifying corporate resources, coordinating activities and evaluations, working our administrative procedures and reporting to management.

School-based coordinator: Acts as main contact and school manager of the partnership. Responsible for recruiting school staff, matching business volunteers to specific teacher requests, conduction orientation for teachers and business volunteers, overseeing planning and evaluation of activities.

Business manager/school principal: Provides support partnership activities, such as release time for staff, orientation sessions and recognition activities. Needs to be involved in, or approve of, the partnerships structure and activities.

Business and school participants: Serve as the most important players in the partnership. Clearly define the role of partner volunteers in planning and implementing your activities.
Tips to Planning a Successful Partner Visit

This is your chance to make a good first impression. Use these tips as a helpful guideline to developing the foundation for meeting with your partner for the first time.

When setting up the initial visit:

• Provide the street address and phone number.
• Provide a street map if necessary.
• Describe the parking arrangements.
• Share any special procedures that visitors are required to follow, such as security or sign-in procedures.
• Clearly mark the visitor’s entrance route by putting up a welcome sign to greet your visitors.

While preparing for your visit:

• Brief your employees about the upcoming visit.
• Develop an agenda
  o Note the names, pronunciations and titles of all individuals who will be introduced.
  o Outline your visit providing references to a tour and or special speakers.
• Prepare business cards to share with your partner’s group.

The goal of exchanging site visits is to give your partner a chance to experience the “look and feel” of your organization. Business people can then better understand the reality of classrooms, and teachers get a taste of what goes on in the company. The experience will help you understand the “cultural differences” that exist, and allow you to plan activities with them in mind. See more information on cultural differences between schools and business later in this section.
The Exchange Visits

When planning the Exchange visit, remember to start and finish your meeting on time. Make sure to schedule enough time for each segment of the event, including: welcome address, introductions, tour, refreshments and discussion. Being well prepared for your meeting creates a positive first impression.

• **When brainstorming activity ideas**, remember to allow all ideas to be accepted during the first round. Let the creativity flow; you can narrow down the options later.

Sample Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Welcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Brief introductions: name, job/title, something interesting about you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Share impressions from the tour. Add observations to the Cultural Differences sheet or refer to your Activities Checklist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Brainstorm activity ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Schedule the next meeting or remind people of the next meeting date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Brainstorm activity ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pass out business cards and share phone numbers and e-mail addresses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cultural Differences

School and Business environments are made up of a many people from various cultural backgrounds. Learning those differences is an important element to understanding what makes partnerships work effectively for student benefit. Knowing your partner well is absolutely essential to creating a successful partnership. Use the graph below to determine what similarities and differences you and your partner share.

What would you and your partner add or delete from this chart?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Business</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Values</strong></td>
<td>Family feelings</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Single Building</td>
<td>Many different workplaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Everyone wins</td>
<td>Winners and losers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time tightly scheduled</td>
<td>Self-managed time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good Grades = Graduation</td>
<td>Good work = more work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main Purpose</strong></td>
<td>Educate students</td>
<td>Serve Customers well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students graduate and leave</td>
<td>Desire to keep job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment</strong></td>
<td>Noisy</td>
<td>Generally quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fun is OK</td>
<td>Fun often distrusted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Little contact outside school</td>
<td>Much contact outside business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult – Child interaction</td>
<td>Adult – Adult Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accountable to</strong></td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Stockholders and owners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State government</td>
<td>Co-workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School District</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collaborative Partnerships

In a collaborative partnership, each partner brings their own values and their unique processes for getting things done. Partners need time to get acquainted, to understand each other, to develop trust, and to find common ground.

This process often takes more time than partners would like to give it, but knowing your partner well is absolutely essential to a successful partnership. Acknowledge differences and learning to work together will allow the partnership to reach its goal with a minimum of misunderstandings that could take a long time to heal. Setting aside much of the first year for getting acquainted provides a firm foundation for future activities.

