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## BUILDING A PARTNERSHIP-READY ORGANIZATION: GUIDING QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help **organizational leadership teams** reflect on their readiness to partner and on the current partnership climate at their organization. Review and discuss the questions below before entering into new partnerships, or when you are rethinking or evaluating existing partnerships. Pay attention to areas that need clarification or further development. At the end of your discussion, you should be clear on why and how partnerships fit into your organization's work.

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### THE RATIONALE: WHY PARTNERSHIPS?

- Why are we investing in partnerships with schools/districts?
- What are our organization's goals? How can partnerships with schools help us meet them?
- What is our organization's mission/vision and how does partnering with this school/district help us achieve the mission/vision?
- What are the goals of the school/district, and how can our organization contribute to their achievement?

### WHAT IS OUR PARTNERSHIP TRACK RECORD IN THE COMMUNITY?

- Do we have any current partnerships in the community or with other schools?
- What are the strengths of these partnerships? What are the challenges?

### WHAT OPERATIONAL STRUCTURES DO WE HAVE (OR CAN WE BUILD) TO SUPPORT THIS WORK?

- Do we have someone that can represent our organization in the process of identifying and coordinating a partnership with the school?

- Does this person have the capacity and skills to manage the partnership and will they have the support of the organization?
- What other kinds of capacity does our organization bring to partnership (e.g. expertise, professional development, space, equipment, time, funding, data analysis)?
- How might we further develop our organization's capacity to support partnerships with schools?

#### **HOW DO WE CREATE AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE THAT PROMOTES PARTNERSHIPS?**

- What can our organization offer or do to make sure that the partnership is a good one?
- What are our assumptions about what a school should do as a partner? How can we communicate this to schools to ensure we are on the same page?
- What must we have in this partnership to make it worthwhile for our organization?
- Are we willing to commit to working on the three elements of a partnership ecosystem: shared vision and leadership; aligned, responsive implementation; and shared accountability for success?

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#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**