ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation:	TYING IT TOGETHER: EDUCATION-FOCUSED COMMUNITY CHANGE INITIATIVES

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Policymakers make many demands of our schools to produce academic success. At the same time, community organizations, government agencies, faith-based institutions, and other groups often are providing support to students and their families, especially those from high-poverty backgrounds, that are meant to impact education but are often insufficient, uncoordinated, or redundant. In many cases, these institutions lack access to schools and school leaders. What's missing from the dominant education reform discourse is a coordinated education-focused approach that mobilizes community assets to effectively improve academic and developmental outcomes for students. This study explores how education-focused comprehensive community change initiatives (CCIs) that utilize a partnership approach are organized and sustained.

In this study, I examine three research questions:

1. Why and how do school system-level community change initiative (CCI) partnerships form?

2. What are the organizational, financial, and political structures that support sustainable CCIs? What, in particular, are their connections to the school systems they seek to impact?

3. What are the leadership functions and structures found within CCIs? How are leadership functions distributed across schools and agencies within communities?

To answer these questions, I used a cross-case study approach that employed a secondary data analysis of data that were collected as part of a larger research study sponsored by a national organization. The original study design included site visits and extended interviews with educators, community leaders and practitioners about community school initiatives, one type of CCI.

This study demonstrates that characteristics of sustained education-focused CCIs include leaders that are critical to starting the CCIs and are willing to collaborate across institutions, a focus on community problems, building on previous efforts, strategies to improve service delivery, a focus on education and schools in particular, organizational arrangements that create shared leadership and ownership for the CCI, an intermediary to support the initial vision and collaborative leadership groups, diversified funding approaches, and political support. These findings add to the literature about the growing number of education-focused CCIs. The study's primary recommendation—that institutions need to work across boundaries in order to sustain CCIs organizationally, financially, and politically—can help policymakers as they develop new collaborative approaches to achieving educational goals.

TYING IT TOGETHER: EDUCATION-FOCUSED COMMUNITY CHANGE INITIATIVES

by

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Policymakers make many demands of our schools to produce academic success. At the same time, community organizations, government agencies, faith-based institutions, and other groups often are providing supports to students and their families, especially those from high-poverty backgrounds, that are meant to impact education but are often insufficient, uncoordinated, or redundant. In many cases, these institutions lack access to schools and school leaders (Kubisch, 2010c). Good intentions and siloed efforts are insufficient for creating more opportunities for children to be successful. Policymakers and education practitioners seem to lack the vision for a comprehensive approach to all the factors that contribute to a child's success both inside and outside of the school's control. What's missing from the dominant education reform discourse is a coordinated education-focused approach that mobilizes community assets to effectively improve academic and developmental outcomes for students.

Dominant education policies and practices at multiple levels of government contribute to an orientation in which schools are seen as the primary institution responsible for the academic development of children (Berliner, 2007). They are the ones ultimately held accountable. Principals, teachers, and district leaders are blamed when students fail to achieve desirable educational and developmental outcomes, and they face sanctions such as school closure or termination for such failures. Yet, the research has told us for years that multiple factors influence a child's development and progress beyond what happens inside of schools. Some observers have argued that if we hold schools solely accountable for academic results, without giving them the resources to address the needs of the "whole child," then we cannot expect to see success at scale (Rothstein, 2004). This study will examine the ways in which education-focused

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community change initiatives (CCIs) bring school and community partners together to identify and attain locally-defined goals that are designed to assist all children to thrive and succeed.

I begin with a description of some of the challenges schools experience. Next, I describe ways in which current education policies and practices rely on a narrow viewpoint that leaves schools primarily responsible for student attainment. I describe an alternative for education policymakers and practitioners that addresses the needs of the whole child through a comprehensive systemic school-community partnership approach I refer to as "education-focused community change initiatives." I end with a description of the purpose and significance of this study and the research questions I will pursue.

The Challenges Schools Encounter

Schools face challenges inside and outside of the school building, especially in schools that serve low-income and minority students. Students in urban schools are confronted with numerous obstacles, despite fifty years of education reform. These obstacles may include violence in the hallways and near the school building, disruption from classmates, inexperienced and unqualified teachers, and poor school leadership. For example, during the 2005-2006 school year students in most high-poverty schools experienced twenty or more violent incidents at school such as rape, physical attacks, and robbery (Planty et al., 2009).

Students also experience obstacles outside the school building. For example, over half of the children in public schools are poor, as defined by free and reduced price lunch status (Suitts, 2015). Poverty has important implications for student readiness and attainment. In addition, many urban children must deal with nutrition and hunger problems. Half of America's children will receive food stamps before they are 20 years old, including 90 percent of black children

(Rank & Hirschl, 2009). These external factors are largely ignored by current education reform, even though they strongly influence what happens in schools and student performance (Berliner, 2009).

Students who come to school with severe home and community disadvantages are presented with numerous barriers to learning (Adelman & Taylor, 1997, 2006). Adelman and Taylor argue that students experience internal (e.g., biological and psychological) and external factors that influence learning. Examples of negative external factors that they cite include community factors (e.g., drugs, weapons, violence), family factors (e.g., family conflict), school factors (e.g., early academic failure), and peer factors (e.g., friends who engage in problem behavior). Adelman and Taylor utilize the theories of child development and ecological context (which I describe later in this section) to make the claim that schools must address both internal and external factors, all the opportunities and barriers to learning, if students are going to be able to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

While quality of teachers, school climate, and other in-school factors can influence learning, students experience numerous barriers to learning that have little to do with the quality of their school (Basch, 2011; Rothstein, 2004). Charles Basch (2011) conducted an extensive literature review on some of the health factors that influence student achievement and found that students with vision problems, asthma, teen pregnancy, hunger, and low physical activity had significantly poorer achievement outcomes. In his book, *Class and Schools,* Richard Rothstein reaches the same conclusions. After reviewing the evidence he asks, "How can it be other than that children with such inferior preparations for learning, with such health, housing, and

economic disadvantages, could do anything but perform less well, on average, in school" (2004, p. 59)?

In fact, while in-school factors such as teacher quality, school leadership, and class size impact measures of student learning, it has been argued that much of the variation in student achievement results from factors outside of schools. One study on the impact of school and neighborhood risk factors on student achievement demonstrated that "approximately a third of the variance in school-level academic performance is predicted by exposure to a set of risk factors largely or completely out of the control of school administrators and teachers" (Whipple, Evans, Barry, & Maxwell, 2010, p. 426). Rothstein's (Rothstein, 2011) estimate is even higher. His research shows that approximately two thirds of the variation in student achievement scores is attributable to external factors. Whether it's one third or two thirds of the variation in student achievement, what happens outside of school clearly impacts student success. Despite the obvious importance of external factors, schools aren't typically designed to address the myriad challenges students bring into the schoolhouse door, including social, emotional, nutritional, and developmental challenges (Basch, 2011). Nonetheless, these "contextual" problems become school problems.

What happens outside of the schoolhouse is something that educators, reformers, and policymakers shouldn't ignore. While some educators may try to minimize the impact of external factors, teachers have indicated that they are increasingly concerned about the broader well-being of their students, especially in the current economy, which has challenged all Americans, old and young alike (Markow & Peters, 2012). Our nation is facing growing inequality that threatens school reform and educational success (Duncan & Murnane, 2014). Economic and

social conditions are deteriorating for high-poverty families at the same time educators confront increased pressure to improve student test scores. In short, if we want our children to succeed, the research suggests that educators and policymakers must also focus on non-school factors (Bryk, 2010; Kirp, 2011).

Education policymakers and practitioners are more likely to act on what they can control within the school building, rather than address what happens to children outside of school. It's more likely that a school board superintendent or principal will change or "reform" those policies and practices they have responsibility for – namely, those affecting instruction within the school building, including the staff they employ. However, the challenges students encounter outside the school building don't disappear when students enter the classroom – they continue to influence learning and achievement.

These facts tell a story of instability and narrowness within our dominant education reform approaches. Policies place a significant burden on educators while largely ignoring the complexity of our collective responsibility to help students grow academically and socially. However, there are other approaches that take a more expansive view of what is required to educate all of our children, particularly those who are failing academically and face significant, non-school challenges. These comprehensive partnership-based strategies draw on resources from the entire community.

Dominant Education Reforms Focus on School-Alone Practices

One of the great debates taking place among education policymakers, researchers, and interest groups is whether students who live and work under restrictive, coercive community and educational conditions should be expected to perform as well as other students who do not face

these challenges? One argument claims that no matter what their background (e.g., poverty, hunger, or health), all students can achieve because there are "proof-points" (e.g., successful charter or exceptional public schools) that some students have achieved at high levels despite the aforementioned obstacles (Carter, 2000; Rothstein, 2004).

Policymakers have perpetuated the idea that schools can and should be solely accountable for a student's academic success. President Bush moved the country toward greater school accountability and a focus on within-school strategies when he decried the "soft bigotry of low expectations" ("Transcript of George W. Bush's Acceptance Speech," 2006). He joined others such as the Education Trust, select foundations (e.g., The Gates Foundation), and a new wave of district superintendents who sought to improve student test scores by focusing primarily on what can be influenced by education policymakers, such as class size, teacher quality, and school choice (Ravitch, 2010; Rothstein, 2004). President Obama has generally continued many of the same accountability and "reform" strategies President Bush put in place while also incorporating, in a relatively limited way, the revival of more comprehensive place-based partnership strategies such as Promise Neighborhoods.

The divide between the two approaches – one that demands educational success regardless of external factors and one that encourages addressing both in-school and external factors – is most clearly described by two "manifestos" released in 2008. These documents have set the tone for much of the debate about education reform that continues today (Goldstein, 2009). One group of advocates argues for a "no excuses" approach to education. Represented by the Education Equality Project, this group advocates human capital and market-based strategies such as teacher incentives and school choice (e.g., charter schools) as well as standards and test-

based accountability. They believe that the challenges students, families, and communities confront are too often used as excuses and that all children can learn regardless of the obstacles in their lives (Education Equality Project, n.d.).

In contrast, other policymakers, researchers, and educators take a different approach that emphasizes addressing the aforementioned contextual factors that have an impact on student achievement (Berliner, 2007; Coalition for Community Schools, 2008; Noddings, 2007; Rothstein, 2004). In their manifesto, *A Broader, Bolder Approach to Education*, notable leaders and researchers who are a part of this group, such as co-chairs Helen Ladd, Pedro Noguera, and Tom Payzant, argue that while instruction from qualified teachers is an essential ingredient in closing the achievement gap and improving outcomes for students, schools alone cannot improve student achievement (A Broader, Bolder Approach to Education, n.d.). They further claim that the issues children bring to school are not "excuses" – they are realities that must be addressed. Among their solutions are partnerships with families and community organizations; partnerships that attend to the academic, social, and emotional needs of the "whole child." The partnerships that I study are more characteristic of this later approach.

A More Comprehensive View of the Whole Child

One primary tenant behind theories of child development is that children require satisfaction of basic needs to develop the potential of the "whole child." James Comer demonstrates the impact of contextual factors on a child's development (Comer, Haynes, & Joyner, 1996). He based his theoretical framework of child development on social psychology theories, human ecological system theories, population adjustment models, and social action models. Comer claimed that a child progresses along six developmental pathways: language,

ethical, cognitive, social, psychological, and physical pathways. The physical pathway (or need) is dominant, which means that if physical needs are unmet, then all other developmental pathways will be delayed. Similarly, since the developmental pathways interact, under- or over-emphasizing any one pathway can lead to unbalanced development. In a balanced development model, the child has an equal amount of development in all six areas. Comer maintained that in order to change the child's behavior (that is, to focus the child on instruction and the primary purposes of schooling) you need to understand the factors that influence the development of the *whole child*. The developmental pathways are influenced by a number of factors or contexts, including society, home, school, and social networks.

Comer developed a school reform model to provide for the balanced development of all six pathways called the School Development Program (SDP). The SDP includes structures that facilitate the collaboration of various stakeholders (including parents, teachers, administrators, and community members) in developing school strategies to improve the development of the child (Emmons, Comer, & Haynes, 1996). Comer's collaborative elements include: stakeholders' identification of children's multiple needs, collaboration to find solutions, and use of school and community resources to provide programs and services to improve child development. These ideas and strategies are consistent with the aforementioned perspective that schools alone are unlikely to be able to address all the needs of the child. Rather, a partnership approach may prove more beneficial.

Comer argued that context matters for child development. While this idea may seem obvious, it is often neglected in contemporary education policy decision-making. A child's development is tied to the context in which he or she learns *and* lives. Urie Bronfenbrenner is

credited with popularizing the idea that child development must be considered in a broader and more complex set of contextual relationships (Brooks-Gunn, 1995, p. 468). Bronfenbrenner wrote that while behavior is a function of both the person and the environment, the environment has been a neglected element in psychological development theory and research. I have argued that the environment is largely ignored in traditional education policies that emphasize school settings, as well.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) developed a theory called the ecology of human development that sought to explain how a person's individual development is influenced by environmental contexts. Bronfenbrenner's theory included four environmental systems that influence the development of a child. These systems include the micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrosystems. Bronfenbrenner provides the following definitions for his four systems:

- A microsystem is a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given setting with particular physical and material characteristics.

- A mesosystem comprises the interrelations among two or more settings in which the developing person actively participates.

- An exosystem refers to one or more settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant, but in which events occur that affect, or are affected by, what happens in the setting containing the developing person.

- The macrosystem refers to consistencies, in the form and content of lower-order systems (micro-, meso-, and exo-) that exist, or could exist at the level of the

subculture or the culture as a whole, along with any belief systems or ideology

underlying such consistencies. (1979, pp. 22–26)

These environmental systems delineate the multiple contexts that influence a child's

development and provide opportunities for leveraging different contexts to improve

developmental outcomes.

Education-focused CCI advocates recognize that settings and contexts influence a child's

development. Thus, they work toward improving the various settings or systems so that students

experience better conditions for learning and child growth. For example, the school itself belongs

in the microsystem level and impacts the experiences and progress of the child. The home,

neighborhood, and school partners are also microsystems of larger mesosystems that influence a

child's development. These systems in turn are influenced by state and federal policies, such as

school funding and urban development, that exist at the level of an exosystem and broader

normative beliefs about the purpose and function of public education and the causes of poverty

that exist at the level of a macrosystem.

The noteworthy idea is that these settings all interact to influence children's development.

While the exosystem and macrosystem are important, CCIs focus on the mesosystem.

Understanding that children flow in and out of each of different microsystems (the movement

between microsystems is conceptualized as the mesosystem), education-focused CCIs work to

improve the conditions of school, family and community environments through coordinated and

comprehensive programs and services. I describe the rationale for this partnership-based

approach next.

A More Comprehensive Educational Approach

A more comprehensive view of the child suggests the need for a more comprehensive educational approach. While think tanks, interest groups, and others battle over what is most important in a child's development – what happens in schools or what happens outside of schools – leaders on the ground in school districts and communities are using various approaches to address both sets of concerns. Increasingly, school district leaders are exploring ways to improve both the quality of instruction inside schools and create the conditions for partnerships that will bring additional resources to aid students (e.g., health care, mentoring, youth development, food, etc.). They know that their budgets can't support all the expanded learning programs that might help improve developmental outcomes (e.g., after school, summer school, extended day), so they are seeking support of public and private funders and partners.

Even Michelle Rhee, the widely recognized former Washington, DC superintendent, who epitomized the stance that educators should be held accountable for student performance, regardless of external factors, saw the importance of creating comprehensive partnerships to more effectively address student needs. Although she closed schools and fired teachers to enforce accountability, she also implemented "wrap-around" services (she called them "full service schools") in eight high-needs schools (Turque, 2008). In these schools, families, teachers, and community agencies worked together to attend to the internal *and* external factors that influence a child's life outcomes.

At the federal level, President Obama and Secretary Duncan also have taken a more comprehensive approach to education reform. While policies like Race to the Top promote state initiatives on teacher quality and standards, federal policies also have advanced programs like

Promise Neighborhoods, community schools, and other place-based approaches that encourage partnerships to support students. These education policymakers have acknowledged that children growing up in economically distressed neighborhoods have a better chance at succeeding with supplemental services provided from outside the family unit. They create policies that encourage partnerships to provide these supports.

Partnerships to Support Schools and Students

In order to fully support the needs of students, schools need to partner with families and other organizations. This is especially true in low-income school settings where the need for resources is greatest. Schools require additional resources, which are oftentimes organized community resources. Berger and Neuhaus (1996) call these community resources "mediators." According to the authors, while the government runs the schools, other organizations (e.g., churches, community organizations, families) can help deliver services. Schools don't have to deliver services and programs alone, they can collaborate with partners to carry out a broader developmental strategy. Although schools have a long history of partnering with community organizations and families (Rogers, 1998; Tyack, 1992), more recent examples encourage a broader scope for partnering and greater collaboration in the provision of services.

School leaders that recognize that "schools can't do it alone" and that children come to school with multiple abilities and difficulties, engage in partnerships with community organizations to improve student achievement and nurture productive citizens. Efforts to reform education through collaborative partnership strategies are growing for a number of reasons. First, the recent fiscal crises have created what Secretary Duncan calls "the new normal" (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.-b). Despite economic improvements at the national level, many

state education budgets are still underfunded. Shortfalls in local school budgets are prompting school leaders to find partners who can provide human and financial resources to offset the cuts. Second, there is growing recognition that partnerships can provide additional academic and developmental opportunities for students that most schools cannot offer on their own. For example, business and technology partners can help enrich schools' curriculum, specifically around STEM activities, by connecting students to scientists and other professionals. Third, many community-based organizations have deep roots in the community and are expressing a willingness to assist schools with family and community engagement. Fourth, partnerships with schools and school districts are becoming a strategy for those who have economic, civic, and other interests in what takes place in schools. Corporations, philanthropies, governmental, and community agencies, all have interests in the operation of schools and students outcomes; well-conceived partnerships are assets for expanding school resources through the acknowledgement of broad, mutual interests. These are a few of the reasons partnerships are attracting increased attention from local stakeholders, policymakers, and school leaders.

Systemic Partnerships: Community Change Initiatives (CCIs)

One partnership approach is the Community Change Initiative (CCI). The goals of the CCI are to combine resources, leadership, programs, and capacity from varied organizations and agencies to support a comprehensive set of outcomes. Rather than relying on one organization or program, CCIs try to maximize impact by using multiple programs and strategies to address a community's most pressing issues. CCI researchers estimate that philanthropies and governments have spent nearly $10 billion on CCIs over the past 20 years (Kubisch, 2010b).

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The scholarly literature on CCIs, especially education-focused CCIs, is limited. There is a gap in the knowledge about how schools and community institutions can work at a systemic level in order to create school and community change. While there are a number of advocacy and technical assistance organizations that support these types of systems-wide partnerships, there are few empirical studies of how they are formed, operated, and sustained.

Purpose and Significance of this Study

The purpose of this study is to elucidate the ways in which sustained education-focused CCIs are organized so that school and community leaders can learn how to structure a comprehensive and collaborative approach to serving students and their families. I use a qualitative case study design to explore two such CCIs that have a history of sustainability and employ a common model. These CCIs were selected because they are widely-recognized as exemplars within the field, having received awards from advocates for CCIs; and each focuses on education, schools and school systems to deliver services. They represent two of the better-known community school initiatives (one prevalent type of CCI).

This study is significant because a growing number of communities are embracing collaborative approaches that seek to partner with schools to enhance student learning and development. Especially notable for its absence in the literature is the role of local and collaborative leadership in creating and sustaining CCIs. I believe that the leadership structures that I identify in the study and the distribution of leadership within partnerships will help explain why some CCIs develop successfully and are able to sustain their work over time. By capturing the perspectives of leaders, stakeholders, and practitioners in sustained CCIs, particularly on the

structures they have created to organize their work, I develop a better understanding of how leaders share responsibility for creating successful CCIs.

Research Questions

Kubisch (2010c) writes about the "special challenge" of working with public schools for CCIs. I propose to explore this "special challenge" by researching features of CCIs that focus on schools as the core element of their reform strategies. I propose to address three questions about CCIs that employ a locally-grown systemic partnership.

1. Why and how do school system-level community change initiative (CCI) partnerships form?

2. What are the organizational, financial, and political structures that support sustainable CCIs? What, in particular, are their connections to the school systems they seek to impact?

3. What are the leadership functions and structures found within CCIs? How are leadership functions distributed across schools and agencies within communities?

The chapters that follow review the literature on CCIs and describe the study's design and methodology. Then, I present a rich description of the two education-focused CCIs that I studied. In the final chapter I identify cross-case themes and discuss the implications of these themes for policy and the creation of successful education-focused CCIs. I conclude with a discussion of the limitations of this study and identify promising areas for future research. I now turn to a review of the literature about the history and current use of CCIs to expand educational opportunities.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The previous chapter suggests that school districts and communities that want to pursue a more comprehensive approach to education may utilize partnerships between school and community organizations. These partnerships take many forms and start for a variety of reasons. For example, external organizations that want to create change inside the schools may initiate partnerships with school leaders. Schools that want to involve the community and partners to achieve their goals may begin a partnership strategy to garner greater external resources. Different cities and districts have employed partnership strategies to varying degrees of intentionality, commitment, scope, and sustainability. Partnerships may be limited to those organized by a school district's office that solicits support from selected community groups or partnerships may be expanded to those organized by a community group that includes multiple agencies and providers. Partnerships can also happen at different levels (e.g., school or district) and with varying degrees of intensity. Despite the rhetoric about the value of partnerships, little is known about their depth, scope, and quality.

The focus of my research is on coordinated systems-level school and community partnerships. These system-level partnerships include leaders from a variety of community organizations and school districts. Over the past twenty years, one common approach for this type of system-level school-community partnership is called "comprehensive community initiatives" (CCIs). This partnership strategy has a long history of supporting community change, such as improved education, but has demonstrated limited evidence of sustainability and success. It's important for leaders to learn why systems-level school and community partnerships, such as CCIs, have failed in the past in order to improve and develop new approaches.

I begin with description of my approach to the literature review. This is followed by a description of CCIs and their supporting theories. I then briefly characterize the history of CCIs and the major themes developed in the literature. As I explain below, the scholarly literature on CCIs is sparse, and therefore there are a number of themes raised in the literature that warrant further exploration. Many of these themes are underdeveloped and provide a rationale for the research questions I posed at the end of the first chapter.

Approach to Literature Review

The literature on school-community partnerships at the systemic level is sparse. Based on previous work, I was familiar with the literature on school-community partnerships at the school level. With my colleagues Linda Valli and Amanda Stefanski, I (2014) conducted a review of the literature on school-community partnerships and identified four types of school-level partnerships: family-interagency collaboration, full-service schools, full-service community schools, and community development models. However, the focus of this study is on the community or systems level, not the school. The articles I have reviewed about school and community partnerships infrequently mentioned connections to a system-level organization. Consequently, I broadened my search about systems-level partnerships beyond the education sector.

Search Terms

The concept of systems-level school and community partnerships is challenging to define. In my initial explorations of relevant literature and through discussions with practitioners and professional who have worked in this area over the past twenty years, a term that kept arising was community change initiatives, or CCIs. In addition, another recent articulation of systems-

level partnerships, similar to CCIs, has received attention in the education field. This idea has been termed, "collective impact" and shares many of the same features as CCIs, a term more commonly used in the 1990s and early part of the century. I used these two terms to identify the literature on systems-level school-community partnerships.

Additional Sources

The literature on systems-level partnerships can best be described as "multivocal." Ogawa and Malen (1991) define multivocal literature as writings by a diverse group of authors who write for a number of purposes (e.g., research, advocacy) and in a variety of forms. The authors argue that while the literature sources may be diverse, a researcher can still apply rigor to the review by following procedures and techniques that minimize bias and error. To that end I attempted to create a complete data set of literature on systems-level partnerships by searching academic journals and by collecting literature on the approach from web searches, and from sources at the Coalition for Community Schools, where I work, and its partners. I reviewed the available sources for themes and patterns that I present in the following sections.

Little has been written about "community change initiatives" or "collective impact" in academic sources. Two key pieces of literature that kept appearing were the *Voices from the Field* series published by the Aspen Institute's Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families led by author Anne Kubisch. The other was a 2011 article published by the Stanford Social Innovation Review by Kania and Kramer called, *Collective Impact*.

I rely heavily on Kubisch's work, especially volume three of *Voices from the Field*, for my literature review and study for a few reasons. First, Kubisch and her colleagues created the

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term "community change initiatives" based on their review of a wide variety of initiatives from approximately 1990-2010. National funders created many of the initiatives and acquiring the individual reports for each would have been difficult. Very few of these initiatives were written about in the academic literature. Kubisch and her colleagues synthesized the reports and identified common themes, which I describe below. In addition, they invited chapters and responses to ideas from a variety of authors representing different disciplines, sectors, and institutions. Professionals and practitioners consider these works excellent summaries about the best thinking around systems-level partnership approaches.

In addition to these two primary sources, I conducted a search for academic literature using the "community change initiative" and "collective impact" search terms. I reviewed approximately 20 sources that met the criteria. While the aforementioned Valli, Stefanski, and Jacobson article included a summary of the literature about school and community partnerships, I also used these terms in my search, looking to see if they would reveal additional literature about partnerships at the systems or community levels, though with limited results.

After my review of the aforementioned literature, I identified relevant themes or topics that might also be useful in completing the literature review. It was clear that leadership was an important element in the literature about successful partnerships, so I conducted additional searches on the concept known as "collaborative leadership." Unfortunately, searches using this term did not identify much additional literature. While there are many articles written about collaborative or shared leadership at the school level (e.g., principals sharing leadership with other school staff), my searches indicated that the literature on this systems-level topic was sparse. Nonetheless, I do include in my review several articles and reports about the role of

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leadership in systems-level partnerships that professional and practitioners identified as influential and relevant.

Although I was unable to identify a strong literature source from refereed or academic sources, I was able to identify a sufficient, largely multivocal literature base to provide a more informed context for this study. Based on this literature I provide a definition of CCIs; describe the theory behind CCIs, as put forth by advocates and researchers who have examined this phenomenon; and discuss the history of CCIs, contrasting early initiatives to later initiatives that are more school focused. Finally, I synthesize the literature by identifying common themes or principles associated with CCIs, and I conclude with a critique of the literature that identifies under developed or omitted areas for research.

Community Change Initiatives Defined

CCIs represent one systems-level approach to creating partnerships between school districts and community institutions to support students and their families. Based on the literature, the purpose of CCIs varies from one setting to another, depending largely on the goals set by community leaders or on the funding requirements of major sponsors. However, several central elements of CCIs reoccur in the literature: they are comprehensive approaches to addressing community issues, such as poverty; they involve coordinating a broad range of community resources; they focus on a specific geographic area; and they rely on community building to develop the capacity to focus resources on community problems. Although no single description of CCIs includes all of these elements, each is a reoccurring theme in the literature.

Stagner and Duran, for example, acknowledge the broad range of goals that CCIs have historically embraced. However, they also argue that CCIs can be distinguished from other

approaches to addressing social issues by their general purpose and approach. According to these authors, CCIs are:

> … Designed to improve the lives of children and families living in poverty through
>
> multifaceted, coordinated approaches to strengthening communities and integrating the
>
> provision of social and other services. (1997, p. 132)

A key distinction of CCIs, therefore, is that they are meant to be comprehensive approaches for addressing the many needs in a community. This is in contrast to initiatives that focus solely on single areas of concern, such as housing, youth development, employment, or early childhood.

Chaskin (2001) argues that CCIs are not specific interventions, but rather are purposefully designed to be comprehensive and inclusive. He writes that CCIs aren't formulaic but rather adhere to a set of common principles including comprehensive planning and asset development, collaboration with and between "community-serving organizations," and community participation. Chaskin's description characterizes the targeted community as an asset and engaged partner, though he acknowledges that the community may need external expertise and support to accomplish the goals set forth by a community change initiative (CCI).

The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change has conducted the most comprehensive review of CCIs to date (Kubisch, Auspos, Brown, & Dewar, 2010). The roundtable reviewed 48 CCIs that were created over the past twenty years. Based on this review, Kubisch (2010b) provides a useful summary of three CCI characteristics: that they are all place-

based, comprehensive (link multiple systems, goals, and levels), and focus on community building.[1]

Kubisch's first principle is that CCIs are place-based. The places in which foundations (typically from other cities) or local leaders choose to develop CCIs are typically urban and poor communities facing significant challenges across a number of economic, social, and political dimensions. Place-based strategies have received significant attention in the past decade, especially from the Obama administration (e.g., Promise Neighborhoods, Promise Zones, and Choice Neighborhoods).

Turner and her colleagues (2014) describe a transition in CCIs from a focus on "place-based" work to "place-conscious" work. Under this framework, the CCI remains focused on the members of a distressed community but is able to see beyond geographic borders in its pursuit of resources and supports for these members. Among the "insights" the authors describe for place-conscious strategies are efforts to connect opportunities across a city or region to the site of targeted service delivery (e.g., a neighborhood or school), working horizontally (across a community and various sectors) and vertically (across various levels of government), and integrating a variety of organizations under a common goal.

Kubisch's second CCI principle emphasizes community building. CCIs work with the communities they serve. Their strategy is to develop plans and implement supports "with" community members rather than "to" community members. CCIs make efforts to build and engage the community in change systems. Kubisch argues that CCIs seek to enhance community

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[1] Stagner and Duran (1997) also write that CCI's focus on community building and comprehensive services but don't specifically distinguish "place" as a feature.

building capacity by providing opportunities for leadership development and skill building, organizational capacity building, social capital building, and building civic capacity (e.g., local leadership or collaborative structures for leveraging resources). Each of these activities stresses the development of individuals and organizations within the community. An organization may be a formal institution such as a United Way or a less formal institution such as a local neighborhood association. What's important is that each of these entities is part of the community and work toward strengthening from within.

Kubisch's final principle focuses on perhaps the most commonly identified characteristic of CCIs: their comprehensiveness. CCI advocates and leaders understand that there is not just one solution to the complex problems facing distressed communities. Focusing exclusively on any one area can lead to neglect of another area and consequently limit the impact and sustainability of the approach. Stagner and Duran note that CCIs have an "intuitive appeal" and "assume the needs of poor families results not from a single problem, but from a conglomeration of many different related problems" (1997, p. 133). This assumption is congruous with my earlier arguments that policymakers and educators must address the needs of the "whole child" in order to improve educational outcomes. It borrows heavily from the aforementioned ecological development theories popularized by Bronfenbrenner (1979) and theories of child development by Comer and his colleagues (1996). As Kubisch admits, CCIs cannot work across all sectors that affect people's lives. Rather, their leaders need to experiment and find the right balance for achieving their overall goals for comprehensive community change.

However, even when guided by these common principles, the specifics of each CCI will vary across communities. CCIs may differ by sponsor (e.g., various levels of government,

foundations, CBOs), locale, capacity, scope, origin, and purpose. They also vary by the focus of

their work – that is, on the particular aspect of the community that is their focus. Kubisch

characterizes these different areas of work, including human development, as education and

social services; physical revitalization such as housing; and economic development.[2] Finally,

since they are designed to address a wide variety of needs, CCIs are nearly always placed in

urban areas with high concentrations of poverty. Messinger (2004) suggests that CCIs could also

be successful in rural communities but acknowledges that funders typically select cities for this

form of intervention.

Theory to Support Community Change Initiatives

According to Kubisch, "The theory underlying community change efforts is based in

systems thinking, which views the strands of community life as interconnected and

interdependent" (2010a, p. ix). Systems theory views the world as systems that are composed of

multiple and related elements. Consistent with the CCI literature, the theory takes a holistic

approach to solving complex problems. In CCIs, organizations and individuals are the elements

(sometimes referred to as 'parts') that can be restructured to work together toward some

specified goal. For example, community organizations, foundations, schools, and government

agencies can collaborate, distribute funding to one another, and work with practitioners on

economic, physical, social, and civic development. CCIs work across the various levels within a

system to keep the system focused on specific goals. When the partners break up into smaller

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[2] The following case studies illustrate a focus on education and place schools as the central
vehicle for delivering services through partnerships. However, the community schools that are
the focus of these CCIs attempt to deliver a variety of supports across sectors including housing,
employment, education, and community development.

topic-focused workgroups they create sub-systems that are all part of the larger supra-system. "Cross-sector" collaboration is another way of describing different sub-systems (e.g., the school district, health system, housing system, and others) working together in one larger supra-system.

Systems theory complements Bronfenbrenner's ecology of development described earlier. Bronfenbrenner wrote about the micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrosystems that influence a child's development. His higher-level systems address some of the contextual and environmental elements that impact an individual child. Similarly, systems theory looks at how the organizations and institutions in Bronfenbrenner's higher-level systems work together (or don't) to create the contexts in which individual children develop. Each theoretical perspective envisions a complex structure with interconnecting social groups and organizations that have a profound influence on individuals and the communities in which they live. Such structures can provide the means for leveraging resources for change.

Systems theory is complex and when applied to community change it highlights the difficulties of getting all the elements of a system to work together. Especially when these elements are focused on their own sub-systems or don't see themselves as part of a larger holistic system or approach to change. As a result of this complexity, Kubisch identifies developing capacity as a challenge for CCIs in fulfilling systems thinking theory. I discuss issues of capacity building in regard to the ways in which CCIs may be organized structurally, supported financially, and sustained politically in later sections.

Early History of Comprehensive Community Initiatives

CCIs have a rich history dating back as early as the settlement houses of the 1900s (Chaskin, Joseph, & Chipenda-Dansokho, 1997; Stagner & Duran, 1997). During the late 1980s

and 1990s philanthropies and governments funded CCIs in select pilot and implementation communities. Some of the most high-profile initiatives of this time included New Futures (Casey Foundation), the Neighborhood and Family Initiative (Ford Foundation), Empowerment Zones (US Department of Housing and Urban Development), and Beacons (multiple public and private funders).[3]

Despite the initial investments from philanthropies and governments, many of these CCIs have disbanded. Kania and Kramer write, "Major funders…have abandoned many of their efforts in frustration after acknowledging their lack of progress" (2011, p. 36). Kubisch adds:

> The classic CCIs of the past 20 years are, for the most part, winding down or finished, but policymakers, philanthropists, practitioners, and community residents continue to put a high value on "place" as an organizing principle for social and economic change. (2010b, p. 10)

While many of the CCIs from the previous century have faded, CCIs continue to play a central role in contemporary policy debates about how to reform schools and improve communities.

A new generation of CCIs is developing. Kubisch writes that today's CCIs have new investments from new sources (e.g., government) and new and more diverse stakeholders who are interested in creating modern CCIs. While contemporary CCIs continue to rely heavily on foundation-driven projects (such as the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Campaign for Grade Level Reading), many are receiving government support (such as the federal Promise Neighborhood program) and are identifying more diverse funding sources (see the two cases described later in

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[3] For a chronological list of some of the better-known CCIs, see Appendix 1 in Kubisch et al. (2010).

this dissertation). As pressure on schools and districts to improve achievement outcomes for students has become the dominant narrative in contemporary education reform, new CCIs also appear to be focusing more intentionally on their work with schools.

Contemporary CCIs and Collaborative Education Reform Efforts

Historically, CCIs have worked on the periphery of schools, seeing them more as the problem than the solution. As described earlier, CCIs worked broadly across housing, employment, leadership development, and social services in their attempts to bring resources together. CCIs were typically organized outside of the school district and with limited participation from school leaders. Kubisch notes, "many community change efforts have resorted to working around the edges of the school system rather than within it" (2010c, p. 20). She says they tend to work in the areas outside of the traditional school domain, such as early childhood, afterschool, and community organizing strategies, rather than with the schools directly.

Kahne, O'Brien, and Brown add, "Despite some support from public sources and foundations, such comprehensive community development efforts have existed at the periphery of the educational reform agenda" (2001, p. 430). The authors acknowledge that historically some CCIs that have chosen to place schools at the center of their strategies due to a school's connection with students and families. Kahne and his colleagues write that it has been foundations in particular that have sought to associate CCIs more closely with education reform. However, they conclude, effective partnerships with schools have been challenging and rare.

Kahne and colleagues studied a Chicago CCI that focused on working with principals and external partners. They found that the CCI was able to achieve their social capital goals of building trusting relationships and developing social networks. However, the CCI wasn't able to

achieve its goal of changing norms and practices inside the schools due to a number of factors, primarily because the principals weren't willing to relinquish some of their control of schools by including other community institutions in decision-making. According to Kahne and colleagues, these political and organizational challenges, which exist in many CCIs, have been particularly evident in efforts to use CCIs to promote education reforms.

Despite previous challenges working with schools and school systems, a "new generation" of CCIs is paying particular attention to improving the lives of young people in schools. They draw from the experiences of earlier community change efforts and seek to improve the involvement and relationship between schools and surrounding community agencies (Kubisch, 2010c). Instead of simply seeing schools as the problem, many new CCIs try to make schools a partner in the change strategy. These initiatives recognize that administrators and teachers need to be crucial players in the leadership and organization of effective CCIs.

While CCIs that start from community institutions are increasingly focusing on education, education policymakers and practitioners are also reaching out to partners to create more comprehensive strategies. In addition to the typical individual school efforts to partner with local organizations and businesses, there are a growing number of systemic school-community partnership strategies emerging, such as community schools, StriveTogether, Promise Neighborhoods, P-20 and cradle-to-career councils. Unlike some of the earlier CCIs that were initiated by external agencies, such as a foundation or government program, local leaders, educators, and community members have started many of these contemporary CCIs. Sometimes the district initiates these partnerships, other times they begin in the community. I describe some

of these initiatives under the subheadings: collective impact, promise neighborhoods, and community schools.

Collective Impact

The term "collective impact" was coined by John Kania and Mark Kramer in 2011 and has received significant attention from communities around the country. Kania and Kramer describe the necessity for cross-sector coordination to create change at scale, with a specific focus on education. Their ideas are similar to those espoused by CCIs described earlier and captured in Kubisch's review. The authors argue that funders and nonprofits typically look for programs and strategies that have only "isolated impact." All too often these programs and strategies are not sustainable and do not achieve the desired community results. They suggest that collective impact strategies are more effective and sustainable because they bring a broader array of cross-sector stakeholders together to work on a set of results.

According to Kania and Kramer, to be successful, collective impact strategies must satisfy five conditions. The conditions include: a common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and a backbone support organization that assumes responsibility for day-to-day operations. Their article has been highly influential, and CCIs that focus on "cradle to career" approaches – that is, approaches that integrate services from the birth of a child to her eventual entry into the labor force – have adopted many of their conditions for success.

