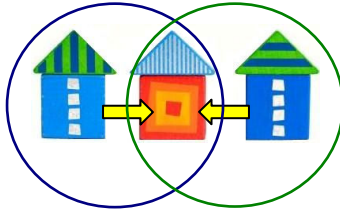


Finding Your Way: Building Community Approaches to HS/4K, October 21, 2008 Strategy Sessions – Notes from Participant Input



Seven topic tables were provided for participants to select from for ten minute strategy sessions. After ten minutes participants were asked to select another table and participate in a discussion surrounding that table's topic. Participants had the opportunity to participate in as many as six different discussions during this strategy session. Staff of the forum's sponsoring agencies provided facilitation and assisted each group's discussion related to three guiding questions and recorded participant responses, found below.

Table 1: **MOUs** - The Head Start Act requires Head Start grantees, no later than December 17, 2008, to enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the appropriate local entity responsible for managing publicly funded preschool (pre-kindergarten) programs in their service area.

Facilitator: Shelley Cousin, Executive Director, Wisconsin Head Start Association
cousin@whsaonline.org

a) Describe assistance that would be most helpful to support Head Start grantees and school districts in the process of developing Head Start / school district MOUs.

We need assistance with:

- Managing MOU completion within the time constraint
 - i. Create a worksheet/checklist for use by all to help in assuring each and every required MOU item is addressed
 - ii. Identify subsequent renewal(s) may be a better option to make explicit more and different items for inclusion in the MOU
 - a. Understanding how the MOU actually improves outcomes
 - b. Evaluating what works in individual services leading to continual improvement
 - c. Promoting community approaches to Head Start and 4K where it currently doesn't occur
- Sharing templates of agreements and MOUs; creating a document pool (5)
 - i. Include samples that address variables – where Head Start and 4K written agreement exists, but must be updated; where no Head Start and school district agreement exists, but school district 4K does; where school district declines participation in underwriting MOU, etc.
- Getting school districts to the table as this is a Head Start, not a school district, mandate
- Interpreting the federal DHHS/ACF/OHS MOU requirement where:
 - i. Head Start grantee *is* the school district or a CESA
 - ii. Head Start and school district 4K don't share *any* services
 - iii. Documented efforts in place for completion of MOUs by 12/17/08 may satisfy this first year requirement

- Contacting the right person at DPI and/or CESA
 - i. Considering CESA as a hub for MOU activity between school districts and Head Start (3)
 - Identifying who the appropriate school district contact may be, e.g. admin, superintendent, elementary school principal, 4K coordinator, etc. (6)
 - Anticipating (and overcoming in the time allowed) the legal requirements and approval systems within both Head Start and school district settings
 - i. Submission to both federal authorities (via DHHS/ACF/OHS regional office) and state authorities (via DCF/HSSCO) may heighten concerns and raise stakes
 - a. Applies to both revising existing contracts as well as drafting of new MOUs
 - Underwriting MOUs with stand-alone 4Ks – where Head Start and school district 4K don't share any services
 - i. Trying to undersign an agreement with a stand-alone may make them more resistant to future partnership with Head Start
 - Documenting where attempts failed and school district refusal does occur
 - i. Include template in document pool
 - Considering both geographic and demographic matters
 - i. Some multi-county Head Start programs may not provide any Head Start services in those rural 4K school districts with whom they must underwrite an MOU – many miles between Head Start program services and these outlying school districts
 - ii. Some multi-county Head Start programs have upwards of 30 or more school districts with whom to underwrite MOUs whereas school districts will largely see the MOU process on a one-to-one basis
- b) Highlight ideas of coordinated activities between Head Start and school districts regarding :1) Shared use of transportation and facilities; 2) Collaboration resulting in reduced duplication; and, enhanced efficiency of services that result in increased participation of the underserved; and, 3) Exchange of information on the provision of non-education services to children.
- No Discussion
- c) How might support be coordinated between those Head Start grantees and school districts with current written agreements and Head Start grantees/ districts who are drafting an MOU for the first time?
- DPI should issue a notice to each school district contact and copy Head Start directors
 - DPI could create a liaison in each of the CESAs for Head Start and school district MOU writing and partnership services
 - DPI could share the existing templates used in 0-3 through CESA as host
 - Consider CESAs as a 'meeting of the minds' - a source common to both Head Start and school districts

Table 2: Professional Development – Staff qualifications, training and support
Facilitator: Linda Leonhart, Director, Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO), Department of Children and Families
Linda.Leonhart@wisconsin.gov

