# **Schools First**

Final Report



**Australian Council for Educational Research** 

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# **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to provide both a context and an evidence base for the Schools First Awards, particularly the key criteria that have been developed for the Awards.

The basis of the report is a literature review. There are three parts to the review: an overview of the concept of social capital and its relationship to school—community partnerships and school improvement; an outline of several effective school—community partnerships; and a review of a number of national and international award schemes.

Building social capital is about building personal and community assets. The concept of 'asset building' is at the heart of effective school–community partnerships. Such partnerships enable students, teachers, parents and community groups to draw on a wide range of skills and expertise. By pooling physical, intellectual and other resources, school communities have access to a potentially richer source of support than would otherwise be available if each partner were acting alone.

The literature review indicates that strong partnerships between schools, parents, businesses and local community organisations can make a significant difference to outcomes for young people. While one of the difficulties associated with research in the field of school improvement is that of establishing a causal relationship between a particular intervention and improved student outcomes, the research shows a range of positive outcomes associated with school—community partnerships, including increased skills, greater engagement with learning, more positive attitudes, and improved transitions into the workforce, further education or training.

Research shows that successful school–community partnerships are typically characterised by:

- An identified need or opportunity that the partnership is set up to address
- A mission to improve student outcomes
- A strong, committed leader and leadership team
- Shared decision-making
- Clear roles and responsibilities
- A structured and well organised program
- Frequent and effective communication
- Regular monitoring and review
- Tangible results
- Sustainability.

Research also shows that effective partnerships go through several stages:

- identifying a need to be addressed
- initial planning
- implementing
- evaluating, and
- further planning.

The criteria for the Schools First Awards have been developed on the basis of these research findings. Each of the five stages of a partnership identified above has an associated criterion that schools will need to meet. The criteria have been piloted with a small number of teachers and principals from a range of schools to ensure the

criteria are easy to understand, realistic, equitable and appropriate. The constructive feedback that participants in the pilot provided has enabled the criteria to be further refined.

While the following criteria are framed in terms of already existing partnerships, they can also be adapted for proposed partnerships. The key criteria for the Schools First Awards are as follows:

- Criterion 1: The partnership has been set up to address an identified need or opportunity that will benefit students.
- Criterion 2: A plan has been developed with each partner contributing to the plan.
- Criterion 3: A program has been successfully implemented. Criterion 4: Students have benefited from the partnership.
- Criterion 5: The partnership has become part of the culture and planning activities of each partner organisation.

The Schools First Awards are intended to promote excellence in school–community partnerships. Through the financial incentives to be made available to successful schools, the implementation of targeted workshops and creation of a knowledge bank, the Schools First Awards are intended to encourage and inspire school communities to work collaboratively for the purpose of improving outcomes for young people. This report provides an evidence base for the development of the criteria upon which the Schools First Awards are based and will form part of the knowledge bank that will be developed as successful school–community partnerships are built and strengthened and their stories disseminated.

# 1. Introduction

The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century identified as an important strategy the need to further strengthen schools as 'learning communities where teachers, students and their families work in partnership with business, industry and the wider community' (MCEETYA, 1999). The Future of Schooling in Australia (Council for the Australian Federation, 2007) recognised that 'building partnerships between schools, families and the community enhances student learning, values and aspirations'. The federal government and several state governments have produced guidelines on school–family–community partnerships. The Rudd government recently set up a Family-School and Community Partnerships Bureau charged with helping to develop partnerships between parents, schools and the community.

Governments, schools and community groups are increasingly recognising the benefits to be derived from school–community partnerships. Case & Hadfield (2006) warn against a view of education that considers schools in isolation from their communities and note a cultural shift away from 'previously isolated and entrenched modes of working' towards 'more inclusive and holistic' multi-agency partnerships in education. The rise of extended schools (United Kingdom), integrated schools (Scotland), community schools (United States), 'joined up' services, place-based learning, community-based learning, social partnerships, asset building and networked learning communities are all part of the same shift towards shared responsibility for the outcomes of young people.

Berg, Melaville & Blank (2006), reporting on feedback received from principals during a study of community engagement, found a consistent message in the focus groups, interviews and meetings: 'Schools can't do it alone', and are increasingly looking to communities to help build capacity and improve educational outcomes. Howard (2006) suggests that while there is no single strategy powerful enough to close academic achievement gaps, social capital (or networks) 'should be an element of a more inclusive and comprehensive effort' to narrow and eliminate these gaps (p. 12).

Before moving on to the literature review itself it would be useful to briefly consider the concepts of both *partnership* and *community*. Given the emphasis on school reform by governments around the world, it has been suggested that school—community partnerships 'must be more broadly conceived to include improvements in student achievement and overall school productivity' (Curtis, 2007: 18). In its 2008 draft guidelines on school partnerships, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) identifies five broad categories of school partnership:

- school and family partnerships
- school and community
- school and business
- school and other education provider
- shared infrastructure partnerships.

While the DEECD document focuses more on single partnerships than on multiple linkages, schools can participate in more complex arrangements involving combinations of schools, families, business, non-government agencies, community groups and education providers. Clemans, Billett and Seddon (2005) refer to 'localised networks that connect some combination of local community groups,

education and training providers, industry and government to work on local issues and community-building activities' (p. 1).

Billett & Seddon (2004) distinguish between 'new' and 'old' social partnerships, arguing that the 'new' variety are largely funded by government to address apparent failures by centralised agencies, promote government agendas, and encourage regional capacity building (p. 63). One of the challenges associated with such partnerships is that they take a lot of effort and time to establish and maintain but governments/sponsors expect the specified outcomes to be achieved quickly.

Chysels & Thibodeaux (2006) also identify a new kind of business and education partnership that goes beyond the traditional model to form deeper and more sustainable linkages with schools. Chysels & Thibodeaux describe the features of the 'traditional' model as being motivated by a sense of good corporate citizenship; mainly characterised by philanthropic efforts; helpful in the short term but not leading to systemic educational change; and non-strategic. The 'new' approach to collaborative education—business partnerships:

- recognises the need for interdependent relationships between schools, companies and community leaders
- recognises that public educators need a better understanding of the needs of business
- involves 'an unprecedented level of collaboration'
- requires schools to be more 'customer focused' when it comes to business needs
- alerts companies to the benefits that public education can provide to the families of their employees.

The type of school–community partnership envisaged as part of the Schools First Awards operates at two levels:

through the governance arrangements that exist between NAB, AustraliaCares, the Foundation for Young Australians and ACER, and through the respective interactions between each partner and school communities via such activities as workshops, judging, communications and the award ceremony.

through the wide variety of school–community partnerships that have made, are in the process of making, or could potentially make, a significant difference in student outcomes.

The concept of community is generally defined in terms of a shared locality and/or a set of common values and beliefs held by those within the locality. Lane & Dorfman (1997), however, suggest these definitions are missing 'a sense of the linkages, the interrelationships, between community members that serve to *identify* individuals as part of a community and allow others to *recognize* individuals as part of a community. The strength of the linkages in the social network is the defining aspect of a strong community' (p. 2). The primary objective of the Schools First Awards program is to recognise the social networks that already exist between schools and communities and to encourage both the strengthening of these and the building of new linkages. The concept of community as used in this report encompasses all three elements of interconnections, sense of place and shared beliefs.

# 2. Literature review

# Social capital, school-community partnerships and improved outcomes

The purpose of this literature review is to provide a general context for the implementation of the Schools First Awards and, more particularly, an evidence base for the development of the awards criteria. The focus is on research conducted into school and community partnerships since 1998. While there is a substantial body of literature on the role of parental and/or family involvement in schools, this has not been examined here.

The first section of the review looks briefly at the concept of social capital and its relationship to school–community partnerships and school improvement before moving on to examples of effective school–community partnerships and good quality awards schemes.

## Limitations

One of the difficulties associated with research in the field of school improvement is that of establishing a causal relationship between a particular intervention and improved student outcomes. Because a school–community partnership is unlikely to be the sole initiative that is being implemented in a school to improve outcomes, any causality needs to be treated with caution (Annie B Casey Foundation, 2008). Spoehr et al. (2007) point out that while there may be statistical associations between high levels of social capital and various benefits, we need to distinguish between those associations that are correlational and those that are causal (p. 108). Ferguson (2008) makes a similar point about the difficulty of isolating outcomes that can be correlated to school–family connections, but also suggests that there is still much that can be learned from these studies. This literature review identifies a range of positive outcomes associated with school–community partnerships.

Anderson-Butcher & Ashton (2004) also urge caution when interpreting data about the benefits of collaborative partnerships because the impact of a collaborative intervention may not be known for some years (2004: 47). The complexity of some of the relationships too means that they 'often build capacity on multiple levels' (p. 47), making evaluation difficult. This is particularly so when schools are involved simultaneously in multiple partnerships.

A third difficulty is that there do not appear to be many examples of effective models that have been evaluated and that involve the broader community (as opposed to parental or family interventions). In particular, Pawlowski (2007) notes that little information is available about building solid business—education partnerships. Much of the literature that does exist, even where it refers specifically to community, family and school connections, focuses more often on family than community linkages with schools.

# The meaning of social capital

If social capital can be shown to contribute to improved student outcomes then 'efforts to improve student performance must focus on the community as a whole, not just on the school' (Holloway, 2004). This section of the report considers the role of social capital in building partnerships and improving outcomes for schools.

Over the past twenty years there has been a growing interest in the concept of social capital by researchers in a range of disciplines, including education. While much of the research has focused on the structural dimension – that is, on analysing social networks and the people who comprise these – social capital also refers to 'the resources that are created by the existence and character of those links, such as information sharing and trust' (Leana & Pil, 2006: 354). This latter dimension is particularly relevant when it comes to school–community partnerships because it goes beyond the mere fact of these linkages to focus on their characteristics and the tangible benefits they can bring.

The three most influential theorists of social capital are generally agreed to be Pierre Bourdieu in the 1970s and early 1980s, James Coleman in the late 1980s and early 1990s and, in particular, Robert Putnam in the 1990s. While Bourdieu and Coleman mainly theorised social capital in terms of the assets and resources accumulated by individuals, Putnam extended the concept to include groups and communities (Lane & Dorfman, 1997). In this, he draws on Hanifan's 1916 use of social capital to explain the connection between community participation and improved school performance (Putnam, 2002).

For Putman, social capital means 'social networks and the norms of reciprocity' that facilitate collective action for mutual benefit (Putnam, 1999, 2002). It represents the stocks, sometimes called 'assets' in the literature, which people can draw on. Communities build up their stocks of social capital through the development of active relationships and the strengthened sense of community ownership and trust that these linkages generate (Lane & Dorfman, 1997).

From their review of the research, Bullen & Onyx (2000) identified several characteristics of social capital:

- networks based on 'voluntary and equal' associations
- reciprocity
- trust
- social norms that provide a form of informal social control
- pooled/collective resources
- the active and willing engagement of individuals and groups.

Not surprisingly, many of these elements are also present in the literature on effective school–community partnerships. However it is defined, there is general agreement among researchers that social capital is derived from people's social ties and that it has an impact on people's well-being (Bassini, 2006).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Social capital can also influence well-being adversely, such as when a student derives significant social capital from their membership of a gang or from a group of youths who may not value schooling and engage in behaviour calculated to disrupt this. Woolcock and Narayan (2000) point out that 'social ties can be a liability as well as an asset' (p. 6).

Researchers have identified three forms of social capital, each of which is present to a smaller or greater extent in school–community partnerships. *Bonding* social capital refers to close relationships between kinship groups and friends, such as between students and their families; *bridging* social capital refers to more heterogeneous relationships that connect people to others outside this immediate circle of close relationships, such as establishing links with other religious, socioeconomic or racial groups; and *linking* social capital is associated with relationships across different levels of wealth and status, thus allowing an exchange of resources and ideas (Spoehr et al., 2007; Michalak & Jones, 2008).

# Social capital and school improvement

Based on his review of the research, Howard (2006) concluded that social capital 'has a major impact on student achievement and health' (p. 9). Robert Putnam's work on social capital has arguably been the most influential in this respect. In *Bowling Alone*, for example, based on complex data analyses, Putnam found that schools performed better in states with high levels of social capital, even while controlling for variables such as wealth and race (Putnam, 1999; Plagens, 2003). Leana & Pil (2006) in their study of 88 urban schools, found that 'internal and external social capital are important determinants' of student achievement test scores in both reading and maths and are also important predictors of teaching quality (p. 362). Croninger & Lee (2001) found that social capital enhances 'the productive capacity' of both individuals and groups. Goddard (2003) refers to 'the mounting evidence that social capital can facilitate desirable outcomes' (p. 62) and the growing interest in social capital from educational policy makers in education.

In his 2004 address to an OECD meeting of Education Ministers, Putnam refers to the networks of students, families and communities that support educational performance. Conversely, he suggests, education can support social capital and cohesion – 'through civic education, through the ways in which schools can become the foci of community and extracurricular activities, and through work in educational institutions' (OECD, 2004). In the same address Putnam also pointed out the limitations of social capital, suggesting that some impoverished communities may face real challenges despite strong community and/or family bonds. On the other hand, Holloway (2004) makes the point that even in poor areas supportive neighbourhoods can provide students with a foundation for high academic performance (p. 3).

