

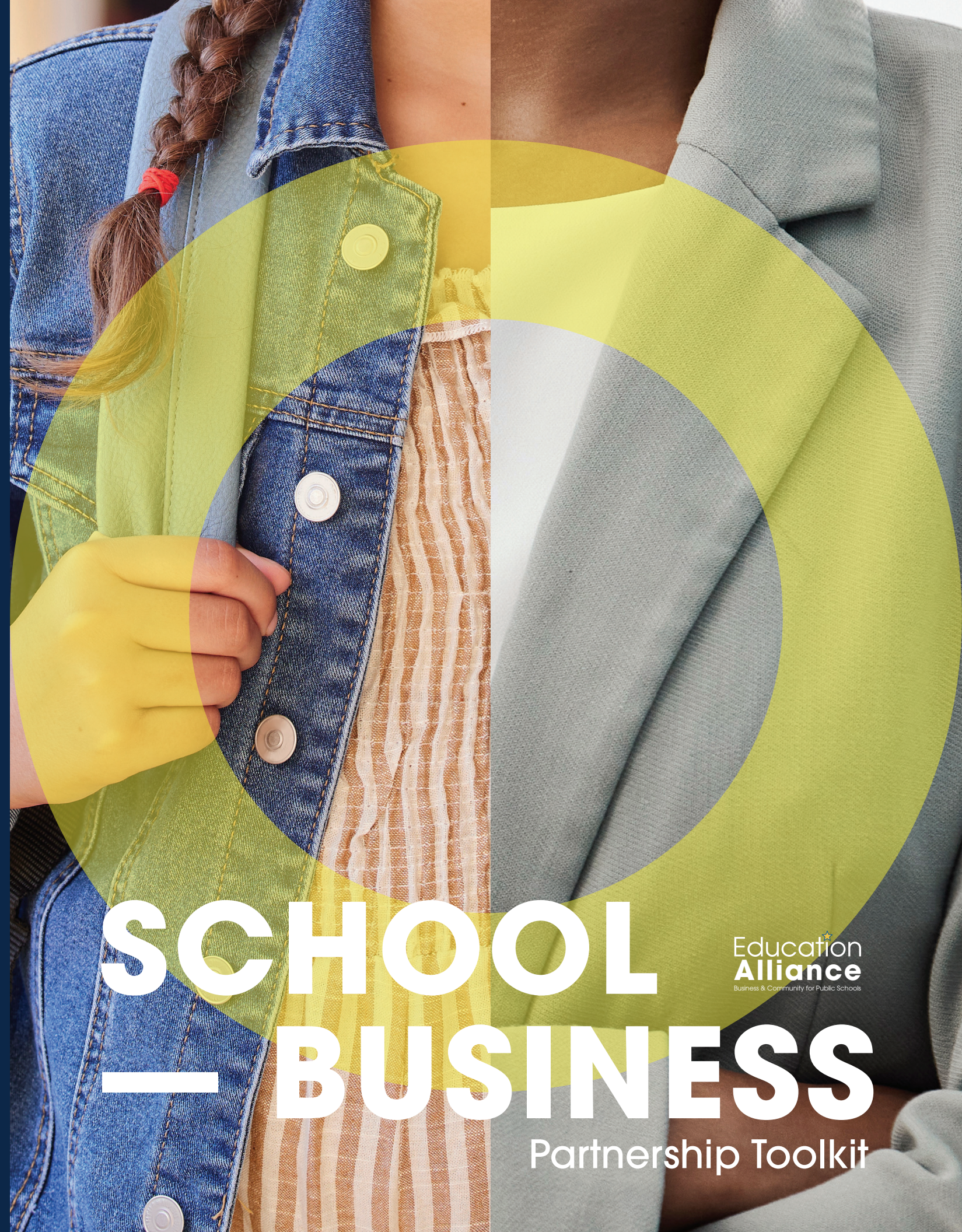
Education
Alliance
Business & Community for Public Schools

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SCHOOL — BUSINESS

Partnership Toolkit

Education
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Overview

The School-Business Partnership Toolkit is designed to help schools, districts, and businesses develop, strengthen, and sustain effective and impactful partnerships. It explains why school-business partnerships are vital for students, what qualities are necessary for an impactful partnership, and how to develop and strengthen such partnerships.



The Importance of School-Business Partnerships

School-Business Partnerships are crucial to the success of our students. By providing early and ongoing exposure to **real-world applications** of academic concepts, these partnerships are able to foster a deeper understanding of the relevance of a student's education. Quality partnerships offer opportunities for **hands-on learning experiences**, career exploration, and mentorship, laying the foundation for future academic and professional success. Moreover, partnerships with businesses bring additional resources and expertise to schools thereby enabling the enhancement of educational programs and extracurricular activities.

School-business partnerships help bridge the gap between the school curriculum and the evolving needs of the workforce, ensuring that all students are better prepared for the demands of the future job market. At the same time, businesses benefit by cultivating a pool of well-prepared, future employees. Effective partnerships engage multiple stakeholders working together through a **reciprocal relationship** that benefits all involved partners. This collaboration creates a more dynamic and responsive education system by aligning workforce needs with the school's curriculum in real time.

Begin Where You Are

While this toolkit makes suggestions on best practices and processes for implementation, we acknowledge that every school, district, and business are different. We encourage you to view this toolkit as just that—a tool—not a prescription. The intention of this toolkit is to meet you where you are on the pathway to strong partnerships and empower you to feel confident in your next steps.

The toolkit is a roadmap to assist both education and business leaders in establishing and navigating quality and effective partnerships. If you have an existing partnership, we hope that this toolkit will help you enhance and grow your collaborative relationship and program. Whether in the Planning, Implementation, or Improvement Phase, dive into the toolkit! We are here to support you along the way.



School-business partnerships help bridge the gap between the school curriculum and the evolving needs of the workforce

Strategic Alliances — Cultivating Partnerships: Goal Alignment, Needs Assessment, and Recruitment



