

From Coordination, to Collaboration to Collective Impact:



Building a Community School Strategy in the Suburbs

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Workshop Overview



1. Explore how a suburban experience is different.
2. Discuss why a district approach to Community Schools can be an effective strategy.
3. Learn how WeGo Together for Kids built a lasting partnership built around a Community Schools strategy.

Community Schools and The Suburbs



**HOW ARE THE SUBURBS DIFFERENT
FROM URBAN AREAS?**

**HOW DO THEY WORK
DIFFERENTLY?**

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Traditional View of the Suburbs



Challenges of Working in the Suburbs



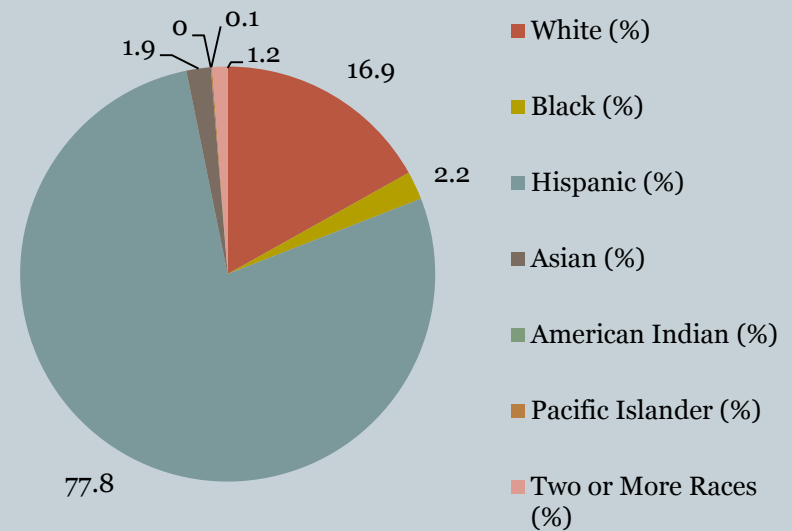
- Politics
- Large social service agencies
- Alignment to county-wide initiatives
- Multiple school districts serving one town
- Lack of Public Transportation
- Geographic Isolation
- Perception that poverty doesn't exist in the suburbs.

Context of West Chicago



- Approximately 27,000 residents 37 miles west of the city of Chicago, IL
- Serve ages Birth through 8th grade
- 4,526 students
- 68% Low income
- 55% Limited English Proficiency
- 9 Buildings
 - 2 Early Learning Centers
 - 6 K-5 Elementary Buildings
 - 1, 6-8 Middle School
 - Home Based Birth-Three program
- District 33 is the largest employer in the city with over 600 employees.

Demographics of District 33 Students 2015-2016



Initial Community Challenges



- Lack of available, affordable mental health services
- Large achievement gap between native English speaking students and native Spanish speaking students
- High rates of alcohol consumption among 8th grade students
- High childhood obesity rates
- Large concentration of poverty and 2nd language learning populations.

Why Community Schools?



- Need to break down silos among service providers
- Initial partnership saw the importance of schools being the hub of the community.
- Needs had to be addressed across the community, not in just one building.

