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SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP TOOLKIT

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Access the Toolkit Online: <https://ydekc.org/resource-center/school-community-partnership-toolkit/>



THE PARTNERSHIP ECOSYSTEM: AN INTRODUCTION

***The Vision:** Authentic and vibrant partnerships between schools and youth- and family-serving organizations provide every young person the opportunity and support they need to be successful.*

Given the continued challenge of meeting the needs of every student in King County, an increasing number of school and school district leaders are realizing that they cannot go it alone. The resource and time constraints of the traditional school day mean that it cannot be the only pathway to student success. We need a coordinated approach that puts students and families at the center and calls on community partners to complement and supplement traditional school offerings through expanded learning opportunities.

A rich body of research about expanded learning opportunities and their impact on students make it clear that high-quality out-of-school-time programs can help reduce the achievement gap and positively affect a wide range of outcomes. This is particularly true when schools and community partners work collaboratively to coordinate school-day activities with the activities offered in before- and after-school and summer programs.¹ Furthermore, many educators are recognizing that a more comprehensive approach to supporting young people’s physical, social, and emotional needs can improve academic achievement.²

By building authentic partnerships between schools and out-of-school-time partners, we can create consistency across the environments in which kids spend most of their time. When multiple partners work together in productive ways, a vibrant **ecosystem** of supports can ensure that each young person’s needs are met holistically- throughout the day and throughout the year.

WHAT IS A PARTNERSHIP ECOSYSTEM?

An ecosystem is defined as “A biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment;” more generally, an ecosystem is “a complex network or interconnected system.”³

We use the metaphor of an ecosystem to frame community-school partnerships because the environment in which partnerships operate is inherently complex, and partnerships function best when they are interconnected and dynamically attuned to student needs. The partnership ecosystem can make the most efficient use of available resources when all partners focus on what they do best and contribute to a holistic system of supports for students. In a thriving partnership ecosystem, schools and partners are committed to effective site coordination; shared leadership; aligned, responsive implementation; and shared accountability for success.

HOW DOES THE PARTNERSHIP ECOSYSTEM WORK?

¹ Partnership for Children and Youth, *Time Well Spent*, <http://partnerforchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Time-Well-Spent-ExecSummary.pdf>

² Harvard Family Research Project, *Partnerships for Learning*, <http://www.hfrp.org/PartnershipsForLearning>

³ “Ecosystem.” *Oxford Dictionaries*. n.d. http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/ecosystem

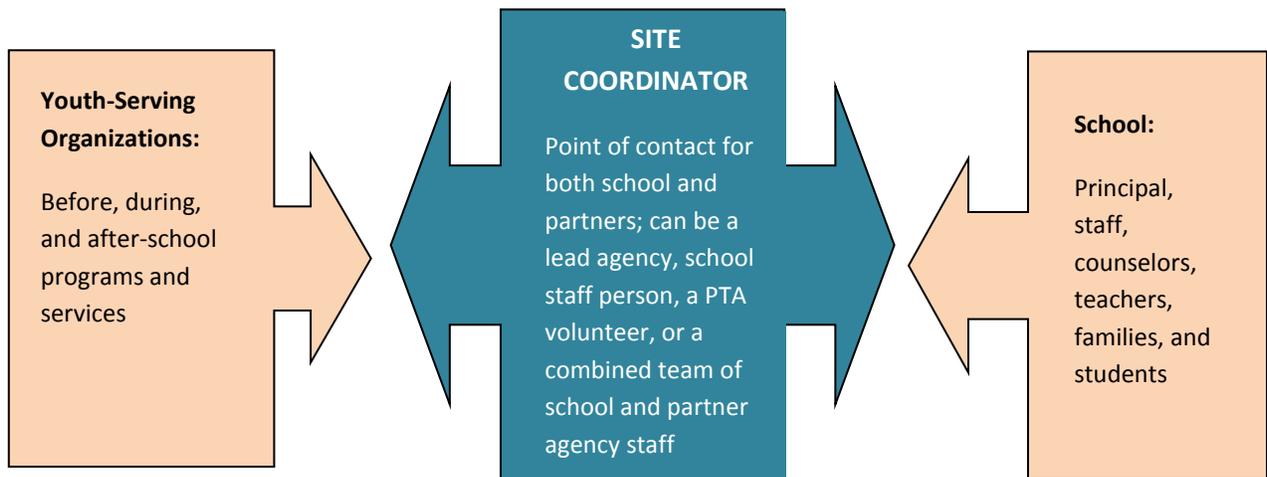
Just like all ecosystems, the partnership ecosystem is strongest when partners and schools work together to create optimal learning environments for students. For the most part, well-coordinated and cohesive services at the school level share certain characteristics, shown below:



There are many program models that have these components; examples include Community Schools, Full-Service Community Schools, and some 21st-Century Community Learning Centers. Regardless of the specific model, **coordination** (by one individual or by a team) is essential to ensure that the core components are implemented well.

Site Coordination: The Glue of a Partnership Ecosystem

In order to lay the proper groundwork for a partnership ecosystem, the partnership must invest in site coordination. The site coordinator or coordination team serves as a central point of contact for community partners and others providing support services. Ideally, the site coordinator or coordination team works closely with the leadership of the school.





THE IMPORTANCE OF SITE COORDINATION

Effective site coordination creates, strengthens, and maintains a bridge between a school and partner organizations. Site coordinators facilitate and provide leadership for collaborative processes and coordinate a continuum of services for children, families, and community members. A site coordinator or coordination team can act as a liaison for many different areas, such as:⁴

- Parent and Family Engagement
- Community Engagement
- Youth Development
- Academic Alignment
- Partner Programs and Services (physical and mental health services, after-school enrichment opportunities, mentoring, early childhood education, etc.)

The next section summarizes different staffing models for site coordination. No matter what the model, the most successful partnership sites have a clear point of contact for partners.

MODELS OF SITE COORDINATION

Site coordination often becomes the responsibility of the principal or school counselor by default. However, there are a number of alternative models in use. Examples include:

- The Chicago Public Schools created a **Community Schools Coordinator** position in its personnel structure to reduce the burden on principals. This person staffs a committee that meets regularly to ensure that student needs are being met. See the full job description from the Coalition for Community Schools (CCS) here at http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/Job%20description_CS_Coor_pdf.pdf.
- Sometimes a site-based **Coordinating Team** is a workable approach to site coordination. The team is typically comprised of school staff members, representatives of partner agencies, and sometimes parents. CCS also provides an example of how a coordinating team works on their website at http://www.communityschools.org/about/community_school_coordinators_network.aspx.
- A site coordinator who is employed by a **Lead (Partner) Agency** can serve as a liaison to the school and can coordinate the work of other partners. Sometimes this lead agency is one of the partners working in the school, and sometimes it is an intermediary organization. Read a job description for a site coordinator employed by an intermediary agency on the Neighborhood Leadership Institute website at <http://neighborhoodleadership.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Glenville-Wraparound-Description.pdf>.
- Communities in Schools (CIS) deploys **Site Coordinators** in high-need schools. These individuals are in charge of providing school-wide enrichment opportunities and intensive case management to the neediest students. Read more about the CIS Seattle model at <https://seattle.ciswa.org/services/site-coordination/>.

⁴ Retrieved from http://www.communityschools.org/about/community_school_coordinators_network.aspx.



VOICES FROM THE FIELD:

The school and partner leadership at White Center Heights Elementary School know that the key to making partnerships work is constant communication. That is part of why having a strong and dedicated coordinator in place can be so critical to the success of a partnership. At White Center Heights, they hired Andrea Gardner, a credentialed teacher, as the Extended Day Outcomes Coordinator, a position that serves as the intermediary between the school staff, students and families, and potential and established partners. The decision was made to fill this role with a credentialed teacher because they were especially interested in meeting academic needs in the time that followed the regular school day. With this background, Ms. Gardner was able to hit the ground running and establish systems in identifying partners that would be a good fit for the school.

Tips to consider:

- Think about the key qualities a site coordinator would need to help with achieving your school's vision for partnerships.
- Consider how much time it will take to get this person up and running. Developing trust and relationships with staff and partners take time.
- Consider any current staff, volunteers, or partner agencies that are already connected to the school that may be a good fit for this position.

COMPONENTS OF THE ECOSYSTEM: TYPES OF PARTNERSHIPS

At a school site, you may encounter an ecosystem that includes an array of different types of partnerships. Partnership types can vary widely depending on the services, interests, and capacity of partner organizations and the schools with which they work. The main partnership types referenced in this document are:⁵

- **Cooperative:** Partners operate autonomously from the school. Program goals are primarily established by the partner agency, though they may share one or more goals with the school.
- **Collaborative:** The partner shares goals with the school, and communicates about progress on a semi-regular basis. The school and the partner organization maintain ultimate decision-making authority over their own activities.
- **Integrated:** The partner plays a major role in site planning processes, and shares data, resources, and decision-making authority with the school.

EXAMPLE OF A PARTNERSHIP ECOSYSTEM WITH MULTIPLE PARTNER TYPES

Below is an example of a partnership ecosystem at Cleveland High School in Seattle. The chart below shows some of the youth-serving organizations at the school and describes their major functions. Partnerships are managed by a Site Coordinator that is employed by a lead agency – in this case the YMCA. The Site Coordinator manages partners and works directly with school staff to align services.

⁵ Adapted from the Oakland Unified School District, Community Partner Identification Tool. Retrieved from <http://www.ousd.org/Page/11101>



Example: Partnership Ecosystem at Cleveland High School, Seattle Public Schools⁶

CHARACTERISTICS		
Cooperative	Collaborative	Integrated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Markets and recruits for programs/activities at school One-time or occasional resource sharing or field trip opportunities Guest lecturing, presentations, panels or judging at school 	<p><i>Same as cooperative partner plus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attends Community Partner meetings at Cleveland Provides on-going opportunities at school Staff members are regularly present at school or school events Actively collaborates with school Collaborates with teachers. 	<p><i>Same as collaborative partner plus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff members work at school on a full- or part-time basis Facilitates collaboration between school and other partners Works to build or change school culture Collaborates on identifying funding sources, grant writing and reporting.
ORGANIZATIONS / PROGRAMS		
Cooperative	Collaborative	Integrated
<p>UW Astronomy Department/Alumni: Invites students to participate in building tour, free dinner, and evening lecture.</p> <p>YouthForce, Boys & Girls Clubs: Recruits students for internships and employment.</p> <p>IGNITE: Provides young women interested in science and technology with field opportunities with Microsoft.</p>	<p>OneWorld Now!: Recruits students for program, holds afterschool classes on campus.</p> <p>Summer Search: Recruits 10th graders for initial summer program followed by mentoring and college going support, volunteers at school wide events.</p> <p>Urban Impact: Runs program during advisory and Homework Center afterschool.</p> <p>Y-Tech, YMCA: Provides trainings for parents and community, afterschool program for students, in class technology support for teachers and professional development trainings.</p>	<p>College Success Foundation: Achievers program and school wide college support.</p> <p>Public Health, Seattle and King County: Operates on-site teen health clinics.</p> <p>YMCA: Implements Full-Service Community Schools grant, oversees Cleveland TEA programs and coordinates community partners.</p>

⁶ Seattle Public Schools, Cleveland High School, *Partner Protocol Template*, K.Domingo



GETTING STARTED WITH PARTNERSHIP

In practice, most school sites do not have the kind of thriving ecosystem described above. Many school and organizational leaders are hesitant about the idea of partnership, or they simply do not know where to begin. **YDEKC's Partnership Toolkit** (available online at <https://ydekc.org/resource-center/school-community-partnership-toolkit/>) is a compilation of resources designed to help community organizations and schools navigate all phases of the partnership process. Tools are organized into the following sections:

- 1. Assessing Readiness:** Resources in this section can help leaders consider the benefits and challenges of partnership, and their school or organization's capacity and willingness to invest.
- 2. Mapping Needs and Assets:** Resources in this section can help program leaders understand the needs of young people in the community, and document existing services and gaps in service.
- 3. Establishing Partnership:** Resources designed to help with some of the foundational aspects of partnership – creating shared vision and documenting agreements and commitments.
- 4. Working Together:** Resources in this section can help leaders establish the practices and structures that will help them maintain communication with partners about all aspects of partnership work.
- 5. Evaluating Programs:** These resources can help leaders to establish planning and evaluation practices that can help sustain the partnership over time.



SECTION 1: ASSESSING READINESS

ARE YOU READY TO PARTNER?

Partnerships require time and resources, so it is important that partners have given some thought to the potential benefits and challenges of partnership, and to their school or organization's capacity and willingness to invest.

Think about what partnerships need to be successful, and then reflect on your school or organization's partnership strengths and opportunities for growth. Finally, consider what kinds of services your organization provides, and think about what type of partnership would be the best fit.

Resources in this section are as follows:

- 1.1 Checklist of Partnership Elements:** Summarizes the key attributes of effective partnerships
- 1.2 Partnership-Ready Organization Guiding Questions:** Guiding questions for CBO leaders trying to assess their readiness to partner with schools
- 1.3 Partnership-Ready Organization Worksheet:** Worksheet that can help you take stock of your partnership readiness
- 1.4 Partnership-Ready School Guiding Questions:** Guiding questions for school leaders assessing their readiness to partner with CBOs
- 1.5 Partnership Type Identification Checklist:** Use this checklist to determine which type of partnership best suits your program

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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.

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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.

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?

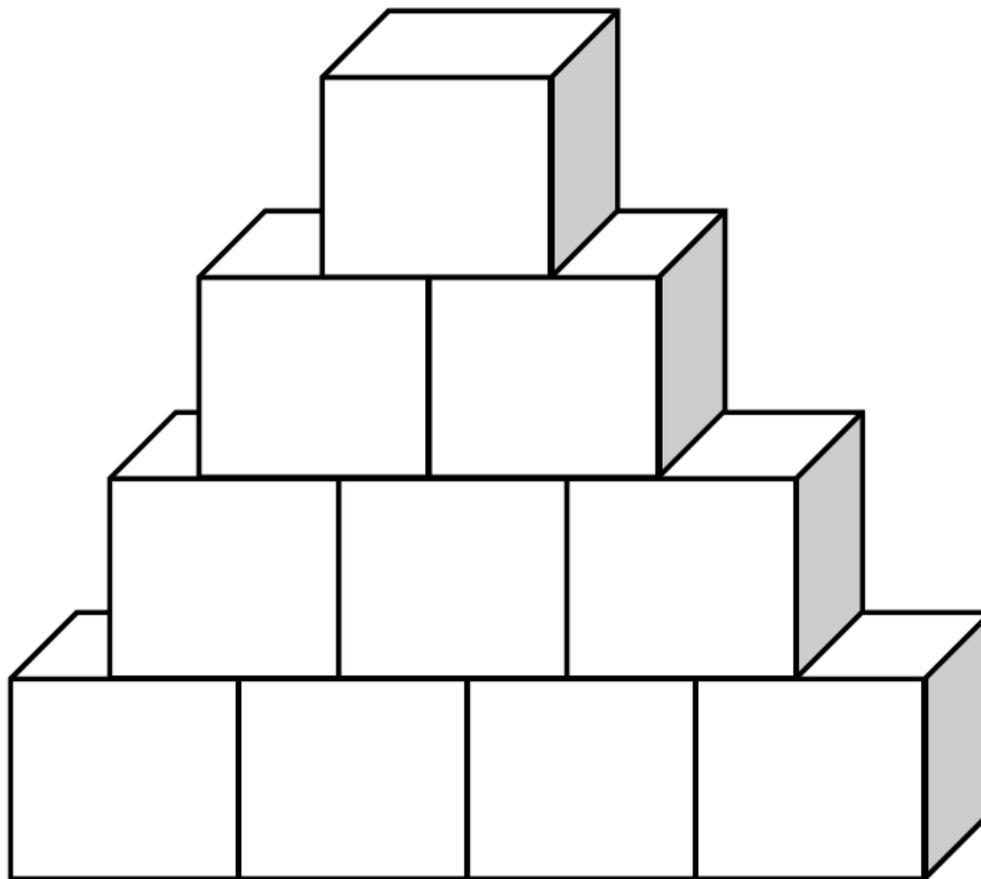
HOW DO WE CREATE AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE THAT PROMOTES PARTNERSHIPS?

- 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?

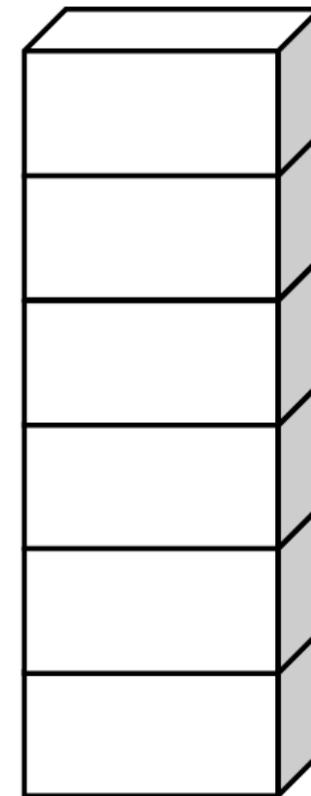
ADDITIONAL NOTES:

BUILDING A PARTNERSHIP-READY ORGANIZATION: WORKSHEET

Using the **Guiding Questions for a Partnership Ready Organization**, identify the assets that you bring to your current school-community partnership. Write each asset in or around one of the building blocks, as these represent the strong foundation you are building. When you identify a component that is under development and not yet strong, record it on or near a block in the “Factory” stack. Categories include: Purpose for Investing in Partnership, Mission/Vision/Goals, Partnership Track Record, On-Site Representation/Coordination, Individual Capacity & Skills of Lead Staff, What Our Organization Brings to the Partnership, and Our Level of Commitment to Partnership.



