

A blue graduation cap with a tassel is positioned diagonally across the frame. To its left, a portion of a diploma is visible, featuring a circular seal and the text "BACH IN P". The background is a light blue gradient.

a primer on
**educational
partnerships:**
ingredients for
SUCCESS



California Academic Partnership Program
July 1998

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What Is CAPP?

Created in 1983, the California Academic Partnership Program (CAPP) is dedicated to improving the preparation of all students for postsecondary education and careers. Through funded partnerships, CAPP addresses issues of strengthening curricula and improving classroom teaching practice. CAPP encourages business and community partnerships that can assist in providing student services such as tutoring, mentoring, and academic counseling. In its 15-year history, CAPP has supported some 50 partnerships involving 145 separate institutions and approximately 3,000 teachers and college and university faculty. Over 130,000 K-12 students participated in CAPP-sponsored projects, with many more gaining benefit from new curricula and learning and teaching strategies.

CAPP is funded by the State of California. It is administered by the California State University system and is an intersegmental effort of California schools and postsecondary institutions. The program is administered with the assistance of an Advisory Committee that provides policy and program direction.

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Introduction

**We have to put a sense of urgency into...
the improvement of public education;
we need to move outside of the traditional
way of thinking.**

Charles B. Reed, Chancellor, California State University

Increasingly, policy makers, community members, parents and business leaders are calling upon those engaged in the education of the nation's youth to work together more effectively to assure that graduates of our schools are prepared to move on to higher education and to an ever more demanding work place. Now as never before, schools are asked to partner with colleges, universities, community agencies and business organizations. Through partnerships, the academic resources of colleges can be brought to bear on the educational challenges of the schools. Through partnerships, the support of businesses and other community groups can be engaged to provide depth and breadth to classroom experiences.

This booklet is intended to introduce some elementary considerations in the establishment and launching of partnerships. It is based, in large part, upon the experience of the California Academic Partnership Program (CAPP). A pioneering effort in encouraging partnerships, CAPP was authorized by the California State Legislature in 1983 to develop partnerships that "improve the academic quality of public secondary schools," with the objective of preparing students for post-secondary study and careers. CAPP is one of a growing number of collaborative approaches

that pool and coordinate resources to improve the chance of success for young people.

This primer outlines various kinds of partnerships, and sets forth ten elements or ingredients of successful educational partnerships. It is designed to give information about what it means to participate in a partnership, so you may decide if this approach will fit your goals and potential partners. It is *not* intended to describe the concrete steps or processes involved in creating and maintaining partnerships. There are many publications that are helpful in this regard; some are listed in the References and Recommended Reading list at the end of this booklet.

Reading the primer, we hope, will assist in anticipating the many challenges in partnering. We believe it will also demonstrate the many benefits that can be achieved by schools, colleges, businesses and agencies working together as co-equals to pursue the objective of improving the learning opportunities for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12.

Partnerships as Catalysts for Change

The present condition of education in the United States is making it evident to school and college educators that educational system isolation is not in the best interests of education ... Whether the system be the K-12 schools, the community colleges, or the universities, system isolation leads to a lack of effectiveness, which leads to a lack of educational excellence for the students.

Dennis Galligani, *Achieving Academic Excellence Through School/College Partnerships, 1987-1990.*

A partnership is a formalized relationship between dissimilar individuals, groups or organizations that decide to join forces because they can achieve a mutual goal better together than they can alone. Partnerships are different from networks, which are relationships between similar entities that share an interest. For a partnership to work, at a minimum the organizations involved must have a mutual vision and goal. Further, there must be “mutual satisfaction of self-interests; and sufficient selflessness on the part of each member to assure the satisfaction of self-interests on the part of all members” (Sirotnik and Goodlad 1988, 14).

Partnerships are rewarding to participants on an individual professional level as well as in the big-picture accomplishment of improved schools, higher student academic achievement, and readiness of young adults for work. School teachers and college faculty are stimulated by working with colleagues in other

schools and on other campuses. Staff and administrators come to understand how “the other guys” do it. Business partners can impact educational programs to respond to their future work force needs. All partners can improve their public image and employee morale.

Despite these benefits, partnerships are not to be embarked on lightly. Successful partnerships require dedication, extra effort, time, and a sense of mission. They do not emerge instantaneously, but are the end result of a planned process. Synonyms for partnership include *participation, partaking, sharing, involvement, cooperation, and collegiality*. Working collaboratively can be equally rewarding and challenging. At the outset, it is important to secure organizational commitment and buy-in to the principle of partnering, with the understanding of what will be involved.

Consider what you hope to accomplish with your project, and whether a partnership is the best way to get you there. A recent national inventory (Wilbur and Lambert 1995) found over 2,300 educational partnerships which serve a variety of purposes and include different partners: public schools, community colleges, four-year colleges, universities, businesses and community-based organizations. The project’s goal dictates which types of organizations must be involved (for example, school-to-career goals should involve the schools and colleges as well as the businesses for which students are being prepared).