Although "collective impact" is not associated with a specific network of CCIs, it has created a "buzz" among professionals and practitioners interested in more comprehensive, collaborative approaches to community development and education reform. Examples of CCIs

that have developed partnerships under this umbrella term include StriveTogether in Cincinnati and All Hands Raised in Portland, OR. It's too soon to tell whether "collective impact" actually represents a new approach to CCIs or whether the adoption of one or more of the five conditions will help CCIs be more successful. Nonetheless, Kania's and Kramer's notion of "collective impact" captures the motivation and thinking behind more contemporary CCIs that integrate schools and school systems into community development.

Promise Neighborhoods

Promise Neighborhoods are a neighborhood-focused CCI promoted by President Obama based on the widely popular Harlem Children's Zone. The U.S. Department of Education created a planning and implementation grant program for Promise Neighborhoods, but many communities are using the strategy even when not awarded federal grants. The main goals of the strategy are to target a particular geographic area (e.g., Harlem Children's Zone comprises 97 blocks in Harlem) and to consolidate significant resources into that area. Federal Promise Neighborhood grantees must commit to achieving a specific set of proscribed results for youth, the family, and the community, including: improvements in the percentage of children performing at or above grade level, attendance rates and graduation rates, the percentage of children who participate in at least 60 minutes of daily physical activity, student mobility, and evidence of parents encouraging children to read books outside of school ("Department of Education: Applications for New Awards; Promise Neighborhoods Program—Planning Grant Competition, 76, Fed. Reg. 129.," 2011).

The Promise Neighborhoods approach unites agencies and partners around results in a defined area. According to their federal program description, among their strategies are:

"Integrating programs and breaking down agency 'silos' so that solutions are implemented effectively and efficiently across agencies [and] developing the local infrastructure of systems and resources needed to sustain and scale up proven, effective solutions across the broader region beyond the initial neighborhood (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.-a)." These elements help characterize Promise Neighborhoods as a CCI approach.[4] Examples of federally-funded Promise Neighborhoods include the Buffalo (NY) Promise Neighborhood, the DC Promise Neighborhoods Initiative, and the San Antonio Eastside Promise Neighborhood.

Community Schools

Community schools represent another CCI that has focused very clearly on education. Community schools are often thought of as schools that "do more" than the traditional school: more community involvement, more services for students and community members, and more democratic participation.[5] Community schools and their partners offer a variety of services and supports at the school site including health and mental health services (often referred to as "wraparound supports"), mentoring, afterschool programming, family engagement, and adult education. The services at each school site or in each community are dependent on the goals selected in those places.

The advent of the community school movement at the start of the twentieth century expanded substantially school roles. According to John Rogers (1998), who developed one of the most nuanced analyses of the community school movement over the last century, community

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[4] The Harlem Children's Zone is also a CCI reviewed by Kubisch.

[5] In this paper I use "traditional school" to describe schools that are not community schools.

schools have always served a number of purposes including providing a range of social services, using the community as curriculum, and promoting democratic participation in school activities. Each successive generation of community schools focused their specific purposes according to their social and historical context.

Community schools recognize the vital role of the school site and have created systems-wide CCIs that include multiple community schools across one or more districts. The Coalition for Community Schools released a guide, *Scaling up School and Community Partnerships: The Community Schools Strategy,* to help systems of community schools grow to scale (Melaville, Jacobson, & Blank, 2011). The guide suggests that there are three main organizational structures in a system of community schools. First, there is the community-wide leadership group that includes the school district, unions, university representatives, local government, and other partners. This group is responsible for setting the vision, policy, and ensuring resource alignment for the initiative. Second, at the school level, there is a school-site leadership group comprised of the principal, a coordinator, partners, students, families, and educators. Finally, supporting both the school and community groups, is an "intermediary" entity that is responsible for planning, coordination, and management of the initiative (See Figure 2.1).[6] Examples of community schools include Cincinnati's Community Learning Centers, United Way Community Schools of Lehigh Valley (PA), and Baltimore's Community Schools.

It's outside the scope of my research to compare these three education-focused CCIs. However, it's worth noting that they vary by the emphasis and scope of their work. The

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[6] "Intermediary" is one term used in the literature on community schools and other CCIs to describe the organization responsible with primary responsibility for coordination of the initiative. A deeper discussion about the term follows in the literature review.

collective impact approach typically takes a city-wide perspective and consequently is responsible for the results at all the schools in that jurisdiction, even if the CCI isn't working directly with specific schools. The Promise Neighborhoods approach looks at the entire neighborhood, including, but not limited to schools. The focus of the community schools strategy is at the school. There is a coordinator and partnerships for each school and it's not a requirement that all of the schools in a community are part of the CCI. These different approaches may have

Figure 2.1

A Collaborative Leadership Structure for Community Schools

Collaborative Leadership Structure for Community Schools

Public Agencies and Local Government

Community and Faith-Based Agencies

Students, Families, and Residents

Nonprofit Organizations

Philanthropies and Businesses

Unions

School Districts

Higher Education

COMMUNITY-WIDE LEADERSHIP
Key Roles: Vision, Policy, Resource Alignment

Key System Functions
Results-Based Vision
Data and Evaluation
Finance and Resource Development
Alignment and Integration
Supportive Policy
Professional Development and Technical Assistance
Community Engagement

Teachers and School Staff

Students, Families and Residents

Unions

Lead Agency

Principal

Site Coordinator

Community Partners

SCHOOL-SITE LEADERSHIP
Key Roles: Planning and Implementation

COMMUNICATION & ALIGNMENT

COMMUNICATION & ALIGNMENT

INTERMEDIARY LEADERSHIP
Key Roles: Planning, Coordination, and Management

IEL Institute for Educational Leadership

Coalition for Community Schools — *Because Every Child Deserves Every Chance*

Source: http://www.communityschools.org//resources/part_two_structure_and_function_.aspx

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an impact on the way that the system-level approaches are organized and on the sustainability

and impact of the CCIs, however, that question has not been explored in any of the literature I

reviewed.

Kubisch writes, "Next-generation [CCI] efforts need to work deliberately on how to place

schools at the center, rather than the periphery, of their efforts" (2010c, p. 20). It is my hope that

this study and the research questions and cases I select will help new and existing CCI efforts

better integrate their efforts with schools. Next, I describe the major themes developed in the

literature on CCIs, as well as those themes that are underdeveloped.

Major Themes in the CCI Literature

The most important themes from the literature on CCIs relate to the common principles

identified by Kubisch and others described above. Among these principles are that CCIs are

place-based, comprehensive, and focus on community building. Based on my review of the

literature, I have identified additional themes including the ways in which actors create and fund

CCIs; the importance of the intermediary role to the organization of the CCI; the challenges

CCIs experience around implementation, funding, sustainability, and evaluation; and the

importance of community engagement as a political endeavor.

CCIs Started by External Actors

The first major theme is that foundation or government actors typically create CCIs.

External funders nearly always started the earlier CCIs in the literature I reviewed, and the CCIs

reviewed by Kubisch and her colleagues. A typical scenario is that national and local foundations

developed CCI strategies that they wished to test out across a variety of communities. National

funders created names for their CCI approaches such as the Casey Foundation's "New Futures" and "Making Connections" projects, the Ford Foundation's "Neighborhood and Family Initiative," or the federal government's "Empowerment Zones." They then identified or sought applications from communities, typically urban according to Messinger (2004), that wanted to adapt the CCI approach locally. What's important is that CCIs oftentimes were started and supported external to the communities in which they operated.

In contrast to the descriptions of earlier CCIs I reviewed in the literature, the description of newly developed or currently operating CCIs includes a larger number of these partnerships that are locally-developed.[7] However, these CCIs are rarely examined in the scholarly literature, though anecdotal evidence and professional reports suggest that they exist. For example, the U.S. Department has encouraged local communities to develop new CCIs to support local Promise Neighborhoods, even if they don't have funding from the program, and anecdotal evidence suggests that some communities do implement locally-sponsored initiatives. Additionally, community school systems have routinely developed partnerships with local community groups, though there is little evidence in the literature that many of these partnerships have evolved to become CCIs at the systems-level.[8] Nonetheless, national organizations, such as the Coalition for

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[7] It is possible and even likely that there were more locally-initiated CCIs than represented in the literature. These locally-initiated CCIs may have received less publicity and attention, possibly because they were overshadowed by the better funded external initiatives that had more interest in promoting their initiatives nationally. The greater recognition of locally-developed initiatives may be due to the emergence of professional networks and advocacy groups that provide technical support but not external funding. These networks seldom conduct research but do have knowledge of the members who participate in their networks.

[8] To be clear, there is academic literature about the school-level partnership approaches for Promise Neighborhoods and community schools, but not about the systems-level approaches.

Community Schools, have identified the emergence of CCIs with minimal external funding but significant support from national intermediary support organizations (Blank, Jacobson, Melaville, & Pearson, 2010). More research is needed to determine whether these CCIs represent a major shift in how CCIs are started or an under examined phenomenon in the literature.

Local Intermediaries Manage the CCI

While external actors typically are the impetus for the CCI, they rely on local intermediary organizations for managing the CCIs. Intermediaries are the organizations that help align the partners and keep them working toward shared goals. For the purposes of this study I will refer to these groups as "intermediaries," however the literature sometimes refer to these groups by different terms such as "backbone support organizations" or "lead agencies." After examining the role of intermediaries from a variety of fields, including justice, housing, and faith-based partnerships, a report sponsored by the White House Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defined intermediaries as:

> An organization that is positioned between a funding entity (which may be an individual, a government agency, a foundation, or a corporation) and a beneficiary organization (most often a faith-based or secular community organization that provides direct social services). It provides the beneficiary organization with assistance to help fulfill the strategic goals of the funder. The forms of assistance intermediaries most frequently provided are training, technical assistance, and frequently—but not always—the regranting of funds. (White House Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008, p. 5)

This definition fits many of the classic CCIs that were initiated and funded by a national or local funder that selected an organization (typically local) to operate the CCI.

Honig writes specifically about the intermediary organizations that attempt to "help schools to establish collaborative partnerships with other neighborhood-based youth servicing agencies…as a primary school improvement strategy" (2004, p. 70). Similar to the CCIs described above, the initiatives she studied were funded either by the government or foundations with the intent of creating systemic change in local communities. Honig defines intermediaries as:

> Organizations that occupy the space in between at least two other parties. Intermediary organizations primarily function to mediate or to manage change in both those parties. Intermediary organizations operate independently of these two parties and provide distinct value beyond what the parties alone would be able to develop or to amass by themselves. At the same time, intermediary organizations depend on those parties to perform their essential functions. (2004, p. 67)

Honig argues that intermediaries vary across a number of dimensions. These include who the intermediary mediates between (e.g., between a funder and school site or districts and community partners); its composition (e.g., dedicated staff or staff contributing their time from multiple organizations in partnership); location (e.g., operate within or outside the geographic area in which they work, such as the district); scope of work (e.g., multiple schools, an entire district, or a city); and funding source (e.g., single providers or multiple providers).

Another term for the intermediary that has been used in the "collective impact" approach is "backbone support organization." Kania and Kramer (2011) describe this organization as a

necessary element of the CCI system. The organization is charged with managing the day-to-day operations of the CCI, coordinating among various and busy partners, collecting and disseminating data, facilitating meetings, and overall communications. The authors write that the CCI should have its own staff that is highly skilled, political, and adaptable.

The literature on CCIs demonstrates that the CCI can dissipate and eventually end when this organizational capacity isn't supported with the necessary funding, or when the wrong intermediary is selected, or when partners don't see the value of collaborating. For example, Okagaki (Okagaki, 2010) writes that the choice of an organization to serve as the "lead agency" (another term for the intermediary) can create internal conflict and resentment among other organizations that weren't selected. Lead agencies get additional power and funding. Okagaki also writes that whether or not the lead agency is "the big dog" (e.g., a university or government agency) matters. Smaller organizations with limited capacity that compete with potential partners may have significant difficulty in advancing the CCI.

Kania and Kramer highlight this point saying, "The expectation that collaboration can occur without a supporting infrastructure is one of the most frequent reasons why it [CCI] fails" (2011, p. 40). If the infrastructure, including leadership groups, networks of partners, and intermediaries, is essential to the success and sustainability of CCIs, then we need to know more about how they are organized to achieve their goals successfully.

Challenges of Implementation, Funding, Sustainability, and Evaluation

Because CCIs are complex, multifaceted interventions, promoters of this form of community building and education reform face many challenges. Selecting or developing the right local intermediary agency is one challenge identified in the literature; other challenges

include implementing key functions, such as collaboration and communication; acquiring

sufficient funding to develop programs and sustain a CCI over time; and evaluating and

monitoring different aspects of the CCI to solve problems and promote best practices. Although

different researchers identify different challenges associated with CCIs, implementation,

funding, sustainability, and, to a lesser extent, evaluation are prominent themes.

In their review, Gardner, Lalani, and Plamadeala (2010) identified the following CCI

implementation and funding challenges, including: false hopes/unrealistic expectations;

inadequate planning and organizational processes; failure to establish communications and

engage in consensus building; not collaborating/partnering effectively; and developing weak

funding strategies for complex initiatives. In a review of one foundation-sponsored CCI in four

cities, Chaskin and his colleagues found that while intentions to collaborate were good, programs

weren't really linked, but ran on parallel paths. The authors provided three reasons including:

- … understanding and reaching consensus on what comprehensive development
  means and how to implement it is very difficult and time consuming,
- operational barriers such as time, resources, and organizational structure inhibit
  their development of integrated programs, and
- competing motivating factors that influence collaborative activity and decision
  making may interfere with integration of projects. (1997, p. 441)

According to Chaskin and his colleagues, these challenges undermined the successful

implementation of the CCI, causing it to fall short of the foundation's ambitious goals.

According to Kubisch, similar challenges have often undermined the efforts of CCIs to

work with and change schools. Kubisch (Kubisch, 2010c) points to two major reasons for the

failure of CCIs to provide the change they sought. The first is what the author calls "theory failure." The theory that a relatively small amount of money could unite partners and catalyze action was insufficient for the magnitude of the challenges poor communities faced. The second reason why CCIs failed to achieve sufficient impact and scale was "implementation failure." Kubisch argues that funders did not provide sustainable, consistent, or sufficient funding, and that initiatives lacked the capacity to manage the CCI and its many partners and activities.

Researchers evaluating the Casey Foundation's New Futures project, a highly visible CCI aimed at rebuilding urban communities in five cities, also provide examples of how insufficient attention to key CCI functions can erode efforts and weaken partnerships over time. They found that the New Futures initiative lacked the staff capacity to support the work of its leaders. In addition, parents and community members were not included in the planning process in a meaningful way. As the complexity of implementation threatened to overwhelm the ambitious reforms promoted by New Futures, local initiatives abandoned the foundation's comprehensive, system theory of action. Instead, local leaders focused on funding and implementing discrete short-term programs (*Building New Futures for At-risk Youth*, 1995). Requirements to demonstrate results to funders quickly only further reinforced a prioritizing of short-term discrete projects over more strategic and comprehensive integrated approaches, which of course was the whole purpose of the CCI (Chaskin et al., 1997).

As was the case for the New Futures project, funding represents one of the greatest challenges to implementing and sustaining CCIs. The literature suggests that most CCIs, especially during the early stages of this interventions development, are supported by foundations or by government grants. While these sources of funding can provide an initial

financial boost to an initiative, they are inherently unstable. Interest in comprehensive

approaches, such as CCIs, wax and wane as policymakers and funders rediscover old ideas but

too often fail to sustain them (Knapp, 1995). When these sources stop funding a CCI, either

because of new funding priorities or because of disillusionment with results, local leaders must

scramble to replace the funding, too often in communities that are strapped for resources.

Regardless, maintaining sufficient financial support, especially at the end of a funding cycle, is a

major challenge to the sustainability of CCIs. There is little research, however, that actually

examines how different funding strategies influence the development and sustainability of a CCI.

Several researchers have also identified the challenge of evaluating the impact and

monitoring major aspects of CCIs (Messinger, 2004; Peterson, 2002). CCIs are complex

strategies that are highly contingent on local contexts. CCIs vary in their approach, composition,

and even the outcomes they seek, making them difficult to evaluate meaningfully. Messinger

identifies a range of challenges based on her review of the literature, including evaluation:

> (1) the long time necessary for planning, implementation, and evaluation; (2) the
>
> formidable task of including low-income citizens in a meaningful way; (3) conflicts
>
> among professionals involved in planning; (4) the uncontrollable effect of local and
>
> external economics and politics on these initiatives; and (5) the complexity of evaluating
>
> a CCI. (2004, p. 541)

In addition to these implementation, funding, sustainability, and evaluation challenges, CCIs are

also characterized by the ways in which relationships are developed between individuals and

institutions, as I describe next.

Political Characteristics

Relationships and community engagement are two elements of a common theme around the political organization of CCIs that can be identified in the literature. While "political" includes the more common understanding of political agencies and elected officials, the emphasis in the literature is on "micropolitics" – that is, on the way in which individuals within organizations work with others, bargain, and promote various interests. Scribner, Aleman, and Maxcy write that micropolitics allows us to look inside of systems theory, "to reveal in intimate detail the combatants in the 'arena of struggle' inside" (2003, p. 24). Because CCIs rely on the collaboration and coordination of multiple actors, CCIs can be understood as a micropolitical system.

In this context, micropolitics includes the relationships that are a necessary part of any CCI. Messinger explains:

> Local politics influence all aspects of community intervention projects. The struggles between different interest groups shape the terms of debate, the definition of social problems, the design of local interventions, and the level of popular and political support for funding and implementing these initiatives. (2004, p. 544)

Kubisch (2010c) describes the political nature of CCIs as their "engagement" functions with individuals, institutions, and the community. She describes the following external engagement strategies that demonstrate how people must work together in a CCI, including: illuminating and legitimizing community priorities to stimulate investment; brokering and aligning efforts; building partnerships with powerful allies to influence public systems; and influencing the fundamental ways that core public and private institutions define and carry out their work.

Writing in the same volume, Dewar expands on the fundamental role of engagement and micropolitics in a CCI saying:

> Therefore, successful community change efforts also require connections and relationships with people and institutions outside the geographic areas targeted for change—players who can help stakeholders access, leverage, and influence key forces for (and against) change, including external power holders, resources, policies, and markets. (2010, p. 77)

According to Dewar, CCIs require the engagement of individuals and institutions that are able to provide services and supports; these individual and institutions are often outside of the school or neighborhood that is the focus of the CCI. For example, a museum partner may be located outside of the neighborhood, but serve as an asset to be engaged by the CCI. This idea is consistent with Tuner and her colleagues (2014) aforementioned conception of CCIs as "place-conscious" strategies that require relationships with stakeholders that are internal and external to a given school or neighborhood.

Relationships are consequently a critical element of CCIs. However, they are also political because they involve negotiation of scope, depth of collaboration, investment of finances and time, and commitment to advocate for the strategy with others in the community. While the literature acknowledges both the importance of fostering strong and supportive relationships between actors in a CCI, and the inherent political nature of these relationships, the literature is relatively silent about the role of leadership in managing relationships and negotiating political interests. I turn to this topic and other underdeveloped themes that I identified in the literature on CCIS next.

Underdeveloped Themes in the CCI Literature

While the themes identified above are prevalent in the literature on CCIs, many of them are relatively underdeveloped, especially in the academic literature. For example, the literature that I have reviewed so far identifies the many challenges associated with implementing successfully a CCI, including reasons for why CCIs fail; however, far less is said in the literature about the organizational structures and leadership roles associated with successful CCIs. In the section below I describe additional aspects of CCIs that are underdeveloped in the literature and that I believe merit greater exploration – specifically, the organizational characteristics of CCIs and the structures that support collaborative leadership.

Organizational Characteristics

Who are the organizations and leaders participating in the CCIs? How often do they meet? Who meets and directs the work? In what ways do organizations partner together to form a CCI? Is there an organization that assumes primary responsibility for overseeing and directing the CCI? What are its characteristics?

The academic literature is relatively silent about the ways in which CCIs are organized and structured. Even in the studies and the analyses of CCIs that I reviewed, there is no focus on the particular structural characteristics of CCIs. While the academic literature doesn't discuss these elements, I found some guiding frameworks from reports from professional networks that provide technical assistance to CCIs and other forms of comprehensive partnerships. The aforementioned framework from the Coalition for Community Schools (see Figure 2.1) suggests there are three structural elements: a systems-level collaborative leadership group, an intermediary organization, and a school-level collaborative leadership group. Additionally, Kania

and Kramer (2011) call for a strong intermediary or backbone support organization. The Bridgespan Group, an education-focused consultant organization writes that collaboratives such as CCIs need the capacity, structure, and organization to support the initiative (n.d.). They write that collaboratives typically include a lead convener institution, a steering or oversight committee, and work or topic-focused subcommittees.

This literature, developed primarily by advocates and technical assistance providers, suggests that the organization of a CCI is important to its success. What follows are two structural elements that I identified in my review of this literature: collaborative leadership groups and network of partners. These two elements, when combined with the literature on intermediary agencies that I discussed earlier, provide some insights about the organization of a CCI, though much about the organization of CCIs deserves additional research.

Collaborative leadership groups

Auspos (2010) comes the closest to describing these structural elements in her characterization of "management structures" that support CCI alignment. She writes that these bodies provide a structure for the CCI that offers leadership, oversight, focus on vision, and integration among various institutions, departments, and individuals. She adds that sometimes CCIs also build "team structures" that support the top-level management structure. Auspos's "team structures" are what I refer to as "collaborative leadership groups." The team structures, of which there may be many in a CCI, comprise partner organization executives and mid-level staff. These groups set the vision for and manage the CCI (Auspos, 2010) and build social capital (Kahne et al., 2001; Peterson, 2002).

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Networks of partners

A group of governing institutions and their leaders are insufficient to achieving the CCI's goal of providing a comprehensive approach. CCIs require a diverse group of partners representing a variety of skill sets and resources. According to Kubisch (2010c), in order to engage and align systems, CCIs illuminate and legitimize community priorities to stimulate investment, broker and align efforts among stakeholder organizations, build partnerships with powerful and influential allies, and influence how institutions define and carry out their work.

Kahne, O'Brien, and Brown (2001) describes the essential role of allies and partners similarly. They write that CCIs seek to generate social capital by creating networks of partners including schools, community institutions, and other agencies, so as to enhance their ability to deliver multiple services. These partners must have opportunities (e.g., meetings, shared learning experiences, joint service delivery) to interact with each other, to develop relationships and trust, to agree on how to coordinate services, and to align the norms and practices of each of the participating organizations to the goals of the CCI.

Auspos describes the network of partners participating in a CCI as a "complex web." She writes:

> Community change requires a complex web of relationships and partnerships— between funders and intermediaries, between intermediaries and lead agencies, between lead agencies and neighborhood organizations, and between the managing entities and neighborhood organizations. It is difficult to ensure that all components are led and implemented well when they are executed by so many players over whom there is so little control, and who have many competing demands, values, and interests. (2010, p. 56)

In order to manage the networks of partners, she prescribes written agreements, developing relationships that motivate action and create collective accountability, thereby creating consequences and providing corrective action for partners.

The collaborative leadership group and the network of partners join the previously mentioned intermediary organizations as potential structures or organizational layers for the CCI. While the role and function of the intermediary agency is more fully developed in the literature, the role and function of the collaborative leadership group and network of partners seems equally important. Understanding how these structures are aligned and coordinate the activities of CCIs warrants deeper study.

Collaborative Leadership

CCIs do not operate independently. Leaders guide the participating institutions. CCIs require leaders from various institutions to work together, to share their resources, and to align strategies. Sometimes all the leaders of participating institutions are included in such an endeavor; sometimes a select group of leaders will suffice. But every CCIs, for better or for worse, relies on leaders to determine the direction of their CCI, to develop strategies for achieving goals, and institute course corrections when needed. Surprisingly, given the important role of leadership in implementing and sustaining CCIs, leadership was rarely discussed as an *explicit* CCI feature in the academic and non-academic literature. Nonetheless, a number of authors acknowledged the importance of leadership in the successful functioning of CCIs, and their description of leaders provide some insights into the type of leadership and supporting structures that CCIs require to be successful.

O'Neill and Carlee (2010), for example, argue that leadership is essential for community change. They write that:

> The essential underlying variable in virtually all societal endeavors is leadership. Leadership of community change can be initiated anywhere—within the neighborhood network or through an outside catalyst. For diverse groups to come together in a shared effort, however, someone must start the conversation. Leadership in this context requires awareness of the need or opportunity; leaders must have a vision for what is possible and an understanding of how to launch the effort and gauge its success. One person becomes two, two become three, three become four, and so on until they achieve the critical mass necessary to translate ideas and vision into a plan. (2010, p. 89)

From this description, leadership involves an awareness of local needs, vision, and an ability to build on that vision to create a CCI.

Others who write about CCIs also recognize the importance of leadership, even when not including it as an essential element. Chaskin (2001), for example, discusses the importance of leadership in building his framework for community capacity, which includes "(1) a sense of community, (2) a level of commitment among community members, (3) the ability to solve problems, and (4) access to resources" (p. 296). From this perspective, leadership involves capacity building. Kubisch also discusses the importance of building leadership capacity as part of the CCI's community and capacity building strategy. While her emphasis seems to be on the development of leaders from the broader community and not the leaders of the various participating institutions, her description of the leadership characteristics in a CCI are relevant. Kubisch writes:

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Leaders who emerge from community change work may be different from other leaders in the sense that they are used to thinking about the interrelated causes of poverty and community distress and are comfortable reaching beyond particular programmatic domains. They follow strong values about promoting resident engagement and forging partnerships. As a result, they have unique experience and skills around comprehensive planning, community engagement, and forming strategic alliances. (2010c, p. 31)

From this perspective, the role of leadership in CCIs is different from the role of leadership in other forms of organization.

Farrow (2010) and Blank and colleagues (2006b) add to the description of CCI leaders. Farrow writes about three qualities for CCI leaders who are working with a results-focused orientation including facilitative leadership, the ability to inspire people and meet long-range goals, and the capacity to balance relationship-building skills with a strong orientation toward data, accountability, and performance. Blank and colleagues write about "cross-boundary leaders" who work at the school, intermediary, and community (what I call the "systems") levels. Their review of eleven community school-focused CCIs found that cross-boundary leaders at the systems level were responsible for creating a sustainable financing strategy, using professional development to improve site based practice, using data to demonstrate results and hold parties accountable, and using public engagement to support the CCI.

Kubisch further describes leadership as a shared enterprise in a CCI, perhaps because leadership in a CCI requires fulfilling a multitude of roles and functions. She describes a broad range of leadership qualities as essential to operating a CCI, a range that no one person would likely possess or fulfill. Kubisch identifies the following qualities for CCI leaders:

- Appreciate the complexity of issues and interactions while maintaining a focus on goals and driving toward medium- and longer-term outcomes,

- Inspire hope and urgency among colleagues,

- Implement programs effectively,

- Use community-level data to analyze and mobilize the community,

- Interact across technical and sectoral boundaries,

- Interact effectively across race, class, and cultural differences,

- Recognize the power bases that can enhance or impede change and engage effectively with them,

- Establish and maintain trust with a wide range of constituents,

- Be opportunistic and take advantage of new political openings, policy trends, funding streams, and economic upswings,

- Be entrepreneurial with regard to funding, and

- Be open to learning, creating feedback loops to manage internally and to learn and adapt. (Kubisch, 2010c, pp. 31–32)

Based on Kubisch's description of leadership qualities, the leadership roles and functions in a CCI are complex and multifaceted, which can only be satisfied through collaboration.

"Collaborative Leadership" is a term that Hank Rubin uses to highlight the ways in which multiple leaders work together in complex organizations. His description of collaborative leadership captures many of the leadership qualities described by Kubisch and others who have studied CCIs. Rubin writes:

Collaborative leadership is the skillful and mission-oriented facilitation of relevant

relationships. It is the juncture of organizing and management. Whereas teachers,

community, and labor organizers are trained to patiently build their movements through

one-on-one conversations with each individual they want to recruit, collaborative leaders

do this and more by building structures to support and sustain these productive

relationships over time. (2009a, p. 18)

Among the characteristics of collaborative leadership that Rubin describes are strategic thinking, recruiting the right mix of resources and people, consensus building, data-driven decision making, an understanding of people or empathy, managerial skills, system thinking, and commitment to diversity.

Rubin's theory of collaborative leadership fits well with the description of leadership qualities for CCIs found in the literature, particularly the list of qualities provided by Kubisch (2009). Despite the dearth of literature on leadership in CCIs, it is apparent that there are a number of important collaborative leadership roles, functions, and structures that should be examined more fully. Rubin's theory may provide a framework by which to do so.

Summary

Policymakers and practitioners are increasingly viewing partnerships and collaborative change efforts as important elements of school reform. Superintendents and other education leaders typically include "partnerships" as a key element of their strategic plans, though the element is typically under-developed and under-resourced. If policymakers and funders believe that partnerships are important to improving outcomes for students, families, and communities,

and are willing to fund them and require them in legislation and guidance, then we need to learn more about why some succeed while others fail.

The literature on CCIs and other systems-level collaborative approaches is sparse and largely found in a limited number of non-academic sources. Still, the available literature offers a set of themes, some more developed than others, that warrant further exploration. In the following section, I describe how I address some of these gaps in the literature and answer my research questions.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

As policies are increasingly calling for partnerships to support collaborative reform efforts, and new initiatives are starting in communities across the country, it's illustrative to look at community change initiatives (CCIs) in-depth. Organizations are writing about how CCIs may develop, but there is very little rigorous academic work that is investigating why and how CCIs form and in what ways they are organized. The following chapter describes my research methods for examining the CCI approach using a qualitative case study design.

My research examines one type of education-focused CCI that has been sustained for multiple years, the community schools initiative. Community schools are a school-community partnership and place-based education reform strategy that has gone through a variety of iterations over the past century (Rogers, 1998). A new community schools movement has been growing since the mid-1990s as evidenced by the increased use of the community school strategy in multiple schools within and across school systems (Blank, 2005).

Despite the rise in the community school strategy, very little has been written about how systems of community schools have been organized at the initiative or systemic level. In particular, I haven't been able to identify any published academic literature on how community schools are organized broadly or used as the backbone for a CCI (there is limited research on their success, but there doesn't appear to be any academic literature about their intermediaries, partnerships, structure, and functions). There are a number of guides, books, and publications that describe the structure and activities of community schools. However, most of these focus on the school level (see for example: Blank, Berg, & Melaville, 2006a; Dryfoos & Maguire, 2002; Lubell & Children's Aid Society, 2011).

To address this limitation in the literature, I designed a secondary data analysis of data that I collected as part of a larger research study sponsored by the Coalition for Community Schools at the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL). I am an employee of IEL and was an employee when I collected the data for a report on early childhood and community schools.[9] I am dedicated to the community school approach as a meaningful education reform effort. However, the purpose of the current study isn't to promote community schools, or CCIs, but to identify the organizational, financial, political, and leadership structures that make them operate. In addition, I included checks for validity that I describe later in order to maintain objectivity.

The original study design included site visits and extended interviews with educators, community leaders and practitioners about the ways community school initiatives were approaching linkages with early childhood education opportunities. I focus on the data collected at two sites – Tulsa, OK and Multnomah County, OR – to answer the following research questions:

1. Why and how do school system-level community change initiative (CCI) partnerships form?

2. What are the organizational, financial, and political structures that support sustainable CCIs? What, in particular, are their connections to the school systems they seek to impact?

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[9] The full report that captures this study is called *Building Blocks: An Examination of the Collaborative Approach Community Schools Are Using to Bolster Early Childhood Development*, and can be found here: http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/REVISED%20BB%20DOC-1-7-13.pdf.

3. What are the leadership functions and structures found within CCIs? How are leadership functions distributed across schools and agencies within communities?

Each site supports a well-developed CCI that includes a partnership between multiple community agencies and local educators. Unlike many of the CCIs discussed in the literature review, these initiatives have a strong focus on local schools, have *sustained* their collaborative reform efforts over four years or more, and continue to operate.

In the sections that follow, I discuss the unique challenges associated with studying CCIs; describe the original research design, including site selection; and describe data collection methods and my approach to data analysis. I also identify several limitations to the study.

Challenges to Studying CCIs

Selecting the appropriate methods for studying collaborative education reform efforts is a complicated task. Stagner and Duran write, "The complex goals, structures, and mechanisms of comprehensive initiatives present significant challenges to determining whether they are successful and which elements of programs were instrumental in their success or failure" (1997, p. 138). In an article titled, "How shall we study comprehensive, collaborative services for children and families?," Knapp (1995) recommends the use of in-depth case studies as these methods are more appropriate for exploring discrete programmatic reforms than the use of comparative experimental studies. Fortunately, the original research design called for the collection of a broad range of data – observations, interviews with stakeholders, current and historical documents – providing a rich database from which to consider my research questions.

Knapp also suggests that researchers develop a strong conceptualization of what is being studied by clearly identifying the theory of action and fundamental dimensions of the strategy. I describe the theory of action behind this type of education-focused CCIs (community school initiatives) later in this section. I draw from the literature as well as relevant documents to develop the conceptual frame that I used in the study. This frame helped me identify the relevant data from the larger dataset, as well as assisted in the identification and clarification of themes.

Finally, Knapp further suggests comparison with other cases to determine which dimensions are more effective than others. Based on this guidance, I use a comparative case study research design (Merriam, 2009). This method offers a strategy for deeply exploring each case as well as generating themes across the cases. I use this method, along with the conceptual frame, to describe the initiatives' theories of action, organizational structures and approaches to leadership. I looked for similarities and differences across sites, including reports about the challenges that each CCI has faced and the strategies (successful and unsuccessful) used to address them.

Overall Design

Data for this study were collected as part of a larger study about the ways community school initiatives are extending services and networking with early childhood education opportunities. I was a principal investigator for the study, which was sponsored by the Coalition for Community Schools, for which I am an employee. I had primary, though not exclusive, responsibility, for identifying sites, developing data collection instruments, and actually collecting the data at the selected sites.

The first step was to select appropriate sites based on the population of community school initiatives around the United States, which now numbers around 80 locations. I established the following criteria for site selection for the early childhood study: a) communities must have implemented the community school strategy for at least four years and b) have strong or developing early childhood initiatives. Because this study sought to answer how community school systems support early learning it was essential that I selected sites with strong community school systems – that is, cases where prior efforts at linking services had been successful and the broader initiative was well established. By focusing on successful, well-operating CCIs – what Patton (2014) describes as critical cases – I sought to increase the likelihood of observing the successful inclusion of early learning services in community schools. For this study, I measured the strength of the system by its longevity.

As a first step, I selected all the communities that met the longevity criteria from a list of members of the Coalition for Community Schools. I then conducted brief telephone interviews with the Coalition's primary contact for each community to gauge their level of involvement with early childhood (most typically a representative of the lead intermediary organization supporting the initiative). From these interviews I selected four sites that had significant initiatives associated with early childhood education for the Coalitions study. Funding sources varied across the four sites, as did the scope of the CCI.

Site Selection for this Study

For the purpose of this study, I sought to restrict some of the variability across cases, and I sought to identify the sites that provided the richest data relevant to my research questions. All of the sites had a sustained history of success and all had strong connections to schools as part of

the initiative. All of the sites also used the community school approach as their major strategy. Ultimately, I selected the two sites that were most closely related to one another in design – Multnomah and Tulsa. Stakeholders at Tulsa had visited Multnomah County and modeled some of their structures and functions. Moreover, in each of these sites the community played an early, major role in developing the CCI, providing a clearer connection to the literature that focuses on community driven approaches.

According to Patton (2014), homogenous case selection is an appropriate design for exploratory analyses, because it provides an opportunity to identify prominent themes and construct a conceptual framework that can inform future research. Unlike in the original study, where I wanted to identify cases that provided the greatest possibility for observing how CCIs incorporated early learning into their services, my focus for the secondary data analysis was on understanding why and how education-focused CCIs develop; the manner in which CCIs are organized, financed, and politically supported; and the distribution of the leadership functions essential to their success. Although Multnomah and Tulsa cases varied in the scope of their CCI – Multnomah servicing a broader geographical area than Tulsa – I decided that the similarity in their underlying design provided the best opportunity for answering my research questions.

Site Visits

I spent three days in each site during spring 2011. Prior to arrival, I worked with the lead contact in each community to generate interview subjects, and I specifically requested to speak to school district leaders (e.g., the superintendent), leaders of the community school initiative, partners, early childhood administrators and providers, and others. In addition, I worked with local sites to identify dates that would coincide with community school and early childhood

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meetings so that I could observe how the different actors interacted as they discussed these two topics. Although early childhood education is not the focus of this study, my observations of these meetings provided some insights into expectations regarding leadership and collaboration. Most of the observations, however, were about the CCIs in general (the focus of my study), not early childhood specifically.

Data Collection

The data set includes interviews with key stakeholders, observations, school site visit field notes, and documents. A national expert on community schools for the original study vetted the protocols for individual and focus group interviews. (Interview protocols can be found in the Appendix). I reviewed the existing data set (described more fully below) for Multnomah and Tulsa, identifying those interviews and other types of data that were most relevant to my research questions. For example, I did not include interviews and observations in my analysis that are strictly about early childhood or about school-level partnerships exclusively (i.e., aspects of an initiative that did not involve collaboration with community agencies). Because the focus of my study is on how CCIs operate at the community-wide level, school-partner collaboration – that is, collaboration between *individual* schools and *individual* partners –was considered illustrative but not essential to my analyses.

Interviews

I collected the data through semi-structured interviews and focus groups with over 50 key stakeholders, including superintendents, community leaders, principals, parents, initiative leaders, funders, community partners, and others. In order to select interviewees, I provided my primary contact with a list of the types of people I would like to speak with based on their role in

the community school initiative (CSI).[10] This included elected officials, funders, school district staff (superintendent and/or relevant staff), key partners, intermediary director, a selection of key staff at the intermediary office, agency leaders (if applicable), site coordinators, teachers and school staff, principals, and others (for a full list, see the letter to site visit leaders in the Appendix). Selecting an array of members involved in the development and operation of the initiative helped me triangulate data to develop themes and findings that are consistent for each case and across the cases (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2014).