Foundational Assets for a Strong Partnership



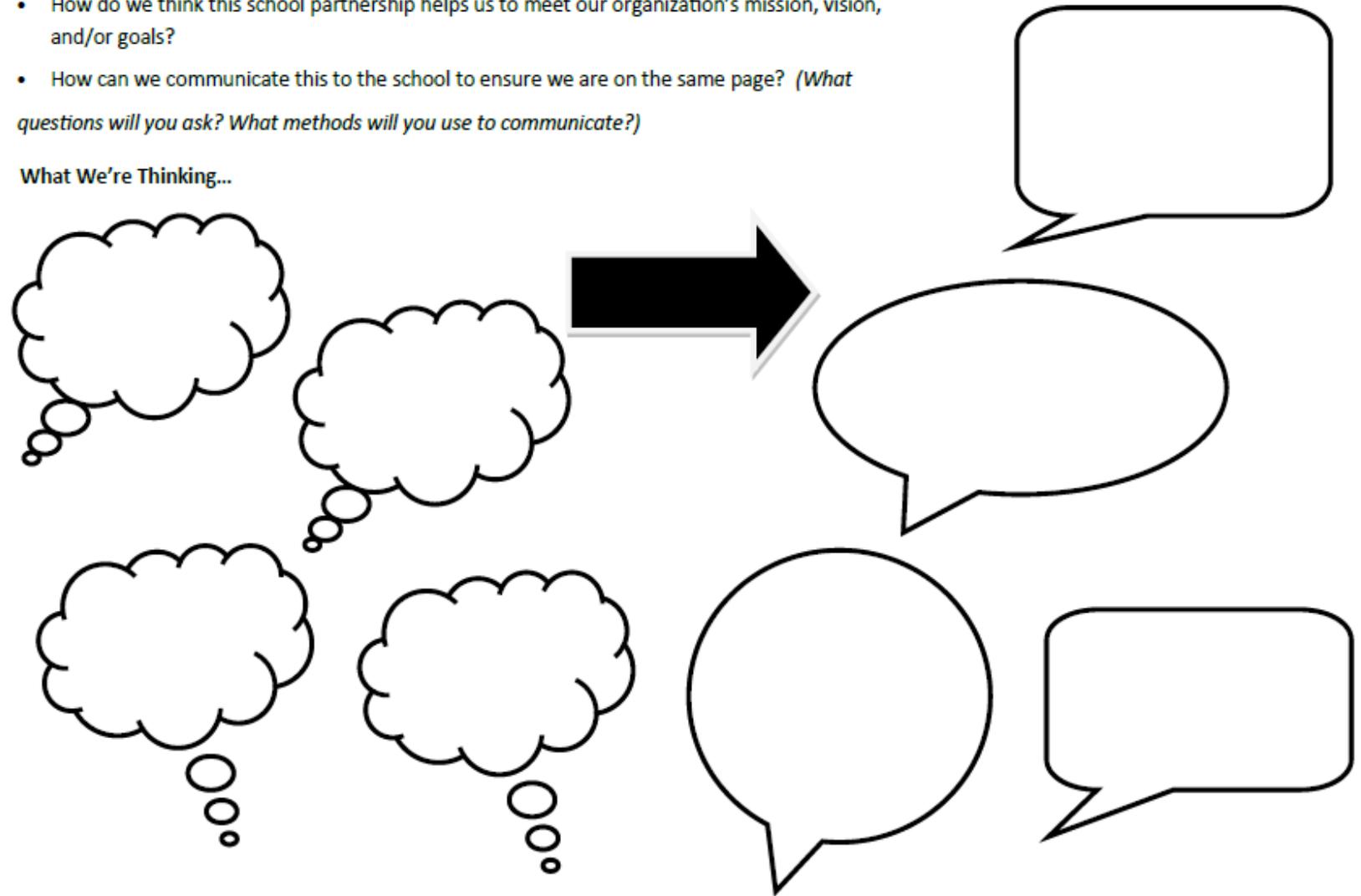
At the Factory: Under Development

Now, think about the questions that relate to your organization's relationship with the school.

- What are our assumptions about what a school should do as a partner?
- How do we think this school partnership helps us to meet our organization's mission, vision, and/or goals?
- How can we communicate this to the school to ensure we are on the same page? (*What questions will you ask? What methods will you use to communicate?*)

How We Will Communicate What We're Thinking to Our School Partner...

What We're Thinking...



BUILDING A PARTNERSHIP-READY SCHOOL: GUIDING QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help **principals and school leadership teams** reflect on their readiness to partner and the current partnership climate at their school. Review and discuss the questions below with your team before entering into a partnership, or periodically to evaluate your existing partnership practices. Pay attention to areas that need clarification or further development. At the end of this discussion, you should be clear on why and how partnerships fit into your school's operations.

THE RATIONALE: WHY PARTNERSHIPS?

- Why are we investing in partnerships? Why are they important to our school community?
- What is the mission/vision of our school and how can partners help us achieve that mission/vision?
- What are our school's priorities and goals? How can external partners contribute to their achievement?

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF PARTNERSHIPS AT OUR SCHOOL?

- What partners are already in the school?
- Currently, how are partnerships going at our school? What are the strengths of these partnerships and what are the challenges?

WHAT OPERATIONAL STRUCTURES CAN WE BUILD TO SUPPORT THIS WORK?

- Do we have a central point of contact for community partners at our school?
- Who are the people in our school who are best positioned to work with partners?

- What kind of capacity, time, and resources can our school dedicate to partnerships (e.g. expertise, professional development, space, equipment, data analysis)?
- How could we grow our capacity to support partnerships with community organizations?

HOW DO WE CREATE A SCHOOL CULTURE THAT PROMOTES PARTNERSHIPS?

- What can the school offer to make sure that each partnership is a good one?
- What are our assumptions of what a partner should do in the school or how a partner should act? How can we communicate this?
- What must we have in a partnership to make it worthwhile?
- Is our principal and/or leadership team 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?

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

PARTNERSHIP TYPE IDENTIFICATION CHECKLIST⁷

This checklist will help partner organizations decide what type of partnership they are interested in and what they have the capacity for. Based on selected indicators, you can identify which category best describes your potential partnership. You may find that you check off boxes in multiple columns. No partnership fits neatly in a single category. To determine which category is the best fit, choose the column where you have checked the most boxes. This allows you to prepare for and to begin a conversation with school leadership or site coordinator.

Domains	Cooperative	Collaborative	Integrated
SHARED VISION AND LEADERSHIP	<input type="checkbox"/> Partner goals are pre-determined by agency, and at least one is aligned with school vision. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school leadership decide on the parameters of the site agreement and then, operate with autonomy.	<input type="checkbox"/> Partner is involved to some degree in the school site planning process, and partner and site goals are aligned. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner communicates with school leadership about decisions and gives/takes input, but the final say rests with either the partner org. or school.	<input type="checkbox"/> Partner plays a significant role in the site planning process. Partner and school leadership share responsibility for implementing the shared vision, along with other site partners <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school make decisions collaboratively. Each leads or co-leads a cross-agency school leadership body.
ALIGNED, RESPONSIVE IMPLEMENTATION	<input type="checkbox"/> Partner has a set program that is not generally adaptable but it appropriate for an identified need at the school.	<input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school leadership meet at least twice a year and incorporate feedback on unmet needs. Outreach is targeted mid-year if needed. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner is invited by school site to core and program-relevant committees as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Partner is part of core school committees and joins program-relevant committees as needs outside program hours. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner works closely with the school so that strategies are complimentary and impact top priorities or needs.
SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SUCCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> Partner collects and provides general participation data. The school gives partner basic information on participants. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner brings some in-kind resources in order to implement our programming.	<input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school discuss role and strategies for impacting site outcomes or needs. <input type="checkbox"/> School gives partner data on participants, trends, and disparities. Partner collects and provides data to support equity efforts. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner provides in-kind resources beyond the contract.	<input type="checkbox"/> Partner collects, analyzes, and shares participation and assessment data. Partner and school are part of teams where data trends are being discussed regularly and support equity efforts. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner provides direct services and in-kind resources beyond contract. Partner works with the school on resource allocation.

⁷ Adapted from Oakland Unified School District, Community Partner Identification Tool, Retrieved from <http://www.ousd.org/Page/11101>

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SECTION 2: MAPPING NEEDS AND ASSETS

LEARN ABOUT POTENTIAL PARTNER SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

Whether you are a school or a partner organization, learning about students and their communities is a vital step to planning for partnership. By researching the community's needs, resources, strengths, history, and culture, school and organizational leaders can better understand the context from which students come.

Understanding the goals of the school can help partners assess whether a partnership will be a good fit. Documenting existing resources is important, as this will show what is already working, prevent overlap in services, and assist with identifying gaps.

Use these tip sheets and tools to do background research and prepare for an initial meeting with a potential partner.

- 2.1 Partnership Ecosystem Mapping Activity:** Activity designed to help leaders visually represent the partnership ecosystem
- 2.2 Partnership Ecosystem Sample Map:** Sample map of a complex partnership ecosystem
- 2.3 Tip Sheet on Conducting a Community Assessment:** Summarizes community assessment resources and methods
- 2.4 Tip Sheet on Understanding School and Student Needs:** Summarizes sources of information on schools and students
- 2.5 Identifying Common Outcomes:** Once you have spent some time researching a partner school, use this tool to think about your common goals and outcomes
- 2.6 School Partner Programs and Services Inventory:** Use this to take stock of existing programs and partners within a school
- 2.7 Tip Sheet on Preparing for an Initial Partner Meeting:** Designed to help schools and partners prepare for an initial meeting
- 2.8 Partnership Proposal Planning Worksheet:** Worksheet designed to help organizations answer essential questions about their offerings before meeting with schools.

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PARTNERSHIP ECOSYSTEM MAPPING ACTIVITY

As you think about partnering with a school, it is important to think about the existing ecosystem at that site.

In this activity, you will draw a map, a visual diagram, of the partnerships and relationships within the existing ecosystem. This can help you to think about your own contribution, or potential contribution. Things to consider as you make your map:

1. What are the layers of partnership that exist? (Example: Entities with existing agreements, funders, etc.)
2. Who are the key stakeholders in the ecosystem? Label by name, organization, and role.
3. How is each individual person an asset to the partnership ecosystem?
4. What actions did you take (or will you take) to build individual relationships, and what do you (or will you do) do to sustain it? List the action below the name.
5. How are stakeholders connected? Where do they sit within the ecosystem?

Who are the stakeholders in the ecosystem? To get started, fill in this chart with some of the key stakeholders.

Stakeholder Name	Role and Organization	How is this person an asset to the partnership?	What key actions did you take (or will you take) to build and sustain this relationship?

Stakeholder Name	Role and Organization	How is this person an asset to the partnership?	What key actions did you take (or will you take) to build and sustain this relationship?

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TIP SHEET: CONDUCTING A COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

A community assessment should seek to understand both the community's needs and its assets. There are a variety of ways to collect this information. The method(s) you choose will depend upon your capacity and how thorough you would like to be. Whether you are a school leader or a community organization, taking stock of community needs, resources, strengths, history, and culture is an important step in deciding which partnerships you should pursue.

While there are many different ways to conduct a community assessment, the Office of Community Services (2012) identified the following six steps as key components of the process:⁸

1. Define your scope. Narrow down the questions you want answered.
2. Do the assessment alone or collaborate with other schools or community organizations.
3. Collect data. Start with secondary source data (data that has already been collected). Follow up with primary source data (data that you collect) as needed.
4. Determine key findings.
5. Set priorities and create an action plan.
6. Share your findings.

Below is a quick catalog of methods and sources to help with the data collection portion of this process (steps 1 through 3).

SECONDARY DATA SOURCES:

Community Profile Websites: These sites are good places to start to learn more about the demographics of your community. Both allow you to access data at the city, county, or zip code level:

- **US Census Bureau:** <http://factfinder.census.gov/>
- **Kids Count Data Center:** <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>

⁸ Office of Community Services. (2012). CCF/SCF tools conducting a community assessment. Retrieved from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/resource/conducting-a-community-assessment1#needsandassets>

District and School Profile Websites: Youth-serving organizations can start at these sites to identify which schools could be potential partners. It is also a good idea to go directly to the district or school website to see current opportunities and information on policies and procedures.

- **The National Center for Education Statistics** allows you to generate a list of schools by city or by zip code at <http://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/>
- **The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction** provides a wealth of data that includes school report cards and district maps for public schools in Washington State at <http://www.k12.wa.us/>

Youth Program Directory (<http://youthprogramdirectory.org/>): Schools can peruse this online directory of youth-serving organizations in King County and find a list of programs and services available in their community (see our one-page guide to the Youth Program Directory for more information on this resource).

PRIMARY DATA STRATEGIES:

Cultural considerations should be taken into account when collecting primary data. As the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction points out:

As student demographics become increasingly diverse, schools should be increasingly adept at reaching out to people, organizations, and agencies that reflect the varied ethnic and cultural aspects of their school and community. Outreach strategies familiar to the White, dominant culture may not be effective in these communities.⁹

The **City of Seattle Office for Civil Rights** (2012) presented six essential strategies for inclusive engagement

1. Build personal relationships with target population.
2. Create a welcoming atmosphere.
3. Increase accessibility.
4. Develop alternative methods for engagement.
5. Maintain a presence within the community.
6. Partner with diverse organizations and agencies.¹⁰

Below are some guidelines and examples:

⁹ Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. Strengthening Student Outcomes (July 2015). Retrieved from <http://www.k12.wa.us/SSEO/pubdocs/RedDisruptBehaviorMenuBestPracticesStrategies2015.pdf>

¹⁰ Seattle Office of Civil Rights. Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide (April 2009). Retrieved from <http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/GRE/IOPEguide01-11-12.pdf>

Surveys- Surveys are an efficient way to capture information from a large group of people. When designing a survey, it is a good idea to pre-test questions with an audience similar to your target audience. This helps to ensure that your questions are clear and comprehensible. Here are some examples of community surveys used by others:

- **Community Strengths and Needs Survey (from the Coalition of Community Schools):**
http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/COMM_STR_NEEDS_assessment_pdf.pdf
- **Road Map Family Engagement Survey (from the University of Washington):**
<https://education.uw.edu/unassigned/2015-users-guide-road-map-family-engagement-survey-data-inquiry-equitable-collaboration>

Focus Groups- Focus groups can be a good way to get unstructured, in-depth information from a smaller number of people. Focus groups give you the opportunity to meet face-to-face and ask follow-up questions. You can conduct focus groups with youth, families, community members, or current or potential service providers. More information can be found at:

- **Community Toolbox: Assessing Community Needs and Resources:** <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/conduct-focus-groups/main>
- **Needs Assessment Focus Group Toolkit:** <http://www.socialent.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/needs-assessment-focus-group-toolkit.pdf>

Interviews- Interviews with key stakeholders in the community can be a great way to learn more about what is needed and shows a genuine interest in getting to know the community. These can be conducted by phone or in-person. Think about people in your community that could be key informants. These might be local leaders such as city council members, faith-based leaders, directors of local non-profits, school officials, PTA leaders, or other high-profile individuals representing your constituents.

- Sample script for beginning a key informant interview:

“Hello, good morning/afternoon! My name is [your name]. I work with the [name of organization]. We are developing a community program on [name topic]. We are in the process of getting to know the community and its leaders so that we can establish community partnerships. Your name was given to us by [name of referring community leader] because you’re a key community leader. I’d like to briefly ask you questions about your community, describe the project, get your thoughts on it and find out if you are interested in working with us. Also, if you can suggest other people who might want to get involved, that would be appreciated. Is this a good time? [If yes, continue. If not, arrange for a follow up face-to-face meeting or conference call].¹¹

¹¹Giachello AL, author; Ashton D, Kyler P, Rodriguez ES, Shanker R, Umemoto A, eds. 2007. Making Community Partnerships Work: A Toolkit. White Plains, NY: March of Dimes Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.aapcho.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Giachello-MakingCommunityPartnershipsWorkToolkit.pdf>

Program Inventory: Taking stock of the existing programs or services at your school or community is an excellent way to pinpoint any gaps in available programs and services.

- **School Partner Programs and Services Inventory** (<http://ydekc.org/resource-center/partner-programs-inventory>): Partnership coordinators can use this grid to create an inventory of programs and services currently available at their school site.
- **Youth Program Directory** (<http://youthprogramdirectory.org/>): Schools can peruse this online directory of youth-serving organizations in King County and find a list of programs and services available in their school or in the broader community. Youth organizations can also use this site to find out what other partners are at their desired school site.

TIP SHEET – UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL AND STUDENT NEEDS

In order to have the most productive conversation possible with a school partner – or potential partner – it is important to come in with a general understanding of the needs of students in the school. Many partners already have this understanding based on their experience in the community. Others can and should consult a few basic information sources to familiarize themselves with the particular context in which they are working, or hoping to work. This document provides a brief introduction to useful sources of information.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The following kinds of information are publicly available online, and may be worth consulting prior to approaching a school or school district (see *Appendix* for a *Summary of Common Academic Data Types*)

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS:

Student demographics are often available on school district website on a school-by-school basis. Demographic information for students in Washington State public schools is also available at the state, district, and school level through the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. [OSPI's school report cards](#) show student gender, race and ethnicity, and participation in special programs such as special education or free and reduced-price meals.

Select a year:

Student Demographics		
Enrollment		
October 2014 Student Count		1,075,107
May 2015 Student Count		1,070,756
Gender (October 2014)		
Male	554,168	51.5%
Female	520,939	48.5%
Race/Ethnicity (October 2014)		
Hispanic / Latino of any race(s)	233,616	21.7%
American Indian / Alaskan Native	16,221	1.5%
Asian	77,421	7.2%
Black / African American	48,248	4.5%
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	10,680	1.0%
White	612,625	57.0%
Two or More Races	76,274	7.1%
Special Programs		
Free or Reduced-Price Meals (May 2015)	482,024	45.0%
Special Education (May 2015)	143,304	13.4%
Transitional Bilingual (May 2015)	111,325	10.4%
Migrant (May 2015)	19,909	1.9%
Section 504 (May 2015)	28,937	2.7%
Foster Care (May 2015)	8,612	0.8%

STUDENT PERFORMANCE:

OSPI's school report cards also show basic student performance data (i.e. high school graduation rates and aggregate results on State-mandated standardized tests). Use the "Compare my school" feature to quickly see the performance of and individual schools compared to state or district averages, or to other schools.

