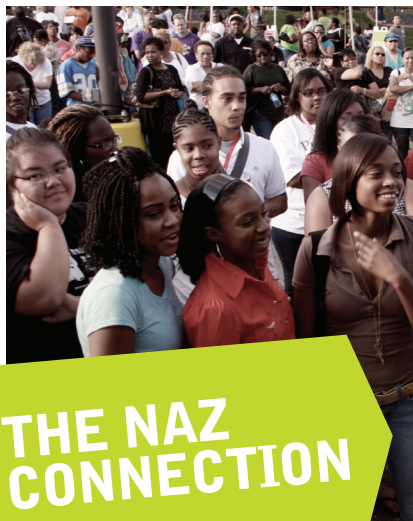


Minnesota has one of the largest achievement gaps in the nation between African-American and white children. In fact, the gap on fourth grade reading scores is the second largest in the nation (*Education Trust's Education Watch Minnesota Fall 2006*). There is no place where the realities of this achievement gap hit harder than in North Minneapolis. As a result, a "cradle to prison" pipeline, as defined by the Children's Defense Fund, has developed in North Minneapolis, propelling far too many of the community's children to incarceration and lives on the margin.

Creating a Culture of Achievement

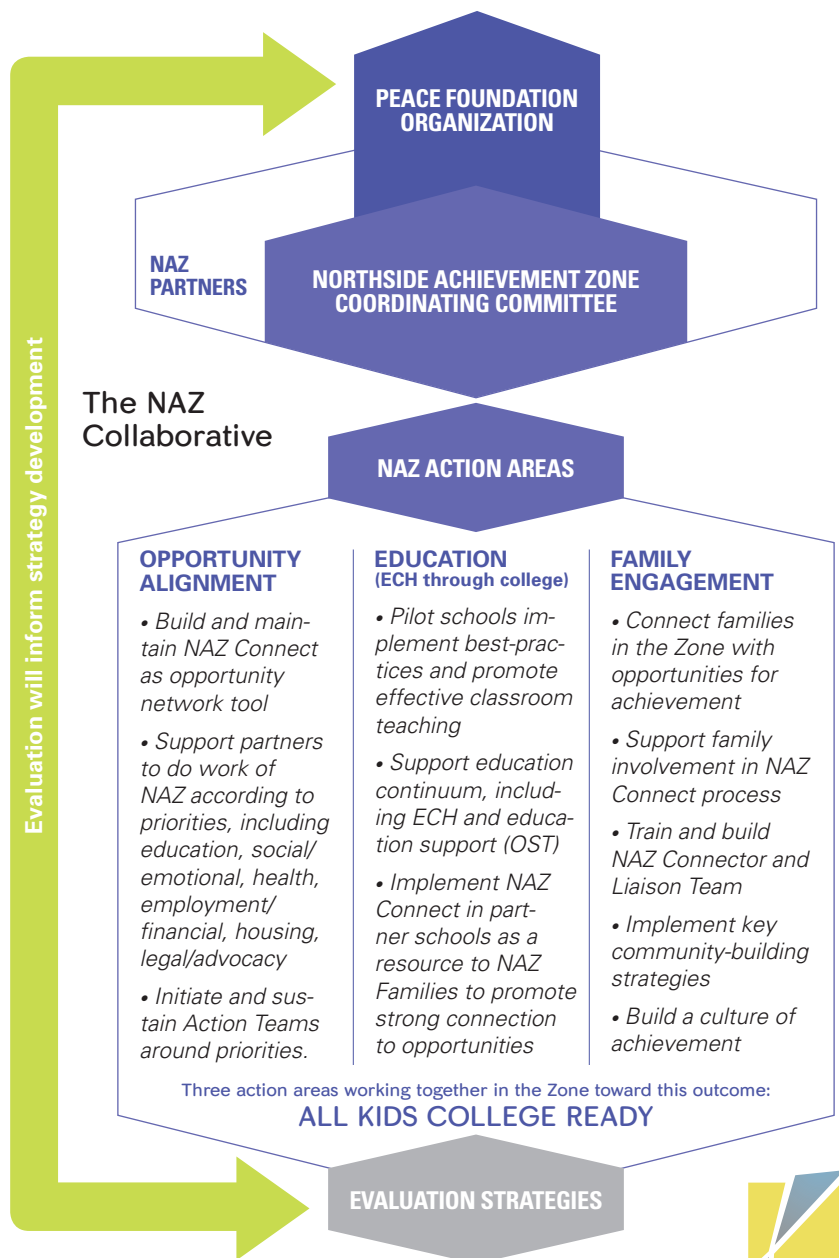
The Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ) is working to redirect this "cradle to prison" pipeline into a "cradle to college" pipeline by taking a collaborative approach to provide opportunities and support for children, starting at birth, and their families within a defined geographic zone of North Minneapolis. Inspired by the success of the Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) in New York City, community organizations gathered in late 2007 to form this collaborative effort that could translate and apply the key components and the promise of the HCZ to the Northside. Today, after two years of collaborative visioning and structuring, and buoyed by a three-year declining rate of violence, NAZ is operational and poised to significantly alter the educational outcomes on the Northside.

