Applications should be sent to Margaret Evans at mevans@naesp.org or fax to (703) 518-6281. Applications will be accepted until 5 p.m. Eastern time, June 20, 2008. Grants will be announced by September 1, 2008.

Funded by

MetLife Foundation
## Sharing the Dream:
Helping Principals Create Cultures
of Engagement and Involvement in Their Schools

Name of Principal: (Dr., Mrs., Ms., Miss, Sr., Jr.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please Check:</th>
<th>NAESP Member</th>
<th>NAESP State Affiliate Member</th>
<th>Other (specify)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Name of School:

School Address:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>City:</th>
<th>State:</th>
<th>Zip Code:</th>
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</table>

School Telephone: ( )

Fax: ( )

E-mail address:

The Sharing the Dream project intends to help creative principals in schools with demonstrated needs. Please share the following information to provide a picture of your school and community.

School Enrollment:          Grade Levels (e.g., K-6)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Is your school (circle one):</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Suburban</th>
<th>Other: ________________</th>
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Student population demographics:

Percentage of students who are eligible for free and reduced-priced lunch:

Does your school receive Title I or Schoolwide Title I funds?

Is your school on a state watch list or in any type of corrective action status for failing to meet adequate yearly progress measures?

If so, please explain:

Describe any other measures that would indicate your school is in need:
In a separate narrative document – not to exceed seven pages – describe your proposed project. The narrative should include:

1. **Context**
   - Explain the school and the community context.
   - Demonstrate the needs of the students or community that will be met through this project.

2. **Project Description**
   - Project name.
   - Describe how the project engages community.
   - Define what success might look like when the community is actively engaged in student learning and school success.
   - Indicate how *Sharing the Dream* funds will allow the school to do something it couldn’t have done otherwise.
   - Explain how this initiative connects to other school efforts.

3. **Measuring Success**
   - Define what success might look like when the community is actively engaged in student learning and school success.
   - Provide examples of types of data to be used in measuring success (e.g., parent participation, satisfaction surveys)

4. **Leadership**
   - Explain the role of the principal in this project.
   - Indicate that the applying principal intends to be an active principal during the 2007-2008 school year.

5. **Budget**
   (If a grant is awarded, grantees are required to submit a budget with specific line items, including: staff and consultants, food, AV or other meeting costs, telephone and fax, printing, postage and delivery, supplies, local transportation, resource materials, and other direct costs.)

   **For the proposal:**
   - Indicate major expenses and estimated costs.
   - Describe possible matching funds from school budgets or other sources.

*Be descriptive and creative!*
BACKGROUND

Public schools are by definition public institutions; they embody the values, hopes, dreams, and expectations of the community in which they operate. When a school actively involves its surrounding community, making best use of all of the resources that community provides and engaging all of that community’s stakeholders in the school’s planning process and activities, students thrive, and achievement improves.

Recent research from a number of sources has brought to light a stark and disconcerting disconnect between the way principals perceive various aspects of their schools’ culture and the way both the public and those within the schools (parents, teachers, students, non-parents, and community and business leaders) perceive school climate, student safety, the ease and openness of information sharing, and other elements that make up a school’s overriding culture, its feel, its ambiance.

The principal is constantly being buffeted by external and internal demands requiring an abundance of time, energy, and focus. Clearly, the principal sets the tone for a school, and just as clearly, the principal is the leader who is directly responsible for his or her school’s status in the community. However, the principal must also strive to change lives by creating a culture within the school that not only promotes learning but also helps students realize their own dreams and aspirations. The principal is then charged with creating and articulating a vision to help constituents both inside and outside of the school understand, believe in, and share the mission of that school. The principal must be equipped with the appropriate skills and support necessary to engage productively his or her various constituents to achieve these worthy but often overwhelming goals.

The Sharing the Dream grant enables principals to test ideas on how to involve and engage their communities to build greater ownership for the work of the school by sharing leadership and decision-making, by keeping all stakeholders informed about all school news — good and bad — and by creating a school climate that fosters open communication, safety and security, respect for every individual, and the idea that the school is the center of the community and welcomes all of its members. In short, the Sharing the Dream grant gives principals a small grant to implement a project designed to further engage their communities toward the goal of improving achievement for all students.
In 2001, the National Association of Elementary School Principals released the groundbreaking document, Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do. In 2008, with the help of principals and other education leaders, and through extensive research on emerging knowledge and trends affecting education, NAESP updated and expanded the standards for what principals should know and be able to do. Individually and collectively, these six standards define leadership for learning communities: places where adults and young people are continuously learning and striving toward improving their knowledge and skills. The sixth standard again emphasizes what educators, policymakers, and families increasingly agree: Schools simply cannot do it alone. Children need numerous opportunities to learn and develop—at home, in school, and in the community. Therefore, effective leaders of learning communities:

**Actively engage the community to create shared responsibility for student performance and development.**

**What does it look like when principals lead through active community engagement?**

**We see principals who:**

- Engage parents, families and the community to build relationships that support improved performance
- Serve as civic leaders who regularly engage with numerous stakeholders to support students, families and schools in more effective ways
- Shape partnerships to ensure multiple learning opportunities for students, in and out of school
- Market the school’s distinctive learning environment and results to inform parents’ choices of options that best fit their children’s needs
- Advocate for high-quality education for every student

**SURVEY DATA**

Each year, MetLife significantly contributes to the education field by examining the attitudes and opinions of teachers, principals, parents, and students. In 2003, the survey focused on school leadership. MetLife’s “Survey of the American Teacher: An Examination of School Leadership” found that principals, teachers, and parents agree that the primary goal of school leadership is motivating students and teachers to achieve. The survey also revealed a disconnect between this goal and reality. Principals have a more positive view of school atmosphere and relationships than do parents, teachers, and students. The survey examines these differences in perception.

**Key findings include:**

- Nine in 10 principals (89%) say their school is welcoming to parents. But only six in ten parents (61%) describe their school in this way.
- Nearly all principals (97%) believe that their school shows concern for students. This view is less commonly held by teachers (83%) and parents (66%).
- Nine in 10 principals (91%) say their school has open communication, yet only six in ten teachers (58%) and parents (58%) say this about their school.
- Nine in 10 principals (93%) are satisfied with their relationship with students’ parents, but only 64 percent of parents report this level of satisfaction. Teachers’ and parents’ assessments are similar. Seventy eight percent of parents and 73 percent of teachers are satisfied with their relationship with each other.
- Of all the members of the school community, students are the least likely to describe their school as safe. While most principals (89%), teachers (67%), and parents (57%) say their school is safe, less than half of students (46%) describe their school this way.

The full survey report may be found online at www.metlife.com (search: “Survey of the American Teacher”)

MetLife Foundation and the National Association of Elementary School Principals are committed to addressing the disconnect among teachers, principals, students, and parents regarding the effectiveness of our nation’s school leaders. The survey data provides a baseline for understanding different perspectives and engaging families and communities in schools. The Sharing the Dream projects will help narrow the gap in perceptions.
THE PROJECTS

NAESP invites principals from around the country to submit proposals for projects that will engage communities. Selected principals in the Sharing the Dream project will receive a $3,000 grant to initiate a project designed to actively engage their communities.

Each proposed project should:
- Align with one of the strategies in standard six of *Leading Learning Communities*;
- Have measurable results;
- Further principal leadership in engaging communities; and
- Indicate which strategy it will address.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Six Strategies</th>
<th>Potential projects may:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engage parents, families, and the community to build relationships that support improved performance.</td>
<td>Provide learning opportunities for parents, families and community members. Produce materials and enlist staff that reflect a diverse array of languages. Visit people where they are, in their homes and community institutions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serve as civic leaders who regularly engage with numerous stakeholders to support students, families, and schools in more effective ways.</td>
<td>Meet with elected officials, community leaders, and parent groups to gauge expectations and communicate goals. Represent the school to the news media. Celebrate school accomplishments publicly. Host community and adult classes in the school building.</td>
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<td>Shape partnerships to ensure multiple learning opportunities for students, in and out of school.</td>
<td>Form partnerships where students can visit workplaces. Build connections to use city facilities for after-school programs. Create links with preschool providers. Attract resources for professional development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Market the school’s distinctive learning environment and results to inform parents’ choices of options that best fit their children's needs.</td>
<td>Speak in public forums and provide materials to market and make a case for the school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocate for high-quality education for every student.</td>
<td>Organize a campaign for increased school funding. Engage parents and community leaders to speak on the critical issues of the school.</td>
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Sharing the Dream Grant Terms:

**Once selected, principals will receive:**
- A grant for $3,000;
- A toolkit of resources focused on engaging families and communities; and
- Inclusion in the “spotlight” publication at the end of the project that will describe the Sharing the Dream projects and provide ideas for other principals.

**As a part of the Sharing the Dream project, principals are required to:**
- Implement the proposed project during the 2008-2009 school year;
- Define a budget with specific line items;
- Submit a midterm and end-of-project report and budget assessment that includes evidence of success; and
- Participate in interviews with NAESP staff about successes and challenges of the project.