>Washington State Tools: Compare My School

Compare My School

This page best printed in "landscape" mode
Click "go" to add the district or school to the comparison. Click "Search" to search for a district or school on specific criteria.

School or District 1	School or District 2	School or District 3
<input type="button" value="Search"/> <input type="button" value="Remove"/> District: Kent School District <input type="button" value="go"/> School: (Select) <input type="button" value="go"/>	<input type="button" value="Search"/> <input type="button" value="Remove"/> District: Kent School District <input type="button" value="go"/> School: Kentridge High School <input type="button" value="go"/>	<input type="button" value="Search"/> <input type="button" value="Remove"/> District: Kent School District <input type="button" value="go"/> School: Kentwood High School <input type="button" value="go"/>
Kent School District Puget Sound Educational Service District 121 12033 SE 256TH ST KENT, 98031	Kentridge High School Kent School District 12430 SE 208th ST Kent, 98031	Kentwood High School Kent School District 25800 164th Ave SE Covington, 98042

Additional student performance measures may be published by the school district itself. The Seattle Public Schools, for example, publish their own [school reports](#) that include student growth measures, data from school climate surveys, and student mobility rates.

SCHOOL CLIMATE:

Most schools administer a climate survey to students, staff, and/or parents. If these results are posted on school websites, they can provide rich information on the ways stakeholders perceive the learning environment. Climate surveys typically include questions about safety, student behavior, peer relationships, teacher and/or principal effectiveness, and the extent to which students and parents feel a sense of belonging in the school building.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS:

Information on the health and wellness of students in your target school may not be readily available. While Washington's Healthy Youth Survey (administered every two years to 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders) documents everything from substance abuse to bullying to school engagement, its results are not publicly reported at the school or district level.¹² It still may be worth your while as a partner to look at the Healthy Youth Survey's results to identify trends or to ask informed questions of a potential school partner.

INFORMATION ON SCHOOL AND DISTRICT PRIORITIES

In addition to the general information described above, many schools and school districts will provide information on their strategic priorities on their websites. If partners and potential partners can equip

¹² For more information on the Healthy Youth Survey, or to see statewide results, visit <http://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/DataSystems/HealthyYouthSurvey>

themselves with information on these priorities, it can help them to better understand the ways that their agencies can contribute to furthering the school's or district's goals.

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS:

School districts and individual schools may have mission and vision statements that guide their work. These are normally posted on websites and documents. Bear in mind that how *visible* a school's mission or vision statement is may be an indication of the extent to which it provides (or does not provide) direction to the institution's work.

STRATEGIC PLANS:

District strategic plans are often posted on school and district websites. In the Road Map region, most districts have posted their current strategic plan, and many acknowledge family and community partnerships as a key strategic priority. You can find information on Road Map districts' strategic plans or planning processes at:

- Auburn School District Strategic Plan, 2017-2022: <https://www.auburn.wednet.edu/Page/19275>
- Federal Way School District Strategic Planning Initiative: <https://www.fwps.org/domain/217>
- Highline School District Information: <https://www.highlineschools.org/Domain/65>
- Kent School District Strategic Plan: <https://www.kent.k12.wa.us/site/Default.aspx?PageID=608>
- Renton School District Continuous District Improvement Goals: <https://www.rentonschools.us/Page/124>
- Seattle School District Strategic Plan: https://www.seattleschools.org/district/district_quick_facts/strategic_plan/
- Tukwila School District Strategic Plan: <http://tukwilaschools.org/district/about/strategic-plan-one-student-at-a-time/>

At the school level, strategic planning processes vary. You might find school strategic plans posted on school or district websites. For example, Continuous School Improvement Plans (CSIPs) for all Seattle schools can be found on the school district website (<http://www.seattleschools.org/cms/one.aspx?portalId=627&pageId=15987>). These spell out each school's goals for the coming year, and often specify the ways that partners can assist with these goals.

APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF COMMON ACADEMIC DATA TYPES

DATA ABOUT SCHOOLS OR DISTRICTS	DATA ABOUT STUDENTS*
<p>Student Demographics (aggregate): Race/ethnicity, Special program participation, and gender are available by school or district from OSPI.¹³ Districts may also collect data on students’ living arrangements and home languages, but do not always report these consistently.</p> <p>Attendance (aggregate): Average daily attendance and/or early warning-type data (attendance, behavior, and course performance) are often reported by districts. Unexcused absence rates are available from OSPI.</p> <p>Performance (aggregate): State assessment data (MSP/HSPE/EOC Exams) is available from OSPI. Growth measures (e.g. “% making typical growth”) are sometimes available).</p> <p>Discipline (aggregate): District-level discipline data is available from OSPI.</p> <p>Teacher/Staffing Information: Number of teachers, years of experience, education, and “highly qualified” designation available at the school and district level through OSPI.</p> <p>Climate/Culture Information: Student, staff, and/or parent survey results are sometimes available from districts.</p> <p>Graduation/Postsecondary Enrollment (aggregate): 4- and 5-year cohort graduation rates are available through OSPI; College enrollment information is available through ERDC.¹⁴</p>	<p>Student Demographics (individual): Race/ethnicity, special program participation (usually <i>not</i> Free and Reduced-Price Lunch eligibility), home language, and living arrangement are often available from school districts.</p> <p>Attendance (individual): A log of absences from classes, or from full days (sometimes with reasons), is collected by schools regularly, with summary data available at the end of term. Attendance data is not necessarily consistent between schools and districts.</p> <p>Performance (individual): State assessment data (grades 3-12) available from districts; other district assessment results are sometimes available. Grades (current, interim, and/or final) are often available. Growth measures (e.g. “growth percentile”) are sometimes available.</p> <p>Discipline (individual): Disciplinary incidents and actions taken may be available from districts.</p> <p>Coursework: Courses in which students are enrolled and their completion/performance status may be available from districts.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"><p>*NOTE: The data types above are the ones that are routinely captured and stored in district data systems; other data may be available from teachers or through student/parent portals (e.g. The Source in Seattle). All identifiable information about students is available only with parent permission and an active Data Sharing Agreement.</p></div>

¹³ Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, <http://www.k12.wa.us/>

¹⁴ Education Research and Data Center, <http://www.erd.c.wa.gov/data/>

IDENTIFYING COMMON OUTCOMES

What outcomes are you aiming to achieve? Outcomes are clear and realistic manifestations of your vision for student success. Identify those shared outcomes that will help the school community move forward. Shared outcomes can pertain to academics, to social and emotional development, or to ensuring children have nutritious food to eat. Use this tool to identify some potential goals that your organization has in common with your school partner.

VISION AND MISSION

- What is the vision and/or mission of our organization?

- What is the vision and/or mission of the school with which we want to partner (hint: check their website)?

- How are these similar? How are they different?

STRATEGY AND GOALS

- What are the main strategic goals that our program has in our work with students?

- Based on our research, what are some of the current goals of our potential school partner?

- Are our goals the same? If not, how do they support each other?

Use the reverse side of this worksheet to think about the relationships between your program or organization's goals and those of the school with which you would like to partner. Sometimes your goals are the same. When they are not, then articulating these relationships could help you to build a productive relationship with a potential partner.

Your Program's Goal	← How they Support or Reinforce Each Other →	School Partner's Goal
<i>Example: Improving young people's social awareness through interactive, performing arts-based activities</i>	<i>Students are better able to productively engage in collaborative classroom-based activities, which enhances learning</i>	<i>Example: Improving school performance on the State's third-grade reading assessment</i>

ADDITIONAL

NOTES:

SCHOOL PARTNER PROGRAMS AND SERVICES INVENTORY

Site coordinators can take inventory of existing programs and partners within their school using the grid below. This process is not always straightforward and may require you to talk to multiple people within your school community. The **King County Youth Program Directory** (<http://youthprogramdirectory.org>) is a good place to start!

Program or Service Type	Program Provider or Administrator	Target Population
Supports for School-Age Children & Youth		
Academic Enrichment/Tutoring		
Art, Music and Cultural Programs		
Before- and/or After-School Program		
College and/or Career Readiness		
Health and Basic Needs		
Leadership, Service, Social Justice		
Mentoring		
Recreation/ Sports		
Summer Programs		
Other:		

Program or Service Type	Program Provider or Administrator	Target Population
Family and Community Supports		
Adult Education/GED/ Literacy		
Early Care and Pre-K Education		
Family Support		
Health Care and/or Dental Services		
Health Education		
Job Training		
Mental Health Services		
Parenting Education		
Substance Abuse Prevention		
Violence Prevention		
Other:		

Adapted from a tool created by the Coalition for Community Schools at the Institute for Education Leadership (2015). Retrieved from http://www.communityschools.org/resources/needs_and_capacity_assessments.aspx

Note that there is an Excel version of this tool on our website at <https://ydekc.org/resource-center/partner-programs-spreadsheet/>

TIP SHEET: PREPARING FOR AN INITIAL MEETING WITH A POTENTIAL PARTNER

This checklist compiles tips and questions for both school sites and partner agencies to consider during the initial meeting(s). Take time to review the questions beforehand and come prepared to share your answers.

SHARED VISION AND LEADERSHIP

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

- Share with each other your vision and mission for your agency/school.
- Do they align/enhance/support each other?
- What type of partnership is the organization pursuing at the school? (Cooperative, Collaborative, or Integrated)

ALIGNED, RESPONSIVE IMPLEMENTATION

“We row in the same direction and continuously adjust by responding to the waves.”

- Share with each other your goals and priorities for your school or your organization’s program/service. Be specific.
- What are the expected measurable outcomes of your organization’s event/program/service? How do they align with the school site’s goals and expected outcomes?
- What specific need or service gap will this partnership be meeting?
- What are the shared goals for this partnership?

SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SUCCESS

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

- What specific program/service is the organization offering? What strategies do they use in implementing this event/program/service? Do they align with the school’s strategies?
- What are the costs of this program to the school and to the partner organization?
- What staff and resources does the organization bring? What direct or in-kind resources does the school provide to the partner?
- What does the partner organization need or expect from the school site? What does the school site need or expect from the partner organization? What are our roles and responsibilities with this potential partnership?
- How will the partner organization ensure that the services they provide are high quality and in alignment with the school’s goal and culture. In turn, what can the school site do to help with this goal?
- How and when will we know if this partnership is successful? How will we measure progress?

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PARTNERSHIP PROPOSAL PLANNING WORKSHEET FOR PARTNERS

Identified student-level need(s):

Example: *Increase attendance rates of ELL students.*

Identified school-level need(s):

Example: *Shared professional development between CBO staff and school staff.*

Target population(s):

Strategies and resources we have to address the needs of this specific population:

Resources the school would need to commit to the partnership:

Ways we can work with school staff in order to integrate school-day activities with our program:

How we intend to measure progress:

CURRENT SCHOOL – COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION PARTNERSHIPS

	School	CBO
Name:		
Contact:		
Phone:		
Email:		

SHARED OUTCOMES (STUDENT LEVEL):

Ex: Increase attendance rates of ELL students.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

SHARED OUTCOMES (SCHOOL LEVEL):

Ex: Shared professional development between CBO staff and school staff.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

STRATEGIES FOR IDENTIFYING/RECRUITING STUDENTS:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

STRATEGIES FOR MEASURING PROGRESS:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



SECTION 3: ESTABLISHING PARTNERSHIP

CREATE A SHARED VISION AND FORMALIZE YOUR AGREEMENTS AND COMMITMENTS

One of the first steps in establishing a successful partnership is to establish a shared vision for your work together. It is also important to document your agreements and commitments at the onset of your partnership, and periodically thereafter. Creating a Memorandum of Understanding or a Letter of Agreement is one way to formalize your partnership and hold one another accountable. It is also important to have early discussions about the roles and responsibilities of partners, and to document your agreements in a partnership charter.

Use these tools to help you establish a shared vision and to clarify mutual commitments.

- 3.1 Shared Vision and Leadership Checklist:** Checklist to assess your partnership practices around shared vision
- 3.2 Sample Visioning Process:** Describes a process for establishing a shared vision in a partnership
- 3.3 Sample Youth Focus Group Protocol-Visioning:** Protocol for establishing a shared vision with youth input
- 3.4 Sample Parent Focus Group Protocol-Visioning:** Protocol designed to elicit parent input on a shared vision
- 3.5 Partnership Charter Planning Tool:** Template that lays out elements of a partnership charter
- 3.6 Sample Partnership Charter:** Example of a partnership charter documenting agreements between a school and an organization
- 3.7 Tip Sheet on Developing a Memorandum of Understanding:** Designed to help schools and partners create a memorandum of understanding (MOU)

Youth Development Executives of King County

Working together to advance the youth development field



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SHARED VISION AND LEADERSHIP CHECKLIST

This checklist can be used to begin a discussion with a school, or to check in on a particular partnership. It can also be used to orient staff to the basics of shared vision and leadership in partnerships generally. For each partnership practice listed, determine which elements in each partnership category apply to you. You may find that your answers fall into multiple categories (cooperative, collaborative, and/or integrated). Think about whether the category where the majority of your responses fall is the “best fit” category for the services you provide. If not, what might you do to move toward a different category?

CREATE A SHARED VISION

COOPERATIVE PARTNERS	COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS	INTEGRATED PARTNERS	NOTES
<input type="checkbox"/> Partner can identify one or more program goals aligned with school vision.	(same as Cooperative Partner, plus...) <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school discuss vision and goals with both parties giving input during the site planning process.	(same as Collaborative Partner, plus...) <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school co-construct shared vision and goals. Both parties are accountable for implementation. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school are both responsible for ensuring the alignment of other partners to shared vision and goals.	<i>Are the majority of my answers in the “best fit” category for my program?</i> <i>If needed, what action can I take to move toward a different category of partnership?</i>

IDENTIFY AND FOCUS ON COMMON OUTCOMES

COOPERATIVE PARTNERS	COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS	INTEGRATED PARTNERS	NOTES
<input type="checkbox"/> Desired outcomes for program/service are set by partner program and shared with the school.	(same as Cooperative Partner, plus...) <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school discuss school priorities and program plans with both parties giving input during the site planning process. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school can identify at least one partner outcome aligned with a strategic priority of the school site plan.	(same as Collaborative Partner, plus...) <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school together review and set priorities and desired outcomes. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school ensure that partner outcomes are aligned with all priority areas of school site plan.	<i>Are the majority of my answers in the “best fit” category for my program?</i> <i>If needed, what action can I take to move toward a different category of partnership?</i>

CLARIFY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, AND SHARE DECISION MAKING

COOPERATIVE PARTNERS	COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS	INTEGRATED PARTNERS	NOTES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school have discussed site decision-making process and identified opportunities for input. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school have discussed and documented the roles and responsibilities of both parties and have identified appropriate check-in points. 	<p>(same as Cooperative Partner, plus...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school regularly and routinely provide feedback to each other. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner participates in a school site-based decision-making body. 	<p>(same as Collaborative Partner, plus...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner leads or co-leads a cross-agency school decision-making body. 	<p><i>Are the majority of my answers in the "best fit" category for my program?</i></p> <p><i>If needed, what action can I take to move toward a different category of partnership?</i></p>

ACTION STEPS:

Which of the action steps identified above are most important?

Keep in mind that different types of partnerships may be more or less appropriate depending on the type of services a program provides, and the extent to which the effectiveness of those services depends upon close partnership with school leadership. Most programs will not be fully of one type. Many programs will not even meet the criteria of cooperative partnership, but will have a relationship that is more transactional in nature. This does not mean that they are any less valuable. The partnership ecosystem depends on many kinds of partners meeting the diverse needs of students in the way they are best equipped to do so.

SAMPLE VISIONING PROCESS FOR PARTNERSHIPS

Community visioning is a common element in the strategic planning literature. Visioning can be helpful in the early stages of partnership planning, or later in a partnership when there is a need to reevaluate existing conditions or activities. The process outlined below is adapted from the University of Wisconsin Extension's "Overview of Vision and the Visioning Process."¹⁵

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY VISION?

A vision statement is a description of the way a community wants the future to be. Often a vision statement includes information about goals, values, and strategies for achieving the desired future state.

WHY SHOULD YOUR PARTNERSHIP CREATE A VISION?

Although schools and partners likely have their own separate missions and visions, a shared vision can provide an important touchstone for partnerships. In addition to providing a common direction, a shared vision can help all partners see how their work contributes to the greater good.

HOW CAN YOUR PARTNERSHIP ESTABLISH A SHARED VISION?

The process outlined below is just one possible approach to community visioning for school partnerships. In essence, it is a guided conversation about the future. It may or may not be facilitated by an outside entity, but should involve school leaders, representatives from partner agencies, and possibly parents and students.

OPTION 1: SMALL GROUP OR PARTNER VISIONING

Using the worksheet on page 2, have participants work together in groups of 2 or more to answer the questions provided (1-4 only). Reconvene as a group to discuss answers to the questions. Then have partners or groups write a draft vision statement based on their answers and on the conversation. Partners or groups can share their individual vision statements with the larger group. Commonalities can be pulled out and a common vision statement created.

OPTION 2: INDIVIDUAL VISIONING

Same as the process above, but rather than sharing out individual vision statements, participants can pass their vision statements around the table and have other participants circle words or phrases that they like.

OPTION 3: VISUAL OR REPRESENTATIONAL VISIONING

Rather than having participants draft vision statements, it can be effective to have participants draw a picture or write a newspaper headline that represents their vision for the future. They can then share their image or headline with the group to identify common themes.

With all of these options, it is recommended that the group not try to finalize wording; it normally works better to have an individual tackle this job and present a final version to the group for approval at a later meeting.

¹⁵ UW Extension (2005). Overview of vision and the visioning process. Retrieved from <http://uwcc.wisc.edu/coopcare/docs/vision.pdf>

VISIONING WORKSHEET

School Vision Statement: (can be filled in before the meeting)

Your Organization's Vision Statement:

PART 1:

Individually or with your group or partner, write down answers to the following questions.

1. What are the *five* most important core values for the partnership?¹⁶
2. Use the values in a sentence or series of sentences that describe the way you want this partnership to look in the future.
3. How will things be different for kids if your partnership embodies these values? Why?
4. What do you see as this school's strengths? What about challenges?
5. How can partnership maximize strengths while addressing challenges?