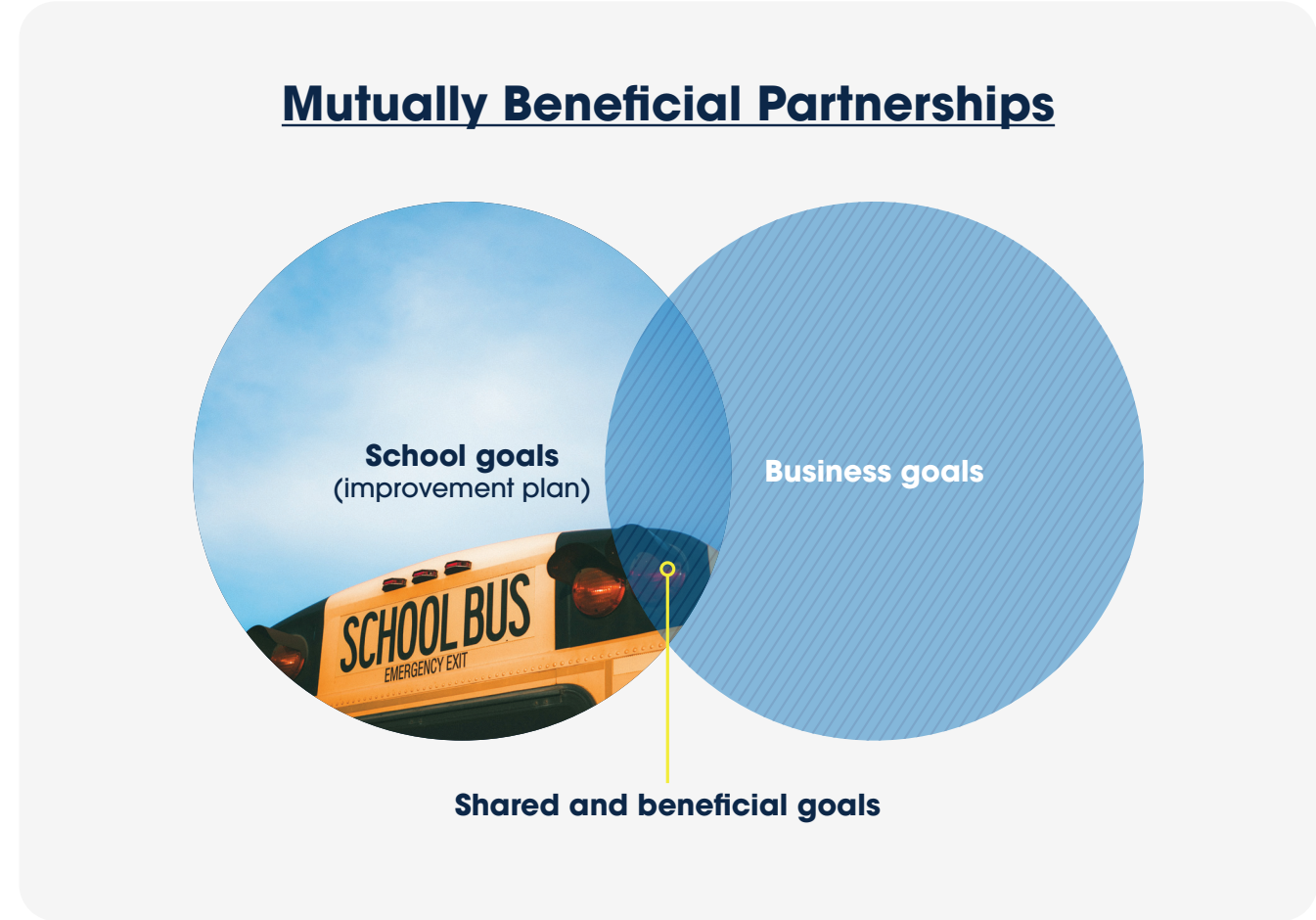
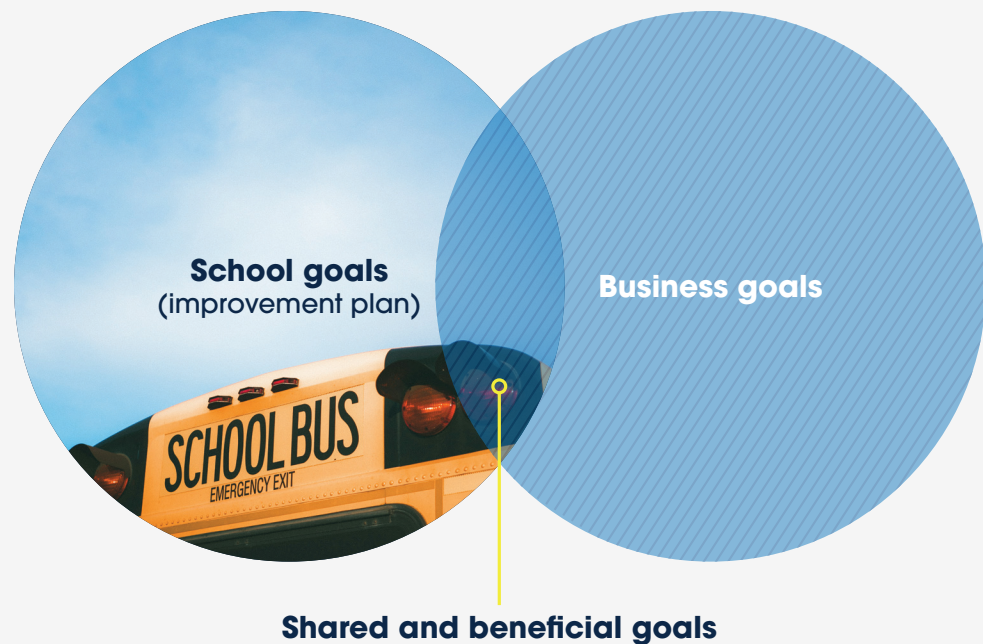
The value of high quality School-Business Partnerships is their ability to bring resources and expertise into the school and community that would otherwise not be available. Additionally, businesses find value in cultivating a pool of well-prepared, future employees while building relationships and goodwill within their local community.



Goal Alignment

These partnerships are effective when they support the overarching goals of the school and business community and facilitate student achievement. For this reason, the beginning of any School-Business Partnership development process should always begin with a review and updating of an organization's goals. Schools have goals outlined in their school improvement plan. Because we assume that each school already has a robust process for their improvement plan development, we will not address that process significantly here. However, it is important to remember that this improvement plan should be the basis for all activities and programming in the school—including business partnerships. Similarly, businesses have defined goals and long-range plans that intersect with the needs of the local community. When engaging with the development of a School-Business Partnership, businesses should identify how they can achieve a mutual goal by partnering with a specific school or district.

Mutually Beneficial Partnerships



Needs Assessment and Action Planning

Once you have reviewed your School Improvement Plan or business goals and confirmed that your goals are up to date, it is important to complete a needs assessment with your leadership team on what additional supports, resources, and activities you need to achieve your goals. Who you choose to complete this needs assessment is up to you and your unique environment. In many schools, this is the full teaching staff. In others, it is a selected group of teachers, staff, and administrators. In businesses this could be key department heads, leadership team members, or an ad hoc group of selected employees. While the full action plan does not necessarily need to be developed by a large group, it is important to gain as much feedback, ideas, and input as possible in the needs assessment and planning process.

The goal of the needs assessment process is for the staff members who are tasked with achieving the goals outlined in the School Improvement Plan or Business Plan to have an opportunity to provide ideas for potential partnerships that could fill the current gaps in achieving the goals. (See [Partnership Needs Assessment for Education Stakeholders](#) or [Partnership Needs and Resource Assessment for Business under Resources](#))

