

Conference Committee

Cathy Printon, Conference Chair
Parent Program Coordinator
VSAC Vermont State GEAR UP
(802) 542-2293, printon@vsac.org

Ken Page
Executive Director
Vermont Principals' Association
(802) 229-0547, kpage@vpaonline.org

Lindsay DesLauriers
Public Policy Associate
Voices for Vermont's Children
(802) 229-6377 x 204, lindsayd@voicesforvtkids.org

Sherry Gile
Director of Professional Programs
Vermont Chapter of the National Educators
Association
(802) 223-6375, sgile@VTNEA.org

Dave Cobb
Director of Development
Vermont Principals' Association
(802) 229-0547, dcobb@vpaonline.org

Karin Edwards
Director
Vermont Department of Education Special
Education Unit
(802) 828-1622, Karin.edwards@state.vt.us

Parents, Educators, and Principals Conference

Partnerships for Student Success

March 27, 2011
Vermont Technical College
Randolph Center

Keynote Speaker

Joyce L. Epstein, PhD

Johns Hopkins University

Founder and Director of the National Network of Partnership Schools

Dr. Epstein is director of the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships and the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS); a principal research scientist; and research professor of sociology at Johns Hopkins University. In 1995 she established NNPS, which provides professional development to enable school, district, and state leaders to design research-based programs for family and community involvement. Dr. Epstein has published more than 100 titles on family and community involvement, including *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action* (Corwin Press, 2009), which guides partnership program development; and *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Preparing Educators and Improving Schools* (Westview, 2011), a college textbook for future teachers and administrators.

Schedule

8:00–8:45	Registration & continental breakfast – Judd Hall
8:45–9:00	Welcome
9:00–9:45	Keynote address
9:45–10:00	Break
10:15–11:15	Session I
11:30–12:30	Session II
12:35–1:35	Lunch – VTC Cafeteria
1:40–2:30	Special topics panel – Judd Hall Burlington School District Reflects on School–Community Partnerships and Family Engagement

Registration

Register at
www.vsac.org/ParentEducatorsPrincipalsConf

Registration **opens January 17, 2012**
closes March 15, 2012

Cost: **\$50 per person includes lunch**
\$200 per school teams of four or more, including parents

Parent scholarships are available through GEAR UP and the Vermont Family Network and Parent Information and Resource Center of Vermont (VFN/PIRC-VT). Contact PIRC-VT toll-free at 1-800-800-4005.

Directions

Directions to Vermont Technical College, Randolph Center

From exit 4 off I-89, turn onto Route 66 and head uphill away from McDonalds (right turn off northbound exit, left turn off southbound exit).

Proceed $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the intersection at the top of the hill (cars travelling up the hill have the right of way at the intersection).

Drive straight through the intersection to reach the visitor parking lots for the main campus.

Please park in the visitor lots. No parking permits are necessary. Registration will be in Judd Hall, past Conant Hall and Old Dorm.

Sponsors



GEAR UP
A federally funded program



Vermont Principals' Association
Supporting Learners and Leaders



Session I 10:15–11:15 am

TIPS — Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork

Dr. Joyce L. Epstein, Director, Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships and the National Network of Partnership Schools

TIPS (Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork) Interactive Homework is part of a comprehensive program of school, family, and community partnerships designed, implemented, and tested by researchers and educators as a Type 4—Learning at Home activity. Using TIPS, any teacher can keep more families informed and involved in their children's learning and help more students complete their homework. Join Dr. Epstein as she shares the TIPS program and process.

Creating a Vision for Family Engagement

MaryBeth Pinard-Brace, Family Engagement Specialist, Vermont Family Network and Parent Information and Resource Center of Vermont

To create a vision for family engagement, it is necessary to understand common barriers to effective communication and to assess the factors affecting your ability to develop successful strategies for engagement. Participants will leave this session with their own vision statements for family engagement and will identify two or three personal steps they can take to improve engagement. If time allows, participants will work on personal vision boards for engagement.

Utilizing Service-Learning, Creative PTO Development, and Career Exploration to Strengthen School–Community Partnerships

Jerry Cassels, Middle School Counselor, Northfield Middle/High School

Embedded in every successful approach to dynamic and creative partnership-building are the core principals of service living and civic engagement. Without committed volunteers, school PTOs, after-school activities, and other enhancement programs wouldn't be possible. What are the differences between communities with strong partnerships and cohesive relationships, and those without? What passions and skill sets of yours will help your partnerships thrive for the benefit of the entire community? Explore what you have to offer, and identify the networks critical in building strong relationships.

