


Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County

Business Plan

March 2014

Table of Contents



Introduction.....	2
Situation Analysis Summary.....	3
Business Description.....	6
Organizational Design and Development.....	10
Outreach Strategies.....	17
Finances.....	19
Implementation Priorities.....	21
Conclusion.....	25
Appendix 1: Interviewees & Focus Group Participants.....	26
Appendix 2: ECPAC Network of Partners.....	28
Appendix 3: Frameworks.....	29

Introduction



Purpose

- The purpose of any business plan is to analyze the environment, assess feasibility, and define the product, target markets, systems, and infrastructures necessary to meet demand and attain desired outcomes and financial sustainability
- While most business plans are developed for a single organization, the Early Childhood Partnership for Adams County (ECPAC) is a system of like-minded organizations that have adopted the collective impact model in order to radically improve early childhood outcomes in Adams County (see Appendix 3 for information on the collective impact model)
 - This plan is best understood as a plan for the ECPAC system as a whole
- This plan outlines:
 - The structure and systems needed to recalibrate ECPAC's efforts, complete the proof of concept project, and make needed strategic preparations in order to increase impact and enhance sustainability
 - Defines the strategic partnerships, constituent markets, and partner relations infrastructure needed
 - Examines revenue models and defines a specific course for implementation

Methodology

- The business plan is informed by:
 - Phone interviews with staff, board members, partners, community stakeholders, and key informants (N=26) and three focus groups with Action Team Members (N=17) (See Appendix 1 for list of interviewees and focus group participants)
 - Review of ECPAC materials and reports
 - Extensive secondary research
- Strategic decisions made by staff and board members at the January 2014 meeting directly informed the shape and direction of the business plan
- The plan is also informed by Nonprofit Impact's experience with education, public health, and human services agencies and organizations around the country and past business planning experience

Situation Analysis Summary



The Opportunity for Impact

- A strong evidence base speaks to the positive and long-lasting impacts quality early childhood interventions have on young children and their families
- Adams County has the highest percentage of children under age five in the state of Colorado and many of these are burdened by multiple risk factors
- ECPAC has developed into a strong, coordinated system ready to meet the needs of young children across the county and across all four domains (early learning, health, social-emotional-mental health, family support)
- This adds up to the potential for dramatic, sustained impact that touches not only young children and their families, but all aspects of life in Adams County

Why Early Childhood?

- Decades of research have confirmed that young children's brains are 90% developed by the time they are age five, setting the stage for the school years and beyond
 - Unfortunately, not all children get a good start due to factors such as economic insecurity, exposure to violence, or lack of access to quality care
- Studies show that children – especially economically disadvantaged children – who attend high-quality preschool programs have better school achievement, social skills, and behavior than children who do not participate in a preschool experience or who are enrolled in a low quality program¹
- Lasting positive effects of quality preschool attendance include:
 - Higher scores on aptitude measures through fourth grade
 - Decreased likelihood of special education placement
 - Significantly higher grade point averages
 - Increased likelihood of graduating from high school
 - Less criminal behavior at age 14
 - Higher monthly earnings at age 27
- Based upon these impacts, economists estimate that an investment in quality preschool returns an average public benefit of 7-10% every year thereafter²

¹ “School Readiness: Helping Communities Get Children Ready for School and Schools Ready for Children,” 2002.

² J. Heckman, et al., J.Pub.Ec., 2010.

- This evidence points to the importance of investing in the early childhood years, especially for children who have risk factors

Why Adams County?

- Adams County is the second most at-risk Colorado county for children (KidsCount 2013)
 - It has the highest percentage of children under age five in the state
 - Poverty rate for children is 27.7% (Adams County) vs. 17.7% (Colorado) (2012)
 - Nearly 50% of Adams County school children qualify for Free and Reduced Meals (rate is as high as 82-96% in some pockets of the county)
- Only 1/3 of 3-4 year olds attend school-based, Head Start, or other preschool programs
- Adams County's five school districts estimate an average of 59% of children arrive at kindergarten already behind
 - This likely contributing to 2/5 of third graders not reading proficiently (vs. 10% statewide) and a 2012 graduation rate of 66.5% (vs. 75.4% statewide)

Why ECPAC?

- Since its founding in 2004, ECPAC has worked to build an impressive network of partners into a strong, coordinated early childhood system serving Adams County (see Appendix 2 for a listing of partners)
- In addition, ECPAC has developed an effective, independent backbone organization that nurtures and maintains the network of partners, leads collective direction-setting and strategic planning efforts, and secures the partner and financial resources needed to take action on shared strategic goals
- ECPAC is a strong, expert, highly interconnected early childhood system perfectly positioned to implement this business plan and achieve significant outcomes for Adams County's 0-8 year olds and their families

Taking Impact to the Next Level

- While ECPAC has made a positive impact on outcomes for Adams County's 0-8 year olds in the past, the majority of its focus has been on building the capacity of the backbone organization and network of partners
- ECPAC is now making a deliberate, strategic transition that will leverage the strength of the backbone organization and network of partners and take its efforts to the next

level, dramatically increasing the outcomes it attains for 0-8 year olds and their families while also enhancing the sustainability of ECPAC itself

- This business plan defines ECPAC’s transition steps and includes the three primary components of that transition:
 - *Recalibrate Focus/ Efforts*: decreasing focus on internal capacity and system building efforts (i.e., from building to maintaining capacity) in order to increase focus on achieving outcomes for young children and their families across the system
 - *Proof of Concept Project*: completing a three-five year project that achieves and documents specific outcomes across all four domains for a subset of 0-8 year olds in Adams County
 - *Strategic Preparations*: continuing coordinated efforts across the early childhood system to ensure that ECPAC is ready to scale up on “the day after” (i.e., the day after the proof-of-concept project is completed)
- Increasing outcomes and enhancing sustainability requires:
 - Building assessment/ evaluation capacity to measure and document outcomes
 - Identifying a project that can yield outcomes in the desired timeframe and securing strategic partners to successfully implement the project
 - Expanding communications, public relations, and marketing capacity to better tell the story of the value of early childhood interventions and ECPAC outcomes in order to secure supporters among key constituencies
- Successful completion of this transition will yield:
 - Increased outcomes for 0-8 year olds across Adams County
 - The ability to document those outcomes and use that information to attract further investment and scale up efforts
 - An even stronger, more deeply connected and coordinated network of partners that aligns its operations, goals, and resources around the accomplishment of shared outcomes