- a) Describe the training, technical assistance, and higher education support that is or would be most helpful in supporting Head Start/4K partnerships.
- Monthly trainings, collaboratively planned, for credit, CESA-linked.
 - District trainings open to all partners on Saturdays and evenings. Registry labels, all child care providers invited.
 - Registration on the school district website.
 - Concern: not enough accessible higher education programs leading to EC certification.
- b) What cross-sector professional development strategies have you found most helpful in supporting community approaches to 4K?
- UW-Milwaukee has a degree program allowing student teaching where people are.
 - Taught a “co-teaching” module to community providers (offered by district).
 - Wisconsin Model of Early Learning Standards (WMELS) training within communities.
 - Use of regional collaboration communities.
 - CESA regional licensing centers.
 - Viterbo offering an add-on EC degree evenings and weekends.
 - Stevens Point has online EC courses.
 - UW-Stout is considering an online EC degree program.
 - Red Cliff has an on-site BA program.
 - Cardinal-Stritch College of Urban Education focuses on language and literacy (reduced tuition).
 - Lac Courte Oreilles College (Hayward) has various on-site classes.
 - Concern: online degree programs.
 - Challenge: EC practica on-site?
 - CESA 9 trainings- evenings and weekends, creative curriculum, etc.
 - EC practica challenge: finding subs.
- c) How do the CESA regional teacher licensing centers and regional collaboration coaches support your 4K professional development efforts? What additional support is needed?
- Get HS staff approved as a cooperating teacher to supervise on-site practica.
 - At Viterbo, classes for credit can be offered.
 - District offering professional development to all partners.
 - Eau Claire gives out articles (Teaching Young Children (TYC)).
 - Photos of best practices in 4K (a PowerPoint presentation).
 - UW system needs to work with 2 year campuses to get EC classes throughout the state.
 - Counseling re: range of opportunities in EC besides public schools.
 - UW-Oshkosh has an accelerated PK-6 degree program in evenings and weekends.
 - PI34- need for greater district support for HS teachers (Eau Claire, use of district mentors).
 - District Professional Development Program (PDP) review team (Black River Falls).
 - Challenge of varying curriculum programs (WMELS training helps) for reporting, data sharing, etc.

Table 3: Parent Involvement – Involving parents in the collaboration building process
Facilitator: Jessica Grassie, WI TA Specialist, Region 5 Technical Assistance Network
Grassie_Jessica@bah.com

- a) What approaches have you considered that have been successful in gaining parent involvement?
- Record, track and document hours of parent outreach.
 - Develop a 4K Plan and a HS Plan that outline guidelines for parent involvement.
 - Use surveys and analyze HS/4K data to set guidelines for parent involvement.
 - Plan HS/4K events in the spring and fall.
 - Consider providing Family Service credentialing training to teachers-both HS and 4K.
 - Both HS and the school district promote parent involvement.
 - School district opens up their events to HS.
 - Every 3rd Thursday school district has an event (Fall Festival) and opens it up to the community.
 - Develop surveys for parents and plan from their feedback.
 - Planned an ice cream social and provided entertainment that was a result of parent surveys.
 - As a result of parent surveys, began holding events on Saturdays between 1pm and 3pm.
- b) Describe some key strategies that you have used to maintain parent involvement?
- Community collaboration relationships.
 - Provide services *at the site*, then both are meeting their needs.
 - Partner with VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) services
 - VISTA comes up with a plan.
 - VISTA completes community services.
 - VISTA provides services for a maximum up to three years.
 - Need to renew service plan annually.
 - Community Service Fund (Fund 80) - restricted use of funds by school district.
- c) Describe some community activities/outreach that has been successful in encouraging/promoting parent involvement.
- Parents completed surveys and we found what their interests were: research on education, job training, and computer training, etc.
 - Would hold events during hours parents were available and could attend (weekends).
 - Held focus groups for parents. Use of facilitators with focused questions yielded good feedback from parents.
 - i. Examples of Focus Groups included: parents of HS, community parents, child care parents and other parents who showed an interest in attending.
 - ii. Parent recruits were provided by the local health clinic resources.
 - iii. Provided dinner, food, child care, and gift cards to parents that participate.
 - iv. You find out exactly what parent interests are by having focus groups.
 - Provide family field trips - parents remember this from their childhood and want to re-experience it with their children.

