Launching Shared Services: Multiple Pathways

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Introduction

• Many ways to organize Shared Service Alliance
  • Organic process shaped by needs of providers and resources available
  • You co-design the Alliance

• How it’s done depends on:
  • Community needs
  • Trust; willingness and desire to work together
  • Resources

• May evolve over time
  • Starting small is fine
Theory of Change: Leadership Capacity-Building

• “Building adult capabilities improves child outcomes” (Jack Shonkoff)

• Shared Services is a strategy to build pedagogical and business capacity
  • Might focus on one or the other area
  • Ideal, over time, to do both
Areas for Discussion

• Startup – who initiated, and why?
• Membership – how does initial group change over time?
• Planning process and funding
• Services shared, and not shared – change over time?
• Most important benefits
• Most difficult barriers to overcome
• Advice to new Alliances
Sound Child Care Solutions
Seattle WA

• Non-profit consortium of 7 early childhood programs, 23 classrooms (9 dual-language)
  • Each center maintains individual name, but sets aside 501c3 to become a chapter of SCCS's 501c3
  • Centers operate independently with centralized services provided by “Casita”:
    • Financial, benefits administration, professional development, mentor teachers, substitute pool, fundraising
• 450+ children, 30% low-income
• Funding streams include family tuition, CCDF, city and state, and philanthropy
Philadelphia Early Learning Alliance
Philadelphia PA

- Collaboration of 6 organizations
  - Total of 10 centers
  - All highly rated (3 or 4 stars) in state QRIS
  - Kinder Academy serves as fiscal agent and Alliance hub for first year
- 500+ children, 90% low-income
- Initial set of services based on highest priorities of members:
  - Professional development and mentoring
  - Substitute pool
  - Maintenance
  - Grantwriting
- Funding for Alliance operations includes philanthropy (startup), and member fees
PELA Operations

- Customized training and in-classroom support
  - Directors choose training subjects together
  - DVAEYC provides training at discounted rate
  - Existing Kinder Academy mentor teacher provides in-classroom support at cost

- Sub pool
  - Kinder Academy office staff set up sub pool and places ads, screens responses
  - Directors rotate responsibility for day-to-day placement of the subs

- Maintenance
  - Alliance enters into contract with experienced maintenance personnel; Directors each responsible for overseeing work in their centers

- Grantwriting
  - Former Director with strong grant-writing experience works on contract basis

- Finance
  - Kinder Academy serves as fiscal agent and Alliance hub in the first year of operations
  - Long-term goal is to create 501c3 to house Alliance
PELA Finances

• Initial costs kept low by building on existing systems and staff rather than creating new
• Members asked to pay 50% of operating cost in year 1; 75% of operating cost in year 2; all of operating cost in year 3
• Foundation funding sought for start-up costs and balance of operating costs in year 1 and 2
Collaborative Teachers Institute
Santa Fe NM

- Collaboration of 8 early childhood programs, convened by Santa Fe Community Foundation
- Initial focus on shared professional development and substitute and staff recruitment
- Anticipate expanding both number of providers, and array of shared services
- Startup funded by philanthropy; anticipate member fees
2. Collaborative Teacher Meetings

- Regular, structured meetings for all teachers at a particular child care center.
- Meetings follow a protocol to support learning.
- Documentation of children’s interests is shared and collaboratively interpreted.
- Teachers learn to deepen the children’s learning as well as their own.

1. Facilitators Training Meetings

- Each participating program selects a “Facilitator” – the Center Director or an interested teacher.
- Facilitators are trained to support teacher inquiries and team collaboration.
- Facilitators learn to strengthen the connection between teachers’ learning and children’s learning.

3. Shared Substitute Teacher Pool

Centers have access to a vetted pool of substitute teachers. Substitutes are made available during the Collaborative Teacher meetings.
SF Early Learning Alliance
San Francisco CA

- Collaboration of 3 early childhood centers, convened by the Mimi and Peter Haas Fund
  - California Child Care Resource and Referral Network serves as fiscal sponsor for first year
- Founding Centers serve 140 children, 70% low income
- Initial focus on shared back office:
  - Fiscal management
  - Enrollment
  - Data management and reporting
  - Human resource services
SF Early Learning Alliance (cont’d)

• Alliance goals:
  • Identify and share strengths and resources of collaborating agencies
  • Scope and scale of services tailored to individual center needs
  • Standardize processes across centers
  • Establish method to evaluate progress and success
• Anticipate expanding both number of providers, and array of shared services
• Funding for Alliance start up operations from philanthropy, anticipate future member fees
Resources

Opportunities Exchange website: www.opportunities-exchange.org

- Tools and resources
- Profiles of current alliances