

Sustain.

KEYS TO SUCCESS



Mission

Jointly established, focus on student needs



Matching Needs and Resources

Do not focus on money



Mutual Benefits

All partners benefit from the outcomes



Communication/Community Relations

Promote in schools, partners, and community through many mediums



Leadership

School based and community based



Commitment

Top level support



Recognition

On an annual and on-going basis



Organization

Policies & procedures for managing volunteer and financial resources



Coalition Building

Inclusive of all stakeholders

What Makes a Great Partnership?

Commitment. Ownership of the program is a by-product of personal involvement and enthusiasm. Ongoing involvement, rather than a one-time gift, is the key to outstanding partnerships. Each partnership is autonomous—there are no prescribed responsibilities. Schools identify their needs and sponsors identify resources and projects. A mutual agreement spells out commitments, activities, time frames and responsibilities. Partners must recognize that the school administration and staff are primarily responsible for the students, their education and their well-being. It must be understood that the school has final approval for all decisions affecting students.

Communication. The lines of communication must run both ways. To have a strong, effective partnership, the school needs to communicate its goals and needs to its partners. In turn, partners need to be honest about their objectives and resources. Each side should feel free to express when the relationship is not meeting those goals and objectives. Understanding the expectations and limitations up front will set the foundation for a long-lasting relationship. A system of sharing information between and among partners should be employed to ensure full utilization of available resources. The major emphasis is on voluntary human resources to enrich offerings that support the educational environment. A LEAP partnership is not a device for boosting sagging school budgets.

Enthusiasm. All parties involved are excited about the programs. Enthusiasm is sustained by regular communication within the partner, between the partner and the school, within the school, and among students, parents, and partners. The program developed by each partnership should be goal-oriented with a built-in evaluation process.

Good mix of partners. Since many businesses and organizations give of what they already have, it is helpful to have different kinds of partners. Be aware that some businesses may prefer not to participate with their direct competitors. Both partners should attempt an understanding of each others' institution.

Planning and organization. Schools with strong programs develop annual and monthly plans and hold events to discuss these plans with their community partners. Partners are kept informed about upcoming events at the school and opportunities for involvement. Projects should be designed to support the total development of all children—culturally, socially, and economically.

Proximity of the partners to the school. A school nearby shortens time away from work for volunteers, and helps both students and the partner organization to build a sense of community. The closer the school is, the more often the volunteers will be there. Partners grouped near one another, as well as near the school, become a true working team.

ACTION PLAN

Achievement Partner:

School Partner:

School Improvement Plan item being addressed:

Business/Organization goal being addressed:

Title of project or activity	Curriculum objective for students – purpose of project or activity	Role of community partners (identify lead person)	Role of school partners (identify the person who is in the lead)	Timeline Dates	Evaluation after completion	Notes

Suggested Fall Partner Kick-Off Event

The first meeting of the school year is especially important. This meeting should include selected staff members, parent leaders, student leaders, and all partners.

Provide each partner with important school information including:

- Schedule of school events
- Official school calendar
- Summary of needs survey
- Map or floor plan of the school
- School profile and demographics
- School handbook
- School newsletter
- List of Partners with coordinators' names, telephone numbers, and company addresses
- Blank Partnership Agreement

Schedule future partnership meetings at a convenient time for

everyone involved. Many meetings are best attended when held during lunch or before work. Poll your partners for their preference. These meetings are informal and intended to promote warm, friendly relationships among community people.

An **agenda** could include:

- A welcome by the school principal and school coordinator. At the first meeting of the year, include remarks by the principal on the school's history, goals, and special programs.
- Encourage people to tell a little about how and why they are involved in the school so they become more than just a face and a name.
- A review by the school coordinator of previous activities and contributions, ideally mentioning at least one item about each partner. Let them see your appreciation and enthusiasm firsthand.
- Discuss upcoming school events where partner involvement is needed. Partnership agreements are used to make the commitment definite and concrete. Schools are more apt to get volunteers for a specific event if they have an agreement prior to the activity.
- Brainstorm about unmet needs and how best to accomplish school goals. Even if they can't assist you directly, they may be able to provide a link to someone who can.
- Community partners love to see students in action. Consider a tour of the school, a short student program, or a visit to a class activity.

Dissolving Partnerships

Sometimes it becomes necessary to dissolve the partnership because of changes in focus of the school and/or business. Since partner relationships are often dependent upon the individuals who have developed the partnership, it can mean the end of the partnership when either coordinator changes. Before you give up on a partnership, make sure the top manager has been contacted and is aware of the change in partnership support. That person will confirm the need to no longer participate in the program or else gain a heightened awareness of the partnership and give it energized support. Please refer to the "Partner Criteria Policy" under the "Inform." section of the Coordinator Handbook.

Please feel free to contact the LEAP office for assistance with this procedure.

P: 330-2434

E: leap@usd497.org