I then worked with each of the primary contacts to schedule a full list of interviews, focus groups, and observations. In all cases, my contact provided me with a schedule of the interviews ahead of the site visit, which was typically modified on site based on availability and the opportunity to secure additional interviews. I taped most of the individual and focus group interviews and took detailed notes for both. Interviewees were asked for permission to record the interview before taping, and in only a few instances where sensitive matters were discussed was I asked not to tape or to stop taping. Interviews and focus groups typically lasted between forty minutes to an hour with a few lasting longer. They were commonly held at the intermediary offices (the site of many CCI meetings), in subjects' offices, and in a few cases at a restaurant. Interviews and focus groups were oftentimes added to existing CCI meetings in order to make travel easier and increase the likelihood subjects would be available.

I was joined on each site visit by a writing consultant who joined in asking questions during the interviews; she took her own set of notes. At the end of each site visit the consultant

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[10] The CSI typically has one intermediary organization and one collaborative leadership group at the city, county, or multi-jurisdictional level that supports multiple community schools. Schools in the CSI share a common vision, purpose, and often funding streams.

and I reviewed our notes to identify themes and areas that required further clarification. For the purpose of this study, I transcribed the most pertinent interviews (nearly all that weren't explicitly about early childhood) and created interview logs for the rest. I reviewed any original transcripts and interview logs that I thought pertinent to the study. Using these procedures, I constructed a secondary database tailored to the research questions for this study.

Table 3.1 below demonstrates that there are data for nearly all of the most important interview categories in each of the cases (e.g., superintendent, district staff, intermediary, coordinators, and partners). Interviewees could fit into multiple categories such as a school district staff member who also served as system partner. However, I placed the interviewees in categories based on the role they were being interviewed about. Although I had more stakeholder data for the Tulsa case than the Multnomah case, I found sufficient data for each case to address the research questions for this study.[11]

Observations, Site Visits, Document Analysis

Interviews were augmented by observations of approximately seven meetings and visits to four community schools, and an analysis of pertinent documents, such as meeting agendas, background information about the CCI created by the intermediary, websites, and organizational charts. These additional sources of data helped inform my analysis and improve the study's construct validity by providing additional context that informs, confirms, or contradicts the interview data (Yin, 2003).

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[11] As the initial study progressed, we determined that fewer interviews, observations and site visits were required to gather sufficient information about the operation of each CCI. Because Multnomah was a later site visit, I collected less information about its CCI than Tulsa's CCI.

Table 3.1

Data Sources by Site

	Multnomah	Tulsa	TOTAL
Interviews			
District Superintendent	1	2	**3**
District Staff		2	**2**
Intermediary Organization	3	7	**10**
School Staff		4	**4**
Early Childhood Staff		1	**1**
School Site Coordinator	5	6	**11**
Coordinator - Other		1	**1**
Family and community members		2	**2**
School and community level partners	8	9	**17**
Funder		2	**2**
Other		1	**1**
Total	17	37	
Observations	2	5	**7**
School Site Visits	1	3	**4**

Data Analysis

I began data analysis by reviewing the site visit data. I created interview logs and transcripts from audio recordings (I listened at least once to each recording) and notes about observation and school site visits, as well as on documents. I reviewed the data for Multnomah first followed by Tulsa. While listening to the interviews I would take notes on themes and topics that were relevant to the research questions (e.g., "finance"). I then developed analytic memos for each case that included the common themes from sources of data organized by my research questions (Merriam, 2009). With the memos and notes on each theme, I then wrote the case study for Multnomah. Completion of this case informed the themes and development of the second case and in turn, completion of the Tulsa case helped me to revisit the themes in the first case. When there were gaps in the individual case studies or where there was missing supporting

data about a thematic element from one or more of the case studies, I had brief email or phone call exchanges with the appropriate interviewees for clarification. I then re-read each of the cases I developed to identify within-case themes followed by cross-case themes.

Checks for Validity

In order to strengthen the validity of my data analysis and findings, I identified a number of validity checks. According to Maxwell (1992) two types of validity that support qualitative research include descriptive validity and interpretive validity. In order to improve the descriptive validity of my study, I recorded and transcribed interviews and took running records of observed meetings and site visits. This approach helps validate that what I describe in the study is based on the data I actually saw and heard. In addition, once each case study was completed, I sent them to my primary contacts in each site to check my interpretation and findings and to seek any additional clarification. Responses from both cases were largely confirmatory with minimal corrections. Respondents also provided additional documentation that helped clarify particular points. These strategies are widely used by researchers to address threats to the validity of qualitative research (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2014).

Limitations

The primary limitation of this study is that it relies on a secondary data analysis from a study that wasn't designed to look specifically at the research questions. As I developed the cases, I recognized that I would have asked some questions differently, probed some issues more fully, and possibly selected additional individuals to interview – particularly individuals who historically played important leadership roles in each organization. However, even with these limitations, the original study was broad enough in purpose and design that it provided sufficient

data for the secondary data analysis. Beyond examining the inclusion of early education as service strategy, the original study sought to provide a rich context about the CCIs formation and operation, which included data useful to this study. As demonstrated in the interview protocol (see Appendix), the interviews were designed to capture the organizational, financial, and political aspects of the CCI, its history and relationships to other institutions, and the role of the school district(s). Observations and documents provided additional opportunities to explore the leadership aspects of the CCI, though more targeted interviews with select individuals in leadership roles would have been helpful.[12]

Despite the limitations described here, I would have likely selected these two cases if I had been collecting primary data. They both met my criteria for site selection described above, namely longevity. They also provided a wide range of potential subjects who have experience in different leadership, partnership, and operational aspects of the CCI. This meant I had enough data to answer my research questions.

Another limitation to this study is that the CCIs involved multiple institutions, making it unlikely that I would be able to get data from all of the institutions involved in each CCI. I attempted to capture data from the most important institutions, using a snowball or nomination technique (Patton, 2014). I asked knowledgeable individuals to identify the key institutions involved in the creation of the CCI and to identify the key institutions that participated in its governing bodies. Although this technique helped to refine my selection of institutions for data collection, limitations of time and resources prohibited the inclusion of all relevant institutions in

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[12] I return to this topic in the final chapter where I discuss directions for future research.

the study. For example, each CCI included multiple school districts but in the case of Multnomah, I was only able to speak to representatives from two of the six districts

Finally, consistent with Maxwell's (1992) discussion about validity and generalizability, the generalizability of my findings are limited. The two cases that I examine in this study have similar designs and focus specifically on education (though they used a variety of school, family, and community supports to meet their educational goals). Moreover, each CCI uses the community school strategy as their primary approach for collaboration and service delivery. Other CCIs may not use the school site as the locus of their efforts and will likely differ in the number of participating school districts, variation in financial contributions, and different sector representation in leadership and the intermediary institution. Nonetheless, by examining two CCIs with similar designs, I hope to identify common themes useful in understanding why and how sustainable, education focused-CCIs are formed; how this form of CCIs is organized, financed, and supported politically; and how leadership functions are distributed across partners. While the results of this study will have limited generalizability to CCIs in general, these results can be used to generalize to theory or conceptualizations of factors associated with sustainable, education-focused CCIs (Firestone, 1993).

Chapter 4: Multnomah Case Study

Multnomah County's Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) initiative represents one of the most mature examples of an education-focused CCI. Community leaders and elected officials started SUN in the 1990s, around the time that integrated services were receiving increasing attention at the national level from practitioners (Dryfoos, 1994), policymakers, and researchers (Behrman, 1992). Communities around the country were beginning to collaborate with schools (Hamann & Hall, 2003) in new ways. The SUN initiative leaders established strategies to sustain their effort while many other CCIs expired. In the following case I will explore how leaders created the structures and functions to sustain their new CCI.

Setting

Multnomah County is geographically the smallest county in the state of Oregon but also its most populous (748,000 residents).[13] There are six cities within the county including Portland, the largest city in the state. While predominantly white, there are pockets of diversity (see Table 4.1), including a growing number of Asian immigrants. Since the Vietnam War the Portland area has been a destination for federal authorities to relocate refugees.

The county includes six public school districts: Portland Public Schools, Centennial School District, David Douglass School District, Gresham-Barlow School District, Parkrose School District, and Reynolds School District. Table 4.1 shows the demographic breakdown of the six school districts. There is a growing trend of increasingly nonwhite students in county schools. A 2010 report by a community group estimated that the white school-age population

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[13] www.webmultco.us

Table 4.1

Multnomah County School District Demographics

	Centennial		David Douglass		Gresham-Barlow		Parkrose		Portland		Reynolds		SUN Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Number of Schools	10		16		23		6		91		22		168	
American Indian/Alaska Native	61	1	107	1	128	1	34	1	637	1	99	1	1,066	1%
Asian	703	11	1,417	13	241	2	565	16	3,606	8	781	7	7,313	8%
Hispanic	1,536	23	2,560	23	2,788	23	857	25	7,017	15	4,148	36	18,906	21%
Black	326	5	1,012	9	289	2	414	12	5,922	13	807	7	8,770	10%
White	3,519	54	5,098	47	8,109	66	1,280	37	25,762	56	4,952	44	48,720	54%
Hawaiian Native/Pacific Islander	49	1	131	1	60	0	85	2	440	1	126	1	891	1%
Two or more races	346	5	575	5	596	5	234	7	2,434	5	462	4	4,647	5%
Total	6,540		10,900		12,211		3,469		45,818		11,375		90,313	

Note. Source: Common Core of Data, Local Education Agency Universe Survey, 2010-11

changed from nearly 70 percent in 2000-2001 to 55 percent in 2009-2010 (Curry-Stevens, Cross-Hemmer, & Coalition of Communities of Color, 2010). This represents a 15 percent increase in the population of minority students in just nine years.

There is considerable diversity within Multnomah's minority population, especially the Asian sub-group. Minorities speak many different languages, and come from varied cultures, such as the aforementioned Vietnamese refugees. Minority leaders created nonprofit organizations that offer supports delivered by members of specific cultural communities and are designed to meet the distinctive needs of those unique groups. Interviews illuminated that county and nonprofits utilize a "culturally specific" model of service delivery. The term designates that each cultural group has distinctive needs and that delivery of corresponding services must be administered according to cultural norms and expectations. As one subject described it, leaders created the Asian Family Center during the 1990s in response to the increased number of Asian refugees and immigrants that came to Portland after the Vietnam War. The subject explained that Asian immigration continued to increase in the 1990s at the same time as the county saw an increase in Latinos. Each of these cultural communities has different needs whether it's a focus on language or cultural sensitivity about parent engagement in schools.

The changing geography of poverty also was an important contextual factor in this case. According to interviewees, at the time of data collection, poverty was spreading beyond the city of Portland to the other areas in the county. This trend is common to other major cities in the United States, as surrounding suburban communities have become increasingly diverse and home to low-income families (Kneebone & Berube, 2013). Thus, the entire county needed to

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create new ways to assist poor families. Addressing poverty and attending to a diverse community required county-wide solutions.

Social services and schools were the two "interventions" poor ethnic minority families encountered almost daily. Multnomah County had a history of broad community support for schools and social services. However, prior to the creation of the CCI, jurisdictions had separate and uncoordinated initiatives that worked with schools to varying degrees of success. The county provided health and social services while the City of Portland's Parks and Recreation Bureau provided recreational opportunities before and after school (Goss & Bouffard, 2007).

Conditions in Multnomah County in the late 1990s were ripe for a CCI with an emphasis on improving education outcomes. There was a clear need for assisting an increasingly diverse community and a history of agencies and leaders working along parallel but disconnected paths. One aspect that makes this CCI case unique is that leaders decided to organize the initiative at the county level, representing many cities and districts. This added another layer of complexity but also additional opportunities to draw from leadership, policy, and resources throughout the county.

In the next section, I describe how SUN developed as a CCI. In the third section, I analyze the political, organizational, and financial structures that supported the CCI and its work with school systems. Because the leadership functions played a critical role in both establishing of the CCI and its political, organizational, and financial structures, I highlight these functions within each area rather than discuss them in a separate section.

Origins of SUN

Multnomah County, like many other counties and jurisdictions around the country, was responsible for delivering a variety of services to an increasingly diverse population in the mid-1990s. City and county leaders wrote about their initial challenges in a reflective report that identified challenges including new state academic benchmarks that linked school funding to achievement performance (consistent with the growing national accountability movement), a widening achievement gap, demographic shifts, more children needing supervision during non-school hours, budget decreases, and high mobility (Hamann & Hall, 2003). All these challenges had multiple local leaders searching for answers (for a timeline of the SUN CCI, see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1. Multnomah SUN CCI Timeline

1997	Multnomah County's leaders start the county Community Building Initiative
1998	City of Portland and county leaders created a committee to explore expansion of the community school strategy. Committee includes school leaders, representatives of the city's afterschool cabinet and of the county's Community Building Initiative.
1999	County (intermediary) begins implementation of the new community school strategy (SUN) in eight schools and hires a CCI director. Ad-hoc planning committee becomes the SUN Sponsors Group
1999-2007	Growth and expansion of community schools across the county's six school districts
2007	School-Age Services Task Force recommends and leaders create the SUN Coordinating Council

*Adapted from Hamann & Hall, 2003, pp. 10-11; Multnomah County, 2014b

City and county leaders from Multnomah County created a CCI for a number of reasons, including the goal of integrating services for students and families, maximizing resources across organizations (rather than tackle them independently), and improving educational outcomes. To achieve this more comprehensive set of goals, leaders repurposed and expanded a long-standing

community school program, which had been funded by the city and offered recreation and community education programs.

Community Leaders Started Community Schools to Integrate Services at the School Site

In the late 1990s, city and county leaders began collaborating about integrating services and effectively supporting schools. While there were a variety of efforts underway, they lacked coordination and cohesion. As described earlier, Multnomah County and city agencies had a rich history of working in partnership with schools. However, according to one report, "These initiatives co-existed but were not aligned and, in some ways, duplicated efforts" (Goss & Bouffard, 2007, p. 2).

The lack of collaboration and inefficiencies changed when Multnomah County Chair Beverly Stein, City Commissioner Jim Francesconi and County Commissioner Diane Linn initiated discussions about how to align their efforts as part of a county-led "Community Building Initiative." These leaders had two goals, to "support education and school success" and to "improve the way resources for students and their families were delivered by developing a school-based delivery model" (Multnomah County, n.d.-b). Stein, Francesconi, and Linn, as O'Neill and Carlee (2010) might argue, 'started the conversation'. They provided the initial leadership that recognized a broader community need and saw an opportunity for a more fulsome community initiative.

Stein, Francesconi, and Linn enlisted others in the task of creating a more integrated structure for pursuing their vision. They established a three-pronged strategy for exploring and creating a foundation for the CCI. First, they had government agency staff research models from

around the country that would help them achieve their goals, especially improved educational outcomes. Second, they built political capital for increased support for schools and services from relevant agencies and departments. Third, in 1998, the aforementioned leaders assembled an ad hoc committee to review existing assets and to develop a strategy and vehicle for achieving their goals.

The leaders recruited additional stakeholders, including those from existing collaboratives such as the county's Community Building Initiative and the city's After School Cabinet, to broaden leadership and ownership. A report describing the initial stages of the CCI characterizes the first initial leadership group as "small" and mentions that it "grew organically as advocates cultivated key relationships and identified resources to support expansion" (Hamann & Hall, 2003, p. 7). Similar to what O'Neill and Carlee describe. "One person becomes two, two persons become three, three become four and so on until they achieve the critical mass necessary to translate ideas and vision into a plan" (2010, p. 89).

Stakeholders identified assets that were already in place: an existing community schools program operated by the City Bureau of Parks and Recreation, the school-based services already offered by the county, and the many nonprofit organizations that had been partnering and working with schools (Multnomah County, n.d.-b). Each of these assets had leaders who became a part of the CCI.

Over the next few years city and county leaders started to fund community schools while they developed their cross-system CCI approach. Part of that development included an analysis of the process for distributing funds that was consistent with the goal to better align resources. County leaders called for an analysis about how the county was spending financial resources on

students and families. As one county staff persons described it, in 2001 the county board of commissioners:

> Became interested in trying to understand where the county was investing in school-age kids and families….There was no sense of level of investment, what the services were and how they fit. And certainly not a "system."

This raised a number of questions about how resources were distributed, where they were being delivered, and if county residents were receiving services equitably.

Equipped with an understanding about how resources were distributed, leaders made the choice to streamline and maximize a variety of programs into one coherent and aligned system. While the county had a number of investments in different programs, organizations, and services, leaders realized they weren't coordinated into a "system." Consequently, programs appeared haphazard and, at times, redundant. In response to shrinking budgets, leaders felt pressure to streamline effective services and ensure equity of service distribution. A county staff member explains:

> Once they [county leaders] saw we had hundreds of programs, good programs, but hundreds of programs, many of them kind of "boutiquey…." They asked that a policy be created that would help the county be more strategic, have a system and link things together better. I think they also saw the writing on the wall that the budget was going to get worse. So they knew [they] needed to figure out a way to identify the core services they were going to provide and align them into a system and stop doing some of these "boutiquey" things that they couldn't afford to do anymore.

Consequently, leaders tasked their staff to think about how to better align investments and programs.

In addition to being more efficient with resources, leaders also wanted to create a system that more equitably distributed resources to high need communities in an increasingly diverse county. One subject who was part of the initial CCI development described the importance of equity saying that leaders were exploring how to respond to the growing numbers of children in poverty. Greater equity in the delivery of services, along with a desire for greater efficiencies and effectiveness of services, was a major motivation in seeking greater collaboration and coordination across service providers in Multnomah County.

In summary, Stein, Francesconi, and Linn were faced with a number of local problems, including shrinking budgets, poor system integration, and inequitable distribution of supports. They helped to identify these problems and promote a more integrated approach to service delivery. However, without other agency leaders deciding to act, and to act together, these problems were likely to persist. Local leaders made a strategic choice to overhaul the disconnected systems and create a better system as part of a new CCI. Visionary and shared leadership beyond, Stein, Francesconi, and Linn would prove critical to setting the direction and mission for the CCI.

While there were several local school leaders who were creating school-community partnerships on their own, and were requesting assistance for these new and promising efforts from the city and county, the initiative started primarily as a "top-down" approach. One interviewee confirmed this, stating, "There was that strong initial visionary leadership to identify this model and say this is what we need to do, and this would make a difference." Now working

together, leaders needed to identify a strategy they could unite behind to achieve their shared

goals. They turned to one of the existing assets they had identified, the community school, to

create Multnomah County's Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN).

Leaders Selected the School as the Place to Deliver Services

Leaders were fixated on better delivery of services while also figuring out how to

improve education from most of their positions outside of the school system. As one subject

clearly described it, leaders wanted a strategy that would answer, "How do we better connect

services to education particularly? And what does that look like?" The CCI made an important

decision to include superintendents as active participants in these discussions from the start,

creating a more collaborative foundation for leadership (Auspos, 2010). CCI leaders and staff

also reached out to school boards and unions for their input. The community, represented by the

county and city officials, did not attempt to change education from the outside, but rather,

through direct partnership with the school leaders.

In their request for an analysis of the state of system integration and recommendations,

leaders asked for a policy that would incorporate "models where we would be more consistently

delivering services and spreading them more equitably across the county." An intermediary staff

explained that leaders selected the expansion of the existing community schools strategy:

> Because we had that existing model that we had seen being really effective. Then that
>
> [community schools] was identified as the way, school based and school linked. So the
>
> school as the place was identified in the policy. And then community school as the
>
> school-based approach was chosen.

However, while the community school model provided a basic strategy for integration and delivery of services, it also required modification and expansion.

At the same time that leaders were asking about service integration, city leaders were using a community school strategy in fewer than 10 schools. While the city's existing community school strategy gave leaders a model to build from as they sought to improve education and resource coordination county-wide, the model also required connecting service agencies more intentionally to education. One subject with knowledge of the history of this decision describes:

> [Community schools] worked well to harness a lot of great partnerships we already had. We had the school based health clinics, the school based health people, you know the city was doing the community schools that were very much [limited to] recreation and enrichment, and not connected…[They were] very nice, co-located, but not connected to school besides to say, "Hey, were in your building. Nice to see you." That kind of thing. Not thinking about the academic connection at all. And not doing family involvement, social services.

In other words, while county and city leaders wanted to create a CCI that was more comprehensive than previous initiatives, and they wanted a strategy that brought multiple services and opportunities to the school site, implementation would require a change in the

existing community school model, which focused primarily on afterschool or health care services.[14]

Expanding community schools represented a shift in practice for a county system that had funded numerous programs and organizations that resulted in some of the aforementioned redundancies. Services had typically been delivered at various locations around the community and the school may have had access to those places and services. In contrast, the emerging community school strategy would deliver community-based services at the school site. This brought challenges for the county and others, such as working with CBOs that were used to delivering services outside the school. Nonetheless, leaders succeeded in garnering significant "buy in" to the new approach from CBOs and agencies currently providing services.

The executive of a community-based group explained the core idea that an emphasis on education and service delivery at the school site would achieve the CCI's goals:

> I think one of the strong foundations of visions for that model and that redesign is that practice and research data had indicated [that] how to best attack and end poverty is education. So they [the initial CCI leadership] take this data and say, "Okay how do we do this?" So then that's where the model shifted from community-based service delivery model into school-based service delivery model.

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[14] SUN Community Schools provide a variety of coordinated supports for students and families at the school site. According to their website, SUN Community Schools and their partners provide expanded learning opportunities outside of the typical school day, family involvement and family development, health and other social services for students, families, and the community, community events, and adult education (see https://multco.us/sun/sun-community-schools/how-it-works).

The new community schools would be more comprehensive than the existing city-sponsored community school approach. Another CCI community-based leader described how the new community schools were different, "In terms of being more comprehensive. The previous community school program was more really, afterschool and recreation focused."

In addition to identifying community schools as the place to deliver services, leaders saw community schools as a way to include partners who were already embedded in the community and had relationships with minority and poor populations. The CCI made the decision to have local partners deliver services in schools rather than county staff, increasing the role for these local community-based organizations. One county representative said:

> We saw that there was a real "value add" to having community based organizations and their specialty and their culture specific perspectives and all of that in our mix. That was an intentional choice.

Because education was a broadly shared interest, the use of the school as the point of service delivery created additional opportunities for strengthening partnerships with minority and community leaders.

Leaders eventually agreed that community schools should be the central place for service delivery in a policy (described later). Policy helped "shift officially" the service delivery strategy from the prior approach and ensured that services were delivered in schools. One subject summarized:

> So the policy really accomplished a couple of key shifts for us. One of which was naming schools as the key place for delivering services and acknowledging that this county had a role in education.

This also had the impact of clarifying the county's desired role in education.

Summary

Individual city, county, and community leaders identified a number of challenges including poverty, a growing achievement gap, and increasing diversity in a historically homogeneous county. They also sought out strategies that would reduce inefficiencies in government programs that staff had identified. Leaders recognized these challenges and decided there was an opportunity to improve service delivery and schools, goals of the developing CCI. In promoting this evolving vision of service delivery, they sought out allies and potential partners within the county. While exploring existing assets and looking to best practices around the country they decided to make expansion of community schools the central vehicle for developing their CCI. In order to institutionalize, govern, and implement their new CCI, they began to formalize systems-level support for their strategy by developing political, organizational, and financial structures as well as leadership functions that could sustain the CCI over time.

How SUN Was Structured

CCI leaders from the county, city, and school districts had initiated a new, comprehensive strategy in 1999 to align and coordinate social services at the school site. Implementing that vision would require multiple leaders to create viable and collaborative organizational, financial, and political structures. Furthermore, since the strategy for community change was centered on a school-based approach, commitment from school district leaders would be imperative. Leaders of the new CCI created structures that were designed to sustain, deepen, and scale the strategy across the county. As mentioned in the literature review, structures are important to supporting

collaborative groups (Rubin, 2009a). Rubin writes that collaborative leaders build "structures to support and sustain these productive relationships over time" (2009a, p. 18).

Organizational Structures

Organizers developed organizational arrangements as a key strategy for including school and community leaders in decision-making at multiple levels. These structures have evolved as the initiative has grown, stakeholders have changed, and new challenges have occurred (see Figure 4.2 for the current organizational chart of Multnomah's CCI).

It's important to note that while the purpose of the organizational structures that follow were to align and coordinate actions of institutions, the coordination within the structures was led by individuals. This is consistent with the Rubin's (2009a) explanation of the role of individuals in collaborative leadership groups like CCIs. While the participation of institutions is relevant, the individuals are the ones who develop relationships and find ways to work together (or not). Consequently, the following sections will describe not only the organizational structures but, when possible, the individuals who collaborated on behalf of their institutions.

Figure 4.2 Multnomah CCI Organizational Chart

Sponsors Group

(All school districts, Multnomah County, City of Portland, Portland Children's Levy, Oregon Department of

Human Services, Portland Parks & Recreation)

Coordinating Council

Intermediary

SUN Service System Division,

Multnomah County Department of County Human Services

District Implementation Teams

SUN Community Schools
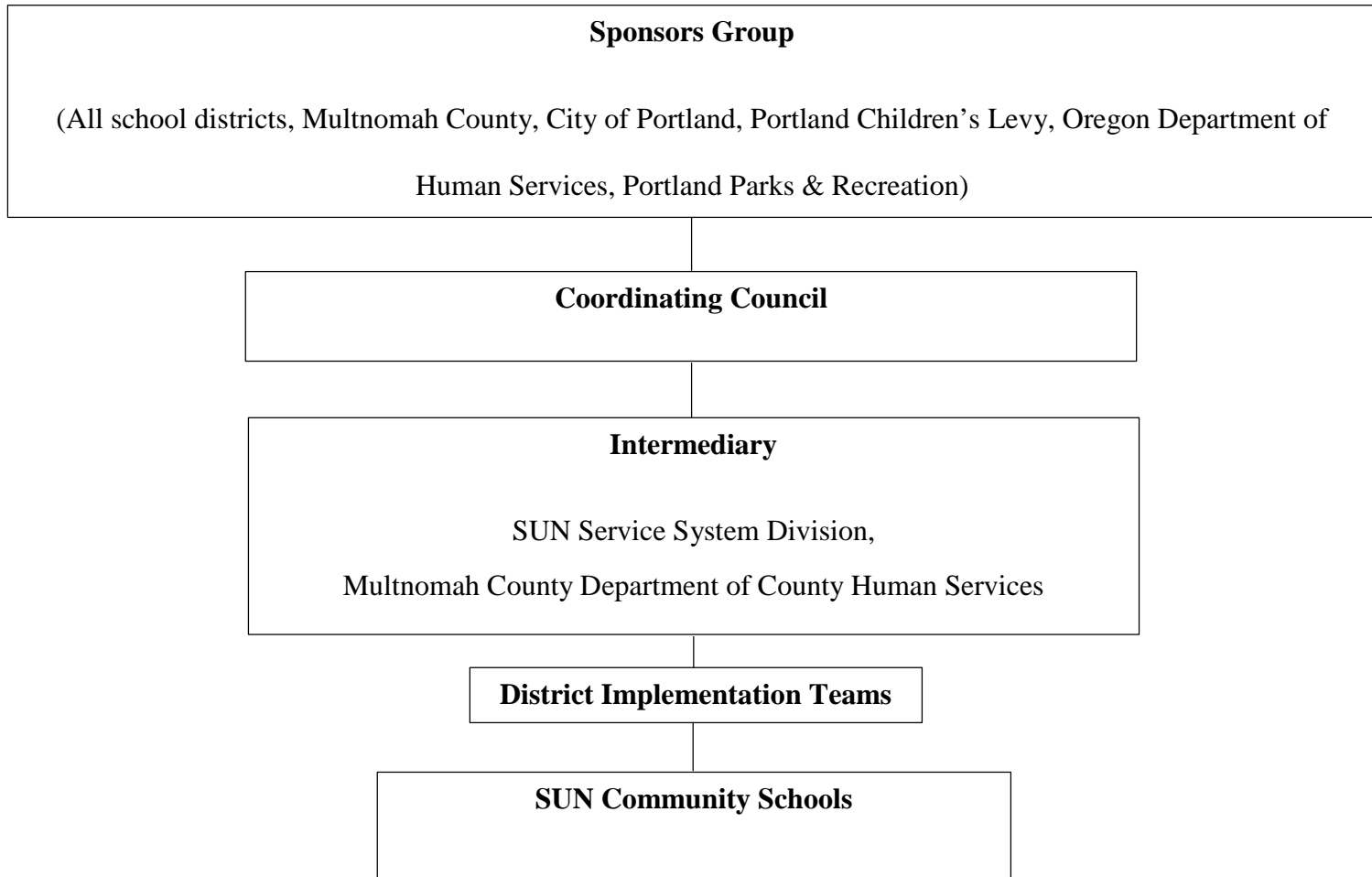
As mentioned earlier, leaders from across sectors and organizations united to establish a comprehensive strategy to align systems, funding, and programming with the goal of improving education and service delivery at the school site. An existing group, the Community Building Initiative's Sponsors Group, oversaw and implemented the initial CCI in 1999. This collaborative included the leadership from participating school districts as well as city and county representatives. In 2007 local leaders created a second tier Coordinating Council, a collection of mid-level representatives from the school districts, the city and county, and other key stakeholders, that could meet more regularly to share governance of the collaborative and help the county grow the initiative. At the same time, they changed the original Sponsors Group to become a collaborative of top leaders (the mayor, county chair, superintendents, head of the state Department of Human Services, etc.) from the organizations contributing resources to the CCI that would meet less frequently. Participation in the new Sponsors Group demonstrated public commitment to the CCI. The initial "visionary leaders" designated the county as the intermediary to staff the CCI from the start. Thus, the county, through its intermediary function, provided the staff to carry out the day-to-day operations of managing and facilitating CCI activities, and, as indicated by Figure 4.2, had major responsibility for managing the coordinating of services to school districts.

The intersection of the Sponsors Group, Coordinating Council, and intermediary group create the nexus for collaborative leadership in SUN. Similar to the Figure 2.1 presented on p. 33, which describes the collaborative leadership structure for community schools, these structures connect community leaders, CCI facilitators, and school leaders. The connections

between these groups provide the primary opportunities for identifying mutual interests, negotiating priorities, and sustaining a vision for SUN.

Sponsors Group

As previously indicated, the CCI grew out of a city afterschool and county Community Building Initiative. It utilized the leaders and leadership structures from those two initiatives to "jump start" the expansion of community schools and the CCI. The county initiative was led by a group of "sponsors" or stakeholders. As "sponsors" each of the leaders made a financial commitment to the initiative that signified shared ownership. As leaders created the new CCI, representatives from the afterschool initiative and the Community Building Initiative Sponsors Group created the new SUN Sponsors Group.

The SUN Sponsors Group was made up of the directors and heads of organizations with decision-making authority for their institutions. These cross-sector leaders included county and city governments and school districts.[15] Consistent with the earlier Community Building Initiative Sponsors Group, the new Sponsors Group retained the name as all participants were expected to contribute resources (financial, human, or in-kind) to the CCI.

At the start of the CCI, the Sponsors Group was its only governing body. While a broad range of funders participates in the Sponsors Group, there are a few voices and perspectives

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[15] The full list of participants includes: the Multnomah County Chair (Lead Sponsor); superintendents of Portland, Parkrose, David Douglas, Reynolds, and Centennial, Gresham-Barlow School Districts, and of the Multnomah Education Service District; City of Portland Mayor; Portland Children's Levy Commissioner; Portland Parks Commissioner; and representatives from the Oregon Department of Human Services; Multnomah County Commission on Children, Families and Community; Portland Business Alliance; and the Business Community (Multnomah County, 2013). Since 2007, additional seats have been added for the United Way and All Hands Raised (the local cradle-to career initiative).

noticeably absent. For example, the group lacked representation from the non-profit community, parents, educators, and youth. Such composition calls into question the extent of community engagement in the CCI, one important aspect of CCIs from the literature (Chaskin, 2001). However, leaders appear to have accounted for this absence later when they created a new body, the Coordinating Council, which included community-based groups. Ultimately, the makeup of the Sponsors Group reflected its mission: integrating and aligning resources for maximum efficiency. The funder or "sponsors" are the ultimate decision-makers for the most relevant institutions across the county.

The Sponsors Group provides broad oversight for the initiative and demonstrates buy-in from major stakeholder institutions. The group also reviews funding and policy decisions and provides leaders an opportunity to network with one another and to align strategies and resources. Serving as a de-facto "board of directors" for the CCI, the Sponsors Group has a number of functions, but primarily acquiring money and reviewing budgets.

While an "official" group, the leaders assemble infrequently.[16] In addition to the many responsibilities these leaders have within their own organizations, they sit on a variety of different committees in the county that require and compete for their time and attention. An intermediary staff characterizes the demands on these leaders:

Because we convene them at the most once a year and they have all these other tables… they don't have much of an identity... We try to catch them as we can…You want to be

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[16] Follow up conversations with subjects since data collection indicate that the Sponsors Group now meets three to four times a year on budget and system building.

advised by your board, but they can't, you know, they [the leaders] all have boards of

their own.

The members of the Sponsors Group were busy because they represented the highest leadership

of participating organizations.

The Sponsors Group also sets priorities for the Coordinating Council, a group of high-

and mid-level managers. According to one Coordinating Council member, the Sponsors Group

makes the ultimate decisions but looks "at the Council for the direction." The subject added that

the Coordinating Council "doesn't really have authority" for making decisions but makes budget

and other recommendations to the Sponsors and the individual organizations and that thus far the

arrangement works well. One member of the Sponsors Group characterized the need for both

groups and their relationship this way:

Here's how Portland likes to do things. They like to have an operations group and then

like a muckety muck group above the operations… SUN is the same way. There's a

leadership group which is high level, CEO kind of level. But there's an operations group

and that's the Coordinating Council.

This suggests that there is a reciprocal relationship between the two groups and that the leaders

of the Sponsors Group rely on the support and recommendations of the Coordinating Council.

Few interviewees spoke about the Sponsors Group, perhaps validating its lack of identity

in the day-to-day operation of the CCI. However, as the ultimate funders and decision makers of

the CCI, this group appears to be critical to the success of the CCI. The Coordinating Council, on

the other hand, has a more recognized identity in the CCI. While the Sponsors Group unites the

leaders who are essential for funding the partnerships and community school sites, the Coordinating Council provides the space for staff from these organizations to work together on a regular basis.

Coordinating Council

From the beginning of the initiative the Sponsors Group funded and provided primary leadership for the CCI. In 2007, however, the leadership changed when a task force recommended the creation of the SUN Coordinating Council (hereafter referred to as "the Council"). Until that time, the Sponsors Group provided the leadership for the CCI, though the county retained a good deal of control. When some county commissioners threatened to cut SUN's budget, Ted Wheeler, the chair-elect of the County Commissioners responded to the threat with a recommendation to create the School-Age Services Task Force that would revisit the direction and operations of the CCI and help share ownership and responsibility so that it wasn't viewed as a county-dominated effort. A local paper quoted Wheeler as saying:

> It became obvious that the budget debate was becoming politicized, and I wanted to refocus our attention on how to really maximize the program and build a consensus on the direction this program should take in the future. (Moyer-Wade, 2007)

Walker believed that the dissatisfaction with the direction and operation of CCI required a rethinking of its organizational structure. Part of the problem resulted from the Sponsors Group's weak influence on the day-to-day operation of the CCI; equally important, however, was the absence of broad stakeholder representation and participation in important managerial decisions, a key component of collaborative leadership groups according to Auspos (2010).

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According to individuals that I interviewed for the case study, there was a perception at the time that the county, which was serving as the intermediary for the initiative, was taking actions without the input of key stakeholders. According to one subject involved in the development of the Council:

> What had happened was that SUN had sort of become viewed by a lot of people as a county program. So what we've tried to do at the Council is to create a governance structure that includes all the partners. And part of the idea is to get a little distance from the county and more ownership from the other partners.

Added another subject:

> What had happened before was that the county was really playing this role of being – what I think of – as the managing partner of the partnership. But there wasn't a place for them to take policy issues to talk about things like, "Okay, we're going to take a budget cut, what do we do about it?" And so they were just making those decisions, they meaning the county SUN staff, were really just making those decisions in a vacuum and then everyone was taking potshots at them. And we had a board of commissioners who wanted to fight with each other…

As the CCI expanded potential stakeholders, reaching into more schools, it required a new type of management and leadership structure.

Budget shortfalls also demanded organizational changes, especially if the CCI was to protect itself against competing interests. Around that time, there was a political battle about budgets that threatened SUN. As one subject described it:

There was a point at which there was a real schism on our board of county commissioners that really had nothing to do with SUN, but SUN it sort of became this plaything in that battle.

Wheeler recognized the threat posed by the CCI being seen as primarily a county run operation, as well as the threat posed by excluding a broader range of stakeholders in operational decisions about the budget, so he convened the School-Age Services Task Force to review the operation of the CCI and current programs.

Wheeler included a diverse group of stakeholders on the task force, which included representatives from school districts, city, county, state, higher education, community groups, and business. One of the major recommendations of the task force was to restructure the organization, creating a second-tier of managers, called the SUN Coordinating Council. According to the CCI's website, the purpose of the Council is "to provide high-level system oversight and support to the SUN Service System to ensure shared responsibility and coordination" (Multnomah County, n.d.-a). The School-Age Service Task Force also outlined specific initial "charges" for the Coordinating Council, including identifying and prioritizing core services, developing an allocation formula, program evaluation, creating a financial sustainability plan, providing for technical assistance from all institutions, adhering to memorandum of understanding to align services across systems, and overseeing systems integration and alignment (Multnomah County, n.d.-b), further distributing leadership functions across partners and stakeholders.

The School-Age Services Task Force designated seats on the Council from a broad range stakeholders in the county,[17] and it recommended that each member "should contribute resources (cash or services) to the system," a membership condition similar to that with the Sponsor Group (Multnomah County, 2008a, p. 2). The county intentionally reserved seats for culturally specific providers because they represented communities that were being served through SUN. One interviewee, who was a representative of a culturally specific provider, agreed that being part of the organizational structure was critical to getting their organization's perspective and priorities included in decisions about SUN. Overall, the structure of the new Council was more inclusive, broadening leadership and promoting shared ownership of the initiative. As one CCI leader noted:

> I think creating the Council really made it crystal clear that all of the partners had a stake in the decision-making of the system, and that the county wasn't calling the shots by ourselves, and that we would take big issues, big policy issues, big budget decisions, decisions about requests for proposal processes…And so that, creating that structure, working on it together…

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[17] The Charter designated council seats specifically for the Multnomah County Chair's Office; Director, Multnomah County Department of County Human Services; State Department of Human Services; City of Portland, Parks & Recreation; City of Portland, Mayor's Office; School District – Portland Public Schools (PPS); two School Districts – non-PPS; Youth and Parent Representation (at Council meetings when possible or, through outreach by Council members); two Coalition of Communities of Color members; SUN Service System Regional Service Center provider, and Business member of Leaders Roundtable (adapted from Multnomah County, 2008a). A more recent version of the charter added seats for the Portland Children's Levy; Multnomah County Commission on Children Families and Community; All Hands Raised; and the United Way (Multnomah County, 2013).