Business Description



ECPAC History and Track Record

- ECPAC was founded in May 2004 and became one of 31 Early Childhood Councils in 2007 under HB 07-1026 charged with working to improve and sustain the availability, capacity, and quality of early childhood services across the four domains
- Over the intervening years, ECPAC has built an impressive network of agencies, organizations, and individuals into a coordinated, aligned early childhood system
- In 2012, ECPAC modified its structure to create seven Action Teams that work to collectively implement strategies and initiatives and achieve shared goals
- Examples of ECPAC activities and results to date include:
 - Implementation of a Pregnancy Related Depression messaging campaign
 - Development of a Comprehensive Coordinated Identification and Referral process and roadmap to increase the number of development evaluations completed
 - Identification of available services and the barriers that restrict access to same
 - Development of a county-wide definition for what constitutes “school readiness” to guide the implementation of coordinated strategies
 - Provision of significant professional development opportunities to early learning staff and organizations to improve quality, including:
 - Quality improvement support to 42 early childhood education programs
 - Providing 539 scholarships for early childhood education coursework
 - Training 267 early childhood teachers in quality infant/ toddler practice

The Business: Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County

Strategic Focus

- *Vision:* All Adams County children are healthy and thriving
- *Mission:* Building a community where every young child can reach their full potential
- *2012 – 2015 Strategic Goals:*
 - Early childhood families have access to available community services and supports that effectively meet their needs
 - ECPAC facilitates the Adams County early childhood system to be efficient, effective, and elegant so that service providers are connected to one another and families’ needs are met
 - Expand and enhance Adams County’s ability to provide high-quality education and care to at-risk children ages birth to eight

Functions

- As a system, ECPAC operates at multiple levels simultaneously:
 - An independent backbone organization with staff and a Governing Board
 - A network of public, nonprofit, and private partners across the four domains
 - A system (collective whole of the backbone organization and network of partners)
- Each level is responsible for distinct, but coordinated functions

Level	Core Functions
Backbone organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership (setting shared vision, rallying partners and others in support of that vision, securing resources, and removing obstacles) • Governance • Management • Convening (serving as hub of the network of partners) • Partner relations management (including partner recruitment and retention) • Strategic planning, monitoring, and evaluation • Marketing and communications • Program delivery (primarily early learning professional development)
Network of partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing work and/ or allocating resources towards shared goals • Information sharing and communications (partner-to-partner) • Disseminating marketing and communications messages • Aligning internal operations with best practices • Advocating for/ supporting backbone organization
System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for achieving desired outcomes for 0-8 year olds • Maintaining focus on shared outcomes

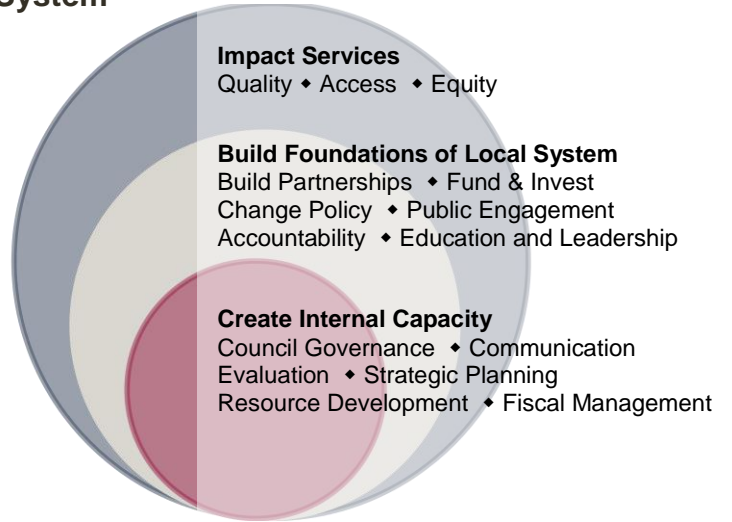
The Product: Outcomes for 0-8 Year Olds

- ECPAC’s core product is Adams County 0-8 year olds who are healthy and start school ready to succeed as evidenced by the following outcomes³:
 - % of children school “ready”
 - % of children enrolled in high quality early learning program
 - % of children under age five read more than three days in the last week
 - % of children ages 3-5 assessed as proficient through Results Matter
 - % of children who complete early intervention evaluation / services
 - % of children proficient on Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

³ At the time of this writing, ECPAC is in the midst of finalizing the overarching shared outcomes for the early childhood system. These interim outcome statements are included as placeholders to indicate the scope and scale of ECPAC’s efforts and potential impact.

The Framework: The Early Childhood System

- Early Childhood Councils improve outcomes for young children through the development of a strong, coordinated early childhood system
- This system is analogous to the K-12 system that attends to the multiple developmental needs of school-aged children
- The early childhood system model includes three components



Strategies, Programs, and Initiatives

- ECPAC’s product (outcomes for 0-8 year olds) comes from its work on all three early childhood system components

Component	Strategies, Programs, and Initiatives
Impact Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing of proof of concept project to achieve outcomes across all four domains for a subset of Adams County 0-8 year olds • Expanding professional development and quality improvement efforts to increase availability of early learning across the county • Disseminating the Coordinated Identification and Referral roadmap to increase early intervention evaluation rates • Raising awareness of the benefits of early childhood interventions among parents of 0-8 year olds and increasing family engagement skills of service providers to support progress towards all shared outcomes
Build Foundations of Local System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing family engagement skill-building opportunities across system • Activating organizations, agencies, and individuals within the system to communicate consistent messages about the value of early childhood interventions • Continuing to use existing tools and structures (e.g., Action Teams, etc.) to maintain system cohesion and high level of trust within partner network • Engaging new partners into the system as needed to reach goals
Create Internal Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing organizational development plans (business, fundraising, communication plans) to ensure organizational and system infrastructures and financial and partner resources are sufficient to meet strategic goals and achieve shared outcomes