Israel & Beaulieu (2004b) draw on various studies indicating that social capital can promote educational achievement and suggest that community social capital 'likely' influences high school students' educational performance through the variety of programs, organisations and activities available in the community. Israel & Beaulieu (2004a) used a social capital framework to analyse how families and schools influence the educational achievement of public school students and found that positive outcomes occur 'whenever there is a collective commitment by families, schools and communities to work in partnership to help young people stay and succeed in school' (p. 50). Their research used the results of the National Longitudinal Study (NELS) and other data sets and hierarchical linear models to estimate the contributions of family, school and community social capital in helping students stay in school. They found the impact of social capital was 'striking' - 'In the case of high resources and high interactive social capital, virtually every student is expected to stay in school' (p. 47), and that students are much less likely to stay on at school when resources are high but interactive social capital is low. Interactive social capital in this context refers to the level of interest taken by teachers and parents in students.

# School-community partnerships and improved outcomes

For the purposes of this review school–community partnerships are taken to be one component of the broader concept of social capital. Given this relationship it could be expected that the findings in relation to social capital and improved educational outcomes are consistent with the findings on the impact of school–community partnerships. Bearing in mind that the relationship between a particular school–community partnership and educational outcomes may be correlational rather than causal, there is nevertheless a growing body of research that demonstrates the benefits that can be derived from well-managed and resourced school–community partnerships.

Melaville, Berg & Blank (2006), for example, have conducted extensive research in the area of community-based learning. Based on their research, they note the importance of young people having access to social capital and

the network of social supports connecting them to shared values, information, guidance, and contacts. Social connections provide assistance and feedback in terms of setting goals, planning for the future, and making wise decisions. Each individual needs to belong to a "community of practice" where beliefs are shared, skills are learned, and collective resources and interactions hold them together. (Melaville, Berg & Blank, 2006, p. 20).

Epstein (2005) refers to a body of research that indicates 'high-quality partnership programs contribute to positive results for students, including improved achievement, attendance, and behaviour' (p. 152). Sanders & Simon (2002) refer to the 'extensive research' that indicates when schools, families and communities work together students benefit (p. 1). They analysed data from 375 National Network of Partnership Schools to better understand partnerships as a strategy for improvement. Using surveys to determine what partnership programs looked like at each level (elementary, middle and high) and what predicts the overall quality of school, family & community partnership programs, they found that high schools needed more information and assistance than elementary schools in creating and maintaining partnerships.

# Impact on student achievement

Dorfman & Fisher (2002) refer to the 'extensive research showing that partnerships between schools, families, and communities strongly and positively affect student achievement' (p. 1). EDC (2004) identify several ways in which participation in the IBM Reinventing Education Grants Program has brought about significant change, including improved professional development approaches, student academic outcomes and evidence of sustainability after the funding has ended. Goddard (n.d.) points out that participation in a network allows schools to draw on the expertise and ideas of staff in other schools 'and gain access to new ideas generated through collaborative activities'.

# Other benefits

In addition to improved academic performance, Michael, Dittus & Epstein (2007) found that family and community involvement in schools is linked strongly to better school attendance and better quality school programs, and is also associated with improved student behaviour and discipline.

Hands (2005) identified several unintentional benefits from school–community partnerships in her intensive study of two schools, including that:

- both schools had raised their profiles in the community
- students' social capital had increased by being exposed to the expertise and knowledge of others in the community
- these community opportunities led to employment for some students after the partnership activities finished
- there was a renewed focus on civics and citizenship among students.

Anderson-Butcher, Stetler & Midle (2006) found that partnerships between schools and other organisations play an important role in addressing some of the non-academic barriers to learning, such as poor peer relations, family conflict and instability, negative community norms and disorganisation. Examples of what Butcher-Anderson & Ashton (2004) call 'ripple' effects include: parents gaining parenting and work-related skills and experiences; teachers knowing which services they should talk to when there are concerns; shared accountability for outcomes; increased professional skills; and more streamlined and efficient services.

Anderson-Butcher & Ashton (2004) also draw on earlier research to identify a wide range of benefits derived from different kinds of collaboration – interagency, interprofessional, intraorganisational, family-centred and community-based. These benefits are said to include: better professional understanding of student issues, better psycho-education programs and activities, less duplication of services, improved academic achievement, better attendance and reduced levels of misconduct and suspensions.

## Impact on rural communities

Kilpatrick & Johns (2002a) investigated effective school–community partnerships in five different Australian rural locations, focusing in particular on the community outcomes of these partnerships and leadership processes. Using a five stage partnership model – trigger, initiation, development, maintenance and sustainability – they found that business and industry benefited from training initiatives; there was an increased retention of young people in these rural communities; there were positive physical and environmental outcomes for the communities; there were cultural and recreational benefits derived from sharing physical and human resources; and there were economic benefits in terms of the school being a major employer and consumer of local goods and services. They concluded that the interaction generated by rural school–community partnerships led to improved capacity for both individuals and communities.

# **Summary points:**

- Building social capital is about building personal and community assets.
- School–community partnerships constitute one dimension of social capital.
- Effective school–community partnerships can bring a wide range of benefits to students, schools and communities.

# Effective school-community models

This section of the report considers several examples of effective school–community partnerships with a view to identifying the key characteristics of such partnerships. The focus for each model is on the context and purpose, key features, and indicators of effectiveness. The main difficulty in this component of the literature review has been finding successful examples of school–community (as opposed to family-school) partnerships that have been evaluated and that are readily accessible. Searches of educational databases were conducted using various combinations of 'community', 'partnership', 'school', 'model', and 'collaboration'. A further search was conducted using the keywords 'business partner' and subject descriptors 'corporate support' or 'school business relationships'.

One of the findings to come out of the literature is the importance of partnerships being adequately resourced. An evaluation of the pilot phase of the new community schools in Scotland, for example, found a key challenge to be that of short-term funding 'which did not facilitate the development of high-trust relationships necessary to build up sustainable links between schools and communities' (Sammons et al., 2003: ii).

# **Community Schools (US)**

# Context

An increasingly popular partnership model in the United States is the community school, known as extended schools in the United Kingdom and integrated schools in Scotland. The National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) in the United States in particular has been working with schools, districts, states and organisations 'to organise and sustain research-based programs of family and community involvement to increase students' success in schools' (Michael, Dittus & Epstein, 2007). Like the concept of community, the community school is 'both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources' (Blank, Berg & Melaville, 2006).

The main purpose of these community schools is to provide a means of bringing together all the disparate resources that can potentially assist students. They seek to connect young people and families 'to sources of opportunity and support in their own communities' (Blank, Berg & Melaville, 2006, v). Public school administrators working in community schools are often described as being engaged in boundary or border crossing. The schools function as community hubs and often include youth development services; physical, dental, and mental health care; homework clubs; social services; adult education; and early childhood education (Annie. E. Casey Foundation, 2008; Bingler, Blank & Berg, 2008; Blank, 2006; Blank, Berg & Melaville, 2006).

# Key features

The community school model is based on the fundamental principle of shared responsibility for young people and their outcomes (Berg, 2006). Partners include a wide cross section of organisations and groups. Blank & Berg (2006) raise the question of who is responsible for creating the conditions for young people to succeed and, based on the evidence, conclude that 'communities have a stake – and must play a role – in the development and success of all children' (Blank & Berg, 2006: 11).

Community schools in the United States are generally characterised by:

- a focus on 'students' physical, social, emotional, moral and civic competencies' as well as academic achievement (Blank, Berg & Melaville, 2006)
- multiple resources and sources of expertise under the one roof
- evidence-based programs and practice
- the use of lead agencies to mobilise and integrate resources (Blank & Berg, 2006)
- availability to school and community members before, during and after school throughout the year
- the support of corporate, civic, local government and agency leaders
- high profile community leaders and midlevel managers who coordinate the partnerships
- a range of data collection methods used to measure outcomes and improve programs.

# Outcomes/evidence of effectiveness

Community school leaders draw on a range of quantitative and qualitative data to measure outcomes. Evaluations show improved student engagement and behaviour, higher attendance and graduation rates, improved academic performance, greater parental involvement, better health outcomes and employment rates. (Blank, Berg & Melaville, 2006; Villarreal, 2007). Blank & Berg (2006) analysed the results of twenty initiatives in community schools and found that fifteen of the initiatives reported improved student academic achievement. More than half of the evaluations found evidence of positive development in other indicators, such as improved attendance, reduced behaviour/discipline problems, and improvements in family involvement. Michael, Dittus & Epstein (2007) found that community schools have the potential to 'increase student learning, strengthen families, and sustain healthier communities'.

One study of eleven communities across the United States, documented by the Coalition for Community Schools, shows what can be achieved (Blank, Berg & Melaville, 2006). The communities studied ranged from small cities to large urban areas and a range of evaluation tools was used. The researchers identified a 'tipping point' when the conditions for learning created by the community schools are 'no longer viewed as add-ons or as beyond the scope of what schools should do. Instead, they are accepted as the norm across whole jurisdictions' (Blank, Berg & Melaville, 2006, 15). This 'tipping point' is part of the process of institutionalising the partnership and ensuring its sustainability.

The Annie Casey Foundation (2008) describes the achievements of one particular school, George Washington Community School, in improving outcomes for its young people through an extensive network of partnerships. Ninety per cent of the students at this school qualify for a free or reduced-price lunch. The school replaced an earlier school that had a low graduation rate of 30 per cent. The new school has more than 50 partnerships with universities, businesses, major non-profit companies, community centres, and other groups. Partners have a shared vision for the school. They have set a challenge of 100 percent of students graduating and 95 percent going on to college and are working towards this (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2008). The school has a strong and committed principal and meets regularly with its partners. Among its achievements is a graduation rate of 70 per cent in 2007, the highest in Indianapolis Public Schools for the second year in a row; an 89 per cent attendance rate in 2006-2007; and 84 per cent of 2007 graduates who went on to post-secondary education.

# Advanced Reading Development Demonstration Project (Chicago, USA)

### Context

The Advanced Reading Development Demonstration Project (ARDDP) is a collaboration between the Chicago Community Trust, Chicago Public Schools, an evaluation team at the University of Illinois and six Chicago-based universities. The Trust sponsors the collaboration. Established in 2002, the initiative is intended to improve student literacy by implementing a school-wide model of literacy development. The majority of students in this school district are from low-income communities.

## Key features

The focus of the partnership is on capacity building. Partnership schools and teachers are used as resources for other schools and teachers. The schools also work closely with the literacy education faculties of the local universities. The main goals are to improve literacy learning and teaching and to 'draw upon the multiple resources of local universities to generate high-quality demonstration models of comprehensive school-wide literacy development that can be replicated in other schools'.<sup>2</sup>

### Outcomes/evidence of effectiveness

A three-year evaluation found that while the reading test scores of ARDDP students did not differ significantly from other Chicago Public Schools, there were other benefits, such as a greater focus on professional development for teachers and literacy coordinators, progress towards the establishment of a professional community in participating schools, greater use of data for decision making, and improved teaching practices.<sup>3</sup>

# **Atlanta Partners for Education (US)**

#### Context

Originally the Atlanta Partnership for Business and Education, the Atlanta Partners for Education (APFE) program has expanded significantly since its beginnings in 1981. Originally a joint initiative between the Atlanta Public Schools and the local Chamber of Commerce, schools from disadvantaged communities now partner with higher education institutions, government agencies, businesses and other civic and professional organisations. The program is designed to improve school achievement for students in Atlanta public schools and since its inception has implemented over 460 partnerships (Denton & Mapp, 2005).

<sup>2 500</sup> 

http://research.cps.k12.il.us/export/sites/default/accountweb/Evaluation/Evaluation\_Reports\_2005/ARD DP Year Three Evaluation Report Summary and Analysis.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A short summary of the evaluation can be found at the above website.

# Key features

The priority goal is to support student achievement. Other goals indicated are:

- · provide schools with vital resources
- align realistic goals with school needs and private resources
- involve and engage all staff
- serve for at least one school year
- champion the good works schools do in the community (Atlanta Public Schools website).

## Outcomes/evidence of effectiveness

On the basis of their research into the impact of these school–community partnerships on disadvantaged schools, Denton & Mapp (2005) separated the schools into two pools of 'more effective' and 'less effective', using measures of success that included 'the range of activities and constituencies, ownership, and longevity' (p. 15). From these pools four schools were chosen to participate in the study.

A key finding was that in the successful schools principals viewed the partnerships as important to school success and took the initiative to seek out new partnerships to meet school needs (Denton & Mapp, 2005: 16). Successful schools were also found to have more than twice as many partners as less effective schools, a clear focus on student achievement as the primary goal, a more diverse range of partnership activities, greater involvement of teachers in planning and implementation processes, greater parental and teacher awareness of the partnerships, and improved teacher performance because of incentives provided by partners in the form of computer training, volunteer assistance, and recognition events (Denton & Mapp, 2005: 17).