PART 2:

Based on your answers above, and on the group discussion, draft a vision statement for your partnership below:

¹⁶ It may be helpful to provide a list from which participants can choose. See, for example, the core values list at <https://www.taproot.com/archives/37771>

SAMPLE YOUTH FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL-VISIONING

This sample protocol is adapted from a protocol developed by MEM Consultants. It focuses on students' experiences in school and the community. It is designed to be used in program design and planning both in and out of school. It is generic, but can be adapted to a particular setting, or set of issues.

BACKGROUND

Facilitator is introduced and states:

- The purpose of this conversation is to learn about your experiences at school and the ways that experience could be better.
- We'll hope you'll help us better understand what matters to you, so we can make your experience the best it can be.
- Your participation is voluntary, and you can choose to not answer any question or leave at any time.
- We'll take notes and report the topics or themes of our discussion, but your names will not be connected to your comments. Your feedback is confidential, except that the facilitator and others in the focus group will hear what you are saying.

Generally speaking, the focus group questions are intended to flow with the following structure

1. *Objective* – factual questions
2. *Reflective* – emotional responses
3. *Interpretive* – making meaning of individual experience
4. *Decisional* – creating collective meaning or agreement, point towards future action

WARM-UP

(Ask everyone to answer, round-robin style – it's important that everyone speak early or some might hide out and never speak, and you want to ask a first question that everyone can easily answer.)

- What grade are you in?
- How long have you attended this school?

MAIN QUESTIONS

Objective Questions:

- Are you involved in any school activities like sports or music or student government? If so, how did you get involved?
- How about programs or activities outside of school, at a community center, YMCA, church, or somewhere else? How did you get involved in that activity?

Reflective Questions:

- When you talk about school with your friends, what do you say?
- What are the best things about school?
 - What (else) do you like about your classes?
 - What else do you appreciate about this school?

Follow-Up Prompts

- Say more
- Tell me more about that.
- Is there anything else you would like to say about that?
- Can you elaborate on that?
- Give me an example.
- What makes you think that?
- How so?
- I need an idea of what you mean by...
- Explain what you mean by that.
- Does anyone feel differently?
- Are there other points of view?

- Is there anything about school that you don't like?
 - What do you want changed about school?
- How about the activities you are involved in outside of school? What are your thoughts about those experiences?

(If applicable, the facilitator can repeat the questions in this section, substituting other activities for school.)

- What are some things that are different about the classes or programs you enjoy, and the ones you don't?

Interpretive Questions:

- If you could imagine the perfect school, what qualities or features would it have?
 - How would it be similar to this school?
 - How would it be different?
- Other than classes, what are some things you would like to be able to do at school, or after school?
 - What would need to happen in order for you to be able to do these things?

(Optional activity. Prior to the focus group, collect a set of pictures that represent different emotional states in different ways – people, landscapes, art, etc. – and have them ready.)

- I am going spread out a bunch of pictures on the table. Please select one picture that represents what you would like your school to be.
 - Each of you should share your picture and why you picked it.
-

Decisional Questions:

- OK, it's time to sum up what we've talked about today. I'd like you to think about the most important changes you would like to see at this school.
 - I am going to list your answers on this flip chart paper.
- Is there anything important left off this list?

CLOSING

- Is there anything I should have asked you today but didn't?
- Is there anything else you'd like to share?

SAMPLE PARENT FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL-VISIONING

This sample protocol is adapted from a protocol developed by MEM Consultants. It focuses on students' experiences in school and the community. It is designed to be used in program design and planning both in and out of school. It is generic, but can be adapted to a particular setting, or set of issues.

BACKGROUND

Facilitator is introduced and states:

- The purpose of this conversation is to learn about your experiences at school and the ways that experience could be better.
- We'll hope you'll help us better understand what matters to you, so we can make your experience the best it can be.
- Your participation is voluntary, and you can choose to not answer any question or leave at any time.
- We'll take notes and report the topics or themes of our discussion, but your names will not be connected to your comments. Your feedback is confidential, except that the facilitator and others in the focus group will hear what you are saying.

Generally speaking, the focus group questions are intended to flow with the following structure

5. *Objective* – factual questions
6. *Reflective* – emotional responses
7. *Interpretive* – making meaning of individual experience
8. *Decisional* – creating collective meaning or agreement, point towards future action

WARM-UP

(Ask everyone to answer, round-robin style – it's important that everyone speak early or some might hide out and never speak, and you want to ask a first question that everyone can easily answer.)

- What grade are you in?
- How long have you attended this school?

MAIN QUESTIONS

Objective Questions:

- Are you involved in any school activities like sports or music or student government? If so, how did you get involved?
- How about programs or activities outside of school, at a community center, YMCA, church, or somewhere else? How did you get involved in that activity?

Reflective Questions:

- When you talk about school with your friends, what do you say?
- What are the best things about school?
 - What (else) do you like about your classes?
 - What else do you appreciate about this school?

Follow-Up Prompts

- Say more
- Tell me more about that.
- Is there anything else you would like to say about that?
- Can you elaborate on that?
- Give me an example.
- What makes you think that?
- How so?
- I need an idea of what you mean by...
- Explain what you mean by that.
- Does anyone feel differently?
- Are there other points of view?

- Is there anything about school that you don't like?
 - What do you want changed about school?
- How about the activities you are involved in outside of school? What are your thoughts about those experiences?

(If applicable, the facilitator can repeat the questions in this section, substituting other activities for school.)

- What are some things that are different about the classes or programs you enjoy, and the ones you don't?

Interpretive Questions:

- If you could imagine the perfect school, what qualities or features would it have?
 - How would it be similar to this school?
 - How would it be different?
- Other than classes, what are some things you would like to be able to do at school, or after school?
 - What would need to happen in order for you to be able to do these things?

(Optional activity. Prior to the focus group, collect a set of pictures that represent different emotional states in different ways – people, landscapes, art, etc. – and have them ready.)

- I am going spread out a bunch of pictures on the table. Please select one picture that represents what you would like your school to be.
 - Each of you should share your picture and why you picked it.
-

Decisional Questions:

- OK, it's time to sum up what we've talked about today. I'd like you to think about the most important changes you would like to see at this school.
 - I am going to list your answers on this flip chart paper.
- Is there anything important left off this list?

CLOSING

- Is there anything I should have asked you today but didn't?
Is there anything else you'd like to share?

PARTNERSHIP CHARTER PLANNING TOOL

Use this template to help determine the key roles and responsibilities in your partnership. See our Sample Partnership Charter for reference. Before using this tool, identify the individuals at the school, the school district, and the external agency that will need to agree to the terms of your partnership charter so that you can include them in the planning process. Then discuss potential roles and responsibilities in the partnership.

Partnership Role/Responsibility	Community-Based Organization	School	School District
Designate partnership lead	Name of lead:	Name of lead:	Name of lead:
Participate in regular partner meetings Meeting frequency: _____			
Collect data (also consider the type of data each party will collect)	Type of data to be collected:	Type of data to be collected:	Type of data to be collected:
Share data (also consider the type of data each party will share)	Type of data to be shared:	Type of data to be shared:	Type of data to be shared:
Generate data sharing agreement (if applicable)			
Monitor data sharing agreement (if applicable)			

Partnership Role/Responsibility	Community-Based Organization	School	School District
Generate leasing agreement for space (if applicable)			
Monitor leasing agreement (if applicable)			
Identify/refer students in need of services			
Deliver services to students (also specify services to be delivered)	Services to be delivered:	Services to be delivered:	Services to be delivered:
Offer shared professional development opportunities			
Participate in shared professional development			
Evaluate programs and communicate evaluation results			
Other roles and responsibilities:			

Once you have discussed some of the roles and responsibilities above, document the commitments of all partners, and obtain signatures indicating agreement as appropriate.

SAMPLE PARTNERSHIP CHARTER

By signing below, you commit to roles and responsibilities for the duration of the partnership, from _____ to _____.

School Responsibilities

- Meet monthly with partnership stakeholders
- Collect, share, and analyze best practices with CBO partners
- Build a culture of collaboration and develop a shared vision for partnership impact
- Cultivate data-driven decision making

-
- Share building space with partners in accordance with district leasing agreement
 - Designate a staff contact for CBO partnership needs
 - Include CBO partners in school-based PD
 - Help identify target students and metrics
 - Identify and involve a family/parent representative

CBO Responsibilities

- Meet monthly with partnership stakeholders
- Collect, share, and analyze best practices with school partners
- Build a culture of collaboration and develop a shared vision for partnership impact
- Cultivate data-driven decision making

-
- Deliver services and/or programs
 - Execute quality assessments
 - Respond to needs of school
 - Comply with building usage and lease agreements
 - Comply with legal and FERPA regulations

District Responsibilities

- Meet regularly with partnership stakeholders
- Collect, share, and analyze best practices with partners
- Build a culture of collaboration and develop a shared vision for partnership impact
- Cultivate data-driven decision making

-
- Dedicate staff to partnership needs
 - Develop data-sharing agreements
 - Support district processing protocols and FERPA needs
 - Advocate for partnership
 - Build infrastructure and systems to support the partnership
 - Provide technical assistance
 - Provide PD opportunities

Principal

CBO Executive Director

Site-Based Program Coordinator

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TIP SHEET: DEVELOPING A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

Documenting your agreements and commitments are important steps not only at the onset of your partnership, but throughout the partnership relationship. Creating a memorandum of understanding is a way to track your agreements, formalize your partnership, and hold others accountable during the process. Be sure to take notes during meetings, document each partner's roles and responsibilities, and update your written agreement as needed.

WHAT IS A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING?

A memorandum of understanding (MOU or MoU) is a formal agreement between two or more parties. Organizations use MOUs to establish official partnerships. MOUs are not legally binding but they imply mutual obligation, and are preferable to informal agreements. Often, MOUs are the first steps towards a legal contract. In US law, a memorandum of understanding is synonymous with a letter of intent (LOI), which is a non-binding written agreement that implies that a binding contract is to follow.¹⁷

As you move forward with formalizing your partnership with a school and/or partner organization, develop an MOU to cover the following:

- The vision, goals, and expectations of the partnership
- An outline of current services, staffing, and schedules
- An outline of the roles, responsibilities, and communication protocols between the school site and the partner agency.

CHECKLIST FOR DEVELOPING YOUR MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Directions: The following checklist can help you craft an MOU for your partnership. Listing who will be responsible for what can help you avoid misunderstandings and ensure continuity if there is turnover in either organization. Make sure that the signers of the MOU have the authority to commit the time or resources of each entity.

An MOU should include the following:

- ❑ **CAPTION:** The caption should describe who is entering to the agreement. This is usually centered on the MOU. Below the caption you repeat what parties are entering into the agreement and a very short explanation of what is being provided.

<p style="text-align: center;">Example: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BETWEEN</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Insert school]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Insert Partner Organization]</p>
--

¹⁷ Retrieved from <http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/memorandum-of-understanding-MOU-or-MoU>.

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into between XYZ School (“School”) and ABC Partner (“Provider”) to provide tutoring services to school students.

SCOPE OF SERVICES: This is where you explain in detail the responsibilities of the partner organization and the responsibilities of the school and/or district. This section should cover:

- The vision, goals, and learning objectives of the program or service being provided.

Example: For the 2015-16 school year the shared goals, priorities and objectives (e.g. outcomes, strategies, utilization, focus populations, etc.) for this partnership are:

- 1) Provide a life skills class during advisory to all 10th grade students to decrease school drop-out rate and increase student self-efficacy.
- 2) Conduct 5 workshops for families, with minimum attendance of 20 parents/guardians, in order to increase family engagement and awareness around college readiness

- What each entity’s roles and responsibilities are. This may include staffing, space, supplies, participant recruitment, etc.

Example: A. Partner Organization will provide:

1. A skilled facilitator to teach the life skills program.
2. Provide supplies, etc.

B. School will provide:

1. Communication to 9th grade teachers about program.
2. Classroom space for the program.

OTHER COMMITMENTS: If both entities have discussed any communication mechanisms, governance structures, conflict resolution measures, data-sharing agreements, evaluation, reporting, or any other specifics of the partnership, don’t forget to list them in your MOU.

DURATION: Add when the partnership starts and when the partnership will end.

AUTHORIZATION: Lastly, have both parties sign and date the MOUS. The signing of this MOU implies that the signatories will strive to reach the objectives stated in the MOU, to the best of their ability.

SAMPLE MOUS

Below are several samples to help guide you in developing your MOU:

- Coalition for Community Schools at the Institute for Educational Leadership lists samples of MOUs on their resource page: http://www.communityschools.org/resources/default.aspx?F_Category=&F_LeadershipRole=&F_Title=Memorandum&F_Keywords=33&F_ToDate=&F_FromDate=&F_Organization=&F_ResultType=
- Seattle School District is currently working on updating their MOU template. You can access the most up to date one here: <http://www.seattleschools.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=627&pageId=912641>
- Oakland Unified School District has a sample Letter of Agreement on their tools page at <http://www.ousd.org/Page/11101>



SECTION 4: WORKING TOGETHER

BUILD A COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP CULTURE

As partners work together, they can build trusting relationships by communicating continuously and by engaging in opportunities to connect, share, collaborate, celebrate, and learn together. All parties within a school community need to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and that there are mechanisms in place to facilitate shared decision making. Partners and school leaders should determine in advance the appropriate level and frequency of communication, provide regular feedback to one another, and alternate leadership roles in a cross-agency leadership body. Additionally, program leaders should plan to proactively communicate about the work they do, and the impact they have on students.

Use the tools below to help you establish clear protocols for your work together, and to develop and refine your communication strategies.

- 4.1 Aligned, Responsive Implementation Checklist:** Checklist to assess your partnership's collaboration policies and practices
- 4.2 Planning for Ongoing Communication:** Planning tool to help set up an annual meeting schedule for partners
- 4.3 Tip Sheet for Planning Equitable Meetings:** Summarizes best practices around equitable meeting planning
- 4.4 Partnership Meeting Topics and Sample Agenda:** Use this tool to think about possible meeting topics and structures
- 4.5 Shared Decision Making Planning Tool:** Use this tool to clarify decision making processes in your partnership
- 4.6 Planning for Shared Space Usage:** Designed to help with space usage planning in a school building
- 4.7 Creating a Partnership Communication Strategy:** Use this tool to think about the various stakeholders in your partnership and their information needs
- 4.8 Communication Strategy Guiding Questions:** These questions can help you design a deeper communication strategy around a particular stakeholder audience
- 4.9 Elevator Pitch Activity:** Describes an activity focused on honing your quick, in-person program pitch
- 4.10 Feedback Loop Exercise:** Use this tool to practice exchanging feedback with a partner
- 4.11 Youth Program Partnership Newsletter Guide:** Step-by-step guide to developing a newsletter for partners about your youth program
- 4.12 Youth Program Partnership Newsletter Planning Worksheet:** Worksheet designed to help you plan the structure and content of a partnership newsletter



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ALIGNED, RESPONSIVE IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

This checklist can be used to begin a discussion with a school, or to check in on a particular partnership. It can also be used to orient staff to your ongoing partnership work. For each partnership practice listed, determine which elements in each partnership category apply to you. You may find that your answers fall into multiple categories (cooperative, collaborative, and/or integrated). Think about whether the category where the majority of your responses fall is the “best fit” category for the services you provide. If not, what might you do to move toward a different category?

ALIGN SERVICES WITH NEEDS

COOPERATIVE PARTNERS	COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS	INTEGRATED PARTNERS	NOTES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school can identify how partner is addressing needs of school community. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner collects and provides general participation data. 	<p>(same as Cooperative Partner, plus...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school work together to identify and fine-tune strategies for meeting needs of school community <input type="checkbox"/> School provides data on participants and on school wide trends and disparities. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner collects and provides breakdown of their data to show needs and disparities. 	<p>(same as Collaborative Partner, plus...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school advise other partners or revise strategies to meet needs of school community. <input type="checkbox"/> School includes partner on teams where data trends are being discussed on a regular basis, e.g. school leadership team, in part to identify needs and disparities. 	<p><i>Are the majority of my answers in the “best fit” category for my program?</i></p> <p><i>If needed, what action can I take to move toward a different category of partnership?</i></p>

BUILD ON EXISTING ASSETS AND RESPOND TO NEEDS AS THEY ARISE

COOPERATIVE PARTNERS	COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS	INTEGRATED PARTNERS	NOTES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner has set program based on their expertise and school’s identified needs. <input type="checkbox"/> School provides basic information on participants, current partners, and school wide trends. 	<p>(same as Cooperative Partner, plus...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school leadership meet at least twice a year to discuss program(s). <input type="checkbox"/> Partner incorporates feedback on unmet needs into program planning for following year. <input type="checkbox"/> If the program is not reaching target populations partner and school conduct targeted outreach to address disparity 	<p>(same as Collaborative Partner, plus...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school leadership meet at least monthly to discuss program(s). <input type="checkbox"/> Both discuss how to make adjustments and/or create new programs to address unmet needs throughout the year. 	<p><i>Are the majority of my answers in the “best fit” category for my program?</i></p> <p><i>If needed, what action can I take to move toward a different category of partnership?</i></p>

BUILD TRUST AND RELATIONSHIPS			
COOPERATIVE PARTNERS	COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS	INTEGRATED PARTNERS	NOTES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school are aware of appropriate site engagement opportunities; partner participation is optional; but welcome. <input type="checkbox"/> Strong communication at the beginning of the partnership to establish expectation for both parties. <input type="checkbox"/> Strong communication at the end of program/activity to evaluate impact. On-going communication, as needed. 	<p>(same as Cooperative Partner, plus...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> School involves partner in core and program-relevant committees regularly. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school meet at least twice a year. <input type="checkbox"/> Both contribute to each other's communications, e.g. newsletters, flyers, brochures, events. <input type="checkbox"/> Both have explicit agreements re: communication, e.g. response time, preferred method, etc. 	<p>(same as Collaborative Partner, plus...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner leads or co-leads a cross-agency school leadership body. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school leadership have a set monthly meeting <input type="checkbox"/> School and partner have an identified process for conflict resolution and problem-solving with each other. 	<p><i>Are the majority of my answers in the "best fit" category for my program?</i></p> <p><i>If needed, what action can I take to move toward a different category of partnership?</i></p>

ACTION STEPS:

Which of the action steps identified above are most important?