Following are some topics that lend themselves to educational partnerships:

- **Tutoring, mentoring and service learning programs in the schools**—for example, those sponsored by the California State University, the University of Southern California's Joint Educational Partnership, and the new State-funded Student Academic Partnership Grants (SB316) which provide support for college students to tutor in the schools.
- **Applications of technology to teaching, often involving businesses**—for example, the Arthur Andersen partnership with Alameda High School that created a technology-focused school-within-a-school.
- **Adopt-a-School**—these partnerships typically involve business and other agencies that agree to provide volunteer services and resources to a given school.
- **Collaborative research on teaching and learning**—for example, research conducted at the University of California, Davis Center for Cooperative Research and Extension Services for Schools (CRESS), in partnership with public schools.
- **College-level instruction for pre-collegiate students**—for example, the Step-to-College program at San Francisco State University which provides university courses to high school students; and the Advanced Placement Program of the College Board, itself a pioneering partnership of schools and colleges.
- **Preparation of underrepresented students for college**—the Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement (MESA) program is an example of a long-standing, major project.
- **K-16/K-18 Councils**—the Education Trust, initially sponsored by the American Association of Higher Education, has mounted a major national initiative which has encouraged the establishment of local or regional K-16 or K-18 Councils designed to bring the schools and teacher training institutions together to work on curriculum, teacher preparation and school reform and accountability.
- **School-to-Career or School-to-Work**—for example, the UniteLA partnership between schools, business, state government, the military, labor, and community and four-year higher education institutions which is designed to prepare students for specific career clusters.
- **Regional multiple-purpose partnerships which include a number of institutions and schools in a region**—the Los Angeles Annenberg Metropolitan Project (LAAMP) is one such joint effort of universities, business, and school districts that works with school clusters in various aspects of school improvement and reform including professional development, school management and drop-out prevention.

Ingredients of Successful Educational Partnerships

True collaboration, by providing an opportunity for all stakeholders—Kindergarten through university, local businesses and community organizations—to exchange expertise and best practices on an equal basis, builds a foundation for school improvement.

Nina Moore, Chair, CAPP Advisory Committee
and Office of the President, University of California

Ten elements are necessary for a partnership to fulfill its vision and purpose. Although this primer emphasizes examples and recommendations from California academic curricular-reform partnerships,¹ the following ingredients for success apply to partnerships with a broad spectrum of missions:

- **Shared vision and goals**
- **Attention to communication**
- **Appreciation of institutional differences**
- **An appropriate organizational model**
- **Leaders who cross institutional boundaries**
- **Committed, responsible members**
- **Involvement of dissimilar partners**
- **Ongoing evaluation**
- **Adequate resources**
- **Processes to stay relevant**

Shared Vision and Goals: *A Oneness of Purpose*

Multi-institutional involvement gives diversity, helping us and them to better understand each other.

CAPP Partnership Participant

A partnership must have a clear vision of the outcomes of its work. The vision should be developed mutually by all partners, not imposed by one individual or organization. Because the vision is created cooperatively, it is understood and owned by all. Goals that flow from the vision should also be mutually created and should reflect the extent to which each partner benefits. A partnership's goals should be those that are best met by working together. If goals can be achieved just as effectively by one partner working alone, there may be no need for a partnership. Assumptions about the ways and means of reaching project goals must also be shared and explicitly stated.

Goals must be measurable so that progress can be ascertained. "Agreement to have all students in a high school successfully complete Algebra 1 prior to graduation" is an example of a clear, measurable goal around which a partnership could be developed.

1 Most examples are drawn from qualitative evaluations of CAPP's 1984-87 and 1987-90 grantees (Galligani 1990), and from the Student and Teacher Educational Partnership (Gomez et al. 1990).

SEAMLESS TRANSITION PROJECT

Tennyson High School, Hayward Unified School District

A CAPP Project

This project is a good example of a partnership that focused on a clear, measurable goal: to prepare 80 percent of students in project programs (a fourfold increase) to meet college academic performance levels in mathematics and written expression by the end of the eleventh grade.

Partners are Tennyson High School and the Hayward Unified School District; California State University, Hayward; Chabot Community College; Robm and Haas; and Students in Business. The project includes a “Prep to College” course to develop academic skills and tutoring sessions taught by college students, college faculty and Tennyson teachers. Curriculum units in English and mathematics have been prepared jointly by faculty from the University and Tennyson. Also featured are summer academic support programs and writing assessments using the university’s student performance levels as benchmarks.

The focus on a specific goal led to rapid, visible results. After only two years, the number of students taking the SAT and PSAT increased threefold. Attendance rates have increased. More than half of the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students in the program’s sophomore cohort have achieved the “competence” level on the written essay. The GPA of students in the program is 2.7 compared to 2.23 for the general student body.

The program currently involves one quarter of the freshman and sophomore classes. By 2001, the majority of students schoolwide should be involved in the program and meeting college academic performance standards by the end of their junior year.