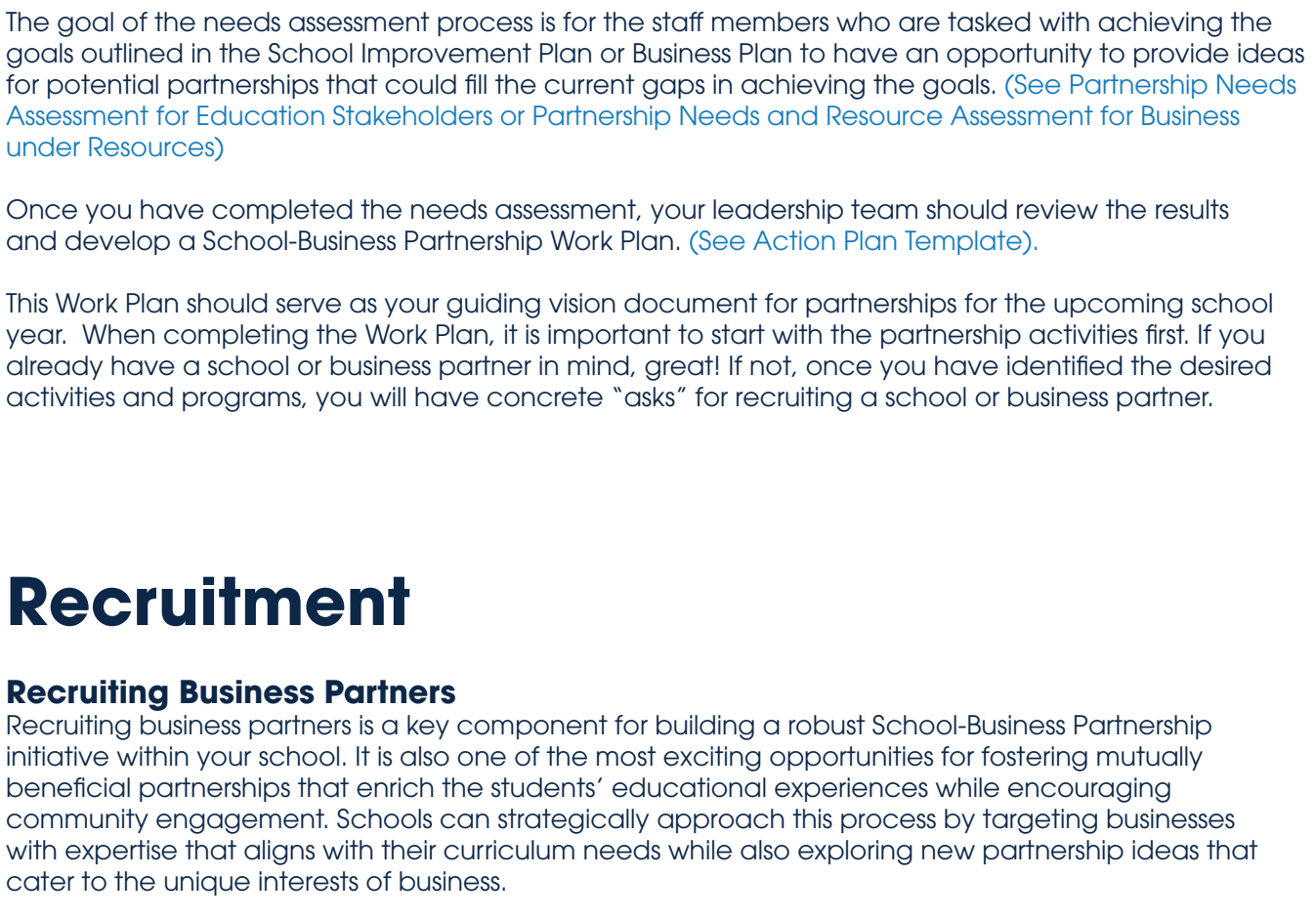
Once you have completed the needs assessment, your leadership team should review the results and develop a School-Business Partnership Work Plan. (See [Action Plan Template](#)).

This Work Plan should serve as your guiding vision document for partnerships for the upcoming school year. When completing the Work Plan, it is important to start with the partnership activities first. If you already have a school or business partner in mind, great! If not, once you have identified the desired activities and programs, you will have concrete "asks" for recruiting a school or business partner.

Recruitment

Recruiting Business Partners

Recruiting business partners is a key component for building a robust School-Business Partnership initiative within your school. It is also one of the most exciting opportunities for fostering mutually beneficial partnerships that enrich the students' educational experiences while encouraging community engagement. Schools can strategically approach this process by targeting businesses with expertise that aligns with their curriculum needs while also exploring new partnership ideas that cater to the unique interests of business.



Once your school has conducted a thorough assessment of your goals and identified areas where real-world expertise could enhance learning outcomes, developing a list of target businesses is an obvious next step. There are many ways of identifying potential business partners. Leveraging your existing networks and community connections (i.e. PTA, County Board Office staff, and school staff) to identify potential business partners is always the best way to start. (See [Recruitment Letter to Potential Business Partner](#)). Make sure to share your draft work plan with those stakeholder groups so that they know what specific expertise you are looking for in a partnership.

Through this process, you may also identify businesses with unique interests that the school hasn't yet identified that could complement educational initiatives. You may also identify businesses that are eager to support the school but who lack a clear picture of how best to do that. The leadership team should assist these business partners in identifying their interests, strengths, and capacity and then working to develop partnerships that support the school's goals. (See [Partnership Needs and Resource Assessment for Business](#))

By strategically targeting businesses with needed expertise and cultivating partnerships that cater to unique interests and resources, schools can create enriching educational opportunities that prepare students for success in the workforce while fostering strong ties with the local community.

Recruiting School Partners

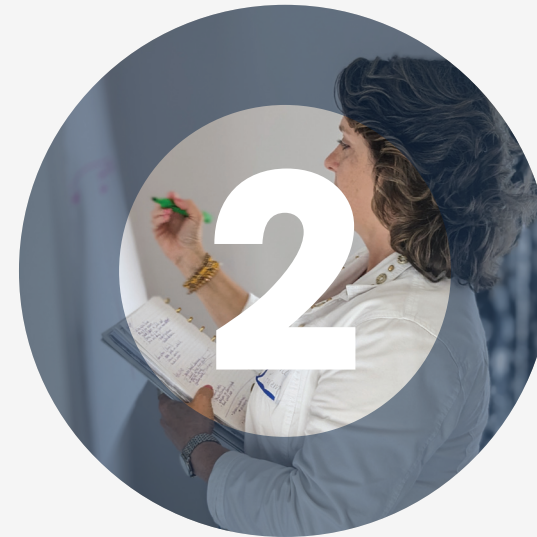
Just as schools seek out business partners to enrich educational experiences, businesses can also proactively engage with schools to foster mutually beneficial relationships. Collaborating with schools presents an opportunity for businesses to contribute to the community while helping to develop a tailored, quality future workforce and demonstrating corporate social responsibility.

Once a business has completed their self-assessment and articulated their goals for school-business partnerships, identifying potential school partners is a key next step. Leveraging your existing networks (employees, leadership team, local chamber of commerce, etc.) is a great place to start. Engaging with stakeholders such as parent-teacher associations, county board office staff, and school personnel can also provide valuable insights into schools that align with your objectives and values. (See [Recruitment Letter to Potential School Partner](#))

While businesses should attempt to approach schools with a clear understanding of how they can contribute to the educational experience, it is not a requirement. Having a willingness to partner and an understanding of your capacity and interests is a great starting point. The potential school partner should be able to brainstorm with you in determining the best fit for a mutually beneficial partnership. Through strategic targeting and collaborative planning, businesses and schools can establish meaningful partnerships that not only enhance educational outcomes but also strengthen ties with the local community and foster a career ready workforce.



Goal Alignment



Needs Assessment and Action Planning



Recruitment

Implementation: Program Development and Solidifying Agreement



Grade-Level Partnership Guidance

School-business partnerships can encompass various types of programming and support, each serving a distinct purpose in enhancing educational experiences and preparing students for future careers. Most of these partnerships can be categorized into Career Awareness, Career Exploration, Career Planning, Work-Based Learning, Social Emotional Support, Academic Support, and Financial Support.

Career Awareness:

These partnerships aim to introduce students to various career pathways and industries through activities such as guest speakers, workplace tours, and career fairs.

Career Exploration:

Partnerships in this category provide opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience such as job shadowing and industry projects.

Career Planning:

Focused on helping students develop career goals and plans, these partnerships involve activities such as mentorship programs and resume workshops.

Work-Based Learning:

Businesses collaborate with schools to offer immersive programming like internships, Simulated Workplaces, or CAREERS (Career Acceleration Readiness Experiences and Employment for Regional Students).

Social Emotional Support:

Often targeted to the Elementary population, partnerships in this category provide resources and programs to support students' social and emotional well-being, such as mentoring programs.

Academic Support:

Businesses assist schools in improving academic outcomes through programing such as tutoring, Read Alouds, and classroom educational activities or demonstrations.

Financial Support:

These partnerships involve businesses providing funding or resources to support specific educational initiatives, such as scholarships, grants, or equipment donations. In addition to a business identifying what category and grade-level partnership they are interested in pursuing, it is equally important for the business to reflect on their capacity and commitment. It is important for the education partner to help match the business with a partnership that is tailored to their expertise, interest, and capacity.

For specific partnership ideas, partners should refer to the Programmatic-Level Partnership Menu, which outlines various partnership opportunities tailored to each category, ensuring alignment with both educational goals and business objectives. This is just a menu of ideas to assist you in getting the discussion started. The options for partnerships are limitless—be creative! If there are specific ideas for partnerships that have come out of your needs assessment, be sure to include them in your own menu.