According to this interviewee, creating the Council made the operation of the CCI "a much more joint ownership kind of feeling." Another Council leader said, "I consider the Coordinating Council as a representation of the owners of the system."

While the heads of organizations participate in the Sponsors Group (e.g., mayor, superintendents, directors, and chairs), senior managers with positions of authority in those organizations and other service providers serve on the Council. This makes it easier for the Council to oversee the operation of the CCI, assess the effectiveness of programs, and coordinate services. The Council also creates workgroups that advise the Council and other participating systems on how to perform certain core functions, such as funding allocation. According to one source, workgroups are created annually based on the priorities the group sets that year. Council members lead Workgroups. As one Council member explained, people take on leadership roles, such as chairing a workgroup, when they have the time and/or because of a particular interest in that project/issue.

Council members make decisions that guide the CCI and influence actions within each participating organization and agency. According to one Council member, they take "those ideas out to the other systems at the table, so it wouldn't just influence the county." In this way, Council decisions have an impact on the ways participating institutions operate and deliver services. As previously described, while each organization has its own governance and set of priorities, the decisions made in the Council have an impact across participating institutions. One reason for this impact is the Council's credibility.

The Council has credibility because of its longevity, the services delivered, and the commitment of a diverse set of stakeholder individuals and organizations to work together. One Council member characterized the "force" of the Council this way:

> When you look at what SUN is doing and when the whole community comes and talks to either the community members or budget advisory committee or the Council, the force of this Council is so great and huge that it's very compelling to them.

Another added that despite the power individual leaders have in the community and often times strong personalities:

> This group has a lot of credibility because of the work that it's been doing and because of the fact that there are people who have - who are influence-makers within their own organizations.

When a Council member can go to their institution and convey that other institutions are moving in a particular and coordinated direction, then that gives legitimacy to act because of the credibility the Council offers.

As a result, the decisions that Council members make help influence changes and actions within their own organizations, which further aligns stakeholder operations with the CCI. In one focus group Council members agreed that while it's sometimes a challenge to take a given action within their respective organizations because each organization has its own missions, "that when the county, when the school districts, and their bureaus come and say, 'this is the way we should go,' they are much more willing to listen and do things, than if it was just the bureau coming."

As previously described, the Sponsors Group meets infrequently, limiting the cohesion

and potential power of this group. They also lack representation from some important

community groups, because they only involve those agencies that fund community schools.

While the Coordinating Council addresses some of the limitations of the Sponsor Group, its

membership comprises leaders and representatives of organizations who have many other

responsibilities in addition to the CCI. It is up to the county, the intermediary organization, to

support these leaders – to provide some of the day-to-day and on-the-ground leadership of the

CCI. I describe this important role next.

Intermediary

The SUN Service System, including the Sponsors Group and the Coordinating Council, is

supported by an intermediary staffing organization, Multnomah County. Recent literature on

"collective impact," a CCI strategy currently popular in many cities, describes this entity as the

"backbone support organization" (Kania & Kramer, 2011). The county has many roles in the

CCI in addition to providing support for running the initiative. These roles include providing

leadership for the CCI (the county is responsible for filling two seats on the Coordinating

Council and for chairing the Sponsors Group) and assisting in the acquisition of funding.

Characterizing the county role is complicated. While I use the term "intermediary" to describe

the role of the county in staffing the initiative, one subject said that they don't consider the

county an "intermediary" because the county also serves as a funder. They added that the county

is more involved in the leadership of the CCI than they would expect an "intermediary" to be.

The School-Age Task Force uses the term "managing partner," which indicates that the county

has responsibilities that were more like other "partners" than just coordinating the leadership and

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administering the school-based strategy. One way to think about the different roles is by position in the county: the elected county commissioners provide the leadership and makes funding decisions while the staff is responsible for the intermediary role. I will continue to use the term "intermediary" for consistency across cases.

The Task Force specified the exact roles expected of the county as managing partner, including, administration and coordination of the SUN Service System, staffing the leadership groups, developing supportive policy, supervising partners (e.g., contracts), program development, staffing the overall CCI, including youth and community members in decision making, funding for support services and the school site coordinator, and evaluation (Multnomah County, n.d.-c). One CCI leader characterized the wide variety of responsibilities that the county staff is responsible for:

> So it's [the county staff's]…responsibility…to really run the day to day of the SUN system…managing those contractual relationships, managing that those providers are reporting back to us about things that are going [on], troubleshooting problems with providers, the school districts, making sure that school districts stay engaged with us. Because that can sort of ebb and flow depending on your principals, superintendents - making sure that we're following all of the county's procedures in terms of payment…And then…serve as policy staff to the Council.

This is a lot of responsibility for a staff of just over two full time employees (depending on the grant funding there was another staff member assigned to the SUN team who worked primarily

on early childhood-community school linkages).[18] However, intermediary staff members are able to leverage the entire county infrastructure for their work. For example, the person responsible for collecting and analyzing the data for SUN is a county employee.

Managing the school sites is one of the staff's most important responsibilities. This includes working directly with all the SUN principals, lead agency supervisors, school site managers, school-based educators, community stakeholders (e.g., parents and partners) and partner agencies. The staff identifies issues and supports necessary to increase school-level and partner capacity such as technical assistance (Hamann & Hall, 2003). SUN staff (the intermediary) noted during a focus group with SUN lead agency supervisors that they look for agencies that have substantial capacity, such as the ability to manage and support the school site coordinator they hire. The intermediary staff, small in number, relies on lead agencies to train, support, and supervise the activities at the school site. They essentially "contract out" some of these activities to the lead agencies but they are the ones ultimately responsible for this area of work for the CCI.

In addition to managing day-to-day operations, the intermediary staffs the SUN leaders at the community level, including the Coordinating Council and Sponsors Group. When city and county leadership initially looked for a strategy for integrating services, before they created SUN, they tasked county and city staff to research options. It was the staff that identified community schools. A few years later, county staff members were tasked with leading the effort

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[18] Follow up interviews indicate that the county has added two additional full time employees to support community schools since data were collected.

to identify programs and funding options. In addition, they were asked to develop a better system, leadership structure, and policies for integrating services.

During the site visit I saw the county staff work with Coordinating Council leadership to create the agenda, publicize the meeting, take notes, provide updates at Council meetings, and assist leadership in other ways. The intermediary staff is responsive to the Council. They collect the information that Council members require to make decisions. One Council member characterized the value of the intermediary staff this way:

> …We have a lot of people from the county staff. So we can always ask for more data and more data for different things. It's very functional, I think, because having that support from the county is important.

While the intermediary staff plays an important role in the success of the Coordinating Council, they deliberately act as staff to the Council and enable the Council leadership to be the decision makers. This seems to facilitate ownership for the initiative by the Council members.

The intermediary also serves a communications role. One Council member identified communication among all the leaders, partners, providers, and school sites as one of the critical challenges that the CCI confronts. They added that the intermediary staff is necessary to "stay on top of it." They facilitate communication between the different components of the CCI. Intermediary staff, or their representatives, meets with all the grantees, partner agencies, coordinators, school districts, and leadership. Being connected to all the stakeholders in the initiative demonstrates a consistent message across stakeholder groups.

In this section I have identified why and how the key collaborative leadership groups were created and characterized their structure. These "team structures" are similar to those described by Auspos (2010) as supporting CCI alignment of effort between partners. The Coordinating Council and Sponsors group have a number of key functions that I will describe in more detail in later sections. I now turn to the important ways that the school districts are connected organizationally to the CCI. Since this CCI utilizes a school-based strategy, school districts are critical to successful implementation and warrant particular attention.

Connections to school districts

The SUN Community School initiative comprises six school districts, including Portland Public Schools, the largest district in the county. These are the highest need districts in Multnomah County. School districts are crucial stakeholders, gatekeepers, and actors in this CCI due to the choice to deliver services at the school site and because of the outcomes the CCI has chosen. In this section I describe the organizational connections to the school districts at the community level.

I established earlier that CCIs have historically faced challenges in engaging schools and school districts in their activities to achieve educational outcomes (Kubisch, 2010c). The creators of the SUN Community Schools strategy selected it in part because of the centrality of the school to the overall goals of the initiative, which included providing services to students and families at a central location, the school.

In order to scale the CCI, however, the CCI partners needed support from the leaders of the districts. At the community-wide level, SUN's first leaders created an organizational structure (the SUN Sponsors Group) that included school district leaders as essential actors.

Around 2004, SUN leaders, including district representatives realized that they needed to work across districts, which required more regular meetings with district staff. SUN leaders created the "Districts Council" which includes one official SUN liaison from each district. They meet every other month and are the primary contacts for intermediary staff who need to work with districts. The Districts Council supports the CCI's operations and planning, is a place for the intermediary to get information out and hear district concerns, and reviews data to guide their work. They also help plan activities and according to one intermediary staff, "bust barriers." About half of the district representatives are directors of student services. Others include chief academic officers, assistant superintendents, or directors of federal programs. All of these representatives have direct access to the superintendent.

Years later, based on a recommendation from the School-Age Service Task Force, the Coordinating Council included representatives from the participating school districts along with representatives from other systems and organizations (Multnomah County, n.d.-c). School districts weren't just recipients of additional services funded by the county and other partners, rather, as "sponsors," they contributed their own funding, leadership, and time, and other resources to the success of the initiative. This arrangement differs from many other CCIs where activities happen "to" schools with minimal involvement from school districts, especially the contribution of financial and leadership resources.

Superintendents from all participating districts sit on the Sponsors Group, which meets once per year. As one superintendent described it, "We are the [CCI] leadership team." Despite their role on the Sponsors Group, however, superintendents infrequently participate in SUN meetings and most often are connected to the SUN system through their representatives on the

Coordinating Council. The Council requires one representative from Portland Public Schools

(the largest school district in the county) and from two other districts.[19]

Despite the centrality of the schools and school districts to the overall strategy, I found no

evidence from interviews that school district leaders were responsible for the creation, vision,

and selection of the strategy. The comments from some subjects suggest that it took time to

convince districts of the value of the CCI. This may be a limitation of the study in that I wasn't

able to speak with district leaders who were part of the original CCI development. In fact, all

district leaders have changed at least once since the CCI was created, a common phenomenon in

contemporary school districts.

However, one of the early leaders of the initiatives who was familiar with the district

perspectives described school and school district support for the strategy as one of the primary

early challenges. This is consistent with the way Kubisch describes most CCIs that focus on

education. As the leader describes:

> And the other challenge really was getting schools themselves to see that this was really
>
> about supporting their core mission. They often talked about, yeah it was good that
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> community county and city and in some cases the state was coming in to help. But when
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> you start talking about their contribution to it, they were saying, "Well you know it's not
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> our core mission." And so it took us years to finally get to the point to seeing them

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[19] At the time of my visit the Coordinating Council contact list included Portland Public Schools (Director of Partnership Development), Parkrose School District (Director of Student Services), and David Douglas School District (Director of Student Services).

recognizing that what we were doing in Multnomah, it was really about their core

business.

While the interviewee didn't indicate how many years it took for the districts and their schools to

fully buy in, the statement illustrates that creating effective relationships with the school districts

included in the CCI was ongoing and required multiple years of engagement. Another

interviewee with perspective on working directly with schools as a partner added:

> I think some time, when you're an outsider and you're trying to deal with schools, it's
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> almost like they say, "No, no." You can't get in…. I can remember the first couple of
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> times that we talked to a principal and I said look, "We're here to work with you.
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> Whatever that you're struggling with because we wanted to be of help to you." I think
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> that's why it would be very key and important for anybody implementing a SUN
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> Community School to have good rapport and establish a good relationship with the
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> principal. You can have a good relationship with the school district but my god, until you
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> have good relationship with the school principal you are not going to be able to do what
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> you want to do.

Having good relationships with school leaders at multiple levels was a key to success.

After demonstrating the value of partnerships and the community schools strategy to

school site leaders, partners and interviewees described greater legitimacy for their work and

acceptance by the districts. One subject told the story they heard from a CCI partner who:

> ….was mentioning how prior to being part of SUN Community Schools, but also the
>
> bigger SUN Service System, they [the nonprofit] really struggled with being seen as

"legitimate" in school districts. Being able to get time and visibility and having that recognition in the system [as part of the CCI] has really helped.

Another subject said that the school districts changed their perceptions of working with partners once they saw the impact partners could make. Their participation has led to "…acceptance by school district. And [the district] seeing that, 'Oh my god, they're not just intruding or being inconvenienced but rather they could really do a lot of things to help.'" Another CCI leader added that in earlier years school districts were "afraid of resources being siphoned off in some way. And I guess I would say that today that thinking has evolved."

Another leader who had been working with SUN since the beginning explains that the SUN strategy addressed many of the activities (e.g., parental engagement) and outcomes (e.g., academics) that schools were responsible for funding. They indicated that when the CCI asked districts:

Can we get some of your Title I money, can we get your general fund money? Because guess what, we are engaging your families, we are engaging your kids, it's part of the dynamics of it. After school support, instructions, its helping to improve their academic outcomes and [inaudible] behavioral changes in the classroom for some of your most difficult and struggling students and isn't that the work you should be doing?

This rationale signified a significant commitment to the SUN approach as districts began to repurpose some of their dollars toward SUN schools.

These efforts helped convince the districts that SUN was the right strategy and worth participating in it. The CCI was able to demonstrate success on measures that school leaders

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cared about such as attendance and academic performance.[20] When the districts and schools saw the value of what community partners were able to achieve through SUN, they became more involved and wanted to make their schools operate as community schools, or in one subject's words, SUN became "institutionalized." The long-time CCI leader explains:

> Finally after a long period of time they [school districts] came on board, started to give money to a number of our [SUN Community] Schools. Portland Public is funding a number of the sites themselves. They picked up three sites this year even after [the district] cut $40 million. So again, it's institutionalized. Getting us to the point where it just wasn't a political football, but people start to see it as an integral part and strategy.

Not only did districts begin to become more involved with SUN, they also started contributing funds in a bigger way.

Districts saw the value of community schools in helping them fulfill some of their obligations from funding streams such as Title I. The subject says the districts are now willing to give SUN Title I and general funds for activities that support school goals. The subject attributes that change to "the success we were having and the relationships that we had built."

In addition to having school district leaders and their staff participate in the two leadership groups, the Council and the supporting initiative staff continuously engages school districts and their constituents to ensure that they feel included. As previously noted, not all districts participate in the Coordinating Council, which makes outreach to their leaders even

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[20] SUN created annual report cards for each participating school to illustrate the measures achieved.

more important. One initiative leader characterized how the Council first recognized the importance of continuously engaging school district and other leaders:

> At the Council we were sort of talking about it one day, and we talked about how like half the superintendents have changed, and all of the board members have changed in the county, and maybe we need to do circle around visits. We just got started, and we just never quit. I mean, we just do a couple a month.

This statement suggests that maintaining the shared vision, alignment, and continued support requires strategies for keeping leaders connected and invested in the CCI. As critical partners, school districts require constant attention, information, and opportunities for collaboration.

A CCI leader indicated that CCI staff and representatives "from each of the districts does a presentation every year to the school board of every one of our school districts" at the time of data collection.[21] This not only keeps the district superintendent engaged, but also the elected school board leaders who make policies and have budget responsibilities that could support the CCI.

Subjects indicated there was a difference of opinion on how SUN has changed practice within districts. In some instances, SUN seemed to have a significant impact on the district while in other cases, it appears to be an additional program, peripheral to other work. Nonetheless, the general impression is that SUN has increased its influence over time. One long-time SUN leader described the ways in which the districts have become increasingly committed to collaboration and why:

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[21] Follow up interviews indicate that SUN has ended these annual briefings.

It's really incredible how the partnership among the school districts has accelerated. So you have the six school districts in Multnomah County that are really doing a lot of stuff together, are all trying all to agree on milestones and data and are really trying to have identical strategies. The partnerships have been good for a long time, the last ten years have been great, but I would say the last two years it's really accelerated. The superintendents are spending more time together, their staffs are spending more time together. I think it's the budget pressures that exist today that have raised the priority of [CCI], since we can't do this alone. I think that their commitment to SUN has increased….we can't afford to do it the old way anymore. People knew that before but they're living it a different way today.

These comments reflect the ways in which the districts have more deeply embraced their participation in the CCI, and the community schools approach, in part due to economic factors.

One district superintendent noted that she places great value on the CCI's community schools approach and wouldn't want to lead a district without them. She said, "All I can say is that it makes a tremendous difference in all of our schools. I want all my schools to be SUN schools."

According to intermediary staff, the districts see increasing value of the CCI when they collaborate on a particular issue. Districts, like other partners, are most interested in supporting the CCI when the goals they are working toward are being realized. One example occurred when initiative staff convened districts around early chronic absence as part of an early childhood project. Intermediary staff described how all the districts sent staff to participate in the

convening, shared data, and changed their practice. Superintendents expressed interests in the intermediary continuing to play a role of convener around other issues.

Still, there remains some doubt about the impact of SUN on the way superintendents operate their districts. According to the same superintendent who indicated that they depend heavily on SUN's supports, participation in the initiative doesn't heavily impact her work. She said, "It [SUN] doesn't really change how I do my business because my job is pretty complex. I'm just all over the place." However, she immediately continued to say that participation is SUN was "a way I just could never go back from." The superintendent may mean that SUN does have some impact on her overall work strategy, though perhaps not on her day-to-day activities.

Another initiative leader said it is still a challenge to have school superintendents see the full vision for the initiative. The leader said they struggle with convincing policymakers, school district personnel, and many others that community schools are more than just a program. While the leader perceives that there is value for districts in the collaboration, there is variability in how school leaders understand the CCI:

> I think we're at a point where all our superintendents mostly get it. But if you interviewed each of them it wouldn't come out quite the same. Some of them would see more possibilities than others.

This statement demonstrates the challenges of working with six school districts that have varying levels of buy-in and commitment to the CCI. While all districts are participants in the CCI, it appears that there is variation in their understanding of the CCI and of their impressions on its impact on their work and their schools.

CCI leaders created the organizational structures to buttress the initiative and maintain continuous support from school districts. These structures helped grow the CCI and influence change within participating organizations and agencies. Creating sustainable financial structures proved to be another important feature of the CCI that I turn to next.

Financial Structure

CCI funding reveals a great deal about how it functions and is sustained. A variety of sources fund the CCI which also has important implications for how the CCI is organized. Leaders strategically diversified funding and use it as a way to demonstrate institutional commitment to the initiative. However, despite multiple funders, the majority of funding for SUN still comes from the county and City of Portland.

Funding sources

Funding was one of the original problems that led to the creation of the CCI. City and county leaders wanted to more efficiently deliver services at the school site. Accomplishing that meant reducing costs. The two government entities that were responsible for starting the initiative, the city of Portland and the county, provided initial funding for SUN Community Schools using general funds (Multnomah County, n.d.-b). One review of the SUN Service System characterizes funding as repurposing existing county, city, and school district resources without utilizing new funding sources (Goss & Bouffard, 2007). At the time of data collection SUN continued this practice of repurposing funds.

The CCI was initially funded with general support dollars, which leveraged additional funds from a variety of sources. In 1998, the CCI received funds from the Casey Foundation for

planning and matching funds from the Oregon State Department of Human Services. In 2000 they were able to fund four additional Portland community schools through a 21st Century Community learning Center Grant and four schools in other districts through a Safe Schools grant. That same year they received more funds from the Casey Foundation to provide technical assistance. Fiscal year 2000 was also important because the City of Portland and Multnomah County added SUN as line items in their budgets – a financial commitment that continues to this day (Hamann & Hall, 2003, pp. 10–11).

Over time SUN was able to identify additional financial resources including federal grants to grow the number of community schools. By 2003 the City of Portland, county, and federal grants funded nineteen community schools and their lead agencies.

An overview document from a county source provides a good example of the various funding streams. Table 4.2 shows the scope of the budget to fund community schools across a county. It also demonstrates that the county is by far the largest funder in total and as a percentage of the overall funding, which helps to promote sustainability. In 2003, the county contributed close to 80 percent of funds, a share of funding that has decreased as more institutions began funding SUN. By 2011, the county represented just less than half of the funding as the city, district, and Children's Levy (a representative group of elected and agency officials and community members created to manage tax-payer contributions for child-centered activities) increased their share. The school districts have the lowest contributions to operating cash but according to sources, they provide millions of dollars in matched dollars and in-kind assistance (e.g., facilities). Similarly, sources noted that the nonprofits are able to provide approximately $3.9 million in matched and in-kind resources.

Table 4.2

Multnomah County Funding Sources over Time

	2000		2003		2005		2011	
Multnomah County	$234,656	44%	$1,010,432	78%	$2,916,280	61%	$2,922,668	45%
City of Portland Pass Thru to County	$300,000	56%	$286,869	23%	$314,891	7%	$275,010	4%
City of Portland Parks - given to school sites					$1,192,946	25%	$1,224,250	19%
21CCLC (Federal Grants to Districts)							$1,059,930	16%
Portland Children's Levy					$355,000	7%	$833,501	13%
School Districts							$156,000	2%
TOTAL	**$534,656**		**$1,297,301**		**$4,779,117**		**$6,471,359**	

Note. Adapted from "SUN Funding History 2000-15"

Does not include in-kind funding sources. For example, according to sources, districts were contributing a lot of in-kind funding in the earlier years and only started to fund coordinators in 2011.

In 2011, only 1-2 districts were contributing funds (all were contributing in-kind). Now, all districts contribute some funds.

Interviewees also indicated there is strong support for education and for SUN from residents of the City of Portland. Leaders wrote in a 2003 report:

> On the broader political scene, the level of support for education and children's issues in the city and county in 2002 and 2003 has been remarkable. In response to economic and social service crises, elected officials, school district employees and the community at large worked collaboratively throughout the school year to pass three levies to restore and expand funding for vital services. The levies included a City Parks levy, a City Children's Initiative and a temporary county income tax primarily for school funding, for total yearly revenue of 46 million dollars dedicated to education and children's services. (Hamann & Hall, 2003, p. 18)

Community members supported the CCI, despite the fact that many residents don't have children in schools. As one Council member told me:

> Within the city of Portland, even though the majority of people don't have children, but they are very progressive and they are willing to tax themselves. So that's why [the] Children Levy is going to pass twice.

However, the city-based Portland Children's Levy does pose a dilemma for a strategy that is countywide. As the subject above alluded, if they want to make every school a community school, then the initiative needs to incorporate regional funding approaches.

Diversified funding

While the county has the largest share of funding for SUN, as indicated by Table 4.2, its share has decreased over time. CCI leaders' have taken deliberate actions to diversify CCI

funding, an effort that parallels their effort to broaden ownership and responsibility for leadership. Through their financial strategy they have built stakeholder investment, improved alignment, and worked to achieve sustainability. From the beginning SUN Community Schools have been financed through a variety of funding streams. Initially the city and county provided all the funds. Over time, SUN received funding from government agencies such as the Portland Children's Levy, school districts, foundations, and federal grants. As one subject told me:

> Some [SUN schools] are run by the city…some are funded by a 21st century grants that go to schools, some are funded by the city Parks Bureau, some are funded by us with the combination of city and county money, and some are funded by the children's levy.

SUN leaders were keenly aware of the intentional approach to diversify funding over time.

When leaders created the SUN Coordinating Council, they codified blended funding that would represent each of the major partners. Each of the SUN Coordinating Council members and Sponsors is required to contribute some resources to support SUN Community Schools (Multnomah County, 2008b).

Diversifying the funding was an intentional decision that created greater investment of partner organizations in the endeavor. One CCI leader said:

> It creates a lot of people who have a real direct investment in day-to-day what's happening. They don't just cut a check from an intergovernmental agreement to another entity and get their support…And I think that's a part of our strength, because I think that really has increased all of our stakeholders' investments in SUN.

The diversifying approach has been a strength that has positively affected stakeholder buy-in.

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The diversified funding streams within the CCI provide multiple sources of revenue accompanied by a diversified funding portfolio to sustain each community school. As one CCI leader described it:

> We [Coordinating Council] evolved a system where we recommended some policies on how to set priorities and all of that, that so far the investors have followed….established some credibility around that. In the last budget season that we're in now there were 60 schools and we're losing 7, 8, or 9 of them that were losing funding (grants running out) and the Council decided to take that on and to work through or broker a conversation about who's going to pick this up so we don't lose any of the schools.

When one funding stream diminishes, there are other sources available to draw from.

The data in Table 4.2 demonstrate one of the limits with a funding approach dominated by one entity. While there are many partners that are contributing cash or in-kind resources, if the county were to discontinue funding SUN schools, it is unlikely that the city and the school districts could contribute supplemental funds to make up the difference. On the other hand, the primary sources of funding are local and not external to the communities that are the focus of the CCI. Unlike historic initiatives funding by external agencies, the vast majority of the funding for SUN Community Schools is local.

Political Structure

SUN Community Schools were originally funded by two government agencies (city and county) but were designed to have a cross-sector representation of leaders and stakeholders (as demonstrated in the initial Community Building Initiative Sponsors Group and recommended by

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the School-Age Services Task Force, and codified by the Coordinating Council Charter). From the beginning, leaders recognized that while there were technical elements to aligning systems and implementing the strategy, politics would be important to the sustainability and growth of the CCI. CCI founders developed a strategy that strengthened political support by broadening leadership and creating policies that would insulate the CCI. This intentional strategy built political support across and within organizations and the community at large. The Council continues to develop and nurture local political leadership to sustain and grow the CCI.

As noted previously, politicians started the CCI. The elected county chair, county commissioner, and city commissioner saw value in combining their resources to align services and programs for improved educational outcomes. According to an elected county leader with leadership responsibility for the CCI, political leaders made a strategic choice to integrate resources. Talking about how individuals created SUN, this leader said:

> There was great political leadership. Political leaders who really became convinced that this was the right thing to do, and really directed that their resources be redirected, which I think was really key…There was a whole process of taking a look at where we were making investments in families and kids, and how we could take system pieces, there were lots of bits and pieces, different kinds of activities, and try to channel all of those into one model that we could all really get behind and support.

Leaders believed they were making more effective investments by combining their resources and streamlining approaches.

These leaders created a strategy with broad political support from politicians and other community leaders. They institutionalized the CCI by creating policies within and across

institutions. It's not clear from the data whether this was a well-planned strategy, but ultimately, the CCI became so essential to community members and partner organizations that there was widespread political support.

It's notable that the CCI started, however, from the "grass tops" rather than the "grassroots." While many CCIs work to include community members and some may even start because the community demands it, it appears that other CCIs are launched when political or financial leaders promote the CCI. This was the case in Multnomah and, as I will demonstrate, in Tulsa as well. More research is needed to explore CCI origins and the implications of origin on the successful start up and sustainability of CCIs.

Broadening leadership had political benefits

These initial leaders immediately broadened the number of stakeholders involved in creating the CCI's foundation. They brought together an "ad hoc committee of representatives…including leadership from an existing County Community Building Initiative and a City-sponsored After School Cabinet" (Multnomah County, n.d.-b). The two existing initiatives had their own political champions and by coopting the organizational leadership structures into this new CCI, they were able to expand the number and diversity of leaders and the institutions they represented.

A few years into the initiative, political leaders asked for a review of the way the entire county was funding services. This review became the School-Age Policy Framework that developed the SUN Service System with SUN Community Schools as a central focus for service delivery and systems alignment. According to one source, this document allowed for further augmenting the leadership.

When political leaders started the CCI they made a politically strategic decision to build a broad base of support and leadership. One way they accomplished this was by involving multiple community leaders in decision-making and by funding them as lead agencies that partner with schools through the CCI.

Another political consideration was including the leaders of minority groups that held significant sway in the community, had strong connections to community members, and were already working with target communities. As one source tells it:

> So they [county commissioners] asked that an analysis be done of the state of things and out of that that a policy be created to create a system and to identify the models where we would be more consistently delivering services and spreading them more equitably across the county. That's something that really was a lot of work done with the Coalition of Communities of Color to get advice about this issue of culturally specific services and what does the community need.

Political leaders wanted to ensure that services were aimed at achieving equity.

The decision to distribute funds to partner organizations so they could hire staff, rather than have the county itself hire all the employees to deliver services, broadened the political sponsorship for the CCI. When these organizations became funded partners, they also became allies. According to one county staff:

> In my opinion, not that we can't hire fantastic county employees or district employees, but we're doing better…because I think, just in the culture of organizations [we contract] there are some things that are hard for us to replicate.

Respondents felt that the leadership and ownership for the CCI came from the community. A community member said, "That is exactly the vision behind it. I mean [it's called], 'Schools Uniting Neighborhoods.'"

Creating a broad political base of support ensured that SUN would be a durable CCI that would be difficult to disband. One SUN lead agency supervisor said that an advantage of the SUN structure was the political support that organizations and the CCI received as a collaborative. They said that the organizational structure enabled them to organize and advocate for the CCI and that it's politically "hard to cut something that has gotten this big and this integral."

Supportive policies insulate the initiative

In addition to building support through broadening leadership and funding partners, the CCI developed policies to sustain the initiative even when leadership changed. A county leader states that the School-Age Policy is one example "that's the stated policy of the Board of County Commissioners that really frames SUN as our school age intervention practice." SUN staff members also have developed written agreements among partners such as intergovernmental agreements that sustain the CCI. These agreements include obligations about participation in organizational structures, appropriation of funds, contribution to an evaluation, and use of school facilities.[22]

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[22] See, for example
http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/Multnomah_Cty_Policy.pdf

County policies institutionalized the CCI and made it an "official" county program. Partners also developed their own organization and agency policies that codified their support for SUN. According to a CCI leader:

> The [City of Portland] Parks Bureau certainly has policies about SUN, and then at the Children's Levy, they officially adopted a policy that if they were going to fund afterschool activities, they would only fund SUN models.

These policies institutionalize and insulate the initiative from political threats as new officials are elected to key positions. Policies that support the CCI are very rare in the literature and may be one reason that CCIs don't last. The impact of having an official policy that elected leaders and providers could point to for justification of their efforts was a strength interviewees highlighted. Policies codified initial commitments to coordinating services, sharing funds, and cross-sector leadership that were sustained as elected leaders, agency staff, and community representatives changed over time.

The political strategy has made SUN Community Schools politically "bullet proof."

The strategy to involve multiple leaders, to fund community-based organizations rather than government agencies, to deliver services that the community values, and to scale the CCI to a cultural "tipping point" are the reasons why the CCI is politically "bullet proof." This point is best exemplified by the following statements that represent the perceptions of most interviewees about the political sustainability of SUN Community Schools. According to one leader, "This model, it's gotten to the point now where you can't hardly be a city commissioner or a county commissioner, and not support it." Added another CCI leader, "And it's politically, at the moment, really bulletproof, in a way that it wasn't not too long ago. And partly because its

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popularity with the public has been tested." More students, families, partners, and the public were being exposed to the SUN strategy, which built a stronger political base of support.

Leaders argued that SUN has reached a "tipping point" where the collaboration strategies have changed the culture across the whole county. According to one county leader, SUN has "just become so ingrained in the culture." The following statement from a CCI leader represents the shift in culture and related broad political support for the CCI:

> There doesn't have to be at the [county] board meeting any discussion about why we would consider starting these SUN schools… The [County] Commissioner says, "I'm proposing an amendment that we partner with these two school districts. They're going to put up half the money, we're going to put up half the money and we're going to start three SUN schools." Nobody says why would we do this model? Why is this a priority? What other models are there out there? No one asks any of those questions. It's just: this is our model, this is how we do it, we want to make investments in school success, this is what we do.

The leader then adds that:

> A third of schools in the county being this [SUN Schools] and now the case doesn't need to be made any more of why we're doing this.

SUN Community Schools have become embedded in the culture of the county schools and have a broad enough scope to reach enough stakeholders to garner widespread support.

Mayoral and community support

Still, garnering community buy-in for a school-based strategy is a challenge in a city where 85 percent of residents don't have children in school. According to one source, part of the difficulty for creating a thriving city is to see how you are going to connect those residents with schools. How are you going to give them a reason to be interested? Former Mayor Adams saw SUN Community Schools as being centers of community and integrated them into part of his Portland Plan to support the broader community (City of Portland, 2012). One source with knowledge about the mayor's interest said:

> And that's where in terms of his [the mayor's] attention to the community schools, that's where he sees SUN providing the opportunity. So SUN is the vehicle with which we can provide sort of this school to be open to the community.

Even though the mayor did not have direct responsibility for the schools in Portland, he made education a central focus of his vision.

There is also broad community agreement for the strategy. As I described earlier, county commissioners considered removing SUN from the county budget in 2006. In response over 500 community members, including students, parents, and others, testified at county council meetings and won sustained support for SUN (Melaville et al., 2011, p. 110).

In summary, the CCI enjoys political support from elected officials, those running for office, and the community. Leaders of the CCI recognize that sustaining the CCI requires a political strategy in addition to organization, funding, and other implementation dimensions. According to one subject:

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Regardless of what community or what city or what town that you come to apply this sort of model, I would probably say that we probably need very good policies and strong leadership to drive it. Otherwise one of the things that I see is that, again, at every leadership level unless you have the political will to make things happen and change things, the way it should be, it would never happen.

This quote captures the sentiment of others that political will was essential to getting SUN off the ground and to its continued growth:

Still, the political dimension of the CCI requires constant attention. Newly elected officials will be responsible for sustaining the CCI. That is one reason the Coordinating Council recognizes that it must spend time sharing information and promoting the CCI with a broad range of stakeholders so as to maintain political support.

In summary, political dimensions created the conditions for the CCI to grow and be sustained. Political leaders started the CCI and broadened leadership to include other political and community leaders who developed a CCI that gained widespread support from a range of stakeholders. The CCI became essential to many partners, schools, and community members and maintained political and community support.

Case Summary

The SUN Community Schools initiative represents a case of a CCI that has sustained its mission and practice since 1999. Its leadership has changed over time but the institutions continue to participate because they see the value in collaborating with others to achieve community goals. This is especially true for the school districts that have come to see the

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demonstrated benefits of opening their school doors to community partners. Community partners, in turn, are better able to achieve their mission by working more closely with schools.

The CCI has created and modified its organizational, financial, and political structures in ways that have helped it respond to challenges. A prime example of this is when they created the Coordinating Council to address concerns that the county was dominating the CCI, thereby spreading more broadly leadership and responsibility for SUN amongst stakeholders. Other examples are the requirement that leader organizations make financial contributions to the CCI and written agreements of cooperation that provide a historical "obligation" to cooperate. These are unique attributes for a CCI, at least they are not highlighted or discussed in the literature.

Throughout the CCI, leadership has been an essential component. CCIs are a collection of collaborating institutions, but individual leaders lead these institutions and must work collaboratively across institutions. I discuss the role of collaborative leadership in the final chapter. I now turn to another case study that is closely related to the Multnomah Case, the Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative.

Chapter 5: Tulsa Case Study

The Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative (TACSI) represents a case of a developing community change initiative (CCI). At the time of data collection, TACSI was assessing progress of its first few years and planning for the future. TACSI had demonstrated an initial track record of success around collaboration and impact at school sites. However, TACSI was a CCI in transition as complications and opportunities arose. While the primary participating institutions had remained consistent from the start (e.g., the school districts and local institutions of higher education), the districts were beginning to invest more heavily in the CCI. This led CCI leaders and staff to negotiate roles and address power issues. The time period I studied represented a period of negotiation, deliberation, development of trust, alignment, and fine-tuning of the CCI. The case offers an opportunity to examine how a CCI matures and whether the structures, political connections, and funding mechanisms it has created can help it move forward and scale up services.

Setting

Tulsa is a medium-sized city (2014 population of 399,682)[23] with a small-town feel. Many civic leaders know one another, and there is a well-established political and social network in the community. For those individuals who have risen to positions of leadership, social capital, especially connections with other individuals who can help leaders achieve their institution's mission, is highly valued. In contrast with the previous case, where the CCI covered a large geographic area and included five school districts, Tulsa has only two school districts. The

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[23] Source U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts. Data derived from Population Estimates, American Community Survey

superintendents know the leaders from many of the other organizations around the city, like the

Community Service Council, which staffed the CCI as the intermediary. Nonetheless, while

there is a familiarity among the civic leaders in Tulsa and the surrounding communities, they did

not consistently work well together toward common goals.

The Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative includes two districts, Tulsa Public

Schools (TPS) and Union Public Schools (Union).[24] TPS exists solely in the city of Tulsa while

Union includes students from the city of Tulsa and the western part of the nearby city of Broken

Arrow, the largest suburb of Tulsa. Table 5.1 shows demographic information for each of the

school districts and the CCI schools in total.

Table 5.1

Tulsa and Union Public School District Demographics

	Tulsa		Union		TACSI Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Number of Schools	87		17		104	
American Indian/Alaska Native	3344	8	1,006	7	4,350	8
Asian	559	1	1,057	7	1,616	3
Hispanic	10,188	25	3,315	22	13,503	24
Black	12,758	31	2,119	14	14,877	26
White	12,431	30	6,684	45	19,115	34
Hawaiian Native/Pacific Islander	50	0	26	0	76	0
Two or more races	2,171	5	724	5	2,895	5
Total	41,501		14,931		56,432	100

Note. Source: Common Core of Data, Local Education Agency Universe Survey, 2010-11

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[24] The TACSI Resource Center has supported other Oklahoma districts but for the purposes of this case and the time in which data were collected, only two districts will be discussed. I use TPS and Union throughout.

Both districts were experiencing far-reaching changes, though leadership had largely remained stable at the time of data collection. Union was a district that was experiencing significant demographic shifts. According to one Union administrator, the district was changing from a predominantly middle-class community to one with increasing levels of poverty. TPS was completing a school consolidation process known as "Project Schoolhouse." During several meetings, the district had engaged the community about the process to close schools, always a contentious topic. Ultimately, TPS would close 14 schools and reopen one school through Project Schoolhouse (Tulsa Public Schools, 2011). School closings were receiving a lot of attention from the community and the district was talking about creating community schools as a way to assuage concern over the closings.

