

**PROMISING PRACTICES IN FAMILY AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS****Overview**

*Are there exciting and innovative programs going on in your school related to family and school partnerships?*

*Would you like to be recognized by the Iowa Department of Education for these programs?  
2017-18 honorees' article found [here](#).*

As part of the continuous improvement and Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) initiative, the Department is requesting applications for recognition of "*promising practices*" in the area of family and school partnerships which include children and youth with disabilities and their families, ages three to twenty-one. The purposes for this search include the following:

- ★ to increase the awareness and highlight the importance of family and school partnerships – a key cornerstone to effective schools;
- ★ to recognize settings that are implementing *promising practices* in family and school partnerships leading to increased student achievement and school improvement; and,
- ★ to further inform continuous improvement and Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) across the state as we develop training and technical assistance efforts in this area.

A "*promising practice*" could be a program, activity, service, strategy, or policy that shows potential (or 'promise') for developing into an exemplary or evidence-based practice. *Promising practices* may be those in the earlier stages of development or implementation. Applications should address a practice that promotes positive partnerships between families and schools. Services described must demonstrate the application of a promising practice and go above and beyond the minimum requirements of IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act).

*Partnerships* refers to a relationship in which families (not only parents) and school personnel agree to build on each other's expertise and resources, as appropriate for the purpose of making and implementing decisions that will directly benefit students with disabilities and indirectly benefit other family members and school personnel (adapted from Turnbull et al., 2015, pg. 161). Research shows that initiatives that take on a *partnership orientation* create the conditions for family engagement to flourish. This includes conditions in which student achievement and school improvement are seen as a shared responsibility, relationships of trust and respect are established between home and school, and families and school staff see each other as equal partners (Patrikakou et al., 2005).

Programs serving students ages 3 to 21 are eligible including those in early childhood, elementary, middle/junior high school, and/or secondary settings. Similar to the terms used by SDI, we will refer to students as *learners*. Submissions must include learners with an Individual Education Program (IEP), include a special educator, and be linked to a public school (local education agency). Linkages with general education and your Area Education Agency (AEA) are encouraged and the application must include a signature from a supervisor such as the building principal or special education director.

**CRITERIA FOR AWARDS**

Submissions are to address all required sections of the Contact and Application forms. Supporting documents, as appropriate, can be attached with your application. The Application section is worth 100 points and sections A, B, and C should not exceed four pages in length, using 12 point Arial font, one inch margins, and utilizing the headings provided. Please save your application and supporting documents into a PDF. If you need help on merging pdf documents, please use <https://www.pdfmerge.com/>

**PROPOSED REVIEW PROCESS AND TIMELINES**

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Estimated Timeline</i>
Call for nominations or applications	September 28, 2018
Applications due	November 2, 2018
Peer Review and Selection of Semi-Finalists	November 2018 to January 2019
Notification of Semi-Finalists	February 2019
Follow-up Interviews	March to April 2019
Final Review and Selection of Finalists	May 2019
Recognition	June 2019

**PROCEDURE FOR THE AWARDS**

A panel of family and school personnel will review all submissions using the *Promising Practices* Reviewer Form. The first review will yield semifinalists. The semi-finalists selected will then participate in follow-up interviews (onsite or via Zoom). The review of all information obtained (original applications and interviews) will be used to select the finalists. Initial announcements of those selected will be in May 2019.

**RECOGNITION OF FINALISTS**

The finalists, consisting of family and school personnel representatives, will be recognized in June 2019. In addition, notice of recognition will be given to the contact person on the application for the school district's use.

Electronic applications or nominations must be received on or before **Friday, November 2, 2018**.

If you have questions, please contact Kim Drew, Family and Educator Partnership Consultant ([kim.drew@iowa.gov](mailto:kim.drew@iowa.gov)) or Deb Chiodo, Family and School Partnership Project Coordinator, ASK Resource ([deb@askresource.org](mailto:deb@askresource.org)).