As the vision and goals are crafted, mutual self-interest should be explicitly acknowledged. The partnership concerned with improving student basic skills, for example, serves the school partner by demonstrating improved student performance on mandated accountability measures. The college partner benefits from students who are better prepared for

college-level work and do not need to take remedial courses. Business partners will ultimately have a pool of qualified job applicants and an enhanced image in their community. Often, however, the direct benefit to non-school partners is not obvious. The more explicitly the benefits can be stated, and re-stated, the better.

Some educational partnerships advise having a broad vision and long-term goals, but recommend beginning with short-term goals and limited activities that can be accomplished in a reasonably short time. Goals and objectives also need to be reviewed regularly to ascertain which can be successfully pursued and which can be dropped or deferred.

Goals, mutually developed and put in writing, must be fully discussed so that each partner understands its respective responsibilities. The goal-setting process leads to a better understanding of the dissimilarities of the environments, approaches and time priorities of the partners. For example, partners may move at different rates toward the common goal. High school partners want to see immediate academic improvement of students, whereas higher education partners are focused on the longer-term outcome of graduation and college enrollment. The challenge is to assure that overall movement toward the goal is consistent and coordinated.

Partners should be clear on each other's priorities and the ways in which outcomes are measured. Partnerships involving schools must align their outcome measures with the long-range plans and accountability measures of the school district which, in turn, are influenced by local school board and State-level directions. Otherwise, non-school

partners will be seen as peripheral to the core practices of the district or worse, an intrusion and an impediment rather than a valuable resource (Gomez et al. 1990, 19). To establish a partnership goal which, for example, is perceived to reduce emphasis on reading in the elementary grades runs counter to fundamental priorities of the schools.

Non-school partners should be aware of the broad categories of accountability measures for California public schools so they can understand what drives the responses of school leaders and teachers. For example, an accountability report card is issued annually by all school districts for each of their schools. The report assesses sixteen school conditions that are listed in the box on the following page. Summaries of other school data are released annually by the California Department of Education (School Performance Report, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ftpbranch/retdiv/epic>). Partnership goals should complement some or all of these statewide goals.

A useful resource for this stage of partnership development is *To Advance Learning: A Handbook on Developing K-12 Post-secondary Partnerships*, by Manuel Gomez and his colleagues (1990). The handbook provides a twelve step "how-to" process from setting objectives through reporting progress of partnership activities.

THE MODEL SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT CARD
(California Education Code 35256)

State law requires that California schools assess themselves in terms of sixteen school conditions:

- 1. Student achievement in and progress toward meeting reading, writing, arithmetic and academic goals.*
- 2. Progress toward reducing dropout rates.*
- 3. Estimated expenditures per student, and types of services funded.*
- 4. Progress toward reducing class sizes and teaching loads.*
- 5. Assignment of teachers outside their subject areas of competence.*
- 6. Quality and currency of textbooks and other instructional materials.*
- 7. Availability of qualified personnel to provide counseling and other student support.*
- 8. Availability of qualified substitute teachers.*
- 9. Safety, cleanliness, and adequacy of school facilities.*
- 10. Adequacy of teacher evaluations and opportunities for professional improvement.*
- 11. Classroom discipline and climate for learning.*
- 12. Teacher and staff training and curriculum improvement programs.*
- 13. Quality of instruction and leadership.*
- 14. The degree to which high school students are prepared to enter the work force.*
- 15. The total number of instructional minutes offered in the school year, separately stated by grade level, as compared to the total number of instructional minutes per school year required by law, stated for each grade level.*
- 16. The total number of minimum days in the school year, as specified in the Education Code.*

Attention to Communication: *Listen While You Work*

Only when partners have developed a good working relationship will 'real,' significant issues rise to the surface of discussions.

Once partners are comfortable with each other from a philosophical perspective (and this requires an investment of time and sensitivity), the partnership can develop a core set of values that is crucial to fulfilling partnership goals.

CAPP Project Director

Communication, as might be expected, is of singular importance in successful partnerships. This refers both to the process of sharing information, and the ways in which individuals interact with one another. Good communication among all involved partners creates mutual trust and respect, both of which are essential to a well-functioning partnership. Experience of CAPP projects indicates that partnerships with no previous history of collaboration can be successful. However, for many reasons, those with some collaborative experience are more likely to succeed.

Academic partnerships typically involve school sites, one or more colleges and universities, and perhaps business or government entities, parents of the students in the schools and the students themselves. Each partner brings to the table different bureaucratic structures, priorities, language and norms, as well as varying levels of confidence and comfort in working collaboratively. It is difficult enough for several schools within a district, or several departments within a university, to communicate clearly, listen respectfully, check for understanding, and come to mutual agreement on issues.

When partners are as disparate as business, school and community, time must be devoted to communication processes.

Communications must be open and often. Communications may take the form of monthly meetings of a steering committee, frequent meetings among co-directors, and informal word-of-mouth information about on-site activities. Newsletters, e-mail messages, and Web pages can all provide information about the program and solicit feedback from stakeholders. A mix of communication channels is desirable.

Your partnership may be one of many that address a similar agenda, such as the academic partnerships emphasizing school reform that are sponsored by CAPP, or those within the California School Academy Initiative. Communication between and among projects that share a common goal can create a learning community whose members communicate successes, challenges, and approaches that have worked.

