Exemplars of Early Childhood Collaboration: Summary of Findings

Prepared by: The Community Engagement and Evaluation Team

The Center on Education and Training for Employment

The Ohio State University

INTRODUCTION

The Ohio Head Start Collaboration Office (HSCO) commissioned a needs assessment to be conducted by The Center on Education and Training for Employment at the Ohio State University in 2017. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were utilized and were aimed at understanding the needs of early childhood serving entities. After which, a report of its findings was created. After review of the summary and findings by the Head Start Collaboration Innovation Collaborative, a working group developed by the HSCO, it was determined that an understanding of early childhood partnerships was necessary. More specifically, the Advisory Group determined that a thorough understanding of partnerships and opportunities for collaboration related to the desires, needs, assets, and barriers regarding them would assist in providing more targeted supports.

The Mission of the Head Start Collaboration Office

The mission of the HSCO is "To promote and facilitate effective collaborations among diverse groups with shared interest in serving young children and their families, so that Ohio children have the high-quality early experiences necessary to reach their full potential." In alignment with the core mission of the HSCO, and in response to the needs assessment, the Collaboration Office commissioned a Phase II of the project. The scope of the next phase was to:

1. Document collaboration exemplars, highlighting best practices and resources
2. Create Professional Development and tools
3. Deliver Professional Development aimed at providing local early childhood serving agencies with the tools and resources to create and sustain effective partnerships
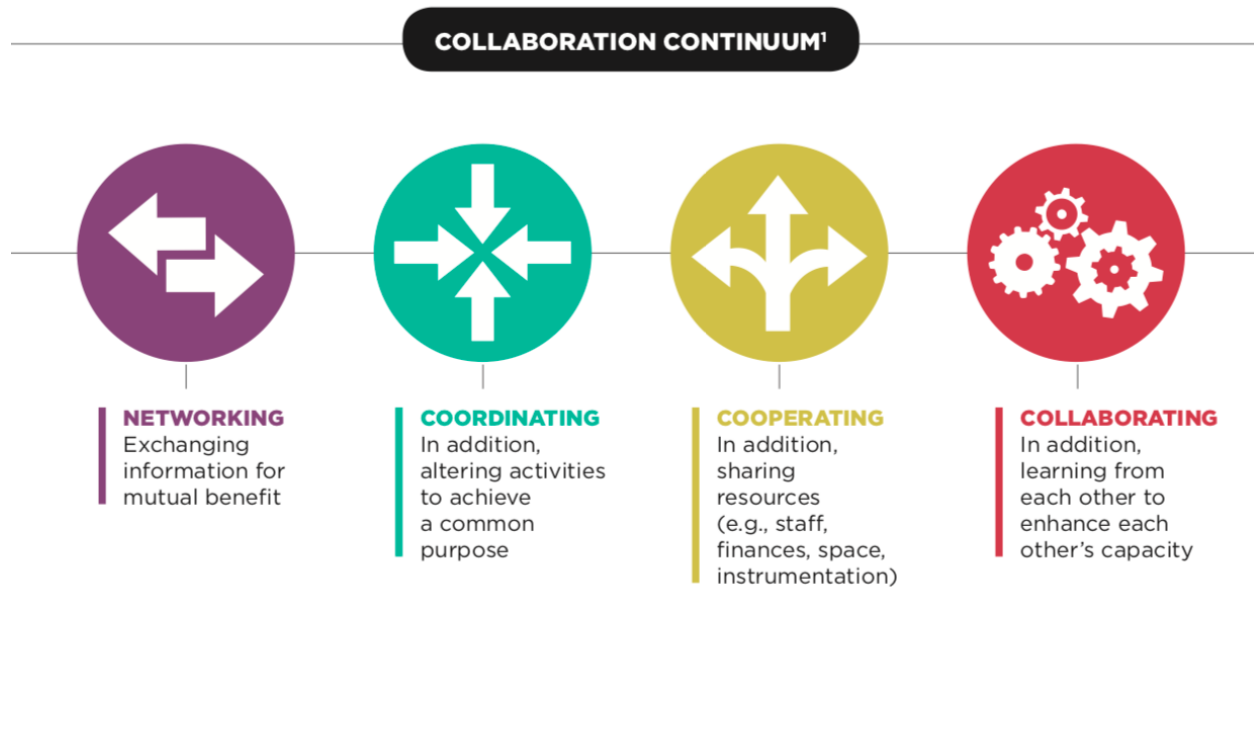
LITERATURE