In the next section, I describe how TASCI developed as a CCI. Then, I analyze the political, organizational, and financial structures that supported the CCI and its work with school systems. Leaders in Tulsa faced significant challenges in their communities, especially with the public school population. Similar to the origins of SUN, local leaders identified a new vision for service delivery and developed a network of diverse partners to implement the vision. It was under these circumstances that leaders brought an education-focused CCI to the Tulsa area.

Origins of TACSI

Similar to the Multnomah CCI, Tulsa's leaders identified a demonstrated need in the community to strengthen education and health services. The foundation for the CCI began when two parallel community-wide groups explored strategies for improving outcomes for children, youth, and families: the Metropolitan Human Services Commission and the Tulsa Founder's Roundtable. In one set of actions, agency leaders decided to mobilize the community around

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education. In the other set of actions, community leaders assembled a diverse group of stakeholders to develop a new strategy for improving the well-being of Tulsa residents. These efforts also combined existing initiatives, including The Tulsa Alliance for Families, a small community school strategy.

Figure 5.1 TACSI CCI Timeline

2005	Metropolitan Human Services Commission (MHSC) makes educational improvement a priority.
	Step Up Tulsa! community leaders recommend community schools.
2006	Group of community leaders attends national community school conference.
	MHSC recommends creating community schools.
	Community Service Council creates the Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative Resource Center to serve as the CCI intermediary.
2008	TACSI leaders create the Steering Committee

*Adapted from Community Service Council, 2010

Metropolitan Human Services Commission Focuses on Educational Improvement

The first effort was led by the Tulsa's Metropolitan Human Services Commission (MHSC). The MHSC, founded in 1981, is a network of community organizations, including the two aforementioned school districts, the Tulsa Community College, city and state health departments, county and city government agencies, the United Way, and ad hoc members such as the Metro Tulsa Chamber and foundations.

The MHSC is staffed by the Community Service Council of Greater Tulsa, which would also become the CCI intermediary. The commission is responsible for making policy, coordinating resources, advocacy, research, and communications with state agencies. It also leverages the collection of its members and leaders to influence how partners and agencies use

resources toward community issues identified by the MHSC (Metropolitan Human Services Commission, 2006).

In 2005, the MHSC used its power to make educational improvement a community priority. It directed its staff at the CSC to begin researching strategies that demonstrated progress and promise around the country (Community Service Council, 2010).[25] In their 2006 report, the MHSC notes that they sent a delegation of diverse community leaders "representing education, philanthropy, community development, business, health providers, and social service providers" to Baltimore to attend the Coalition for Community Schools' national conference to learn more about the community schools strategy.[26] It is at this conference that community leaders first learned about Multnomah's initiative: Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN).[27]

Tulsa leaders were drawn to the Multnomah model because of the focus on connecting systems (e.g., county, city, health departments, and school districts), the enthusiasm of stakeholder leaders in systems and the community, and the emphasis on schools for service delivery. The next Coalition for Community Schools conference was in Portland, OR and Tulsa brought an even larger contingent of stakeholders, including representatives of the Tulsa Community Foundation, the mayor's office, and all community school principals.

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[25] A timeline of TACSI's development can be found in Figure 5.1.

[26] The report specifically notes that the MHSC sponsored a reception for participants from other CCIs "to bring together Tulsa representatives with knowledgeable persons in like roles in communities across the country" (MHSC, 2006).

[27] Disclosure: the author has worked for the Coalition for Community Schools since 2008.

Although Tulsa's leaders recognized that the Multnomah community was different from the Tulsa community, they also felt that the Multnomah CCI could serve as a template for developing a CCI in the area. Civic leaders created a working group of conference participants who met regularly to develop an implementation strategy that MHSC could approve, including a proposed organizational structure and required resource support (Metropolitan Human Services Commission, 2006). Importantly, this working group would eventual evolve into a steering committee or management team charged to build the new CCI. According to one intermediary staff member, they built the CCI to be sustainable from the start. They were willing to go slowly in order to create the right organizational and financial arrangements to help the CCI thrive over time.

By 2006, MHSC approved the plan and recommended development of community schools as one of its priorities (others included early childhood and promotion of child well-being). Their stated objective was to: "Further develop existing community schools and expand the "Community School" concept to other schools (with an initial focus on Tulsa and Union Public Schools with additional school districts added as appropriate)" (Metropolitan Human Services Commission, 2006, p. 6). To facilitate the development of these schools, CSC/MHSC used an existing school-based approach as its foundation, the Tulsa Alliance for Families (TAF). TAF was a project coordinated by CSC and comprised a number of city, state, and community partners.[28] Leaders from over thirty organizations, including three school districts, started TAF

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[28] Partners inlcuded TPS, State of Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Tulsa Housing Authority, Family & Children's Services, Parent Child Center of Tulsa, Tulsa City/County Health Department, Parent-Child Center of Tulsa, Tulsa Works/Goodwill Industries of Tulsa, and the YMCA of Greater Tulsa (Community Service Council, 2015b)

in 1995 through a grant proposal to the Oklahoma Department of Human Services that distributed federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds. TAF used a collaborative network to provide a wide variety of supports for children and families in three elementary schools, similar to the design proposed for community schools.

TAF laid the groundwork for the TACSI by using a community school-like strategy, creating system-wide structures, and recruiting leaders who would eventually also participate in the new CCI. TAF was supported by a variety of organizational arrangements. The Management Team was charged with implementation and evaluation. It included representatives from TPS, CSC, principals, and TAF school-based program directors. This team was a predecessor to the TACSI Management Team structure that was created to operate the new CCI. Complementing the Management Team was the Executive Directors group. This group was responsible for assisting the Management Team in implementation.

A Policy/Advisory Board, made up of the Executive Directors group, representatives from all levels of government, and community leaders, established TAF policy. There was also a group for TAF Program Partners. School level groups included Family Support Teams and Student Success Teams. All of these groups closely resemble the organizational arrangements and that would be created in the new CCI.

While TACSI can trace its roots to TAF, according to one subject, TAF was "totally different" from TACSI in its scope and depth. As the new CCI developed, it created new structures and new models for public education and the delivery of public services throughout the area. According to the subject, TACSI "is the kind of effort that could be, and it looks to me like it is going to be, a culture change for the community."

Tulsa Funder's Roundtable and Step Up Tulsa!

At nearly the same time, in the fall of 2005, community leaders ("movers and shakers" according to one subject) began a citywide planning activity called Step Up Tulsa! (hereafter referred to as "Step Up"). It started when one member of the Tulsa Funder's Roundtable (an informal group of philanthropists that met monthly to discuss local issues) suggested that funders join forces to invest in a new project for long-term impact. They decided to identify priorities through a community engagement process. They included over 150 stakeholders in the process. Among their goals were to identify regional needs, ensure those needs were being met, and avoid duplicate efforts (John Dobberstein, 2006).

The Funders' Roundtable directed four new committees (health and human services, education, economic development, and health care) to review existing plans and studies for the region going back decades. They wanted to create a new regional plan with fresh ideas, eventually named Step Up Tulsa! Step Up staff surveyed community members, held convenings, and employed a national facilitator to generate input on strategies. Based on these data, and at the direction of the facilitator who asked for bold ideas, they generated a set of "trend bender" strategies. Recommendations included an education goal to retool systems to improve the quality of education. The two associated "trend bender" strategies were expanding a) early childhood education and b) community schools.

One subject reported that after Step Up decided to focus on community schools the CSC put together a business plan to create a Resource Center, hire approximately five school site coordinators, and included some money for schools to start programming. That plan represented the convergence of the MHSC and the Tulsa Funder's Roundtable, and essentially launched the

new CCI, the Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative. The Resource Center would become the intermediary, playing a critical role in planning, implementing, and sustaining the CCI.

One of the original members of Step Up said that community schools "was probably the most striking of those 'trend benders.'" They added that while Step Up no longer existed:

> That's okay because certainly something like TACSI was the grandest moment…the fact that the TACSI has its genesis with the Community Service Council is really a great thing because you already had those partnerships and developing ideas, philosophies, merging together… And so it resides here, it still does, it always will.

The merger of efforts provided broad-based support for an even more ambitious community initiative to improve schools and the delivery of public services.

Summary

Just like in the Multnomah case, the Tulsa CCI was created when leaders assembled to identify solutions for wide-spread community challenges. In this case, they prioritized education and health services. Leaders created collaborative initiatives that after research and learning about best practices, led to the development of a CCI focused on the community school strategy. They established a new vision for how services and education would be delivered and created collaborative leadership structures to institutionalize their vision.

How TASCI is Structured

Tulsa's leaders created organizational, financial, and political structures to grow and sustain the new CCI from the start. With the emphasis on education, leaders focused their work in two urban school districts and worked closely with their superintendents and staff. School

leaders became increasingly invested in the CCI as they saw its beneficial impact in the school sites. Consequently, school leaders created their own structural arrangements for community schools within their districts. In the following sections I describe the structural arrangements that enabled collaborative leadership, as well as the supportive financial and political arrangements.

Organizational Structure

As described in the previous sections, Tulsa's school and community leaders created a CCI, the Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative (TACSI), to support the growth of community schools in the Tulsa Public School District and Union Public School District. The Community Service Council, in the form of the TASCI Resource Center, served as the intermediary organization that would coordinate the CCI. This institution played a critical supporting and guiding role that affected all other aspects of the CCI, as I describe later. Building off previous efforts, leaders established organizational structures that would enable them and their staff from a variety of organizations and sectors to work together in their implementation of the CCI's primary strategy, community schools. These structures included a Steering Committee, a Management Team, District Implementation Teams (DITs), a Partners Group, and the intermediary itself. Figure 5.2 displays the relationships between these various organizational arrangements. I have purposefully used the double-sided arrows because that is consistent with the original chart provided by the initiative and is likely to represent the flow of communication (and possibly leadership) between multiple organizational bodies.

Figure 5.2 Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative Organizational Chart[29]

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                    ┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
                    │   Metropolitan Human Services Commission (MHSC)   │
                    └─────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                        ↕
┌──────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────┐
│ Steering         │ ↔ │ TACSI Resource Center                │ ↔ │ Community        │
│ Committee        │   │ (Community Service Council)          │   │ Partners         │
└──────────────────┘   └──────────────────────────────────────┘   └──────────────────┘
                                        ↕
                          ┌──────────────────────────┐
                          │     Management Team       │
                          └──────────────────────────┘
                              ↕                  ↕
┌────────────────────────────────────┐   ┌────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Tulsa Public Schools (TPS)         │   │ Union Public Schools (UPS) District     │
│ District Implementation Team       │   │ Implementation Team                     │
└────────────────────────────────────┘   └────────────────────────────────────────┘
                  ↓                                        ↓
┌────────────────────────────────────┐   ┌────────────────────────────────────────┐
│     TPS Community Schools           │   │       UPS Community Schools             │
└────────────────────────────────────┘   └────────────────────────────────────────┘
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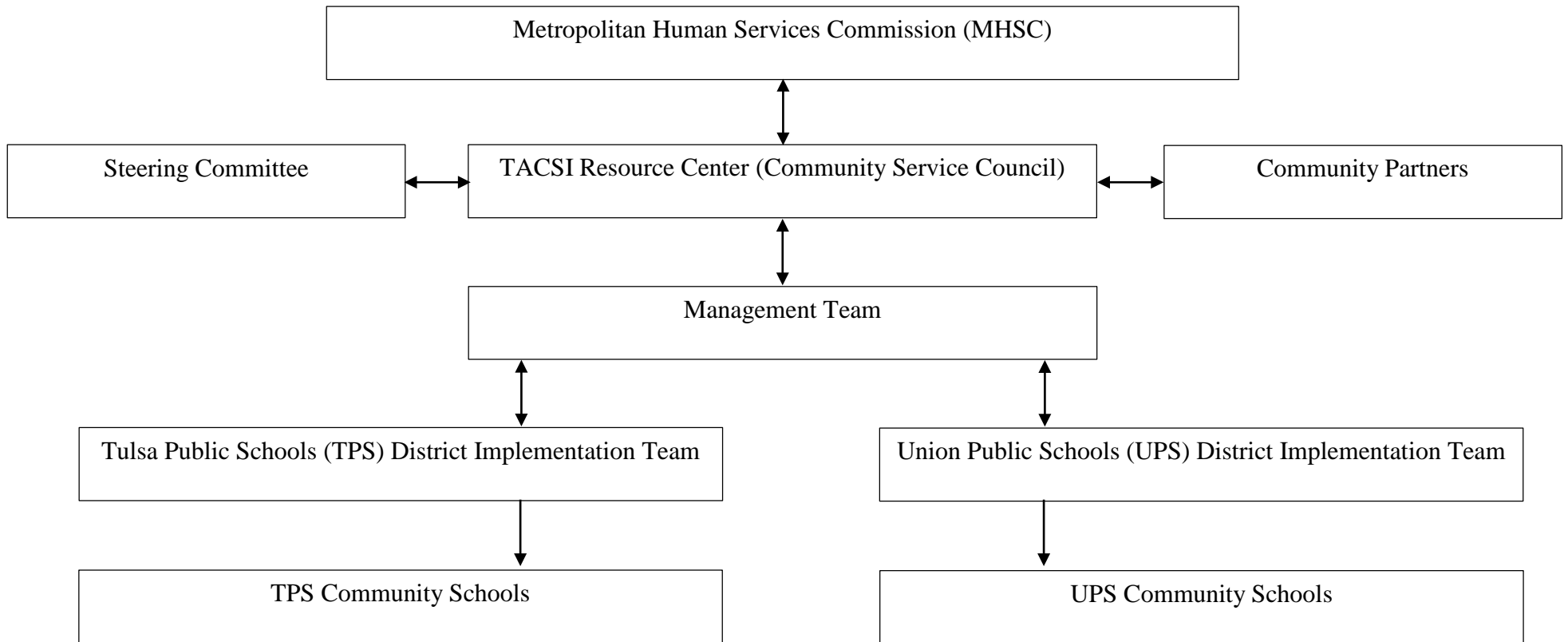
[29] Adopted from TACSI Governance Structure document.

As described earlier, the Metropolitan Human Services Commission is the governing body that oversees the governance for the entire TACSI CCI. Having described this component of the CCI's organizational structure earlier, I use the rest of this section to characterize the elements that are most directly engaged in the administration and governance of the CCI.

Steering Committee

The TACSI Steering Committee is a cross-boundary leadership group that is responsible for overseeing the CCI and making key policy and funding decisions. It is a forum for discussion and decision-making, provides feedback to the intermediary about implementation and growth, and engages the community. While the MHSC created and is the highest level of governance for the CCI, the Steering Committee, similar to the Multnomah County Sponsors Group, is most directly responsible for governance and administration of the CCI.

According to the TACSI website, specific Steering Committee responsibilities include:

- Use influence to generate broad-based support and build consensus for the Initiative.

- Provide policy direction to advance the community schools agenda.

- Assist with the identification and development of partnerships around the community school core components.

- Assist in the organizational alignment of community resources at the neighborhood level.

- Identify possible funding resources in order to build and sustain community schools on a ten-year horizon plan.

- Monitor progress of the development of the initiative and the outcomes of the framework for student success.

- Assist in the development and implementation of a public engagement program. (Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative, 2014)[30]

Interview and observation data confirms that the Steering Committee fulfilled many of these responsibilities, as I will discuss in this section.

The Steering Committee was formed after the Management Team, in 2008, but represents the highest level of leadership participation. While the Management Team represented mid-level staff that could meet more frequently on their institutions' behalf, leaders decided to create the Steering Committee in order to broaden its group of participating stakeholders and to begin planning for sustainability and expansion.

The Steering Committee, which included approximately 20-25 members, comprised a more diverse set of stakeholders with responsibility for the CCI than the Management Team. Members include representatives from the participating districts, partners, funders, and university partners. Notably, there is no parent, family, or student representation, despite the goal of broadening stakeholder support. Instead, the Steering Committee seems to be a broad group of representatives from influential institutions and professionals, not representatives of the communities being served. This is even less representation from those communities being served than the Multnomah case where there was an intentional inclusion of representatives from institutions that served communities, even if there weren't community members themselves.

Notably, the committee does not formally include TACSI or CSC staff. While these organizations are responsible for coordinating the Steering Committee, for staffing it, they are

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[30] While this description is from a current website, it aptly describes the purpose of the Steering Committee from my data collection in 2011.

not recognized formally as part of the leadership structure. Despite this formal exclusion, during my observation of a Steering Committee meeting, I noted that TACSI staff members were deeply involved in leading the meeting. It seemed likely that while they were not officially members of the Steering Committee, they were looked to as important leaders of the TACSI and de facto Steering Committee members.

The Steering Committee meets monthly and in special cases, as needed.[31] My data collection included an observation of a spring 2011 Steering Committee meeting. The meeting took place at the CSC offices that house TACSI. Members sat around a set of tables arranged in a rectangle. The committee chair wasn't able to attend so a substitute Steering Committee leader presided over the meeting. That leader sat at the head of the table along with the TACSI staff director. Other staff and invited guests sat around the table or along the wall. The temporary chair led the meeting, which signified that members of the Steering Committee acknowledged formal ownership of the CCI. However, in this instance, the temporary chair frequently deferred to the TACSI staff for content and to answer questions.

The meeting had a predetermined agenda, to which the temporary chair and TACSI staff adhered. Among the agenda items were the presentation of a new promotional video, staff presentations on TACSI's strategic planning, a CCI early childhood program, a new CCI summer learning initiative, and other updates including relevant state policy, school district policy (school closings), the creation of a new community school staff position within the Tulsa Public School district, and the announcement that one of the community schools received a national award of recognition.

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[31] For example, in early 2011 the group held retreats to develop their new strategic plan.

Based on the conversation, I noted that the CCI seemed to be at a point of assessing progress and planning for growth. Their previous success was based on the fact that they had created significant relationships across institutions, expanded the number of community schools, and were able to easily recruit partners to participate in a new summer initiative to provide additional learning and youth development opportunities for underserved students. However, it was clear from their discussion about the strategic plan and the appointment of a new community school administrator at TPS (a new position) that they were growing in new and important ways. During the strategic plan portion of the agenda participants quickly moved to a discussion about how to expand the number of community schools based on their accomplishments to date. The CCI was also innovative, trying out new programs such as summer learning and early childhood interventions. At one point in the meeting the chair characterized how the CCI is set up to experiment with new ideas, programs, and strategies. The Steering Committee is the place where those new ideas are discussed and approved.

Management Team

While the Steering Committee represents top leaders from key partners, the Management Team, which is smaller than ten people, comprises mid-level staff from those organizations; these individuals are able to meet more frequently and provide additional support for implementation on behalf of their organizations. Most of the systems-level work gets done at the Management Team. As one participant put it, "I mean the Steering Committee is brought up to speed on the activities; the Management Team kind of really gets down to the core of what really needs to happen." In contrast to the Steering Committee, the Management Team meeting is intentionally led by the TACSI Resource Center, the CCI intermediary.

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Similar to the Steering Committee, the Management Team meets monthly. However, for the first eighteen months of the CCI, the Management Team met weekly to generate a working relationship and build trust. From time to time, they also hold longer retreats, similar to the retreats held by the Steering Committee. The group includes representatives from institutions most critical in aligning resources and strategies across the CCI. These include the CSC Resource Center (the intermediary), Tulsa and Union Public School districts, the University of Oklahoma, and the University of Tulsa. Each of these groups was represented at the Management Team meeting I observed in spring 2011. Partners that work in a limited number of schools aren't included but the universities that have health centers and operate other programs in many of the community schools do participate as key partners. Similar to the Steering Committee, there is no parent, family, or student representation.

Perhaps the most essential Management Team participants are the district representatives, because they represent the participating schools where the community school strategy is implemented. The school-level leaders are best positioned for aligning activities between schools and partners in pursuit of the central outcome, improved student academic performance. Management Team decisions could not be made if the districts were not represented at the meetings. The CCI leaders know that the creation of community schools cannot happen *to* the schools and districts but can only happen successfully if they are implemented in partnership *with* them. School superintendents participated in the Steering Committee and district staff that could meet more regularly and help with the nuts and bolts of implementation participated in the Management Team. This demonstrates how important the CCI views district participation and

the creation of "team structures" (Auspos, 2010; Kubisch, 2010c) to the successful CCI implementation.

The Management Team's "mid-level" staff members are the professionals who have the time, ability, and capacity to ensure the CCI progresses.[32] As one district official described the importance of the Management Team:

> The Management Team is one of the central [CCI] pieces because they really talk about -- they raise the hard questions and they deal with the hard decisions. It is a collaborative group; it's not very big, but it determines the state and the direction of community schools….it's really sort of the driving force because we actually do act on those things.

The Management Team has a lot of responsibility for helping move the CCI forward.

What does the Management Team actually do? One member said that the mission of the Management Team is "to internally work out the day-to-day operations." She explains in greater detail:

> But again, it's to really fully outline the future and the progress. We go over the budget very carefully. We actually authorize expenditures of the coordinators as to there is some discretionary money and we actually go through those, there are actually little RFPs and vote on those. If there is an issue with an employee and we talk about that. Essentially it's kind of a housekeeping type. It's more than that but we do get down to the really basics of administration.

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[32] By "mid-level" staff I am referring to those staff that support the superintendents or executives in their organizations.

In Tulsa, maintaining a complex CCI requires regular participation of all stakeholders and a group of leaders who can monitor its day-to-day operations.

The Management Team is able to connect institutions that don't often have capacity to collaborate. Business and networking don't stop when the meeting ends. Similar to all the collaborative meetings I observed, and as noted by a number of subjects, attending the meeting provides a space for individuals to network and create opportunities to do business informally. For example, immediately following the observed meeting, intermediary staff negotiated with a district representative about how they were going to implement the new summer program in the district schools. The formal meeting allowed local leaders to secure commitments to work out later details that weren't covered in the meeting. During an interview, intermediary staff indicated that they were talking with one of the superintendents after the Management Team meeting about a funding issue. While the focus during meetings is typically about logistics and implementation, people connect before and after the meeting in order to discuss key implementation issues.

Partners also indicate that the meetings are important for them to stay connected to the CCI and to obtain the information they need for implementation within their own organizations.[33] One district respondent said that, "it's important again for me to be at these kinds of things [meetings] taking back the information. We need a district representative." The Management Team, therefore, provided meaningful opportunities for collaborative leadership.

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[33] TACSI created MOUs for the Management Team partners but made the language broad to maximize flexibility. For example, they changed the language from "partners" to "entities" since "partners" has financial implications in legal terms (something CSC staff said she had learned from Multnomah).

Representatives connected the diverse groups invested in the CCI, and they nurtured a vision of collaboration mutual investment in the CCI's success.

It was clear from my observations that the formal space provided by the Management Team allowed leaders to specify more clearly the operations and details of the CCI. Participants were familiar with one another and their organizational capacity and priorities. The regularity of the meetings meant they could address issues in-depth and track progress, and it helped to foster a set of expectations that nurtured trust and commitment to building the community's capacity for change, a necessary component of leadership for any CCI (Chaskin, 2001; O'Neill Jr. & Carlee, 2010).

Community Partners Group

At the school site, community-based partners are one of the most essential elements of the community school strategy that is at the heart of the CCI. At the systems level, partners also play important roles. As members of the Partners Group, CCI partners are able to convene and align their efforts, learn about the direction of the CCI, network and learn together with other organizations, and have opportunities to connect with school leaders to improve implementation.

After TACSI convened partners on a specific topic, student mentoring, they decided to create a broader Partners Group. The experience with the mentoring group demonstrated the usefulness of having a face-to-face space for groups to collaborate. Consequently, TACSI decided to create the Partners Group, which included all partners across core components of the

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community school strategy (e.g., mentoring, afterschool, and health).[34] This represented

approximately 160 partners, making this group the largest body in the CCI. While it did not have

governing responsibility over the CCI, select partners participated in the Steering Committee.

While previous efforts like Step Up Tulsa were intended to bring partners together for a

common purpose, subjects indicated that nothing formal like the Partners Group existed before

TACSI started. Partners Group members had varying levels of responsibility for what happened

in community schools, from hiring and training site coordinators to providing program funding

and opportunities. Partners include representatives from all organizations participating in the CCI

(including the districts and schools themselves). Individual and institutional funders are partners,

too. This group was different than the aforementioned groups in that it was inclusive of all CCI

partners, not just the leaders of the core institutions. Participating in the Partners Group offered a

way for community partners to connect with the CCI and the other leadership groups at a

systemic level.

During my site visits I met with partners in focus groups and observed a partners

meeting. These meetings were held monthly and the one I attended was a large gathering hosted

by Junior Achievement, one of the partner organizations. There were approximately 50 people in

attendance. The intermediary staff led the meeting and began with introductions and updates.

Then, a team from one of the community schools, including the principal and partners, made a

presentation about family engagement. Intermediary staff indicated that partners' meetings

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[34] In the beginning TACSI wanted to assemble partners according to their core components (e.g., early childhood, health, etc.). However, they didn't want to duplicate existing partnership groups and therefore joined existing networks and created ones that didn't exist, primarily a mentoring group.

typically emphasize a topic that draws a particular set of interested partners. They added that at the beginning of the school year, however, there is a much larger kick-off meeting that draws a greater number of partners who attend. It was clear that participants didn't see each other on a daily basis but were energized by the ability to connect with others. According to interview reports from partners, there were a number of features and benefits to participating in the Partners Group which, I describe below.

One of the most important roles of the Partnership Group is to create a networking and learning space. An example of this occurred when a school team shared with other partners how they improved family engagement in their community school after a CSC (intermediary) assessment showed weakness in that area. The partner institution engaged in an "eye opening" poverty simulation to develop a better understanding of the conditions families in their neighborhood experience. Then, they had brainstorming sessions on how to improve their in-school practice, such as permitting parents to walk their children directly to their classrooms so that they could interact with teachers. Prior to this change, parents were required to drop their children off outside of the school. The Partners Group enabled them to share their findings with school and partner peers so that others could learn from their experience.

One partner characterized this feature of the Partners Group as an "information exchange." She said that partners benefit from observing what others are doing, building relationships, listening to presentations that assist them in improving their own practice, and conversing one-on-one with school principals and staff.

At meetings, CCI partners are able to access other organizations that they would be unlikely to do otherwise. This provides additional opportunities to network and collaborate. As

one partner said, "They've [TACSI] got people at the table that I couldn't get if I wanted." For example, one partner talked about the opportunity to connect with the representatives from the city library system to address the problem of libraries not allowing teachers to check out enough books. The CCI provides a space for them to develop relationships and trust, to network, and to work out their challenges.

Partners also reported that participating in the CCI helped them see possibilities from other perspectives, outside of the dominant approaches in their institutions and sectors. One district staff member spoke about the ways networking has helped the district think differently:

It really is the networking piece that to me is kind of amazing. Because it doesn't exist in public education. We're a bunch of educators talking around jabbering the same stuff we've done the last 30 years. And then the lady from the library says, well, why can't we do that?

Interviews suggested that partners appreciated the opportunities to think outside of their own organizational paradigms.

Learning about and from one another also provided partners with a vehicle to align their efforts around the CCI's core mission. When a partner or school identifies a need that is connected to CCI goals, other partners are able to recognize the opportunity to contribute their particular expertise. The alignment is primarily around the core CCI goal to improve learning by supporting the whole child. According to one intermediary staff, the partnerships have matured to a point where they are ready to have more concrete discussions about the ways institutions can collaborate toward improved learning, rather than just creating redundant programs. Partners, including the districts, are also beginning to see the value of working together and addressing the

needs of the whole child because it helps them meet their primary goal of improved student success.[35]

An example of the collaborative forged by the partnership group is the manner in which local providers worked to tackle a new community need, in this case summer learning and enrichment. The CCI decided to pursue the summer learning and enrichment strategy when CCI leaders, intermediary staff, and partners participated in a national community schools meeting and became aware of the importance of summer learning. Together, they decided to make summer learning an important new strategy, knowing that their Partnership Group vehicle gave them a way to implement the new activities.

Partner organizations stepped up, didn't compete to provide services, and shared resources to make it happen. They created an inexpensive summer program that would serve at least 500 children in six schools. The first week would focus on literacy and arts, the second on camping, and the third on fitness and nutrition. All of the activities were made possible through in-kind donations from the more than thirty-five partnering organizations. One TACSI staff member characterized the meetings to organize the summer activities with partners as overflowing with lively discussion that wasn't competitive because partners were focused on the kids. This report indicates that there was an expectation of conflict but that none arose. Partners confirmed the collaboration in their focus group. As a "springboard," as one partner characterized it, the Partners Group provided the CCI with the infrastructure to act on new ideas and strategies.

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[35] An intermediary staff indicated that the CCI talks about "student success" rather than academic performance because they have a broader goal that centers around academic achievement, but also includes other outcomes relevant to development of the whole child.

Partners saw the benefit of participating in the CCI for sharing goals across the community and for achieving their own organizational goals. The desire to gain access to schools for their programs was a common request from the representatives of most organizations I interviewed. They saw their participation in the community school strategy, which was the dominant partnership approach in the city, as a way to validate to school leaders their organization's interest in working with the schools. Individual partners moved them from being just another partner to becoming an essential part of the school's learning and opportunity strategy. In short, participation offered partners credibility. The CCI enabled partners to more effectively achieve their own goals and organizational missions by delivering services and programs inside the school building with the populations their boards wanted them to serve. Partners also benefited from the relationships they built with other partner organizations through sharing ideas and getting to know one another.

Each organization is responsible to its board and funders for meeting established goals and results. Partners told me they saw their participation in the CCI as a way to achieve their own organizational objectives. One partner's board decided they would achieve their goals by working in underserved schools, the type of schools the CCI focused on. TACSI gave the board and organization the opportunity to reach students in underserved schools because of the culture that the CCI had created to welcome partners. As the respondent said:

> So with the community schools the opportunity we saw was that you have a school
> culture that wants to welcome providers into the school setting, which is what's important
> to us because we felt like in that kind of culture we would have the support from the

school that would support the children's involvement and the families' involvement as

well.

The participant explained that their work in a community school offered a "big advantage" to

achieving their organizational objectives compared to non-CCI schools. The participant

explained:

> The advantage is that there's more communication than when you have a school where
>
> the principal is trying to cobble together two or three things …You're better able to build
>
> those relationships that help you to recruit the kids, to engage the kids, to encourage them
>
> to continue to attend, and to talk to the parents about their services.

Participation in the Partners Group opened the school doors to community-based groups.

Community-based organizational partners are not the only ones who see a benefit to

participating in the CCI, school districts do as well. A district administrator talked about the

benefit to the district of participating in a CCI that includes partners who can contribute

additional perspective, expertise, and supports.

Sitting at that "table" is also beneficial to partners who want to make connections to other

organizations that are working with the same students and families. Partners see a benefit to their

participation in the CCI is their ability to build relationships with other partner organizations and

their opportunity to describe their organization's purpose and activities so that they can reach a

broader audience. One partner identified communication, particularly with school staff and other

partners about what they offer, as an important benefit and rationale for their participation in the

CCI. The partner said:

I think it's communications. I think community school is a piece of that because when we

go into schools where we work with them, people know who we are. And it's like, "Call

that agency that can help you"… The more you're out there, the more people know about

it, the more they tap into the services you have…You open doors by developing those

relationships. And that's why this is so valuable. And it's also valuable to send other

people so they also have relationships [like her staff].

The Partners Group provided a unique space in Tulsa for organizations to build relationships and

collaborate.

The most important partner role is to coordinate and provide learning opportunities and

other supports at the school site. The partners get significant assistance from the intermediary in

making connections with school leaders. The intermediary can also help trouble shoot any

problems in the relationship.

An example illustrates this point. One subject explained that at the school level the

"community school coordinators have helped us to strengthen what we're able to do in the

school. Lots of times they act as an advocate on our behalf." They add that the system leadership

is able to help when they have challenges in a school as well. She says, "The executive team of

TACSI can go in and it keeps our relationship intact because they can advocate for certain things

that aren't happening." If the partner wasn't a part of the CCI, the relationship between their

organization and the school would potentially dissolve because there wouldn't be a third party

that would be able to mediate.

From the district's perspective, they need those partners in the school and see the CCI,

specifically the Partners Group, as a way to keep the district's doors open. It is common for

schools and school districts to resist true partnership because of the culture of other systems and negative partnership experiences. According to one superintendent:

> We've always tried to be open door, but the agencies think that the whole TACSI thing has really helped them a lot to get into [the schools]. They feel a little more welcome, open door…they didn't always feel that.

In Tulsa, the school leaders actively seek partnership and want to make their schools accessible to partners.

One limitation is that the partners I spoke with may have represented the strongest and most active partners with fewer tensions with the CCI. However, based on a focus group with a variety of partner organizations and observations of an active partners meeting with many more institutions, I believe that my characterizations of the Partners Group as a mostly positive and collaborate structure is likely to capture the nature of how the group operates.

In conclusion, the Partners Group unites otherwise siloed organizations under the common mission of the CCI. Partners want to participate and indicated they get energized from collaboration. One partner said that she gets energized by the level of partnership and acknowledges that her organization couldn't solve all the problems the children are facing on their own. Rather, she needs the assistance of other organizations. One respondent noted that she gained renewed "passion…the lighting [of] the fire, feeling like I'm not alone. I'm not the only one that is seeing these things. That so many other agencies and programs going on."

"The glue to the whole process:" The TACSI Resource Center at CSC Intermediary

A strong backbone support organization, an intermediary, is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the CCI, for staffing the various groups discussed above, for identifying funding opportunities, and for strategic planning for scale. From the start of the CCI, the TACSI intermediary has been the Community Service Council (CSC), specifically, the staff of the Resource Center that was created after leaders and community members decided to make community schools a central focus of their CCI with Step Up Tulsa. As demonstrated in Figure 5.2, the intermediary is the connector and conduit to all the other organizational elements in the CCI.

As described earlier, this organization was selected to support the Step Up initiative and promoted community schools through their research of that initiative. CSC staff created the TACSI Resource Center to support the growth and expansion of the community school strategy. At the outset of the CCI, staff took on the majority of the responsibility for creating the strategy, fundraising, and developing the organizational leadership structures that would eventually guide the CCI. Based on my observations and interviews, CSC staff members were the primary drivers of the CCI initially and continued to play an essential role in sustaining the CCI. Similar to Multnomah, the leadership provided by the intermediary agency created the context and helped set the education reform goals for the CCI. Intermediary staff members were responsible for identifying the strategy to achieve those goals.

The TACSI Resource Center had significant credibility because it was housed at the CSC. Leaders from partner organizations and the districts were accustomed to collaborating with the CSC staff and indicated that they respected the CSC's work and that it was an organization

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that the community trusted.[36] One district respondent who had years of experience working with

the CSC noted that there was a benefit to starting the CCI with an organization that had a deep

history in the community. While the CCI and the community school strategy would be new, they

would build on the existing infrastructure and networks of a local and respected organization. As

the subject said, "the fact that the TACSI has genesis of the Community Service Council is really

a great thing because you already had those partnerships and developing ideas, philosophies,

merging together… And so it resides here, it still does, it always will." The intermediary staff

brought an abundance of social capital including relationships that are so critical to the CCI's

success, including partnerships with districts, funders, providers, and others. This is a significant

advantage over communities striving to create a CCI with an intermediary agency that is also

new to an initiative.

During a focus group with school-level coordinators, subjects agreed that there were two

people at the CSC who were most responsible for TACSI's development and implementation.

These individuals had been with the CCI from the beginning and their social capital was thought

to be one of the CCI's most valuable assets. For example, their social capital, according to

several intermediary staff, had helped the CCI develop quickly. According to a coordinator, if

someone tried to create the CCI in a new city:

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[36] The Community Service Council (CSC) was founded in 1941 to unite Tulsa's social service
agencies in order to maximize their collective impact across a number of issues important to the
community including homelessness, education, and transportation. The CSC has played multiple
roles including convener, researcher, funder, and incubator of new organizations (Community
Service Council, 2015a). The CSC supports a number of initiatives including the P-20 Council,
the Child Care Resource Center that handles their early childhood efforts, a veteran's initiative, a
homelessness initiative, and the Homeless Management Information System.

And the people who are in those [intermediary] positions don't have those contacts, I see

it taking much more longer. The problems that come up, they're not going to be able to

address them as easily because they're having a lot of problems at the top with a lot of

people that they already know. And it's amazing to me to just go around town and all of

these people know [the intermediary staff] already.

CSC staff used that social capital as they built and implemented the CCI.

CSC staff played an essential role in the operations of the CCI. During meetings I

observed how the two CSC Resource Center staff nurtured their relationships as they engaged

leaders individually around the room. I saw the care they took in communicating the messages

they wanted people to understand about community schools. I saw the clearly defined model

they were promoting. And I heard the language they had developed about that model from

multiple and varied stakeholders.[37] Having staff members that are able to work across

institutions and develop relationships with multiple stakeholders, all while maintaining

consistency in focus, appears to have been an important element of implementing and sustaining

the CCI.

Over the initial five years, the roles and responsibilities of the intermediary adapted as the

CCI matured and other key partners (e.g., the districts) became more willing to support it. When

the CCI started the intermediary had greater responsibility for funding, defining the model,

building relationships, and monitoring implementation. As the CCI has matured other partners,

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[37] Since data were collected these two leaders have retired and the CCI survives. However, the importance of having leaders who are connected, who have social capital, who can mobilize resources, is critical for getting the CCI started and for its sustained implementation.

especially the school districts, were transitioning into some of these roles. Consequently, the intermediary had to redefine itself and "give up" some responsibilities in order to share ownership with other groups associated with the CCI. For example, school districts were hiring internal staff to be responsible for the community school approach and were also increasing their financial contributions. From their perspective, district funding would help free the intermediary to focus on other responsibilities while maintaining the relationships with TACSI would help the school districts maintain fidelity to the TACSI model. Still, based on my observations and interviews, all parties saw the intermediary as playing an essential role in the CCI. As one school district administrator put it, "TACSI [the CSC Resource Center] has been very instrumental in providing the leadership, the sustainability through outreach to philanthropy. We depended on that tremendously."

The specific role of the intermediary wasn't codified in any documents I collected. What I describe below is based on the functions that I identified during the spring of 2011, when I collected data for this study.[38] One clear responsibility is to coordinate and align the activities among the various groups. The organizational chart (see Figure 5.2) shows the intermediary as the connector between the Steering Committee and Community Partners. It is also a member and convener of the Management Team and the District Implementation Teams.[39] In the following

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[38] The Resource Center currently identifies its functions as: information and communication, professional development, community capacity building, accountability and results, and financial management (see http://www.tacsi.org/?page_id=2157).

