



The Promise Neighborhoods Institute Intensive Learning Partnership

The Promise Neighborhoods Institute at PolicyLink (PNI) is creating the opportunity for a group of communities to join an Intensive Learning Partnership (ILP). Participants in the Intensive Learning Partnership will receive:

- ***Support in assessing the Promise Neighborhoods planning process and identifying technical assistance needs and resources***
Participants in the Intensive Learning Partnership will have the opportunity to access an on-site visit in which PNI staff and/or consultants will facilitate an in-depth self-assessment of their overall approach to developing a Promise Neighborhoods implementation plan. The goal is to enter the planning period with the strongest possible “plan-to-plan” and to identify key areas where technical assistance and support are needed.
- ***An opportunity to participate in the Harlem Children’s Zone’s Practitioner’s Institute***
HCZ's Practitioners Institute is designed to educate practitioners, policy makers, and funders about the Harlem Children's Zone's philosophy and approach and to help organizations adapt HCZ programming to their communities. Partner Communities will have an opportunity to bring a team to the Practitioner’s Institute for a customized session where they will learn in a structured way about HCZ’s programs, services, and approach. Preparatory work with communities will help target the content to each specific community’s needs. Site visits provide an opportunity to observe the work on the ground. Time with individual program managers provide an opportunity to answer questions most relevant to each community.
- ***Customized support for planning activities from the Promise Neighborhoods Institute partners***
Each Partner Community will be assigned a designated liaison from either PolicyLink, HCZ, or the Center for the Study of Social Policy—an experienced community change consultant—who will help assess the need for technical assistance, match community needs to PNI resources, and make peer technical assistance connections to other communities in the Intensive Learning Partnership. In addition, each community will have an opportunity for one site visit by experts in priority areas where the community seeks technical or planning support to develop its implementation plan. The community liaison will work with them over time to develop a technical assistance plan that makes the most effective use of this visit as well as the other technical assistance resources of the PNI.
- ***Opportunities to learn and share with other Partner Communities***
The PNI will host invitation-only meetings for Intensive Learning Partners as well as a regular series of topical webinars. The information collected from the initial assessment activities, Practitioner’s Institute Action plans, and the individualized technical assistance requests will be used to target these learning opportunities.

The above activities are designed to create a structured approach to technical assistance that is both targeted to the needs of each individual Partner Community, while also allowing peer sharing and learning in areas where there are common challenges. Our intent is to help those communities that have made a serious commitment to the philosophy and ideas behind Promise Neighborhoods complete a planning process that will position them to achieve their local Promise Neighborhoods goals. Moreover, we believe that together as a learning community, we can demonstrate that the “promise” of *Promise Neighborhoods* is an effective way to improve educational outcomes and the health and well-being of children and youth in communities across the country.

Criteria for Participation

All Federal Promise Neighborhood Planning Grant recipients are invited to join the Learning Partnership. An estimated fifteen additional Partner Communities will be chosen to join the ILP based on the criteria below:

Required of all participants:

- Evidence of sufficient resources to plan. Generally this is assumed to be a planning year investment equal (or nearly equal) to the match requirement in the federal Promise Neighborhoods application.
- Evidence of a continuing commitment to this approach from at least one school, with preference given to participants who have evidence of strong school district support as well.
- Evidence of a continuing commitment from a broad range of partners to collaborate on the planning and implementation of Promise Neighborhoods activities, with preference given to communities that have commitment from schools and the school district (see above), health care providers, local government (city or county), and one or more local or national funders.
- Evidence of a strong lead partner that is either a non-profit or an institute of higher education and is willing to take responsibility for the overall coordination of the planning process and is willing to be the lead partner in implementation.
- Evidence of a continued commitment to a robust community engagement strategy that includes clear roles for residents of the community in decision-making regarding the initiative.
- Willingness to engage within the Promise Neighborhoods Intensive Learning Community, sharing experiences and lessons learned (for example, participating in peer-to-peer activities during Learning Community meetings, webinars, and so forth).

Additional Considerations:

- A high-score on the federal Promise Neighborhoods application as defined by the U.S. Department of Education (score of 80 or above).
- A community of special interest (rural, Native American, immigrant populations, communities of color, communities with persistent poverty, communities experiencing violence, high number of kids in foster care, and so forth).
- A community with strong funding support from a foundation or from a public agency, which is making a longer range commitment to building that community’s capacity to plan and implement the Promise Neighborhoods approach.
- Strong capacity for evaluation or for generating evidence about the Promise Neighborhoods approach.
- High readiness to implement.
- Evidence of coordination with other federal initiatives especially Choice Neighborhoods.

Applying to Participate in the Intensive Learning Partnership

Applications to join the ILP will need to be submitted by **5:00pmEST on Friday, November 12, 2010** via email or fax to Erika Bernabei at erika@policylink.org or (212) 273-1619. The following documents make up the application process:

- **Cover letter:** (Optional—maximum 2 pages) Makes the case for why your community should be included.
- **Fact Sheet:** Provides contact information, key demographics, and a brief overview.
- A copy of your **Promise Neighborhoods Planning Grant** and all materials submitted in support thereof.
- **Evidence of Continuing Commitment:** Written communication, such as an email or cover letter dated after September 30, 2010 from funders which indicate that funding is still in place/committed. As well, written communication (may be an email or cover letter) from partners in the collaboration that indicates the partnership/collaboration has agreed to move forward with the Promise Neighborhoods strategy.

Upcoming Events

Intensive Learning Community Gatherings: Meetings for communities receiving federal grants and others invited to participate in the Intensive Learning Community will begin in the Fall and Winter of 2010. These meetings will provide sites with an opportunity to:

- Participate in learning sessions aligned with key capacities related to the Promise Neighborhoods planning process.
- Learn more about the technical assistance and resources available to you through the Promise Neighborhoods Institute.
- Establish relationships with other communities implementing the Promise Neighborhoods strategy.

Facilitated Sessions to Assess Your “Plan-to-Plan”: Promise Neighborhoods Institute staff or consultants are available to facilitate self-assessment sessions in your community. These sessions will focus on:

- Evaluating any feedback received on your federal application.
- Initiating a self-assessment of your planning process.
- Understanding the technical assistance resources available to your community through the PNI.

About the Promise Neighborhoods Institute at PolicyLink

The Promise Neighborhoods Institute at PolicyLink is an independent, foundation-supported nonprofit resource that offers tools, information, and strategies to assist communities interested in participating in the U.S. Department of Education’s Promise Neighborhoods program. The Institute provides technical support for planning, identifying quality approaches, building partnerships and assessing needs. Several organizations have been instrumental to the development of the Promise Neighborhoods Institute: [PolicyLink](#), [Harlem Children's Zone](#), and [The Center for the Study of Social Policy](#). For more information regarding the Promise Neighborhoods Institute or these three organizations, please visit us at www.PromiseNeighborhoodsInstitute.org.

Questions? Please contact Erika Bernabei at (212) 502-6499 or erika@policylink.org.