
CHECKLIST OF PARTNERSHIP ELEMENTS

A thriving ecosystem must include partnerships that feature the common elements described below: **shared vision and leadership**; **aligned, responsive implementation**; and **shared accountability for success**. Each of these elements is further broken down below:

1. Shared Vision and Leadership

“We know where we are going and we share responsibility through genuine collaboration.”

- ✓ Create a **shared vision** by identifying what families, youth, educators, and youth development professionals want for the partnership and the students it serves.
- ✓ Identify and focus on the **common outcomes** that will help achieve the vision.
- ✓ **Clarify roles and responsibilities and share decision making.** With a shared vision and aligned outcomes to focus on, each partner can be clear on their role and how it contributes to achieving the vision. Schools and organizations need to establish clear procedures and responsibilities, and devote time and resources to coordination.

2. Aligned, Responsive Implementation

“We row in the same direction and continuously adjust to changing conditions.”

- ✓ **Align services with needs.** Use data and an equity lens to identify community needs and disparities. Make sure there is a structure in place to identify individual student needs.
- ✓ **Build on existing assets and/or seek out additional partners.** Take advantage of the partnerships, strengths, and opportunities already present in a given community. If there are needs identified that current partners do not have the expertise in filling, respond by finding partners that can fill that need.
- ✓ **Build trust and relationships.** Do this by communicating continuously and by engaging in opportunities to connect, share, collaborate, celebrate, and learn together. Set up clear and regular communication for progress and goals. Give, receive, and value robust feedback.

3. Shared Accountability for Success

“We manage for impact and sustainability and keep each other accountable.”

- ✓ **Build evaluation into your program to promote continuous improvement.** Engage in improvement efforts by exploring mechanisms to collect and share data to improve services to students. Commit to a high-quality point of service by participating in quality improvement processes.
- ✓ **Create a sustainability plan and leverage resources.** Get help with identifying diverse funding sources, aligning strategies, and make time to combine efforts in creating and executing a sustainability plan.