One important consideration when reviewing the Menu and assessing the availability of business partners is to consider the option of exploring digital partnerships. With many businesses operating partially or fully remotely, digital partnerships such as virtual internships/job shadowing, online mentoring programs, and webinars or virtual guest speakers provide valuable opportunities without geographical constraints.

Welcoming and Formalizing New Partnerships

Establishing School-Business Partnerships requires a welcoming approach to new partners and formalizing the collaboration through a comprehensive agreement. Welcoming new partners ensures a positive start to the relationship, fostering trust and enthusiasm for collaboration. A [sample welcome letter](#) has been provided for schools to utilize. As always, this letter should be personalized to reflect your own voice and partnership specifics.

Additionally, formalizing your new partnership with an official Partnership Agreement is essential for clarifying expectations, roles, and responsibilities of both parties. While a [sample partnership agreement](#) is provided in the resources as a framework, it should be customized to address the unique needs and goals of the partnership. It's vital to involve your County Board of Education office in reviewing your specific agreement to ensure compliance with regulations and inclusion of all necessary information. Additionally, the business partner should be sure that the agreement has been reviewed and revised by any necessary corporate authority or upper management to ensure it includes all desired language. The agreement should outline the scope of the partnership, goals, timeline, and resources committed by each party. By formalizing the partnership, both schools and businesses can mitigate risks and lay the groundwork for a successful collaboration that benefits the students, the business, and the community as a whole.

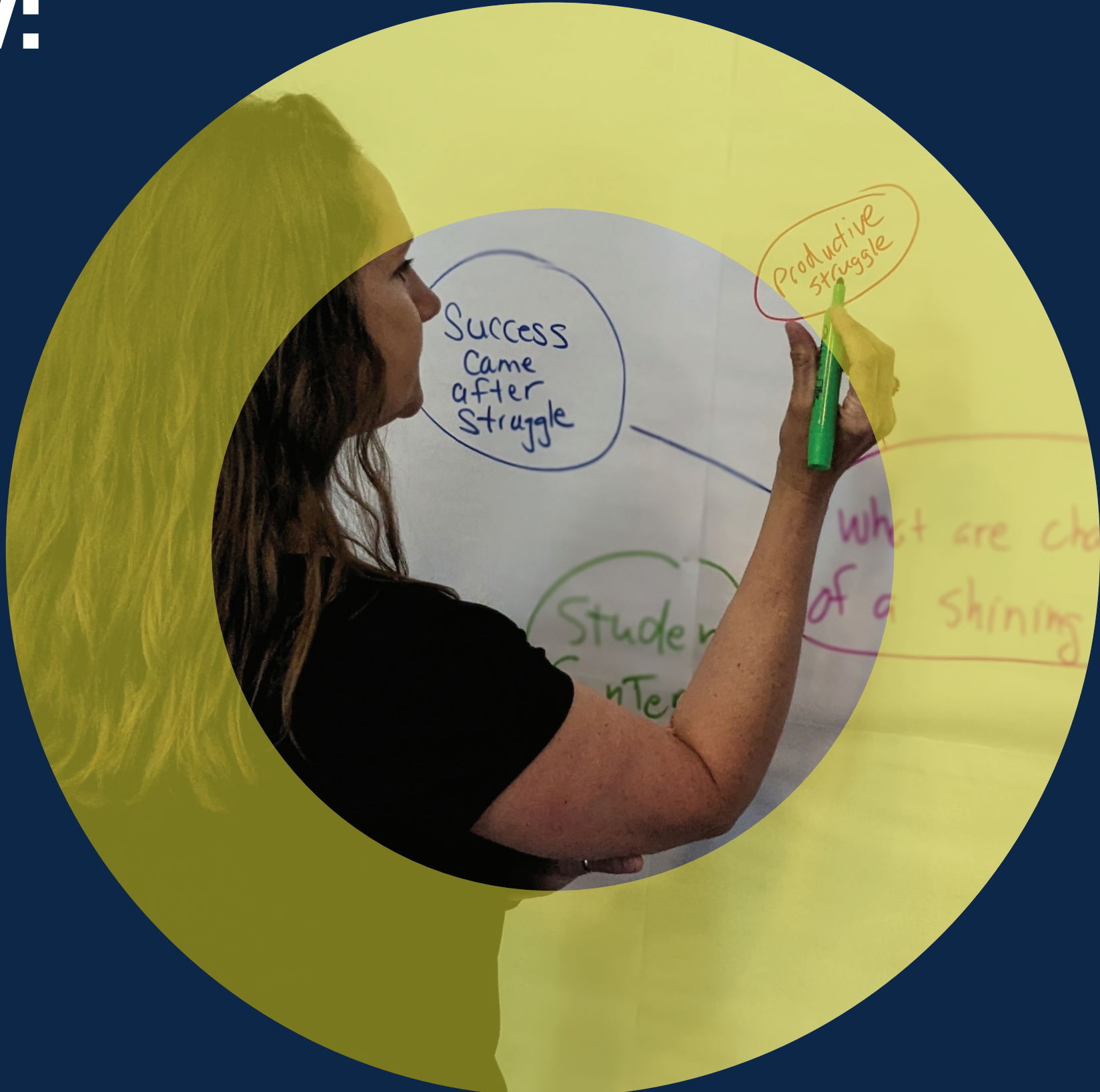
Once your partnership has been formalized, it is important to discuss the announcement and publicity of the partnership. This is something you will need to discuss with all partners. In some situations, businesses will want the education partner to take the lead on any publicity while other businesses will want their communications staff to handle it. Oftentimes businesses have very specific protocols around press releases and public announcements so it is of vital importance to have this discussion before any public announcement is made. (See Sample Press Release)



Welcoming new partners ensures a positive start to the relationship, fostering trust and enthusiasm for collaboration

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Improve and Grow: Assess and Enhance





The school and the business can adapt and refine their approaches to better achieve their shared goals

Assessment of Existing Partnerships

Regular self-assessment of an ongoing School-Business Partnership is vital for its sustained success and effectiveness. This practice ensures that both the school and the partnering business remain aligned with their goals and objectives throughout the collaboration.

By conducting self-assessments, stakeholders can evaluate the partnership's progress and identify areas where adjustments may be necessary to better meet the needs of all partners. This includes assessing whether the partnership is effectively addressing the educational goals of the school while also fulfilling the strategic objectives of the business.

The self-assessment should also provide an opportunity to gauge the level of engagement and satisfaction among stakeholders, including students, educators, employees, and business leaders. Feedback gathered from this process can inform planning for the upcoming year, allowing for adjustments to be made to enhance the partnership's overall impact. By regularly evaluating the partnership's performance and outcomes, both the school and the business can adapt and refine their approaches to better achieve their shared goals.

Included in this toolkit is a [Self-Assessment Tool](#) for both the school and the business to complete. Feel free to tailor this tool to your needs—you will most likely have unique questions and metrics for each partnership.

Other performance indicators and metrics you could include might be:

Quantitative Performance Indicators:

Student Impact Metrics: Number of students participating, attendance rates in programs, and completion rates of internships or projects.

Skill Development: Pre- and post-assessment of student skills in specific areas targeted by the partnership programs (e.g., technical skills, communication skills).

Academic Performance: Changes in participants' grades or test scores in relevant subjects before and after the program.

Business Impact Metrics:

Employee Engagement: Rates of employee participation in the partnership activities and their satisfaction with the involvement.

Recruitment Impact: Tracking if students involved in partnerships apply for internships or jobs at the partner business, or if the business hires from the student pool.

Operational Metrics:

Program Reach and Scalability: The expansion of the program in terms of schools and businesses involved over time.

Resource Utilization: Analysis of the resources contributed by the business (financial, material, human) and their alignment with the outcomes achieved.

