

Research Tells Us:

National Assembly:

School/Community Collaborations MATRIX: Page 1

Elements of a Successful Collaboration (from literature review)	Obstacles to Collaboration (from obstacle survey)	Promising Practices in Collaboration (from survey/ interviews/sites)	Practical Applications of the Promising Practice (from site visits)
Shared vision and decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turf issues - Unclear roles & responsibilities - Different perceptions of accountability - Different goals & philosophies 	Establish a collaboration goal of finding common ground that is larger than any turf issue, where everyone's voice is heard. In after-school collaboration that goal was most often improving the well-being of children.	The way in which the collaboration achieves its goal is not stagnant. Time and experience often leads to a greater understanding of differing approaches and shared decision-making.
Clear communication structure.		Create regular opportunities for open discussion among collaborating partners.	Use quarterly meetings, retreats, listservs, advisory councils and/or working committee structures.
Key stakeholders should be involved from the beginning.		Convene planning meetings before any action or decisions are taken. A lead agency needs to call the meeting but should not make unilateral decisions, although program funders may have imposed requirements.	<p>Involvement in the planning process is more than a letter of support.</p> <p>All the key players need to be at the table and valued for their unique contributions.</p>
Strong link between academic and youth development programs.		Decentralize decision-making to individual schools about how to balance after school program activities between academic and youth development.	<p>Create site-based committees to balance the youth development and academic activities.</p> <p>Fund a site-based coordinator who is responsible for managing the day-to-day program and involvement of the partners.</p>

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Clear roles & responsibilities grounded in the planning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turf issues - Unclear roles & responsibilities - Different perceptions of accountability - Different goals & philosophies 	Use contracts, subcontracts, and letters of agreement to structure inter-organizational financial relationships and to define mutual rights and responsibilities.	School districts (or individual schools) use contracts, subcontracts, open purchase orders and letters of agreement to structure financial relationships with community agencies, to define goals, and to specify agencies' responsibilities.
Consensus on clear goal(s) with a method for measuring success.		Examine qualitative and quantitative measures of success, such as changes in attitude about collaboration.	Include an evaluation of the collaboration in the overall program evaluation.
Realistic timeline to accomplish goals, taking into account partners responsibilities outside of collaboration.		Develop methods to strengthen and reinforce relationships between individual school principals and the after-school program (and its partners).	Create site-based problem solving committees with representation from all partners.
Funding relationships should be established between schools, community and funding institutions.		Create an investment by potential program funders by including them in all stages of the project from planning to implementation and sustainability.	Develop a community-level governing or advisory committee to discuss program issues and mobilize support related to sustainability issues

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Collaboration should have ongoing staff development and other efforts to ensure focus and avoid burnout.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turf issues - Unclear roles & responsibilities - Different perceptions of accountability - Different goals & philosophies 	Provide initial and regular ongoing training for after-school program staff and collaboration partners.	Use regular meetings, retreats, and electronic communications to foster ongoing dialogue about the project vision, goals, alternative philosophies on how children learn and develop, and relationship to project activities.
School/ community collaboration should be responsive and active in the neighborhood and political process.		Encourage the involvement of children, parents, the community, potential funders, elected officials and the media to support the program and its continued operation.	Use a community-wide Visioning Day to develop the program and Community Nights to engage the larger community in the project.