- d) Other comments about parent involvement.
- Community partners coming together to fund an event(s) for parents in the community.
 - When community events involve all partners in collaborations, there are more resources, opportunities for networking and recruitment.
 - Practice the "Pay It Forward" concept where the parent pays it forward to another parent outside of school to get parents involved, once every month.
 - When holding family fun night event, some staff have to stay later
 - i. Have clear expectations with staff and union staff.
 - ii. Communicate and have patience with the union/results; union wrote in more time for staff in the contract the next year.
 - College credits for family service credentialing. "Buy in for staff."
 - HS helps in forming relationships with parents and assists school district in maintaining parent involvement.
 - School district more involved with parents because of HS approach.

Table 4: **Getting Started** - Coalescing the multitude of voices, priorities, and opinions.
Facilitator: Wendy Bowe, WI TA Specialist, Region 5 Technical Assistance Network
[Bowe Wendy@bah.com](mailto:Wendy@bah.com)

- a) Describe some key strategies for team building and communication among partners.
- Set an appropriate location of meeting/time.
 - Provide food and they will come.
 - All enough time for discussions, adhere to time frames (starting/ending times).
 - Use a common language; try to avoid jargon and alphabet soup.
 - All participants need to have an open mind, don't judge.
 - Start small (in # of people and tasks).
 - Offer samples of other community approaches from which to build from.
 - Share missions with each other and create joint mission for the collaboration.
 - Listen to their fears to learn what to pay attention to.
 - Being organized.
 - Show commitment but try not to be too pushy.
 - Show needs to one another.
 - Link the school district together.
 - Dispel rumors (anticipate what they might be to head them off before they become an issue).
 - Don't load up new partners with standards and regulations.
 - Be aware of common goal. Set one if needed.
 - Get right people at the table (determine who that includes).
 - Create common vision to go with your mission.
 - Bring partners to regular HS meetings so they get a feel for the overall program.
 - Create a one pager on options for a community (highlight benefits).
 - Work with parents early on to get feedback and buy in.
- b) How can you ensure all partners have opportunities to voice their priorities and opinions when entering into collaboration?
- Stick to agenda.
 - Set ground rules, stick to them.

- Visit each potential host site.
 1. Breakfast at a center once a month
 2. Visit sites/ask questions
 3. Meet and greet (lunch/site visit).
 - Get feedback/follow up from meeting.
 - Remind the group that: Everyone’s in this for the children”.
 - Minutes sent out to all parties in a timely fashion.
 - Utilize list serves/providing information means being transparent.
 - Keep trying even after failure.
 - Form subcommittees of smaller numbers so all can communication and share ideas.
 - Bring in an outside facilitator to move the group along.
 - Ensure each member has an understanding of regulations of HS and school district.
 - Value each others’ ideas.
 - Share “general” contract so that expectations are discussed from the beginning.
 - Learn about each other at every meeting.
 - Write down all questions at the beginning of the meeting and prioritize them.
 - Clarify issues as they arise.
 - Provide an environment where everyone feels welcomed.
 - Establish common times to communicate.
 - Get right people to the table.
- c) Name a successful communication tool used among collaborative teams.
- Invite the newspaper for written press and pictures.
 - Distribute minutes to all parties.
 - Create a panel presentation /open forum for questions.
 - Create an idea box for those who may not be as comfortable speaking in the group.
 - Use ice breakers at the beginning and during meetings.
 - Keep levels of opinion professional.
 - Do not make comparisons of this group to any others.
 - Respect/listen to everyone.
 - Get a good facilitator to lead your group.
 - Provide collaborative resources (create resource list together).
 - Talk about concerns first.
 - Give HS overview to all parents.
 - HS annual report may be a good tool for sharing what HS is about.
 - Public Awareness of school board members is important.
 - Establish community committee led by HS to discuss impacts on community partners.

Table 5: Challenges to Collaboration among Partners - Time to communicate and build consensus of multiple agencies and multi-disciplinary teams
Facilitator: Mary Peters, Early Childhood Consultant/619 Coordinator, Department of Public Instruction
Mary.Peters@dpi.wi.gov

- a) Describe your process for successfully communicating with multiple agencies and staff.

- Go to the partners to get started. Use phone, email resources. Use cc to share info.
- Staff moving between- agreement: assign “buddy school”, use for parent outreach, resource centers, familiarity with staff, directors, families.
- Provide access to email- a computer in each center.
- Regular meetings with all partners (monthly, weekly, or bimonthly), facilitated by an impartial person, and fixed location.
- Share meeting minutes to inform all.
- 4K point of contact coordinator Have one in every classroom (visits, observes, etc). Determine one person responsible between 4K coordinator and HS manager (i.e. who to call?).

b) Highlight ideas for sharing Head Start Performance Standards (HSPS) and requirements with collaborative partners.