Partnership Agreements

- Partnership agreements or contacts can be helpful in clarifying expectations and involvement.
- What is your organization willing to do or to provide for the partnership’s activities?
- What do you expect from the partner?
- What time period frames each expectation—a single activity, a month, a school year or the life of the partnership?

Answering these questions frankly with your partner will ensure that everyone understands the goals and expectation in the same way.

Achieving Buy-in

Involving a representative group of people in planning and implementing the partnership is also crucial to success. This leads to broader commitment and participation on the part of your organization. It also alleviates feelings of being left out, of being forced into activities without prior agreement, or of being expected to participate in ways that are not consistent with a specific department position.

This buy-in can take place by creating a large Steering Committee with broad representation or by forming site committees that include a cross-section of departments/staff. The result will be widespread cooperation and support.
Step four, *Hold Organizational Meetings*, was developed as a guideline for developing your partnership structure by forming a dual vision and choosing partnership goals.
Meeting Structure

In addition to the role and responsibilities of group members, you will need to decide how the group will function during meetings. Listed below are some ground rules to consider and the most popular decision-making methods used by partner groups. As usual, adapt these to your particular situation.

Ground Rules to Consider

- Distribute the agenda a day or two before the meeting.
- Start and end your meeting on time.
- Prioritize agenda items as a group at the beginning of each meeting.
- Stick to business until the meeting is over.
- Listen to the person who has permission to speak.

Decision-making Methods

**Majority Rule:** Committee makes decisions based on the majority of votes.

*Advantage:*
- Useful when limited time is available for discussion

*Disadvantage:*
- Not everyone will be fully committed to the decision

**Consensus:** Decision is agreed to by all committee members.

*Advantage:*
- Allows every member to be heard, including quiet ones
- Allows members to thoroughly discuss pros and cons
- Uses conflict as a stimulus for discussion and creativity
- Creates decisions that everyone accepts and supports

*Disadvantage:*
- Very time-consuming
- Needs skill facilitating
Questions to Consider: Roles and Responsibilities

Have the group answer the following questions as you organize your partnership. While you’ll be able to answer some questions right away, others may need to be answered later. You may find that questions need to be adapted or added to reflect your partnership, so feel free to change them to meet your needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Person(s) Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Who will set the dates and call meetings?</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who will solicit items and set agendas?</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who will run the meetings?</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who will be the time keeper?</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who will facilitate the discussion?</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who will take minutes and distribute them?</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who will oversee the planning of activities?</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who will OK the use of your site resources?</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who will evaluate each activity?</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who will annually evaluate the partnership?</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional considerations

1. How will the coordinators communicate? (Note: Teachers are rarely available during school hours.)
2. How will coordinators communicate with their site participants?
3. How will you share with the community?
4. How will you become better acquainted and develop trust?
5. How will activities be chosen?

Some groups may find this process to be tedious and time-consuming. It can be, but it is necessary.
Initial Program Planning

These steps will probably take more than one meeting, but the complete outline is included here to give you an idea of the flow of topics.

1. **Brainstorm**
   **Review:**
   - Brainstorming notes from the tours
   - Activities Checklist
   - Partner Profiles from pages
   - Mission Statements from each site

   Record all ideas in your partnership manual. Add to your list when you have a new idea and review them all annually as you plan your next year.

2. **Form a vision.**
   Imagine what you would ideally like your partnership to be doing in three years. Write your vision down and refer to it during annual planning.

3. **Choose goals.**
   Imagine the vision and possibilities in to three to six activity areas that are important to both partners. For a first-year partnership, include “getting acquainted” as one goal. **See example: Year One Goals**

4. **Choose goals.**
   Decide on some first steps to reach your goals and vision.

5. **Formulate activity plans.**
   For each goal, list activities that will help you achieve them. **See example: Activity Plan, Year Two and Year Three**

6. **Prepare a calendar.**
   **See example: One-year Calendar**

7. **Assign People.**
   Who will be in charge of specific tasks?

