Collective Impact in Adult Education

Pro Literacy Conference
September 2019
Goals for this session

1. **DISCOVER** the **meaning**, **scope**, and **benefits** of using a Collective Impact approach.

2. **LISTEN** to our experience of adopting a Collective Impact model with adult education in Nashville.

3. **PRACTICE** your new collective impact navigation skills to measure your learning!
What does literacy look like in Nashville?

1 in 8 Nashville adults can’t read.

30% of students in public schools live in homes where English is not the primary language.

Children of parents with low literacy skills have a 72% chance of being at the lowest reading levels themselves.
Nashville’s numbers:

Up to **250,000 adults need education support:**

- High School Equivalency
  - **55,000** are without high school degrees
- Adult Basic Education
  - **80,000 are functionally illiterate**
- English Language Learner
  - **115,000** speak English less than “very well”

AECI partners currently serve less than 1% of these.

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National Assessment of Adult Literacy by the National Center for Education Statistics, 2003; American Community Survey, 2016; TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Working together differently

COLLECTIVE IMPACT
Overview from Collective Impact Forum

https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/getting-started
Building a solution using collective impact framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 CONDITIONS OF COLLECTIVE IMPACT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common Agenda</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common understanding of the problem.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shared vision for change.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Backbone Support</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Separate organization(s) with staff.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resources and skills to convene and coordinate participating organizations.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Continuous Communication</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Consistent and open communication.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus on building trust.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mutually Reinforcing Activities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Differentiating approaches.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coordination through joint plan of action.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shared Measurement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Collecting data And measuring results.</td>
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<td>Focus on performance management.</td>
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<td>Shared accountability.</td>
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Why use collective impact?

**Not all problems are created equal**

Technical problems can be solved by the knowledge of experts; the definition, solution, and implementation are clear.

Adaptive problems require new learning; they involve a disparity between values and circumstances.
## Technical Problems vs. Adaptive Problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technical Problems</th>
<th>Adaptive Problems</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easy to identify</td>
<td>Difficult to identify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Require change in a few places</td>
<td>Require change in values, relationships, approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current expertise exists</td>
<td>Require change across multiple organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solutions can be implemented quickly</td>
<td>Solutions take a long time; experimental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People are generally receptive</td>
<td>People often resist</td>
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</table>
Can you identify the type of problem?

Technical vs Adaptive problems
Problems to be Addressed Through Collective Impact

Adult Literacy services in our community currently reach approximately 1% of the target population in need.

One of the primary barriers to increasing our service to this population is a lack of ACCESS to providers.

This lack of ACCESS takes the form of mismatched needs, logistical obstacles, and limited availability of the right service for the right learner in the right location.

Before we focus on increasing capacity to serve (Phase Two of our work together) we must begin by improving use of existing resources.
We propose our work together start with a better understanding of the full picture of adult literacy services shared between all of the literacy support providers.

With a “big picture view,” we will work together to direct learners to the best opportunities that fit their needs and to service providers with the capacity to serve them in a timely and culturally appropriate way.

Once we have maximized the use of the current system, we will use the data we collect together to share best practices and to build capacity in ways and where it is most needed.
Right Learner in the Right Seat at the Right Time.
Nineteen agencies have formed the Adult Education Collective Impact (AECI).

We are working together to achieve our goal:

We will triple the number of adults achieving their educational goals by 2025 and create a network able to better serve more people.
AECI Partners

Nashville Public Library
Nashville Adult Literacy Council
Workforce Essentials
Begin Anew
TN Language Center
TN Department of Labor and Workforce
Nashville OIC
Institute for Educational Volunteer Programs
MNPS, EL office

Nashville State Community College
Nashville Career Advancement Center
Salvation Army
NICE
American Job Center
THEC
Chamber/TN Reconnect
YWCA
Salvation Army
The structure for the work

**Backbone Leadership**

- Steering Committee

  **Data Working Group**
  - What data do we have?
  - What data do we need?
  - What do we currently collect and measure?

  **Referrals Working Group**
  - Assessments
  - Services
  - Matching products

  **Research/Communication Working Group**
  - Comparisons with other cities
  - Common messaging and community awareness
6 roles of Backbone Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting aligned activities</th>
<th>NPL</th>
<th>NALC</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Coordinate and facilitate partner’s continuous communication</td>
<td>• Recruit and convene partners and key external stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Seek out opportunities for alignment with other efforts</td>
<td>• Ensure taskforces are being data driven</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shared measurement</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Collect, analyze, interpret, and report data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Catalyze or develop shared measurement systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide technical assistance for building partners’ data capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide vision</td>
<td>• Build a common understanding of the problem</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Serve as a thought leader/standard bearer for the initiative</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ensure common agenda is updated as strategy unfolds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobilize resources</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Mobilize and align public and private resources to support</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>initiatives goals (and the backbone itself)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance policy</td>
<td>• Stay on top of policy developments that impact the effort</td>
<td>Advocate for an aligned policy agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build community engagement</td>
<td>• Support community member engagement activities</td>
<td>Create a sense of urgency and articulate a call to action</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Produce and manage communications (news release, reports, etc)</td>
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Where are we now? And what’s next?