- Phone.
- Dependent upon the stage of collaboration; situational.
- Learn as you go.
- Play by and know your own rules.
- Process of informing.
- Email. Ensure everyone has access.
- Ensure everyone has vision and is on the same page by having ongoing meetings and promoting ownership/creation of vision.
- Make sure there’s one key contact person or a small group of contact people.
 - Open the building for meeting.
 - Email /set site for large group/set agenda/coordinate/connect
- Principal and site coordinator jointly hold meeting for all staff.
- Try to agree and co-exist- then able to focus on planning. Need to look at how to be responsible and non-duplicative.
- Curriculum assessment – share data – WMELS.
- Life is a process - take it to the next step!
- Coordinator and teacher partnership within the program. Email eliminates distance/space barriers.
- Involve 5K- bring up what has been a problem, e.g. meal, transportation
- B-6 Interagency Council established- same place, B-3 facilities, and bi-monthly.
- Steering committee, annual plan and monthly meetings, strategic planning, process contract review, MOU requirements.
- Collaborative staff development HS, 4K, EC once a month.
- Staff meeting-need to talk.
- Teacher breakfast- rotates monthly, each site provides.
- Cross training beneficial to all conferences (like this!) – all partners. Once a month for HS/EC/4K.
- Biggest success: People doing the work! Intertwined job role.

c) Describe ways to build time for partner discussions.

- Breakfast meetings
 - Voluntary.
 - Each site hosts/provides food.
 - Team-to-Team facilitated.
 - Meet monthly - 15 min. topic and open time for networking.

- Establish day and time and stick to it.
- Teachers meet each week (Friday, 1 hour)
- Professional development: scheduled monthly, no cost to partners.
- Required monthly meeting/professional development for teachers and directors. How to keep it fresh?
- Registry labels/required topics and others. If required, the district pays. E.g., 2-Day Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA).
- Discuss what we all do the same, what can be autonomous, what needs to be collaborative. Set up outcomes. Address complexity through MOU.

Table 6: Public Awareness and Community Support - Child care and preschool providers concerns for economic impact on their small businesses

Facilitator: Robin Mainhardt, Director, Project Bridges Child Care Resource and Referral; Northern Region Collaboration Coach, Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners (WECCP)

bridges@hyhc.com

- a) Describe effective community awareness activities used to inform the community of a new HS/4K partnership.
- Articles in the newspaper.
 - Questions and answers.
 - Public forums.
 - Start communicating about and sending information before the 4K program goes in affect.
 - Parent survey through census list. Do a parent survey using the census list –only would go to 4K eligible families.
 - Brochure of programs – distribute ahead of programming- school district, HS center, pre-school, child care.
 - HS met/ corresponded with families to let them know they had a choice in type of program – 4K for all children (3 year old parents).
 - Translations for families-bilingual.
 - Transition information provided by the committee to the families.
 - Child development days- info on 4K, nurse, teacher, language specialist; creates awareness to parents.
 - Conduct surveys during popular events, e.g., community ice cream social; gathered the information needed for other planning as well. Survey included baseline info: what do they need? What hours for meetings? Weekends? How to get bigger turnouts – parents identify subjects they need/want.
 - Brochure for school district with collaboration partners showing where everything is located (map) mailed out to all families with four year olds.
 - Meet and greet with staff of 4K and HS.
 - Printed media/newsletters.
 - TV/Public access station.
 - Community event with a bike give away; community involvement.
 - More awareness of types of programs available.
 - Continual meetings/awareness.
 - Bilingual awareness needed.
 - Block party, involved businesses (gave money) donations and school, 4K, child care, HS. Flyers dropped off, toured the program and won free food items.

- Flyers passed out at HS/private school. Petting zoo, kids got school supplies and backpacks. Kids got to perform. Created awareness of this program.-involved the kids to involve the parents.
- Create yearbook.

b) How have you involved child care/preschool providers in the discussions of a new HS/4K partnership?