# Merck Institute for Science Education Partnership (MISE) (US) Context

MISE was set up by Merck & Co and its main mission is to improve science education and enable students from K-12 to reach high levels of scientific literacy (Corcoran & Lawrence, 2003: 8). MISE formed partnerships with four public school districts in 1993 on the basis of a ten-year commitment by the corporation. Funding was subsequently renewed for another five years in 2003. MISE recognised that many teachers in the four partner districts did not have the knowledge or skills needed to design and guide scientific inquiry (p. 10) and that building this capacity would mean long-term support and significant curriculum changes. MISE has sponsored over 350 intensive workshops for more than 5,000 teachers from the partner school districts.<sup>4</sup>

### Key features

MISE aims to deepen teachers' knowledge and skills mainly through workshops and inquiry learning. The evidence-based approach adopted is characterised by the:

- development of a shared vision consistent with national and state standards
- development of a new culture of distributed leadership and a professional community around science
- development of new curriculum frameworks and assessments
- adoption of tested instructional materials compatible with the standards
- provision of high quality learning opportunities

http://www.merck.com/cr/science\_innovation\_and\_quality/commitment\_to\_science\_education/mise.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See

- building of communities of practice in and across schools
- alignment of other policies and procedures (assessment, teacher evaluation, materials management, professional development)
- use of data to set strategic priorities, and guide strategy and teaching
- continuance of collaborative work until these components are institutionalised in the district.

# Outcomes/evidence of effectiveness

The Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) has extensively documented the quality and impact of the professional development opportunities provided by MISE and found that:

- · the status of science was raised
- teachers' practice was changed
- student performance in science was improved
- districts became more effective at leading, supporting and sustaining instructional improvement
- a new model of leadership emerged (Corcoran & Lawrence, 2003).

One of the factors contributing to the effectiveness of this partnership is that it is not a short-lived initiative. Traditional models of corporate support involve relatively short periods of 18 months to three years but MISE has given the participating school districts more than a decade of support. On the basis of the evidence, 'it is clear that the four districts have changed dramatically, that their capacity to support improvements in instruction has been significantly enhanced, and that the impact has extended beyond science and mathematics' (Corcoran & Lawrence, 2003: 30).

# **Reinventing Education (US)**

#### Context

IBM established the *Reinventing Education* grant initiative in 1994. In 2004 it was a \$70-million education reform program involving dozens of school districts, states and international sites. The IBM initiative was envisaged as a 3 to 5 year partnership with grant sites. It was recognised that technology alone would not bring about reform and that a more systemic approach was needed (EDC, 2004). The goal of *Reinventing Education* is to improve students' academic standards.<sup>5</sup>

#### Key features

The initiative seeks to address some of the educational challenges facing school districts through 'co-developed interventions' (EDC, 2004: 2). IBM recruited and paid the salaries of full-time IBM researchers to work closely with teachers. School districts wanting to take part completed a Request for Proposal and appropriate selection criteria for identifying potential partner school districts were used. Criteria included:

- 'school districts that can demonstrate their own commitment to reform ... with proven leadership and a document history of innovation in improving schools' (EDC: 4)
- grantees needed high academic standards
- reform experience
- public commitment from leaders at the state level to the district superintendent to the school
- broad parent involvement

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> See http://www.ed.gov/pubs/investpartner/snapshot3.html

- potential collaboration with other national reform initiatives
- IBM 'purposely sought out school systems in tough educational environments' and rural state partners with their own particular challenges.

### Outcomes/evidence of effectiveness

In 1997 the EDC Center for Children and Technology began a longitudinal evaluation study of the sites where the program was launched. Five years later, the study found the program to be 'a compelling model for systemic school reform' (EDC, 2004: 3). Key findings were:

- improved professional development practices
- improved student outcome across grade levels and main academic areas
- evidence of sustainability with schools adding staff and resources specifically to support and extend the solutions implemented as part of the program after the funding has ended (p. 70).

Several reasons have been identified for the effectiveness of the program:

- IBM selected partners who 'identified a significant barrier to quality education and who demonstrated a clear commitment to working hard on the solution' (EDC, 2004: 9)
- realistic expectations were set
- the importance of communication was recognised
- · a team of capable leaders was created
- learning was disseminated to improve other learning situations
- professional development was of a high quality 'The innovative practices modeled by large-scale reforms demand complex sets of skills from teachers, administrators and technology support staff' (p. 11)
- there was ongoing internal review and improvement.

# High Five Regional Partnership for High School Excellence (USA)

#### Context

The High Five partnership began in 2003 with a large corporation offering to fund a major initiative to improve schools. The initiative involves five corporations and five adjacent school districts in North Carolina and has a particular focus on improving graduation. In 2004 the partners announced a \$2.5 million, five year, sponsorship arrangement to improve schools. Each of the five companies has committed \$100,000 a year for five years. What has made this initiative different from many other school–business partnerships is that the corporations asked schools what they needed rather than telling the schools what they would do for them (McCullen, 2006: 34).

# Key features

- The partnership focuses on improving teaching, helping re-design school structures and improving community support.
- 'The approach was to address the problem as something owned not only by the schools but also by the entire community' (p. 34).
- In addition to funding, the corporations provide in-kind support and are represented on the executive board.
- The five districts identified common and measurable goals, including 100 per cent of students graduating from high school by 2013. There is a strong focus on ensuring sustainability, as this goal is beyond the life of the project. The High Five program is about building capacity in schools and in the community.

- A regional plan was developed to enable the community to support the high schools.
- Considerable thought went into the planning stage. The partners spent much of the first year meeting, exchanging ideas, and identifying appropriate strategies.
- A professional learning community (PLC) model was adopted, which allows teachers to work collaboratively and share responsibility for improved student outcomes. High quality professional learning is the core of the High Five program.
- The school timetable has been amended to allow teachers to meet and plan collaboratively.
- Change management was handled well with the program proceeding in stages rather than being implemented all at once.
- The model supports schools to build and sustain the program through partnerships with private corporations and by working closely with the broader community.
- The program is underpinned by a philosophy of 'If students fail, it is everybody's problem' (McCullen: 37).

### Outcomes/Evidence of effectiveness

There does not appear to be an independent evaluation of the outcomes so far, most likely because the program is still going. However, McCullen (2006) provides anecdotal evidence, in the form of interviews with a selection of key stakeholders, which suggests that the program has already brought benefits to the participating schools.

# **Working Community (Melbourne, Australia)**

## Context

Billett & Seddon (2004) describe this partnership as one of the 'new' social partnerships that have arisen in response to changes in work and society. 'Rather than locating learning within specific contexts – in schools, industry or community – decision-making and learning experiences are distributed across these agencies' (p. 53). The program was piloted in the western metropolitan region in 2000. Schools in the area were using the program in the SOSE area. It is based on work done with atrisk students in the UK. The purpose is to help maintain students' interest in their studies. While Working Community is perhaps more a program than a partnership, it does show what can be achieved when schools work closely with other educational providers and local businesses.

## Key features

- A five-phase program that develops young people's work skills, self esteem, peer support and a sense of personal and social responsibility.
- While offering the same kind of benefits as other vocational education programs, such as students linked with employers, it does not have a specific vocational focus.
- Focus is on generic and transferable skills of teamwork, leadership and communication.
- Begins with an intensive induction for students with community, employer and education representatives.
- Students are asked to investigate community agencies and take responsibility for a community project.
- Program ends with a forum involving local employers.

Outcomes/evidence of effectiveness

Qualitative data was gathered via surveys after the initial pilot. There is little in the public domain, however, about the outcomes of this program although student feedback is said to have been overwhelmingly positive (O'Donoghue, 2001, 13).

# **Summary points:**

- Few school–community partnerships are adequately documented, evaluated and disseminated.
- Effective school—community partnerships are characterised by strong leadership, shared goals, clear roles and responsibilities, regular communication, shared decision-making and regular review.
- Developing a sustainable school–community partnership takes time.
- Partnerships need to be sufficiently resourced to ensure sustainability.

# **Examples of Awards Schemes**

An online search was conducted to identify examples of good quality school-based awards whose criteria, management and application processes could potentially inform the development of Schools First. Awards that were focused solely on individual teachers were not included. Only a small number of these awards were specifically aimed at school–community partnerships.

Fifteen examples of good quality awards schemes were identified covering a range of content areas and purposes:

- Showcase Awards for Excellence in Schools (Queensland)
- Australian Government National Awards for Quality Schooling (national)
- Panasonic National School Change Awards (USA)
- BECTA ICT Excellence Awards (UK)
- Blue Ribbon Lighthouse School Award (USA)
- National School and Business Partnership Awards (USA)
- MetLife Foundation–NASSP Breakthrough Schools (USA)
- Merrill Lynch Education Award (UK)
- Intel Schools of Distinction (USA)
- Best Business/Education partnership (Scotland)
- School Achievement Awards Scheme (UK)
- BP Enterprise Agreement (NZ)
- EPA Environmental Education Grant Program (USA)
- Ashden Award for Sustainable Energy (UK)
- The Broad Prize for Urban Education (USA)

# **Purpose**

All of the awards are about recognising achievement of some kind. The Ashden Award also contains a prospective element requiring schools to indicate their future plans for sustainable energy and how they intend to use the prize money for expansion/dissemination of their work. In general, the awards are about acknowledging and showcasing excellent practice. The main themes evident in the various stated intentions include:

- recognising excellent practice in public schools, including high performing and significantly improving schools, particularly in disadvantaged areas
- fostering a learning culture and sharing practice among school communities
- recognising individuals who have made an exceptional contribution to their school community and to student outcomes
- demonstrating excellence in a particular domain, such as innovative uses of ICT, environmental sustainability, maths and science
- recognising exemplary partnerships between schools and businesses
- encouraging school-business partnerships
- providing incentives for school districts to improve.

# School-community partnerships

Four awards specifically encourage school–community partnerships of some kind. The Australian Government National Awards for Quality Schooling, for example, now includes a category recognising excellence in family–school partnerships. The Blue Ribbon Lighthouse School Awards, which involve an assessment process rather than an award, requires schools to demonstrate 'a commitment to and recognition of the important role that families, partnerships and community play in supporting learning'. The National School and Business Partnerships Award, BP Community Enterprise Project, and Falkirk Herald Business Awards all seek to reward a mutually beneficial outcome between schools and businesses.

# **Selection Criteria**

In many of the awards schemes the criteria used had evaluative components built into them rather than being expressed in a neutral tone. A wide range of criteria were used, including the following:

- a school's contribution to quality outcomes and continuous improvement for students (education, personal, well-being, vocational)
- evidence of 'significant change'
- criteria based on the sponsor's own review tool
- school improvement process incorporating student-centredness, school organisation and culture, challenging curriculum and standards, technology integration, ongoing professional development, commitment to school community partnerships, high academic standards
- strength of the partnership's planning, implementation, sustainability and evaluation
- level of collaborative involvement, including leadership and parental involvement
- level of student achievement, e.g. academic performance and improvement of state tests; continuous growth on state assessments over time
- specific efforts to close the achievement gap
- 'capacity to scale and sustain'
- evidence of innovative projects
- proportion of students eligible for free or reduced price meals
- full description of a proposed project, including timing, costs, knowledge of partners involved, business research undertaken, presentation
- college readiness indicators, such as graduation rates.

The draft criteria being proposed here for the Schools First Awards is neutral in tone with the evaluative components attached to the evidence required.

## **Outcomes/evidence of effectiveness**

Few of these awards appear to have been evaluated. The Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) commissioned an evaluation of the Australian Government National Awards for Quality Schooling scheme, which found that the 2006 awards had 'a significant personal and professional impact on the Award winners and contributed to the wider awareness and exchange of quality teaching practices across schools' (DEST, 2007: 3). In particular, the scheme was found to have benefits for individuals (increased professional skills, confidence, responsibility, and job satisfaction), schools (greater investment in learning resources and technology; changes in school culture; program extension and development; changed culture; increased standing in the community; student and community engagement), and the teaching profession (investment in professional learning for

staff within the school but also across schools as Award winners collaborated more widely with their peers and formed professional networks [DEST, 2007: 3]).

Because the purpose of the Australian Government National Awards for Quality Schooling award scheme is 'to improve the professional standing of school teachers and leaders' (DEST, 2007: 3), the most significant impact of the award is associated with the elevation of an award winning school's standing in their community. The evaluators report that: 'It has been a means of boosting morale, building pride in the school and the profession, and a motivating force for teachers to continue to strive for excellence' (p. 3).

The evaluation attributed the success of the awards scheme to several key features, all of which have relevance for the conduct of the Schools First Awards. The 'transparent rigour and fairness of the selection process, the substantial prize money awarded, and the prestigious nature of the Awards ceremony' were all seen to be critical to the scheme's growing credibility. In addition, the calibre of the winners in itself conferred status on the awards. The evaluators point out that by 2006, only the third year of the award, 'one in every fourteen schools had nominated for an Award' (p. 4).