Keep in mind that different types of partnerships may be more or less appropriate depending on the type of services a program provides, and the extent to which the effectiveness of those services depends upon close partnership with school leadership. Most programs will not be fully of one type. Many programs will not even meet the criteria of cooperative partnership, but will have a relationship that is more transactional in nature. This does not mean that they are any less valuable. The partnership ecosystem depends on many kinds of partners meeting the diverse needs of students in the way they are best equipped to do so.

PLANNING FOR ONGOING COMMUNICATION

Use this document with your partner to establish communication norms for your work together. Shared expectations around communication can prevent misunderstandings, and can make difficult situations easier to resolve.

Primary Contact (School):

Contact Phone:

Contact E-mail:

Preferred Communication Method:

Alternate Contact:

Primary Contact (Partner Agency):

Contact Phone:

Contact E-mail:

Preferred Communication Method:

Alternate Contact:

SCHOOL YEAR MEETING SCHEDULE

Meeting Purpose (e.g. scheduling, partnership check-in, data review)	Meeting Frequency (e.g. monthly, quarterly)	Attendees	Facilitator(s)
	Date(s):		
	Date(s):		
	Date(s)		

Meeting Purpose (e.g. scheduling, partnership check-in, data review)	Meeting Frequency (e.g. monthly, quarterly)	Attendees	Facilitator(s)
	Date(s):		

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Was the schedule above created with input from all partners?
2. How will you establish meeting agendas so that everyone's concerns are addressed?
3. How will you document and share what goes on in meetings?
4. What actions will be taken when problems or issues arise?
5. Are there other protocols or practices you would like to establish, such as time frames for requesting agenda items, meeting notification practices, meeting locations, etc.?
6. How often will you revisit this plan?

TIP SHEET: PLANNING FOR EQUITABLE COLLABORATION MEETINGS

This tip sheet summarizes several practical approaches to promoting greater equity in collaborative meetings across sectors. These tips are adapted from Attachment A of the [PSESD DD3 Round 3 Technical Assistance Report](#) created by [Emerging Design Consulting](#) (May 2016).

Dynamics of power and privilege can adversely affect collaboration across sectors even when there is consistent communication. These tips can help partners to mitigate these dynamics in meeting situations.

- 1. Set up structures that are inclusive of all partners to a collaboration.** Create a core team that includes someone from each major sector.
- 2. Design agendas collaboratively and ensure that content is inclusive.** Frame agendas in a way that engages everyone by avoiding jargon, using open-ended questions, and exploring assumptions.
- 3. Share leadership roles.** Rotate meeting facilitation where possible, and seek opportunities to involve all partners in all meeting roles.
- 4. Establish a clear group decision making process.** Decide whether decisions will be made via vote or consensus, and how all perspectives will be considered.
- 5. Establish group accountability.** These can include partnership norms, communication modes and methods, and clear ways of documenting of collective decisions.
- 6. Include different learning styles.** Use visual, verbal and kinesthetic modes, and allow time for all to process information.
- 7. Include the cultural approaches of all partners.** Ensure that your partnership supports and benefits from different and holistic points of view.
- 8. Use small group or committee work in meetings.** Encourage full exploration of topics by regrouping participants into small groups so that all voices are heard and considered.
- 9. Allow time for socializing and relationship building.** Build in adequate breaks, provide food, and create structured opportunities for participants to get to know one another. Also consider rotating meeting locations.
- 10. Avoid common institutional pitfalls.** Allow adequate time to address meeting topics; prioritize topics that invite genuine discussion. Avoid gatekeeping and/or decision making outside of established group process.

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PARTNERSHIP CHECK-IN MEETING TIPS

A core element of aligned, responsive implementation within any partnership is building trust and relationships. We encourage partners to communicate continuously and engage in opportunities to connect, share, collaborate, celebrate, and learn together. When establishing expectations at the beginning of the partnership, set up clear and regular communication for progress and goals. Include time to give and receive feedback to support the continuous improvement of the program(s) and partnership. Collaborate to decide what topics you will cover and what your partnership check-in meetings will look like.

Here are some topics to consider over the course of the year:

- Shared Vision and Goals for the Partnership
- Aligning Services with Needs
- Setting Expectations and Norms
- Defining Roles and Responsibilities and Shared Decision Making
- Program and Partnership Check-in: What's working well? What could improve?
- Data Review and Goal Setting
- Program Evaluation
- Sustainability: Funding and/or Succession Planning
- Planning for the Upcoming Year

For tools to apply during these meetings, check out <https://ydekc.org/resource-center/partnership-toolkit/>.

PARTNERSHIP CHECK-IN MEETING SAMPLE AGENDA:

Monthly Partnership Check-In Meeting	
Date:	
Attendees:	
Agenda:	
➤	Relationship Building: <i>Authentic partners take time to get to know each other as people. You might pose a different question each time or consistently respond to the same prompt, such as "Share one highlight from the past week."</i>
➤	Program and Partnership Check-in: <i>In relation to both the program and the partnership process (such as your communication with each other), share your perspectives on how things have been going since you last met.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. What's working well?b. What could improve?
➤	Timely Topic: <i>Choose a topic from the list above, or another topic that is relevant and timely for your partnership.</i>
➤	Upcoming: <i>Discuss opportunities, events, changes, etc. impacting the program and/or partnership that may occur between now and your next meeting.</i>
➤	Action Steps: <i>Clarify what actions will be taken, by whom, and by which date, based on today's conversation.</i>
➤	Schedule Next Meeting: <i>Set up the date and time for your next meeting.</i>
➤	Closing: <i>Close the meeting with a reflection, expression of gratitude, or other form of closing</i>

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SHARED DECISION MAKING PLANNING TOOL

Use this matrix to specify the roles of different parties in making decisions about the partnership. It is helpful to plan for shared decision making in advance, though it will not be possible to anticipate or plan for every situation that might arise. For each entity listed in the matrix columns, you can either 1) use a check mark to designate a principal decision maker; or 2) use a performance management framework to assign roles in decision making. This example uses a RACI matrix to assign roles. RACI is an acronym for roles that partners or team members might play. These are: **R-Responsible** for executing on a decision; **A-Accountable** for decisions (or **Authorizing** party); **C-Consulted** on decisions; and **I-Informed** of decisions made. As you fill out this matrix, consider whether you are really *sharing* decision making power (i.e. are the roles distributed equitably? Could they be?).

Activity or Issue Area (e.g. space planning, program offerings, evaluation strategy):	Site Coordinator	Principal/School Lead	Partner Agency Lead	School Staff	CBO Staff	Youth	Families	Other
Decision making roles: R-Responsible; A-Accountable; C-Consulted; I-Informed								

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PLANNING FOR SHARED SPACE USAGE

Space can be at a premium in school buildings, and conflicts and confusion around space are common. Site coordinators can use this document to maximize space usage during afterschool hours. This tool is adapted from a document created by [Seattle Public Schools](#).

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Several issues will need to be considered when planning for space usage. Among these are the following:

- **Some spaces are better suited to certain kinds of programs than others.** Library and classroom spaces are best for tutoring and other quiet, contained activities; gyms are better suited to programs that incorporate physical activity.
- **Some programs have specific space needs (i.e. a sink or refrigeration) related to licensing requirements.** Check with your providers to better understand whether they are subject to these kinds of requirements.
- **Clear up front agreements regarding space use are essential.** Be sure to discuss who will have access to spaces, when they will have access, which supplies will be used, how clean-up will be handled, etc. This can prevent issues from arising during the year.

PROGRAM INVENTORY

Use this grid to better understand which programs in your building need dedicated space, when they need it, and for what purpose(s).

Program Name and Description	# of Children Served	Ages Served	Licensure Requirements (if any)	Days and Times Offered	Notes

Program Name and Description	# of Children Served	Ages Served	Licensure Requirements (if any)	Days and Times Offered	Notes

AFTERSCHOOL SPACE INVENTORY

Take stock of the available spaces in your building and use this grid to plan for use of these spaces.

Available Space	Meets Licensure Requirements (Y/N)?	Physical Capacity	Hours and Days Available	Possible Program(s)	Notes

Available Space	Meets Licensure Requirements (Y/N)?	Physical Capacity	Hours and Days Available	Possible Program(s)	Notes

WEEKLY SPACE PLAN

Finally use this grid to assign programs to spaces

Available Space	Program				
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

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CREATING A PARTNERSHIP COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

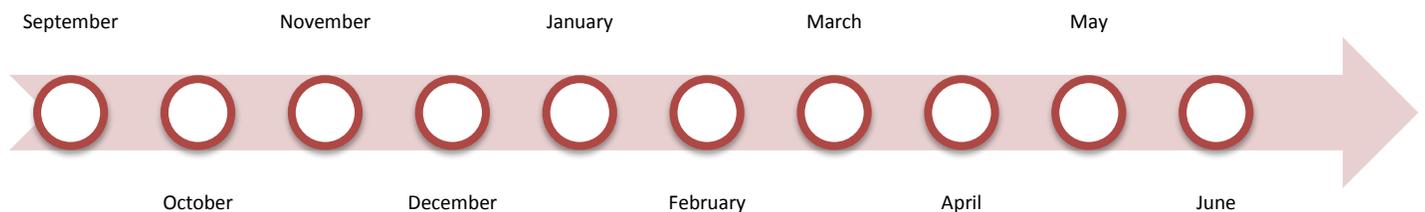
Use this tool to think about your partnership stakeholders and their information needs. **Who** needs to know about your program? **What** do they need to know about it? What do you want them to do with this information? Once you have answered these questions, you can think about **when** and **how** you might want to communicate with different stakeholder groups.

YOUR AUDIENCES AND PURPOSES

Stakeholder Group	What do they need to know?	What do you want them to do with this information?

YOUR COMMUNICATIONS TIMELINE

Now that you have thought about who your stakeholders are, and why you need to communicate with them, use the school-year timeline below to plan out **when** and **how** you will communicate with them:



SOME CONSIDERATIONS:

- How do each of the stakeholder audiences you have identified like to receive information (by e-mail, in person, or some other way)?
- How often can you commit to communicating with your stakeholder groups? Be realistic!
- Think about your communication timeline in the context of:
 - Your program activities (When are you enrolling students in your program? When are you reporting results to funders?)
 - Your data collection and analysis activities (Do you have data to share with partners or others?)
- Most importantly, **be strategic** and **prioritize**. Your time, and that of your stakeholders, is valuable!

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY GUIDING QUESTIONS

Although there may be many audiences that you want to communicate with about your program, different audiences may be more or less important at different times. You can use these guiding questions to help you further develop a communication strategy around a particular high-priority audience.

1. **Audience:** With whom are you trying to communicate? What are their characteristics? How do they relate to your program?
2. **Your needs:** What do you want this audience to do with respect to your program?
3. **Audience needs:** What do you think your audience wants from your program?
4. **Priority message:** What do you want this audience to know? Think about what is *most* important.
5. **Stories, data, details:** What is most interesting to your audience?
6. **Secondary messages:** Is there anything else you want this group to know (a “nice to know” rather than a “need to know”)?
7. **Platform(s):** What is/are the best way(s) to reach this audience? How do they typically want to receive information?
8. **Staff and schedule:** Who on your team will do this work, and when will they do it?

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ACTIVITY: CREATING AN ELEVATOR PITCH

Use this activity with your organizational leadership and/or program staff to create or refine the way you talk about your program with others.

Supplies: 8.5x11's cut in half, Post-its

- A. Introduction: Consistency in communications is a critical part of having partners have a clear idea of who you are, clear expectations, and clearer ways to advocate and support your program. Word of mouth/face-to-face interactions are some of the most effective ways of building relationships and communicating the value of your team and program.
- B. Whom to Target: Apathetic vs Advocate vs Amenable Audiences
 - a. Write your elevator pitch with “middle ground” audiences who are already amenable to your program in mind.
 - b. Distant, disinterested, apathetic audiences require a lot of effort to win over and may not be a strategic use of time and resources.
 - c. Supportive, engaged audiences do not need to be targeted very strongly.
- C. Participants are given ½ sheets of letter paper, post-its
 - a. Participants have 2 minutes to write down everything they want (potential) partners to know about their program on one side of their half sheet. Prompt responses with the Framework Questions below.
 - b. Participants have 2 minutes to edit down their content from their half sheet to their post-it. Use the Editing Help below.
- D. Framework Questions
 - a. What does your program do/provide for partners?
 - b. Who does your program serve and why?
 - c. How is your program unique?
 - d. How does your program do its work?
- E. Editing Help
 - a. Strategic/partnership goals?
 - b. What isn't important for a first impression?
 - c. Remove redundancies/group ideas
 - d. Can you hear yourself/your staff actually saying this?
- F. Pair up. One person says elevator pitch, gets feedback.
- G. Switch and repeat.
- H. Share back 2-4 examples (or everyone depending on time) to large group, get feedback.

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1-ON-1 FEEDBACK LOOP EXERCISE

Use this tool to practice exchanging feedback with a partner.

Context: This exercise is useful after an event, activity, or process in which two people have been engaged.

Step 1: Establish goal to express our appreciation of each other's strengths and identify possible opportunities for growth

Step 2: Set norms for this exercise

- Approach this exercise from a learning mindset (looking for, "What can I learn from my partner's perspective?")
- Share feedback that is specific and based on observation
- Recognize that each of us has our own blind spots and others can help us see those
- Acknowledge that each recipient decides what to do with the feedback they receive
- Ask open-ended clarifying questions if we don't understand each other
- Express gratitude

Step 3: Appreciations

Purpose: To acknowledge and appreciate your partner's strengths, skills, expertise, improvement, etc. and their positive impact

Take turns expressing appreciations of your partner, one at a time. (Example: Person A shares an appreciation of B, Person B shares an appreciation of Person A, etc.)

Sample language for the person offering appreciations:

"I appreciated when you..."

"I noticed you...and the impact was..."

"I felt supported by you when..."

Step 4: Opportunities

Purpose: To share your perspective on how your partner could grow, improve, etc. in their skills, expertise, and impact

Take turns offering opportunities for growth to your partner, one at a time.

Sample language for the person offering opportunities:

"One thing I observed was..."

"One thing I'm wondering about is..."

"One possible area for growth might be..."

Step 5: Closing

Express gratitude to each other for engaging in this feedback loop.

If desired, share an action step each of you plan to take as a result of this conversation.

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YOUTH PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER GUIDE

Developing a Youth Program Partnership Newsletter may help you to achieve your communication goals. Follow these steps to design your own newsletter.

WHO is our audience?

Identify who your key stakeholders are. Who is invested in the success of the young people you serve, and in the success of the program? Who influences the long-term success of your partnership? Your stakeholders may include youth participants, the community partnerships liaison at the school district, school administrators, parents/guardians of participants, school staff, community based organizations that you partner with, etc.

WHAT is our purpose for communicating with our stakeholders?

Choose which purpose(s) are the best fit for your program and partnership, or create your own.

- To build a community of stakeholders who are invested in the success of your program and partnership
- To communicate how the program and partnership are meeting school, student, and community needs and to illustrate the program's impact (how it is valuable and a critical part of the school community)
- To showcase program or partnership values, such as collaboration, learning, or innovation
- To be accountable to the community by sharing how your program's unique approach and outcomes match its vision and goals

WHAT will we write about?

Talk to some of your stakeholders before you begin. What do you know about what each of those stakeholder groups cares about?

- Share your communication strategy and plan with key stakeholders, such as the school principal, your supervisor, etc. and ask for feedback.
- Talk with some stakeholders to find out what they would like to know about your program and how they would like to receive the information.
- Ask youth participants, staff, and volunteers what they want the stakeholders to know and what makes the program unique.
- Identify your organization's policy for collecting and sharing photos, stories, etc. about participants, staff, and/or volunteers.

HOW will we distribute our newsletter?

Keeping in mind your staff capacity to create the newsletter on a consistent basis, consider...

- Program calendar (at what times of year do you have important information to share?) and frequency of distribution (e.g. monthly, quarterly)
- Accessibility: What is the most accessible way to deliver it to the most people, and what language(s) will our newsletter be provided in?
- Format (e.g. e-mail message with key bullet points, one-page newsletter with photos made using a Microsoft Word newsletter template or Publisher, Facebook post) and platform (e.g. [MailChimp](#), Facebook, printed material)

WHAT TO WRITE ABOUT: SAMPLE NEWSLETTER COMPONENTS

Overall tip: *Connect the content of each component to your audience and purpose!*

Component	Description	Sample Component Titles & Content Ideas	Tips
Who We Are	-Highlight your organization (history, values, mission, etc.), staff, key partners, or volunteers	-“Q&A with Our New Program Director” -“Program Values: What Youth Have to Say” -“Our History Here at ____ Middle School: How it All Began”	-Include a photo (with proper permissions)* -Story or interview format
Story-telling	-Highlight a program activity or participant that illustrates program/partnership impact	-“Community-Building in Action” -“Q&A with our Music Production Class” -“Introducing Our New Curriculum: What Does Project Based Math Learning Look Like?”	-Include a photo* or make a collage -Include quotes from staff, youth, or family members that relate to the program partnership goals, such as what youth are learning -Format: Story, interview, or collage
Data-sharing and Continuous Improvement	-Share qualitative or quantitative data aligned with mission and/or goals shared by the partnership such as program outputs (e.g. # of youth who participate), program outcomes (youth or family survey, program or school attendance, grades), youth program quality assessment data, etc.	-“Highlights and Action Items from our 2016 Youth Survey” -“1 st Semester Data Report Shows Attendance Interventions Work!” -“Assessing Our Program Quality: Increasing Levels of Engagement” -Exceeding Goals: Program Attendance and Retention Rates Soar”	-Share program-level outcomes (not individual or identifiable student-level data) -Story or chart format
Youth Voice	-Include the voices of your participants—through an article written by a participant, quotes from participants in articles, etc.	-“Youth Reporter: Our Program from a 5 th Grader’s Perspective”	-Story or interview format
Gratitude	-Express gratitude to specific people and/or stakeholder groups who contribute to your program and partnership’s success	-“Special thanks to the classroom teachers who have hosted us this year!” -“Principal _____: A True Partner”	-Make copies of the newsletter, circle the names of the people you thank, and personally deliver a copy to each one -Format: list of people and what they have done that you are grateful for
Upcoming Events and Announcements	-Share dates and a description of upcoming events, activities, or programs	-“You are invited to our program Open House next month!” -“Summer Program enrollment is open now”	-Calendar or list format
Contact Information	-Include the name, title, phone number, e-mail address, and room number (if applicable) for the main contact(s) for the program	-“For more information, contact...”	-Format: brief description

YOUTH PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER PLANNING WORKSHEET

Target Date for Distribution: _____

Developing our Communication Strategy for our Newsletter

Who is our audience?	What is our purpose?	What do we want them to know?	What do they want to know?