The Pivot Point: Proof of Concept Project

- Given current financial and human capacity constraints as well as evaluation challenges, ECPAC has opted to make its transition from capacity building-focused to outcome generating system in stages
- Rather than scaling up its efforts across the whole of Adams County simultaneously, ECPAC will design and implement a proof of concept project to act as the pivot point for its transition
- The purpose of the proof of concept project is to impact outcomes across all four domains *for a subset* of 0-8 year olds in Adams County within a 3-5 year period
 - This will allow ECPAC to activate the system towards shared outcomes at a smaller scale (i.e., prove the concept of the systems approach)
 - The project will also serve as the means through which ECPAC will develop the assessment and evaluation approaches, frameworks, and tools needed to measure and demonstrate the impact of its efforts
- Successfully proving the value of the systems approach through documented outcomes for a subset of 0-8 year olds (while also recalibrating efforts and making other strategic preparations) will bolster ECPAC's ability to take its efforts county-wide in the future

Project Criteria

- The ideal project will meet the following criteria (in priority order):
 - Designed to achieve clearly defined, measurable outcomes that align with ECPAC's long-term vision and approach (working as a system, across the four domains)
 - Sustainable (i.e., sufficient capacity exists sustain the project over the 3-5 year timeframe and achieve project outcomes)
 - Scalable (i.e., the project can be replicated and/ or expanded in the future)
 - Able to be leveraged to dovetail with ECPAC awareness building efforts
 - Impact Adams Counties neediest 0-8 year old population
 - Rely upon evidence-based, evidence-informed, and promising strategies and interventions to the greatest extent possible

Organizational Design and Development

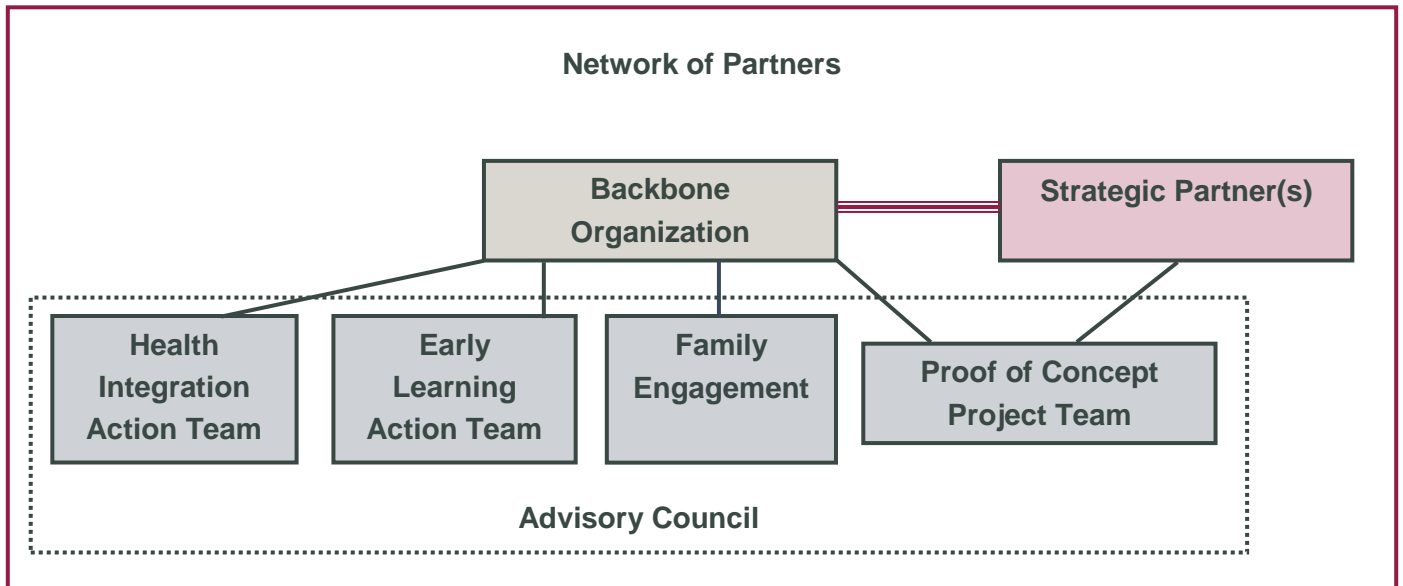


Business Model

- A business model defines how an organization does its work and generates resources and revenues to support that work
- ECPAC's business model is a systems change model
 - Designed to create change at a systemic level, addressing root causes through a stronger, more coordinated, more efficient system of service delivery
 - Designed for sustained impact by engaging a network of partners around shared outcomes such that those partners align their operations towards those outcomes
- Within the systems change model, the backbone organization's role is to successfully engage the network of partners around shared outcomes, rally sustained focus on those outcomes across the network, and secure resources/ address obstacles
- To enhance sustainability, ECPAC must recalibrate the focus and efforts of its systems change model to produce greater outcomes for a greater number of 0-8 year olds in Adams County (from "storming" to "norming" – see Appendix 3)
- This implies a shift towards a more shared leadership model, with network partners stepping into roles traditionally played by the backbone organization
- This will free up some of the backbone organization's capacity, allowing it to focus on the proof of concept project, new partner engagement, and marketing and awareness building efforts
- This transition also suggests increased differentiation between partners along the Partner Relations Continuum (see Appendix 3) as:
 - Some partners become formal strategic partners working on the project
 - Other partners become less engaged when Action Team projects or the proof of concept project doesn't impact their work or client populations as directly as in the past
- This ebb and flow of individual partner engagement is a natural side effect of the group development process; however, it does increase the importance of effectively sharing information across the system so that partners remain up-to-date regardless of their current level of engagement