[39] I describe the District Implementation Teams (DIT) in the upcoming section on CCI connections to the school districts. Each district has a DIT that works with the intermediary. The DITs include the superintendent, district staff, all the principals and coordinators of community schools in each district, and the intermediary.

sections I describe the intermediary functions including supporting the identification of CCI outcomes and goals, developing standards of practice, monitoring implementation and fidelity, providing professional development, and developing partners.

The CCI has a number of goals that it was created to support. The primary goal was to improve education in Tulsa by mobilizing the resources of the entire community on students' behalf. The intermediary helped create and define some of those goals at the beginning of the initiative and works with partners to establish agreement around common outcomes. Those outcomes dictate the "core components," or school-based activities including early childhood education and development, healthcare, and after school programs. The Management Team is the vehicle the intermediary uses to get all the partners working toward the shared outcomes.

Another intermediary role was to define the model and standards that would be used for the CCI, in this case, community schools. At the start, the CSC Resource Center worked with partners and school leaders to examine the research on best practice around the country and to identify the "core components" of the community school model. From this research and discussions, TACSI created the model they would ultimately use at school sites.

Two parts of TACSI's community schools are the coordinator and the collaborative school site team.[40] TACSI has made both these elements requirements of their model, and according to the coordinators I spoke with the CCI has also tried to standardize how these elements operate. For example, coordinators were meant to work with partners, not to fill in for lunch or recess duty. The coordinators acknowledged that despite these requirements, context

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[40] These elements are consistent with other community school initiatives, including the Multnomah case.

and background matter. Their role and responsibilities are often dictated by the school where they work and the principal's expectations. Similarly, the structure and format for school site teams vary across districts and schools. In one case the school site team is the same as the school's improvement team.

One way the intermediary tries to ensure standardization of roles and practices is to have coordinators fill out a time sheet that includes how much time they are spending on the aforementioned "core components" (e.g., early childhood, family engagement, out of school time, etc.). The intermediary indicates that they use those school level reports to share out with the leadership teams in order to correct cases where coordinators are being asked to do something outside their responsibilities.

One district staff represented the views of others when the staff identified creation and fidelity to the model as a key function of the intermediary. They said that, "I see their role as a 'forever role' because it's making sure that the fidelity of the process and the philosophy is there, forever."

As a "resource center," CCI leaders charged the intermediary with the responsibility to support and train community school coordinators at the site level. TACSI staff created opportunities for principals, community partners, and others to learn about community schools through informational convenings, documents, and time spent explaining the strategy to others. However, their primary professional development role remained working with the coordinators.

The intermediary selected and trained coordinators. The school coordinators had their own group that the intermediary would convene twice a month. The coordinators would also

meet with their District Implementation Teams once a month at TACSI.[41] At the coordinator meetings, the intermediary brings CCI partners to tell coordinators about what programs they offer. The intermediary plays an important role of connecting the people that know the schools best, the site coordinators, with the partner organizations that participate in the CCI's partner networks. This provides a benefit to the coordinator who is able to learn about what partnerships and services are available that meet their school's needs and it helps partner organizations fulfill their mission by reaching schools. TACSI consistently strengthens connections within the CCI network and to other networks, at multiple levels.

The intermediary also had responsibility for monitoring the coordinators themselves. This is in contrast to Multnomah where lead partner institutions monitored their multiple coordinators. Using the aforementioned timesheets, the intermediary identified areas in which coordinators needed additional support, training, or connections to partners. Intermediary staff explained that monitoring coordinators at this level would help the entire CCI saying, "We were trying to see where we are focusing." Intermediary staff members also fill out their own time sheets. One explained:

> I always want to know how I am spending my time. Because if I am giving too much
> time to resource and development and not enough to capacity building, then what am I
> doing in resource and development? If I don't have the capacity then to implement it.

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[41] I describe District Implementation Teams in the section focused on the districts below. There was one DIT for each of the participating districts and their coordinators, principals, and district representatives.

This attention to detail and level of precision was characteristic to the ways the intermediary staff operated.

The intermediary would also ask the coordinators what sort of training they needed and who to bring in for support. Coordinators I spoke with described trainings and professional development opportunities that included training in specific areas of work (e.g., afterschool programming) from a national leader, attending national conferences, securing community school-specific technical assistance, networking with other coordinators at their meetings, and participating in District Implementation Team meetings where they can hear what principals are thinking as they speak with their peers.

While one of the key roles of the school site coordinator is to identify partners to work in the school, TACSI intermediary staff recruit partners who can work across several schools. TACSI organizes partners at the systems level that are then able to connect to local sites through the coordinators to offer services at the school site. According to one coordinator:

> They [the intermediary] have established a lot of the partnerships that we draw from…[Institutions] partner through the TACSI Resource Center. So there's some formal partnerships formed through the TACSI Resource Center that we benefit from. That we can just say, yeah, we're already partners, we have made commitments to be in community schools.

The coordinator continues to say that the opportunity to get partners "that we can take advantage of…That happens all the time."

TACSI also serves as a way to equitably distribute partnerships so that coordinators and schools aren't fighting over partnerships. As one coordinator said, "They don't want [to] compete. They want to partner at that level… and spread the resources. Rather than have all of us fighting over partnerships." Therefore TACSI has the dual functions of securing partnerships and equitably distributing them. Another way of describing this role is that they are the coordinators' coordinator.

In summary, the intermediary plays an essential role in supporting the CCI. As one participant explained, "I just see it as the glue to the whole process. I think that if suddenly TACSI went away we would be floundering because it simply is the founding cornerstone to community schools." In addition to the roles above, the intermediary also plays an important role about funding, which I describe in the funding section below. I now turn to the organizational connection to school districts.

District Implementation Teams and the Organizational Connections to School Districts

The school districts represent the most important CCI partners. They enable access to the school sites and serve as a gatekeeper for the success of the CCI. They also have a vested interest in the CCI succeeding as it designed to help the educators achieve their goals, especially improved student performance. I found that the school districts had strong leaders who truly believed in the CCI and the community school strategy specifically. While the CCI began *outside* of the school district (but with school district input and support), in 2011 both school districts were transitioning into a more central role. Not only would they be partners, but they were transforming the community school strategy by making it their own and developing new internal organizational and funding approaches. I begin this section by describing the formal

connections created by the CCI to the school districts, the increased participation and ownership

by the districts over the CCI, and the inherent tension and associated challenges and

opportunities of increased district involvement. I also address the strategies leaders employed for

resolving those tensions. I end by characterizing the ways in which the CCI has changed the

school districts and how the districts have changed the CCI.

The districts have multiple formal and informal connections to the CCI. Informally,

leaders and staff across organizations see each other in multiple settings and are able to utilize

meetings and side meetings (the time before and after meetings) to address any issues that may

arise. During my observations of CCI meetings I saw many of the same leaders participating in

these meetings, indicating that there were multiple opportunities to connect with others.

The primary ways in which the districts are formally connected to the CCI are through

the Steering Committee, Management Teams, and the District Implementation Teams (DIT). I

already described the first two groups above and it's worth reiterating that the Management

Team does not make any decisions if the districts are not able to participate in a given meeting.

The DITs are the primary vehicle for the CCI to work with the districts and all of the schools that

are participating within that district. The DIT helps the district implement and align the

community school strategy with other district priorities and efforts.

The DITs are unique from the other groups in that they are focused on regularly working

with one partner, a school district. While the Steering Committee and Management Team include

representatives from both districts and other stakeholders, the DIT is unique in that it allows the

intermediary to work directly on the issues of implementation and alignment that are specific to

each district and its schools. It's a way to provide specialized support and build relationships one school district at a time.

The DITs comprise intermediary staff, district administration staff, principals, and coordinators. While I was not able to observe one of these meetings, respondents characterized them as a place to help the districts implement the strategy with fidelity and align efforts within the district and across the CCI.

Principal participation in the DITs signifies his or her commitment to the community school strategy and provides an opportunity for the CCI to directly engage the building leader. Principals, district administrators, and coordinators are able to hear what each expects from the community school strategy and work together on achieving shared goals. The intermediary is there to support this process and to ensure that the school sites and districts are implementing the TACSI community school model with fidelity. The intermediary also identifies any partnership or other needs that the school practitioners may present. Coordinators get time to strengthen their relationships with the principals and to learn from other schools. According to one coordinator:

> I learn a lot at the Implementation Team Meetings because the principals are there. The coordinators, we can talk if we want to, but that is a forum primarily for the principals. So it gives me a better understanding of where they're coming from, what their challenges are in the school system. You realize that whether they're getting angry or frustrated, you give them grace. Because you know they're going through something.

The DITs were a unique space for different stakeholders to learn about one another.

While the two districts had always been important stakeholders and leaders in the CCI, they began to play an increasingly significant role as they prioritized the community school strategy within their own organizations and began enlarging their financial investment. TACSI staff and funders had always attempted to sustain and scale the CCI by convincing the districts to invest more heavily using public dollars. Now that districts were funding coordinators, there were a number of implications for the CCI that I describe below. While the districts acknowledged they wanted TACSI's CSC to remain the intermediary, their increased involvement led to a number of emerging tensions. I now turn to the specific ways in which the districts increased their involvement, describe the changing role of the intermediary, talk about the emerging tensions, and close this section with ways in which the districts changed.

Union and Tulsa school districts demonstrated their increased commitment to the CCI in at least two significant ways. First, at the time of data collection, both districts had begun to make financial commitments to fund community school coordinators, a role TACSI's Resource Center staff were previously responsible for.[42] Second, they hired or designated central office administrators to manage the community school workload. In Union, Associate Superintendent Kathy Dodd added community schools to her other duties. In Tulsa, Dr. Ballard hired Diane Hensley as the Community School Director. Their responsibilities were primarily to strengthen their district's community schools and to participate in the CCI. The districts had institutionalized their commitment to the CCI through these positions and funding.

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[42] I was unable to capture the exact amounts that each district spent. However, TPS hired an internal staff person for community schools and was funding a handful of school-based coordinators. Union announced at a meeting I observed that they were spending money on at least one new site coordinator.

District leaders also codified their commitment to the CCI. In Union, the district's board agreed to MOUs supporting community schools. In Tulsa, TACSI staff worked with the TPS foundation and the district to name community schools within the district's strategic plan.

However, just getting the community schools into the strategic plan was insufficient. The district had placed community schools under an area that didn't make sense to TACSI staff (school safety). This sent a message to intermediary staff that the district partner didn't yet "truly understand community schools." From the intermediary's perspective, community schools were ultimately about student achievement and should be incorporated with that part of the district's strategic plan. The district changed its plan with TACSI leadership's feedback and made the expansion of community schools a core strategic objective under the student achievement component.[43]

Still, according to a district staff person, having community schools specifically named in the TPS strategic plan "gives great credibility to the work that TACSI does." They noted that:

> ….it wasn't there to begin with, but everybody saw that there was a necessity for it to be in there. It's not in one of the core goals but it is sort of -- it all relates to, but yes, community schools are definitely a part of our new strategic plan so that gives great credibility to the work that TACSI does….

Despite this alignment and public support, tensions were beginning to emerge.

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[43] https://www.tulsaschools.org/4_About_District/_documents/pdf/Strategic_Plan.pdf

Tensions

While CCI leaders celebrated the districts' increased investment in the community school strategy, the districts' increased role created tensions within the CCI around fidelity to the model, shared leadership, and priorities. The intermediary had to increase its role in keeping partners, especially the districts, connected to the CCI as they started using the community school strategy to achieve their own objectives. One quote for intermediary staff summarizes the key tension points, over financing and ownership of the community school strategy and the CCI more broadly:

> Again this is an ongoing conversation we have had with [the superintendent], is that no one "owns" community schools. If you want to own it, it's "school based," then you can have it. But if you want to do "community schools," there's a place in this [approach] that's for community.

The subject differentiates between a strategy that is "school based" and doesn't include partners, and the existing "community school" strategy that uses partners to achieve shared goals.

One district leader claimed that the intermediary agency initially had a harder time with the district increasing their funding for the community schools because of the potential changes to the model. Despite these challenges, the district leader acknowledges that relationships between the CCI players enabled them to work through issues of funding, control, and power. According to the leader:

> I had actually more resistance from Community Service Council and from TACSI than I had from my school district. That's because they had a way in which they were already

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committed to funders…and now they were going to have to go back and say, "We would

like to use it for afterschool program, or for other things." …But as we work through that,

and I think she has understood that it is not to diminish the control of power of TACSI,

then we've been able to go forward.

This quote demonstrates how there was tension over money and control for the CCI. There was

also tension over the speed in which TACSI was able to create new community schools that the

district wanted. A district administrator implied that the intermediary and the CCI in general may

have been moving too slowly for the district. From the administrator's perspective, the district

taking more responsibility for the initiative would increase the number of community schools

and assist new community schools to develop more quickly.

Interviews with school-based coordinators from both school districts identified additional

tensions between the districts and the intermediary. The coordinators worked closely with the

district and the intermediary. As a result, they could offer a unique perspective on the ways both

groups perceived their changing role in the CCI. Coordinators clearly identified tension related to

funding, fidelity to the model, and mission creep.

One coordinator was quite skeptical about increased school district involvement. The

coordinator claimed that the CCI had struggled with getting a particular district to fully buy-into

the strategy. This led to the coordinator's concern over their newly found involvement:

When we went in, started, there really wasn't a person at [the district] who was the

liaison for the Resource Center [intermediary] at all. Basically it was just a power of that

social capital that got us going. And then they little by little they have found out it's

[community schools] good. It's been a battle.

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The coordinator then characterized the school district as "huge and dysfunctional" and that the coordinators were able to be effective because they weren't managed by the district. The coordinator's preference was for cross-boundary leadership where the district and the CCI Resource Center share responsibility for the CCI and the coordinators.

However, she was ultimately concerned about any extra control from the school district, an institution known for mandates that reach far into the school. She said that the district taking over more control, "will corrupt a good thing because it [the district] always does." She added that from her perspective, the value of the way the CCI was structured was that the community has some ownership and therefore "leverage" over the decisions the district makes, saying:

> And it's our positions [as coordinators] that continue to be owned by the community in some fashion. And if there is no one outside of [the district] that has leverage, I mean real leverage, they [the district] will decide that…they don't want to spend money on parent coordinators anymore [a role they need to fill]…So we [the coordinators] will become their employees and they'll start giving us jobs that someone else is [currently] doing.

The coordinator's comments reflect the potential for the district to dilute the coordinator's explicit role and responsibilities.

Other coordinators represented an opposing perspective that the districts were inevitably going to get more involved as the CCI grew and that changes needed to be embraced cautiously. Overall, coordinators I interviewed said that it's critical to build the structures within the district now that will sustain the CCI going forward, especially if a less favorable superintendent comes in and decides to abandon the CCI approach. According to one coordinator:

I'm saying we need to be on the proactive side...By getting these people up there [district administrators responsible for community schools] and putting those programs in place…Our superintendent is phenomenal right now…gets community schools. I mean [the superintendent] needs to do it [build the structures] now before [the superintendent] leaves cause I don't know who's going to come in behind.

Another coordinator agreed that embracing the change and codifying community schools in the district is important saying, "And I think that's our fear. It's that, we don't know who comes in behind [next] and then that's when they change [strategies]."

CCI leaders and TACSI staff did not ignore these tensions. Rather, I heard time and again from subjects about meetings between district leaders and TACSI staff to figure out ways to ease some tensions and create a workable solution. One example illustrates the point. During one interview a TACSI staff member described meetings they were having with a variety of district staff to share with them what the community schools were trying to achieve. This was a role to which staff was accustomed. As one intermediary staff described it:

All of this is just a way of growth and it's looking at that…But we really are cognizant of the fact that there with some people, we may have to go back and rebuild. Everyone has to know that that's okay, it doesn't mean we are failing, it doesn't mean we are weak…it's more intentful so that you keep the piece up here so that everybody we are all reaching towards this.

In addition, leaders provided information to the Steering Committee and Management Team, as well as other groups. And final decisions were shared with the key cross-organizational leadership teams as well.

There was clearly a transition in 2011, as the districts invested more heavily in the CCI. The organizational structures (management and leadership teams, regular meetings), relationships, contribution of resources from multiple organizations (compared to one source), and the expressed need by districts for community support, enabled the partners to work through issues that arose and to develop shared solutions.

TACSI was present to support the district as it internalized their community schools efforts

While the districts were taking on additional roles in the CCI, interviews indicate that school leaders still saw key functions for the intermediary, the TACSI Resource Center. During this period of transition, school leaders were very specific about how they thought the intermediary would contribute to their increased engagement.

The CCI already had an arrangement for how the intermediary supported districts. In addition to working with district staff through the Steering Committee and Management Team meetings, the intermediary met with the aforementioned District Implementation Teams (DITs) to identify ways in which the intermediary and the district could use their unique assets to support community school implementation. TACSI staff also met with superintendents often to check in and identify areas of support.

These changes meant that the districts and the intermediary had to change the ways they were interacting. The intermediary was starting to relinquish some responsibilities as the district gained independence and took on more responsibility for the CCI. However, the CSC Resource Center staff members were hesitant, especially in the early stages, to let the district move too far

on their own. This is in part because they wanted to ensure fidelity to the model, as well as maintain some control over decision-making.

TACSI staff acknowledged that the district partners should be, and were exerting their independence on implementing the strategy. Speaking about an upcoming check-in meeting with the TPS superintendent to discuss these changes, one TACSI staff said she had identified numerous requests to bring to the superintendent's attention, including a job description for the new district community schools staff position. The staff added that if such a job description didn't exist, she expected to be able to assist the district in developing it. This is one example of the new ways the intermediary was supporting the district and negotiating control over the initiative and its implementation.

As the district commitment to the community school strategy increased, they also had ideas for ways in which the intermediary relationship would change. Interviews with the superintendents and district staff indicate that they wanted TACSI to assist with implementation, but they decided that school districts would start paying the salaries for the school-site coordinators. One superintendent said that this approach would ultimately "institutionalize" the initiative within the district. According to the superintendent:

> I am very appreciative of what TACSI has done – they have been the impetus for all the work that has been done, they have been the bedrock upon which we stand, and I'm very grateful …We'll always be a partner with TACSI, but I believe so strongly in community schools, that to a certain degree…I would like for us to begin assuming some responsibilities for ourselves…What I would like is for TACSI to remain as our compass, our research partner, and our training partner.

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The superintendent sees a continued role for TACSI as a key partner in the CCI but also alludes to the district's increased commitment to the strategy and possible changes in their relationship moving forward.

The district leader identifies TACSI, the intermediary, as the continued leader or "compass" for the CCI. The district leader wants the intermediary to keep an outsider's perspective, to remain objective, and to ensure that the district is implementing their community schools (now with more funding from the district) with fidelity. Whereas changes in balance of funding can disrupt an initiative, and influential actors exert more control with their increased financial contributions, it seems to be that the districts, in good faith, want to continue to share power and ownership of the CCI as they increase their financial contributions. Certainly, as described in the earlier section, tensions still existed during the period of transition I observed. However, the data indicate that district and intermediary leaders were making progress which is likely attributable, in part, to the collective trust and organizational arrangements that both groups had already created through the CCI, as well as a desire to protect the investments they had already made in the strategy.

Participation in the CCI has led to a cultural shift within the district

As demonstrated earlier, the leaders from both school districts believed in the community school strategy and saw their participation in the CCI as a way to promote that strategy within their districts to improve educational outcomes. Both district leaders hired or assigned a top administrator to be in charge of the community schools portfolio including working with the CCI partners. Their initial participation and actions to increasingly invest in the community school strategy have led to cultural shifts in the way the district operates.

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One superintendent characterized the change within the district saying, "So it really has changed who we are, our identity is different than it's ever been." The superintendent said that the new culture has changed parents' expectations. Now, they all want their schools to be a community school. Consequently, the district created a position with responsibility for creating enrichment programs at all schools, even if they aren't community schools and the programs have to be tuition-based. According to the superintendent, the culture has changed and "it's not okay for those services to not be provided everywhere."

TACSI leaders and staff had created the organizational arrangements that enabled individuals and organizations to identify problems and work through solutions together. The different groups strengthened relationships across organizations and helped organizations internalize and "institutionalize" the CCI's community school strategy. Next, I turn to the CCI's financial and political structures.

Financial Structure: Time, Talent, and Money

The Tulsa CCI is a shared enterprise that requires myriad partners across the city to contribute and participate in multiple ways. According to one intermediary leader, everyone has something to add whether it be "time, talent, and money." She explained:

My whole thing is everyone can participate in a community school and everyone has a passion and a pocket book. It's just what degree do you want to give of both and how can we help you see where your investment on both will be used and what you want to contribute.

This sentiment captures how TACSI encourages the commitment from many individuals and institutions to support the CCI in any way they can. It harkens back to Chaskin's definition of "community capacity" where community members and institutions are engaged and contribute local resources to a common end (Chaskin, 2001).

In previous sections I discussed how partners contributed their time and talent through leadership and participation in CCI meetings (e.g., the Partners Group). They set the direction for the CCI at cross-sector meetings and worked with their own institutions to implement that direction. They also contributed in-kind resources, as exemplified by the partner participation in the summer learning and opportunity strategy. However, the CCI requires financial resources to hire the school site coordinators and fund programs at the school. The intermediary also requires funds to pay for meetings, staff time, professional development, reports, and evaluations.

Table 5.2 below illustrates how the TACSI CCI was funded over time. The table represents funding for the school sites as well as the intermediary. As explained above, the funding reflects the increased investment of the two participating school districts. The TACSI intermediary, the CSC, was originally responsible for raising all funds from philanthropies. By the time of data collection, this funding source represented only half of the funds for the CCI.

TACSI, led by the CSC Resource Center, initially funded their community schools by securing investment from philanthropists, foundations, and corporations. These funders included businesses, family foundations, and others. According to one funder, identifying funds for the initial startup was a primary challenge:

> I think first of all you've got to have funding, and we were the first [foundation] to step in and say, "Ya, we'll do it." But then they had to get a number of others to come on board

too and they did. But essentially I think that was one of the first hurdles to be crossed was

to get the necessary funding.

TACSI strategically included key funders in the Steering Committee in an attempt to keep

funders connected to the CCI. They wanted a mechanism to enable funders to sustain or increase

their contributions. From time to time, including during my site visit, they also hold special

funder events, such as a "Funders Coffee." Using these strategies, the CCI has turned "funders"

into "partners," which demonstrates a higher level of commitment.

Table 5.2

Tulsa Funding Sources over Time

	2007		2011		2014	
Philanthropic	$500,000	100%	$350,000	49%	$555,000	37%
Union Public Schools (Title I)			$290,000	41%	$440,000	30%
Tulsa Public Schools (Title I)			$75,000	10%	$283,000	19%
Tulsa Public Schools Foundation					$207,250	4%
TOTAL	**$500,000**		**$715,000**		**$1,485,250**	

Note. Funding table received from personal communication follow up to the original research
study. Table does not include in-kind funding sources.

The intermediary spends a lot of their time soliciting and working with funders.

According to one intermediary staff, they invest in efforts to explain to funders what the

community school strategy is. The staff explained:

It takes six months to "date" and talk to and get these funders to the point where they

understand a little bit what community schools are. So you just don't decide, "Okay, here

is when we are going to start on this and it happens in two months or three months." It

just depends on their [grant making] cycle and then trying to explain. We have had that

same conversation, same conversation.

Communication and constant attention to funding partners is imperative. A funder
explained that the intermediary arranges a visit to the school they fund each year. This visit helps
them see what they are investing in and develop relationships with the intermediary and school
staff. The CCI is able to increase buy-in and ownership through these visits, updates for funders,
and other communication mechanisms.

Their efforts seem to pay off. As one funder indicated, "My guess is that we will continue
to support the community schools in some manner or the other because we are very much
impressed with what we've seen." The funder even suggested that they think community schools
should be expanded across the state and the country, another indicator of their commitment. The
CCI is not just securing funders, but nurturing partners and advocates for the strategy.
Showcasing results to your partners, especially to your funders and leadership, can have a
sustaining effect on funding and their partnership and leadership.

So how are the funds distributed between the schools and the CSC? At the time of my
visit, the distribution was changing based on the source of the funds (e.g., district and other
sources). Funds were initially distributed (when funding came primarily from foundations and
individuals) based on a cost per school. Intermediary staff explained that each community school
costs approximately $100,000. From that, the CSC or district paid the coordinator approximately

$55,000.[44] They provided the coordinator $10,000 for school-based activities. From that, $5,000 was for the coordinator and the school site team to use for agreed upon and mission-aligned programming (e.g., hiring an after school provider). The other $5,000 went to the coordinator for their professional development and other discretionary programming needs. The remaining $35,000 remained with the CSC to pay for CCI activities such as professional development and evaluation. One funder justified the portion that went to the CSC Resource Center saying that the intermediary "supports the entire operation."

Tulsa's CCI, however, has transitioned from predominantly relying on grants from philanthropies and businesses to a more blended model that includes public school dollars. As indicated elsewhere, this shift in funding appears to have led to a change in power and control over the direction of the CCI, especially at the school site. Districts wanted to ensure their goals were being met at the school site, something they could control if they paid for coordinators. One superintendent characterized the transition, starting with the important role that TACSI had played up to that point, saying, "TACSI has been very instrumental in providing the leadership, the sustainability through outreach to philanthropy. We depended on that tremendously." The leader continues to explain the new arrangement from the district's perspective:

> This next year I plan to relieve TACSI a little bit, hopefully, of some of that need to go
>
> out and raise quite so much money from the community. It's not that we still don't want
>
> their involvement, but we want it in different ways. We want to make sure that if we've
>
> done strategic planning that we're guaranteeing that we've got a Resource Center that

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[44] The coordinators' salaries varied by whether they were paid by districts or the CSC. As district employees coordinators were paid more according to the negotiated union schedule.

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will continue to provide professional development, and that will continue to hold us all to the standards of the model that TACSI has developed – but we don't necessarily want them to be responsible for the day to day funding needs for the school's community school coordinator. So I'm using our Title I money to fund those positions, and I feel great about that because it sustains the entire model in our school district whether I am there or not. We can just guarantee that that funding, that program, will be a part of who we are as a district.

Interviews indicate that the CSC and funders welcomed the increased financial investment from the districts. At the Steering Committee meeting I observed, CSC staff reported that Union was hiring their first community school coordinator with a combination of a $50,000 grant and Title I funds. TACSI staff indicated at that meeting that the school district valued community schools enough at this point in the CCI to give Title I money for the coordinator.

Representing the views of others, one funder reflected on the importance of the increased contributions from districts:

So you're beginning to get a lot of support at the district level from the superintendent and the board members…So it looks very promising to me that it's going to become more or less… it will become a part of the [school] program. And if that philosophy can be carried through under those circumstances then I think it will be a marvelous thing to do.

District contributions had been a goal for the CCI for a long time and their contribution represented a milestone.

Still, a number of challenges accompanied the new financial contributions from the districts. It raised issues of who was responsible for raising funds for the coordinator, the

intermediary, for programs at the school site, and for training coordinators. Intermediary staff who had been the only ones responsible for funding up to this point indicated that they had to manage district expectations for starting community schools based on the patterns of when funders gave grants (e.g., grant cycles). The intermediary had to explain to districts that the CSC has to balance the needs of the school district (a desire to start a program by this date) with the way that the funding world works and with the way and times that the district is able to use their own funds. These competing schedules required additional negotiation and collaboration to ensure that the schools the district and TACSI agreed should get support had the right funds at the right times.

Now a shared responsibility, the district and CSC would have to negotiate over who will find the funds for which schools. While Union was paying for some coordinators, it was still up to the intermediary to raise the other $45,000 to pay for CSC functions as well as school-site programming. This introduced another level of complexity and the need for even greater coordination.

Most important to the new financial structure was deepening the concept of "shared ownership" for the CCI. One intermediary staff indicated that funding and shared ownership are tied together. She said that if the leaders from different sectors want to have a shared vision and shared strategy that is consistent with the intervention's model and actual implementation, then no matter where the funds come from, community schools need to operate similarly. Interviewees representing different stakeholder groups were concerned that if coordinators were being funded by a different funding source (the district), the coordinators' perceptions of their work and accountability for CCI goals could change, as could the quality of their work.

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Ultimately, despite the immediate challenges and negotiations, the district and other CCI leaders saw increased investments from the districts as addressing a serious funding issue: sustainability. Financial stability is important for the sustainability of the CCI. Existing funders had recognized that the CCI will not survive long-term if the CCI relied solely on foundations and corporations. Leaders understood that funders change their priorities and that funding sources may not be there for the expansion of the CCI in the future. In this way, TASCI and school leaders repositioned themselves to address the most fundamental challenge to comprehensive school-community partnerships, the sustainability of these partnerships over time. While this repositioning helped broaden the pool of funds for the CCI, it still only increased by two organizations, the districts. Unlike Multnomah, there were fewer organizations contributing to funding the TACSI CCI. Although the incentives for the sharing of funding responsibilities may have been different for TASCI and school leaders, the result was a more sustainable funding base for community schools operated by Union Public Schools and potentially for Tulsa Public Schools once they decided to invest.

Political Structure

Politicians played a less prominent role in the Tulsa case study compared to the Multnomah case study. However, as with any community-based initiative, "politics" was still an important issue that had to be addressed by local leaders and advocates for the CCI. To a large extent, these issues were primarily addressed through the organizational arrangements, relationships, and communications strategies that leaders developed and sought to sustain.

While in Multnomah politicians started the CCI, making it heavily dependent on financing from agencies under the supervision of elected officials, in Tulsa, the CCI was started

by a community group (the CSC) at the direction of elected and appointed officials (the MHSC) and community members and funders (Step Up Tulsa). Funding came primarily from individuals, foundations, and the school districts, which limited the political interests of local officials in the community, particularly those officials who did not need to contribute financially to the initiative's start up.

Intermediary staff members appeared to be attuned to potential political challenges and generally were cautious in how they engaged political leaders. An intermediary staff member described one example when they had to be particularly attentive to potentially conflicting interests with local politicians. According to the staff member, at one point, Mayor Taylor and the Tulsa City Council wanted to explore how the city's out-of-school-time programs were being distributed across the community in order to eliminate inefficiencies such as multiple programs in the same schools. One of the city's management team members recommended to the mayor that he ask the CSC to conduct a review of all relevant programs. The CCI leaders, specifically CSC intermediary staff, feared that doing the review, particularly if it led to recommendations to eliminate some programs, might alienate potential partners and create conflicts with city council members who might be invested in particular programs. The intermediary consequently had to be politically cautious with politicians and partners that they needed to support the CCI's efforts: in this case, the major strategy was to avoid creating an issue, so as not to alienate potential partners and political allies.

At other times, however, intermediary staff members were proactive in addressing potential political challenges. Within the CCI, intermediary staff members were responsible for working with the superintendents to address any political issues. They discussed issues as a

group in the Steering Committee and had meetings with individual superintendents and staff to negotiate other topics such as funding, access to the schools, and MOUs. The organizational arrangement of cross-sector leaders making joint decisions as a Steering Committee made it possible to build consensus and develop political support and cohesion for the CCI. When asked whether there were any "political issues" of getting community schools started one district superintendent responded, "I don't know whether you can call them political challenges or factors or not," and proceeded to talk about the role of funders instead, suggesting that at least in her eyes politics was a minor concern in developing and implementing the initiative.

School boards can be an important source of political support or opposition to community-based school initiatives and election cycles can be an occasion for political turmoil. However, TACSI had broad support from the relevant local school boards, making these individuals a reliable source of political support. In one district, an administrator said that:

My Board President is the Advisory Board Council President of TACSI. He's marvelous. He could do my job, he's a great thinker, he's a great guy and he has been willing to mobilize people in the community to support TACSI so, he's great. My board has always bought in to community schools…And any board members that I have had in [the district] that don't support these kind of initiatives have gone off the board.

These comments reflect the school board's enthusiasm for the CCI, and, even more importantly, the broad support for the CCI in Tulsa, even across election cycles.

In the opinion of one superintendent, the real political negotiations didn't happen with the school board, but with the principals. The subject said that the board does not generally make decisions about how to spend federal dollars, money that they were going to use to support the

CCI. "My struggle is really to only make sure that principals who are going to have to lose some positions with Title I were satisfied that this [funding community schools] is a better way to do it." In order to achieve that goal, the superintendent met regularly with the principals to talk about ways community schools and their participation with the CCI would benefit the school, despite the tradeoff of losing funding for other positions (e.g., instructional coaches). The subject described subsequent buy in, saying, "so giving up some of those things was really hard, but it was not hard this year. We just actually rolled into it because we've been talking about it all year long, about how we really want to make this a stable funding thing."

Tulsa had fewer identified political challenges than Multnomah, however, building and sustaining political support was just as important to the CCI. The organizational structures that leaders created enabled the CCI leaders to raise, address, and solve political challenges. The intermediary played a key role in managing the politics by reaching out to political leaders and other initiatives. Superintendents were essential in negotiating their internal politics, both at the systems level by developing school board support, and at the school level by working with principals to facilitate buy-in that is crucial to successful school reform efforts.

Case Summary

TACSI's leaders had built the organizational, financial structures and political structures to expand the community school strategy across two districts with approximately 160 partners. The CCI had grown quickly, benefiting from the experiences of other CCIs such as Multnomah County. Despite the rapid expansion, leaders still took a measured and intentional approach to their work with a focus on sustainability from the start. They articulated a clear and shared vision for how their CCI would operate at the systems level and at the school site.

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This case represents a CCI in transition. After a few years of positive developments, the power and responsibility for funding was changing as the districts increased their investments and support for the CCI. A strong intermediary that spent a lot of time on being intentional in their approach and constantly communicating their message was essential because it provided the daily leadership and coordination of multiple actors with competing priorities around a shared vision. The CCI was able to address these changes because of the organizational, financial structures, and political structures they had built together.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusion

The two cases provide an in-depth analysis of education-focused community change initiatives (CCIs) that has been largely absent from the academic literature. As funders, policymakers, and community members create more CCIs, specifically with their focus on education, we need more research about the successes and failures of sustained education-focused CCIs. In this section, I will analyze the similarities and differences between these two cases and offer lessons to guide CCI leaders. The two cases have much in common but also have some important differences, such as the level of school district involvement in CCI leadership and operation. While the emphasis of each CCI was on the use of the community school strategy as the core vehicle for their efforts, I believe these findings are applicable to a broad array of education-focused CCIs (e.g., Promise Neighborhoods, cradle-to-career initiatives) that are attempting to change educational practices and outcomes.

I begin the discussion by comparing the two cases broadly, noting basic similarities and differences in the scope and implementation of the CCIs. Then I address the three research questions that are the focus of this study.

1. Why and how do school system-level community change initiative (CCI) partnerships form?

2. What are the organizational, financial, and political structures that support sustainable CCIs? What, in particular, are their connections to the school systems they seek to impact?

3. What are the leadership functions and structures found within CCIs? How are leadership functions distributed across schools and agencies within communities?

I demonstrate that local leaders started their CCIs in order to solve complex problems, that the organizational arrangements they created supported their work, that a diversified funding approach broadened stakeholder engagement, that political actions built stakeholder support, and that collaborative leadership may be essential to their success. I conclude with a discussion of the limitations of the study and propose future research.

Overview of Cases

The Multnomah County and Tulsa CCI cases provide useful contemporary examples of sustained CCIs that can help advance the literature on how CCIs begin, how they grow, and how they are sustained. In this section, I summarize some of the similarities and differences between the cases. This approach will help contextualize the analysis across the cases that follows.

One of the most important similarities across the cases is that they were created to focus on educational outcomes. In the review of the literature I noted that many of the CCIs of the 1990s and 2000s focused on a variety of community outcomes, but that education was a difficult area because of the complexity of working with schools and school systems (Kubisch, 2010c). In the Multnomah and Tulsa cases, community leaders explicitly made education their focus, even when they had a broader strategy that included services and partnerships with a variety of sectors.

In addition, both initiatives identified the community school strategy as central to their approach. Multnomah's leaders selected the school as the site of service delivery for the county's

social services and funded partnerships. Tulsa's leaders made educational outcomes the focus of their efforts and after researching best practices around the country, settled on the community school strategy as the cohesive element for their partnership-based work.

Leaders in both cases also built their CCIs off previous CCI-like efforts and researched their chosen approach. Multnomah had an existing community school approach, after school initiative, and history of collaboration in service delivery. In Tulsa, the CCI developed, in part, out of the Step Up Tulsa! initiative that represented an effort to identify community goals through a collaborative community engagement process. Leaders from both initiatives created work groups that represented multiple sectors and levels of government to research best practices for accomplishing their goals, with an emphasis on finding a strategy that worked closely with schools. Staff from each initiative supported the workgroups in this exploration.

Once the initiatives selected the community school strategy, they both created systemic cross-sector organizational structures to govern and guide the CCIs. These structures built on, and replaced, previous collaborative bodies and were both staffed by an intermediary organization that supported the leadership. Each of these structures represented multiple levels of involvement from participating groups and represented a range of governmental and non-governmental actors. In short, the CCIs were not governed by a single organization, but rather operated under a collaborative approach.

Since both CCI approaches selected the community school strategy, district support became essential. Both initiatives had support from the school district leaders within the geographic area, though district participation varied. Multnomah's CCI included the six area

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school districts within the county while Tulsa included both districts within the city of Tulsa. District leaders played important and changing roles as the CCIs developed.

Finally, it's important to remember that the cases are connected in another way. Staff and leaders from Tulsa developed their strategy, in part, by visiting Multnomah and learning from their experiences. Tulsa's CCI was created almost half a decade after Multnomah. While Multnomah continued to adapt their strategy since its launch, Tulsa leaders were able to establish consulting relationships with Multnomah leaders and staff as they created their own strategies and structures.

In addition to these similarities across the cases, it's worth noting important differences that have implications for conclusions drawn about education-focused CCIs. First, the cases varied by their scope. Multnomah represents a county level approach while Tulsa focused on the city. This has implications for the resources and members of participating organizations and agencies. Counties and their cities around the country vary in what resources they control and in their authority. For example, in some places the county is responsible for health services while in other places that responsibility falls to cities. In the Multnomah case, the county was responsible for human services and controlled significant resources.