8. **Announce the partnership.**
   Tell all employees, students, teachers and the community about your intentions and plans.

9. **Plan Communication.**
   How often will the Steering Committee meet? The program coordinators? How will members communicate with each other?
Example: Year One Goals
For the ABC Corporation and Smith School Partnership

- **Shared Goal: Become better acquainted.**
  
  **Objective:** Send four groups of three people from each partner to visit the other’s site to observe for a few hours a work day; take place over a period of three months.

  **Objective:** Hold a late Friday afternoon party in October for all participants, jointly planned and executed.

- **Shared Goal: Establish a presence in the respective partner’s site.**
  
  **Objective:** A different department from the business or grade from the school will being charge of creating a display for the partner each month during the school year.

- **Shared Goal: Participate together in collecting food for the food shelf.**
  
  **Objective:** The school and business will both promote this activity and then share a party to celebrate the amount collected.

- **Shared Goal: Help math curriculum become more real-world oriented.**
  
  **Objective:** Company engineers and fifth grade math teachers will work together to develop business-related math projects for students.

- **Shared Goal: Establish tutoring opportunities.**
  
  **Objective:** Business and School employees will join forces to become thoroughly involved in tutoring students. Demonstrating that there is nothing more essential than providing students the world’s best educational opportunities.
Plan and Implement Activities

Step five, *Plan and Implement Activities*, is designed to enhance educational awareness for businesses and schools through the implementation of activity, resource, and timeline planning procedures.
Activity Plan Guide

Below are some questions that you will need to answer as you make your decisions about partnership activities. Keep in mind your existing school and business mission and goals. The following examples may help you understand how this works in an actual partnership.

Goals
- What would you like to achieve for your site?
- Is your partner able to provide some resources? *(See Activities Checklist)*

  Shared Goal: Where do your needs and resources overlap?

Objective
- What specific, measurable activities will you do to reach or make progress toward your goal? Activities need to be reasonable to achieve, and framed within a specific time period.

Commitments
- What resources are you each willing to give this activity?

Baseline
- Where are you now in terms of this area?
- How can you measure this need now? *(You need to know your starting point in order to measure progress.)*

Evaluation Plan
- How will you measure progress/achievement?
- What information will be useful to you as you work together?
- Who will want to know about your progress?
- What will they want to know?
- Who will collect the data and how?
- How and when will this information be shared?
Example: Year Two Activity Plan

For the ABC Corporation and Smith School Partnership

**Business:** Provide employee development activities during the work day.

**School:** Improve parent support for children’s education.

**Shared Goal:** Inform employees on how to best support their children at school.

**Objective**

During the school year, parent educators and/or teachers give monthly presentations at the business during the noon hour.

**Commitments**

**Business:** Space, advertising, time

**School:** Speaker, time away from school to make presentation, handouts

**Baseline**

Occasional noontime entertainment is provided at the business, but at the time, no employee development activities are being offered.

**Evaluation Plan**

1. Will measure success by:
   - Number of attendees at each monthly session
   - Participant feedback
2. Partnership Coordinator will collect the data using a two-question feedback form
3. Information about the success of the activity will be shared in the school and business monthly newsletters.
4. The evaluation of the activity will be filed with other activity evaluations for use during Annual Evaluation.
Example: Year Three Activity Plan
For the ABC Corporation and Smith School Partnership

Business: To provide volunteer opportunities
School: To improve reading skills
Shared Goal: To use volunteers to improve the reading skills of students

Objective

To provide 12 tutors weekly to first-graders who need extra reading support

Commitments

Business: 12 people, release time from work for tutoring
School: Training and support for volunteers, class time for tutoring

Baseline

• Some first-graders are behind their grade level with reading.
• Small groups are presently used to assist students, but no individual tutors.
• Company wants to provide more school-based volunteer opportunities.