ECPAC System

Structure



Network of Partners

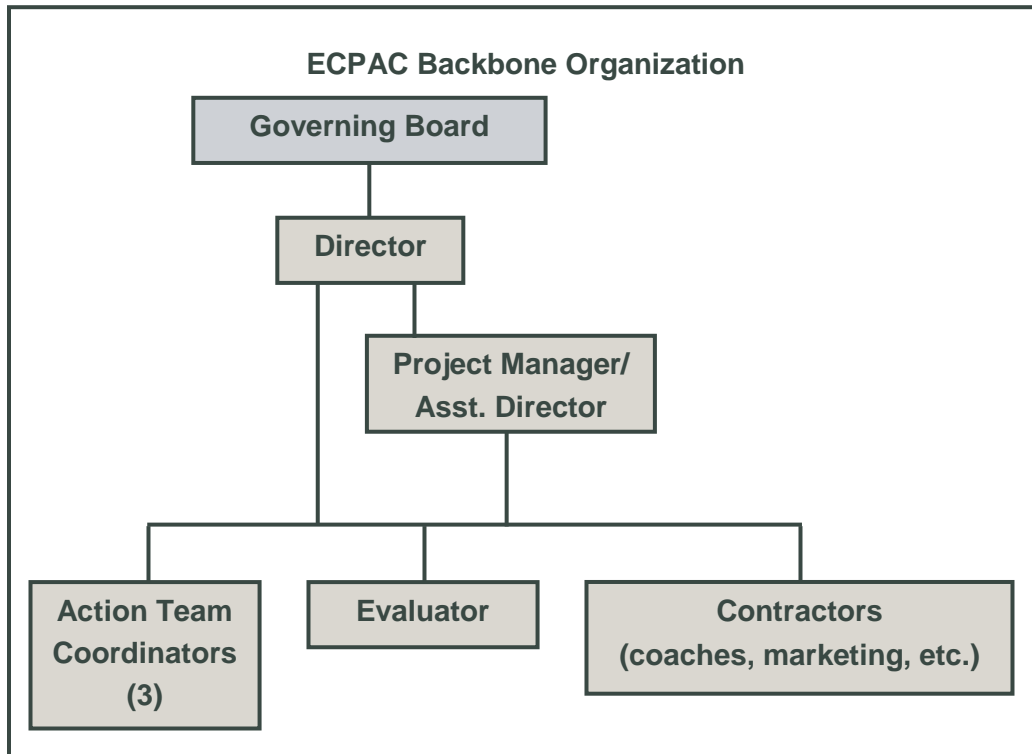
- The makeup of the network of partners ebbs and flows over time
- Within this ever-changing environment, three structures provide means for hands-on partner engagement in the shared work of the system:
 - *Proof of Concept Project Team*: manages the proof of concept project and includes members from all four domains
 - *Action Teams*: committee-type structures that implement strategies and initiatives that contribute towards the accomplishment of shared outcomes
 - *Advisory Council*: serves the platform for partners across the system to provide updates, ask for input, and keep up-to-date on ECPAC's numerous efforts

Backbone Organization

- The backbone organization provides the structures, systems, and staffing that supports the network of partners in working towards shared outcomes
 - In essence, the backbone organization makes it easier for partners to engage in collaborative work as part of the system

Backbone Organization

Structure



Governance

- The Governing Board of ECPAC's backbone organization is primarily made up of representatives of the network of partners
- The Board fulfills primary governance and leadership responsibilities (oversight, direction setting, policy setting, accountability, etc.)
- Moving forward, the Board will also attend to:
 - Actively monitoring progress of the proof of concept project
 - Maintaining good partner relations with the network of partners including working to deepening partner engagement and promoting shared outcomes
 - Working in partnership with Executive Director to oversee ECPAC's transition phase (i.e., recalibration of efforts; strategic preparations)
 - Working in partnership with Executive Director to secure needed financial and partner resources

Management and Staffing

- The Director is responsible for:
 - Executing strategies that build and maintain the capacity of the backbone organization and the strength of the network of partners
 - Cultivating and maintaining high-level partner and donor/ funder relations
 - Providing deep content and process expertise to nurture and maximize the impact of the systems change model
 - Serving as an articulate and effective advocate for early childhood interventions, early childhood service providers, and the systems approach
 - Supervising staff and contracted employees and overseeing day-to-day management

- Other staff (employees and contractors) provide specialized expertise in either one of the four domains or a key organizational function (e.g., evaluation, marketing, project management); staff are co-located with host agencies as appropriate

- Primary staff functions include:
 - Supporting efforts of network partners
 - Staffing Action Teams and other work groups
 - Providing technical assistance and professional development
 - Facilitating communications across the system
 - Serving as a content and process expert in their area of focus
 - Understanding relevant issues, processes, systems, and populations
 - Knowledge of best practices
 - Cultivating/ maintaining good relations with partners in their area of focus

- The number of staff will grow as the proof of concept project and more robust marketing and awareness building efforts get underway
 - A new middle management level (project manager/ assistant director) is designed to keep the number of direct reports reasonable and ensure that the Director has sufficient capacity to attend to higher-level relationship building tasks

- Given the need to be able to demonstrate outcomes, a new evaluation/ assessment expert will be added to the backbone organization
 - This position will be responsible for designing the assessment and evaluation frameworks for the proof of concept project as well as other efforts
 - An evaluator with a proven track record in designing and implementing new frameworks would be an ideal candidate

Systems and Processes

- It is beyond the scope of this plan to fully build out internal systems
- What follows is intended to broadly define the capacities such systems and processes must provide moving forward

Technology

- A website and social media presence specifically designed for families will help ECPAC better connect with and communicate the value of early childhood interventions to families; such a site could include:
 - Communication of awareness building messages
 - Links to additional information
 - The roadmap with links to service providers
 - Means to facilitate family engagement
- The ECPAC website appears to work fairly well for both the backbone organization and network of partners, however upgrades or the addition of new web-based applications may be needed to ensure:
 - Partners who are less able to attend in-person meetings have other ways to engage in Action Team or project team work
 - Less-engaged partners can easily stay up-to-date on efforts

Project Management

- A robust project management system (project plan, monitoring process, communication mechanisms, etc.) is needed to manage the work of the proof of concept project
 - Ideally, this system will be scalable so that it can also be of use to other projects such as those administered by the Action Teams
- The project management system is distinct from the system used to gather and analyze assessment and evaluation data (i.e., a project management system monitors the completion of project tasks whereas an evaluation system measures whether or not those tasks are leading to intended outcomes)

Administrative/ Financial Processes and Systems

- The backbone organization's core administrative and financial systems are provided through a fiscal sponsorship agreement with the Mapleton School District