Similarly, the CCIs differed in the number of participating districts, as well as the size of each district. Multnomah included six districts, with Portland being the largest. Tulsa included two districts that worked within the same city. This is important because the more districts one has participating in the CCI, the greater likelihood there is for variation in levels of engagement. In the cases reviewed in this study, it appeared that the two district leaders had greater levels of engagement than those in Multnomah. This could be a function of the number of participating

districts but could also have other explanations such as strength of the CCI, leadership styles, or external factors such as school board demands. I was not able to interview enough of the Multnomah district leaders to make conclusions about this point. Further research should focus on district leaders and their involvement in education-focused CCIs.

The CCIs also were different regarding their intermediary, or backbone support organization. Multnomah was supported by the county human services department while Tulsa selected a community-based organization to serve as the intermediary. The Tulsa case also represented a shift as one district began to take more responsibility for acting like the intermediary with their community schools, while maintaining participation in the CCI operated by the CBO. This difference in intermediary organization is consistent with other education-focused CCIs. In some education focused CCIs the district may also serve as the intermediary. The intermediary likely has important implications for how the CCI develops and operates.

The CCIs also differed in other important ways. The budgets, number of schools, and number of participating organizations across both CCIs was different. Multnomah County was the larger initiative with the larger budget. Working across six district, the CCI included 64 community schools, representing 39 percent of the total available schools. In Tulsa, there were 31 community schools, representing 31 percent of the total available schools. In addition, the estimated budget for Multnomah was $6,471,000 compared to $715,000 for the Tulsa CCI (see the cases for more detail). Finally, Multnomah had an estimated 300 participating organizations while Tulsa had 160.

In case study analyses, the context of the cases is always important to the conclusions a researcher is able to draw. The two cases in this study have similarities and differences that

likely affected their development. The conclusions I draw next attempt to account for these contextual factors yet identify common themes. Nonetheless, any application of the findings to other or to new CCIs must recognize the likely impact that the local context will play in how a CCI develops.

Why and How do School-system Level Community Change Initiatives (CCI) Partnerships Form?

Once they started, many CCIs failed to sustain their work because of challenges such as poor communication, false expectations, poor planning, weak organizational structures, lack of coordination and partnership, competition, ineffective funding strategies, and failure of policymakers and funders to sustain their commitment (Chaskin et al., 1997; Gardner et al., 2010; Knapp, 1995). While the literature illustrates the many reasons that CCIs fail to sustain their efforts, there is less literature on why CCIs are formed and how their formation may influence sustainability. The two cases that I developed for this study add to the literature about why and how CCIs that are sustained, at least for a given time, are created.

As I described in the literature review, CCIs traditionally started when an external funding source, typically a foundation, approached communities with an initiative that the funder wanted to support. The best-known examples involved national funders piloting CCI strategies in a variety of cities, such as New Futures (Casey Foundation), the Neighborhood and Family Initiative (Ford Foundation), and Beacons (multiple public and private funders). These communities relied heavily on national foundation funds to start, build capacity, and implement their CCI. The impetus for these strategies was external, even though funders acknowledged the importance of local leadership and collaborated in identifying local needs. In fact, one of the

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reasons that led to the demise of many of the classic CCIs was that national, or external funders, discontinued funding; when these external resources were withdrawn from the CCIs, local leaders were unable to replace them with local resources, either because the resources were not there or because local leaders were unable to convince the community to use existing resources differently (Kania & Kramer, 2011).

There is a dearth of literature about CCIs that were started by local entities to solve locally identified problems. Unlike the typical case described in the literature, the two cases that I examined were locally initiated and developed. The community and government leaders in each of the sites identified common community problems that they alleged could best be solved through a collaborative and comprehensive approach. This small group of leaders reached out to their peers from other institutions within the community to collaborate. They built strategies on the foundation of previous local efforts for change, but chose to make schools, and the more efficient delivery of services, the focus of their work. In each of the cases, it was local leaders, who sought to develop comprehensive solutions to complex local problems, who initiated the CCI. Consequently, these cases add to the literature on why and how CCIs start by providing under-studied examples of locally developed CCI approaches.

Started in Order to Solve Community Problems

Community leaders formed each of the CCIs to address a range of community problems, specifically poor education outcomes in areas of high need and perceived inefficiencies in the use of community resources. In Multnomah, the CCI leaders believed that they were faced with multiple challenges including poor academic performance, declining funding for education, and the potential for at-risk youth to get into trouble outside of the typical school day (Hamann &

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Hall, 2003). There were also concerns about whether youth programs were using community resources efficiently. City and county leaders decided to work together to identify new strategies to address these challenges. Their aim was to collaborate and offer a comprehensive set of services at the school site.

In Tulsa, the Metropolitan Human Services Council (MHSC), a local governing body comprised of cross-sector leaders, directed staff to develop a strategy for improving educational outcomes and using limited community resources more efficiently. They intentionally looked for a solution that included, but was not the sole responsibility, of the school districts. They believed that change would require a comprehensive and cross-sector approach to be successful. At the same time, a local group of community leaders called Step Up! was also developing a plan to address the many city needs, especially education, in a more comprehensive way.

What's similar about each of these cases is that community leaders recognized that their jurisdictions faced numerous, interconnected challenges including education, health, and community development. They also recognized that they could be more successful at addressing these challenges if they developed a more collaborative strategy that made more efficient use of community resources (previous, agency specific attempts had failed). As a result, community leaders started to create the vision for a broader approach, one that included many of the elements of a successful CCI: a comprehensive approach, based in a particular place, with community building through collaboration of relevant local stakeholders (Kubisch, 2010b).

Leadership was Critical to Start the CCI

The role of leadership is oftentimes left out of the CCI literature. This may be because, at the start, the impetus for the CCI has typically been external. In the cases I reviewed, it was local

leadership across sectors in Multnomah and Tulsa that was the impetus for the CCIs. These individual champions had an ambitious vision for collaboration and coordination of community services and resources, which in turn fostered a collaborative form of leadership with multiple community groups engaged in the development of the CCIs.

In Multnomah, city and county elected officials and their staff discussed ways they could collaborate on community problems that would be different than the siloed strategies of the past. In Tulsa, multiple leaders, including the school district administrators, city department officials, higher education representatives, and philanthropists, were responsible for identifying the problems the community faced and creating processes to address those challenges in a shared and comprehensive manner.

Both of these cases are characterized by the active engagement of executives of agencies, government, and other institutions that were involved from the beginning in the creation of the CCIs. They set the vision and direction and gave credibility to the CCIs. Their vision and commitment strengthened the CCI's legitimacy within the community and created a foundation for the CCI's organizational, political, and financial sustainability.

Although individuals championed the idea of the CCI in Multnomah and Tulsa, these champions also sought broad input and buy in from the community. In the earliest stages of the formation of the CCIs, local visionaries sought to develop a broad coalition that could provide the leadership to focus community resources. Collaborative leadership, which involved multiple local leaders representing multiple agencies working toward implementing a common vision of service delivery, was important to the creation and sustainability of CCIs in both of these cases.

(I discuss the importance of collaborative leadership more fully when I address the third research question for this study.)

Intermediary Staff Supported Leadership's Vision

Each of the CCIs had staff that was instructed to take the community leaders' vision and mission and generate a coherent and comprehensive strategy. Staff work was critical for the creation of the CCIs and included research, visiting other cities with education-focused CCIs, organizing meetings, and surveying the community. Staff researched existing local and national strategies to solve educational challenges utilizing the assets of multiple partners. They identified community schools as the key place-based education strategy for their collaborative efforts, and they developed the implementation strategy to make the CCI's proposed vision and mission a reality.

Although the literature acknowledges the importance of staff in sustaining CCIs once they are created (Kania & Kramer, 2011), the two cases that I examined suggest that capable staff may also be important in the creation of CCIs. In both Multnomah and Tulsa, staff members involved in planning eventually became the CCI's intermediaries, providing a critical role in maintaining the momentum started by the leaders. It was the staff members who were responsible for moving the CCI forward by taking on the day-to-day work of translating the vision and mission into a workable plan. They determined the organizational, financial, and political arrangements that would sustain the CCIs.

The intermediary staff from both cases was relatively small, no more than five people at any given time. However, other staff within their various organizations supported them, and staff involved in the initiation of each of the CCIs was well connected and skilled at negotiating

assistance and the acquisition of resources. In Multnomah, the staff was able to draw on the expertise within the county's various agencies, eventually coalescing into a department that would serve as the intermediary for Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN). In Tulsa, staff received assistance from the larger Community Services Council to develop Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative (TACSI).

Intermediary staff played dual roles of supporting and helping to generate the leaders' vision for the CCI. As members of the local community, they were keenly aware of the challenges the communities faced and were also well-connected to many of the important players. In Multnomah, the county worked with many community-based groups that received county funds and worked with other city and county leaders. In Tulsa, intermediary staff had significant social capital and knew many of the most important stakeholders within the districts and around the city.

Contrary to most of the CCIs discussed in the literature, intermediary staff reported to local leaders, rather than to external funders. The CCIs weren't ultimately accountable to primary funders outside of their geographic area, but rather to the leaders, funders, and communities that initially called for and continued to maintain the CCI. This point adds to the literature on what it takes to create and develop a sustainable CCI. Perhaps, it also suggests that national funders are better served by supporting locally developed efforts than by creating new CCI approaches that originate outside of communities.

The case studies demonstrate the critical role of intermediary entities in coordinating, managing, and supporting the CCIs. While there are many communities that have an existing organization that can serve this role, there are likely many more communities that don't have the

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existing capacity or expertise. Many local community organizations are focused on service delivery, and don't know how to collaborate and mobilize a variety of partners toward a common purpose. Funders and policymakers should find ways to develop the capacity of local organizations to serve in this intermediary role.

Built on Previous Efforts

Both CCIs used elements of previous locally developed initiatives to build their organizational and leadership structures; they also sought to adopt practices from these initiatives thought to be successful (such as expanding the existing community schools programs). This is consistent with the literature on successful CCIs, which states that CCIs should build on existing efforts rather than create new structures that may require significant start-up costs and may cause conflict with existing programs (Kubisch, 2010a).

Multnomah's CCI started as a joint effort by the city and county to transform existing programs (an afterschool and community school program) into a more comprehensive and coordinated strategy that would involve community partners in working to improve results at the school site. Rather than create a totally new program, local leaders redesigned existing service programs and expanded the existing community school program to serve as the heart of the CCI.

Leaders in Tulsa started their CCI when two parallel community-wide groups sought to improve a range of outcomes for students, families, and the broader community. The MHSC and Step Up Tulsa! both made education a priority and selected community schools as their strategy. Staff members at the Community Service Council (CSC) were able to operationalize the vision started by these two groups and to create a formal CCI that would be responsible for planning,

implementing, sustaining, and evaluating the work across the city. They used the existing partnership structures to create the new governing bodies of the CCI.

Worked to Improve Efficiency of Service Delivery

Sustainable CCIs coordinate their organization's discrete efforts to maximize the efficient delivery of supports and opportunities. In each of the sites, myriad agencies and organizations were already providing services and were finding ways to support students and their families. However, there was a sense from leaders that these services weren't coordinated, efficient, or strategic. In Multnomah, county leaders directed an analysis of how county funds were being spent on children and families. This analysis raised questions about resource distribution, delivery, and equity. Consequently, leaders decided to consolidate multiple funding streams and programs into a more strategic and efficient system that would become SUN Community Schools and the SUN Service System. In Tulsa, the mayor enlisted the CSC in creating a map of where all the afterschool programs were being delivered in order to better coordinate activities in a more strategic way under the purview of TACSI. Leaders in both CCIs wanted a more efficient and effective way to deliver services that removed redundancies in order to maximize impact and address the challenges associated with declining budgets. The realization of these efficiencies may have provided each CCI with greater legitimacy among local leaders, taxpayers, and government officials and helped to create broad support for the initiative.

Made Education and Consequently Schools the Focus of their Work

While each of the cases identified multiple community problems, they made education the focus of their work. This is consistent with many of today's most common CCIs that see education as the starting point for community change (e.g., Promise Neighborhoods, cradle-to-

career initiatives). Leaders in these communities continued to take a comprehensive view of their challenges and strategies. However, they deliberately focused on education and schools as the primary vehicle for connecting students, families, and community members to other supports that addressed issues such as housing, hunger, and employment.

Selecting education and schools as the focus strategy was an important decision. Both CCIs chose the community school strategy, which made the school site the center of the CCI's efforts. This differentiated the CCI from other forms of CCIs described in the literature that lack a specific place – a building or school – upon which to focus their efforts. These more traditional CCIs (e.g., New Futures, the Neighborhood and Family Initiative, and Empowerment Zones), sought to coordinate social services more generally within communities but without a specific service target, like schools. Because leaders directed their organizations to serve clients in one specific place, there was a clearer focus for service delivery and an easier way to measure the impact of the CCI, which helped support the collaboration illustrated in the cases.

This decision had implications for the sustainability of the CCIs. Certainly, the decision to focus on educational outcomes and to focus on the schools as the site of their work provided the CCIs with clarity of purpose. The CCIs were still 'comprehensive' in nature in that their leaders sought to influence a wide variety of outcomes and brought a range of supports to the school site. Leaders understood the connections between poverty and education. They also recognized that schools alone had not been able to achieve academic success or alleviate some of the problems associated with poverty. Further, they saw the school as the place many of their clients could most efficiently be served. For example, Multnomah County still provided services to parents, but did so at the schools. Tulsa still provided health care supports to families, but at

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school-based health clinics. Focusing on the school building helped coordinate partners around a clear geographic area and population.

Additionally, the focus on schools meant that the school districts, including school district leaders and their staff, were deeply involved in the CCIs. Rather than create a CCI with many working groups representing different areas (e.g., community building, jobs, and education), the emphasis on education, and the school as the site of delivery, meant that the superintendents had a strong incentive to be active participants in the CCI. If the CCIs were going to be systemic and operate at a high percentage of schools, then school district leaders had to be involved. The success of the CCI at the systems level and the community school strategy at the school site level required the active participation of both school district and school leaders. Their participation lent credibility to the CCI externally with funders, other partners, and the larger community, and internally with their principals, teachers, and district office staff.

The community schools strategy and the requirement to have district leaders actively participating at the systems level differentiates these CCIs from others in the literature, especially those that have an education focus. CCI leaders demonstrated that when education is a primary focus for a CCI, focusing on the schools as the site of CCI activity helps grow and sustain the strategy. It creates strong incentives for school district and school leaders to buy into the initiative, arguably greater incentives than when the school is just one of many agencies being targeted by a CCI.

These cases demonstrate the importance of local leadership and initiation in creating a successful CCI. Local leaders created a vision and support for comprehensive solutions to complex, local community problems. Capable staff helped to further develop the vision and

transform it into a credible implementation plan. They built on existing initiatives and revised programs to realize greater efficiencies in the use of local resources, and they made schools the focus for service delivery, providing a clear purpose and target for the CCI's activities and the use of partner resources. Next, I turn to the ways the leaders and staff structured the CCI, organizationally, financially, and politically.

What are the Organizational, Financial, and Political structures that support sustainable CCIs? What, in particular, are Their Connections to the School Systems They Seek to Impact?

How the initial CCI leaders and staff chose to organize their efforts, who was involved, what leadership groups were created, and how partners interacted were important decisions that have posed challenges or helped to sustain CCIs. These organizational arrangements provided a strategy to implement and grow the CCI with multiple stakeholders and created a space to address political tensions and financial threats to the CCI. In addition, the participation of school leaders in these groups made meaningful collaboration with the schools possible. An intermediary organization that supported the CCI was another critical organizational element, as I will explain. In this section I discuss the organizational structures developed by the CCIs, followed by the financial structures and political structures. I then discuss their connections to the school system.

Organizational Structures

The organizational structures created for the CCIs in Multnomah and Tulsa are similar, though not identical. Each structure seeks to integrate services vertically and horizontally. Vertical structures promoted program consistency and coherence while horizontal structures

promoted collaboration and cooperation. These two dimensions of the structures supported the implementation and sustainability of the CCI at each site. The functions of the organizational structures that I describe contribute to what has thus far been an underdeveloped element of the academic literature on CCIs. They add to Auspos's (2010) characterization of "management structures" that are created to lead, oversee, focus on the vision, and integrate and align different partner organizations. These findings also demonstrate the ways in which multiple levels of the CCI interact with one another, rather than characterizing a single level or group as is common in the limited research available.

Organizational arrangements utilized a multi-level approach that gave leaders and institutions multiple points of contact

One similarity across the CCIs is that each had a top-level leadership group and a complementary group of mid-level staff representing key partners. In Tulsa, the Steering Committee included the school superintendents, funders, and university partners. In Multnomah, the Sponsors Group also included school superintendents and the heads of major agencies like the county health department. Each of these top-leadership groups demonstrated the organizations' support for the CCIs and set the overall vision and goals.

There were apparent differences between the operations of top-level leadership groups across the cases. Tulsa's Steering Committee met regularly and was very involved in the CCI's strategic development and implementation. In contrast, Multnomah's Sponsors Group rarely

assembled and according to one superintendent, didn't have much of an "identity."[45] Despite challenges in the ways in which this group assembled, each of its leaders demonstrated their commitment to the CCI in other ways than just meeting, including lending their name to the list of participating leaders, financial contributions (which were sometimes significant), and aligning activities through memoranda of understanding. It's possible that the scope of the CCIs (city and two school districts compared to county and six school districts) may have contributed to differences among these groups.

Another way institutional leaders demonstrated their commitment was by designating a representative to the mid-level management group. Mid-level staff is oftentimes the source of critical innovative CCI work. In Tulsa, the Management Team met almost weekly at the start of the CCI to ensure alignment and collaboration around the development of the CCI structure and operations, the definition of the community school strategy, and funding strategies. In Multnomah, the Coordinating Council is a well-organized group that meets monthly. These groups are led by partners (sometimes represented by a rotating chairperson) and staffed by the intermediary. They have clear agendas and offer a neutral space for representatives to collaborate and work out issues that support the CCI across systems and at the school site.

While some institutions were only represented on one of the leadership groups (e.g., Multnomah's Communities of Color is only on the Coordinating Council) or were represented by

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[45] Interviews did indicate that Multnomah leaders, particularly superintendents, were involved in multiple collaboratives. As a result, their availability to convene was limited. In addition, leaders saw their representatives on the Coordinating Council as having primary responsibility for demonstrating their organization's commitment to the CCI and for coordinating activities with other institutions. For example, one superintendent said that they rely on their Coordinating Council representative to come back and brief them on decisions that the district leader can then implement.

other similar institutions (e.g., Multnomah has districts rotate their representatives on the Coordinating Council), all of the major institutions were included in the CCIs' organizational infrastructure. The most essential institutions had representation on multiple levels of leadership groups, which allows for multiple points of collaboration and demonstrates a commitment by the leaders to provide the staff time to support the CCI.

Creating multiple collaborative organizational structures gave stakeholders shared ownership over the CCI. What's most important about the effectiveness of the organizational structures (e.g., CCI governing bodies and management groups) is that they were collaborative in nature. Organizations shared responsibility for maintaining the CCI and for putting the needs of the CCI before their own organization's interests. This was only possible because the CCI started from an understanding that no one organization could solve complex community problems on its own. Interview and focus group data demonstrate that multiple school and community stakeholders were included in a variety of collaborative organizational structures in order to develop shared ownership, build trust and relationships, align financial and human resources, and monitor CCI progress.

Organizational arrangements also increased stakeholder investment and ownership

CCI leaders made efforts to recruit the organizations and agencies that would best help the CCI achieve its results, primarily improved educational outcomes. For example, securing school district participation was a critical first step. In Tulsa, the districts were part of the MHSC that charged the CSC to identify a comprehensive strategy and consequently shared ownership. In Multnomah, city and county leaders started the CCI as a way to impact education and thus had

to recruit the districts to participate. Leaders invited other partners because of their ability to contribute, which, in turn, encouraged shared ownership.

The different institutions across sectors each had their own organizational missions and requirements, but they viewed participation in the CCI as a way to help their organizations meet its own goals. Institutional leaders understood the CCI's premise that discrete and disconnected programs wouldn't solve the community problems. This encouraged leaders to participate and invest their time and often their financial resources in the more comprehensive CCI approach, and the benefits of participation sustained their engagement and commitment to the CCI.

Not only were organizational leaders participants in the CCI, they shared ownership for its implementation and success. Each of the CCI's governing bodies were empowered to make decisions that would set the vision, goals, strategies, and programs each CCI would employ. In Multnomah, institutional leaders made collaborative decisions about which schools to include and how to fund them. In Tulsa, leaders made joint decisions about how the community school strategy would be implemented and were heavily involved in the CCIs overall strategic plan.

Organizational arrangements created space to build relationships and develop trust

The CCI staff and leaders developed the aforementioned organizational structures to implement the community school strategy by building relationships and trust. While local leaders were familiar with one another and their organizations, they indicated that they didn't have opportunities to work collaboratively without the CCI. The regular meetings for leaders and staff from multiple institutions provided that opportunity. The CCI's focus on a set of shared results, coupled with a focus on the school-site strategy, were other factors that helped individuals learn about each other's capacity and find ways to collaborate more intentionally.

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Intermediary organizations played an essential role in supporting collaborative groups.

The intermediary organization and staff play the essential role of ensuring that the CCI leadership is supported by managing the day-to-day operations. They have additional responsibilities including fundraising, professional development, research, and partnership development. Kania and Kramer warn, "The expectation that collaboration can occur without a supporting infrastructure is one of the most frequent reasons why it fails" (2011, p. 40). The intermediary represents the core of that infrastructure. While the organizational structures described above enable leaders from various sectors and institutions to work together, set direction for the CCI, align funds, and share accountability, those leaders are ultimately responsible to their own organizations and cannot dedicate a significant portion of their time to the CCI, even when they are full supporters. Rather, they rely on the intermediary to be the connectors that keep the CCI moving forward on a day-to-day basis.

CCI partners I interviewed recognized the vital nature of the intermediary to the sustainability of the CCI. Each of the CCIs spent a portion of their overall resources on the creation and maintenance of the CCI either through in-kind contributions from the county in the Multnomah case or through private funding and grants awarded to the Community Services Council in the Tulsa case. In both cases, a strong intermediary, or what Kania and Kramer (2011) call a backbone support organization, was an essential element for coordinating the wide array of CCI activities.

Missing community involvement

One of the three major components Kubisch (2010b) assigns to CCIs is "community capacity." The CCIs were successful in mobilizing community agencies and organizations,

however, they appeared to lack involvement from residents and families in the decision-making bodies. These groups may have been absent from the systems level collaborative groups because the community school strategy that each CCI used included family and community engagement at each of the participating school sites. There may be other reasons why these groups weren't represented. The collaborative bodies were meant to integrate institutions and CCI leaders may have felt they had other ways to get community input. One exception to this finding was the involvement of the Coalition of Communities of Color organization in Multnomah's Coordinating Council. This group had deep connections with families and residents and was able to advocate on their behalf. In Tulsa, there wasn't a group that represented families and the community in the same way.

The absence of family and community engagement at this level may have made it easier to make decisions, identify priorities, and implement policies. The inclusion of families or more community stakeholders might have made it more difficult to coalesce around a single vision for the CCI. However, it's also possible that the systems-level actors may have missed some important perspectives and issues that greater representation by families and community stakeholders would reveal. Multnomah represents a compromised approach that ensures that these stakeholders are represented, if not by themselves, then by a representative organization.

Special connection to schools

The literature on CCIs has emphasized the difficulty of working with schools and districts. Improving education is a common goal among many CCIs. However, it was often the most challenging to achieve and many CCIs fail, at least in part, because schools and districts will not participate.

I selected these cases, in part, because education was the focus of the CCI. These CCIs were attempting to work at scale, across an entire district or sets of districts, with a particular focus on schools with high concentrations of poverty. It was important that superintendents shared ownership of the CCI and help set its direction. These leaders provided access to school sites and personnel, credibility, funding, and professional expertise.

In the cases, CCIs were not happening "to" schools, but "with" them. School leaders and staff were essential components of the CCI. CCI leadership created mechanisms to keep dialogue open between school and community leaders. Partners were responsive to district needs and there was a sense of shared accountability for achievement of the CCI's goals.

In Multnomah, each of the school districts was part of the Sponsors Group. That meant that their superintendents would gather whenever that group was convened (which was infrequently according to interviews). The districts were also represented on the Coordinating Council, which met monthly to guide the CCI. Portland, the largest school district, was always on the Coordinating Council while the other smaller districts rotated.

In Tulsa, both superintendents were on the Steering Committee and their representatives served on the Management Team. In addition, Tulsa Public Schools had recently hired a staff person dedicated solely to promoting community schools, the primary CCI strategy, and Union Public Schools had delegated that responsibility to an Associate Superintendent.

This intensive participation from school leadership was significant and distinguishes these CCIs from the others reviewed in the literature that had less success with educational change. Superintendent participation may be increasing as new education-focused CCIs continue to grow and recruit superintendents as key partners. These cases indicate that when

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superintendents are seriously committed and are active partners, they can help create the educational change the CCI pursues.

One of the key differences between the two sites was that in Multnomah the superintendents had to be convinced to participate in the CCI and weren't part of the original group of leaders who created the vision and overall strategy. In Tulsa, superintendents directed intermediary staff to work toward development of a CCI and were active participants from the beginning.

Kubisch (2010c) writes that CCIs have had a hard time securing involvement from schools which have been on the periphery of classic CCIs. As mentioned previously, the centrality of the school site to the approach for comprehensive and coordinated supports likely helped involve the school leaders in ways that previous CCIs weren't able to do. Once the CCI convinced superintendents to grant access to school sites as the location for coordinated activities, the superintendents had a vested interest in their success. It's almost certain that if the superintendents had prohibited activities in the schools, the CCIs would have not been established.

It doesn't appear that there is one best way for superintendents and school leaders to participate in the CCI. Their representation, depth of involvement (e.g., number of involved staff), and financial contributions varied. What's important is that each participating district in an education-focused CCI had made significant human and financial commitments to support the CCI. They opened the schools to community partners and helped align the CCIs goals to meet their discrete educational needs.

As demographics shift and an increasing percentage of our students in public schools come from poor households, it is important for school districts to identify strategies that will bring external resources into the school site. While there are organizations and resources such as community health clinics that could provide supports to poor students and families, the place they go every day is the school, making it one of the best locations for meeting a wide array of needs. The CCIs in this study demonstrate that when superintendents and districts open up the schools to outside agencies and community organizations, they are able to create lasting partnerships that provide a wealth of opportunities the schools could not provide on their own. Superintendents, especially those in high-poverty areas, should actively look for ways to create or join CCIs, open their school doors, participate in leadership roles, and when possible, help fund the CCIs.

Diversified Funding Broadens Stakeholders

According to the literature on CCIs, one of the most significant challenges of sustaining a CCI is funding. CCIs have typically been funded by a grant making organization and the CCI ends when the grantor moves on to a new idea (Knapp, 1995). One of the reasons I selected these cases was that they have been able to sustain their operations over time. What I found was that they were started locally and were not living at the whim of a national foundation. They also developed funding strategies that diversified their funding sources, which helped build collaboration and sustain their work.

Organizational Arrangements Align Financial and Human Resources

The organizational arrangements were also created to help institutions align financial and human resources to meet CCI goals. In a typical community, institutional leaders make resource

decisions within each institution, without considering the existing commitments of other institutions. This can lead to the duplication of services, leaving some potential clients unserved, and creating confusion about service delivery and competition over resources. Through their meetings, the various leadership groups were able to ascertain how other institutions were spending their resources and were better prepared to coordinate and align efforts toward a common set of results in a specific place – the school.

One major reason that previous iterations of CCIs disbanded was that they were funded by one source, primarily foundations, and as a result, weren't able to sustain their work. The case study CCIs constantly had to address funding and sought new partners and grants. They had to piece together funding among partners and supporters that helped develop a belief in the shared mission of the CCI. The case study CCIs have financially sustained their work in two ways. First, they diversified their funding sources. Second, they made financial supporters into active partners.

Diversified Funding

The case study CCIs operated under a diversified funding strategy. Leaders only worked on funding in a meaningful way after they identified community challenges and developed comprehensive and collaborative strategies. In contrast to the CCIs I reviewed in the literature, the impetus for local leaders to develop CCIs was external funding that was pushing a particular strategy or model. The CCIs I studied diversified funding, which nurtured stakeholder investment and avoided potential financial problems if a particular funding stream changed. For example, in Multnomah one member of the Coordinating Council indicated that when grants for particular school sites ran out, the Coordinating Council worked together to identify which

institutions could increase their funding to ensure the continued financial support for those schools. This example demonstrates how CCI leaders identified funding as a collective responsibility.

Funders as Partners

CCI funders were actively involved partners that typically sat on the governing bodies of each CCI. They helped develop the strategy, oversaw its implementation, and made key decisions that influenced all facets of the CCI. The funders had shared ownership of the CCI. The terminology that the Multnomah CCI uses for their collaborative leadership group of institutional executives, the Sponsors Group, conveys that message. Each of the participating members of that body is also required to be financial sponsors to the extent that each can contribute funds. In Tulsa, where the intermediary solicited initial funding from philanthropic and corporate grants, the school districts increased their funding contributions while also having a seat at the decision-making table.

Not all funders operated the same across CCIs. Some funders contributed financially but weren't intimately involved in the regular planning and implementation of the CCI. Other funders provided irregular financial support. However, all of these funders were treated by CCI leaders and staff as partners and were regularly updated about activities (e.g., with Tulsa's funders coffee and visits to school sites) in order to build sustained and diversified financing.

In Multnomah, CCI leaders were able to expand their base of supporters beyond the heads of well-known key community institutions. SUN provided services to a wide array of stakeholders in the community including local non-profits and family members. When county commissioners threatened reduced funding for the CCI, the community base that had been

receiving SUN services marched on the county office and successfully demanded full restoration of funds. This example demonstrates that consumers of the CCIs services, along with the leadership of the CCIs, became advocates for the CCI, particularly in regard to financial matters.

There are three other notable points about the CCIs' financial arrangements. First, the local nature of the funds helped sustain the work. Second, the financial support of the school districts was an important indicator of their active participation in the CCI. Finally, in-kind resources that don't show up in budget spreadsheets were also significant parts of the CCIs' financial structure.

Whereas in much of the literature on CCIs the funding comes from an external source (e.g., Ford Foundation's Neighborhood and Family Initiative), case study site funders were typically local (the CCIs received national grants, but this was often project-based and did not support the core of the work).[46] Having local funders who are taking part in the work on a regular basis (daily, monthly) and who also have responsibility for decision-making apparently leads to developing shared ownership and sustainability. CCI leaders work hard to maintain that support.

Since this study focuses on the problem of creating effective and comprehensive partnerships with schools and school systems, the importance of contributions, both financial and in-kind, from the school districts cannot be overstated. Budgets are oftentimes extremely tight in school districts and the pressure to demonstrate results in an era of high-stakes accountability are

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[46] Some previous initiatives had local funders to be sure, in fact, the Ford Foundation's effort made the local community foundations the fiscal agents, but that's still different from having a local funder (Chaskin, Joseph, & Chipenda-Dansokho 1997).

significant. School district leaders thought highly enough of the CCI partnership strategy that they redirected public funds to the CCI. Their ensuing financial support for such an approach is notable. One Tulsa example highlights the significance of the districts' financial choices that accompanied their participation. Explaining their increased financial contributions and associated trade-offs, one Tulsa superintendent said: "My struggle is really to only make sure that principals who are going to have to lose some positions with Title I were satisfied that this [funding community schools] is a better way to do it."

Finally, in-kind support for the CCI at multiple levels helped with the funding of CCI activities. Much of the funding went to school site coordinators and particular programs and services. However, partners at the school and systems level also gave of their time and brought their own funding sources to support school-based activities. In Multnomah, the county redirected existing health and other social services to the school site. In both cases, partners that were funded to support children found the CCI's school-based approach as a convenient way to deliver on their funded activities. Tulsa's summer program is one example where partners utilized their own funding to support CCI activities.

CCI leadership is responsible for sustaining funds. The level of funding may change from year to year which can influence how many community schools can be funded and what activities and services are offered. However, the CCI's collaborative nature, and its aforementioned organizational structures, helps ensure its sustainability through fund diversification which in turn leads to engaged and active participants and leaders. I now turn to the political arrangements of the CCIs.

Political Actions Build Stakeholder Support

As I described in the literature review, the political nature of CCIs is best exemplified by the role of relationships among internal and external parties. Kubisch (2010c) calls these relationships the CCI's engagement functions. We can learn three things about the ways in which politics and relationships can support the sustainability of CCIs from these cases: political support, especially at the outset, can help give the CCI credibility and authority; broadening leadership is a smart political decision that can also promote sustainability; and supportive policies can sustain and insulate the CCI from future political challenges. These three political considerations have a sequential character that I describe next.

The CCIs started when politicians, or agency staff working for elected leaders, looked to identify strategies that would address a comprehensive set of community problems in collaboration with multiple institutions. Their vision was to mobilize the entire community in developing strategies and supports to achieve a variety of goals. Government resources (e.g., city and county funds, schools, etc.) would be only one part of the overall CCI. It's inappropriate to assume that all sustainable CCIs will start with political leaders describing a powerful vision for collaboration, however that may be the case in some communities. In other places, community leaders may take the initial role in developing that vision. In these two cases, however, it's notable that politicians who were tasked with identifying community issues and their solutions played important roles in the initial stages of development for the CCI and continued their participation (or had representatives from their agencies) throughout its implementation.

A common political feature of both CCIs was their intentional decision to broaden the leadership responsible for the CCI. While they both started with a charge from political leaders

to craft a coherent and comprehensive strategy, each CCI invited additional leaders to participate in its development and growth. This decision created shared ownership among a diverse group of leaders and helped sustain the leadership and implementation of the CCIs. Shared leadership meant that the CCI didn't belong to any one agency or political leader. Consequently, when that leader left his or her position, the CCI wouldn't be seen as their "pet project" and be disbanded under new leadership, as is so often the case when new leaders arise and want to create a new self-promoting initiative. The Multnomah case illustrates this point. The CCI has continued through a number of elected county commissioners and several mayors. Each time the political leadership changes, the institutional commitment to the CCI remains.

The political constituency is never taken for granted. CCI leadership and staff make efforts to "educate" new leaders about why they should support the CCI. The CCIs were able to maintain this political support by making relationship building a key part of their work. Multnomah's leaders talked about how they visited politicians, superintendents, and other stakeholders regularly to give them updates about the progress of the CCI. Tulsa's CCI staff would take funders to visit schools, report progress to the MHSC (political leaders), and visit new staff in school district offices. CCI leaders and staff understood that stewardship for these relationships required constant attention and that when new stakeholders were elected, appointed, or hired, those in charge of the CCI had a responsibility to meet with those people and provide them with the necessary background about their CCI and the ways in which their respective agencies and predecessors were involved.

Finally, each of the CCIs developed supportive polices to sustain and insulate their efforts. Once the leaders and staff had built the necessary relationships, they used those

relationships to create official policies that would institutionalize partners' commitment to the approach. These policies took the form of MOUs with partners, county and school board policies, and internal CCI policies that provided guidelines for how the CCI would operate.

While previous sections describe some of the more technical ways in which CCIs operate (e.g., their organizational and financial compositions), it's apparent that sustaining CCIs is a political process that depends on the relationships of those involved. My observations of the education reform field indicates that new CCIs are developing data systems, toolkits, and funding strategies that try to develop technical solutions to a complicated set of problems. These strategies are necessary but insufficient. These cases demonstrate that CCI enterprises are inherently political by nature. Leadership, particularly collaborative leadership, is a political element of the CCIs to which I turn next.

What are the Leadership Functions Structures Found within CCIs? How are Leadership Functions Distributed across Schools and Agencies within Communities?

Systems-level leadership is often overlooked in the CCI literature. Researchers have focused on the CCI's community building and alignment functions, which include elements of leadership, but don't explicitly address the role of leadership in guiding the initiatives. The CCIs of the 1990s, and even some today, were typically created by external funding sources that piloted work in a variety of cities and utilized local leadership to develop plans and implement the initiative. In these examples, leadership was important, but it wasn't necessarily collaborative. For the two cases that I studied, collaborative leadership appeared to be essential to sustaining each of the CCIs.

Leadership is Collaborative

Each of the cases started when local leaders collaborated on complex community problems, with a focus on education, in a more comprehensive way than they had originally been done. They developed the structures to unite systems under one shared cross-sector meta-system, the CCI. No one organization led the entire CCI. Rather, leadership was necessarily collaborative to enable a comprehensive approach. Leaders shared responsibility for facilitating meetings, for working with other leaders, for holding one another accountable, and for contributing their own organizations' assets.

I characterize the leadership structures in the cases as collaborative because there is no one institution or leader that is responsible for the CCI alone. Key partner institutions are represented on the collaborative leadership groups that I described as the organizational structure and share responsibility for decision making. There are certainly cases where one or a small number of institutions takes nearly absolute responsibility for leading the CCI. However, these CCIs are outside of the data I collected. What the cases I studied demonstrate is that sustained CCIs seem to require leaders who have collaborative skills, who share ownership, and who share responsibility for running the CCI.

Another reason why collaborative leadership, rather than leadership from any one individual or organization, is important is turnover. Turnover is a significant concern in CCIs, especially for staff (Horsford & Sampson, 2014; Messinger, 2004; Sridharan, Go, Zinzow, Gray, & Gutierrez Barrett, 2007). District leaders I interviewed acknowledged this concern and were implementing policies and creating a culture within the district that supported community schools and participation in the CCI so that their institutional involvement would continue when

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they left the district. When too much of the CCI's success rests on one leader or organization, the CCI is severely threatened when that individual leaves or that organization discontinues their involvement. Rarely discussed, collaborative leadership, with significant staff support from an intermediary coordinating agency, may offer a better and more sustainable approach for CCIs than a structure dominated by one or only a few organizations.

Collaborative Leadership Functions

In Chapter Two I identified some key functions from the collaborative literature, which I discuss next (Auspos, 2010; Melaville et al., 2011; Rubin, 2009a; The Bridgespan Group, n.d.). In the following section, I use this literature to describe some of the leadership functions that I observed or identified across the two sites. Although the secondary nature of these data does not permit a full examination of the role of leadership in creating and sustaining CCIs, they do suggest a number of important functions that leaders fulfill that are consistent with the collaborative literature.

Creating and maintaining a shared vision around common goals

According to Kubisch (2010c), working toward a set of core goals is a function of collaborative leaders. In addition, Rubin (2009b) argues that "vision-centered leadership" is a dimension of collaborative leadership. Taken together, collaborative leaders create a shared vision around a core set of commonly agreed upon goals.