In order to gain a thorough understanding of successful partnerships, a review of scholarly literature was conducted. A synthesis of more recent literature provided a conceptual framework for understanding:

1. The use of the interchangeability of the terms; partnership and collaboration
2. The need for collaborative partnerships
3. The similarities in successful partnerships across the nation
4. Challenges in sustaining partnerships

Activities led by a common interest, that occurs across partners is considered a partnership, which is believed to be extremely valuable to agencies who engage in them. On the other hand, collaboration is the maximum culmination of partnership efforts, shown in Figure I below. Himmelman (2002) suggest that collaboration occurs across a continuum, with collaboration being the optimum form of the building of efforts. First, many agencies conduct work in the form of *Networking.* Networking occurs when groups engage in the exchange of information for mutually beneficial reasons. Building upon the activities of networking, *Coordinating* involves the altering of activities to reach a common purpose. While gaining in intensity, *Cooperating* includes the sharing of actual resources to achieve a shared purpose. The most intense form of working with partners, *Collaborating*, is a layering of all activities with a keen focus on increasing the capacity of each involved partner. In essence, an early childhood collaboration with partners aims to help each partner become the best at what they do, while meeting

the needs of others. More importantly, this would indicate that within an optimally performing collaboration is the sharing of "risk, responsibilities, and rewards" (p. 3).

Figure I: *Understanding the Collaboration Continuum*

COLLABORATION CONTINUUM[1]

NETWORKING
Exchanging information for mutual benefit

COORDINATING
In addition, altering activities to achieve a common purpose

COOPERATING
In addition, sharing resources (e.g., staff, finances, space, instrumentation)

COLLABORATING
In addition, learning from each other to enhance each other's capacity

METHODOLOGY

Guided by literature and related research practices, a multi-method data collection procedure was utilized in order to understand the nature of successful early childhood partnerships in the State of Ohio. Most notably, a qualitative approach allowed for open-ended questions that were used for the recorded interview portion of this project. While, quantitative data collection methods captured the extent to which certain partnership characteristics existed.

Data Collection

Informed by purposive sampling methods, the Center on Education and Training for Employment team requested a compilation of early childhood serving agencies that demonstrated success in creating and sustaining partnerships in order to meet the needs of their early childhood population. It should be noted, that a representative sample regarding agency type and location was solicited. Guided by qualitative sampling methods, it was determined that a group of no more than 12 and no less than 8 agencies would be sufficient to make a reasonable conclusion (Creswell, 2013). As such, the selected agencies covered 9 counties in the state and ranged in populations and number of children and families served. While no in-home provider was identified they were highlighted as partners to some of the identified agencies. A list of the participating agencies is provided below:

1. Cincinnati Early Learning Centers
2. Butler County Educational Service Center
3. Clinton County Community Action, Inc.
4. The Ohio State University (Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships)
5. Early Childhood Resource Center
6. Celina City Schools/Mercer County Head Start
7. Community Action Committee of Pike County, Inc. (Head Start)
8. Community Action Commission of Fayette County
9. Summit County Board of Developmental Disabilities
10. Gallia County Local Schools/Heart of the Valley Head Start

Interpretation of Findings

Some of the identified agencies provide services for a targeted population (e.g. zero to age three, medically fragile, etc.), while others cater services to include the broader community. All of the selected agency's leadership have demonstrated a strong commitment to early childhood populations with an average 25 years of experience in the field. Additionally, the represented agencies have engaged in collaboration with partners for an average of 11 years, with partnerships that range between 3-22 years. It is through these rich lenses that participants were asked to respond to interview prompts. Leadership from the identified agencies were queried regarding their collaborations based on a phenomenological approach. Phenomenology allows for the exploration of a particular experience shared by participants (Creswell, 2013). In this case, interagency partnerships were the phenomenon under investigation. Associates at the Center on Education and Training for Employment developed guiding questions that inquired about the following:

1. How partnerships began?
2. Who are the partners?
3. What need the partnership(s) fulfill?
4. Why and how partnerships are discontinued?
5. How partnerships are sustained?