Evaluation Plan

1. Will measure success by:
   • Number of volunteer tutors sent weekly
   • Number of children tutored weekly
2. Feedback from teachers on helpfulness of individual tutoring approach
3. Feedback from tutors on their experiences
4. Partnership Coordinator will collect the data.
5. Information about the success of the activity will be shared in the school and business monthly newsletters.
6. The evaluation of the activity will be filed with other activity evaluations for use during Annual Evaluation.
# Example: One-Year Calendar of Activities

Possible activities over a one-year period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Summer</strong></th>
<th><strong>October:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **June:**  | • Put article in school and company newsletters.  
             • Hold a “Get Reacquainted” party. |
| • Include partner in end-of-year activities.  
  • Compile evaluation information. Share at June meeting. |
| **July:**  | **November:** |
| • Plan back-to-school event. |
| **August:** | • Thank partner. |
| • Include partnership information in back-to-school information for families, new staff.  
  • Send partner information about back-to-school events.  
  • Plan next year’s activities.  
  • Review communication system.  
  • Educate new staff at business and school about partnership.  
  • Recruit new volunteers. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Fall</strong></th>
<th><strong>Winter</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>September:</strong></td>
<td><strong>December:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • Celebrate last year’s accomplishments!  
  • Plan and set up partnership activities.  
  • Train new volunteers.  
  • Participate in recognition for partners. |
| • Work together on a service project. |
| **October:** | **January:** |
| • Meet for mid-year review and planning.  
  • Continue ongoing activities such as tutoring. |
| **November:** | **February:** |
| • Hold a job shadow event. |
| **Winter** | **Spring** |
| **December:** | **March:** |
| • Work together on a service project. |
| • Display items from partnership during school conference or business event. |
| **March:** | **April:** |
| • Hold volunteer appreciation event.  
  • Participate in “Take Your Child to Work” project. |
| **April:** | **June:** |
| • Do it all again! |
Types of Activities

As you plan your activities, you may want to consider the type of activities and how each activity and its type fit into your overall activity framework.

There are four types of activities you may plan:

1. **Support existing activities**: The partner will help you with activities you already do.
2. **Introduce new activities**: You and your partner are doing new activities together.
3. **Integrate new information**: You and your partner are integrating new activities and information into existing activities.
4. **Change existing structures**: You or your partner will change the way you do a regular part of your work.

Based on the four main activity goal areas, here are some examples.

**Professional Expertise Goals**  
*Staff provides expertise to partner.*  
Activity ideas:  
- Collaborate on food-shelf project (type 1)  
- Monthly displays at partner’s site (type 3)

**Support Activities Goals**  
*Partner provides resources for a project.*  
Activity ideas:  
- Bring situational work problems into math curriculum (type 2)

**Motivation/Recognition Goals**  
*Partners celebrate accomplishments or people.*  
Activity ideas:  
- October party (type 2)
Recruiting Volunteers

Recruiting volunteers is essential to a successful partnership. These ideas have proven effective in other partnerships, but may need to be adapted to yours.

Successful recruiting depends on:

• Showing potential volunteers the need for their participation
• Identifying the skills and resources needed for each activity
• Communicating the commitment expected: time, location, skills
• Recruiting for several activities at once, offering a variety of ways to serve
• Providing a reliable, knowledgeable contact person who can answer questions

The most successful recruiting methods include:

• Testimonials from colleagues about their own volunteer experiences
• Examples of real-life benefits gained by students, educators, business staff
• Student presentations: in person, by letter, by e-mail, in a music program
• A joint presentation by school and business management representatives

Recruiting events may include:

• A brown bag lunch presentation
• A recruiting table in the employee lunchroom with display and sign-up sheet
• Informational tent cards on lunchroom tables
• A root beer float party (symbolizing the partnership idea)
• A student music presentation

Be creative! In any case, have written information available to hand out to potential participants, provide an immediate sign-up form, and do some follow-up to reach undecided or additional people.
Training Volunteers

When developing a successful partnership, it is important to create an effective volunteer training strategy that meets the needs of both schools and businesses. It is also important that all volunteers are aware of the participation guidelines so they can feel confident about fulfilling partnership expectations. Use the questions below as a guide as you create your volunteer training strategy.