Long-Term Outcomes:

Tracking Alumni: Follow-up with participating students to gauge the longer-term impact on their career paths and educational trajectories.

Community Impact: Surveys or studies to assess the broader community impact, such as economic benefits or improvements in local workforce readiness.

Feedback Loops:

Regular Check-Ins: Scheduled feedback sessions with all stakeholders to discuss ongoing progress and adapt strategies as needed.

Data-Driven Adjustments: Using data collected to make informed decisions about the future direction of the partnership, adjusting goals, and strategies to optimize outcomes.

No matter what you assess, be sure to also review any relevant student data (work product, test scores, student surveys, etc.) as a part of the self-assessment process. This information should assist in determining any needed partnership changes or enhancements.

Completing a self-assessment of an ongoing School-Business Partnership is crucial for ensuring alignment with objectives and enabling continuous improvement of the collaboration's effectiveness and impact. It should serve as a guiding tool for fostering mutual success and long-term sustainability in the partnership. This practice ensures that both the educational institution and the partnering business remain aligned with their goals and objectives throughout the collaboration.

Celebrating Success



Recognizing Business Partners

Recognizing and celebrating your business partners for their contributions to students is a key component in fostering strong, ongoing relationships and enhancing educational outcomes. These recognitions not only acknowledge the vital role played by businesses but also highlights community ties and encourages further collaborations.

From small gestures to larger events, there are many ways to express appreciation. Hosting a recognition luncheon or breakfast allows for further relationship building and provides an opportunity for school staff, students, and business representatives to share success stories. Creating plaques or certificates to prominently display at the school and at the business is another way to acknowledge ongoing partnerships. Even simple acts like personalized thank-you notes or letters from students can be some of the most meaningful recognitions a business can receive.

Recognizing School Partners

Just as schools celebrate their business partners, it is equally important for businesses to recognize and honor their school partners for their invaluable contributions to the community and students. Expressing appreciation strengthens the bonds between businesses and schools, fostering long-term relationships and positive educational outcomes.

Businesses can show recognition through various means, tailored to the preferences and interests of their school partners. Whether it is acts of appreciation for the school as a whole or a celebration for the specific group of students and teachers that you worked with throughout the year, showing your appreciation for the partnership and those involved is vital in sustaining quality partnerships and building towards additional opportunities in the future.

However you choose to recognize your partners, celebrating School-Business Partnerships further highlights their importance and encourages continued support for our students and schools.



CONCLUSION



Conclusion

Cultivating a strong School-Business Partnership environment in your community can be transformative for your students, school, and local businesses alike. We hope that this toolkit will be helpful in providing confidence and encouragement in the process. It should be viewed as not a rigid set of rules but rather a collection of strategies and tools meant to be supportive. Feel free to pick and choose what aligns with your unique environment and capacity, and adapt the process to suit your needs.

Above all, remember that often the success of a School-Business Partnership lies in the quality of the relationship between the partners. Create open lines of communication from the start and nurture those connections throughout the process. All effort you put into your partner relationships will pay off in dividends.

As you progress on this journey, take the time to celebrate your achievements. Recognize and acknowledge wins along the way, as they signify progress and reinforce the value of your partnerships. Embracing these successes will serve as motivation to continue innovating and growing. The process outlined in this toolkit is continuous: plan, implement, assess and improve, and then repeat. Each cycle will strengthen your collaboration and maximize your impact. The Education Alliance is committed to supporting you along your journey and looks forward to seeing all that you and your partners accomplish together.



Transformative for your students, school, and local businesses alike.

Resources



Needs Assessments

Partnership Needs Assessment for Education Stakeholders

Goals from School Improvement Plan	Identify targeted strategies and outcomes to address goals:	Identify how the school-business partnership may support or enhance the identified goals?
Goal 1:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What practices, procedures, and strategies will be implemented to support the goals? 2. Which areas need improvement to enhance student learning outcomes? 3. What are the desired outcomes of the specified strategies? 4. How will you measure with data the outcomes? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the business's area of expertise? 2. Which identified education outcomes can best be supported through the partnership? 3. What are the greatest unmet needs? 4. What are the resources that the school-business partnership may leverage to support the plan? 5. What opportunities exist for the school-business partnership to impact the business partner?
Goal 2:		
Goal 3:		
Goal 4:		

Partnership Needs and Resource Assessment for Business'

What internal goal(s) does our business have that could be improved or met by a School-Business Partnership?

What kind of training or expertise do our employees have that could be shared with the school? I.e.:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| • Computers | • Crafts and hobbies | • Athletic coaching |
| • Safety, health issues | • Public speaking | • Graphic arts, printing |
| • Photography | • Creative writing | • Construction |
| • Engineering | • Job preparation | • Business site visits |

List other:

What categories of support are we most interested in supporting?

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| • Career awareness | • Career exploration | • Career planning |
| • Work-based learning | • Social emotional support | • Academic support |
| • Financial support | | |

List other:

What level of commitment are we interested in providing?

Short-term (One-off events or activities or support that requires minimal time)

Medium-term (More than a one-off event but can be limited to a specific period of time (semester, year, etc.))

Long-term (Support that requires ongoing support and time)

Are we willing to provide release time from work for employees to take part in school activities?

What can the school do to assist us? What are our needs?

https://www.bishopwoodsschool.com/uploads/7/1/6/2/7162551/bwea_business_partnership_program_sept_2012.pdf

Action Plan Template

Work Plan Template for School-Business Partnerships

Name/Description of Partnership:

School Improvement Plan Goal #1: (What school improvement goal does this partnership support?)

Strategy/Activity (What will be done?)

Responsibilities (Who will do what?)

Timeline (By when? Month/Year)

Resources

Resources Available

Resources Needed

Potential Obstacles

Individual or institutional barriers that might exist?

Strategies for overcoming barriers?

Communication Plan

Who needs to be involved in ongoing communication?

What methods/how often?

Recruitment Letter Templates

Recruitment Letter to Potential Business Partner

Dear (insert name of Business or Community Leader),

(Insert name of school or district) is making great strides toward success for all students by connecting their classroom learning to real-world experiences. In doing so, we are ensuring that our students are college-and-career ready. To that end, we are asking all community stakeholders to assist us in helping students reach their highest level of achievement. We are looking to create business partnerships with local businesses to enable us to reach our goal and we think that (insert business name) would be an incredible asset to our school and our students.

In addition to being of vital importance to our students and community, we envision a partnership that is of value to your business interests as well. Through quality partnerships, we can ensure that students are better prepared to enter your workforce and your business is viewed as an asset to the community.

Together, we can create a supportive community where all students have the opportunity to participate in experiences like (insert examples of partnership activities).

There are many different ways you could partner with our school including:

(Insert list of potential partnership ideas specifically tailored to this business)

These are just a few of the ways your business could assist in supporting our school. We would love to discuss this with you further and hear your additional ideas for building a partnership that is equally supportive of our students and your business.

We hope that you will join our efforts to ensure (Insert county or town name) students are ready for the workforce and for the opportunities that await them after graduation.

Please call or email me at (insert contact information) to discuss this opportunity further

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Printed Name and Title

Recruitment Letter to Potential School Partner

Dear (Insert Principal or other contact name),

As a local business in the (Insert City or Region) community, (Insert Business Name) is deeply committed to contributing to the growth and success of this area. It is with great enthusiasm that we extend this letter to express our interest in forming a School-Business Partnership with (Insert School Name).

We have been inspired by the approach (Insert School Name) has taken in fostering an environment where students can thrive academically and develop crucial real-world skills. It is evident that your dedication to preparing students for future success aligns perfectly with our own values as a business. We believe that by joining forces, we can create mutually beneficial opportunities that not only enhance the educational experience for students but also contribute to the continued success of our community. By providing students with exposure to real-world scenarios and experiences, we can help bridge the gap between academic learning and practical application, better preparing them for the demands of the workforce.