- This arrangement works well for both parties; however should new funding streams require financial tracking/ reporting at a higher level of complexity, an update to the agreement may be appropriate

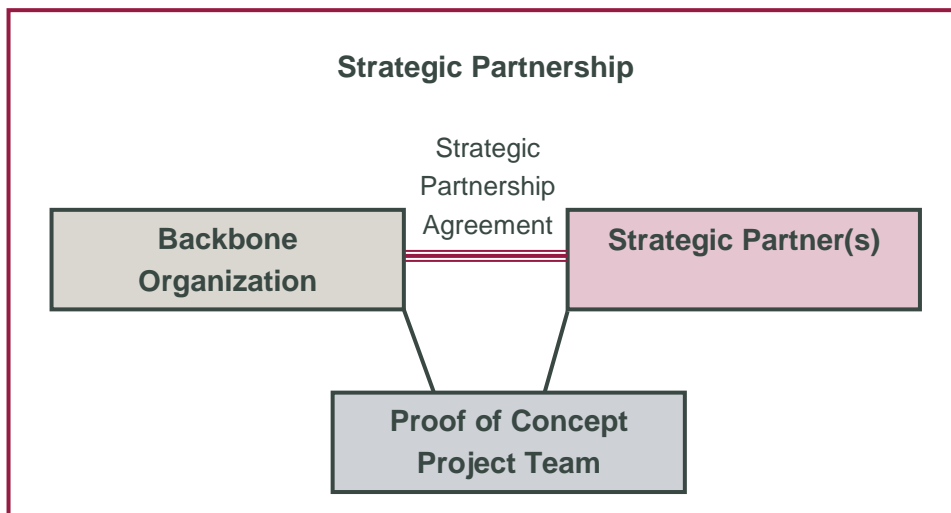
Information Management and Data Sharing

- Information management tools and systems are needed to securely manage:
 - Partner contact information
 - Assessment and evaluation data
- While the partner contact information management tools/ system should be located within the backbone organization, the assessment and evaluation data system could be located within one of the proof of concept project’s strategic partners (assuming the partnership agreement allows ECPAC staff appropriate data access)
- In addition to systems to manage data, ECPAC will need to create formal data sharing agreements to facilitate its assessment and evaluation efforts
 - The first of these will likely be connected to the proof of concept project
 - However, as ECPAC’s efforts go to scale county-wide over time, the need for these types of data sharing agreements will continue to grow

Proof of Concept Project

- In order to successfully implement the project, the backbone organization will work with one or more strategic partners who bring complementary strengths and abilities
- The strategic partnership(s) will be governed by a partnership agreement that states the shared goals, outlines the commitments of each partner, and defines mechanisms for bridging organizational and interpersonal differences

Structure



Role of Backbone Organization

(Note: at the time of this writing, neither the project nor strategic partner(s) are finalized; this section and the strategic partner profile are based upon the best thinking at this time)

- Project management (allocating, tracking, and using resources to achieve a particular outcome within a specified period of time)
- Project assessment and evaluation
- Engagement of members of the network of partners, Action Teams, etc. as needed to support project success and complete project tasks
- Co-leader of the project team
- Coordination of project and awareness building efforts
- Keep the network of partners up-to-date on project progress
- Work in partnership with strategic partner(s) to secure funding
- Financial management, reporting, and donor/ supporter communications and relations

Strategic Partner Profile

- The ideal strategic partner for the proof of concept project will:
 - Be a respected service provider from one of the four domains
 - Have access to a distinct, unique subset of 0-8 year olds to serve as the project population (e.g., a school, neighborhood, or early learning program) and have relationships with families that enable them to secure project participation
 - Have the capacity to track data on all individual children involved in the project and the ability to share that data with the backbone organization
 - Be willing and able to provide access to the project population to the extent needed to ensure the realization of project outcomes
 - Allocate a negotiated amount of financial and staff resources to the project for the full term of the project
 - Work in partnership with the backbone organization to secure project funding
 - Participate in ECPAC awareness building efforts

Managing the Strategic Partnership

- A strategic partnership must be deliberately managed to ensure success
- Managing the partnership is the job of the leaders of the backbone organization and the strategic partner(s)
- Regular check-ins to evaluate how well partners are working together, address any outstanding issues, and make decisions about changes needed will be key to managing the strategic partnership

Outreach Strategies



Position, Brand, Image

- ECPAC is the early childhood system for Adams County
- ECPAC is the leader; it sets the agenda and drives the conversation about early childhood issues, needs, and resources
- The brand is deeply collaborative – all of the partners are “on the same team” and working collectively towards the same outcomes
- The image is one of deep expertise, trustworthiness, caring, and cultural competence

Target Markets

- ECPAC has two important target markets:
 - Its network of partners
 - Parents and guardians of 0-8 year olds in Adams County
- With partners, ECPAC’s goal is to deepen the partner engagement over time, ideally to a point where many partners are engaging in strategic partner-like behavior:
 - Aligning their strategic goals with the system’s shared outcomes
 - Allocating staff, financial, or other resources towards work on those outcomes
- With parents and guardians, ECPAC’s goal is to significantly increase their awareness of the core benefits of early childhood interventions (essentially boosting the “market demand” for the very services that will lead to achieving outcomes)

Important Publics

- Publics are distinct from markets
 - Whereas markets are engaged in order to elicit a desired action, publics are those groups that need to know ECPAC exists and have a positive opinion of it
- ECPAC’s important publics include:
 - School district leadership (staff and boards)
 - Adams County government (County Commissioners and service agencies)
 - Healthcare providers that serve children and families
- Public relations strategies
 - “ECPAC 101” and “Early Childhood 101” content, materials, talking points
 - Regular, consistent outreach (meetings, presentations, etc.)
 - Dissemination of materials and talking points via network of partners