Special note should be made concerning communication among school site partnerships. A recent Bay Area School Reform Collaborative call for proposals points out: "Though it has been commonplace to talk about becoming a 'learning community,' schools more often compete with rather than learn from each other." For schools to work together successfully, there should be a mutual commitment to share what they are learning with and from each other. The same can be said regarding relationships among colleges that are members of a partnership.

BAY AREA SCHOOL REFORM COLLABORATIVE (BASRC)

One example of a large, comprehensive learning community is the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC), which is supported by a \$50 million challenge grant from the Hewlett and Annenberg Foundations and matched by an additional \$50 million. The Collaborative demonstrates an effort to bring coherence to multiple, fragmented school reform efforts underway in the San Francisco Bay Area. (There is a similar regional collaborative in the Los Angeles area known as LAAMP—Los Angeles Annenberg Metropolitan Project.)

BASRC concentrates its funds in schools which make an explicit commitment to take on a leadership role in the region. Schools that are not yet ready to take on this extra commitment participate as collaborative members. Funding is used to support whole-school change efforts that have the potential to improve the learning of all students. Current professional development workshops and seminars sponsored by BASRC focus on standards and assessment, public engagement, literacy, leadership, and diversity.

The Board of Trustees for the Collaborative includes leaders from business, higher education, government, labor, the community, and the schools. A Delegate Assembly composed of representatives from all members provides input to the Board. At the start of the 1997-98 academic year, BASRC had 269 member organizations, including 53 districts, 187 schools (55 of which are leadership schools and which receive direct funding), and 27 support providers such as colleges and universities. Member schools enrolled 19 percent of the Bay Area's students reflecting the region's demographic characteristics. BASRC demonstrates that a large partnership designed to coordinate multiple efforts is possible; time is needed to determine the effort's lasting impact and capacity to continue as major external funding ends.

Establishing the fundamentals of communication, and the trust and respect that grow among members, often takes longer than expected. Ideally, this process will have occurred among at least the key partnership

leaders before funding is sought. Otherwise, sufficient time and resources must be built in to the project to build the spirit of mutual trust, respect, reliability, and identified shared values so essential to a partnership's success.

Appreciation of Institutional Differences:

Take a Walk in Their Shoes

The world of education and the world of business function in different ways. Understanding business operational practices makes it easier to communicate effectively.

Algebra: Providing Access for All Project, Culver City Unified School District, Final Report

Partnerships that include higher education and school faculty must recognize certain basic differences in orientation and environment between the two. College professors divide their attention between the institution and their discipline. Reward structures tend to favor recognition in the discipline rather than skill in the classroom. In contrast, teacher recognition depends on classroom performance (Gross 1988, 46). Time for research, reflection and special projects that is part of university life does not exist for the average school teacher. College faculty are responsible for curriculum development and implementation, while K-12 teachers have flexibility in implementation but little discretion in curriculum content.

Partnership participants should make an extra effort to keep abreast of “hot topics” within their partners’ environments. For example, university participants should be aware of the external pressures upon K-12 schools to adopt standards and assess student and school progress in terms of those standards.

Each partner needs to understand the other’s institutional requirements and chain of command. For example, a university partner may need a single sign-off to attend a conference, while a teacher may need a time-consuming

specific action by the school board, superintendent and/or principal. Limits on the use of facilities and equipment may be placed on one partner but not on another. Understanding the other partner’s constraints is part of acknowledging the “dissimilarity” aspect of the working partnership.

An Appropriate Organizational Model: One Size Doesn’t Fit All

There was no one model that worked for all [CAPP] projects. ... The key ingredient seemed to be the extent to which administrative support was provided, district and school needs were clearly defined, and an environment for faculty-to-faculty interaction was established.

Dennis Galligani, Achieving Academic Excellence Through School/College Partnerships, 1987-1990.

A one-size-fits-all model for partnerships does not exist. Although there are statewide partnerships, such as the Mathematics Engineering and Science Achievement Program, most are smaller and based in a local school. Each environment demands a structure that reflects the uniqueness of its participants and can adapt to changes in the partnership’s priorities and needs over time (Sirotnik and Goodlad 1988, 220).

The organizational structure that evolves should be able to respond affirmatively to the following questions:

- Are partners willing to make long-term commitments?
- Is there a commitment to shared governance?

- Is there a commitment to ongoing evaluation?
- Is there a fully representative administrative body?
- Is there an expectation of continuity in that body and in project direction?
- Is there a teacher advisory committee?
- Is there an implementation plan of sufficient scope?
- Have needed resources been identified?

- Will partners be co-equal participants in leading partnership activities?

Colleges, universities and schools are bureaucratic organizations. (It is this fact that tends to most frustrate would-be business partners who do not understand the multiple levels of authority and consequent delays in public organizations.) To the extent possible, a partnership should not create a new bureaucratic organization. Instead, it should rely on the partner institutions' lines of authority to cascade through the entire membership.