Phase I: Build trusting relationships, create governance, and understand capabilities and core competencies.

Phase II: Implement technology system with defined outcome measures and clear referral processes.

Phase III: Recommend program improvements for scalable growth with quality services.

Phase IV: Sustain and continue long term growth.
What does that look like?

Phase I & II

Phase III & IV

Future Outcomes

- Standardized Intake
- Precise Referrals
- Shared Data
- Student Oriented Goals
- Process Improvement
- Barriers Identified and Addressed
- Increased financial stability
- Stronger Workforce
- Coordinated Learning
- Improved K-12
- Decreased poverty
- Convenient Access
- Social Enterprise
- Increased stability
- Increased taxpayer savings
- Reduced Healthcare Costs
- Reduced Crime

Future Outcomes:

- Decreased poverty
- Improved K-12
- Stronger Workforce
- Process Improvement
- Reduced Crime
- Reduced Healthcare Costs
- Increased financial stability
- Increased stability
- Increased taxpayer savings
Steps: Partnerships

- Create formal agreements with core agencies to define roles, responsibilities, and governance structure for the next two – three years
- Increase leadership capacity of the group through coaching from CNM consultants
- Ensure core members engage in collective work on a monthly basis
- Host at least one community awareness event to build support for the vision for change
- Identify redundancies between agencies for potential consolidation
Steps: Strategic Planning

- Conduct at least two student focus groups to learn about barriers to success and ensure our plans address them
- Create a three-year strategic plan with milestones for reaching the collective goal by 2025
- Create a one-year project plan
- Manage the project plan through consistent, streamlined, communication software
Steps: Technology

- Define shared data measures for success
- Build upon baseline data through the Adult Education Dashboard:
  - Number of learners enrolled
  - Number of educational goals achieved
  - Number of active students
- Document the “ideal state for referrals” between adult education partners (future state will include referrals between other collectives and agencies providing supplemental services)
- Using the “ideal state for referrals,” create detailed business and technical requirements for building a data system
- Gather vendor bids for system selection and implementation
Are you ready to transform the system?
Collective Impact Feasibility Framework

1. Which specific social problem should we focus on in this community?
   - Assess the specific social problem you want to address by selecting the social problem that allows you to... dramatically improve social outcomes... take advantage of recent changes in the landscape (e.g., policy changes)... urgently respond to a community need.
   - Select social problem to focus on.

2. Are there multiple actors in the system who can influence this social problem?
   - If yes, consider collaborative approach to solve social problem.
   - If no, consider programmatic solution and/or capacity building.

3. If yes, is collective impact the most appropriate solution for solving this social problem in this community?
   - Complexity of the social problem
   - Scale of the social problem
   - Is the system fragmented, disconnected, and broken?
     - If no, consider a programmatic solution.
   - If yes, do multiple sectors need to work together to address the issue?
   - Are the majority of end-users in that system affected by this social problem?

4. If yes, is this community ready for cross-sector collaboration?
   - Are there influential champions who can provide local leadership?
   - Do financial resources exist to support collaboration for at least 12 months?
   - Is there a history of collaboration in the local community?
   - Is there urgency for change on this issue?
Applying the framework to YOUR community
What will change: from the learner’s perspective

- Reduced wasted opportunities
- More options
- Robust referrals
- Increased opportunities
- Increased success
- Decreased service silos
Q&A
Stay in touch

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Kim Karesh
kkaresh@nashvilleliteracy.org
Barrier: staff turnover

When someone would leave a partner agency, they took their understanding of the program with them. New staff members not only needed to get onboarded for their positions, but for the CI group as well.

Removed by:

Creation of role descriptions and on-boarding processes that get the new contributor quickly up to speed, while removing this burden from the agency. This created a near seamless transition for the CI work.
Barrier: agency buy-in

Before we could get data, we needed to ensure agencies and other partners would trust us with their data.