An evaluation of the School Achievement Award Scheme (SAAS) in the United Kingdom found that, although nine in ten staff agreed the financial incentive was worth having, 'for the majority of school staff, winning the *award* was perceived as more important than receiving the *money*, both personally and in terms of impact on staff morale' (Stevens et al., 2003: 4). Under the terms of this award, funding was distributed to staff within the award-winning schools as pay bonuses. While the Department for Education and Skills provided guidelines regarding the allocation of this money, it was up to the school's governing body to decide which staff would receive it and the amount each would receive. The scheme also recognised the efforts of non-teaching staff.

The evaluators found that slightly more than half the staff in award-winning schools wanted to see a larger pool of money provided to each school, more publicity for the scheme, value-added measures as part of the award criteria, and greater transparency in the nomination process. In non-award winning schools staff wanted to have more information about the scheme and value-added measures as award criteria.

Appendix 1 provides summaries of particular aspects of the fifteen award schemes. Appendix 2 provides a more detailed profile of each scheme.

# **Summary points:**

- Few awards schemes are evaluated.
- Most awards recognise achievement rather than intentions.
- There is a wide range of criteria and supporting evidence associated with different awards schemes.

# 3. Awards criteria

#### Context

The awards criteria in this document are consistent with the key objective of the Schools First Awards, which is to recognise and promote excellence in school—community partnerships.

For the purposes of Schools First, 'success' in a school context has been taken to mean *improved outcomes for students*. Such outcomes could include improved attendance, retention and/or graduation rates; better academic performance; more student engagement in learning; or increased self-esteem. Successful outcomes for a school starting from a low base in terms of student performance or levels of student engagement may be quite different from the successful outcomes of schools that are already high performing.

An important feature of the Schools First Awards is that the winning entries must be exemplary. The awards are intended to showcase what is happening in school—community partnerships across Australia and thus need to reflect best practice. Winning entries need to be exemplary in two key respects:

in terms of their outcomes in terms of their processes.

It is possible that some school–community partnerships may not have achieved all that they set out to achieve but can nevertheless demonstrate what they have learned through the collaborative process. This learning is an important outcome of a partnership engagement and, if disseminated, may assist other school communities to lay solid foundations for their own linkages.

## **Schools First Awards**

The Schools First Awards are intended to encourage schools to think creatively about the kinds of partnerships they might build with groups in their local community. The creators of the awards want schools to look carefully at the resources and skills that exist in their local community and to think about how these might be harnessed to improve outcomes for young people.

The awards criteria have been written in such a way that they can be used either for existing partnerships or adapted for proposed partnerships. While the awards funding will be targeted mainly at school–community partnerships that show evidence of outstanding achievement, there will also be a discretionary element that will allow the judges to recognise the potential for excellence. Given that significant educational change can take years to achieve, there will be school–community partnerships that may not yet be in a position to demonstrate improved outcomes for students but which show clear evidence of exemplary processes and collaborative engagement.

# **Characteristics of effective schools**

There is a substantial body of literature on the factors and conditions that contribute to highly effective schools. Masters (2004) distilled this research into a summary of six key features:

- strong and effective leadership that engages with the community to build partnerships to support the school's objectives
- a recognition that improving learning is the central purpose of the school and a celebration of student learning and achievement

knowledgeable and highly skilled professionals in the classroom

- a school culture that challenges and nurtures students and instils a sense of belonging and pride
- a well-developed system for monitoring and evaluating performance and a commitment to continuous improvement
- high levels of parent and community involvement and partnerships designed around school goals.

# Characteristics of effective school-community partnerships

Research shows that effective school–community partnerships typically have the following characteristics:

- an identified need or opportunity that the partnership is set up to address
- a mission to improve student outcomes
- a strong, committed leader and leadership team
- shared decision-making
- clear roles and responsibilities
- a structured and well-organised program
- frequent and effective communication
- regular monitoring and review
- tangible results
- sustainability.

# An identified need or opportunity

The need or opportunity may be identified by either a school or community organisation. The need should be significant in the sense that addressing it will make a difference in educational outcomes. All partners are involved in discussing the need or opportunity. The need or opportunity is supported by evidence in the form of data.

# A mission to improve student outcomes

Goals are clear, shared and realistic. They may be short and/or long term. Ultimately, the primary goal is to improve outcomes for students. Partners work towards a common interest.

# Strong and committed leadership and leadership team

There is a clear commitment to the partnership at the top level of each partner's organisation. Distributed leadership – that is, providing leadership opportunities for a team of teachers/employees – is also important for building capacity in each organisation and thus sustainability.

## Shared decision-making

All partners are involved in the decisions that are made. Each partner contributes meaningfully to the planning and implementation of the program. The particular expertise of each partner is drawn on throughout the program.

### Clear roles and responsibilities

There is a management structure and clear processes in place. All stakeholders are represented in the governance structures. Each partner has a clearly identified role.

# A structured and well-organised program

Activities are student-centred, high quality and adequately resourced.

# Frequent and effective communication

There is a clear communication plan in place. Partners are in regular contact. There is a high level of awareness among stakeholders regarding the partnership.

# Regular monitoring and review

Goals, progress and achievements are regularly monitored and refined as needed.

## Tangible results

These could include better school attendance, improved academic achievement, increased family and community involvement, and improved school programs. It may be some time before tangible benefits are apparent.

# Use of data and evidence as a basis for decision-making

Data help schools identify a need or opportunity. Evidence is collected throughout the program. The data enable success in the form of improved outcomes to be measured.

## Sustainability

There are sustainable resources (financial, human) to maintain partnership activities. The partnership becomes an accepted part of the culture of each partner organisation.

Table 1 below shows the evidence base for the awards criteria. The criteria are consistent with the research on highly effective schools and effective school—community partnerships. The third column represents the 'raw' criteria emerging from the evidence.

Appendix 3 summarises the key characteristics of effective school–community partnerships from a selection of the studies reviewed for this report.

Table 1: Evidence-based selection criteria

Characteristics of effective schools	Characteristics of effective school-community partnerships	'Raw' criteria based on the evidence
Strong and effective leadership that engages with the community to	Visionary and committed leadership	Strong and committed leadership
build partnerships to support the school's	Distributed leadership	Team of capable leaders
objectives	Assessments of school/community needs	Clear identification of need  – to address problem  – for partnership
	Clear roles and responsibilities	Good governance
A recognition that improving learning is the central purpose of the school and a celebration of student learning and achievement	Clear mission focusing on student achievement  Concrete, tangible results	Improved outcomes for students
Teachers who are knowledgeable and highly skilled professionals	Support for teacher learning	Improved outcomes for teachers (e.g. increased professional learning

		opportunities)
A school culture that challenges and nurtures students and instils a sense of belonging and	Structured and well-organised program  Quality partnership activities	Student-centred partnership activities
pride	Child-centred	
A well-developed system for monitoring and evaluating performance and a commitment to	A commitment to continuous improvement through regular review	Commitment to continuous improvement
continuous improvement	A use of data and evidence as a basis for decision-making	Evidence-based identification of need and decision making  Sustainability
High levels of parent and	Community and parents	All partners involved in
community involvement	involved from the beginning	strategic planning, implementation and review
	Commitment to joint action	
Source: Masters (2004)	Sources: Denton & Mapp, 2005; Corcoran & Lawrence, 2003; Pawlowski, 2007; Cotton, 2001. See	
	Appendix 2 for other sources.	

# Piloting the draft awards criteria

For the pilot, the characteristics identified from the literature were organised around the following stages of a partnership (see Lane & Dorfman, 1997; Hands, 2005):

Stage 1: Identification of a need

Stage 2: Planning

Stage 3: Implementation

Stage 4: Outcomes

Stage 5: Review and future planning.

Based on the characteristics shown in Table 1, a set of criteria was developed. Table 2 below shows the dimensions based on partnership stages, final criteria and possible sources of evidence. For the pilot the 'raw' criteria in Table 1 were transformed into a series of statements designed to show schools the basis for the awards. The possible sources of evidence listed in column 3 are not intended to be definitive or exhaustive but suggestions only. Table 2 shows the draft awards criteria that were piloted.

# Purpose of the pilot

The draft awards criteria were 'tested' with a small number of teachers and principals from a range of schools nationally to ensure the criteria were clear, equitable and useful for schools. A list of potential pilot schools was put together covering the following types of schools:

- primary/secondary
- public/Independent /Catholic
- rural/urban
- co-educational/single sex
- schools with Indigenous/multi-racial components of the student population
- large/medium/small size
- low/medium/high socioeconomic status communities.

Permission was sought from the relevant educational authorities to approach the proposed schools to test the draft criteria. The short turnaround time between development of the draft criteria, piloting and finalisation, and the fact that schools were on holidays at different times during the pilot period, meant that not all of the originally targeted schools could be used.

Altogether, feedback was received from 15 teachers or principals, twelve of whom were currently in schools and three of whom were former employees. The feedback covered all categories of schools.

Participants in the pilot were asked:

- Are the criteria easy to understand? If not, is there anything in particular that you think needs changing?
- Do you think your school would find the selection criteria helpful in preparing an application for an award? (Please explain your view.)
- Are there any particular criteria that you think are inappropriate or unrealistic or not relevant? (If so, which ones?)
- Do you think your school would be disadvantaged by any of the criteria? (Please explain why if you think this would be the case.)
- Do you have any suggestions or comments to make regarding the possible sources of evidence that have been suggested?

Table 2 shows the draft document that participants were asked to comment upon.

**Table 2: Draft Selection Criteria** 

Dimensions of partnership stages	Criteria	Possible sources of evidence
Identification of need	The primary focus is on improving student outcomes.  A clear need or opportunity has been identified.  The need or opportunity is significant.  The identification is based on evidence.  All partners recognise the need for a partnership.	<ul> <li>Evidence of needs analysis documents and processes</li> <li>Reference to contemporary research in identifying the need and how to address it</li> <li>Evidence of data collection</li> </ul>
Planning	All partners have been involved in the strategic planning.  The partnership is built on shared values and philosophies.  The goals are clear and realistic.  There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities.  The outcomes are measurable.  Risks have been identified and planned for.  Appropriate levels of resources have been identified.	<ul> <li>Copy of strategic plan, business plan, other strategic documents</li> <li>Copy of communications strategy</li> <li>Timeline for achieving the goals</li> <li>Budget outline</li> <li>Minutes or other records of partnership meetings</li> <li>Diagram or flow chart showing management structure and reporting</li> <li>Risk identification matrix</li> </ul>
Implementation	There is a clear commitment to the partnership at the top level of each organisation.  The partnership draws on expertise from both within the school and the community.  There is regular communication between partners.  Decisions are made jointly.  The contributions of each partner are valued.  The employees within each partner organisation are aware of the existence and purpose of the partnership.  Partnership activities have a student	<ul> <li>Evidence of commitment from leaders of each partner e.g. through newsletters to employees, parents, attendance at meetings, speeches</li> <li>Positions occupied by members of the leadership team</li> <li>Employee release time to meet and work on partnership-related activities</li> <li>Documents showing management structure</li> <li>Records of meetings</li> <li>Photographic evidence of joint attendance at activities or meetings</li> <li>Examples of communication between partners e.g. newsletters</li> </ul>

	focus.	<ul> <li>Number of information sessions held by and for partners</li> <li>Partnership promoted on each partner's website</li> <li>Reciprocal website links</li> <li>Inventory of programs, activities, events, services conducted through the partnership</li> <li>Printed, recorded, film, photographic or other evidence of partnership activity</li> <li>Student involvement in the partnership activities (e.g. attended workplace training; participated in mentorship relationship)</li> </ul>
Outcomes	Students have benefited socially, emotionally and/or academically from the partnership.  All partners have contributed to these outcomes.	<ul> <li>Improved attendance figures</li> <li>Improved graduation figures</li> <li>Improved performance on state literacy and numeracy tests</li> <li>Improved retention rates</li> <li>Fewer disciplinary problems or issues</li> <li>Participation in mentoring events</li> <li>Student satisfaction surveys</li> <li>Feedback from teachers or partners regarding improved student outcomes</li> </ul>
	Teachers have benefited from the partnership.	<ul> <li>Increased participation in training or other professional development opportunities</li> <li>Proportion of staff engaged in these opportunities</li> <li>Fewer teachers on sick leave</li> <li>Reduced turnover of staff</li> <li>Staff satisfaction surveys</li> </ul>

	Parents have benefited from the partnership.	<ul> <li>Improved attendance at information nights, parent teacher meetings, working bees, voluntary activities</li> <li>Greater involvement in excursions, camps, other school events</li> <li>Positive feedback on parent surveys</li> </ul>
	The school as a whole has benefited from the partnership.	<ul> <li>Increased enrolment applications</li> <li>Better student-computer ratios</li> <li>Improved facilities, resources, finances</li> <li>Higher profile in local newspapers</li> </ul>
	Business and community partners have benefited from the partnership.	<ul> <li>Higher profile in the community</li> <li>Increased staff participation in training or other professional development opportunities</li> <li>Staff satisfaction surveys</li> <li>Improved resources or practice</li> </ul>
Review and future planning	The partnership is reviewed regularly in terms of its goals, processes and achievements.  The impact of the partnership has been evaluated and areas for improvement identified.  All partners have been involved in the review process and in future planning.  The partnership is integrated into the culture and planning activities of each partner.	<ul> <li>Strategic planning documents</li> <li>Long-range plan for financial sustainability</li> <li>Evidence of evaluation</li> <li>Evidence of data collection</li> <li>Employees informed about the partnership as part of their induction</li> <li>Succession planning</li> </ul>

## Feedback on the awards criteria

Are the criteria easy to understand?