PROJECT STEP

Orange County

A CAPP Project

Project STEP (Student/Teacher Educational Partnership), a long-term, multi-purpose collaborative effort involving Santa Ana Schools; the University of California, Irvine; California State University, Fullerton; and Chapman and Rancho Santiago Colleges identified eight features related to the partnership's longevity. Half of these are related to organizational structure.

- *Long-term commitment from partners.*
- *An administrative council composed of high level representatives to provide a foundation to overcome organizational pressures.*
- *Shared governance in which leadership is exerted by district and school site staff in collaboration with four-year participants.*
- *Co-equal participation with each partner taking the lead for one or more program components.*
- *A teacher advisory committee to ensure responsiveness to school site initiatives.*
- *A comprehensive scope for the program.*
- *A focused action plan aligned with long-term institutional goals.*
- *Adequate resources committed to the support of cross-segmental activities.*

(Gomez et al. 1990, 7-8)

Despite the effort to avoid bureaucratic molds, bureaucracy cannot be ignored. The partnership that fails to touch regularly the hierarchical bases of superintendents, principals, presidents and deans will operate on the periphery and have little chance of substantive impact. This is one reason for the emphasis on continuous communication between the partnership and its bureaucratic stakeholders.

Organizational groupings—such as the administrative council used by Project STEP or task-oriented committees of participants with special expertise—are efficient ways to manage the partnership and accomplish its work. A steering committee of one representative from each partner institution can be particularly helpful in communicating with the key persons in those institutions.

Leaders Who Cross Institutional Boundaries: *Managing in Multiple Worlds*

A primary element is the identification of responsible persons at each institution to direct the partnership ... who have a strong interest in the activities and who have the skills and authority to get things done. ... [Their roles] can be perceived as that of “diplomats.”

Dennis Galligani, Achieving Academic Excellence Through School/College Partnerships, 1987-1990.

A partnership must have strong and flexible leadership, one or two people who are accountable for keeping the partnership's agenda moving forward. Partnership leaders are not only the “diplomats” described by

CAPP partners; they are also “chief worriers” (Sirotnik and Goodlad 1988) and “boundary crossers” (Cordiero 1996).

A boundary crosser is someone who understands the institutional realities and constraints of each partner and is comfortable working in more than one culture and environment. Such a leader might be the university professor who can enter the world of the middle school teacher, the high school assistant principal who can understand the university's frustration at the inadequate (by their standards) preparation of entering college freshmen, the teacher who is equally effective in communicating with students and with potential employers. One skill of boundary-crossing leaders is communicating effectively with individuals at the various levels of the organizations involved.

Leadership positions should be specifically identified and responsibilities clearly delineated. Furthermore, a specific portion of the director's time should be devoted solely to the partnership. The experience of CAPP projects suggests that between 40 and 100 percent of a director's time is ideal, but should be no less than 25 percent.

Depending upon the partnership's structure, there may be component co-directors, or a director and assistant directors. The point of contact for the partnership should be clear to participants as well as to those who are outside the partnership. Partnership spokespersons must speak “from the same page” to avoid conflicting or confusing messages about the partnership's goals and accomplishments.

Perhaps the single most important factor in leadership is continuity. Turnover in directorship, especially in the formative period, can

OAKLAND HEALTH AND BIOSCIENCE ACADEMY

Oakland Technical High School, Oakland Unified School District

A CAPP Project

Founded in 1985 and the recipient of one of the initial CAPP grants (1985-1990), the Oakland Health and Bioscience Academy, located at Oakland Technical High School, is still operating as a school-within-a-school. Approximately 300 students participate each year. The Academy features a curriculum, initially supported through the CAPP grant, which is integrated with work experience to prepare students for careers in the health and bioscience professions.

Partners include Kaiser Permanente; the Peralta Community Colleges; Samuel Merritt College of Nursing; and California State University, Hayward, among others. The program is three to four years in length with most students entering at the tenth grade. It has become a model for School-to-Career programs nationally. More than 90 percent of graduates go on to do college-level work. The Academy has received extensive state and national recognition from the U.S. Department of Education, the American Association of Higher Education, Johnson & Johnson, and the National Leadership Forum. The success of the Academy as demonstrated by external evaluation has led to the establishment of 37 academies in the Oakland Unified School District to date.

A study of career academies reflects on the importance of effective leadership and administrative involvement: “The health academy enjoyed strong support from within the Oakland district. The key initiator was the lead teacher, who taught English in the program and organized many of the other activities. Extremely hardworking and unusually knowledgeable, she was effective in working with both employers and students. Her principal was also sold on the academy approach and provided much support. They were able to assemble a strong team of teachers as well.” (Stern et al. 1992, 128-9)

mean the partnership fails to meet any of its objectives. Similarly, continuity of other key members, such as those on a steering committee, is particularly critical in early months.

Making time for professional growth is useful for those who are new to leadership roles.

Reading about educational change, for example, can give new leaders a perspective on what to expect in partnerships that emphasize curricular reform, academic standards and assessments.