We are eager to explore various avenues through which we can collaborate with (Insert School Name). We are committed to finding ways to positively impact the lives of students and contribute to their future success and hope to work with you to design and implement a partnership that is mutually beneficial and helps you achieve the goals you have for your school. We are excited about the possibility of forging this partnership and are eager to discuss potential collaboration opportunities further.

Please feel free to contact me at (Insert Contact Information) at your earliest convenience to schedule a meeting to discuss how we can move forward with this partnership. We are confident that together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of students and contribute to the continued growth and prosperity of our community.

Thank you for considering this partnership opportunity. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)
(Your Position)
(Insert Business Name)

Programmatic-Level Partnership Menu³

Activity	Type	Description	Commitment	Key Roles
Guest Speaker	Career Awareness	Visit a school to talk with students about jobs, businesses, industries, and the skills knowledge needed to achieve career goals	Short-Term	Business Partner: Prepare remarks for the classroom Education: Give clear context and instructions to the business partner about the visit, including time, location, background of students
Workplace Tour	Career Awareness	Host a small group of students to tour your workplace and discuss career options, a typical day, student opportunities, and more.	Short-Term	Business Partner: Share with the education partner the breadth of opportunities in your organization and work to identify the key areas of emphasis for the tour. Be up front about safety protocols and other logistical details. Education Partner: Work with business partner to identify key areas of emphasis for the tour and communicate logistics and other information throughout your school.
Career Fair	Career Awareness	Staff a booth to share advice on pursuing a career, skills and knowledge needed, and career roles and responsibilities	Short-Term	Business Partner: Prepare materials to hand out at your booth that are easily understandable Education Partner: Give clear information on logistics of the fair and a general idea of who will be attending.
Mentorship	Social-Emotional Support	Offer in-person and virtual support, guidance, and motivation to students as they explore careers and enter the world of work.	Medium-Term	Business Partner: Tailor mentoring to include the skills or needs outlined by the Education Partner. Find ways to connect on a personal level with students and guide them in a meaningful direction. Education Partner: Organize opportunities for potential mentees and mentors to be introduced and matched. Assist mentors in outlining needed skills for each mentee and provide training and tools for them to be successful. Connect the mentor to valuable information about the mentees.
Tutoring	Academic Support	Offer in-person academic support for students by providing one-on-one tutoring sessions with students identified by education partners.	Medium-Term	Business Partner: Work with Education Partner to match each tutor with student or students. Work to set up a mutually agreed upon schedule of tutoring. Provide support for tutors as needed. Education Partner: Match each tutor with a student or students. Work with tutors and classroom teachers to determine needing academic support and go over assignments. Work with Business Partner, classroom teacher, and student to set up a mutually agreed upon schedule. Serve as point of contact between Business Partner and classroom teachers.
Read Aloud	Academic Support	A read-aloud partnership unites businesses with elementary schools, promoting literacy and community engagement. Business-partners visit schools to provide in-person read aloud opportunities to classes or small groups promoting literacy while fostering meaningful relationships with students.	Medium-Term Business	Partner: Work with Education Partner to match each classroom reader with a classroom. Work with Education Partner to set up a recurring schedule (ie. half an hour every week or every other week) to visit the classroom. Coordinate reading material with the classroom teacher. Education Partner: Match each classroom reader with a classroom. Work with the Business Partner and classroom teacher to set up a mutually agreed upon schedule. Serve as point of contact for Business Partner and classroom teachers.
Classroom Activity/Demonstration	Academic Support	Partnerships between businesses and elementary schools where business partners provide classroom demonstrations or activities tailored to their unique expertise and interests of the students (ie. STEAM activities, Financial Literacy activities, etc.)	Short-Term	Business Partner: Work with Education Partner and classroom teacher to develop meaningful activity or demonstration. Prepare for and provide any needed materials for activity. Education Partner: Work with Business Partner and classroom teacher to develop meaningful activity or demonstration. Support Business Partner in providing activity/demonstration.
Sponsorship	Financial Support	Financial sponsorship of events and programs to enhance educational experiences, extracurricular activities, and facilities.	Short-Term	Business Partner: Work with Business Partner to determine financial or material support opportunities. Education Partner: Work with Business Partner to determine financial or material support opportunities.

³ <https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Career-Tech/Work-Based-Learning/Work-Based-Learning-for-Businesses-and-Communities/Employer-Guide-to-Work-Based-Learning.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>

Activity	Type	Description	Commitment	Key Roles
Guest Speaker	Career Awareness	Visit a school to talk with students about jobs, businesses, industries, and the skills knowledge needed to achieve career goals	Short-Term	Business Partner: Prepare remarks for the classroom Education: Give clear context and instructions to the business partner about the visit, including time, location, background of students
Workplace Tour	Career Awareness	Host a small group of students to tour your workplace and discuss career options, a typical day, student opportunities, and more.	Short-Term	Business Partner: Share with the education partner the breadth of opportunities in your organization and work to identify the key areas of emphasis for the tour. Be up front about safety protocols and other logistical details. Education Partner: Work with business partner to identify key areas of emphasis for the tour and communicate logistics and other information throughout your school.
Career Fair	Career Awareness	Staff a booth to share advice on pursuing a career, skills and knowledge needed, and career roles and responsibilities	Short-Term	Business Partner: Prepare materials to hand out at your booth that are easily understandable Education Partner: Give clear information on logistics of the fair and a general idea of who will be attending.
Industry Project	Career Exploration	Collaborate with teachers to integrate authentic industry tasks and problem solving into curriculum	Medium-Term	Business Partner: Identify problems or inefficiencies in your industry or organization that students could attempt to solve through project-based learning opportunities Education Partner: Work with a business partner to discuss relevant information regarding your classroom learning. What standards are you looking to address? What problem solving techniques could business partners advise on? Work to define project-based learning opportunities for students.
Competition Judge	Career Exploration	Judge student presentations or competitions and provide constructive feedback regarding student mastery of targeted competencies.	Short-Term	Business Partner: Participate in judging competitive student events. Many schools host a variety of opportunities to judge –anything from science fairs to mock trials, from public speaking events and even industry-oriented contests. Education Partner: Give clear information on logistics of the judging event. Explain any rubrics you'll be asking judges to use and give business partners a general idea of what to expect from students.
Mentorship	Social-Emotional Support	Offer in-person and virtual support, guidance, and motivation to students as they explore careers and enter the world of work.	Medium-Term	Business Partner: Tailor mentoring to include the skills or needs outlined by the Education Partner. Find ways to connect on a personal level with students and guide them in a meaningful direction. Education Partner: Organize opportunities for potential mentees and mentors to be introduced and matched. Assist mentors in outlining needed skills for each mentee and provide training and tools for them to be successful. Connect the mentor to valuable information about the mentees.