DATA ANALYSIS

Based on the parameters set forth by the Center on Education and Training for Employment, the Innovation Collaborative identified 13 exemplar agencies which it felt demonstrated the ability to successfully create and sustain early childhood partnerships. The Head Start Collaboration Director emailed an introduction and invitation to participate to each identified agency's leadership (e.g. Vice President, CEO, Director of Partnership and Community Engagement, etc.) and a Center on Education and Training for Employment associate followed up with a phone call and if needed an additional reminder email. After which, responding agencies scheduled an in-person or telephone recorded interview. A response rate of 77% was achieved.

In the interest of thoroughly understanding the partnership experiences of interviewees, interviews were transcribed line-by-line, themed and then subsequently coded. As such, the qualitative transcript data were analyzed by the identification of consistent themes as they arose which were later collapsed into codes and applied to similar utterances. Anomalous data were also analyzed as they were thought to be related to a specific agency type or region, therefore informing on best practices in the State of

Ohio, yet exclusive to a particular subset of agency characteristics. Quantitative data which contained "Yes" and "No" data responses were analyzed to determine the existence of a particular attribute of an identified partnership, while scaled data were analyzed to determine frequency of an occurrence.

KEY FINDINGS

Key findings from the qualitative and quantitative data analysis were used to delineate the scope and nature of local partnerships, the associated recommendations are presented below.

Key Demographic Findings

Based on the 2017 Head Start needs assessment report conducted by the Center on Education and Training for Employment, it seems that many agencies do not engage in partnerships because doing so appears to be cumbersome. However, some local agencies have indicated that they have found ways to streamline the process. As such, all agencies involved in this project engage in partnerships on some level. More importantly, it is clear that these successful partnerships align with Himmelman's definition of collaboration (2002). However, not all of their partnerships fulfill the collaboration space. Himmelman's framework is appropriately captured as agency leaders suggest that they engage in multiple partnerships at varying levels of intensity. Most notably, all the agencies have at least one collaboration. The following table highlights the focus and results of participants' partnerships. It should be noted that activities 8 through 13 are identified as collaboration actions.

Table I: *Data Snapshot*

100% of Agency Leader Suggest that Their Partnerships...
1. Includes Mental Health Professionals
2. Involves Teacher Education
3. Focus on Health
4. Engages their School Feeder Pattern
5. Depends on External Funds
6. Depends on Internal Funds
7. Uses a Memorandum of Understanding
8. Are Mutually Beneficial
9. Exchanges Information
10. Prompted Agency Changes
11. Shared Resources
12. Enhanced their Agency
13. Increased Partner's Capacity

When describing their process in developing and sustaining partnerships and collaborations, local early childhood leaders use a framework that helps them understand 1) why they need a partnership, 2) what outcome they seek from the partnership 3) how they will engage with partners and 4) who they partner with.

Why:

Early childhood partnerships begin for many reasons. Many local agencies determined that due to funding and/or staffing constraints, their needs exceed their agency's capacity. The lack of resources creates considerable service gaps. Gaps in services are identified either formally or informally. For example, a local agency experienced a reduction in funding, as a result they looked at who was doing what and asked how they could cultivate a mutually beneficial relationship to serve all needs. While another organization engaged in cross agency conversations with the expressed intent of fulfilling each agency's gaps and needs. Filling each other's needs as an impetus to developing partnerships was a consistent theme across all partnerships. Additionally, 100% of the interviewed agencies indicated that within many of their partnerships they shared resources to meet each other's needs.

What:

Teacher Education. Appropriately credentialed teachers were the focus of many agency partnerships. More specifically, Ohio's implementation of the Step Up to Quality (SUTQ) rating system was the impetus for partnerships aimed at gaining credentials for new and existing early childhood educators. The SUTQ tiered quality rating and improvement system identifies standard metrics for all early childhood providers that lead to improved outcomes for the children served (Ohio Department of Education, 2019). Embedded within the standards are professional educational requirements for teachers. Some of which includes a Bachelor's degree or similar for lead and assistant teachers. Many partnerships are aimed at helping childcare centers and family child care providers achieve a star status in order to meet Ohio's mandate requiring all licensed programs receiving Publicly Funded Child Care dollars to participate in SUTQ by July 1, 2020. Without this support, agency leaders note that many early childhood serving entities may consider closing their doors after July 1, 2020. As such, this area was deemed as a critical focus of many partnerships.