Making Sense of Different Concepts



- Partnership development
 - Big P and little P

- Alignment of philosophies

Definitions Activity

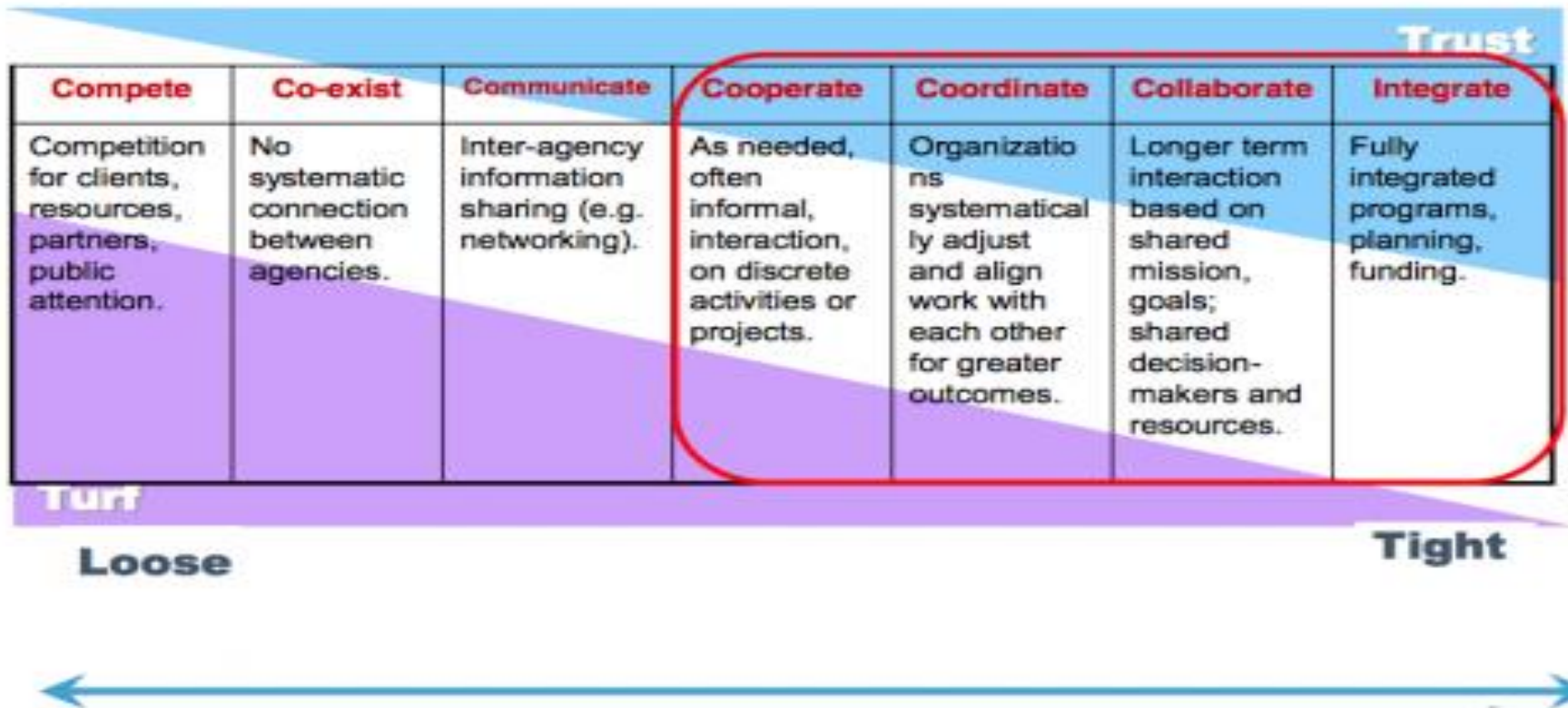


Coordination

Collaboration

Collective Impact

THE COLLABORATION SPECTRUM



5 Elements of Collective Impact



- Common Agenda
- Shared Measurement
- Mutually Reinforcing Activities
- Continuous Communication
- Backbone Support

How We Created WeGo Together for Kids



WeGo Together for Kids

Connecting our Community... Strengthening our Families

4 Key Elements



- Relationship Development
- Common Agenda and Bold Goals
- Data Informed Decision Making
- Stewardship of Funding

Relationship Development: Why?



- Foundational to all the work
- Sustains you through the hard times
- Let's you have fun
- Allows the work to be rich because of diverse expertise and personality

Relationship Development: How?



- Have a concrete purpose for engaging.
- Develop a mission and vision, together.
- Create guiding principles or shared values for the work.
- Create Structures for Interaction

Initial Infrastructure



Operations

Work Groups
Communication
Safety
Family Education
Medical Advisory
Wellness
SEL Planning

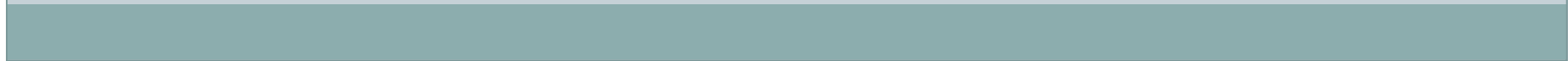
Steering Committee

Monthly Service Provider Group

WeGo Together for Kids

Activities

Safety Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention Mental Health
Early Childhood literacy Learning & Wellness Community Development



Relationship Development: How?



- Set a positive tone
- Articulate the value of each partner
- Never give up on missing partners
- Build individual partner sense of purpose
- Celebrate progress and success as often as possible

Relationship Development: Activity



- **At your table:**
 - How do you build relationships with partners and the community?
 - What structures are in place?
 - What is one thing you will start doing to strengthen relationships?

Setting a Common Agenda and Bold Goals:

Why



- Having a common set of goals, gives direction.
- Sets the long-term vision for the work.
- Guides the development of programs and services.
- Allows the community school to work together on a common set of goals, instead of solo activities.

Setting a Common Agenda and Bold Goals: How?



- Do you have a diverse, representative group working together?
- What are the needs and strengths of the community?
- Give the group space to dream and vision.
- Look at research, data, other communities
- Set bold, but realistic goals.

Example: WeGo Together Goals



- **Health**

- Reduce BMI rates to at or below the national average by 2025.
 - ✦ Challenge: High BMI rates in our elementary schools.

- **Parent Engagement**

- Develop 100 new parent leaders in the community by 2025.
 - ✦ Challenge: Low participation of families in leadership and decision making bodies in West Chicago.

Data Informed Decision Making: Why



- We have to have a reason for working together and setting goals.
- Data gives us this reason for the work.
- Data is not just numbers, it's the stories and experiences of the entire school community.
- Data gives us the opportunity to highlight both our successes and our challenges.

Data Informed Decision Making: How?



- What sources of quantitative data are available in your community?
 - School level data
 - Community level data-Census, American Community Survey, Locally collected data
 - Partner outcome or service data
- How can you learn about the experiences and families?
 - Interviews
 - Focus Groups
 - Surveys
 - Partner sharing

Data Informed Decision Making: How



- **Who do you need data on/from?**
 - Families
 - Students
 - Teachers
 - School Support Staff
 - Administrators
 - Partners
 - Community Leaders
 - Others?

Data Informed Decision Making: How?



- Create a process for regularly looking at this information.
- Ensure that the data gets shared across the community, not just internally.
- Develop programming from the data, not from just a feeling. Can you back up what you say the need is?

Data Informed Decision Making: Activity



- **Hand Up, Stand Up, Pair Up**
 - Find a partner
 - Take 1 minute each to share what data you currently use in decision making.
 - Take a second minute to share what data you need.
 - Find a group to share your discussion with.

Funding Stewardship



- **Why is this important?**
 - Matching funding to goals, not goals to funding
 - Not chasing funding
 - School Districts cannot fund this alone
 - Diversify funding
 - Stealing vs. Sharing resources
- **Consider**
 - Recognize the needs of surrounding communities
- **How?**
 - Have a clear, common agenda and goals

The Reality and Joy of Building Community Schools



- This work is hard.
- This work takes time, a long time.
- The payoff is worth it when you see the growth of the community.

Questions?



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