Creating “Success Momentum” for At-Risk, Out-of-School Youth

Michele Delhaye, Educational Counselor, VSAC Career & Education Outreach

Drew McDowell, Transition Counselor, State of Vermont Vocational Rehabilitation

This interactive, experiential workshop will focus on ways to serve out-of-school youth who have fallen through the cracks. Using case scenarios, small groups will discuss how best to collaborate and utilize community resources for the ultimate success of youth most in need of training and education beyond high school. We will also address ways to share case management and resources.

Student-led Conferences: An Engine for Parent-Teacher-Student Engagement

T. Elijah Hawkes, Associate Principal, Randolph Union Middle/High School

Student-led conferences (SLCs) are parent conferences that shift the dynamic from a two-way conversation between teacher and parent to a three-way conversation that includes the student. Student work is on the table while grades, learning goals, and student work habits are discussed, with the student leading as much of the conversation as possible. Schools that use this model experience not only extraordinary jumps in parent engagement at conference time, but also a good deal of change in the classroom as students become more responsible for their education. Learn about student-led conferences as an exhibition of both student learning and teacher practices.

Cyber-communications: Connecting in the 21st Century

Terri Vest, Teacher, Twinfield Union School

In today's busy world, how do parents, teachers, and students find time to communicate? What's happening at school? What about homework, long-term projects, evening events, missing work, and picture day? In this interactive session, participants will learn about an existing program at Twinfield Union School that uses cyber-communications to increase the ties between school and home without adding to the workload of parenting or teaching. You'll discover how to build systems to send information quickly and efficiently between school and home and back again. Participants will need to bring a computer.

The Common Core: What Parents and Teachers Should Know

Karen Heath, Literacy Coordinator, Barre School

This workshop will introduce participants to the new K–12 Common Core State Standards. The session will provide a brief history of its inception, an overview of the Common Core, key points concerning focus in instruction, and what parents should know about the standards and new assessments that will replace the NECAP.

Session II 11:30 am–12:30 pm

Fostering Parent and Professional Collaboration: Partnership Strategies

Janice Sabett, Family Support Consultant/Training Specialist, Vermont Family Network

In this fun and interactive workshop, participants will work in groups to identify specific ways in which professionals and parents can foster collaborative relationships characterized by respect, trust, open communication, and shared goals. Participants will have time to reflect on a specific collaboration to identify what worked well and what might have been improved.

Barriers to Engagement: Using Community Engagement Strategies to Strengthen Family and Community Support of Education

Alisa Del Tufo, Founder and Executive Director, Threshold Collaborative

This session will present data and insights collected during an initiative implemented in the Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union in 2009. Participants will discuss the implications of these insights when it comes to reaching out to families and to developing family and community engagement initiatives in Vermont.

It Takes A Village

Anthony Popoli, Teacher, Twinfield Elementary School

Join this discussion of approaches to engaging families with the school community. This is a true example of a parent–school creation over one year. Find examples from your own creation. Share helpful hints and approaches, get the inspiration to try it out your way and instill positivity in all of us!

How to Tap into Creative Thinking: Knowing Your Child's Innate Creative Abilities at Home and in the Classroom

Susan A. Cherry, Author of *Curiosity and Creativity* and former music teacher from St. Johnsbury

This session will demonstrate ways to assess personal creative strengths using a valuable new discovery based on the theory of multiple intelligences (Howard Gardner) and a new taxonomy of curiosity published in Susan Cherry's new book, *The Curiosity Wheel: Finding Your Innate Creativity*. Useful to both parents and classroom teachers, this workshop will teach participants to tap into their curiosity in order to understand their natural creativity.

The OSSU 200 Early Literacy Book Club

Nancy S. Frenette, Principal, Braintree Elementary School

In this session, participants will learn about the benefits of establishing Early Literacy Book Clubs in elementary schools and will review the benefits of the program for families and the community.

Parent Primer

Dawn Moskowitz, Family–School–Community Coordinator, Burlington School District

This session will introduce participants to Vermont schools, will cover the top ten things parents need to know to help their students succeed, and will review the ways in which schools can help.

How to Avoid The Seven Deadly Sins That Corrupt Relationships with Parents

Curtis Reed, Jr., Executive Director, Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity

School administrators unwittingly drive parents to litigation in cases of harassment/bullying because administrators fail to recognize and avoid “seven deadly sins” of school policy. This workshop will detail proactive strategies designed to avoid these seven deadly sins and build productive relationships with parents or guardians who perceive that the school has failed to protect their children. The session, involving both guided discussion and group work, draws on experience working with hundreds of parents over the last 15 years.