Training Outline

1. Who needs to be trained?
2. What skills will be achieved as a result of the training?
3. What basic orientation information do volunteers also need to know? (e.g., parking information, worksite, policies, restroom location, etc.)
4. Who is qualified to do the training?
5. What is the best location for training?

To attract and keep your volunteers, ensure that:

• They have a positive experience (training)
• They feel appreciated for their involvement (recognition)
• They are asked for their feedback (evaluation)
6 Publicize, Evaluate and Recognize

Step six, *Publicize, Evaluate and Recognize*, provides helpful suggestions for publicizing your partnership to provide awareness of your activities in the community as well as recognizing partnership participants. This section also includes tips and suggestions for evaluating the partnership activities that were developed to enhance educational achievement.
Keeping in Touch

Partners are connected to many communities who need or want to be informed about partnership activities. This list is a sample to draw from and edit for your own needs and purposes.

Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business:</th>
<th>School:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Volunteers</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Volunteers</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Management</td>
<td>Non-teaching Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Employees</td>
<td>District Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers</td>
<td>Families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both:

City Government
Chamber of Commerce
City Residents
State Government
Local Businesses
Partnership Organizations

Ways to Communicate

- Phone calls, greeting cards, letters, e-mails, and faxes
- Newsletters, newspapers and trade magazine articles
- Yearbooks
- Posters and bulletin boards
- Exhibits, banners or flags
- Website
- Social Media
- E-Newsletters
- Radio spots and cable TV
- Site announcements, staff meetings, public presentations
Publicizing your partnership will not only generate awareness of the innovative things you are doing, but will also help give recognition to all the people involved in the activities. Following are some ideas for publicity:

**News Releases**

**News releases may be appreciated by:**
- School newsletter
- Company newsletter
- Community newspaper
- Chamber of Commerce newsletter
- Larger news media (for special events)
- Social Media Networks

**A news release should include:**
- Date
- School name, coordinator, phone number, e-mail address
- Business name, coordinator, phone number, e-mail address
- Description of activity and participants
- Remember the question word: who, what, where, why and how
- Name, phone and e-mail address of contact person for questions
- Photo (make sure the photo is clear and the subject interesting)
Evaluating Activities

**Evaluate often.**
Partners in a good partnership know that the best partnership programs are not invented… they “evolve” over time. What works today might work even better tomorrow. What didn’t work yesterday might work today. Make a point to continually evaluate your program as it builds and evolves.

When evaluating each activity, look back to your Activity Plan Worksheet (sample on pages 5–3) to remind yourself of your evaluation plan. Ask yourself, “What worked?” “What could have been better?” “How will we improve our process or activities going forward?”
Activity Evaluation Form

Partners
School: _______________________________ Business: _______________________________
Partnership Coordinator Name: ___________________________________________________
Phone: ___________________________ E-mail: ______________________________________

Activity Information
Name of activity: _______________________________________________________________
Date of activity: __________________________

What worked well?

What needs to change to make the activity or objective more successful in the future?

Did this activity meet your objective? (Why or why not?)