Newsletter Components

You may decide to include a few core components in every newsletter, and then add others depending on how your communication strategy shifts over time, or you might choose a different component each time to be the focus of your newsletter tool.

Component	Description	Title	Additional Notes or Items to Include

Distribution

Calendar <i>When do we have important information to share?</i>	Frequency <i>How frequently will we distribute our newsletter? (e.g. monthly, quarterly)</i>	Accessibility <i>What is the most accessible way to deliver it to the most people, and what language(s) will our newsletter be provided in?</i>	Format <i>What format will we use? (e.g. e-mail message, one-page newsletter)</i>	Platform <i>What platform will we use for distribution? (e.g. Mail Chimp, printed material)</i>

SECTION 5: EVALUATING PROGRAMS

BUILD EVALUATION INTO YOUR PARTNERSHIP TO ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY

How will you monitor the success of your program and your partnership? It is important that all partners who are working to support students engage in continuous improvement efforts and commit to high-quality instruction across settings. Partners can begin to collaborate in their improvement work if they understand and support each other's quality improvement processes, and plan for shared evaluation of partnership results. Start by clarifying goals through logic models, and plan out your evaluation activities for the year.

Wherever possible, use evaluation results to plan for future activities, and to seek resources to carry out those activities. These resources can help in your planning process:

- 5.1 Shared Accountability Checklist:** Self-assessment tool for community partners around program and partnership evaluation
- 5.2 Understanding and Assessing Program Quality:** An introduction to the YPQA, with a matrix comparing it to Washington's TPEP frameworks
- 5.3 Theory of Change to Logic Model Worksheet:** Designed to help with the creation of a logic model
- 5.4 Theory of Change to Logic Model Example:** Example of a Theory of Change to Logic Model Worksheet for a hypothetical program
- 5.5 Logic Model Template for Partnerships:** Use this template to create a simple logic model for your partnership work
- 5.6 Logic Model Example for Partnerships:** Sample logic model for a hypothetical afterschool program
- 5.7 Logic Model Facilitator Guide:** Use this resource with a partner to uncover the basic elements of a logic model for your program
- 5.8 Evaluation Planning Worksheet for Partnerships:** Worksheet designed to guide the development of an annual evaluation plan
- 5.9 Evaluation Calendar Template for Partnerships:** Use this tool to time your evaluation activities
- 5.10 Data to Practice Protocol for Partnerships:** Discussion guide for looking at data with partners
- 5.11 Sustainability Checklist for Community Partners:** If you are a community partner, use this checklist to assess your progress towards building a sustainable program and partnership
- 5.12 Sustainability Checklist for School Leaders:** If you are a school leader, use this checklist to assess your progress towards building a sustainable program and partnership
- 5.13 Partnership Sustainability Goal Setting Worksheet:** Use this worksheet to reflect on your progress and identify next steps towards building a sustainable program and partnership
- 5.14 Finding Funding to Sustain Your Partnership:** Use this worksheet to identify potential funding sources

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SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SUCCESS CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to monitor the progress of your partnership. Revisit this checklist at regular intervals, or as needed. For each partnership practice listed, determine which elements in each partnership category apply to you. You may find that your answers fall into multiple categories (cooperative, collaborative, and/or integrated). Think about whether the category where the majority of your responses fall is the “best fit” category for the services you provide. If not, what might you do to move toward a different category?

BUILD EVALUATION INTO YOUR PROGRAM TO PROMOTE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

COOPERATIVE PARTNERS	COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS	INTEGRATED PARTNERS	NOTES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school can identify how partner is addressing needs of school community. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school use a continuous improvement process. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school meet regularly to review and suggest improvement strategies. <input type="checkbox"/> Data is available on request from site or partner as it pertains to needs/outcomes and services provided. 	<p>(same as Cooperative Partner, plus...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> School and partners share information on program quality and improvement goals. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and work together to plan strategies for meeting shared outcomes. <input type="checkbox"/> School leadership and partner meet twice per year to review data on priority student and family outcomes and fine tune strategies together. 	<p>(same as Collaborative Partner, plus...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school strategies are complementary and coordinated to impact top priorities or needs of site. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner has access to relevant data concerning student and family outcomes. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and site identify necessary data to track for agreed-upon site priorities. <input type="checkbox"/> Site and partner regularly review data on priority outcomes to fine tune strategies. 	<p><i>Are the majority of my answers in the “best fit” category for my program?</i></p> <p><i>If needed, what action can I take to move toward a different category of partnership?</i></p>

CREATE A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN AND LEVERAGE RESOURCES

COOPERATIVE PARTNERS	COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS	INTEGRATED PARTNERS	NOTES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bilateral provision of resources between site and partner. <input type="checkbox"/> Resources are applied to general district or site need. 	<p>(same as Cooperative Partner, plus...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school access resources together to support identified site priorities. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school agree on alignment of resources to address identified priorities. 	<p>(same as Collaborative Partner, plus...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school plan together at least twice per year for resources development and sustainability. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner and school make resource allocation decisions together. 	<p><i>Are the majority of my answers in the "best fit" category for my program?</i></p> <p><i>If needed, what action can I take to move toward a different category of partnership?</i></p>

ACTION STEPS:

Which of the action steps identified above are most important?

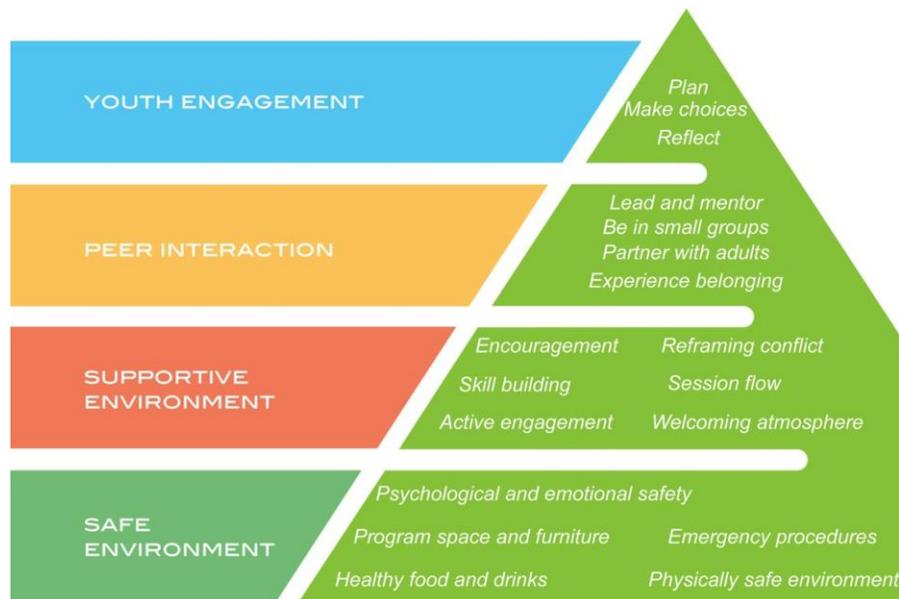
Keep in mind that different types of partnerships may be more or less appropriate depending on the type of services a program provides, and the extent to which the effectiveness of those services depends upon close partnership with school leadership. Most programs will not be fully of one type. Many programs will not even meet the criteria of cooperative partnership, but will have a relationship that is more transactional in nature. This does not mean that they are any less valuable. The partnership ecosystem depends on many kinds of partners meeting the diverse needs of students in the way they are best equipped to do so.

UNDERSTANDING AND ASSESSING QUALITY IN PARTNER PROGRAMS

High-quality instructional practice at the classroom or program level is fundamental to building student success skills. In Washington’s classrooms, high-quality practice is largely defined by the teacher evaluation frameworks authorized by the State’s Teacher and Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP) – Charlotte Danielson’s Framework for Teaching, the 5D+ Framework from the Center for Educational Leadership and the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model. In youth programs, quality is defined by the Center for Youth Program Quality’s Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA). The common themes within these frameworks represent broad agreement on what constitutes a high-quality learning environment for young people.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE

The Center for Youth Program Quality’s “Pyramid of Program Quality” (pictured below) loosely parallels Maslow’s hierarchy of needs.¹⁸ The pyramid provides a way to think about the complex job of a classroom teacher or youth development professional. In addition, this approach offers a common language for those who work with young people to engage in meaningful dialogue about how to create productive learning environments. This document uses Youth PQA pyramid as an organizing principle for our discussion of high-quality practice both in and out of school. For a more detailed breakdown of how YPQA indicators correspond to elements of the TPEP frameworks, see *Figure 1*.



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- **Safe Environment** – The safety of young people is necessary if they are to have an opportunity to learn. Safety is important in all of its aspects: physical, emotional and psychological. The Youth PQA assesses physical and emotional safety and includes indicators aimed at reducing bias in programs. One of the

¹⁸ Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–96. Retrieved from <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Maslow/motivation.htm>

basic criteria in Washington State’s TPEP (detailed in all three evaluation frameworks) is that teachers foster safe, positive learning environments.

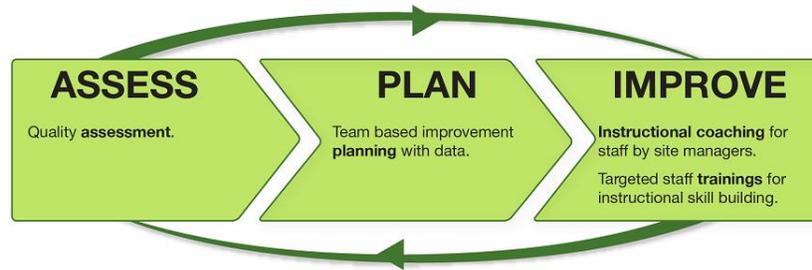
- **Supportive Environment** – Supportive environments provide students with opportunities to meet and overcome challenges. When adults consistently offer encouragement rather than praise, they can help young people to develop a growth mindset. Supportive environments also recognize and address the social and emotional challenges that students face in school or in youth programs. All three teaching frameworks and the Youth PQA promote individualized instruction, and the establishment of classroom and program environments that respect students’ cultures, values, and diverse learning needs.
- **Interaction** – Young people, like all people, need to experience positive relationships with adults and peers. When they feel alienated, young people are more likely to seek out unhealthy or unsafe relationships in their search for connection. Developing exciting, challenging, and purposeful opportunities for young people to learn and interact with each other inside and outside of school will increase their capacity to learn and grow. The Youth PQA details expectations for building peer-to-peer and youth-to-adult relationships in programs. Teacher quality frameworks outline practices that build mutual respect and rapport (Danielson), and teach conversation and inquiry techniques that deepen understanding (5D+, Marzano).
- **Youth Engagement** – When young people feel safe and experience a sense of belonging, this enables them to experience challenge and deepen their learning. Youth engagement is at the top of the Youth PQA pyramid and consists of two main ideas: voice and choice in programming at all levels and opportunities to set goals, make plans, and to reflect on experiences. All of the teacher quality frameworks approved by OSPI incorporate student engagement in learning as an outcome of effective instructional practice. The 5D+ framework integrates student voice and choice into both instruction and assessment domains. The Marzano framework makes student engagement a component of effective teaching practice. The Danielson framework describes a learning culture in which students are highly engaged, and take responsibility for their own and others’ learning.

Taken together, the classroom practice and evaluation frameworks above define a way of working with young people that is essential for their growth, development and success, regardless of the specific content being taught. Research suggests that programs that reach the higher domains of the quality pyramid (positive interaction and engagement) can have significant positive effects on youth outcomes.¹⁹

ASSESSMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The frameworks described above both define quality practice and provide a means of assessing it and improving it. While TPEP focuses on the teacher and the principal as the object of evaluation, the YPQA focuses on the program environment as a whole. We believe that all of the tools described here should be used in the context of a continuous improvement system as shown below:

¹⁹ Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P. & Pachan, M. K. (2010). A meta-analysis of afterschool programs that seek to promote personal and social skills in children and adolescents. *American Journal Community Psychology*, 16, 294-309. doi: 10.1007/s10464-010-9300-6.



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Just as TPEP has components related to professional growth and development, the YPQA improvement system includes not only assessments but aligned trainings that can be used for professional development for youth workers, with the ultimate goal of improving outcomes for students.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUTH PROGRAM QUALITY:

- **School's Out Washington** - <http://schoolsoutwashington.org/>
School's Out Washington supports implementation of the Youth Program Quality Intervention across Washington State by offering training and technical assistance.
- **David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality** - <http://cypq.org/>
The Weikart Center, in conjunction with stakeholders around the country including partners in Washington State, developed the Youth PQA to assess, plan, and improve program environments for young people.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT TEACHER EVALUATION FRAMEWORKS:

- **Center for Educational Leadership's 5D+ Teacher Evaluation Rubric** – <http://www.k12-leadership.org/>
Developed by the Center for Educational Leadership at the University of Washington, the 5D+ rubric is based on the 5 Dimensions of teaching and learning: purpose, student engagement, curriculum and pedagogy, assessment, and environment and culture.
- **Danielson's Framework for Teaching** - <http://www.danielsongroup.org/>
The Danielson framework is based on a constructivist approach to teaching and learning, and is used by many districts locally for evaluation and professional development.
- **Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model** - <http://www.marzanoevaluation.com/>
The Marzano framework explicitly aligns teacher practice with student growth. Also includes a leadership component.
- **Washington State Teacher/Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP)** - <http://tpep-wa.org/>
Washington State's resource for teacher and principal evaluation process. TPEP specifies broad evaluation criteria and recommends evaluation tools for school districts to use.

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FIGURE 1: QUALITY FRAMEWORKS COMPARISON MATRIX

This matrix uses four program domains and three organizational domains of the Program Quality Assessment (PQA) to highlight key similarities between the quality assessment tool most commonly used in partner programs and the teacher quality assessments used in Washington State. Understanding these elements of common practice can help partners to collaborate more effectively.

I. BASED ON YOUTH PROGRAM QUALITY ASSESSMENT, FORM A: PROGRAM OFFERINGS

Program Quality Assessment (PQA)	Danielson Framework for Teaching	5D+ Teacher Evaluation Rubric	Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model
Safe Environment (Washington State Criteria 5: Fostering and Managing a Safe, Positive Learning Environment)			
Accommodating Environment: Space is sufficient and suitable for program activities, flexible, and contains enough furniture for participants.	Organizing Physical Space: Classroom is inviting, accessible, and arranged in a way that is suitable for learning activities (2e).	Use of Physical Environment-Arrangement of Classroom: Environment is safe, and is arranged to support student learning (CEC1).	Organizing the Physical Layout of the Classroom: Classroom is organized to facilitate movement and focus on learning (Domain 1, Element 5).
Emotional Safety: Staff models and promotes a positive emotional climate; program environment is free of bias.	Environment of Respect and Rapport: Teachers' interactions with students, and students' interactions with one another are respectful (2a). Managing Student Behavior: Expectations for student conduct are clear and consistently implemented (2d).	Classroom Culture, Norms for Learning: Classroom norms are evident and encourage risk taking, collaboration, and respect for divergent thinking and for student culture (CEC7).	Establishing and Maintaining Classroom Rules and Procedures: Teacher reviews expectations regarding rules and procedures to ensure their effective execution (Domain 1, Element 4). Acknowledging Adherence to Rules and Procedures: Noticing and responding to violations (Domain 1, Elements 33-35).
Supportive Environment			
Warm Welcome: Staff are friendly, respectful, and greet all participants by name when they arrive.	Environment of Respect and Rapport: Teachers' interactions with students, and students' interactions with one another are respectful (2a).	Use of Classroom Environment-Accessibility and Use of Materials: Materials are accessible and intentionally used to support learning (CEC2).	Using Verbal and Nonverbal Behaviors that Indicate Affection for Students: Teachers convey interest and care for students (Domain 1, Element 37).
Session Flow: Session flow is planned, presented, and paced for youth. Materials are readily available, time is adequate, and activities are clearly explained.	Managing Classroom Procedures: Routines and procedures are seamless; students take initiative in handling materials and transitions (2c). Engaging Students in Learning: Activities, assignments and grouping strategies support active engagement in learning; materials are appropriate to learning objectives; lesson is structured and paced to promote student enthusiasm, interest, thinking and problem-solving; teacher invites students to reflect (3c).	Classroom Routines and Rituals, Use of Learning Time: Transitions are student-managed, efficient, and maximize instructional time (CEC4).	Planning and Preparing for Lessons and Units: Lessons are planned and prepared to effectively convey content and understanding (Domain 2, Elements 1-3).
Encouragement: Staff supports participants with encouragement, using non-evaluative language and open-ended questions.		Intellectual Work, Quality of Questioning: Teacher asks questions to probe for deeper understanding; teacher assists students in clarifying their thinking with one another (SE1).	Helping Students Elaborate on New Information: Teachers asks questions that require elaboration beyond what was explicitly taught (Domain 1, Element 11).
Active Engagement: Activities support active engagement, balancing concrete experiences with abstract learning; participants have opportunities to reflect on learning.		Engagement Strategies, Support for Participation and Meaning Making: Variety of strategies and structures support participation and meaning making for students; routines are often student-led (SE5).	Lesson Segments Addressing Content: Organizing students to integrate new content, deepen their understanding through active engagement, and reflect upon and refine their learning (Domain 1, Elements 6-23).