**Committed,
Responsible Members:
*Something for Everyone***

I am finally getting my wish to work with the middle school teachers in our district on a consistent basis to talk about where mathematics education is going. There's now a group of 25 teachers working on math standards. This is the first time this kind of teamwork has occurred in the district, and it is tremendously satisfying to me.

Stella Bohn, Project Connect, Reedley High School

In developing the partnership, key faculty and teachers who have credibility in their respective schools or colleges should be identified and invited to participate. They should have leadership qualities, believe in the partnership's purposes, and be willing to make a long-term commitment. Once they are on board, they should have clearly defined responsibilities and be given the necessary support to carry them out.

Partnership members participate for many different reasons. Some view participation as a public service stemming from a deep-felt desire to assist students in preparing for college. Others have an interest in the smooth transition from high school to college and the undergraduate major. Still others, largely from university schools of education, see benefits in their research and pedagogy. School personnel value the opportunity to work with their college counterparts in order to be up-to-date with their discipline and to share teaching approaches. All of these motivations should be considered as participants are being recruited, and represented in the final mix of members.

Vital to a successful partnership is that all members perceive themselves as co-equals. Most certainly, the impression that university faculty are superior to secondary school staff must be avoided, as well as the potential for in-group/out-group dynamics among educators, parents and representatives from business and community groups.

Despite willingness and goodwill on all sides, tangible rewards for participants are necessary to achieve partnership success. Rewards can be released time for college and school faculty, funded summer workshops, and stipends for extra time spent on especially time-consuming partnership activities, such as curriculum development. College and university leaders can encourage faculties to recognize public service such as active participation in partnerships in tenure and promotion decisions. As mundane as it may seem, the availability of food at meetings appears to have a positive effect on interactions.

Involvement of Non-Educational Partners: *Links with the World of the Future*

Radionics' ... workforce lies within the surrounding areas and the company thus plays a significant role in the community. Radionics views a successful community as a triangle: the legs being the school, the home, and business. "If one leg is missing, everything falls apart."

*Thematic Mathematics in the Middle School Project,
Washington Middle School, Final Report*

Schools and colleges are traditionally seen as natural partners to address aspects of teaching and learning. Businesses are concerned about students' preparation for the job market, especially in mathematics, science and language arts. Nationally, the School-to-Work initiative (called School-to-Career in California) is a major example of a partnership between business and schools that improves student preparation for entry into the workforce. Businesses and other community-based organizations want to contribute to the vitality and strength of their communities and see collaboration as an opportunity for community improvement. Businesses have the additional incentive of ensuring that their employees remain in the community.

Businesses and community agencies not only gain from collaborating, but can also contribute a great deal to partnerships. Educators see businesses as a source of resources—such as computers, tutors, mentors, and internship opportunities. Businesses seek graduates who do not need training in basic skills. Businesses

can open their doors to teachers and faculty for learning and research opportunities.

Attention to communication and appreciation of institutional differences become particularly important with the involvement of non-educational partners. Business partners will likely be represented by the day-to-day manager who has little discretionary time and who may not initially understand the potential benefits of the partnership to the business and the community.

Business leaders generally want fast results. Extended consultation and discussion of goals and objectives, and the need for multiple levels of approval are not part of the business culture. Although a business which partners does so in a spirit of willingness to give, it should not be viewed as a bank with unlimited withdrawal privileges.

In most cases, business orientation toward public service is different from that of schools and colleges. Only the larger businesses can assign staff to partnership activities. Smaller firms seldom have the well-staffed community relations programs typical of larger firms. Educational members of the partnership will need to make extra efforts to find the best points of access to firms not traditionally active in the community. Superintendents, board members and college presidents may be helpful in making contact with CEOs to discuss partnership possibilities with them.

As in school/university partnerships, participating partners should be co-equal, sharing in establishing the partnership's vision, setting direction, and determining outcomes. Outcomes should clearly benefit each partner: the school, college, business and/or the occupational field in general.

THEMATIC MATHEMATICS IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Washington Middle School, Salinas Union High School District

A CAPP Project

The goal of this project was to double the percentage of students who enter high school at or above grade level in mathematics, through a sustained, collaborative relationship among Washington Middle School; Hartnell Community College; the University of California, Santa Cruz; and Radionics, Inc. This partnership was distinguished by the extensive involvement of the industry partner, a security alarm manufacturing company.

The primary motivation behind Radionics' involvement with the project was to ensure that the workforce in Salinas had the necessary skills to succeed in industry. The main representative from Radionics wrote Manufacturing in Mathematics, a booklet that presented numerous mathematical concepts relevant to processes used at the Radionics plant. The booklet served as the basis for a mathematics curriculum developed by math professors from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

The curriculum included a full-day visit to the plant, where students received hands-on exposure to various manufacturing processes, and shadowed employees in eight different departments. Radionics also developed a CD-ROM "electronic fieldtrip" so students could review their visit. At the end of the CAPP grant, project partners planned to continue their relationship, and to extend it to include high school students.

Ongoing Evaluation: *Staying on Course*

Without evaluation, you have no objective way of knowing what you're doing and what impact you're having. Part of ongoing evaluation is feedback, which becomes especially important when there are multiple partners.