Marketing Matrix

Target Market	Profile	Needs/ Interests	Desired Action	Messages/ Strategies
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders and staff of nonprofit organizations and government agencies • Funding is typically tight • Caring professionals who want to do the best for their clients and make a lasting impact • Open to collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making progress towards their own strategic goals • Demonstrating their own results (e.g., to get/ keep financial supporters) • Meeting client needs effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand their work in the context of the system (staff) • Make strategic and resource allocation decisions that align with shared outcomes (leaders) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System success stories (partners working together to benefit clients) • Roadmap rollout and how it can benefit their clients • Explicitly connect the dots between their strategic goals and shared outcomes • Annual “state of the system” review
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and guardians of 0-8 year olds • Live in Adams County • Ethnically diverse • Lower income and higher poverty rates than CO • Many work entry-level, service sector jobs • Time stressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and wellbeing of their families (including financial health) • Finding/ keeping their jobs • Instilling traditions and beliefs in their children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about the basic benefits of early childhood interventions • Understand where to go for additional information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center on 2-3 clear, catchy messages about benefits • Be where they are (online, social media, app) • Visual collateral (posters, etc.) and talking points to key partners (hospitals, healthcare providers, early learning centers, WIC, etc.) • Coordinated press strategy emphasizing benefits • Giveaways and events branded with messages

Finances



Revenue Model

- ECPAC's revenue model is an institutional funding model with the majority of revenue from private and government grant sources or government allocations
- The majority of the benefit from ECPAC's work towards shared outcomes accrues to:
 - Families of 0-8 year olds (whose outcomes improve and who receive the long-term benefits of early childhood interventions)
 - Network of partners (who benefit from a more streamlined, efficient system that helps them meet their own strategic goals and benefits their clients)
 - Schools and employers (who benefit when children enter K-12 school system ready to learn and exit ready to work)
- Unfortunately, these primary beneficiaries do not translate as natural revenue sources:
 - Adams County families, partner organizations, and schools are all cash-strapped
 - The time horizon on employers' return on investment is long and they will first need to see demonstrated outcomes from ECPAC before investing significantly
 - The majority of ECPAC's expenses fund the backbone organization (which is more likely to be understood as playing a supporting role vs. partners who are more likely to be perceived as contributing directly to shared outcomes)

Revenue Sources

- Fortunately, institutional funding trends are positive
 - Multiple state and federal funding streams appear relatively secure
 - Private foundations are moving towards more competitive grant processes and ECPAC's new evaluation capacity will position it as a strong competitor
 - Adams County demographics (high ethnic diversity, lower socio economic levels, and high number of 0-8 year olds) makes it a place where institutional funders can make a deep impact among those of highest need
 - These demographics also open up the possibility of tapping into health foundation funding (e.g., by addressing health disparities and health equity issues)
- Additionally, as partner relations deepen and more partners see the direct connection between progress towards shared outcomes and their own goals and interests, the partners themselves become a revenue source in less traditional ways:
 - Allocating staff time to backbone organization staff functions or co-locating and funding backbone organization staff (to an even greater extent than at present)

- Writing ECPAC overhead into grant proposals
- Contributing other resources and expertise (such as marketing expertise, meeting space and costs, etc.)
- As ECPAC’s evaluation capacity builds, it may become feasible to solicit support from employers (especially those with a large proportion of entry level employees) or put in place one of the emerging social enterprise models such as social impact bonds

Estimated Expenses

Line Item	Year 1	Year 3	Year 5
Staff/ Contractors (salary + benefits)			
Current Salary and Contractors	280,000	294,000	309,000
New - Evaluation Coordinator		65,000	68,000
New - Project Manager/ Asst. Director		75,000	78,500
Office Expenses			
Telephone	600	1,200	1,500
Travel	5,118	5,500	6,000
Tech Support/ Website	740	12,000	10,000
Meeting Expenses	2,747	3,000	35,000
Office Supplies	1,250	2,500	2,700
Family Incentives	2,348	2,700	3,000
Printing	3,450	4,000	4,500
Program Materials	28,000	29,500	31,000
Evaluation Support	830	0	0
Training Expenses	4,425	5,000	5,500
Other	22,357	24,000	28,000
Early Learning Professional Dev.			
Program Expenses	62,000	68,000	74,600
Contracted Coaches, Instructors, etc.	170,000	187,000	196,000
Total Expenses	583,865	778,400	853,300

Implementation Priorities

First-Stage Implementation Priorities

- Initial implementation steps for the business plan include:
 - Vet, finalize, and promote shared outcomes
 - Align work of Action Teams, staff, and board around shared outcomes
 - Select strategic partner, negotiate partnership agreement(s) and design project (i.e., specific project goals and project plan)
 - Communicate plans and actions to current funders/ supporters
- A six-month timeframe for completing these first-stage implementation steps is recommended

6-Month Action Plan Draft

Priority 1: Define ECPAC's Shared Outcomes

Objectives	Tasks	Timeframe	Responsible
Draft shared outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review potential outcomes with Action Teams/ Committees • Provide input re: measurable indicators related to potential outcomes • Analyze/ synthesize input • Draft shared outcomes for whole of ECPAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March • April • April • April 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Action Teams/ Committees • Staff • Staff
Vet outcomes with partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review draft outcomes with Executive Committee • Revise draft • Share outcomes with Advisory Council (w/ comment deadline) • Provide input • Analyze/ synthesize input • Revise shared outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May • May • June • June • July • July 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director • Staff • Director • Adv. Council • Staff • Staff
Finalize outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit outcomes to Board • Confirm shared outcomes (revising as needed) • Communicate final outcomes to network of partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August • August • August 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exec. Comm. • Board • Director

Priority 2: Align Work of Action Teams, Committees, etc.