Skill-Building: Staff makes skill-building focus clear to youth, supports skill development by modeling, scaffolding, and encouraging effort.	Setting Instructional Outcomes: Learning outcomes are clear, represent high-level learning, and are differentiated to student needs (1c).	Scaffolds for Learning, Scaffolds the Task: Teacher supports the development of targeted concepts or skills (CP6).	Providing Clear Learning Goals and Scales: Students are aware of learning goals and their own progress toward meeting them (Domain 1, Element 1).
Reframing Conflict: Staff use youth-centered approaches to reframe conflict, seeking input from those involved and helping youth to generate solutions.	Managing Student Behavior: Students actively monitor their own behavior; response to misbehavior respects students' needs and dignity (2d).	Classroom Routines and Rituals, Discussion, Managing Student Behavior: Students manage themselves; teachers handle student misbehavior according to established routines (CEC5).	Establishing and Maintaining Classroom Rules and Procedures: Students follow clear routines and manage own behavior (Domain 1, Element 4). Acknowledging Adherence to Rules and Procedures: Noticing and responding to violations (Domain 1, Elements 33-35).
Interaction			
Belonging: Participants have opportunities to develop a sense of belonging (e.g. structured opportunities to get to know and appreciate one another); behavior is inclusive.	Environment of Respect and Rapport: Teachers' interactions with students, and students' interactions with one another are respectful (2a).	Classroom Routines and Rituals, Discussion, Collaboration, and Accountability: There are routines for discussion and collaborative work; students take ownership of their learning and support the learning of others (CEC3).	Understanding Students' Interests and Backgrounds: Teacher knowledge of students' interests produces a climate of acceptance and community (Domain 1, Element 36).
Collaboration: Participants have opportunities to work toward shared goals in teams or groups with interdependent roles.	Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques: High-level discussion is promoted; students formulate questions, initiate topics, and challenge one another's thinking (3b). Engaging Students in Learning: Activities, assignments and grouping strategies support active engagement in learning; students initiate learning; students may serve as resources for one another (3c).		Classroom Culture, Student Status: Patterns of interaction indicate all are valued; teacher creates opportunities for student status to be elevated (CEC6).
Leadership: Participants have opportunities to act as group facilitators and mentors.			
Adult Partners: Youth have opportunities to partner with adults; responsibility is shared.		Scaffolds for Learning, Gradual Release of Responsibility: Teacher uses strategies to gradually release responsibility to students (CP7).	Demonstrating High Expectations: Ensuring all students participate by valuing and actively involving "low expectancy" students (Domain 1, Elements 39-41).
Engagement			
Planning: Participants have multiple opportunities to plan projects or activities.	Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness: Teacher enhances student learning by building on student interests and addressing student needs (3e).	Intellectual Work, Ownership of Learning: Teacher provides student with opportunities and strategies for students to take ownership of their learning (SE2).	Engagement of Students: Teacher uses multiple strategies to promote active engagement in students (Domain 1, Elements 24-32).
Choice: Participants have opportunities to make content and process choices based on their interests.			
Reflection: Staff provides structured opportunities to intentionally reflect on experiences and provide feedback on program activities.	Using Assessment in Instruction: Assessment is fully integrated into instruction; students contribute to criteria and have opportunities to reflect on their own learning (3d).	Self-Assessment of Learning: Students consistently assess their own learning and understand where they are in reference to learning targets (A1).	Reviewing Content: Teacher engages students in review of content (Domain 1, Element 14).

II. BASED ON YOUTH PROGRAM QUALITY ASSESSMENT, FORM B: ORGANIZATIONAL ITEMS

Program Quality Assessment (PQA)	Danielson Framework for Teaching	5D+ Teacher Evaluation Rubric	Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model
Cultural Competency and Responsiveness (Washington State Criteria 3: Differentiating to Meet Individual Student Learning Needs)			
There are policies and practices in place that are directly related to making programs welcoming and accessible to all youth and families.	Demonstrating Knowledge of Students: Teacher is aware of students' linguistic and cultural heritage and uses knowledge to plan instruction; teacher participates in community cultural events; teacher provides opportunities for families to share their heritage (1b).	Teaching Point(s) are Based on Student Learning Needs: Teacher bases teaching points on the learning needs – academic background, life experiences, culture, and language – for groups of students and individual students (P3). Engagement Strategies that Capitalize on the Learning Needs of Students: Teachers build on the learning needs of students – academic background, life experiences, culture, and language – for groups of students and individual students (SE4).	Understanding Students' Interests and Backgrounds: Teacher uses knowledge of students' interests and backgrounds to produce a climate of acceptance and community (Domain 1, Element 36). Planning and Preparing for Special Needs of Students: Including language and learning needs (Domain 2, Elements 6-9).
Staff know and understand the cultures of participating youth and are responsive to cultural needs, interests, feelings and abilities.			Providing Students with Opportunities to Talk about Themselves: Students have opportunities to relate what is being taught in class to their personal interests (Domain 1, Element 31).
All participants are encouraged to share about their family culture and are provided with opportunities to learn more through a variety of activities.			
Assessment, Planning, and Improvement (Washington State Criteria 6: Using Data Elements to Improve Instruction)			
The organization employs strategies for program improvement based on data and shares evaluation data with stakeholders.	Designing Student Assessments: Teacher has an assessment plan that includes authentic, formative assessment; students are actively involved in designing assessments and collecting information (1f). Reflecting on Teaching: Teacher assesses lesson effectiveness and makes adjustments based on assessment (4a).	Teacher Use of Formative Assessment Data: Data is used to make adjustments, modify future lessons, and give targeted feedback (A6).	Identifying Strengths and Weaknesses in Practice, and Evaluating Effectiveness: Identifies strengths and weaknesses and evaluates the effectiveness of lessons and strategies on certain groups of students (Domain 3, Elements 1-3). Developing and Implementing a Professional Growth and Development Plan: The teacher develops a plan with goals, action steps, and timelines (Domain 3, Elements 4-5).
The organization formally solicits feedback from multiple types of stakeholders.		Collection Systems for Formative Assessment Data: Teacher has a system and routines for collecting and recording data from multiple sources (A4).	
Program has a systematic and standardized way of collecting data and using it for quality improvement.			
Family, School, and Community Connections (Washington State Criteria 7: Communicating and Collaborating with Parents and the School Community)			
Program engages families in the planning, implementation, management, evaluation, and/or improvement of the program.	Communicating with Families: There is frequent two-way communication with families and opportunities for families to engage in the learning process (4c).	Communication and Collaboration, Parents and Guardians: There is frequent 2-way communication on student needs, goals, and progress (PCC3).	Promoting Positive Interactions about Students and Parents: Teacher fosters positive home-school relationships through positive interaction with parents (Domain 4, Element 2).
There is regular communication with schools and other organizations involved with youth to better coordinate supports.	Participating in the Professional Community: Teachers collaborate with colleagues to share and plan for student success (4d).	Professional and Collegial Relationships: Teacher sustains relationships for the purposes of student, staff, or district growth (PCC 2).	Mentoring Other Teachers and Sharing Ideas and Strategies: Collaborating to support professional growth and student learning (Domain 4, Element 4).

III. NOTES ON QUALITY FRAMEWORKS

For more information about Washington’s Teacher and Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP), see <http://tpep-wa.org/>. For more information on the quality frameworks highlighted in this document (descriptions from the websites listed):

Program Quality Assessment

The PQA is a research validated instrument designed to assess the quality of youth programs for the purposes of accountability, evaluation, and program improvement. The instrument has been used in a wide variety of settings including after-school, community-based, camp, drop-in, and mentoring programs. The PQA is both an evaluation tool and a learning tool. The PQA is currently being used nationally in numerous state-wide and county-wide accountability, evaluation, and improvement systems.

<http://www.cypq.org/downloadpqa>

Pursuant to RCW 28A.405.100, the school districts in Washington must adopt one of the three frameworks below:

The Framework for Teaching by Charlotte Danielson

The Framework for Teaching identifies those aspects of a teacher’s responsibilities that have been documented through empirical studies and theoretical research as promoting improved student learning. The Framework Consists of 4 Domains – Planning and Preparation, The Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities – which are divided into 22 components. While the Framework is not the only possible description of practice, these responsibilities seek to define what teachers should know and be able to do in the exercise of their profession.

<http://tpep-wa.org/resources/instructional-frameworks/danielson-framework/> or <https://www.danielsongroup.org/framework/>

Center for Educational Leadership 5D+ Teacher Evaluation Rubric

The 5D+ Teacher Evaluation Rubric is based on the 5 Dimensions of Teaching and Learning (5D) instructional framework, which is derived from an extensive study of research on the core elements that constitute quality instruction. These core elements have been incorporated into the 5D framework and 5D+ rubric as five dimensions – Purpose (P), Student Engagement (SE), Curriculum & Pedagogy (CP), Assessment for Student Learning (A), and Classroom Environment & Culture (CEC) – which are divided into 13 subdimensions. The 5D+ rubric also includes Professional Collaboration and Communication, which is based on activities and relationships that teachers engage in outside of classroom instruction.

<http://tpep-wa.org/resources/instructional-frameworks/uwcel-5d/> or <https://www.k-12leadership.org/content/service/5-dimensions-of-teaching-and-learning>

Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model

The Marzano model describes a set of practices that have been shown to affect student outcomes. The model consists of four domains – Classroom Strategies and Behaviors, Planning and Preparing, Reflecting on Teaching, and Collegiality and Professionalism – and 60 elements that build upon one another. A defining characteristic of the model is its unique granular approach that allows for specific feedback to teachers and specific guidance to teachers that can be provided by administrators and instructional coaches. Finally, the model is designed to help teachers systematically improve on weakness in their instructional practices over an extended period of time.

http://tpep-wa.org/wp-content/uploads/Marzano_Teacher_Evaluation_Model.pdf or <http://www.marzanoevaluation.com>

WORKSHEET: THEORY OF CHANGE TO LOGIC MODEL

I. "SO THAT" CHAIN TEMPLATE

Complete the template below to see how your Theory of Change elements connect. Start at the bottom, with your goal or outcome statement, then work from top to bottom.

STRATEGY OR ACTIVITY:

SO THAT

SO THAT

SO THAT

MISSION OR VISION STATEMENT:



Adapted from: Organizational Research Services (2004). *Theory of Change: A Practical Tool for Action, Results, and Learning*. Prepared for the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-theoryofchange-2004.pdf>

II. OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK TEMPLATE

Now that you have mapped out a Theory of Change for your program, think about the **goals** or **outcomes** of your program, and about your program’s major **activities**.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES	PROGRAM TARGETS	WHAT WILL CHANGE NOW?	WHAT WILL CHANGE LATER?	GOAL OR OUTCOME
<i>What are you doing?</i>	<i>For whom are you doing it?</i>	<i>How will you know you are on track?</i>		<i>What do you hope to see as a result of this activity?</i>

Are there any **assumptions** that underlie your program theory (i.e. that X will lead to Y)? What are they?

What about **external factors**? Is there anything beyond your control that could get in the way of achieving your outcome(s)?

WORKSHEET: THEORY OF CHANGE TO LOGIC MODEL

I. "SO THAT" CHAIN TEMPLATE

Complete the template below to see how your Theory of Change elements connect. Start at the bottom, with your goal or outcome statement, then work from top to bottom.

STRATEGY OR ACTIVITY:

We have students work in groups to complete projects designed to build student success skills (academic and social-emotional)

SO THAT

Our students develop strong collaborative and interpersonal skills

SO THAT

Our students connect to adults and peers in their school communities

SO THAT

Our students have a more successful transition to high school



MISSION OR VISION STATEMENT:

All students graduate on time and well prepared for college, career, and life

Adapted from: Organizational Research Services (2004). *Theory of Change: A Practical Tool for Action, Results, and Learning*. Prepared for the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-theoryofchange-2004.pdf>

III. OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK TEMPLATE

Now that you have mapped out a Theory of Change for your program, think about the **goals** or **outcomes** of your program, and about your program’s major **activities**.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES	PROGRAM TARGETS	WHAT WILL CHANGE NOW?	WHAT WILL CHANGE LATER?	GOAL OR OUTCOME
<p><i>What are you doing?</i></p> <p><i>Summer:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation • Family events <p><i>9th Grade:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly cohort meetings • One-on-one tutoring • School check-ins 	<p><i>For whom are you doing it?</i></p> <p><i>Students identified as at-risk in 7th grade (referred by school staff or by a parent; history of disciplinary action, chronic absenteeism and/or academic failure)</i></p>	<p><i>How will you know you are on track?</i></p> <p><i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend program activities • Develop school readiness skills • Build relationships • Improve interpersonal skills 	<p><i>How will you know you are on track?</i></p> <p><i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend school regularly • Avoid disciplinary action • Do well in classes (“C” or above) 	<p><i>What do you hope to see as a result of this activity?</i></p> <p><i>Better high school graduation rates</i></p> <p><i>Improved postsecondary attainment</i></p> <p><i>More equitable educational outcomes</i></p>

Are there any **assumptions** that underlie your program theory (i.e. that X will lead to Y)? What are they?

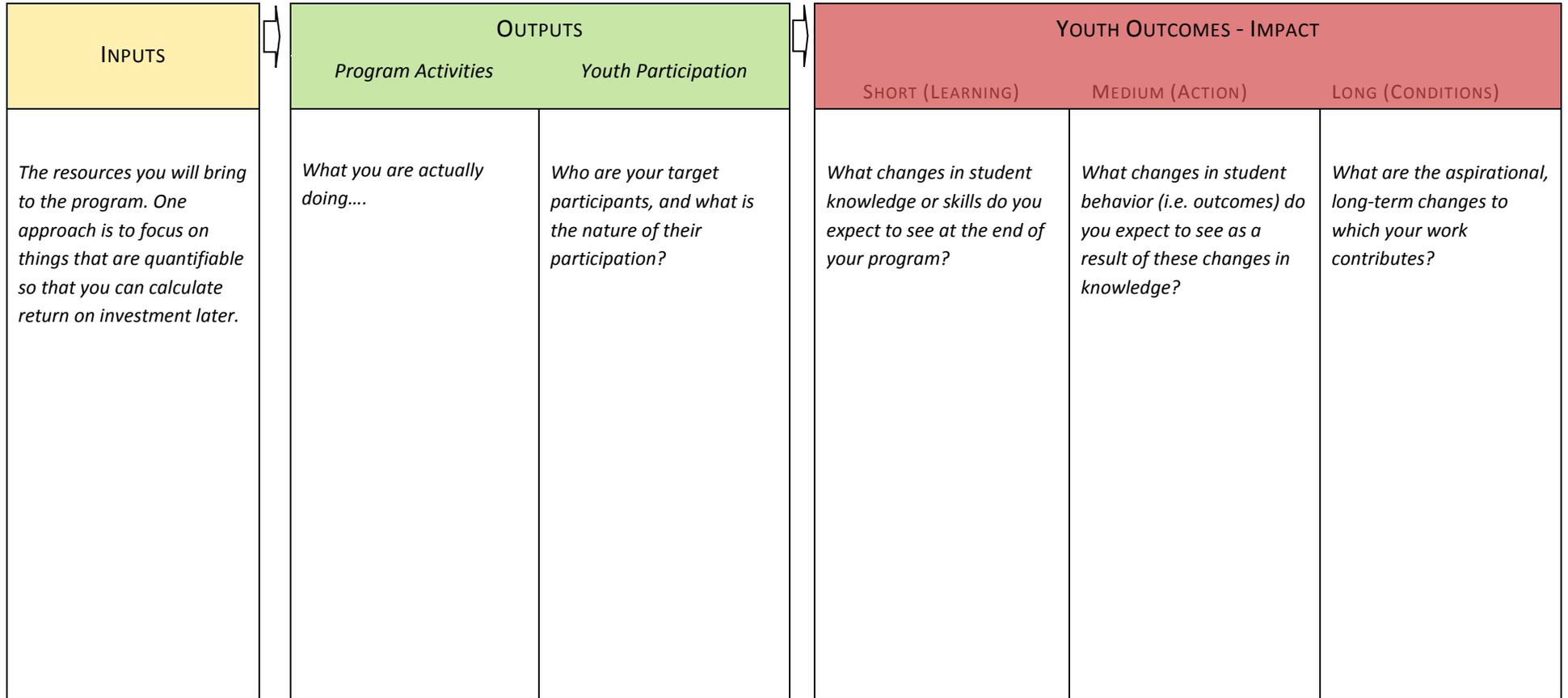
9th grade transition is key; school connectedness leads to better performance; support outside of school leads to better outcomes in school

What about **external factors**? Is there anything beyond your control that could get in the way of achieving your outcome(s)?

Student mobility; Attrition; In-school factors; Family dynamics; Program staff and student turnover on the program

LOGIC MODEL FOR (INSERT YOUTH PROGRAM NAME HERE)

Program Outcome Statement: *A brief statement of ultimate purpose*



Assumptions
What are you assuming to be true in order for your model to be true?

External Factors
What are the known factors that can influence your success, over which you have little or no control?