Removed by:
Using the common agenda components from CI, we established an environment with no hidden agendas, no shaming, trust and transparency. This initiative improves each individual agency’s capabilities and, in the long run, improves ROI on those existing agencies in which we’ve already invested.
Barrier: data availability

We needed not just numbers about who needs services – but capabilities and utilization at agencies as well. Together this would create a clear picture of our current state.

Removed by:

Extensive research and data mapping by our Work Groups, as well as continued relationship building with agency partners.
What have we accomplished to date?
Success: **governance and scope**

- Formal agreements in place with core agencies to define roles, responsibilities, and governance structure for the next three years.

- Common agenda and defined scope for work:
  
  Davidson County focused
  
  Serving people outside of K-12 education
  
  Focused on the continuum of adult education – not just one specialized literacy
  
  A drive to recognize the juncture points between service systems.
Success: **clear & efficient operations**

- Three-year strategic plan in place with milestones for reaching the collective goal by 2025.
- Efficient, central communication hub for filesharing, project tracking and collaboration via Basecamp platform.
- Clear roles defined with supporting materials to quickly onboard new team members.
- Identification of redundancies between agencies for potential consolidation and more efficient use of resources.
Success: **piloting a dashboard**

Using gathered data, partner capabilities, shared best practices and other utilization research, we built and have been piloting a shared dashboard.
Better technology means a better use of everyone’s resources – including those we serve.
Phase II technology sprints

Optimize NALC’s Salesforce instance with Power BI reporting to create a prototype of what is possible

Select a second agency for deployment, noting what works well and what needs to be improved

Create a minimum viable product (MVP) for other agencies through design documentation and final system selection

Make enhancements identified in Beta

Add a state-funded agency to create an auto-generated CSV the state can accept

Enhance and train

Roll Out
Q&A: Where are you getting your data?

ProLiteracy
TN Department of Workforce and Labor
Census
Metro Social Services
MNPS
Project Management Perspective

Time
- Low Quality
- Scope Change

Cost
- Expensive
- Slow

Quality
- Slow
- Expensive
- Scope Change
- Low Quality
Measuring Success

Sample early performance indicators focused on quality of **design** and **implementation**

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**Table 3:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CI ELEMENT</th>
<th>INDICATORS</th>
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</table>
| **Common Agenda** | • The initiative’s Steering Committee (or other leadership structure) includes voices from all relevant sectors and constituencies  
• Members of the target population help shape the common agenda  
• Partners and the broader community understand and can articulate the problem  
• Geographical boundaries and population targets are clear for all partners  
• Partners use data (qualitative and quantitative) to inform selection of strategies and actions |
| **Backbone Infrastructure (BBI)** | • The initiative’s Steering Committee (SC) or other leadership structure includes a diverse set of voices and perspectives from multiple, relevant sectors and constituencies  
• Backbone staff (BB staff) are respected by important partners and external stakeholders  
• Partners look to the BBI and SC for initiative support, strategic guidance, and leadership  
• BBI provides project management support, including monitoring progress toward goals and connecting partners to discuss opportunities, challenges, gaps, and overlaps  
• BBI convenes partners and key external stakeholders to ensure the alignment of activities and pursue new opportunities  
• SC regularly reviews SMS data on progress toward goals and uses it to inform strategic decision making |
## Measuring Success

### The Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Collaboration Project</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Statements about Your Collaborative Group:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral, No Opinion</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| History of collaboration or cooperation in the community | 1. Agencies in our community have a history of working together.  
2. Trying to solve problems through collaboration has been common in this community. It has been done a lot before. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Collaborative group seen as a legitimate leader in the community | 3. Leaders in this community who are not part of our collaborative group seem hopeful about what we can accomplish.  
4. Others (in this community) who are not a part of this collaboration would generally agree that the organizations involved in this collaborative project are the “right” organizations to make this work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Favorable political | 5. The political and social climate seems to be “right” for starting a collaborative project like this one. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
Evidence-based practice

National
Collective Impact Forum
SSRI
Aspen
Tamarck

Community-level
Memphis
Chattanooga
Pashallville, PA

Emerging
Vanderbilt
Research Allies (E-BES)
X-Prize
Including Learner Voice

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**Objective of the Approach**

- **Inform**: To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, or solutions.
- **Consult**: To gather feedback from targeted stakeholders on the project’s goals, processes, shared metrics, or strategies for change.
- **Involve**: To work directly with stakeholders continuously to ensure that concerns are consistently understood and considered.
- **Collaborate**: To partner with stakeholders in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and priorities.
- **Co-Lead**: To place final decision-making in the hands of stakeholders so that they drive decisions and implementation of the work.
Sample data point: wait lists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>English Language Learners</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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