Medical Issues. Other successful partnerships help address medical issues, with providers focusing on a singular issue or a range of issues. Head Start Performance Standards require that each child receive health and development screenings within the 45 calendar days of when the child first attends the program (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2019). Child serving agencies often partner with local medical professionals to ensure that child wellness exams are sufficient and compliant. However, other successful partnerships pertaining to health are more intense and aimed at exceeding requirements. For example, a local Columbus early childhood leader suggested "we're not box checkers," as she described a partnership with local medical professionals geared towards providing preventative vision and dental care.

Other Ohio early childhood leaders suggest that the critical disparate infant mortality rate, prompted some of their partnerships. The Ohio Department of Health (2017) suggest that despite intense focus, the infant mortality rate for African American babies has increased while those for all other races have declined. These disparate health outcomes led to the development of early childhood partnerships aimed at providing prenatal support for mothers and projects focused on increasing the level of engagement for fathers. In another situation, one agency successfully partnered with local immigrant community leaders to help lower the presence of a highly contagious disease by providing information to the population regarding the importance of immunization.

Family Concerns. While many successful partnerships are tailored towards direct outcomes for children, some form to primarily benefit adults, which could later impact their children. In fact, one agency leader suggested that their engagement in partnerships were "for the good of the children and families in our community." While the opioid crisis is noted to be a national issue, Ohio is seen as one of the states that has been hit the hardest. This was demonstrated in 2017 when the National Institute of Health determined that the State of Ohio had the second highest number of opioid overdose related deaths in the nation. The impact of this epidemic has been felt in families and communities across the state. Nowhere is the impact more apparent than with the children of affected parents. As a result of their parent's circumstances, many of Ohio's children have recently been engaged with the child welfare system. For instance, The Public Children Services Association of Ohio (2019) suggests that in 2015, half of the children removed from their parent's care was due to the abuse of illegal and prescription drugs.

Kinship care relationships occur when a minor child is cared for by either a close relative or family friend of a court involved parent/guardian (Franklin County Children Services, 2019). Many of the agencies interviewed, indicated that their kinship providers are often grandparents who do not know how to navigate the court, medical, or financial systems needed to provide for the children in their care. As a result, these kinship providers miss out on critical information and resources that could make their transition to caregiver easier. Local early childhood partnerships provide resources related to the Kinship Navigator program, which is a program designed to assist with locating resources in order to "maximize caregivers'' ability to provide a safe and stable...home." (Casey Family Programs, 2018).

Mental Health. Overwhelmingly, 100 % of the interviewed leadership, suggested that many of their partnerships began out of a need to address mental health issues. These issues ranged from special education evaluations to remediating preschooler's externalizing behaviors related to trauma. Some partnerships focus specifically on barriers to access while other partnerships in mental health focus on staff and teacher training related to appropriate interactions and environments for children exposed to trauma. Trauma is the primary focus of many local partnerships and is still seen as an issue with very few resolutions, despite the 2017 needs assessment determining that 73% of agencies incorporate some trauma informed practices in their day-to-day services. That same project found that 33% of respondents expressed the need for trauma informed care professional development for their staff.

According to Carello and Butler (2015), trauma informed care practices, involve activities that are undertaken with the understanding that some individuals' lives are impacted by victimization, violence and trauma. As a result, practitioners who provide services to these individuals do so with healing and recovery in mind. For instance, personnel in one local partnership provides coaching to early childhood professionals on how to design a calming classroom environment, using dim lighting and neutral colors rather than the bright primary colors that are associated with childhood. Carello & Butler (2015) suggest that this approach is a best practice, given that "the environment in which we ask trauma survivors to function is often a problem," and can be a trigger for some students (p. 265). Another agency has engaged with a local mental health resource center for over 10 years to provide advocacy support to parents during special education evaluations and meetings. In addition, they developed a collaboration which aided in the funding of two on-site mental health therapists to serve their children.

How:

Optimize Resources. Early childhood partnerships are created for a host of reasons. While filling the gaps is of primary concern, some partnerships target services that are duplicated as a way to optimize

the funding they receive. For instance, a local Head Start and county agency were both offering parenting classes, with some success. They decided to combine their efforts, where the Head Start offered their space and the agency provided the parenting classes while paying center teachers to provide childcare. The leadership suggested that bringing the classes "in-house" allowed for both center and community members to receive the services. The sharing of agency space in a collaborative manner is something other agencies echoed as a standard partnership practice. Many times, these are considered mutually-beneficial relationships, where both agencies share in the results of their efforts. Meanwhile, a local college partnered with an agency leader to provide reading interventions for their preschoolers and the college used the data to make modifications to the intervention. These types of mutually beneficial partnerships occur quite often, since 100% of the interviewed leaders shared that they engage local educational agencies and institutions in partnerships.