Logic Model Template Courtesy of the Program Development and Evaluation Unit at the University of Wisconsin – Extension, <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/index.html>

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Logic Model for *High School Transitions*

Program Outcome Statement: *We ensure that academically at-risk middle schoolers successfully transition to high school*

Inputs	Outputs		Youth Outcomes – Impact		
	Program Activities	Youth Participation	Short (Learning)	Medium (Action)	Long (Conditions)
<p>The resources you will bring to the program.</p> <p>Program staff and volunteers</p> <p>Space and infrastructure</p> <p>Quality improvement system (Youth Program Quality Intervention)</p> <p>Curricular supports</p>	<p>What you are actually doing...</p> <p>Weekly cohort meetings to build student success skills during school year</p> <p>Individualized academic support</p> <p>Summer orientation activities during summer (with optional academic and recreation component)</p> <p>Family engagement</p> <p>School partnership meetings</p>	<p>Who are your target participants, and how much do they participate?</p> <p>Students identified as “at-risk” in 7th grade (specifically target low-income students of color who are not SpED-identified but are low-performing in a core subject area)</p> <p>Goal: Attendance at 90% of weekly sessions in 8th and 9th grade and summer bridge program</p>	<p>What changes in youth knowledge or SKILLS do you expect to see at the end of your program?</p> <p>Improved interpersonal skills</p> <p>Connection to school (adults and peers)</p> <p>Strong academic self-efficacy</p> <p>Positive future orientation</p>	<p>What changes in youth behavior (i.e. TRANSFER outcomes) do you expect to see as a result of these changes in knowledge?</p> <p>Improved school attendance</p> <p>Reduced disciplinary incidents</p> <p>Improved course performance</p> <p>“On-track” to graduate</p>	<p>What are the aspirational, long-term changes to which your work contributes?</p> <p>Better high school graduation rates</p> <p>Improved postsecondary attainment</p> <p>More equitable educational outcomes</p>

Assumptions
School connectedness will have a positive impact on school performance; Extra support outside of school can build transferable skills

External Factors
Student mobility; Attrition; In-school factors; Family dynamics; Program staff and student turnover

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LOGIC MODEL DEVELOPMENT-FACILITATOR GUIDE

Directions: Interview a partner about the activities and goals of their program. Ask the main questions below, and write down responses. Use the follow-up prompts only as needed. If something does not make sense to you, ask for clarification.

- 1. What are the main things that your program does with young people?** *(Follow-up prompts: What does a typical young person experience in your program? What do they do on a typical day? How does staff support them?)*
- 2. Can you describe the young people that you work with?** *(Follow-up prompts: What are the ages of your participants? Do they share any particular characteristics (i.e. demographic features, academic needs, etc.)? Do you intentionally try to recruit certain groups?)*
- 3. What do you want young people to get out of your program?** *(Follow-up prompts: What has changed for them as a result of your program? Are there skills that you want them to master? Are there behaviors you are trying to influence?)*
 - What are short-term changes (i.e. what knowledge or skills will participants *learn*)?**
 - What are longer-term changes (i.e. what changes in *behavior* do you expect to see)?**
 - What is the ultimate goal (i.e. what will be different if your program is successful)?**
- 4. What are you assuming to be true in order to reach these goals (i.e. what are your assumptions)?** *(Follow-up prompts: Are there “leaps of faith” in your program theory? What are they?)*
- 5. Are there things that might get in the way of your success?** *(Follow-up prompts: What are things that out of your control that influence your students’ success? Are there school factors? What about family factors?)*

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EVALUATION PLANNING WORKSHEET

Use this worksheet as a tool for planning for shared evaluation of program or partnership progress.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

[Enter program or initiative description here. This should be one or two sentences describing what the program or initiative will do and what its primary goals are.]

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE(S) AND AUDIENCE(S):

[What is the primary purpose and audience for *your evaluation*? Is there a secondary purpose? If so, you may include that too.]

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

[Use your logic model to brainstorm evaluation questions. What do you want to know about the project or initiative? This will help you to decide what information to collect.]

PRIORITIZING EVALUATION QUESTIONS

[What are the most important questions to you right now? Think about how answering these questions could lead to actions or adjustments. *Circle* the highest priority question(s) above.]

MAPPING EVALUATION QUESTIONS TO DATA SOURCES

[For each question above, list a possible data source that could help you answer the question. Do you have the kind of data you need? If not, how might you get it?]

TYPES OF DATA USEFUL FOR EVALUATION:

- **Program Participation Data:** How many youth are participating in various programs? How often are they attending? This information can help you to better understand what interventions are most promising.
- **Student or Parent Satisfaction Data:** This can come from school climate surveys or from surveys (or interviews or focus groups) administered within programs. This information can help you understand how young people and families are experiencing schools and/or programs.
- **Quality Data:** Just as teacher observations can help you understand what is happening in the classroom, program observations (using tools like the Youth Program Quality Assessment or YOQA) can yield valuable information about program strengths and areas for improvement.
- **School Records:** School data systems contain a wealth of information on student progress. Some of this might be relevant to the work of your program, and may be accessible with parent permission.

IDENTIFYING OR CREATING INDICATORS

[After identifying a question you would like to answer and a data source that can help answer it, try translating this into an indicator (i.e. a formal metric that represents the information you need to answer your question). The grid below contains an example; there is a blank grid on the next page. Keep in mind that you might have multiple indicators.]

Example

Evaluation Question:	[what question from your logic model does this indicator address?] Are students in our attendance intervention program improving over time?	
Indicator Name:	[what is the name of your indicator?] Attendance trend	
Indicator Description:	[brief description of your indicator] We put students into categories – improving, worsening, or steady – based on the number of class period absences they have over the last 10 days versus the previous 10 days	
Data Source:	collection method:	[by what method will data be collected?] School records
	frequency:	[how frequently will data be collected or compiled?] Data are collected daily and compiled every two weeks
	scope:	[are there any specific inclusions or exclusions from your indicator?] We will not factor in illness-related absences
Presentation:	comparison type:	[between groups, trend over time, pre-/post-, etc.] Trend over time (2-week intervals)
	presentation method:	[how will you present this indicator, and to whom?] Student list coded with red, yellow, and green. We will look at this information during our (staff) team planning meetings. Individual line charts showing individual trend will be shared with student and parent.
	frequency:	[how often will you present this indicator? May or may not be the same as the frequency of collection] Every two weeks
Response:	[how will you respond to changes in this indicator?] <u>Improving:</u> No response, until student’s improvement is significant and sustained enough that they no longer qualify <u>Steady:</u> Continue participation programming as appropriate to the number of absences the student has <u>Worsening:</u> One-on-one conversation with student; parent notification; modification to program participation if overall absence rate warrants it (i.e. move into more frequent/intensive intervention)	
Notes:	[anything else important to document about this indicator, including its relationship to other indicators] We also consider total absences, as students can have an improving trend, but a very high number of absences (and vice versa)	

Evaluation Question:	[what question from your logic model does this indicator address?]	
Indicator Name:	[what is the name of your indicator?]	
Indicator Description:	[brief description of your indicator]	
Data Source:	collection method:	[by what method will data be collected?]
	frequency:	[how frequently will data be collected or compiled?]
	scope:	[are there any specific inclusions or exclusions from your indicator?]
Presentation:	comparison type:	[between groups, trend over time, pre-/post-, etc.]
	presentation method:	[how will you present this indicator, and to whom?]
	frequency:	[how often will you present this indicator? May or may not be the same as the frequency of collection]
Response:	[how will you respond to changes in this indicator?]	
Notes:	[anything else important to document about this indicator, including its relationship to other indicators]	

EVALUATION CALENDAR WORKSHEET

Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Program Activities									
Evaluation Activities									
School District Data Availability									

Use this template to create a rough timeline of program and evaluation activities

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DATA TO PRACTICE PROTOCOL²⁰

1. **What is the first thing you notice about your data?** Is there anything that stands out as surprising, disappointing, or exciting?

- *What do you notice first? What stands out?*
- *What is interesting or exciting?*
- *What is disappointing or frustrating?*
- *What are you skeptical about?*

2. **What does the data say?** Take a couple of moments to jot down observations (*not* interpretations) about your data. Focus on simply *describing* what you see (e.g. "90% of the youth in my program say that getting a college education is important to them").

- *What results are positive or make you proud?*
- *Which results suggest challenges or weaknesses?*
- *Which results affirm what you already know?*
- *Which results offer new information?*
- *Does the data answer some of the questions you hoped it would answer?*

3. **What does the data suggest to you?** Choose one or two data points, and try to think of possible interpretations. Are there more than one? What makes the most sense to you? Does the data challenge any of your assumptions?

- *What is most significant in the data?*
- *What are emerging patterns or key themes?*
- *How can you interpret the emerging themes and patterns?*
- *Why do these results look this way?*
- *What other things do you need to consider?*
- *What questions has this raised for you?*

4. **How could you act on the data?** What are the implications for program practice? Is there anything you would like to do differently as a result of looking at the data? Try to come up with at least one idea for applying this data to your work.

- *What applications or action ideas has this triggered for you?*
- *What kinds of program changes could you make based on this information?*
- *What is not a priority or concern at this time?*
- *Who else should see this information?*
- *What kind of decisions should take this information into account?*

²⁰ This document is partially adapted from the ATLAS Looking at Data Protocol, available on the National School Reform Faculty website at

http://www.nsrffharmony.org/system/files/protocols/atlas_looking_data_0.pdf

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SUSTAINABILITY CHECKLIST FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

As a Community Based Organization (CBO) Program Coordinator for a partnership with a school, use this checklist to identify what steps you have taken to build a sustainable program and partnership and then choose which steps you will take next to strengthen the capacity of your partnership to withstand the inevitable changes it will encounter.

Relationship Building

- Build relationships and collaborate with stakeholders that influence the sustainability of the program.* Youth, families, teachers, school staff, school administrators, school district leaders, CBOs, volunteers, and businesses care what happens in a school community. Involve them in planning, leading, and/or evaluating components of the program. Take the first step by mapping out your [Partnership Ecosystem](#).
- “How” we do the work is often just as important to the success of our partnership as “what” we are doing.* To create a collaborative culture for partnership interactions and meetings, apply strategies from the [Tip Sheet for Planning for Equitable Collaboration Meetings](#).
- Build collaborations with other CBOs to strategically share resources, seek new sources of funding, refer families to programs well-suited to their interests and needs, and cooperate to meet the needs of the school community.*
- Participate in school-based leadership and decision-making.* For example, find out what kinds of committees and groups you and/or a parent/guardian from your program could join, such as the Building Leadership Team or the Race and Equity Team at the school.
- Ensure key school stakeholders have relationships with people from your organization (rather than only with you).* For example, include your supervisor in an annual meeting with the principal and introduce your staff or colleagues to stakeholders whenever they are in the school building or attending events, etc.

Communication

- Use “our” rather than “my” when referring to the program and/or partnership, internally and externally.*
- Establish an [annual communications strategy and plan](#).* Communicate multiple times per year about program updates and achievements so diverse stakeholders are aware of what the partnership offers to the community, how the services match needs at the school, and what its outcomes are. For example, [create a quarterly newsletter](#) for your program and partnership.
- Participate, to the extent allowable by your organization, in activities that raise awareness and advocate for youth programs, such as [Lights On Afterschool](#).*

Documentation

- Establish a [Partnership Charter](#) or [Memorandum of Understanding](#) with your partner to document what you expect from each other.*

- ❑ *Document key components of the partnership and program.* This will enable the next person in your position to build on what has been developed so far. Develop a brief “guidebook” for the partnership and program that includes:
 - An annual calendar showing key tasks, events, etc. that occur at specific times of the year.
 - A list of “Key People to Know” including names, positions, and contact information
 - A [Partnership Ecosystem Map](#) for this school
 - Partnership and program vision, goals, and descriptions
 - Brief history of each partnership and/or program
 - A list of tools or resources you often use to support the partnership

- ❑ *Collect annual reports, newsletters, and grant applications, and file them together.*

- ❑ *Create a tangible folder or a folder on the desktop of your computer and file the documents listed above in that folder.* Before you leave your position, transfer the file to a public or shared folder or give the tangible folder to your supervisor or another member of your team.

Partnership and Program Quality

- ❑ *Review the [Checklist of Partnership Elements](#) and assess the status of the partnership.* Choose one area to focus on for partnership growth. These elements provide a strong foundation for effective school-community partnerships and, because they emphasize collaboration and shared leadership, ensure that the partnership’s existence is not dependent on a single person or organization.

- ❑ *Develop a high-quality program.* Engage in a continuous improvement process focused on program quality, such as the [Youth Program Quality Initiative](#), or evaluate your program using quality standards, such as the [Washington State Quality Standards for Afterschool and Youth Development Programs](#).

- ❑ *Invest in staff development through coaching, skill development, collaborative team learning, and training.* A member of your team may succeed you when you leave your position, or move on to develop or manage other partnership programs in the future.

Resource Development

- ❑ *Share program updates and achievements with any organization or individual that provides resources to the partnership.* Stakeholders are more likely to continue supporting the partnership when they are aware of the outcomes of their investment.

- ❑ *When possible, diversify funding sources so the partnership is not dependent on a single source.* Use the [Finding Funding worksheet](#) to document current and potential resources. Ask each partner to acquire funding or in-kind resources so all partners are invested financially in the program and partnership.

- ❑ *Discuss sustainability with your partner(s).* People and funding come and go, so prepare in advance for potential changes.

SUSTAINABILITY CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

As the School Lead for a Partnership with a Community Based Organization, use this checklist to identify what steps you have taken to build a sustainable program and partnership and then choose which steps you will take next to strengthen the capacity of your partnership to withstand the inevitable changes it will encounter.

Relationship Building

- Share power and decision-making with your Community-Based Organization (CBO) partner. Use the [Shared Decision Making Planning Tool](#) to decide how who will make decisions and how you will communicate with each other about decisions.*
- Encourage your CBO partner to participate in school-wide events for youth and families. Partnerships are more likely to sustain when they are visible and accessible and when students and families see the program as a vital part of the community.*
- Offer opportunities for your CBO partner to participate in school-wide decision making and leadership. For example, invite them to join the Building Leadership Team or the Race and Equity Team at your school.*
- “How” we do the work is often just as important to the success of our partnership as “what” we are doing. To create a collaborative culture for partnership interactions and meetings, apply strategies from the [Tip Sheet for Planning for Equitable Collaboration Meetings](#).*
- Introduce yourself to CBO partner staff, such as tutors or health professionals who are working directly with students, and introduce CBO staff to leaders and key stakeholders within the school building and school district. This is one way to show that you value the work of your partners and consider them to be an asset to the school community.*
- Facilitate or provide opportunities for CBOs who serve your community to connect, collaborate, and learn from each other. Map out the [Partnership Ecosystem](#) at your school.*

Communication

- Notify the Program Coordinator about what’s happening in the school community. For example, include them on school-wide e-mails and notifications.*
- Take time to see the program in action multiple times per year. For example, attend a program event or stop by for a 30-minute observation or program tour from the program coordinator.*
- Use “our” rather than “their” or “my” when referring to the program and/or partnership, internally and externally.*
- Share program partnership highlights and updates with school staff and families and listen for their feedback. Stakeholders are more likely to continue supporting the partnership when they are aware of its outcomes and have opportunities to contribute to its success.*

- ❑ *Advocate for your CBO partners within the school district.* Share the successes of the partnership and how collaboration impacts the school community. Learn what challenges CBOs face as they seek to partner with schools and districts, and advocate for policies, funding, or procedures that will improve their experience and open up more opportunities for partnership.

Documentation

- ❑ *Establish a [Partnership Charter](#) or [Memorandum of Understanding](#) with your partner to document what you expect from each other.*
- ❑ *Keep a file on the partnership and program.* Prepare in advance for changes in leadership at the school level by keeping a file on the partnership, with documents such as a Memorandum of Understanding, program reports or newsletters, etc. that can be shared with other school staff if you move on from your role as Partnership Lead for the school.

Partnership and Program Quality

- ❑ *Review the [Checklist of Partnership Elements](#) and assess the status of the partnership.* Choose one area to focus on for partnership growth. These elements provide a strong foundation for effective school-community partnerships and, because they emphasize collaboration and shared leadership, ensure that the partnership's existence is not dependent on a single person or organization.
- ❑ *Ask your partner how they define and assess program quality.* Find out how they incorporate continuous improvement into their practice and ask if you can support or participate in the process.
- ❑ *Invest in professional development to align practices and share expertise across the partnership.* Invite CBO staff to a training for school staff or ask the CBO to lead a training or an activity in a staff meeting for the school.

Resource Development

- ❑ *When possible, [diversify funding sources](#) so the partnership is not dependent on a single source of funding.* Ask each partner to acquire funding or in-kind resources to support the partnership so all partners are invested financially in the program. Be creative in seeking out resources from district, city, or other sources.
- ❑ *Establish a partnership coordinator role for your school.* A school staff member or a CBO partner may take on this leadership role coordinating all of the partners within the [Partnership Ecosystem](#) at your school.
- ❑ *Discuss sustainability with your partner(s).* People and funding come and go, so prepare in advance for potential changes. Collaborate by supporting the steps your CBO partner is taking to build a sustainable program and partnership.

PARTNERSHIP SUSTAINABILITY GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

Use this worksheet to reflect on the steps you have taken to build a sustainable program and partnership and then choose which steps you will take next to strengthen the capacity of your partnership to withstand the inevitable changes it will encounter.

Relationships

What relationships have you built within your school community to sustain the partnership?

Communication

What are some strategies you are using to communicate with different stakeholders about the program and partnership?

Documentation

What documentation exists or have you developed for your partnership or program? (If you left your job tomorrow, what would your predecessor be able to find out by looking through online or off-line files?)

Program and Partnership Quality

What are you doing to assess and improve the quality of the program and partnership? (What does your cycle of continuous improvement look like?)

Resource Development

What steps have you taken to identify or develop resources to sustain the partnership?

Next, set goals in one or more of these areas to strengthen the sustainability of your partnership and program.

What do you want to accomplish?	What strategies will you use to accomplish this goal?	How will you know you achieved success, and by what date do you plan to reach your goal?

FINDING FUNDING TO SUSTAIN YOUR PARTNERSHIP

Adapted from the [Road to Sustainability](#) toolkit created by the [Afterschool Alliance](#). Out-of-school time programs typically rely on a diverse array of funding sources. Some are direct to programs, while others come through schools (e.g. Title I or the City of Seattle’s Families and Education levy) or through subsidies to individuals (e.g. TANF or other childcare subsidies). Use this worksheet to document current and potential sources of funding for your partnership.

Federal Funding Sources	State Funding Sources	Local Funding Sources	Private Funding Sources	In-Kind Sources of Support
<i>Examples: 21st-Century Community Learning Center or GEAR-UP grants</i>	<i>Examples: Federal pass-through grants through OSPI</i>	<i>Examples: City departments (Parks and Recreation, Human Services), Best Starts for Kids</i>	<i>Examples: United Way, foundation funders</i>	<i>Examples: Space in school buildings, donated supplies</i>

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