

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



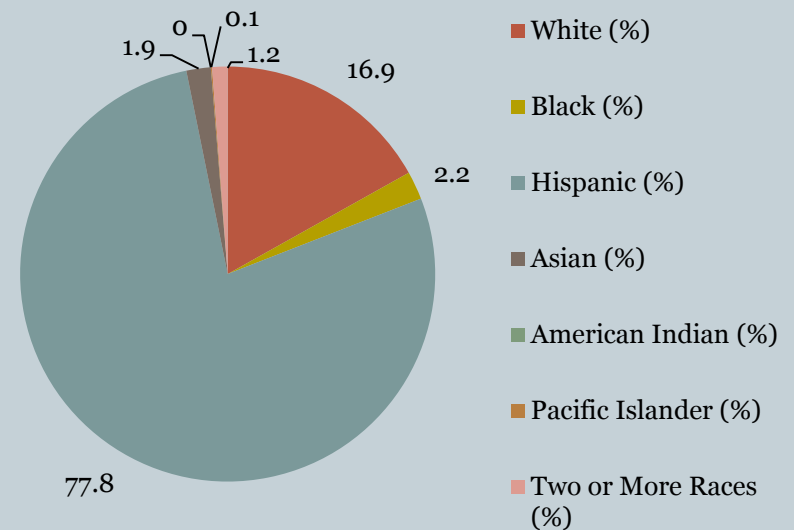
- Politics
- Large social service agencies
- Alignment to county-wide initiatives
- Multiple school districts serving one town

- 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

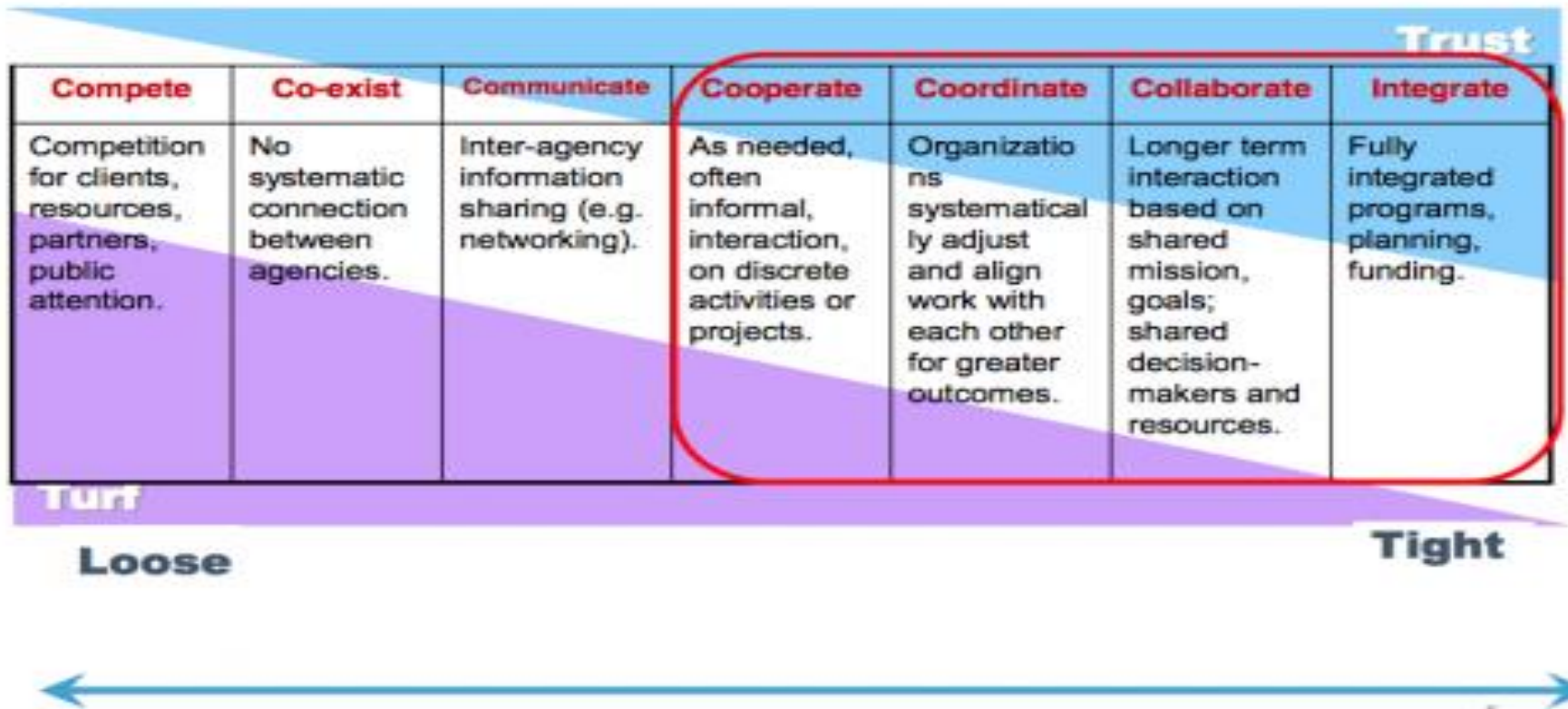


Coordination

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

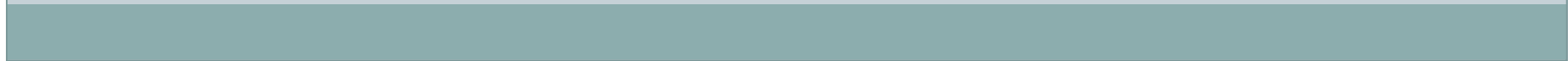
Steering Committee

**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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