Benevolence. On the other hand, not all partnerships are mutually beneficial. Some successful partnerships are benevolent in nature and can include the provision of free community spaces and services. For example, one agency leader suggested that his agency regularly provides space for the community and organizations that serve the community, by simply having them fill out a room request form. In fact, he commented regarding building use, "we need to be busy all the time and the parking lot always needs to be full." Another leader added "there's just some collaborations that you just do because they're the right thing to do," when it came to providing grant writing coaching to a partner.

Presence in the Community. While some agencies allow their needs to drive interactions, other agencies ensure that they are active and visible to local businesses and agencies should a need arise. This is a more proactive partnership stance. For example, one agency leader suggested that she "sits at many tables," which includes community, county, and state boards or similar. Likewise, a convening agency leader suggested that it is the rich conversations that occur prior to and after the meetings where collaborations are formed. Being present at tables where conversations take place was a reoccurring theme in successful partnerships as evidenced by the 70% of leaders who suggested they engage in that practice intentionally.

Champions. Half of all the interviewees reported that some of their early childhood partnerships are started tangentially by "champions." Champions are individuals who appreciate and support the work of the agency. As such, numerous agency leaders suggest that often times they are recommended to a new partner by a champion of their work. One person put it best, "A friend of yours is a friend of mine." Additionally, interviewees propose that the fact that they are known as collaborators is what cultivates the partnership soil for potential partners.

Memorandums of Understanding. Partnerships can begin in many ways. Some are informal and are later formalized, while others operate according to articulated and written parameters from the outset. The success of many of the explored partnerships suggest that the acknowledgement of who is doing what is critical to the success of the partnership. This is further evidenced by the fact that 100% of the interviewees use a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with some of their partners, of these 80% use them with all partners. Some leaders indicate that the decision to use an MOU depends on who the partner is or the maturity of the partnership or if they anticipate issues. Others suggest that if there is an exchange of funds, personnel or tangible resources an MOU is necessary. For example, almost all of the partnerships with school districts include an MOU. Still other leaders require signed MOUs, regardless of

the partner. It is reported that one of the benefits of MOUs is that they often contain language surrounding the nature and extent of the partnership.

Data. Local agency leaders report that data drives their partnership relationships. Data is used in many ways. The collection of data often alerts some leaders to the need for a partner, for others it helps determine when a partnership is no longer working. For instance, one agency lead suggested that data allows them to maximize resources. Overall, leaders suggested that they use all forms of data to determine success. One leader reported that "the number of families served" helped him determine the success of his partnership with a local mental health agency. While another leader used data to explore the exponential impact of providing trauma informed training to teachers, in a partnership. Qualitative data helps capture the impact of partnerships through stories. A local early childhood leader suggested that "word of mouth testimonials" from in-home daycare providers single-handedly recruits other in-home daycare providers to join their agency in partnering to provide care for local children and families.

Funding. While some parents can pay for preschool and early childhood services for their children, many cannot. And sometimes comprehensively serving community needs requires more resources than an agency has access to. All of the agency leaders reported that their partnership relationships involve the use of internal agency dollars as well as external funds. Eighty-eight percent of the external funds used to sustain successful partnerships are provided through grants. This suggests that successful partnerships involve activities to secure funding. In fact, many interviewees routinely complete requests for proposals (RFP). As a result, they develop a system for the grants they target. For example, a convening agency leader suggested "we don't go after everything. But we know what we want to go after. And we've gotten very good at writing them." He suggested that applicants pay attention to the RFP rating structure and write with it in mind. Answering the questions completely helps tremendously. Second, writing grants requires many hands and minds. Convening a team (e.g. financial, professional development, etc.) where every person brings a different skillset to the proposal is advised. Third, write for everything, then whittle it down and fine tune. Fourth, have a team review. Lastly, have someone operate as an editor to put the proposal into one cohesive voice. Going through this process allowed the agency to get the first grant they applied for and amongst other things, it helped to fund a grant for fathers.