Objectives	Tasks	Timeframe	Responsible
Develop alignment process/ criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define process/ directions to use for aligning plans Create criteria to use to evaluate work plan contents Finalize criteria using final shared outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> June June August 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Staff Staff
Review Action Team, Committee, etc. work plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule separate review meetings with each Action Team, Committee, etc. Schedule staff meeting to review staff work plans Review work plans using process/ criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July July August/ September 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varies Director Staff
Update Action Team, Committee, etc. work plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update staff work plans Update Action Team, Committee, etc. work plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> September September 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Staff

Priority 3: Develop Strategic Partnership and Project

Objectives	Tasks	Timeframe	Responsible
Recruit potential strategic partner(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create ad hoc committee to work on this priority Finalize strategic partner profile Draft and send partnership solicitation (w/ deadline) Share partner profile at Board and Advisory Council meetings Identify suspected partners Make inquiry calls to suspects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> March March March April April April 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director Ad hoc team Director Ad hoc team Ad hoc team Director
Select strategic partner(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review potential strategic partners and create short list Hold one-on-one introductory meetings Discuss meetings and identify top candidate(s) Forward top candidate(s) to board for approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April/ May May May May 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad hoc team Ad hoc team Ad hoc team Ad hoc team

Create strategic partnership agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold negotiation/ partnership development meeting • Draft partnership agreement • Review and revise agreement • Submit agreement to ECPAC Board • Submit agreement to strategic partner's board • Confirm agreement (revising as needed) • Communicate strategic partnership to network of partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June • June • July • July • July • August • August 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ad hoc team • Director • Director • Ad hoc team • Potential partner • ECPAC BOD, partner BOD • Director
Define proof of concept project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft project concept (project goal, scope, timeframes, rough budget estimate) • Define project team (leadership, membership, roles) • Review project definition and project team with ECPAC Board and partner's board • Confirm project leadership • Draft first year project plan (tasks, timeline, responsible) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August • August • September • September • September 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director and partner • Director and partner • Director and partner • ECPAC BOD, partner BOD • Project leadership

Priority 4: Communicate with Current Funders/ Supporters

Objectives	Tasks	Timeframe	Responsible
Prepare for meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify list of funders/ supporters to meet with • Identify who will do meetings • Create external version of business plan, relevant work plans, partner/ project info. • Define agendas and desired outcomes for each meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July • July • August • August 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director • Director • Staff • Director
Set and hold meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact partners and schedule • Attend meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July/ Aug. • September 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Varies

Debrief and identify next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send thank you's (immediately after each meeting) • Debrief meetings (immediately after each meeting) • Analyze debriefing notes • Define specific next steps for each supporter/ funder • Assign tasks/ deadlines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies • Varies • September • September • September 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Meeting attendees • Director • Director • Director
---------------------------------	--	---	--

Likely Second-Stage Implementation Priorities

- The outcomes from implementing the first-stage priorities may necessitate a reordering of second-stage priorities; however, at the time of writing, the next set of implementation tasks appears to be:
 - Face-to-face meetings with network partners (to review ECPAC plans, track implications, troubleshoot issues and obstacles, etc.)
 - Define evaluation/ assessment needs and seek support to fill position
 - Secure support to launch project
 - Develop internal (to network of partners) communication tools (i.e., beyond in-person meetings)

Conclusion



- ECPAC has deliberately, systematically developed into a strong, coordinated system focused on early childhood interventions and improving outcomes for 0-8 year olds and their families in Adams County
- The key to sustainability for ECPAC is to transition from capacity building-focused to outcome generating
 - Successfully completing the proof of concept project
 - Recalibrating the focus and efforts underway across the system
 - Making other strategic preparations such that ECPAC is able to take its outcome generating ability to scale county-wide
- This transition implies
 - Changes to the role of the backbone organization (e.g., shifting to more of a shared leadership model; building evaluation, project management, and marketing/ awareness building capacity)
 - Increased differentiation between the level of engagement of partners (a natural side effect of a more focused approach)
 - Increased engagement of a subset of partners as evidenced by strategic partner agreements, alignment of goals, and resource allocation decisions
- Sometimes an organization’s goals focus on “building the car” and at other times, they focus on how far down the road they will drive that car, and in what direction
- ECPAC has spent the time needed to build a reliable car and the time is right to shift from fine-tuning and start down the road to its ultimate destination

Appendix 1: Interviewees and Focus Group Participants



ECPAC Board Members

- Isebel Arellano, Adams County Human Services
- Mat Aubuchon, Adams 50 School District
- Jill Bonczynski, Tri-County Health Department
- Amy Brunner, Parent Representative
- Lynda Freas, Family and Library Services Director
- Becky Hoffman, Adams County Youth Initiative
- Cristie Jophlin-Martin, Community Enterprise
- Jackie Kapushion, Mapleton Public Schools
- Carrie Morris, North Metro Community Services
- Cherylin Peniston, Colorado House Representative
- Chris Shaffner, Adams County Housing Authority
- Teva Sienicki, Growing Home

ECPAC Staff Members

- Jane Harris (past staff member)
- Lisa Jansen Thompson
- Rebecca Wilson

External Stakeholders and Key Informants

- Scott Burns, Lakeshore Learning
- Phil Corn, Community Member
- Chris Gdowski, Adams 12 School District
- Tammi Graham, Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Community and Family Support
- Jodi Hardin, Civic Canopy
- Stephanie John, Community Reach Center
- Deidre Johnson, Colorado Trust
- Chris Kline, Adams County Department of Human Services
- Tania Mendoza, Community Reach Center
- Susan Steele, Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation
- Marsa Williams, Aspen Family Services

Focus Group Participants

- Janet Benavente, Adams County/ CSU Extension
- Julia Brink, Red Rocks Community College
- Michelle Dalbotten, Step by Step
- Penny Farster-Narlesky, Head Start of Adams County
- Sharla Fellers, Kaiser Permanente
- Jenny Garner, City of Thornton
- Nicole Gonzales, Red Rocks Community College
- Lauren Jassil, Community Reach Center
- Danielle Meir, Children's Outreach Project
- Kristen Morel, Adams 14 School District
- Lisa Mulligan, Invest in Kids
- Susana Ramirez, Head Start of Adams County
- Rhonda Ronczka, Mapleton School District
- Amy Speers, Tri-County Health
- Vicki Swarr, Tri-County Health
- Cindy Vigesaa, Kiddie Academy of Brighton
- Rebecca Zamora, Growing Home