Most participants found the criteria straightforward and easy to understand. The issues that were raised by participants were related more to the number of criteria than to their accessibility.

# Are the criteria helpful?

Nearly all participants found the criteria to be helpful. One respondent suggested the criteria 'help to focus on the issues which need to be addressed in formulating the project'. Another suggested, however, that while the criteria were 'straightforward and unambiguous', some parents might need assistance with some of the concepts if they were to be involved in the application process. One respondent found the criteria to be 'very prescriptive' and 'inflexible' and suggested some schools might be discouraged from applying because of the time that seemed to be required in preparing an application.

# Are the criteria inappropriate/unrealistic?

The criteria were found to be appropriate, realistic and relevant. It was suggested they allowed for 'ongoing risk evaluation'. One respondent suggested that 'expertise from within and outside the school is valued and utilised'. One respondent felt the criteria were too 'utopian' and 'democratic', trying to accommodate all schools.

# Do the criteria disadvantage your school?

One respondent indicated the criteria could disadvantage their school because of the cost involved in having to release a teacher to prepare an application. Another suggested that some schools might be advantaged by having a strong focus already on social relationships when compared with other schools that have chosen to excel in a different area.

Several participants pointed out that primary schools and rural schools could be disadvantaged not by the criteria but by the very fact that the awards are about school–community partnerships. For example, it was suggested that primary schools might find it harder to attract business partners than secondary schools. It was also suggested that 'the smaller the community the harder it is to develop partnerships with businesses as most businesses have particular alliances to the school that their children attend or attended'.

## Additional comments

There were several suggestions made regarding the kind of data collection that could be undertaken by schools. Some respondents commented on particular criteria with suggestions for improvement. Others suggested deletions.

There was concern about the work involved in preparing an application. Comments included:

- 'I often read through the process required to go through for awards or grants and think that it is just too much effort required for the result.'
- 'It's one thing completing an application. It's another thing having to almost set up the program in such a way that it means you can satisfy all the criteria for the award.'
- 'A lot of the criteria sound like they will be very time consuming for primary schools we do not have many staff to do this'.
- 'Regardless of how necessary documentation may be it looks like an overwhelmingly long selection criteria for [something] that you may or may not get'.

A small number of respondents expressed concern about the prospect of a relationship that expects non-school partners to have an equal say in decisions affecting educational outcomes. 'The whole section on partners making joint decisions is a worry because partners whose main business is not education should not have an equal say in educational outcomes' was one such response.

## Feedback on particular criteria

Feedback on each criterion was generally positive with constructive suggestions made for improvement. For example, it was pointed out that a word like 'benefit' or 'enhancement' should be used rather than 'identifying a need' because 'need suggests a deficit situation and a school might well be wishing to further enhance a feature of their school which is already operating to the benefit of students'.

#### Other constructive comments were that:

- A focus on improving student outcomes 'may not be the primary goal'.
   Schools might have as their primary focus 'improving teacher outcomes with improved student outcomes an implied rather than explicitly stated goal'.
- All interested parties need equal representation on any decision-making body that is set up. There was a concern that teachers might not be included.
- It was suggested that student involvement in the planning phase is also important.
- Having partnerships built on shared values and philosophies 'could exclude some sensible partnerships, e.g. if there was a religious component with one partner and not with the other'.
- 'Pre and post measurements are essential and not possible sources of evidence'.
- 'Employees who are to be involved must be not only aware of the purpose but must be supportive of the project'.
- Having a student focus in the partnership or project may discourage organisations from applying 'if their ideas focus on staff or parents and by default have students at the foundation of why they are partnering'.
- While teachers may benefit form the partnership there could also be problems for teachers 'if the partnership creates a lot of additional work'.

#### **Implications**

The pilot highlighted two key concerns: the level of time and effort potentially involved in preparing an application and the potential for some schools to be disadvantaged.

In response to the first concern, the awards criteria have been reduced to five key criteria, one criterion for each stage of a partnership. The original statements encapsulating the criteria have been replaced by guiding questions. The sources of evidence have been streamlined and condensed.

It will be made clear to schools in the application form and guidelines that are currently being developed that the examples of evidence provided in Table 3 below are suggestions only. It is not expected that schools will be able to provide all of these types of evidence, but the evidence must show how their partnership meets the relevant criterion.

In relation to the second concern, the pilot indicates that while the criteria themselves are equitable, the awards may present a potential problem for small, primary and rural schools. The comments by several respondents, mostly from primary schools

and/or regional/rural schools, are supported by a United States survey from 2000 of school partnerships, which found that rural communities find it harder to organise partnerships because of distance, poverty, small populations and a lack of businesses concentrated in the community (Ferguson, 2000).

One implication for the Schools First Awards is the need to encourage such schools to think more creatively about how and who they could partner with. For example, one respondent in the pilot suggested his small, rural primary school could potentially partner with a local charitable organisation. It might be that a partnership can be established remotely with another community. While on the surface this might seem counter to the idea of community as a shared locality, it is in keeping with the broader concept of a community as being about shared values and beliefs.

The Schools First workshops will also need to ensure that support is targeted at those schools in particular who might otherwise find it hard to build community partnerships.

## The Awards Criteria

While the awards criteria are framed in terms of already existing partnerships, they can also be adapted for proposed partnerships. The key criteria that have been developed for the Schools First Awards are:

- Criterion 1: The partnership has been set up to address an identified need or opportunity that will benefit students.
- Criterion 2: A plan has been developed with each partner contributing to the plan.
- Criterion 3: A program has been successfully implemented.
- *Criterion 4*: Students have benefited from the partnership.
- Criterion 5: The partnership has become part of the culture and planning activities of each partner organisation.

These criteria will now form the basis for the Schools First Awards.

The draft application form and guidelines are in the process of being developed and will be piloted with a selection of schools, including, where possible, the same teachers and principals who have already so generously contributed their time and thoughts in the earlier pilot.

# **Summary points:**

- Award winning school–community partnerships need to be exemplary.
- A useful way of organising the selection criteria is around the stages of a partnership.
- The criteria, guiding questions and examples of possible evidence need to be as clear and concise as possible to help schools in their applications.
- A strong focus of the Schools First workshops will need to be on helping those schools who are potentially disadvantaged by not having access to the same resources as other schools.

Table 3: Application guidelines and selection criteria

Criteria	Guiding questions	Possible sources of evidence
1. Starting Out  The partnership has been set up to address an identified need or opportunity that will benefit students.	What evidence was there for this need or opportunity? What improved student outcomes was the partnership designed to achieve? Were all partners involved in identifying/discussing the need or opportunity?	<ul> <li>Evidence of needs analysis documents and processes</li> <li>Evidence of data collection (e.g. survey, school performance data, parent feedback, observations)</li> <li>Reference to contemporary research in identifying the need and how to address it</li> <li>Documentation of early communication between partners</li> </ul>
2. Planning  A plan has been developed with each partner contributing to the plan.	Does the plan indicate: how the need would be addressed? how, and how often, the partners would communicate? how decisions would be made? how roles and responsibilities would be shared? how stakeholders in the partnership (e.g. parents, employees) would be kept aware of what is happening? clear and realistic goals? measurable outcomes? ways of addressing any identified risks? appropriate resourcing?	<ul> <li>Copy of strategic plan, business plan, other strategic documents</li> <li>Copy of a communications strategy</li> <li>Timeline for achieving the goals</li> <li>Budget outline</li> <li>Minutes or other records of partnership meetings</li> <li>Diagram or flow chart showing management structure and reporting</li> <li>Risk identification matrix</li> </ul>
3. Implementation  A program has been successfully implemented.	Is it clear what actually happened?  Did the partnership draw on both school and community expertise?  Was there regular communication among stakeholders?  Were decisions made jointly?  Was there continuing leadership commitment?  Did the partnership activities have a student focus?  Were the activities of high quality?  Were goals, progress and achievements regularly reviewed and refined?	<ul> <li>Examples of communication between partners e.g. newsletters</li> <li>Positions occupied by members of the leadership team</li> <li>Employee release time to meet and work on partnership-related activities</li> <li>Documents showing management structure</li> <li>Records of meetings</li> <li>Information sessions held by and for partners</li> <li>Reciprocal website links</li> <li>Inventory of partnership activities</li> <li>Student involvement in the partnership activities</li> </ul>
4. Evaluation of outcomes  Students have clearly benefited from the partnership.	What evidence is there that the need has been met? Was evidence collected throughout the program? Who has benefited from the partnership and in what ways (e.g. students, teachers, parents, the school, community, non-school partners)? Were the outcomes as expected?	<ul> <li>Improved student outcomes (e.g. changes in attendance, graduation, performance on state literacy and numeracy tests, classroom behaviour, student engagement)</li> <li>Increased teacher/employee participation in professional learning opportunities</li> <li>Greater parent involvement in school activities</li> <li>Improved school facilities,</li> </ul>

Criteria	Guiding questions	Possible sources of evidence
	Were any changes made to the partnership or program as a result of the evaluation?	resources, finances Higher profile in the community
5. Future planning	What plans are in place to ensure future sustainability?	<ul><li>Planning documents</li><li>Succession planning</li></ul>
The partnership has become part of the culture and	Have all partners been involved in the development of future plans?	·
planning activities of each partner	What changes will be made to the program for the future?	
organisation.	Is there a succession plan in place if leadership team members leave?	

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# **Appendix 1: Summary of Awards Schemes**

Name of Award	Jurisdiction	Award grants	Categories	Criteria
Showcase Awards for Excellence in Schools	Queensland	Total: \$370,000  up to 97 Regional Awards, each receive a \$1,000 development grant  24 State Finalist Awards (3 per category) receive a \$5,000 development grant (selected from the Regional Award recipients)  8 State Awards, each comprising a \$20,000 development grant	8 categories of Showcase Awards, including community or industry partnerships	There is one overarching criterion regardless of category: documented evidence of the school's contribution to quality outcomes and continuous improvement for students.  These include education, personal, health/social wellbeing and vocational outcomes.
Australian Government National Awards for Quality Schooling	National	Prizes of up to \$1.215 million were awarded in 2008	Several categories, including Excellence in Family– School Partnerships (the most recent addition)	The main criterion for the Family—School Partnerships award is evidence of a strong and sustainable partnership that contributes to student learning.  This is done through:     specific collaborative strategies that promote and sustain family involvement and participation     a range of opportunities that promote effective communication, connect home and school learning, and participation in decision making influencing and improving student learning and opportunities influencing and improving the wellbeing of students.

Panasonic National School Change Awards	US	Total: US\$30,000  Six schools receive \$5,000 each and subsidised attendance at a Principals' Leadership Institute course	One category that is around school change	Key criterion: schools must show evidence of 'significant change' (4 dimensions, 16 criteria)  1. How meaningful is the change? Is it substantial rather than superficial?  2. How deep and broad is the change? Is it systemic rather than isolated?  3. How is the change focused? Is it student centred looking at teaching and learning?  4. How is it measured? Is it solution or outcome oriented?
BECTA ICT Excellence Awards	UK	National winner of Best whole-school category wins £6,000 with each regional winner in this category receiving £1,000. Winners of other categories receive £2,000 with £1,000 for the runners up	Five award categories, including best whole-school, beyond the classroom, leadership, learning experience and ICT support for schools	Criteria based on BECTA's 'Self-Review framework', which includes: leadership & management impact on pupil outcomes curriculum (planned and actual) learning and teaching assessment resources extending opportunities for e-learning professional development
Blue Ribbon Lighthouse School Award	US	Schools apply to be assessed and pay associated costs	Award based on achievement of excellent performance in all nine categories of the Blueprint For Excellence	Student focus and support – how well student needs are met, such as in transitional stages, their developmental needs, extracurricular activities, accessibility of facilities for students with disabilities.  School organisation and culture – exemplifying a caring community that supports continuous learning  Challenging standards and curriculum – includes significant content learning, citizenship, interpersonal and workplace skills  Active teaching and learning – purposeful decision-making governing all aspects of the teaching and learning program  Technology integration – the use, mastery and application of technologies that promote teaching and learning to provide opportunities that produce technology-capable students  Professional community –continuous professional development to support improved student learning