In early childhood partnerships, external funding helps provide for so many things. One agency leader suggested that she is able to hire more staff, while another one retains a portion of grant funds and then shares it across the agency partnerships to help serve their local children and families. When grant funds are not available, many successful partnerships involve in-kind resources. In-kind resources are considered non-monetary assets. They are either a service or good offered for free. Companies are often looking for a place to give, especially over-stock items or food. An agency leader shared that through a partnership, her agency was able to distribute food to families when a local restaurant made changes in their menus. Another partnership involved a food pantry dropping off food bags to a childcare center, which helped reduce the barrier of travel and time for families who accessed the services.

Nurturing Relationships. Ongoing communication is critical to sustaining successful partnerships given that 100% of agency leaders reported that they have multiple conversations that lead to and sustain their partnerships. In fact, one leader indicated that it took multiple conversations and years of relationship building to get a partnership started. This suggests that building successful partnerships

takes time and the willingness and patience needed to develop relationships. Sometimes agency leaders themselves are brought into a partnership. So, their relationships in the community are critical. One interviewee suggested that "when it comes time to partner, you're not thinking of those people who you don't have a relationship with. You're thinking of the people you do have a relationship with."

A critical element of relationship building that aides in the sustainability of early childhood partnerships is the idea of being open. Openness, leaders suggest involves several elements:

1. Recognizing that your agency cannot do it all and you need partners
2. Knowing that collaborations range in intensity and duration, and small things can lead to bigger things
3. Understanding that it is not an "us versus them"
4. Being okay with working through issues when they arise
5. Being transparent
6. Being clear and open when communicating
7. Being okay with saying "no"

Based on the interviews, it appears that early childhood partnerships are a necessary part of providing comprehensive services to children and families. One leader put it plainly, "If you live on an island you will die on an island...there comes a time when you can't push that ball up the hill anymore." Given that dynamic, developing relationships with partners should first start with the acknowledgement that you cannot do it alone. In addition, all partnerships do not take up the same space nor do they require the same intensity, yet being open means that leaders are open to all categories and kinds of partnerships.

When relationships are not firm, turf issues are noted to be a great determinant to the sustainability of partnerships. In fact, many leaders suggest that within the early childhood space, many providers are concerned about other providers taking their children. This is a notion that was affirmed in the 2017 needs assessment. However, leaders suggested that "It isn't an us and them, it is what's best for our kids and families." Another one suggested, "The site down the street is not our competitor, they are our partner because there are enough children in this world to fill everybody's site." Building relationships takes time and the benefit is that when issues arise they can be solved. A leader indicated that partnership relationships must be tended to and nurtured and "when there's challenges we just work through them." Being open in partnership relationships means being "incredibly transparent." Successful partnerships involve partners fulfilling stated commitments, being honest with their time and abilities and being okay with not always leading. This indicates that the leaders in early childhood partnerships must be very self and agency-aware prior to engaging in partnership relationships.

Across the state, effective communication in early childhood relationships is considered extremely important. The 2017 needs assessment found that over 72% of early childhood providers believe communication across the early childhood system needed improvement. Not surprisingly, nothing appeared to be a greater threat to early childhood partnerships than lack of communication. When asked, 66% of the interviewees in this project, reported that they are in frequent contact with those they partner with. Additionally, another 11% shared that they communicate more than occasionally with partners. It appears that when engaging in a relationship with an early childhood partner, consistent communication is one of the main drivers of success. For example, several leaders suggested that when partnerships encountered barriers it was due to low or no communication. In addition, mis-or under communication with staff regarding a partnership fed many problems. However, leaders suggest that in

the midst of issues, their most successful partnerships involve a workable solution due in part to communication styles and frequency developed as a part of relationships.