Activity	Type	Description	Commitment	Key Roles
Tutoring	Academic Support	Offer in-person tutoring providing academic support and fostering supportive relationships. Business partners offer personalized guidance enhancing the students' learning experience.	Medium-Term	<p>Business Partner: Work with Education Partner to match each tutor with student or students. Work to set up a mutually agreed upon schedule of tutoring. Provide support for tutors as needed.</p> <p>Education Partner: Match each tutor with a student or students. Work with tutors and classroom teachers to determine needing academic support and go over assignments. Work with Business Partner, classroom teacher, and student to set up a mutually agreed upon schedule. Serve as point of contact between Business Partner and classroom teachers.</p>
Classroom Activity/ Demonstration	Academic Support	Partnerships between businesses and schools where business partners provide classroom demonstrations or activities tailored to their unique expertise and interests of the students (ie. STEAM activities, Financial Literacy activities, etc.)	Short-Term	<p>Business Partner: Work with Education Partner and classroom teacher to develop meaningful activity or demonstration. Prepare for and provide any needed materials for activity.</p> <p>Education Partner: Work with Business Partner and classroom teacher to develop meaningful activity or demonstration. Support Business Partner in providing activity/demonstration.</p>
Sponsorship	Financial Support	Financial sponsorship of events and programs to enhance educational experiences, extracurricular activities, and facilities.	Short-Term	<p>Business Partner: Work with Business Partner to determine financial or material support opportunities.</p> <p>Education Partner: Work with Business Partner to determine financial or material support opportunities.</p>

Activity	Type	Description	Commitment	Key Roles
Guest Speaker	Career Awareness	Visit a school to talk with students about jobs, businesses, industries, and the skills knowledge needed to achieve career goals	Short-Term	Business Partner: Prepare remarks for the classroom Education: Give clear context and instructions to the business partner about the visit, including time, location, background of students
Workplace Tour	Career Awareness	Host a small group of students to tour your workplace and discuss career options, a typical day, student opportunities, and more.	Short-Term	Business Partner: Share with the education partner the breadth of opportunities in your organization and work to identify the key areas of emphasis for the tour. Be up front about safety protocols and other logistical details. Education Partner: Work with business partner to identify key areas of emphasis for the tour and communicate logistics and other information throughout your school.
Career Fair Career	Awareness	Staff a booth to share advice on pursuing a career, skills and knowledge needed, and career roles and responsibilities	Short-Term	Business Partner: Prepare materials to hand out at your booth that are easily understandable Education Partner: Give clear information on logistics of the fair and a general idea of who will be attending.
Industry Project	Career Exploration	Collaborate with teachers to integrate authentic industry tasks and problem solving into curriculum	Medium-Term	Business Partner: Identify problems or inefficiencies in your industry or organization that students could attempt to solve through project-based learning opportunities Education Partner: Work with a business partner to discuss relevant information regarding your classroom learning. What standards are you looking to address? What problem solving techniques could business partners advise on? Work to define project-based learning opportunities for students.
Informational Interview	Career Exploration	Answer student questions in person, by phone, email, or in a group about a profession or specific topic	Short-Term	Business Partner: Be available field questions from students in a variety of communication platforms. This could be one scheduled time, or throughout a given time period. Be sure to give clear and complete communication as you may be the first professional in your field a student has had the opportunity to interact with. Give advice and feedback as often as possible. Education Partner: Set expectations with students on the quality and type of communications they will be having with professionals. Encourage students to ask questions and be prepared with topics they would like to address with the business partner.
Competition Judge	Career Exploration	Judge student presentations or competitions and provide constructive feedback regarding student mastery of targeted competencies.	Short-Term	Business Partner: Participate in judging competitive student events. Many schools host a variety of opportunities to judge –anything from science fairs to mock trials, from public speaking events and even industry-oriented contests. Education Partner: Give clear information on logistics of the judging event. Explain any rubrics you'll be asking judges to use and give business partners a general idea of what to expect from students.
Job Shadow Career	Exploration	Provide an opportunity for students to observe, discuss and participate in daily routines and activities of a particular business	Short-Term	Business Partner: Prepare an experience for students to see the careers available at your organization. Consider how students may have opportunities to have some hands-on experiences during this time. Education Partner: Organize logistics of transportation, scheduling and work with business partners to create an experience for students that will give them an idea of whether or not a career at that organization is for them.

Activity	Type	Description	Commitment	Key Roles
Mock/Video Interview	Career Planning	Provide students feedback on their responses to interview questions	Short-Term	<p>Business Partner: Conduct an interview with a student that mirrors how you would interview potential employees. Provide thoughtful feedback on how the student performed and what you would suggest they do in the future.</p> <p>Education Partner: Make it easy for the student and business partner to interact—help arrange the logistics and give clear instructions to all parties. Help the students interpret their feedback.</p>
Mentorship/Coaching	Career Planning	Offer in-person and virtual support, guidance, and motivation to students as they explore careers and enter the world of work.	Medium-Term	<p>Business Partner: Tailor mentoring or coaching conversations to include the skills outlined by the Education Partner. Find ways to connect on a personal level with students and guide them in a meaningful direction.</p> <p>Education Partner: Organize opportunities for potential mentees and mentors to be introduced and matched. Assist mentors in outlining needed skills for each mentee and provide training and tools for them to be successful. Connect the mentor to valuable information about the mentees.</p>
Resume Development	Career Planning	Provide feedback to students on their resumes.	Short-Term	<p>Business Partner: Offer feedback and advice to students on what you as an employer are looking for in a resume. Connect students to an HR professional in your organization to discuss proper application and resume writing procedures.</p> <p>Education Partner: Provide opportunities in class to discuss resume development and refinement. Give examples of high-quality resumes to guide students in developing their first drafts. Help students interpret feedback and put it into action.</p>
Off-Site Placement and Internship	Work-Based Learning	In an off-site placement or internship experience, the student is a paid employee or non-paid intern for a business or community partner. The student performs tasks and demonstrates skills necessary for the operation of the business or organization, as determined by the employer with additional guidance from the instructor or educational supervisor.	Long-Term	<p>Business Partner: Develop a job description and work tasks. Assign an individual to serve as the supervisor/mentor of the student. Work with the educator to determine an evaluation schedule. PRioritize the student’s learning of necessary skills.</p> <p>Education Partner: Work with students to align work tasks to learning outcomes. Provide support to the business partners in supervising the student, including additional relevant instruction and skill development as needed. Assist in implementing and documenting evaluations.</p>
Simulated Workplace	Work-Based Learning	Simulated Workplaces allow students to transform their classrooms into a business to create an authentic workplace environment. Participants in the program are treated like employees: they are required to pass an interview for entry into the class, fill assigned roles within the company, participate in random drug tests, write a company handbook and pass a safety training. Business partners serve in ongoing advisory roles and/or reviewer/inspector roles.	Long-Term	<p>Business Partner: Advisor Role—Serve as an industry advisor to guide the student and educator on typical work tasks within the industry. Provide feedback to students on demonstrated skills, areas of success, and opportunities for improvement.</p> <p>Reviewer Role: Serve as an expert r. Allow students to showcase their products/ services to and provide professional advice to address equipment, safety, current business trends, certifications, etc. Onsite reviews give students the opportunity for value-added learning experiences within their companies, as well as helping local employers become more familiar with student achievements and skill sets. Onsite business reviews provide a win-win experience for both the student and the employer.</p> <p>Education Partner: Work with the student to align work tasks to learning outcomes. Potentially serve as the day-to-day supervisor of student work; partner with the business mentor to implement an observation, supervision, and evaluation schedule that meets the educational needs. Assist students in documenting evaluations and other feedback.</p>

Activity	Type	Description	Commitment	Key Roles
Remote or Virtual Placement	Work-Based Learning	In a virtual or remote placement experience, the student is a paid employee or non-paid intern for a business or community partner, but work-based learning most often takes place outside of the physical location of the employer.	Long-Term	<p>Business Partner: Develop a job description and work tasks. Assign an individual to serve as the supervisor/mentor of the student. Work with the educator to determine an evaluation schedule. Prioritize the student’s learning of necessary skills.</p> <p>Education Partner: Work with students to align work tasks to learning outcomes. Provide support to the business partners in supervising the student, including additional relevant instruction and skill development as needed. Assist in implementing and documenting evaluations.</p>
Careers (Career Acceleration Readiness Experiences and Employment for Regional Students)	Work-Based Learning	The CAREERS initiative provides a unique educational journey for high school juniors and seniors with industry-curated curriculum, hands-on training, and paid internships aimed at readying them for professional life.	Long-Term	<p>Business Partner: Provide students with skills, hands-on training, and innovative mentoring experiences culminating in a paid student job experience through this interconnected school-business partnership for targeted career opportunities.</p> <p>Education Partner: Work with the business industry partner to facilitate curriculum development and student participation in this intensive hands-on career training work-based experience.</p>
Sponsorship	Financial Support	Financial sponsorship of events and programs to enhance educational experiences, extracurricular activities, and facilities.	Short-Term	<p>Business Partner: Work with Business Partner to determine financial or material support opportunities.</p> <p>Education Partner: Work with Business Partner to determine financial or material support opportunities.</p>

Sample Welcome Letter

Dear (Insert Principal or other contact name),

As a local business in the (Insert City or Region) community, (Insert Business Name) is deeply committed to contributing to the growth and success of this area. It is with great enthusiasm that we extend this letter to express our interest in forming a School-Business Partnership with (Insert School Name).