Number of people involved in your target groups: _______________________________
Is there need for additional participants? _____________ How many? ________________
Who needs to be involved?_____________________________________________________

Resources used:
- Volunteer hour
- Other resources
  (please list): _______________________________________________________________
- Monetary resources:
- Grant programs or other sources (please list):
Thanking Your Partner

Ideas

• Write an article for the site newsletter or community newspaper.
• Send thank you notes, drawings, cards or photos.
• Provide a banner, sign or seasonal decorations for the partner’s site.
• Invite partners to a picnic, concert, sports event or open house.
• Help your partner host an event, clean a work site, or develop a special project.
• Give your partner volunteer special ribbons, certificates, T-shirts, pens or other mementos of appreciation.
• Take pictures or shoot some video footage of your partnership activities and share with your partner. Document all your activities in a scrapbook.
The final step of the partnership process, *Maintain the Partnership*, provides details on how to effectively develop your annual evaluation forms, review future partnership goals, plan for next year’s partnership activities and maintain quality educational opportunities.
Annual Evaluation Questions

At the end of the school year, it is useful to review your individual activity evaluation and do a “big picture” look at the partnership. This will help you assess what you have done and where you are going. The following questions provide possible data, but your evaluation needs to be adapted to match your unique objectives, information needs and audience. Feel free to delete or change these questions or add new ones to suit your partnership’s situation.

Summary Statistics
(Refer back to your individual Activity Evaluations)

• What kinds and how many activities did you do?
• How many people were involved – students, school staff, employees, families?
• What resources did you use? What kinds? How many or how much?

Evaluating Objectives

• What were the partnership’s major accomplishments this past year?
• Did you make progress towards or achieve each objective?
• What was good about your activities?
• What could have been better?
• What improvements would you like to make for next year?

Evaluating the Partnership Structure

• What is working well with your partnership?
• What needs to change for your partnership to work more effectively?
• Are your goals still appropriate for the next year?
• Would you like to add, delete or change any goals?
• Has your organization’s commitment been appropriate for your partner and your partnership activities?
• Has your partner’s commitment been appropriate for the partnership?

Partnership Transition Periods

It is common for partnerships to go through periods of transition and uncertainty, especially when a partner business is purchased by another company, or a coordinator is transferred. Partnerships may need to be put “on hold” until things settle down and new coordinators can be found, or until it is determined whether the new parent company will still have the partnership as a priority. If this happens to your partnership, talk honestly with your partner about whether you should dissolve your connection or be patient and hope that it can continue at a later time.
Annual Evaluation Form

Partnership Information

School: ___________________________ School Year: ______________________

Business: ____________________________________________________________________

Partnership Coordinator: _______________________________________________________

Phone: __________________________E-mail: _____________________________________

Activity Summary Statistics

Total number of activities: _________________________________

Total # people involved:
Students:_______ Employees:_______
School Staff:_______ Families: ________

Resources:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Volunteer Hours spent on activities</th>
<th>School /Business</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$______ $______</td>
<td>$ ______</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other in-kind resources (please list)

Total monetary resources spent on or contributed toward activities

Please note below any special grant programs, national corporate resources or other resources that may have been contributed.

Evaluating Partnership Objectives

1. What were the partnership’s major accomplishments this past year?

2. Did you make progress toward or achieve each objective?

3. What improvements would you like to make for next year?

4. What about the partnership is working particularly well?

5. What improvements would you like to see?
Continued Program Planning

Every year, your group will need to have an organizational meeting to review your vision and goals. When goals have been set, you are ready to plan the next year’s activities. Refer to the One-Year Calendar for specific ideas and events you want to include.

1. **Review your vision.**
   - Does the original vision still fit, or does it need to be revised?
   - Share this with new partnership members.

2. **Choose goals.**
   - Review evaluation feedback from activities and annual evaluation before beginning this part. Are last year’s goals still appropriate or do they need to be revised or replaced?
   - Are you ready for a new goal or two as well?

3. **Set Objectives.**
   - Brainstorm ideas and choose the best for your group.

4. **Formulate activity plans.**
   - Select activities that will help you achieve each of your goals. (See Year Two and Year Three Activity Plans)

5. **Prepare a calendar.**
   - Include meeting times and special events for each partner, as well as joint activities.

6. **Assign people.**
   - Who will be in charge of special tasks?

7. **Plan ongoing communication.**
   - Update the phone and e-mail list. Plan regular meeting dates.