

Want Great Partnerships Next Year? Evaluate this year!

By Ruth Anne Landsverk

Evaluating your Action Team's progress is a valuable way to begin to set goals and strategies for improving partnerships next year. Review your team's One-Year Action Plan or Three-Year Outline to see which goals have been achieved, which need to be discarded, and which could be "tweaked," or done differently for better results next year.

Your team might want to answer these general questions as it considers how partnership efforts made a difference for students, families, and staff:

- Which partnership **practices** are presently strong? Which are weak? Which should continue? Expand to other grade levels or subject areas? Which should be dropped?
- Did partnership practices address **families'** interests and needs about keeping informed and involved in children's learning?
- Did partnership practices strengthen the learning goals that **teachers** had for students?
- Which **families** did you reach and which are not yet involved? How might all families be involved?
- What did **students** expect their families to do to help them with school life and homework? What do students want the school to do to inform and involve their families?
- What **relationships** among families, teachers, students, and other school staff have been strengthened by partnerships this year? What relationships could be improved next year?
- Was your partnership **budget** adequate? Was it used to support your Action Team's goals?
- Were the **contributions and skills** of families and the community used to support your Action Team goals? Could they be used more effectively next year?

The major goals here are to reach families who might not have been involved this year, to better connect partnerships to school goals, and to strengthen the work of the Action Team and partnerships, in general.

Remember, good partnerships take time – at least three years to really approach being comprehensive. Taking the time to review will help your school lay the groundwork for continual improvement and sustainability.