- Involved in IEPs.
- Invited initially.
- Newsletters from HS to providers.
- Monthly meetings with HS/providers/coordinator of 4K.
- Task force: invited, report taken to school building.
- Invited to planning meeting.
- Childcare has benefited.
- How can they become part of the collaboration- child care providers now calling (with interest).
- Participate in training/resources.
- Providers located four-in-one location for providing 4K. (Providers brought kids together so their children could receive 4K services in one location.)
- Director's meeting from beginning- everyone from community.
- Used license list.
- Personal invitation.
- Four times a year- community outreach/partnership meetings.
- Assuring parents their kids wouldn't miss out in collaboration with programs for district.
- Involve in professional development, see focus is the kids. (teacher competition)
- Books for Kids (grant program)-open to any one teacher, child care program. Each child can have their own library.
- Kohl's department store -Books & Bear.
- Involved Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) to have connections to providers.
- Collaboration Coach involved; provided neutral modeling of involvement.
- Directly invited.
- WMELS training.

c) What are some successful strategies that you have used to gain community support?

- Public awareness meeting was a successful strategy.
- Four to five events each year to get sites together (example of one event: Kid Olympics).
- Open community forums.
 - Dennis Winters (Department of Workforce Development) on financial impact.
 - Many media present (resulting in media changing position on issues).
 - Polling parents (how many used child care, etc.)
 - Dependent on parties involved and interest.
 - Lots of presentations in community.
 - School board presentations.
 - Using knowledge that is here already (current 4K models).
- Surveys for parents of children.

- Faith-based Eau Claire provider talked to providers on successes.
- Workshop presentation to get providers on board (include bar codes-Registry).
- Help from UW survey on community values; build on those values.
 - Professor- random survey to community.
 - Element of those who thought kids too little.
- Media tour, speak to research to get at values.
- Marketing plan.
- Answering questions on district website.
- Different community groups meetings.
- Gain parental support (use media, parents able to connect to a real person).
- HS talking to parents/providers group.
- Want to be win/win.
 - Superintendent, all speaking same language.
 - Advocate among school district ranks that child care providers trust.
- Many different meetings with partner saying the same things the same way.
- Professional approach with providers.

Table 7: Service Delivery/Program Design – Regulations affecting design and service delivery of program options.

Facilitator: Linda Hurst, Preschool Consultant, Department of Public Instruction's Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program; Southeast Region Collaboration Coach, Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners (WECCP)
Linda.Hurst@dpi.wi.gov

- a) In order to implement 4K using community approaches, how have schools and/or Head Start changed their "traditional" service delivery/program design?
- Extended days for HS.
Waiver requested to interpret meal time as instructional time (social cognition times). Some communities institute this policy without requesting waiver.
 - Lesson plan, goals are similar across sites.
 - Creative approaches to serving same number of 4K-4 year olds (mix HS and non- HS).
 - District staff doing home visits.
 - Combined enrollment and other forms into single unified form for all sites.
 - Extended year for 4 year olds.
 - Mixed ages in 4K classroom as response to low enrollment.
- b) What federal or state regulations have been barriers to implementing 4K and Head Start Community Approaches?
- Required number of hours.
 - Meals - family-style, also dealing with diversity of family responses to meals. (i.e., bringing bag lunches/snacks).
 - Transportation- parent transportation, bus monitors, child restraints.
 - Requiring children to be within "sight and sound".
 - Requirements for evaluations.
 - Different licensing interpretations by different licensing specialists.
 - Licensing standards varying from one program to another.
- c) How can different service delivery/program designs help maintain access to children in rural areas as 4K is implemented and/or Head Start attendance areas are reduced?
- Child assessment - district adopts a HS model or uses two models.
 - Identified uniform curriculum across sites.
 - Stronger focus on parent involvement (family-partnership agreements) for district.
- d) Challenges?
- Image of HS as separate from the district and child care.
 - Segregation of students from poverty.
 - Increase in amount of paper work.
 - Changes in contract agreements from year to year.
 - Boundaries between school districts and children attending whose parents work in another district.
 - Building trusting relationships.
 - Maintaining student data collection (skyward).
 - Differing opinions about how to implement Response To Intervention (RTI).

Follow Up Questions

Facilitator: Jill Haglund, Early Childhood Consultant, DPI

Jill.Haglund@dpi.wi.gov

a) MOUs

- Timeline – first year deadline is a concern (by 12/17/09).
- Cross-departmental support. What if districts refuse?
- Need for sharing MOU examples.
- How to document outreach hours requirement? (87.5 hours available to everyone)

b) Parent outreach examples

- Orientation.
- Screenings.
- Home visits
- Educational components for field trips.
- Connect to parent education.
- Availability to everyone.

c) Problem of socioeconomic segregation by program in small communities.