				Leadership and educational vitality – dynamic leadership engaging the school community in continuous school improvement focused on high levels of student achievement, current needs and future challenges School, family and community partnerships – a commitment to and recognition of the important role that families, partnerships and community play in supporting learning Indicators of success – student achievement of high academic standards
National School and Business Partnership Awards	US	Not known	One category based on the guiding principles developed from research with companies	A set of guiding principles is used as the basis for selection. Four dimensions:  1. Foundation – the strength of the partnership's foundation as shown by shared values, mutually beneficial goals  2. Implementation – strength of this 3. Continuity – the partnerships' sustainability  4. Evaluation – clear evidence of improvement in students' academic, social or physical wellbeing
MetLife Foundation- NASSP Breakthrough Schools	US	Small grant in recognition of schools with improved/high academic achievement	Middle and high schools  Based on a school's documented success in implementing strategies around collaborative leadership; personalised attention to students; and curriculum, instruction and assessment	Schools need to demonstrate:     continuous growth on state     assessments over time     specific efforts towards reducing the     achievement gap     40% or more students eligible for free     or reduced price meals  Other indicators:     equity of student participation in         challenging courses     academic and career focused         personal learning plans for all         students     school community connections     leadership development/mentoring
Merrill Lynch Education Award	UK	Supported by Dept for Children, Schools & families Funding level not known	Covers students 5 to 19 years. Aimed at companies	Award goes to community programs 'that improve the achievement of young people through sustainable partnerships'  Criteria loosely based around:  companies working directly with students providing support to or building capacity of teachers

				<del>,</del>
				developing and providing resources for schools
				companies devoting at least a year to the program
				Companies need to obtain a Partner Verification Form from a third party
				organisation that supports their application
Intel Schools of	US	Cash grants of	Awards go to	Key criterion: schools must develop an
Distinction		\$10,000 and \$100,000 in	publicly funded	environment and curricula that meets or exceeds benchmarks, including national
		products and services	and/or not for profit schools	maths and science content standards
			One	extent to which applicants meet the benchmarks of the Partnership for
			elementary, one middle	21st Century Skills in the ICT literacy maps for maths and
			and one	science and national content
			senior school in each of	standards for that content area professional development program(s)
			two categories:	leadership model level of community involvement
			maths and	level of collaboration/teamwork
			science	capacity to scale and sustain use of rich digital content
				level of student achievement a variety of instructional strategies
				incorporating such areas as
				critical thinking skills, hands-on experiences and project-based
Doot Ducknoon	Castland	Nietiner	A	learning
Best Business/ Education	Scotland	Not known	A number of different	Award goes to the organisation that best demonstrates 'commitment to working in
partnership (Falkirk Herald		Award goes to the business rather	business- related	partnership with our local schools to support our young people in developing
Business		than the school in	categories;	skills in life and skills for work'
Awards)		the partnership	one business-	
			school category	Quality of evidence showing the impact of a business's partnership with local schools
School Achievement	UK	£60 million per year	Awards tied	Based on performance at Key Stage tests
Awards Scheme		for three years in the early 2000s	to academic results	over a four-year period (1999–2002)
		Awards could only be used as bonus	Two	
		payments for staff	categories: rapid	
		No longer operating	improvement and high	
DD E	Nieus 7		performance	The state of the s
BP Enterprise Agreement	New Zealand	Award used to fund the development of	Based on prospective	quality of project plan – timing, costs level of understanding of the role of
		a business plan by students for	project rather than	the beneficiary organisation knowledge about the businesses that
		school-community.	retrospective	will complete the project
		Ranges from \$500	achievement	evidence of sound business research
		to \$1,500		(e.g. how the project will benefit

				evidence of enterprise in undertaking
				the project
				excellence in presentation
EPA Environmental Education Grant Program	US	Most grants are of US\$50,000 or less. 12 grants of between US\$85,000 and \$100,000 each year. Grantees must provide non-Federal matching funds of at least 25% of total cost of grant project in either cash or in-	Local initiatives supported. Range of applicants across universities, schools, non-profits, stat, federal	Nine critical performance components:     cost-effectiveness     effectiveness of collaboration and     partnerships     environmental or educational     importance of the project     effectiveness of delivery methods     methods for evaluating and improving     project     measurable results     geographic distribution of projects
Ashden Award for Sustainable Energy	UK	kind  First prize of £15,000 and two second prizes of £7,500	For existing achievement; not planned work but includes plans for using awards money	sustainable energy has been a key part of the practice and culture of the school for at least one year level of integration between sustainable practice and policy evidence of the energy generated or saved; benefits to the local community the sustainable energy work is inspirational and replicable – i.e. can be showcased there must be innovative aspects to the sustainable energy work of the school as a whole there are clear plans to use the award prize money for expansion and/or dissemination of the award-winning work the school must be well managed and governed and be working in partnership with others – local community, local education authorities, training bodies, energy supply companies – i.e. schools that have the capacity to make sustainable energy more widespread the school must have the capacity and commitment to make sustainable energy more widespread
The Broad Prize for Urban Education	US	US\$500,000 in scholarships for winning school district; \$125,000 in scholarships for four finalist districts	For school districts	academic performance and improvement on state exams compared with other districts in the state with low-income student populations closure of income and ethnic achievement gaps college readiness indicators

# **Appendix 2: Outline of Awards Schemes**

1) Country: Australia, Queensland

**Name of Award:** Queensland Education Department "Showcase Awards for Excellence in Schools," including:

- 1. The Network Ten Showcase Award for Excellence in the Early Phase of Learning
- 2. The Commonwealth Bank of Australia Showcase Award for Excellence in the Middle Phase of Learning
- 3. The RACQ Showcase Award for Excellence in the Senior Phase of Learning
- 4. The Showcase Award for Excellence in Inclusive Education
- 5. The Queensland University of Technology Showcase Award for Excellence in Leadership
- 6. The RemServ Showcase Award for Excellence in Innovation
- 7. The Showcase Award for Academic Excellence
- 8. The TechnologyOne Showcase Award for Excellence in Community or Industry Partnerships

**Main Focus / Purpose:** The Showcase program is designed for Queensland State Schools and features eight categories (see above) that aim to:

- recognise, celebrate and reward excellent practice in State Schools
- foster a learning culture that supports sharing excellent practices
- create professional development opportunities
- promote public education.

Award grants total \$370,000, comprising:

- Up to 97 Regional Awards, each comprising a \$1,000 development grant, presented during State Education Week (26–30 May 2008)
- 24 State Finalist Awards (three per category) receive a \$5,000 development grant, selected from the Regional Award recipients and announced late July
- Eight State Awards, each comprising a \$20,000 development grant, which will be presented at the Showcase Gala Dinner.

#### **Key Features:**

Participating in Showcase 2008 involves four elements:

- 1. Completing an Expression of Interest
- 2. Providing a Regional Award submission that describes the school's outcomes
- 3. Showcasing the school via a display or event within the local community during State Education Week 2008, 26–30 May
- 4. If recognised as a Regional Award winner, completing a State Award submission for review by the State Evaluation Team
- 5. A State Evaluation Team provides general feedback to applicants (via guideline documents) on pitfalls and praiseworthy aspects of previous applications.

**Criteria used:** There is one over-arching criterion for the Showcase awards:

'The school's contribution to quality outcomes and continuous improvement for students. These could include education, personal, health/social wellbeing and vocational outcomes.'

- Selection panels look for a range of features, which may include sustainability, transferability of process, innovation and inclusivity, as well as demonstrated evidence of successful outcomes.
- Content, not presentation, is the basis for selection for the awards.
- The entry should document evidence of a commitment to continuous improvement over time to achieve quality outcomes for students.

#### **Evidence required from schools:**

- Schools are required to provide specific evidence (qualitative or quantitative) of their contribution to quality outcomes and continuous improvement for students in the submission.
- Documentation of the evidence supporting the outcomes is a crucial part of the Submission.
- The use of one multimedia item (with a maximum length of three minutes) is optional; for example, PowerPoint presentation or Media Player file.

Evidence of awards' effectiveness: Not available

2) Country: Australia, national

Name of Award: Australian Government National Awards for Quality Schooling, including:

Awards for Individuals:

- Excellence by a Teacher
- Excellence by a Beginning Teacher
- Excellence in Teacher Leadership
- Excellence by a Principal
- Excellence by a Support Staff Member

#### Awards for Schools:

- Excellence in School Improvement
- Excellence in Family–School Partnerships

In addition, the Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations presents her Medal of Distinction to one of the Best National Achievement winners.

**Main Focus / Purpose:** The purpose is to recognise and reward teachers, principals and support staff who make an exceptional contribution to their school community and outcomes for students, and to share good ideas and practice among school communities across the country.

Prizes of up to \$1.215 million were awarded in 2008.

# **Key Features:**

School nominees for the 'Excellence in Family–School Partnerships' award are required to meet the three eligibility criteria:

- 1. Demonstrated partnership between the pre-school, school and the parent or governing body
- 2. Previous award winners will not be considered
- 3. Both the nominated school and parent community must have made a substantial and sustained contribution to the achievements.

**Criteria used:** Selection for these Awards is based on a demonstrated two-way partnership between a school and its parent community that contributes to better learning opportunities, outcomes and well-being for students. The nomination is to include qualitative and quantitative information that clearly demonstrates the partnership has contributed to student learning.

Nominations will be assessed on the extent to which the work of the school and its parent community demonstrates a strong and sustainable partnership that contributes to student learning through:

- specific collaborative strategies that promote and sustain family involvement and participation
- a range of opportunities that promote effective communication, connect home and school learning, and participation in decision making
- influencing and improving student learning and opportunities
- influencing and improving the well-being of students.

# **Evidence required from schools:**

The nomination process involves:

- nomination by someone in the school community
- preparation of a statement that addresses how the work of the school and its parent community has impacted on student learning and well-being, and supporting qualitative and quantitative information
- verification by two referees
- signed endorsement of the nomination by the principal and chair of the governing body or parents' association.

#### Evidence of awards' effectiveness:

An evaluation of the 2006 Awards was conducted by I & J Management Services in March 2007. The main finding was that the awards had 'a significant impact on individual Award winners, schools and the standing of the teaching profession'. The type of impact:

- Individual professional skills, confidence, responsibility, scholarship, career; reward
- School program extension; professional learning (conferencing, time release); resources (computers, equipment, materials); culture; promotion (signage, enrolments); engagement (students, community)
- Profession professional learning (conferences, sharing, networks); media; community recognition.

3) Country: United States of America (US)

Name of Award: Panasonic National School Change Awards

**Main Focus / Purpose:** The purpose is to recognise those schools (and school districts) that have been able to achieve significant school change for the better and to conduct research on how these schools were able to be successful.

An award is given to six schools that includes:

- a ceremony conducted at their school in May/June 2008
- a \$5,000 grant
- national recognition and coverage by the media
- subsidised participation of the school's principal in the Eleventh Annual National Principals Leadership Institute to be conducted at Fordham University in New York City, July 2008
- an awards presentation by the United States Department of Education at a special ceremony in New York City in July 2008
- participation in a major national research project focusing on school change.

**Key Features:** Annually, six schools across America are recognised for having "significantly changed." Nominated schools measure themselves against sixteen criteria.

Criteria used: The sixteen criteria are grouped under four dimensions.

Dimension 1: How meaningful is the change? Is it substantial rather than superficial?

- i. There has been a measurable change in attitudes, beliefs and values.
- ii. The practices, especially in classroom instruction, dramatically changed.

- iii. Teachers are engaged and own the change vision.
- iv. Students and staff want to come to school, enjoy being in school, and often stay beyond normal school hours.

Dimension 2: How deep and broad is the change? Is it systemic rather than isolated?

- v. The change is not merely affecting one classroom or grade; it is more widespread (systemic) in the school.
- vi. The changes in the school are evident in decisions about instruction, organisation, governance and accountability.
- vii. There is a perception in the school among all stakeholders (administrators, teachers, students, parents) that positive change has taken place.
- viii. There is a perception in the larger community that positive change has taken place, as reflected in a higher number of applicants, registrations, visits, etc.

Dimension 3: How is the change focused? Is it student centred looking at teaching and learning?

- ix. The overall quality of teaching has improved as measured by observations, peer evaluations, self-assessments, student feedback, parent comments, etc.
- x. Innovative teaching practices, such as problem-based learning, interdisciplinary learning, etc., have been effectively implemented and sustained.
- xi. There is an alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- xii. The school culture promotes inquiry, use of research, professional development, growth, the idea of a 'learning organisation'.

Dimension 4: How is it measured? Is it solution or outcome oriented?

- xiii. Documented increases across all groups of students demonstrated by multi-year performance data, improvement in overall student performance groups, and evidence of closing achievement gaps.
- xiv. Documented increases across all groups of students demonstrated by 'outside' evaluations such as district, state or national norm or criterion referenced examinations and/or standards.
- xv. There are documented increases in measurable outcomes such as promotion rates, graduation rates, acceptances into highly rated schools, job placements, number of visitors to the school, etc.
- xvi. The school has won recognition and awards for improved performance.

#### **Evidence required from schools:**

Schools submit four binders and four CDs that specifically address the criteria in the four dimensions above. The nomination materials include:

- application form
- essay of 10 to 16 pages
- letters of recommendation (1 page each)
- supporting documents, charts, news articles, etc. (up to 15 pages)
- schools have to meet at least 2 criteria in each dimension and at least 10 criteria.

**Evidence of awards' effectiveness:** None currently, although Panasonic, in conjunction with the Fordham University Graduate School of Education, is conducting research into the award winners.

4) Country: United Kingdom (UK).

Name of Award: BECTA ICT Excellence Awards.