Appendix 2: ECPAC Network of Partners

Partners Participating on ECPAC Board, Action Teams, and Initiatives

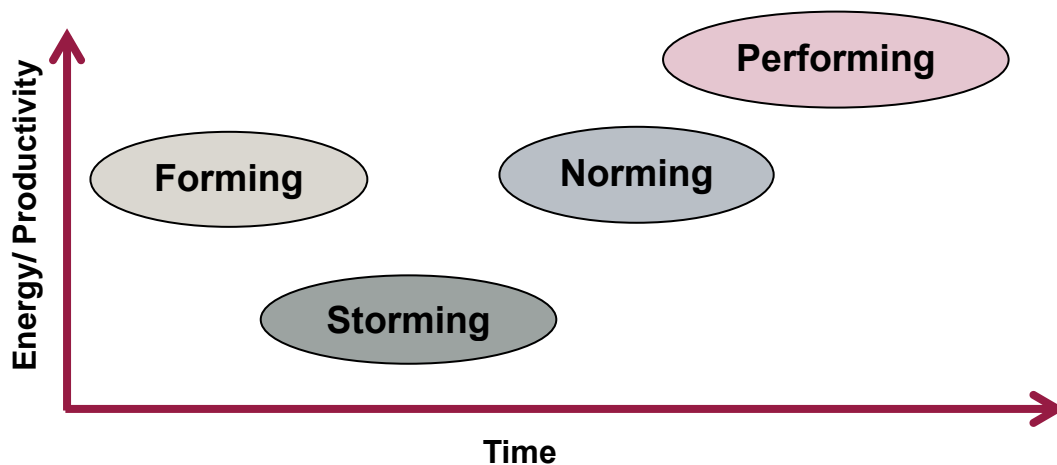
- Adams County Head Start
- Adams County Housing Authority
- Adams County Human Services
- Adams County Youth Initiative
- Adams 12 School District
- Adams 14 School District
- Adams 27J School District
- Adams 50 School District
- Anythink Libraries
- Community Reach Center
- Community Enterprise
- Tri-County Health Department
- Boys and Girls Club
- Bright Beginnings,
- Bright Horizons-Horizon High School
- Child Care Innovations
- Children's Outreach Project
- City of Thornton
- Colorado State House of Representatives
- Colorado State University Extension
- Community Health Services
- Community Members (individuals)
- Crossroads Church
- Franko Group
- Front Range Community College
- Growing Home
- Horizon Pediatrics
- Invest in Kids
- Kaiser Permanente
- Kiddie Academy of Brighton
- Mapleton Public Schools
- Mountainland Pediatrics
- North Metro Community Services
- North Suburban Medical Center
- Rocky Mountain Youth Clinic
- Salud
- Senior Hub~SWAT
- St. Anthony's Hospital~Nurse Family Partnership
- Step-by-Step Child Development Center
- Sweet Pea Center for Early Learning
- Teachers' Treasure Trunk
- 17th Judicial District Attorney
- Westminster City Council Member

Appendix 3: Frameworks

Collective Impact and the Systems Approach

- Collective impact refers to an emerging practice in which organizations, agencies, and individuals from different sectors join together to address a significant issue or problem – in this case improving early childhood outcomes – in a coordinated fashion, typically at a scale that no one actor could achieve individually
- Successful collective impact efforts are marked by⁴:
 - *Common Agenda*: Common vision, understanding of the problem, agreed to approach for solving the problem
 - *Shared Measurement System*: Enables the understanding of patterns and trends so the collective can take action or make mid-course corrections
 - *Mutually Reinforcing Activities*: Impact comes from each participant playing to their strengths in a way that is coordinated across the collective as a whole
 - *Continuous Communication*: Time to build trust (years), common vocabulary, regular meetings of CEO-level leaders (monthly)
 - *Backbone Support Organization*: Independent from the participants; with the right skills to do the job – convening, facilitation, tech/ communications support, data collecting/ reporting
- Collective impact-type efforts in the realm of early childhood are most often characterized as efforts to build an *early childhood system*

Bruce Tuckman's Model of Group Development (1965)



⁴ Collective Impact; Kania, J. and Kramer, M.; Stanford Social Innovation Review; Winter 2011.


- Given that ECPAC is not a single organization but rather a system of partner organizations, Tuckman’s model of group development offers another way to understand the development of ECPAC over time
 - Role of leader correlates with role of the backbone organization
 - Indicators show how results change over the group development process
- ECPAC is deliberating moving into the norming phase as a means of transitioning to the performing phase

	Forming	Storming	Norming	Performing
Defined	Recruiting members; clarifying of expectations and anticipated roles	Building relationships and trust; can be contentious as members jockey for position or to prove their value	Time to make decisions, take risks, turn ideas into reality; members using the expertise that brought them to the team	Powerful team doing productive work; members come and go and team remains intact
Role of Leader *	Telling: Provide specific instructions and closely supervise performance	Selling: Explain decisions, provide opportunity for clarity, clarify goals	Participating: Share ideas and facilitate team in decision making (team assumes more responsibility)	Delegating: Turn over responsibility for decisions and implementation; ensure contributions are recognized
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of team members/ meetings • Agenda-setting and goal development tasks completed • Initial structures and systems created 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention of members • Level of trust, understanding of what others bring to team • Member-member results • Early benchmarks of work towards shared goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members taking initiative (not waiting for leader) • Progress towards shared goals • Members start making aligned resource allocation decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More members make aligned resource allocation decisions • Shared goals reflected in members’ strategic plans • Significant, documented progress towards shared goals

* Hersey, P., *The Situational Leader*. (1984). New York, NY: Warner Books, Inc.

Partner Relations Continuum

The location of a partnership along the continuum defines the type of working relationship and the extent of involvement and connection.



	Independent	Interdependent	Dependent	
Goals	Mutual interests; separate goals	Work together on some goals	<i>Goals developed and monitored together</i>	One set of goals
Structure	Informal, unstructured, low connection	Some structure around a particular common issue	<i>Defined, explicit structure to support common efforts, high connection</i>	Formal, highly structured, high connection
Environment	Totally separate working environments	Likely maintain separate environments and identities, with some overlap	<i>Shared environment influences success</i>	Culture and environment merge / meld
Collaboration	Exchange of information	Work together on discreet projects or tasks	<i>Synergistic and complementary skills and assets</i>	Fully integrated systems and operations
Success	Success is independent of other	Success (or failure) is shared on team components	<i>Success depends on other</i>	Success and failure is fully shared
Example	Associations Networks	Project teams Coalitions	<i>Strategic partners</i>	Joint ventures