2017 Nelson Chair Roundtable
On Networking Community-Based Programs

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Director

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The tenth Nelson Chair Roundtable on Networking Community-Based Programs was moderated by Dr. Anderson J. Franklin, Director of the Roundtable and Honorable David S. Nelson Professor of Psychology & Education in the Lynch School of Education at Boston College, and Sheena Collier, Former Director of the Boston Promise Initiative (BPI). Attendees included 70 participants from 40 partner organizations in the Boston-area, as well as past Roundtable participants from The Esimaje Foundation, an NGO located in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Overtown Children & Youth Coalition located in Overtown, Miami. It was the third Roundtable in partnership with BPI—one of twelve federally-funded Promise Neighborhoods. The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), located in Roxbury, Massachusetts, acts as the lead agency for BPI and has existed for over 30 years as a resident-led, non-profit group.

The 2017 Roundtable theme, "Shared Leadership, Shared Outcomes", represented the third year of a collective impact strategy in which BPI partners strive to share leadership responsibilities and leverage partnerships in order to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes with the common end goal of supporting children and families in the community. This year's event featured Mini-Roundtables organized around three unique BPI/DSNI initiatives:

1. ***Principals as School and Community Leaders***: Focused on potential within principals' dual roles as school administrators and community leaders with the intent of connecting schools to community organizations to increase local resources.
2. ***Mutual Data Sharing Agreements***: Explored how school district and community-based organizations can partner to utilize school and agency data to determine collective impact.
3. ***Building Pathways for Young People***: Integrated youth voice and participation to define effective and meaningful strategies to support youth development beyond primary school years.

MINI-ROUNDTABLES

Principals as School and Community Leaders

Facilitated by Katrina Brink, School and Community Specialist at DSNI, this mini-roundtable group included community stakeholders and Boston Public School (BPS) principals involved in the Principal Community of Practice–a shared leadership strategy spearheaded by DSNI to support principals' collaborative efforts in advancing equity and achievement for students and their families. With DSNI as a facilitator, principals convene monthly to talk about their practice, relevant policy issues, and how to leverage key resources to meet shared goals. The group addressed challenges involved in the implementation of this type of formal collaborative tool, and came up with seven key strategies:

- Needs assessment strategies
- Alignment from multiple systems and stakeholders
- Networking with partners and stakeholders
- Commitment to the collaborative efforts
- Emphasis on the dual role of principals
- Clear branding in the form of a mission statement
- Distributive leadership

Mutual Data Sharing Agreements

Facilitators Andrew Seeder, DSNI Data Systems Manager, and Akshata Kadagathur, Evaluation Associate from the Offices of Data and Accountability/School and Community Partnerships for BPS introduced participants to the steps involved in planning for data exchange as well as the accountability processes involved in effective data sharing through a guided review of a Mutual Data Sharing Agreement (MDSA) between DSNI and BPS.

The group's discussions centered on who can benefit from knowledge of data sharing principles, how MDSAs can be used by community partners to plan, enact, and demonstrate collective impact, and what are the challenges/conditions that must be in place to implement such an agreement. In the case of the MDSA between DSNI and BPS, the primary goals of the agreement were to:

- Enhance the ability of both partners to improve targeted program enrollment and academic achievement for BPS students by allowing access to individual student records consistent with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) and while protecting students' Personally Identifiable Information (PII).
- Establish data analysis and reporting mechanisms that will allow DSNI and BPS to reach shared goals and report on progress toward those goals.
- Allow other DSNI community partners to join this partnership by agreeing to the conditions and terms laid out in the original MDSA document.

Building Pathways for Young People

The third mini-roundtable group focused on how schools, community-based organizations, employers, and young people can collaborate, with an emphasis on incorporating youth voice, to identify how youth living in a variety of socioeconomic contexts can distinguish strong and viable postsecondary programs that lead to in-demand, livable wage jobs in their region. Carrington Moore, former High School to Career Manager for DSNI facilitated the discussions.

The Pathways for Young People mini-roundtable featured four Peer Leaders from the Youth Voice Project (YVP), and three community partners engaged with the YVP: Kristin McSwain, Executive Director of Boston Opportunity Agenda, Erve Niclas, Youth Council of Boston Youth Service Network, and Rob Surrat, Postsecondary Employer Account Manager of Boston Private Industry Council.

During a small group activity participants identified a number of barriers that prevent young people from progressing through High School to a postsecondary program that leads to career opportunities. The group then discussed the following potential strategies:

- Support and encourage young people's development and success during early childhood.
- Expose students to professionals in the world with whom they can identify.
- Address the varying types of instability (financial, housing, food, transportation, health care) felt by many students.
- Expand career advisement and mentorship opportunities.
- A diverse system of supports should address students' needs for:
    - o Financial literacy
    - o Time management skills
    - o Stress management skills
    - o Access to funding resources
    - o College preparation courses
    - o Navigating internship and interviewing processes

Written and prepared by Julia Medzhitova and Carolyn Looker

PLENARY SESSIONS

Networking Partnerships for Educational & Community Change: Social Network Analysis

Kyle Fagan and Amanda Weber, doctoral students at the Lynch School of Education, presented on the importance of utilizing existing networks to achieve collective impact results. Through a re-introduction to the Social Network Analysis, a strategy used by BPI, attendees learned about its use as a tool for systematically assessing the nature of partnerships and intervening at critical points to sustain and improve collaboration. This strategy can enhance a community's capacity to:

- Combine diverse knowledge and skills for effective solutions to complex problems.
- Influence decision makers and opinion leaders.
- Be responsive to community needs.
- Coordinate collective tasks and services efficiently.

Participants then divided into groups to work through an exercise using a Social Network Toolkit created by Kyle Fagan and Amanda Weber for the Roundtable.

Using Data to Inform Policy Development & Sustainability

Drs. Rebekah Levine Coley and Laura O'Dwyer from the Lynch School of Education along with Kristin Haas, Data & Policy Coordinator from Project Hope presented on how community programs can use institutional and/or program data to evaluate programmatic impact, advocate for policy change, and to achieve sustainability through funding. Dr. Coley began with an exploration of where and how to access data with emphasis on three key points grounded in a logic model:

- How to exploit current systems to build data.
- How to build new data systems.
- How to access other extant data sources such as administrative records, federal surveys, and national statistics.

During two case study presentations, attendees learned from Dr. O'Dwyer how the City Connects program uses data for application and policy development, and from Kristin Haas on how Project Hope used data for tracking evictions and influencing city policy.