As the NAZ planning process has progressed over the last year, the role of the PEACE Foundation as the lead organization has emerged. The partners made the decision to run NAZ as a collaborative initiative within the PEACE Foundation's organizational structure. As the partners execute the key work of NAZ, the PEACE Foundation will facilitate the collaboration, execute the fundraising and financial management, and operate the family engagement strategies. This new structure brings much needed organizational "top down" efficacy to NAZ while supporting the collaborative partners to focus on their critical role in the effort.



News from the Northside Achievement Zone

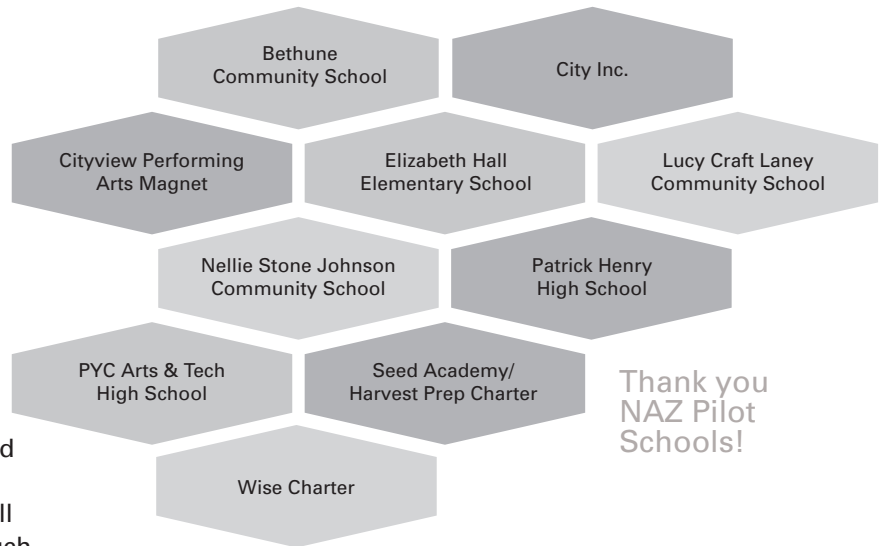
March 2010





What's Happening in the Zone

March 2010



Thank you NAZ Pilot Schools!

Ten Pilot Schools to Implement NAZ-Identified Proven Strategies

It is our belief that the educational achievement gap does not start at kindergarten—it starts in the womb! To meet the needs of children at all stages of their development, NAZ will provide a connected stream of effective services that directly impact a child's education and future success. Strategies will range from critical early childhood intervention, such as timely pre-natal care and pre-school screenings, to extended learning time through quality in-school and out-of-school programs, as well as effective implementation of researched and proven educational strategies in the Zone's pilot schools.

NAZ is currently facilitating an unprecedented collaboration of public, charter, and contract alternative K-12 schools. Ten of the partnering schools have committed to become NAZ Pilot Schools, where promising and proven strategies will be implemented, student progress will be uniformly measured and reported to the community, and excuses for poor student achievement will not be tolerated. As the planning phase for this initiative culminates, the following strategies have been identified as key focuses for the pilot schools:

- Develop strategies and leadership to ensure that ALL students in pilot schools have a common and rigorous academic experience.
- Increase out-of-school time and early childhood learning opportunities, and solidify link with in-school.
- Strengthen engagement of families to support kids in school.
- Encourage families to use NAZ Connect to establish an achievement plan, facilitate connection to opportunities, and ensure alignment between early education and out-of-school time activities.
- Report progress publicly to share practices that work and ensure work toward continuous improvement.

The outcomes of this unprecedented local school-based work through NAZ will be movement toward our shared goal of ALL KIDS COLLEGE-READY.

First Class of NAZ Connectors Ready to Instill a Culture of Achievement!

In December 2009, the first wave of 23 NAZ Connectors completed their training and made a commitment to serve as key neighbor-leaders in the Zone. As with any movement or behavior-change campaign, a solid on-the-ground operation is necessary for success. And every successful "tipping point" effort requires a first round of people starting the surge. With this team of Connectors engaged to bring in and support other NAZ families in 2010, the culture of achievement shift has begun!