Agency leaders are often presented with partnership ideas, which sound very appealing, especially if there is money involved. However, many early childhood leaders suggest that due to their openness in partner relationships, they have declined partnerships opportunities. Leaders say "no" to partnerships for a variety of reasons. In fact, the 2017 needs assessment suggests that 62% of respondents noted a lack of time as a factor as to why they don't collaborate. As such, leaders in this current project are strategic when choosing to engage in a partnership. One leader suggested "I don't' have to be a part of everything." As such, leaders are deliberate when choosing to engage in a partnership. More than half of the interviewed agency leaders suggested that the concept of goodness of fit, helped them determine when to say no to a partnership. For this project, goodness of fit simply describes the extent to which a potential or current partnership fits with the focus and mission of an agency. When a partnership began to violate the agency's mission, leaders withdrew. Surprisingly, when withdrawing from partnerships early childhood leaders reveal that it was due to the strong relationship and open communication they developed with their partner.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this most recent phase of work, confirms many of the conclusions contained in the 2017 needs assessment that was conducted by The Center on Education and Training for Employment. These corresponding results across several years provides a strong backdrop for the early childhood collaborative work that is occurring across the State of Ohio. These accumulative findings determined that agency leaders identified the impacts of the opioid epidemic and trauma as a significant problem. As such, the current participants suggest that early childhood serving agencies sought mechanisms to provide meaningful remedies. This qualitative research project found that many successful partnerships aim to meet these articulated needs.

Successful early childhood partnerships in the State, involve many agencies and are whole-child centered. Some partnerships pertain to the training of teachers, while others are geared towards providing comprehensive resources to parents and families. Nevertheless, effective early childhood partnerships eventually impact the current and future experiences of children. Understanding the critical elements of successful partnerships will give other agencies who wish to engage partners the tools needed to attract partners and more effectively serve children.

Overall, this project found that partnerships can range in their level of intensity and time. As such, partnering with local agencies could be as simple as allocating a space that helps another agency provide a service to the community. While a more in-depth partnership might include collaborating to optimize resources when serving children and families in the surrounding community. Regardless of the type and style of an early childhood partnership, constant and effective communication within partnerships is the bedrock to success and sustainability. Similarly, MOUs are the most practical tools that leaders use in their partnerships which helps orient partners to the accountability structures involved in the partnering relationship.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In consideration of the 2017 needs assessment and with an intricate understanding of the findings of this phase of work, the following recommendations are offered to the Head Start Collaboration Office and the Advisory Group for consideration:

1. Convene the Innovation Collaborative to help identify the most salient areas to target for professional development (PD) sessions. It is recommended that the committee give strong consideration to offering a half-day, face-to-face PD for local practitioners. In order to maximize efforts, the PD focus should be to provide a brief overview of elements of local successful early childhood partnerships. Include tools that will help participants gain an understanding of potential areas of need in their agency, current partners, possible partners, etc. These tools can be used during breakout sessions. This session should be associated with the Head Start Collaboration Office and could serve as a pilot for future external PD sessions. Participants should engage in providing evaluative information which will help refine the PD sessions before they are released to additional audiences.
2. Foster an environment where local early childhood providers can network and build their capacity for collaboration. For example, regional Community of Practice (CoP) style sessions facilitated by a regional exemplar would provide both a space for early childhood colleagues to share and problem-solve, while receiving coaching or mentoring from a more experienced leader, with an eye towards building capacity as a result of peer to peer engagement.
3. Periodically highlight successful early childhood partnerships using a medium that is highly visible to local practitioners.
4. Encourage highlighted exemplars to act as technical assistants to agencies who are seeking to develop strong partnerships.

References

Carello, J. & Butler, D. L. (2015). Practicing what we teach: Trauma-informed educational practice. Journal of Teaching in Social Work *(35)*2, 262-278.

Casey Family Programs: https://www.casey.org/what-are-kinship-navigators/.

Creswell, J. D. (2013). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Franklin County Children Services: http://childrenservices.franklincountyohio.gov/public/documents/PDF/BA4A26FC-B9A5-E516-68AC7367A4C55223.pdf.

U. S. Department of Health and Human Services: https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy

Head Start: Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center: https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/45-cfr-chap-xiii/1302-42-child-health-status-care.

Ohio Department of Education: http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/Step-Up-To-Quality-SUTQ.

Mashek, D. (2015). Capacities and institutional supported needed along the collaboration continuum. A presentation to the academic deans committee of The Claremont Colleges, Claremont, CA.

National Institute of Health: https://www.drugabuse.gov/opioid-summaries-by-state/ohio-opioid-summary.

Ohio Department of Health: https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/media-center/odh-news-releases/2017-ohio-infant-mortality-report.

Public Children Services Association of Ohio: https://www.pcsao.org/programs/opiate-epidemic

Results Management Team at the Center on Education and Training for Employment. The Ohio State University. (2017). *Head Start Needs Assessment Report*.

Understanding the Collaboration Continuum (2015). The Teagle Foundation.