Co-sponsors of the ICT Excellence Awards 2008 are Atomic Learning, Ramesys, RM, Toshiba, and Serco.

**Main Focus / Purpose:** The purpose is to identify and reward whole school excellence in ICT. The ICT Excellence Awards reward schools across the UK approaching ICT in outstanding or innovative ways, benefiting their whole community, inside and outside the school building.

The national winner of the Best whole-school category will win £6,000, with each of the 12 regional winners in this category receiving £1,000. The winners of the other four categories (outlined below), except for 'Support for schools', will receive £2,000, with £1,000 going to the runners-up. There is no monetary prize for the 'Support for schools' category, because winners and runners-up in this category are expected to benefit greatly from the national publicity the award will give their work.

# **Key Features:**

There are five awards categories in total:

- 1. Best whole-school with sub-categories for early years, primary and secondary, and a regional focus
- 2. Beyond the classroom with sub-categories for primary (including early years) and secondary
- 3. Leadership, management and collaboration with sub-categories for primary (including early years) and secondary
- 4. Learning experience with sub-categories for primary (including early years) and secondary
- 5. Support for schools for organisations that support school improvement with ICT.

#### Criteria used:

Criteria appears to be based on BECTA's 'Self-Review Framework', which incorporates eight elements:

- 1. Leadership and management
  - the vision for ICT
  - a strategy to achieve the ICT vision
  - the use of ICT to improve organisational effectiveness and efficiency
  - monitoring and evaluation
- 2. Impact on pupil outcomes
  - pupils progress in ICT capability
  - pupils progress more widely
  - attitudes and behaviour
- 3. Curriculum
  - the planned ICT curriculum
  - pupils actual ICT experiences
  - curriculum leadership and review
- 4. Learning and teaching
  - teachers' planning, use and evaluation
  - learning with ICT
  - leadership of learning and teaching
- 5. Assessment
  - assessment of, and with, ICT
- 6. Resources
  - provision

- access
- management
- 7. Extending opportunities for learning
  - · awareness and understanding
  - planning and implementation
- 8. Professional development
  - planning
  - implementation
  - review.

**Evidence required from schools:** Unavailable as the 2008 award has recently closed.

Evidence of awards' effectiveness: Not available.

5) Country: USA

**Name of Award:** Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) Environmental Education Grant Program.

**Main Focus / Purpose:** The goal of the program is to support environmental education (EE) projects that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills to make informed and responsible decisions that affect environmental quality. To be considered as EE, a project must be based on sound science and promote environmental stewardship. Each year, universities, schools, non-profit organisations, and state, local, and tribal agencies compete across the nation to receive approximately \$3 million to support local initiatives.

Since 1992, Congress has annually appropriated almost \$3 million to the EPA to award EE grants. The competition for EE grants is considerable, and about 200 grants are funded annually from among more than 1,000 applications received.

Grants of \$50,000 or less make up the vast majority of grants issued. Grants for more than \$50,000 are awarded by EPA Headquarters in Washington, D.C.; 12 are usually issued each year. Grants issued by Headquarters usually range between \$85,000 and \$100,000.

Grantees must provide non-Federal matching funds of at least 25% of the total cost of the grant project. The match may be cash or in-kind contributions.

**Key Features:** The project must enhance critical-thinking, problem-solving, and effective decision-making skills, as well as teach individuals to weigh various sides of an environmental issue to make informed and responsible decisions. Environmental education does not advocate a particular viewpoint or course of action.

# Criteria used:

The EPA's current educational priorities are for projects that:

- 1. build state capacity to deliver environmental education programs
- 2. use EE to advance state education reform goals
- 3. improve teaching skills
- 4. educate the public through community-based organisations
- 5. educate teachers, health professionals, community leaders, and the public about human health threats from pollution, especially as it affects children

6. promote environmental careers.

Factors considered in making final selections include:

- 1. cost-effectiveness
- 2. effectiveness of collaboration and partnerships
- 3. environmental or educational importance of the project
- 4. effectiveness of delivery methods
- 5. methods for evaluating and improving a project
- 6. measurable results
- 7. geographic distribution of projects.

**Evidence required from schools:** An application of 7 pages – the Project Summary (1 page) and up to 6 pages total for both the Project Description and Project Evaluation (a detailed budget and appendices are not included in the page limit).

#### Evidence of awards' effectiveness:

The EPA provides a Grants Map Booklet that includes:

- a summary and statistics for grants awarded since 1992
- detailed project descriptions for grants awarded by EPA Headquarters
- a list of grant recipients in the current year, organised by state and US territory
- maps and lists of recipients for all grants awarded since 1992, organised by EPA Region and sorted by state and US territory.

6) Country: USA

Name of Award: The Blue Ribbon Lighthouse School Award

Main Focus / Purpose: The award recognises 'schools of excellence'.

**Key Features:** It is not a typical application process. Schools undertake an assessment process and the award is based on 'achievement of excellent performance in all nine major categories of the *Blueprint for Excellence*'. The assessment costs schools according to how many enrolments they have. The Blueprint is intended to be a 'positive school improvement process' covering the nine major categories.

**Criteria used:** The nine critical performance components are:

- 1. Student focus and support how well student needs are met, such as in transitional stages, their developmental needs, extracurricular activities, accessibility of facilities for students with disabilities
- 2. School organisation and culture –exemplifying a caring community that supports continuous learning
- 3. Challenging standards and curriculum includes significant content learning, citizenship, interpersonal and workplace skills
- 4. Active teaching and learning purposeful decision-making governing all aspects of the teaching and learning program
- 5. Technology integration the use, mastery and application of technologies that promote teaching and learning to provide opportunities that produce technology-capable students
- 6. Professional community continuous professional development to support improved student learning
- 7. Leadership and educational vitality dynamic leadership engaging the school community in continuous school improvement focused on high levels of student achievement, current needs and future challenges
- 8. School, family and community partnerships 'a commitment to and recognition of the important role that families, partnerships and community play in supporting learning'

9. Indicators of success – student achievement of high academic standards.

# **Evidence required from schools:**

- Schools submit a letter of intent: contact details; description of school; reason for undertaking the assessment; commitment to submit a minimum of three best practices employed at the school; preferred date for the assessment
- An online demographic description of the school is done by the school administration
- The assessment is completed by building level administrators, certified staff, support staff, a sample of students and a sample of parents and community
- Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence (BRSE) prepares a final report for the school
- A site visitor validates the findings
- Develop the school's improvement plan.

Evidence of awards' effectiveness: Not available.

7) Country: USA

Name of Award: National School and Business Partnerships Award

**Main Focus / Purpose:** To recognise exemplary partnerships between schools and businesses.

**Key Features:** Run by the Council for Corporate and Social Partnerships, established in 2001. The award is underpinned by the knowledge gained from a series of interviews with school administrators and business executives. This information became the Guiding Principles for School–Business Partnerships, and was followed up with an award

#### Criteria used:

- Strength of the partnership's foundation as evidenced by shared values, ability to define mutually beneficial goals
- Strength of the partnership's implementation
- The partnership's sustainability
- The partners' ability to present a clear evaluation of the partnership's impact, including evidence that it has resulted in improvements in the academic, social or physical wellbeing of students.

# **Evidence required from schools:**

Evidence of awards' effectiveness: Not available.

8) Country: USA

Name of Award: MetLife Foundation-NASSP Breakthrough Schools

**Main Focus / Purpose:** To 'identify, showcase and recognize middle level and high schools that are high achieving and/or are dramatically improving student achievement' and that serve large numbers of students living in poverty'.

**Key Features:** Aimed at middle and high schools. Not so much an award as a small grant in recognition of achievement.

**Criteria used:** Selection criteria is based on a school's documented success in implementing strategies aligned with the 3 core areas of *Breaking Ranks* that have led to improved student achievement:

- collaborative leadership
- personalisation (attention to all students; mentoring and school/community connections
- curriculum, instruction and assessment.

#### Nominated schools must demonstrate:

- continuous growth on state assessments over time
- specific efforts towards reducing the achievement gap
- 40% or more students eligible for free or reduced price meals.

#### Additional success indicators:

- equity of student participation in challenging courses
- academic and career focused personal learning plans for all students
- school–community connections
- leadership development/mentoring.

**Evidence required from schools:** Completion of a nomination form that asks for the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced priced meals; schools asked to briefly describe why the school should be considered a Breakthrough School.

To demonstrate growth schools need to attach official documents of progress for at least 3 years in the form of state or local reports; a summary table of 3 years upward trend progress in at least English/language arts and maths.

Evidence of awards' effectiveness: Not available.

9) Country: New Zealand

Name of Award: BP Community Enterprise Project

**Main Focus / Purpose:** to encourage students to work on a project that will benefit a non-profit organisation. The award pays for a business plan to be implemented. It is a prospective rather than a retrospective award.

**Key Features:** The award is sponsored by BP Oil NZ.

- In teams, students put together a proposal and finance it within the \$1,000 budget provided by BP (if they win an award)
- Students negotiate with people in local businesses and their chosen community organisation
- They develop a project plan
- Up to 11 awards are made nationally within geographic areas
- National award provides an all expenses paid experience in Wellington
- Student awards: national award per team \$1500; runner up per team \$1,000; third place per team - \$500
- Project awards Five Excellence \$1,000; Five Merit \$500; and Two Achievement \$500.

# Criteria used:

- Providing a full description of the proposed project timing, costs and other businesses involved (25% weighting)
- Demonstrating an understanding of the role the beneficiary organisation plays in the community (15% weighting)
- Demonstrated knowledge of the businesses that will complete the project (10%)

weighting)

- Evidence of sound business research (e.g. a description & flow diagram of how the project will benefit the community) (15% weighting)
- Evidence of enterprise in undertaking the project (25% weighting)
- Excellence in presentation (10% weighting)
- Where all other things are equal those schools that outline an alternative funding strategy if BP funding is not won will be preferred.

# **Evidence required from schools:**

- Project report of no more than 8 pages should include description of the project, who is involved, benefits to the community, especially economic benefits
- Additional supporting documentation can include letter from the beneficiary organisation, a letter from the nominated business(es) to the students stating cost and agreement, a letter of support from the Principal, a letter from the Enterprise Studies teacher stating at least 4 students from the class who are involved, a list of team members participating x 4 copies.

Evidence of awards' effectiveness: Not available.

10) Country: UK

Name of Award: School Achievement Awards Scheme – now closed but ran for three years in the early 2000s

**Main Focus / Purpose:** To celebrate the achievements of schools that have either made significant improvement or are high performing; they were intended to reward staff teams.

**Key Features:** Funding was £60million per year for 2001, 2002 and 2003.

- Awards tied to academic test results, not for all round excellence
- The majority of schools were selected based on Key Stage tests/tasks for GCSE/GNVQ results. Schools were divided into Key Stage groups and ranked by their difference between their average points score in 1999 and 2002 with awards given to the highest-ranking schools in each Key Stage group
- For schools without test results (such as nursery schools or small primary schools) awards were based on the nominations by chief education officers, which were in turn assessed by panels with expert knowledge of the particular type of school
- There were two main categories of Rapid improvement (3/4 of awards were in this category) and High performance (which were for good results compared with other schools in similar circumstances – high performance) (high performance included the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals as an indicator of low socioeconomic characteristics)
- Because 'relatively few schools at any level of performance show continuous improvement year after year', the awards were based on a four-year improvement period (i.e. from 1999 to 2002)
- Used Average Point Score rather than value-added measures although DfES acknowledged that value-added measures based on individuals' prior attainment is a better way of comparing schools' performance
- Over the three years, 13,797 schools won awards
- The award money could only be used for funding one off bonus payments to staff (both teaching and non-teaching) and associated costs.

**Criteria used:** Test results. Schools were only required to submit nomination forms if they fell into the category of schools without test results or with special characteristics.

**Evidence required from schools:** See above.

**Evidence of awards' effectiveness:** The scheme ended after three years because it 'has achieved what it set out to do' (i.e. celebrate achievement), but also because the scheme evaluation showed 'there is no real evidence to suggest that the scheme has had a positive impact on teaching and learning, and school improvement'.

11) Country: Scotland

**Name of Award:** The Falkirk Herald Business Awards: category of Determined to Succeed (Best Business/Education Partnership)

Main Focus / Purpose: To recognise business support for young people.

**Key Features:** This is one category of a range of business awards offered by the Herald.

- Recognises a company's commitment to supporting the development of young people
- Examples given include through providing work experience placements, curriculum-focused projects, mock interviews, hosting school visits, attending careers fairs
- Royal Bank of Scotland is the main sponsor.

**Criteria used:** Award goes to the organisation that 'best demonstrates commitment to working in partnership with our local schools to support our young people in developing skills for life and skills for work'.

# **Evidence required from schools:**

Application form which requires:

- company details
- description of the organisation, including its goals, main products and services
- rationale for why the company believes it should win the award (maximum 2000 words).

Evidence of awards' effectiveness: Not available.

12) Country: UK

Name of Award: Merrill Lynch Education Award

**Main Focus / Purpose:** To recognise company community programs that improve the achievement of young people through sustainable partnerships.

**Key Features:** Supported by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and covers students 5 to 19 years old.