Jordan Horowitz, Project Director,
Evaluation Research, WestEd

CAPP projects identified periodic formative evaluations as an element of success. Formative evaluations ensure that the partnership is functioning well, that project activities are on course, and that objectives and outcomes are being met. Formative evaluations can consist of scheduled discussions in partnership meetings, review of project timelines, interviews with partner organizations, and interim reports from the summative (outcome) evaluation component of the partnership project.

TYPES OF DATA THAT ARE REPORTED IN TYPICAL CAPP PROJECTS

Student Data

- *Prospective year of graduation*
- *Demographics (gender, ethnicity, grade level)*
- *Average GPA; standardized test scores*

School Data

- *Schools served; student-teacher ratio*
- *Attendance/Average Daily Attendance (ADA)/Drop-out statistics*
- *Schoolwide demographic data; Limited English Proficiency (LEP) data*
- *High school graduation and postsecondary enrollments (University of California, California State Universities, California Community Colleges, independent colleges)*
- *Students completing college preparation sequence (A-F pattern)*
- *Performance on mandated assessments (California's mandated annual student testing program)*
- *Students taking PSAT; SAT*
- *Students taking optional assessments (Math Diagnostic Testing Project; Advanced Placement; Golden State; CSU Entry-Level Math; CSU English Placement Test; locally developed assessments)*
- *Teachers/staff participating in programs/demographic data; in special workshops, etc.*
- *Parent participation*

University Data

- *Faculty/staff participating in programs/demographic data; in special workshops, etc.*
- *College and university students participating/demographic data*
- *Data on English Placement Test and Entry-Level Math performance by school (California State University system)*
(<http://www.asd.calstate.edu/performance>)

Much of the above data is collected by the California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS) and is available at <http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us> and <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ftpbranch/retdiv/epic>

Most partnership plans will include a summative evaluation component, especially partnerships that receive funding from government agencies and private foundations. Too often, however, the evaluation plan is not sufficiently planned at the outset and too little attention is paid to measurable outcomes. It is worth making a concerted effort to assure that systems are in place to manage and measure the change process. Even though a partnership may hire an evaluator, partnership participants should understand the purpose and importance of both formative and summative evaluation.

As the partnership develops its goals and objectives, participants need to identify those which can be measured and determine whether the data needed can actually be collected. For example, if a partnership is addressing improvement of student performance in California schools, obtaining comparable statewide student performance data can be a challenge.

As a rule, it is best to address the challenges and limitations in evaluation at the outset, rather than well into partnership programs. Increasingly, the documentation of fundamental change in overall school performance, student success in specific academic programs, and long-term impact of the project on students is being required.

A variety of data and data sources are available through statewide databases. The challenge is to take full advantage of the data in order to provide perspective on what is being undertaken by the partnership.

Adequate Resources: *Two (or More) Cannot Live As Cheaply As One*

CAPP funding provides money, impetus, methods and a reason for the university and school district to come together to create opportunities for a seamless educational system. It gives the teachers opportunities for intensive inservice, and we [at the university] gain a lot by being in the K-12 community and out of our ivory towers.

Eunice Krinsky, California State University, Dominguez Hills

It should go without saying that partnerships require resources. The existence of special funding may, in itself, play a major role in gaining credibility for the partnership in its formative stages. Fiscal resources can also come from institutional budgets, special grants or appropriations. Each partner should contribute resources of comparable value to the partnership.

Although creation of a partnership always takes a serious commitment of time and resources, some successful partnerships begin without external funding. The advantage of partners' contributing start-up resources is increased ownership of and flexibility in establishing goals and objectives that are most meaningful to the partners. Agendas of external funding agencies do not, therefore, drive the direction of the program. Partnerships that choose to begin in this way can seek external support for activities at some later point.

However, if institutional resources—both fiscal and human—are used, they must be

reallocated for partnership activities. This means an existing institutional activity or staff responsibility must be dropped if a partnership project is added. Even if there is additional funding, fully-committed staff cannot take on the additional partnership responsibilities without giving up some other project.

Funding agencies—whether Federal, State, or private—often demand seemingly instant results. It is all too typical for a partnership to receive its first funding (often delayed) in one

month and in the next month be required to submit a progress report and second-year funding request. Partnership leadership should also be alert to changing priorities of funders and the implications this may have for the future viability of the partnership.

A danger for externally-funded partnerships is that they lose sight of their own priorities, and become answerable to the funding agency rather than to their own members and constituencies. Partnerships are fragile; multiple conflicting agendas can shatter them quickly.

ALGEBRA: PROVIDING ACCESS FOR ALL

Culver City Unified School District

A CAPP Project

In 1992, with funding from CAPP, Culver City Unified School District and California State University, Dominguez Hills formed a partnership to improve the mathematics achievement of underrepresented students in the district. Teachers field tested an enriched mathematics curriculum with the sixth and seventh grades in the middle school, and a new algebra program in the high school. With two years of an enriched curricular experience behind them, the entire eighth grade class enrolled in Algebra 1 using the new program. At the same time, all high school students enrolled in Algebra 1 and 2 and Geometry 1 used the new program.