We have been inspired by the approach (Insert School Name) has taken in fostering an environment where students can thrive academically and develop crucial real-world skills. It is evident that your dedication to preparing students for future success aligns perfectly with our own values as a business. We believe that by joining forces, we can create mutually beneficial opportunities that not only enhance the educational experience for students but also contribute to the continued success of our community. By providing students with exposure to real-world scenarios and experiences, we can help bridge the gap between academic learning and practical application, better preparing them for the demands of the workforce.

We are eager to explore various avenues through which we can collaborate with (Insert School Name). We are committed to finding ways to positively impact the lives of students and contribute to their future success and hope to work with you to design and implement a partnership that is mutually beneficial and helps you achieve the goals you have for your school. We are excited about the possibility of forging this partnership and are eager to discuss potential collaboration opportunities further.

Please feel free to contact me at (Insert Contact Information) at your earliest convenience to schedule a meeting to discuss how we can move forward with this partnership. We are confident that together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of students and contribute to the continued growth and prosperity of our community.

Thank you for considering this partnership opportunity. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)
(Your Position)
(Insert Business Name)

Sample Partnership Agreement⁴

_____ and _____

This agreement is completed by the school principal and/or district lead and partner liaison.

School or District Name:	Organisation/Business Name:
School District Lead Name and Title:	Partner Lead Contact Name and Title:
Phone Number:	Phone Number:
Email:	Email:
Primary Partnership Contact/Coordinator Name:	Primary Partnership Contact/Coordinator Name:
Backup Partnership Contact Name:	Backup Partnership Contact Name:

This agreement is completed by the school principal and/or district lead and partner liaison.

- Career Awareness**
 - Guest Speaker
 - Workplace Tour
 - Career Fair
- Work-Based Learning**
 - Off-Site Placement and Internship
 - Simulated Workplace
 - Remote or Virtual Placement
 - CAREERS (Career Acceleration Readiness Experiences and Employment for Regional Students)
- Financial or Administration Support**
 - Serve on School Advisory Boards
 - Fundraising / Donations
 - Event Sponsorship
- Career Exploration**
 - Industry Project
 - Competition Judge
 - Informational Interview
- Social-Emotional Support**
 - Mentorship
- Other**
 - Please Explain:
- Career Planning**
 - Mock/Video Interview
 - Mentorship/Coaching
 - Resume Development
- Academic Support**
 - Tutoring
 - Read Aloud
 - Classroom Activity/Demonstration
 - Establish Lunch & Learn
 - Judge Teacher of the Year Finalists

Estimated # of students impacted:

Shared Partnership Goals

Company/Organization Goals:

Describe two to three SMART goals you would like you the company/organization you are partnering with to achieve:

Example: Support student career exploration and advance student understanding of communication in the workplace.

-
-

Company/Organization Commitments:

Describe two to three tangible commitments you would like the company/organization you are partnering with to achieve:

Example: 5 volunteers will review/judge a student-based project in English class.

-
-

School/District Goals:

Describe two to three SMART goals your school/district will achieve within this partnership:

Example: Connect learning in school to the workplace and develop critical soft skills (professional behaviors).

-
-

School/District Commitments:

Describe two to three tangible commitments your school/district will achieve within this partnership:

Example: Provide partnership updates regularly in school communications and post on the website.

-
-

All volunteers are required to complete an application and undergo a criminal background screening conducted through (insert the agency your school/district uses for background checks). The school/district lead has final decision-making authority regarding volunteers and volunteer opportunities at the schools.

No photos or videos will be taken of students without prior written permission.

Partnership Agreement

We agree to the above described collaborative School-Business Partnership with the shared commitment to enhance the quality of education and cultivate a skilled workforce. This partnership seeks to address the needs of students, parents, educators, and the wider community. Through this joint initiative, we aim to enrich the curriculum, fortify the educational foundation crucial for economic advancement, and bolster the future workforce. Our collaborative efforts will be assessed annually, allowing for a review of progress and an opportunity to mutually agree upon any necessary adjustments to optimize the impact of this partnership. This agreement is forged in the spirit of fostering support for public education and the broader community.

Signatures

School Lead Printed Name and Signature

Date

And/Or

District Lead Printed Name and Signature

Date

Company / Organization Lead Printed Name and Signature

Date

⁴Toolkit for Building Partnerships between Schools and Businesses or Organizations across South Washington County Schools St. Johns County School District Annual School – Community Partnership Agreement

Sample Press Release

(School or District Name)
(Name of Media Contact Person)
(Phone Number of Media Contact Person)
(Email Address of Media Contact Person)

(Release Date)

For Immediate Release or for Release (Date/Time)

(District/School Name) and (Business or Organization Name) Announce New Partnership

(Optional: Press release subtitle: Short description of partnership)

(Date, City, State)—(School or District name) is excited to announce a new partnership with (Business name) to focus on (insert focus area/type (ie. career readiness, mentorship, etc.)). This partnership, which will begin (enter date), will (insert a short description of the partnership with the most important facts. Share the **who, what, when, where, and why.**)

(Insert 1- 2 additional paragraphs that share background information about why this partnership is significant, background information on the business, and includes quotes from a representative of the business and a representative from the school/district.)

For further information, (insert action step you would like people to take (visit website, contact X, etc.))

Partnership Self-Assessment Tools⁵

Business and Community Partner Form

Please evaluate your Partnership below. Your feedback is key in determining the effectiveness of the partnership in achieving student progress. Your suggestions and ideas for improvement are vital to future success.

Name of School Partner:

Name of Business Partner:

Self Assessment completed by:

1. Partnership Outcomes: The overall rating of our Partnership is:

Excellent Good Fair Poor

2. Partnership Content: Please describe your partnership:

3. Participation:

How many employees are involved in the Partnership?

Are you making a financial contribution? Yes No

Approximate amount

Are you providing "in kind" contributions? Yes No

Approximate financial value

Approximately how many hours are contributed? (per week or per month)

4. What are the best components/qualities of your Partnership?

5. What changes would you like to see moving forward?

6. On the reverse side, please make a brief statement about your Partnership.

⁵https://www.bishopwoodsschool.com/uploads/7/1/6/2/7162551/bwea_business_partnership_program_sept_2012.pdf

Education Partner Form

Please evaluate your Partnership below. Your feedback is key in determining the effectiveness of the partnership in achieving student progress. Your suggestions and ideas for improvement are vital to future success.

Name of School Partner:

Name of Business Partner:

Self Assessment completed by:

1. Partnership Outcomes: The overall rating of our Partnership is:

- Excellent
 Good
 Fair
 Poor

2. Partnership Content: Please describe your partnership:

3. Participation:

Approximately how many students are involved in the Partnership?

Approximately how many school staff are involved in the Partnership?

Approximately how many hours are contributed? (per week or per month)

4.Goals: What goal from your School Improvement Strategic Plan does this partnership support?

5. What are the best components/qualities of your Partnership?

6. What changes would you like to see moving forward?

7. On the reverse side, please make a brief statement about your Partnership.