Examples of how businesses support young people include:

- working directly with students
- providing support to or building capacity of teachers
- developing and providing resources for schools

**Criteria used:** Companies entering this award need to obtain a Partner Verification Form – a statement from a third party organisation that is based in the community to support and verify their application.

- No more than 4,000 words
- Unclear.

**Evidence required from schools:** Unclear what businesses need to provide.

Evidence of awards' effectiveness: Not available.

13) Country: USA

Name of Award: Intel Schools of Distinction

**Main Focus / Purpose:** To recognise excellence in maths and science education.

**Key Features:** 6 winning schools – one elementary, one middle and one high school in each of two categories (maths and science) receive \$10,000 grants and more than \$100,000 in products and services from sponsors.

- Open to K-12, public, private, charter etc. school; 'Eligibility is limited to accredited schools that are publicly funded and/or not for profit
- Online entry with several rounds of judging
- Large range of sponsors
- Around \$1 million in grants and awards to winning schools was distributed for the 2008 awards
- Representatives from winning schools attend an awards celebration.

**Criteria used:** Schools must develop an environment and curricula that meet or exceed benchmarks, including national maths and science content standards. Programs need to be designed to ensure high levels of achievement for all students in all program areas.

- Extent to which applicants meet the benchmarks of the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills in the ICT literacy maps for maths and science and national content standards for that content area
- Professional development program(s)
- Leadership model
- Level of community involvement
- Level of collaboration/teamwork

- Capacity to scale and sustain
- Use of rich digital content
- Level of student achievement
- A variety of instructional strategies incorporating such areas as critical thinking skills, hands-on experiences and project-based learning.

**Evidence required from schools:** Judging looks at the strength of the school community and partnerships.

Evidence of awards' effectiveness: Not available.

14) Country: UK

Name of Award: Ashden Award for Sustainable Energy

Main Focus / Purpose: To promote the widespread use of local, sustainable energy.

**Key Features:** Open to any UK school providing education for pupils between 5 and 16 years old, which has an ethos and practice of sustainability.

- They are for existing achievements, not grants to start new work.
- Judges represent a range of expertise in sustainable energy, including technology, business, education, policy and the media.
- All applications and refs are sent to all judges with detailed comments from at least 2 specialist judges. Four schools short-listed. These are visited by a group of judges, assessors and awards staff.
- The purpose of the visit is to see the school in action; gather evidence to support
  what's been claimed; clarify technical and management details; answer questions
  from the judging panel; take photos for publicity; talk to members of the school
  community. Visitors report to the second meeting of the judging panel. Finalists
  agreed on. Interviewed by a panel.
- Winners and their guests attend the high-profile awards ceremony and second and third prize winners are announced.
- Awareness-raising regarding the work of finalists and winners as examples of best practice.
- 5-minute films made about the work of each finalist.
- First prize of £15,000 and two second prizes of £7,500.

# Criteria used:

- Sustainable energy has been a key part of the practice and culture of the school for at least one year
- Level of integration between sustainable practice and policy
- Evidence of the energy generated or saved, benefits to the local community
- The sustainable energy work is inspirational and replicable i.e. can be showcased
- There must be innovative aspects to the sustainable energy work of the school as a whole
- There are clear plans to use the award prize money for expansion and/or dissemination of the award-winning work
- The school must be well managed and governed and be working in partnership with others – local community, local education authorities, training bodies, energy supply companies – i.e. schools that have the capacity to make sustainable energy more widespread
- The school must have the capacity and commitment to make sustainable energy more widespread.

**Evidence required from schools:** Application form summarising the work of the school, and references from 3 people familiar with sustainable energy.

- Applications have 6 sections plus an appendix: including information about the school, achievements in sustainable energy, future plans for sustainable energy, financial information, names of referees, declaration, information for referees and reference form
- Entries must be supported by evidence wherever possible
- Photographs allowed up to a maximum of 6 pages in a single document
- Provide refs from 3 people familiar with the school but independent from it.

Evidence of awards' effectiveness: Not available.

15) Country: USA

Name of Award: The Broad Prize for Urban Education

# Main Focus / Purpose:

Its four goals are to:

- reward districts that improve achievement levels of disadvantaged students
- restore the public's confidence in our nation's public schools by highlighting successful urban districts
- create competition and provide incentives for districts to improve
- showcase the best practices of successful districts.

The award is intended to recognise urban school districts that 'demonstrate the greatest overall performance and improvement in student achievement while reducing achievement gaps among ethnic groups and between high- and low- income students.

**Key Features:** The annual US\$1 million Broad Prize was established in 2002. It is the nation's largest education award. The Board recently announced a doubling of the prize money to US\$2 million. The winner of the 2008 Broad Prize will receive \$1 million in college scholarships for graduating high schools students and the four finalist school districts will each receive \$250,000 in college scholarships.

- Annual award honouring urban school districts making greatest progress in raising student achievement
- Winner receives \$500,000 in scholarships for graduating seniors
- Each of the four finalist districts will receive \$125,000 in scholarships
- Finalist districts were selected by a review board of 19 prominent education researchers, policy leaders, practitioners and executives from leading universities, national education associations, think tanks and foundations
- Over two months teams of educational researchers and practitioners conducted site visits in each finalist district
- A selection jury of prominent individuals from business, industry, education and public service then review the performance data and the qualitative site visit reports to choose the winning school district
- School districts don't apply; 100 districts with significant percentages of poor and minority students are automatically analysed and considered each year on publicly available data.

#### Criteria used:

 Academic performance and improvement on state exams compared with other districts in the state with low-income student populations

- Closure of income and ethnic achievement gaps
- College readiness indicators, such as graduation rates, SAT, ACT and Advanced Placement exam data.

**Evidence required from schools:** Schools do not nominate. The five finalists are chosen by a review board of more than 15 experts who review the academic performance data and make qualitative site visits.

**Evidence of awards' effectiveness:** Anecdotal feedback from schools on the website provides some evidence of the benefits schools have derived from participation in the review process, particularly the feedback arising from the site visits. One school district, for example, suggested 'the Broad experience' had taught them 'the importance and impact' of both qualitative and quantitative data, the need for continual review of their initiatives, and 'the need for more recognition and celebration of effective teaching and learning; the constant acknowledgement of the people in our district – students, parents, teachers, administrators, school communities'.

# **Appendix 3: Summary of characteristics of effective school–community partnerships**

These summaries are drawn from a wide range of studies either reviewed or undertaken directly by the authors listed in the source column. While some focus on a particular aspect of school–community studies, such as leadership, all have something to contribute to our understanding of the key characteristics of effective school community partnerships. 'Effective' in this sense generally refers to improved academic achievement, better school attendance, improved family and community involvement, and/or improved school programs.

Authors (full citations in the References section)	Characteristics
Annie E Casey Foundation (2008)	<ul> <li>Key elements of successful community schools: <ul> <li>A full-time community school coordinator who marshals community resources and ensures everything works together to achieve desired results</li> <li>Partners actively involved and working towards a common interest</li> <li>The principal is completely engaged and committed</li> <li>Governance structures include all stakeholders</li> <li>Community leaders, service providers, parents and students are involved form the start; local businesses participate</li> <li>Common vision to raise student achievement</li> <li>School district supports the program</li> <li>Financing is diversified</li> <li>Successful program expansion requires good timing, enough funding to maintain programs, and active involvement of partners.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) (2008)	Based on a review of the literature, DEECD identified the following critical elements:
SA Social Inclusion Board (2008)	<ul> <li>Qualities of successful partnerships:</li> <li>Clarity and agreement about the purpose of the relationship</li> <li>Shared goals and visions</li> <li>A good 'fit' between the partnership purpose, shared goals and visions, and the articulated needs of the communities in which the partnership operates</li> <li>Identification of mutual benefits that respond to each partner's needs</li> <li>Leadership support for the partnership</li> <li>Good communication, including reflective processes to review how the partnership is working for all partners and whether goals are being achieved.</li> <li>The capacity of partners to support the chosen</li> </ul>

Family-School Partnerships Framework (DEEWR, 2008)	<ul> <li>partnership type</li> <li>A foundation of trust fostered through continuity of relationships and mutual respect</li> <li>Recognition of each other's strengths, expertise and credibility among particular population groups</li> <li>A willingness to be flexible, to support each other and to share responsibility.</li> <li>Effective family—school partnerships are characterised by:         <ul> <li>Sharing of power, responsibility and ownership, with each party having a different role</li> <li>A degree of mutuality that begins with the process of listening to each other and that incorporates responsive dialogue and give-and-take on both sides</li> <li>Shared aims and goals based on a common understanding of the educational needs of children</li> <li>Commitment to joint action in which parents, students and teachers work together.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Pawlowski (2007)	On basis of interviews with business and education leaders these critical elements were identified:  • A balanced partnership with neither education nor business dominating  • Making responsibilities explicit and have them endorsed by top officials  • Clearly identify outcomes for each partner  • Constant communication with all stakeholders  • Plan for sustainability.
Epstein (2005)	Based on studies of schools and school districts identify eight 'essential elements' for effective leadership and programs of school, family and community partnerships:  Leadership Teamwork Action plans Implementation of plans Funding Collegial support Evaluation Networking.
Denton & Mapp (2005)	<ul> <li>Visionary and committed leadership</li> <li>Clear mission focusing on student achievement</li> <li>Assessments of school/community needs</li> <li>Collaborative planning and involvement</li> <li>Assignment of school and partner liaisons</li> <li>Structured and well-organised program</li> <li>Visible partnership contact with students, teachers, parents</li> <li>Open and frequent communications</li> <li>Concrete, tangible results.</li> </ul>
Education Development Centre (2004)	Common features of IBM partnerships with school districts:  Visibility – partners demonstrated clear need and commitment to working hard to find a solution  Realistic expectations  High degree of communication  Distributed leadership

	Leverage – use the learning and investment in early programs to refine and develop subsequent ones
	<ul> <li>Professional Development</li> <li>Accountability – ongoing internal review and improvement.</li> </ul>
Corcoran & Lawrence (2003)	Factors critical to the success of partnerships with school districts:  • Leadership committed to instructional improvement • Sustaining support for instructional reform over time • Coherent policies to provide focus and guidance • Instructional resources to support the desired practice • Setting clear expectations for practice • Support for teacher learning • Professional norms that support improvement of practice • Use of data and evidence as a basis for decision making at all levels.
Hardy, Hudson & Waddington (2003)	<ul> <li>Have developed a tool based on six partnership principles:</li> <li>Recognise and accept the need for partnership</li> <li>Develop clarity and realism of purpose</li> <li>Ensure commitment and ownership</li> <li>Develop and maintain trust</li> <li>Create clear and robust partnership arrangements</li> <li>Monitor, measure and learn.</li> </ul>
Kilpatrick et al. (2002)	Identified indicators of effective school–community partnerships and effective leadership:  Committed school principals with transformative leadership style  School has in-depth knowledge of the community and resources available.  School actively seeks opportunities to involve all sectors of the community  School has a high level of awareness of the value and importance to school–community partnerships of good public relations  School and community draw on extensive internal and external networks  School and community share a youth-centred vision  School and community are open to new ideas  Collaborative decision making and joint responsibility  School is seen as learning centre for whole community.
The Council for Corporate and School Partnerships (2002)	<ul> <li>The partnership needs to be built on shared values and philosophies</li> <li>Partnership activities should be integrated into the school and business culture</li> <li>There should be a clear management process and structure</li> <li>Partnerships should have specific, measurable outcomes</li> <li>Partnerships should have high-level support within the business and school</li> <li>Partnerships should have clear and detailed communications plans</li> <li>There should be clear definitions of success for all partners.</li> <li>Summarises some of the critical elements of successful school—</li> </ul>

	<ul> <li>community linkages:</li> <li>A focus on prevention and development rather than crisis management or early intervention</li> <li>Staffed by professionals who function as a team</li> <li>Child-centred</li> <li>Deliver services to families</li> <li>Staff are given time, training and skills to establish and maintain sustained and supportive relationships</li> <li>Results oriented and accountable to participants</li> <li>Meaningful support from senior management</li> <li>Responsive to local needs.</li> </ul>
Coalition for Community Schools (2000)	To be effective, partnerships need to:
Lane & Dorfman (1997)	<ul> <li>Collaborative and integrated involvement and participation</li> <li>Peer-based relationships among diverse stakeholders that are facilitated by a collaborative leader</li> <li>Multiple partners and multiple partnership levels</li> <li>A strong focus on the community as the change agent, with a particular focus on the school as a main component</li> <li>Goals that are both process oriented (building social capital) and task oriented (using social capital to achieve goals).</li> </ul>
The Council for Corporate and School Partnerships  – Guiding Principles	<ul> <li>Recognise that partnerships are both a process and a product</li> <li>Establish a clear mission</li> <li>Determine mutual needs</li> <li>Secure top management support and commitment</li> <li>Clearly define expectations, roles and responsibilities</li> <li>Identify services and available resources</li> <li>Set realistic goals</li> <li>Emphasise clear communications</li> <li>Create on-going monitoring and evaluation systems.</li> </ul>