Results of this CAPP experience were dramatically positive. Enrollments in Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, honors and advanced courses doubled over pre-CAPP years. In Spring 1997, 70 percent of all students in Culver City High School had passed algebra or higher. Seventy-three percent of all students who participated in the enrichment program passed algebra or higher by the end of the ninth grade, and 50 percent passed geometry or higher.

Clearly, activities during the CAPP years helped create a gateway to higher mathematics and beyond for all students; 1997 PSAT data suggest that nearly twice as many students were considering the college option than in pre-CAPP years.

Although there is no hard-and-fast rule, a partnership should anticipate needing fiscal support for at least a three- to five-year period. A five-year plan for funding is highly desirable and will assist in setting long-term goals and timelines. After that, the partnership should plan to be self-supporting or institutionalized. The more partnership activities are integrated with other programs at the school site, the better the chances the partnership will be central to the educational program.

Processes to Stay Relevant: *As Time Goes By*

Studies of change efforts have found that the fate of new programs and ideas rests on teachers' and administrators' opportunities to learn, experiment, and adapt ideas to their local context. Without these opportunities, innovations fade away when the money stops or enforcement pressures end.

Linda Darling-Hammond, [The Right to Learn](#)

As a partnership matures, there should be a process of reviewing its vision and priorities, and creating new goals or refining old goals. Healthy partnerships grow and change over time in response to internal and external shifts. For example, a partnership that originally emphasized curriculum development may later stress statewide standards and assessment. The evolution of technology may create new applications for teaching and learning.

It is valuable for academic partnerships to endure, and for this, their organizational

structure and communication processes must be continually tended. The advisory or steering committee should meet regularly with a clear agenda. Individuals new to partnership programs must be initiated into the collective agenda. Ongoing attention must be given to communication with decision makers: superintendents, principals, deans, presidents, and boards. With turnover of partnership members and school/college staff, ongoing orientations and education are essential.

JOINT EDUCATIONAL PROJECT University of Southern California

Founded over twenty-five years ago, the Joint Educational Project (JEP) is a service-learning program based in the University of Southern California's College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences. The program is designed to broker between academic courses and schools and service agencies in the university's community. Each year JEP places approximately 1,500 college students in the neighborhood as mentors, mini-course instructors, translators, and assistants to teachers and other helping professionals.

Continuity of leadership, commitment of the university, and well-developed relationships with schools and agencies are among the reasons for the long-term success of this program.

A successful partnership seeks ways to celebrate accomplishments and provide non-monetary rewards and recognition to its active participants. School teachers and staff can be singled out for their teaching and leadership in order to bring them to the attention of school principals and superintendents. Recognizing university faculty efforts in helping school improvement, for example, may assist in promotion and tenure decisions, particularly for faculty in schools of

education. Publicity about business participation provides a positive community image which benefits the business in the long term.

Partnerships which pay attention to the above do continue. Orange County's Project STEP has continued for more than fifteen years. The Oakland Technical High School Health and Bioscience Academy continues after thirteen years. The University of Southern California's Joint Educational Partnership is more than twenty-five years old.

Concluding Thoughts

Are partnerships worth it? There is ample evidence from many different kinds of partnerships that they are. But there are no shortcuts to success. Hard work, often in ambiguous situations, is the rule. Efforts take about five years to reach fruition, and during this time, continuity of leadership and membership should be maintained. Project goals, progress and successes should be continuously communicated to all stakeholders, and mechanisms to assure good communication among partners should be kept current. In successful partnerships, individuals will find reward in their personal experiences and will learn from their relationships with partners.

This primer has described the elements for partnership success, and emphasized the theme of working together on mutual goals that result in mutual benefit. Projects that know what to expect on the road to developing and maintaining a partnership, and learn from the experience of others, are most likely to have a successful and fulfilling experience. Most importantly, an effective partnership should lead to improved student learning and performance which is, after all, what education is all about.

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* Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute. 1998. Building partnerships for our children. *On Common Ground: Strengthening Teaching*

through School-University Partnership. (Winter, No. 8). (Numbers 1 through 8 are all appropriate to this topic.)

Useful Resources

Bay Area School Reform Collaborative:
<http://www.wested.org/basrc>

California Academic Partnership Program (CAPP): <http://www.co.calstate.edu/aa/capp>

California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS): <http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us>

California Department of Education:
<http://goldmine.cde.ca.gov>

California Education Round Table (links to all segments): <http://www.certicc.org>

California High School Performance Reports:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ftpbranch/retrdiv/epic>

California Public School Profiles:
<http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us>

California State University Data on Performance of High School Graduates (English Placement Test and Entry-Level Math performance by school):
<http://www.asd.calstate.edu/performance>

California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP), California Student Aid Commission: There are eight Cal-SOAP consortia that provide outreach services to K-12 and community college students.

Education Trust/K-16 Councils:
<http://www.edtrust.org>

National Center for Urban Partnerships:
<http://www.ncup.org>



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