CCIs are comprehensive strategies that include multiple stakeholders in tackling the most pressing issues in a particular place. Implementing this approach requires leaders who create a shared vision around a common set of goals. These leaders may come from particular

organizations, districts, or the community. Each individual has his or her own vision and mission, whether it's academic success, safer neighborhoods, or some other community change opportunity. The CCIs reviewed above show how leaders come together and take those disparate visions and create a unified vision for community change. In these cases, the penultimate vision was a network of partnerships to improve student outcomes across a range of results (i.e., academic, health, and developmental). Leaders selected community schools as the strategy to operationalize that vision. They mapped out the community resources and broadened their leadership to include the key individuals who would support that vision, especially superintendents.

From the beginning, SUN's leaders broadened leadership for the CCI to create a common or shared vision. They assembled different agencies and levels of government to develop a shared set of goals and strategies under a common vision. As one leader explained, "there was that strong initial visionary leadership to identify this model and say this is what we need to do, and this would make a difference." This vision became SUN Community Schools and the SUN Service System.

The leaders maintained that collaboration by constantly involving a broad group of leaders in updating the goals and vision of the CCI. One example was the creation of Multnomah's Coordinating Council that would broaden leadership and responsibility for the CCI. In the Task Force recommendations the group wrote:

The Task Force further envisions a change in "ownership" of the system. Whereas Multnomah County has been in the lead for the SUN Service System, the Task Force envisions more shared responsibility for the system. The Task Force recognizes that this

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shift will take extraordinary leadership from the County and the proposed Coordinating

Council to navigate the transition. (Multnomah County, n.d.-c, p. 1)

One SUN supervisor from a lead agency noted that an advantage of SUN's strategy is developing a unified vision that all the supervisors and agencies are working toward. These partners would solidify their commitment by signing memoranda of understanding agreeing to work on particular areas identified as supporting the CCI's shared vision.

Tulsa's CCI started when community leaders identified goals they wanted to work toward in order to improve outcomes for children and families. These goals were modified and clarified as more groups were brought together. Leaders began identifying a shared vision and common goals through the Step Up Tulsa process, which surveyed community members for their input. MHSC staff also researched best practices around the country and identified community schools as an approach and a vision that could unite myriad organizations, districts, and agencies in pursuit of the developed common goals. A number of organizations began seeing community schools as the vision to help the community achieve its goals and the CSC began to operationalize that vision.

After Step Up Tulsa's finished convening meetings and compiling community surveys, a more formalized process and organizational structure was required to continue refinement, operationalization, and buy-in for the goals. The organizational arrangements that were described earlier, the Steering Committee, Management Team, Partners Group, and others, provided the infrastructure to enable more leaders to provide their input and interests into the developing vision. One part of the vision was that no one entity could solve the community's problems. Rather, a community vision required the entire community to participate and contribute.

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While it's clear from interviews and observations of meetings that CSC staff drive the CCI and do most of the heavy lifting, school and community leaders are the ones making key decisions about the vision, direction, and goals of the CCI. One ongoing example of sharing responsibility for the CCI vision was the strategic planning process that was taking place during and around the time of data collection.[47] TACSI staff led its leadership in a strategic planning process during meetings and retreats. They developed shared goals that would span a number of years with expectations about what was going to be achieved and when. The strategic planning process got everyone on the same page as they moved forward developing a shared vision, common goals, and a consistent definition of what it meant to be a TACSI community school.

One CSC staff member said that the strategic plan was the way to get all the stakeholders' talking about what the components are for a TACSI community school (their "essential elements"). The discussions about model definition were a negotiation so that individuals could ensure that their interests were included in the vision, but also represented broader thinking about the community school strategy so that all perspectives and needs could be included. For example, one TACSI staff member recounted how a superintendent wanted community schools to focus on their specific needs, wrap around services. The staff explained that a fully developed community school would include those services and more. Thus, the community school vision could address the needs of multiple stakeholders while also capturing a broader vision that was inclusive of all partners.

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[47] This strategic planning process had also taken place at the beginning of the CCI as well and was a common practice among the staff and leaders.

One finding these cases add to the literature is that it was the collaborative responsibility of CCI leaders, especially the intermediary, to maintain commitment to the shared vision. As the example from Tulsa demonstrates below, the intermediary worked with partners to maintain the vision of community schools and their agreements about how the strategy should be implemented.

Once leaders created the vision for community schools and the CCI structures to support them, the CSC staff saw it as their responsibility to keep the partners aligned around that shared vision. This meant ensuring that community schools were implemented with fidelity and that the processes for leadership and partner meetings happened regularly. One staff member explained that when a superintendent wanted to put one of their administrators in charge of community schools, the staff conveyed that their support for that plan would require that the administrator "was under the fidelity to TACSI," specifically the shared vision of the community school strategy that had been developed. They went on to explain that it was important for the viability and sustainability of the CCI that the districts, which were interested in growing their own community schools, created community schools that were aligned with the TACSI model. This would provide coherence to the shared vision and goals of the CCI and avoid a cacophony of confusing models that could lead to a disruption in the CCI and divergent visions.

What's unique about the CCI approach, compared to other education reform strategies, is that the partners are working on developing goals and a vision that are specific to their community. The Partners Group is a vehicle for shared responsibility for the CCI. Each of the partner organizations is responsible for their own individual missions. By participating in the CCI, they are also committed to the mission and results set by the CCI. As partners, they develop

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a sense of shared responsibility, knowing that they couldn't meet their goals individually. One subject explained that Tulsa organizations, "are good networkers and we historically have been. We have been really good collaborators as we come under a grant." What's different about this approach is that instead of responding to external goals and visions that are described in a grant, the CCI is about Tulsa's needs. The TACSI staff member said this occurs through the "true convergence" of the community school strategy they had built.

Creating a vision that was truly collaborative required building relationships with multiple diverse stakeholders utilizing clear lines of communication. I turn to these functions next.

Building relationships and communication

Relationship building and communication were essential collaborative leadership functions. The CCI's organizational structures provided leaders with a vehicle for building and strengthening relationships both internally (e.g., with partners) and externally (e.g., with policymakers). Leaders from different sectors, who didn't see each other regularly, had the opportunity to work together and to understand the other organization's purposes. They could then have better informed discussions about which institution is best situated to address a given CCI need. This understanding can help reduce competition, and in the best case scenario, maximize impact.

Leaders from all participating sectors took on the role of representing the CCI and communicated with external entities on its behalf. Leaders of participating organizations were keenly aware that in a comprehensive CCI, all leaders shared responsibility for representing the collective.

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One of the primary leadership functions of Multnomah's Coordinating Council, Sponsors Group, and the intermediary is to serve as champions and public representatives for the CCI with internal partners and external parties. Leaders are vocal about their support for the CCI and bring the support and credibility of their own organizations and work to convince others about its value. Leaders and intermediary staff serve as "explainers" of the CCI: they build relationships and establish multiple ways to constantly communicate about their work with existing supporters and potential supporters.

The CCI began to understand the importance of external relationships when Coordinating Council members realized there were significant leadership changes that could threaten investment from uninformed new leaders. One member of the Coordinating Council described the "outreach" council members have done:

> …we've done this set of outreach visits where we send at least two members of the Coordinating Council to go meet – we've met with all the County commissioners, all the City commissioners, the mayor, the chair, all the superintendents of schools, powerful business leaders in the community, church leaders in the community…and we're clear in that we talk about the evaluation results, we talk about what SUN is, we talk about how SUN is connected to whatever it is these people care about.

Another Coordinating Council leader explained how outreach impacts perceptions of the CCI. While some think about the CCI as just an afterschool program, because of the outreach efforts that SUN leaders have employed, organizations and others have changed their view and see community schools as a "universal service-delivery backbone."

Coordinating Council members described the impact of the communication they've had with politicians as well. Politicians are responsible for approving budgets that include the CCI and are thus critical supports. According to one council member:

> We have become a force in the community in terms of convincing politicians. [We have become] advocates for competing needs in our community that this is something that is important for us. In my own case, you've got people who care about elderly, they care about disabled, recreation, and they care about dogs. They care about whatever…then when you look at what SUN is doing and when the whole community comes and talks to either the community members or budget advisory committee or the Coordinating Council, the force of this Council is so great and huge that it's very compelling to them.

SUN has been able to mobilize and advocate for their strategy.

Multnomah also invested a lot of energy in building relationships with internal partners, especially the school districts. Communicating with and strengthening relationships with school personnel is important in education-focused CCIs. These stakeholders are the gatekeepers to the most important resource in each CCI: the school site. CCI leaders, and the intermediary staff in particular, made it their responsibility to "educate" new school personnel about the vision, purpose, and activities of the CCI approach. They would also revisit these individuals to constantly clarify their vision (specifically the community school approach) and adjust practices. This type of outreach is important to sustaining the CCI as personnel across organizations change, especially in school districts.

One school leader talked about the "education" they received from SUN leaders when they first arrived in the school district about what SUN was and how the district could continue

to be involved. Communicating with district leaders, including school boards, is an annual activity meant to create and sustain support for SUN Community Schools. One of the Coordinating Council leaders described the process this way:

> You know, we do this round every year to visit all the school superintendents, even though they have representatives at the Council, and I usually go and meet with them annually…. [Intermediary staff] and whoever from each of the districts does a presentation every year to the school board of every one of our school districts.

Council members shared responsibility for visiting elected officials and critical organizational leaders.

The constant need for communication with school leaders may indicate that their involvement and support for the initiative isn't as deep as expected of leaders who are supposed to serve on the collaborative leadership groups. At least one superintendent indicated that they sent a staff member to represent them at leadership group meetings. Even though the districts sit on the Sponsors Group, it seems that their direct involvement is limited and may vary by district.

In contrast with Multnomah, Tulsa's CCI leaders focused their responsibilities for relationship building and communications to other leaders and partners in the CCI. I rarely heard subjects talk about meetings with external parties (e.g., politicians or new partners), though those conversations may have happened and weren't captured in my data. Another explanation may be that so many organizations and entities were already associated with the CCI. In addition, Multnomah may have had to work harder at external communications and relationships because they were a larger initiative that spans an entire county and six school districts.

Internally, the CCI constantly held conversations about creating a shared understanding of the CCI, specifically the TACSI community school model. Subjects, especially TACSI staff, made it clear that meetings were a strategy for building and strengthening relationships with new and existing partners and that these meetings occurred frequently as part of their job.

The task of building relationships and communication seems to rest most heavily with the TACSI staff. One TACSI staff member described building relationships as one of their most important responsibilities. This role takes a lot of time and effort and an acceptance that you may have to work with multiple people in a single organization (like a school district) and revisit individuals and conversations to clarify and redevelop shared understanding. As one TACSI staff said:

> But we really are cognizant of the fact that there with some people, we may have to go back and rebuild. Everyone has to know that that's okay, it doesn't mean we are failing, it doesn't mean we are weak, it just means…it's more intentful so that you keep the piece up here so that we are all reaching towards this.

The intermediary staff identified communications and developing a shared understanding as key challenges. For example, a TACSI staff explained:

> But as far as my biggest challenge, has been truly getting everyone—it's like herding cats…But truly getting everyone to understand what it is they are investing in and what it is we are trying to truly accomplish. That we are not a program.

TACSI staff indicated that they constantly have to explain to existing CCI partners and leaders that community schools are a broad and inclusive strategy and not a single program.

While the responsibilities for building relationships and communication rests primarily with the intermediary staff, and while those roles focus on existing CCI partners, there were indications that partners are likely to be representatives for the CCI and build relationships necessary for support. For example, the superintendents worked with their school boards to get funding and other support for their community schools. In one case the TPS administration also used their relationship with the Tulsa Public Schools Foundation to communicate the purpose of the CCI and make community schools a funding priority for the foundation. During the Steering Committee meeting that I observed, TACSI staff presented a new video about the CCI that featured superintendents who were expressing their support for the CCI, a very public way of communicating about the CCI.

Prioritizing community problems and organizing partners to solve them

Leaders created each of the CCIs to identify and prioritize community problems and to develop a comprehensive partnership approach to address them. The first priority that each of the CCIs established was on improving education. School and community leaders knew, however, that schools alone could not make the necessary changes in academic outcomes they desired. They consequently selected other areas that would provide a set of supports for students including physical health, mental health, early childhood education, family engagement, and more. Leaders prioritized those areas that they knew had to be addressed in order to improve learning. These became areas of each CCI's theory or action. Leaders then recruited partners at the system and school levels with the resources and expertise to create opportunities for students to thrive, primarily through repurposing programs and services that partners already provided.

The main priority for the Multnomah CCI was to organize resources more efficiently at the systems level to improve a range of outcomes at school sites and in their communities. SUN was created for exactly that purpose. The CCI established a set of "core services" that each community school would have to address, the minimum required to be a SUN school. One subject indicated that these core services reflect the priorities of the Coordinating Council and especially the districts, which, according to the respondents, were adamant that SUN was initially focused on school-age children, compared to, for example, early childhood youth.[48]

While the CCI determined some core outcomes and areas of work (e.g., afterschool support), CCI leaders left the identification of specific community and school problems to local school sites. That is to say that the specific activities and partners that school sites select would depend on their local priorities.

TACSI started because leaders had identified a set of community problems and were looking for a comprehensive strategy to address them. They wanted to unite organizations, school districts, and agencies in addressing these problems. The highest priority for the group was education. However, within that focus there were many other related community problems that the community school strategy was meant to address. For example, health care was a huge priority, which led to the placement of numerous health clinics inside of community schools. Enrichment opportunities for youth development were also a high priority. The districts had to make certain that improved academic outcomes were a priority because that was their mission.[49]

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[48] The respondent noted that as the districts saw the connection to early childhood development and K-12 success, they grew more interested in including the early years as part of SUN's effort.

Partner organizations wanted their goals to be priorities whether they be camping opportunities for kids or enrichment through scouting programs. Similar to Multnomah, each school also had its own set of priorities that were unique to their context. The role of the collaborative leadership groups, the Steering Committee and Management Team, was to make sense of these sometimes competing priorities.

The first way in which leaders prioritized community problems was defining what broad areas they wanted community schools to work on. In the TASCI case study, these areas would be responsive to the most pressing community problems and included early childhood development, a core instructional program, motivating and engaging students, addressing the holistic needs of children, family and school partnerships, and creating a safe school environment.

The intermediary ensures community priorities are being met through school-based timesheet that are reported with the CCI leadership teams. This information helps them review their priorities and refocus activities when needed. At the school site, site-based leadership teams set their own priorities based on local needs that are within the CCI's framework.

While leaders did collaborate on identifying common goals and strategies (namely community schools), each institutional partner maintained their own set of priorities. The CCI's community school strategy is designed to be flexible, to be able to address the priorities that the leaders set as well as the needs of local schools. A description from one Tulsa intermediary staff illustrates that there is a clear tension with the districts in who sets the priorities. The staff says,

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[49] Participants indicated that they collected and shared academic data (typically year-end reports) for each school with leaders and funders.

"We only are doing what you are telling us you want done. This is not something we dreamt of. We get your marching orders from our site teams, the school."

Even when community priorities are set at the systems level, multiple funding streams can introduce competing sets of priorities at the school level. For example, in some of the schools the coordinators are funded by TACSI with non-district funds. They are able to have more flexibility in working on a set of priorities that are established at the systems and school levels by the community. However, subjects expressed concern that as the districts began to fund coordinators the priorities would be narrowed to the academic priorities of the school and district.

In both cases, CCI leadership monitored and evaluated the progress toward solving these community problems. Leadership addressed the conflict between what the system and site wanted to do, and what partners wanted to do, by creating a core priority set of results and associated activities. They also allowed for flexibility at the school site to address local site needs, as long as system-level priorities were addressed. CCI leaders should use data and other information from the school sites to make ongoing decisions about problems to be addressed and to identify the most appropriate solutions and partners. They should also allow flexibility to enable school sites to impact the challenges that are specific to their school and community.

Integrating and aligning multiple and varied organizations

Chrislip and Larson (1994) argue that building broad-based involvement is another collaborative leadership function. Relatedly, Kubisch says that leaders of CCIs have the ability to "interact across technical and sectoral boundaries" (Kubisch, 2010b, p. 32). Each partner entity comes to the CCI with its own mission, interests, goals, and programmatic approaches. While

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they have created a shared vision and identified common goals to work toward, leaders still need strategies to integrate and align their efforts, while acknowledging their own interests and capacities. The collaborative leader's job is to help the group see ways in which their efforts are complementary and to integrate and align the various strategies under a coherent approach with specific goals.

Leaders created the SUN Service System and SUN Community Schools to specifically align and integrate the many services provided by government and nonprofits around the county. They chose to use the school as the site of service delivery. They worked closely with district leaders to align their supports (e.g., wrap around services, health, youth development, after school programming) with the core mission of the schools. SUN leaders believed that leaders had to work together across "big bureaucracies" in order to align the many activities happening around the county.

As demonstrated in the previous section, the Sponsors Group and Coordinating Council provided the space for leaders and staff to align their strategies. This is one way that SUN supports cross-boundary leaders. In addition, the SUN staff members meet regularly with partner leaders to ensure that priorities are integrated and aligned. SUN grantees that operate the SUN Community Schools create MOUs that ensure that the strategies being implemented at the school sites are integrated and aligned with the goals of the CCI as well as the resources available from partner organizations and agencies (SUN staff create templates for the grantees to use).

Scale may have an impact on the ability of institutions to integrate and align efforts. Institutions may be more likely to work together if they are part of a bigger system that includes more institutions and works with more schools. One respondent indicated that for better system

integration, a goal of the CCI, leaders realized that it's easier for "big bureaucracies" to talk with one another when more of the schools are part of the SUN strategy. That's why leaders had been working on a plan to make every school a SUN school. The subject suggests that the SUN CCI and schools give big bureaucracies a reason to align and integrate their work:

> It's easier for big bureaucracies to really make deep connections to other systems when you have that consistency. They run on consistency. So we, in that process, really identified the way to create that kind of integration across multiple systems would really be for every school to be a SUN school.

If big bureaucracies work in multiple schools and are only implementing good alignment and integration practices in some of the schools (the SUN schools), then this leads to the lack of the ability to function in a systemic way and inefficiencies.

In Tulsa, leaders directed their organizations to align summer activities so that more learning and enrichment opportunities for students could occur. Partner organizations stepped up to share resources offering whatever they could whether it was a camp, staff, funding, programming, or something else. The partners didn't compete but rather aligned their various summer efforts under the CCI.

The centrality on the school site as the place to deliver opportunities and supports may have encouraged leaders to integrate and align their efforts. For example, partners that wanted to work with school-age children may be more willing to align their activities to the schools' needs. This may be different from many of the CCIs that don't have schools as the focus of their efforts. As more CCIs emphasize a particular "place-based" approach (i.e., neighborhood or school), the

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focus on a clearly defined place, specifically the school, is likely to lead to better integration and alignment.

Challenges in integrating and aligning the efforts of varied organizations remain. Each of the partners still has their own agendas, their own model components. For example, while the Steering Committee and Management Teams may make some decisions together as a shared leadership group, individual organizations (especially the districts) seem to be very comfortable with doing things completely on their own (e.g., making decisions about funding, scale, etc.).

Thinking about scale

The literature about scaling CCIs suggests that leaders need to be cautious about their efforts to expand and that few have succeeded in substantially scaling up efforts (Turner et al., 2014). However, as CCIs begin developing strategies that focus on an entire city, county, or region (i.e., cradle-to-career, Campaign for Grade Level Reading, Strive Together, or community school initiatives), their leaders will need to think carefully about their role in scaling the approach. The previous section suggested that a scaled-up CCI may also have greater success at integrating and aligning partner institutions.

CCI leaders make decisions about the scale of the initiative as well as whether and how it should scale up. The leaders of the two case study CCIs had a much broader scale in mind from the start. Since they were focusing on education, and since they wanted to partner closely with the school districts and include them in their collaborative leadership, they were thinking at the district, city, and county levels.

In Tulsa, there were two districts in the city, Tulsa Public Schools and Union Public Schools. Leaders of both districts served on the MHSC that initially charged the CSC to create a city-wide strategy for improving education and other outcomes. In Multnomah, the City of Portland had an existing afterschool program and the county, which included six school districts, was looking for ways to maximize the impact of their services at the school site. Consequently, they selected the county and its six school districts as the geographic boundaries for the CCI.

Each CCI started with a small number of pilot schools, while they developed the infrastructure to support the CCI and school sites. Leaders then set the conditions for scaling up. In Multnomah, leaders decided to scale their efforts to every school in the county, but with an equity focus that required them to select those schools with the greatest needs first (as funds became available).

Tulsa's leadership had developed a scale-up strategy where schools had to demonstrate their commitment to the partnership approach before receiving funds to hire a coordinator. Their rationale was that you have to build capacity and commitment in order to build for sustainability and success. This is consistent with Auspos's findings. Auspos says:

> Going more slowly also allows organizations and initiatives to build trust and support as they go along. Developing a reputation for success helps to build a constituency for the work, increase engagement and interest from other stake-holders, and create a pool of partners for each new project or phase of the work. And expanding gradually allows managers to apply newly learned lessons to the next phase of work. (2010, p. 62)

However, at least one superintendent wanted every school to have the opportunity to quickly become a community school, which led to some tensions with others in the CCI.

Working with districts as close partners may raise tensions around scale. Leaders engage in a negotiated process when scaling up their CCIs and take many factors into account such as their own organization's interest (e.g., districts wanting more sites to improve educational outcomes at a fast pace), shared principles (e.g., equity in Multnomah), and capacity. The organizational structures may provide leaders with a vehicle to address tensions and make decisions that best serve the entire CCI.

Creating policy

CCI leaders created internal policies that guided operations. Policies included definitions of the community school model, the responsibilities and roles for partner organizations, and the ways in which the collaborative governing bodies would operate. As one Multnomah council member described, "The Coordinating Council was seen as making policy and choices around running the SUN system….[it was set up to] oversee the development of community schools."

Partners also created their own policies for their respective institutions that would support the CCI. For example, some school districts and their school boards created community schools policies that clarified the district's role and commitment to the CCI.

Policies sustain the CCI by institutionalizing an organization's commitment. When a school district superintendent leaves, a school board policy supporting the CCI, and describing how the district is going to contribute to its success, can help maintain the district's efforts beyond a given individual. For example, CCI leaders in the Tulsa created MOUs approved by the school board to demonstrate the district's commitment to the CCI and added community schools to another district's strategic plan that was board approved. One of the most significant policies was the authority to fund the CCI's community schools.

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Funding

As described in the earlier sections on financial arrangements, leaders and their respective organizations use diversified funding to support the CCI. The leaders see funding as a shared responsibility. The two cases differ regarding who was responsible for the initial funding. In Multnomah, the county was the primary funder, especially at the start of the CCI. However, they eventually required each of the participating and essential "sponsor" organizations, such as the school district, city, and county, to contribute to the CCI. In Tulsa, intermediary leaders were the ones with primary responsibility for securing grants. During my site visit, the districts had recently committed to financially supporting the CCI.

Both CCI leadership groups thought about funding from a sustainability perspective. They attempted to build diversified funding models and scaled up their strategy slowly, going to those schools with the greatest need and likelihood of success. They leveraged the resources of other partner organizations.

The two cases differ by which of the key institutional partners, those participating in the highest level of leadership, were responsible for funding. In Tulsa, funding was only a responsibility for the districts and the intermediary. In Multnomah, each of the Sponsors Group members were required to contribute some funding for the CCI and in turn were the ones with ultimate decision-making authority. In Tulsa, other key organizations (e.g., the University of Tulsa and key partners) were included in the decision-making body but weren't necessarily all funders of community schools. It's important to note that this doesn't mean that other partners didn't fund programs at community school sites or provide in-kind resources like personnel, time, and space. As one intermediary leader in Tulsa put it, everyone has something they can

contribute whether it is "time, talent, or money." Leaders counted not only on the financial but also the in-kind resources that partners would contribute.

CCI leaders should consider funding to be a shared responsibility. When leaders contribute funds from their own institution, they demonstrate their belief in and commitment to the CCI. They are invested in its success. Further, when more leaders across institutions fund the CCI, those decisions help sustain the CCI when other funding streams diminish.

Implementing

Ultimately, leadership is responsible for successful implementation of the strategy and programs (Kubisch, 2010c). The CCI leadership designated the intermediary in each site as the primary organization responsible for implementing the community school strategy. This strategy enabled the CCI leaders to maintain a higher level of decision-making while the intermediary could handle implementation. One exception was in Tulsa, which was experiencing a transition. The school districts were considering a more active role in implementing the strategy, especially Tulsa Public Schools (TPS). Still, the Tulsa intermediary, the TACSI Resource Center, was the primary institution with responsibility for implementation.

The intermediary staff was charged with monitoring and supporting implementation. They provided the professional development and support for school site coordinators. In Multnomah, the intermediary shared some implementation responsibility with lead agencies that monitored implementation of their collection of community schools. The intermediaries were also responsible for ensuring fidelity of implementation toward the specified community school model that the CCI leadership had created.

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Tulsa's leaders thought that fidelity to the school and systems models that TACSI had researched and adapted to their community was critical. It's clear from the interviews that Tulsa spent a lot of time researching what the field considered to be effective practice for the community model. Then intermediary staff built a shared vision of what they wanted community schools to look like at the school site. One Steering Committee member described how the group's work on a community school model was communicated with other institutions and schools. The member recounted a conversation with a principal who claimed to be a community school and therefore didn't think they needed to be involved in the TACSI CCI. The Steering Committee member's response was, "Well no, you're not. You're not a community school in the sense that we're talking about."

CCI leaders commissioned research to determine what high-implementing community schools looked like. They followed this study with an impact evaluation that demonstrated that high implementing community schools had a positive impact on student achievement outcomes (Adams, 2010). Initiative leaders, especially intermediary staff, made quality of implementation a key part of their job. They were creating the "TACSI community school" and wanted to ensure that it was implemented with fidelity in order to strengthen existing community schools, scale up, and demonstrate impact.

Despite this intentionality, what qualified as a "TACSI community school" was under some debate at the time of my site visits. The districts were funding new community schools and hiring or assigning district administrators to oversee the community schools they funded. The district and intermediary were having conversations about what fidelity to the model under these new arrangements would look like. Ultimately, those discussions were possible because of the

relationships and organizational arrangements at the systems level (e.g., having an established

Steering Committee to address some of these issues). Leaders were able to work through issues

of definition and agree that adherence to the commonly developed TACSI model was important.

District staff I spoke with all said that it was important to them to stay as close to the TACSI

model as possible. One district administrator who also serves on the Steering Committee

represented this view saying that, "fidelity to the TACSI model needs to stay."

While the intermediary was responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the

initiative, CCI leaders remained responsible for the general oversight of implementation.

Intermediary staff would report to the leaders about the CCI's progress on a regular basis and

leaders had the opportunity to pose questions about implementation practices. CCIs should create

implementation oversight roles for their leaders in order to monitor fidelity of the approach,

progress, and make course corrections.

Collecting and reviewing data to evaluate and assess progress of the initiative

Using data to inform decision-making is a key leadership function for CCIs according to

Kubisch (2010c). Similar to the implementation function, the intermediary was responsible for

collecting data and evaluating the CCI's community school strategy while the leadership had

oversight responsibilities.

From its inception, both CCIs prioritized data and research for identifying best practices,

continuous improvement, and evaluation. Both CCIs began when CSC staff researched best

practices for community change focused on education and found the community school strategy.

They read articles, attended conferences, and in the case of Tulsa, visited other CCIs such as

Multnomah. Tulsa then used this research in their leadership discussions to develop the organizational structures for the CCI and the definition of the TACSI community school model.

Data continued to be important for implementation and impact. The Tulsa intermediary hired a researcher to create implementation measures and to evaluate schools' progress by level of implementation. They brought that information to the CCI leadership who used it to make decisions about funding and scale. One Tulsa superintendent quoted the research as a rationale for why he supported the community school strategy and why he wanted to expand the number of participating schools.

Leaders in Multnomah County used data to identify which sites should be selected to become community schools (using an equity framework), for program improvement, to make the case for increased support for community schools, and to focus programs and distribution of grants on specific identified issues. In at least two of the interviews, leaders on the Coordinating Council demonstrated a command of the data, including demographic data for service delivery and allocation strategies as well as data about results.

The intermediary collected data to assist the CCI leadership make decisions. For example, intermediary staff assembled demographic data that leaders could consider in conversations about scale. CCI leaders said they relied on the intermediary to bring data to the Coordinating Council meetings so that they could make informed decisions. In addition, partners had access to data to make better decisions about their programs and activities. One council member said that sharing data allows the Council to answer questions that individual organizations would never be able to tackle on their own because of their focus on the unique missions. They say, "we are so varied here [in the Council] that we can really pose questions that

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may never occur…We are able to really make sure that people have data. They have information. And they can readily answer some of these questions."

A common approach in many new CCIs (e.g., Strive Together, Campaign for Grade Level Reading) is to develop a shared data system that tracks students and school data across multiple partners. These systems are used for program improvement, case management, and evaluation. The data sets include school district information as well as information about which services students received across sectors and programs such as health, housing, afterschool participation, and more. At the time of my site visits, neither of these CCIs had a common data system that provided a comprehensive analysis of each participating child or school. Rather, intermediary staff and leaders drew upon multiple data sets to inform their decisions. New technologies and better understanding about sharing data is likely an essential feature of CCIs moving forward and would help CCI leaders in their development and monitoring of initiatives.

However, looking at the data is insufficient if it is not connected to cross-agency action. One subject spoke to the amount of time spent looking at data, but her comments suggest that action is sometimes lacking. They say, "I think it's more…we like to admire the data a lot. At least the ongoing educational data like, 'Oh, we have an achievement gap! Oh, we have this high dropout rate!'" The subject continues to point out that beyond looking at the data, they work with their partners to understand the data, make decisions, and then take actions.

Leadership, especially collaborative leadership, is an issue that hasn't been widely addressed in the literature on CCIs. However, these cases demonstrate that leadership is an essential component to sustained CCIs. While specific leaders may change, the collaborative leadership structure ensures that multiple institutions are able to carry out the leadership

functions and the internalized funding and policy commitments previous leaders made helps encourage new leaders to maintain institutional and leadership obligations to the CCI.

Conclusion

Over the last five to ten years we have seen a resurgence of CCIs, especially within the education reform space. "Collective impact" has received a lot of attention from funders, policymakers, and communities that are seeking ways to change educational outcomes, especially for our most disadvantaged youth. President Obama's emphasis on place-based approaches such as Promise Neighborhoods and Promise Zones (White House, 2009, 2010) has brought renewed attention to collaboration among school, community, government, and other partners. We are likely to continue to see new terms and theories of action for community change that largely build or borrow from previous efforts. It's important that we learn from the lessons of past strategies, especially those that have been able to sustain their work.

Failure to acknowledge and learn from previous efforts and to recognize and honor the existing CCIs may lead to frustration about community change, collaboration fatigue, and skepticism and distrust. The cases in this study are not perfect, but they present ways to organize CCIs for sustainability. Visionary leaders from both of the cases recognized the existing efforts and assets in their communities, identified best practices from across the country, and adapted best practices to their unique local contexts. Leaders then committed to a collaborative leadership arrangement where ownership for the CCI would be shared among institutions and leadership functions would be diffused among participating institutions. Disputes about ownership and shared responsibility and accountability are common reasons CCIs and other education reforms

fail. The arrangements and agreements that leaders made in these CCIs serve as a lesson to other sites that want to build an initiative for sustainability.

Leaders also assigned a respected and resourced intermediary institution to support and implement their vision. These entities played essential roles in helping to create, coordinate, and sustain the CCIs. They were the "glue" that helped keep the various leaders and partner organizations together and provided the human and organizational resources that were crucial to furthering the CCIs.

Leaders also created shared financial arrangements and developed supportive policies that strengthened the CCI. Importantly, school district leaders and their staff participated in the CCI in a variety of ways. Furthermore, the CCIs demonstrated their value to school leaders so that they in turn saw a reason for deeper engagement and support.

Four years after the data have been collected, the CCIs continue to exist and adapt to changes in local leadership and variation in participation. They respond to new collaborative efforts that arise and in some ways compete for the attention of leaders and financial resources. If the literature on CCIs and other collaborative efforts tells us anything, it's that the continued success of these CCIs is far from guaranteed. New ideas, new leaders, and changing financial and political contexts are always a threat, and possibly an opportunity. However, this study argues that education-focused CCIs can be sustained by the organizational, financial, and political arrangements they create and the collaborative leadership functions that are shared among key stakeholders.

Limitations

Despite the aforementioned assertion about the elements of a sustainable education-focused CCI, findings should be interpreted with caution due to a number of limitations. First, my case study methodology was inherently susceptible to missing data from not interviewing enough or the right subjects. I attempted to address these limitations by interviewing subjects from a variety of stakeholder groups as well as observations of CCI meetings. Still, it's possible that I wasn't able to capture some points of view from subjects who didn't participate in the CCI, who participated in competing approaches, or who I simply wasn't able to interview (e.g., I wasn't able to interview to all participating Multnomah superintendents).

Second, even though I would describe my review of the data as rigorous, it is always possible that I have misinterpreted some observations, interview data, and archival evidence. I sought to confirm my interpretations by sharing the cases with my site contacts for review. When I had misinterpreted the data, they corrected me.

Third, I only conducted case studies of two education-focused CCIs, and both of them used the community school strategy as the focus of their work. While I make claims about implications for a variety of education-focused CCIs, it's important to understand that the contexts I studied may not translate to other communities or other education-focused CCIs utilizing a different change approach.

Finally, the secondary nature of the data limited of my potential research questions and topics. For example, I was only able to discuss the collaborative nature of leadership, with an emphasis on these leadership structures, rather than the leadership of individuals or the specific ways in which leaders collaborated, because of the available data. Future research may explore

collaborative leadership further by employing a different set of questions and focusing more narrowly on the specific leaders that participate in the collaborative.

Implications for Policy, Practice, and Research

Despite these limitations, the cases and study offer the following implications for policy, practice, and future research. From a policy perspective, governments at all levels, from school boards to the federal government, should incentivize cross-sector collaborative partnerships with the goal of improving student outcomes. Incentives that provide new funding or the ability to re-purpose funding streams may help local communities use financial resources that are context dependent. These policies would also help sectors reduce inefficiencies (as was the case in Multnomah County) and better focus resources for maximum impact.

As described above, new education-focused CCIs abound. Practitioners from these new CCI approaches should learn from the literature on CCIs and from these cases. Practitioners that work at the national level should support local communities in their efforts to adapt locally developed-strategies. The literature is clear that national funders and practitioners change strategies and funding frequently, which can leave local efforts that rely on external support in a challenging situation. Local practitioners should learn that collaborative efforts require creating the organizational arrangements that generate relationships and trust, which can lead to sustained action.

The challenges facing our communities, especially in high-poverty and urban areas, are many. If we think of improving student outcomes from a developmental approach, and not just test scores, then we quickly realize that schools and communities must work together because neither has sufficient resources or capacity on their own. However, the literature reviewed

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demonstrates that these relationships aren't easy to create or sustain. This study demonstrates the potential ways in which school and community leaders can work together. The opportunity for collaboration arises when leaders find a way to work toward a common vision and develop the organizational, financial, and leadership arrangements to support their collaboration. Superintendents and school leaders should welcome partnership and become full partners in collaborative efforts by opening their schools to the community and taking active leadership roles in the CCI. School district leaders and principals are gatekeepers for the success of education-based approaches and must be participants of CCI efforts that hope to create sustainable change.

Practitioners should also learn from the lessons above about collaborative leadership and diversified funding strategies. Sharing leadership and funding responsibility provides multiple leaders and institutions a share in the ownership, vision, and implementation of the CCI. Truly comprehensive CCI approaches that seek to create change at scale require the mobilization of myriad community assets. Further, a shared or diversified approach ensures that the CCI is able to sustain when changes in leadership or institutional participation occur.

There are a number of opportunities for research in this under-studied field. First, the precise relationships between individuals and organizations could be studied using social network analysis, especially if conducted across multiple CCI sites. Such an approach would demonstrate how tight relationships are or whether they are more cursory than anticipated. This type of research may help us understand the optimal size and tightness of participating organizations and leaders for a sustained CCI, as well as whether these characteristics vary depending on geography, size of the community, or some other variable. It may also help

elucidate whether there are "essential" participating organizations and leaders and if so, it may

identify them by role. Second, an analysis of resources, including the "time, talent, and money"

described by one subject, would explain in greater depth the ways institutions combine financial,

human, and in-kind resources to support CCIs, as well as the ways in which those resources are

distributed. A financial analysis or return on investment study may be some of the approaches

worthy of future research.

Third, this study has only begun to explore the important role of leadership in CCIs,

specifically collaborative leadership. Future studies should focus on leadership functions and

actions that drive the CCI, and how they are distributed (or not) among a group of leaders

representing multiple organizations. For example, this may be accomplished through additional

case studies focused on leaders or surveys of leaders that identify common functions and

characteristics. It would interesting to also research the important role of the intermediary and its

leadership. How do they balance their other work with their coordination of the CCI? What

happens to a CCI when the intermediary changes? How does the type of intermediary (e.g.,

community based group or district) influence the development and outcomes of the CCI?

Fourth, a case study or outcome study that compared CCIs that are originally funded by

local or national sources would test my observation and findings from the literature that

nationally-funded CCIs are less likely to be sustained. Fifth, researchers should develop

comparative case studies such as this one that examine the political, financial, and organizational

arrangements in failed CCIs, whereas this study focused on how those arrangements supported

sustained CCI approaches. Sixth, future research should explore the quantitative impact of

education-focused CCIs on the goals they were designed to achieve, namely educational

attainment. While this study looked at a successfully sustained CCI, future studies should examine CCIs that fail as well. This may provide explanations for the ways failed CCIs are formed and how they were organized, financed, and set up politically. Finally, future research should test the claims made in this study for CCIs that aren't focused on education. Are findings about leadership, organizational arrangements, and financing applicable in other CCIs that chose another outcome such as housing or employment and that utilize different strategies? This type of research would help generalize the findings across various types of CCIs.

The pressure from families and policymakers on schools and school districts to perform is very high. Different approaches in contemporary education reform emphasize different strategies that rely on a schools-alone or partnership-based approach. This study demonstrates one way that community and government institutions can partner with schools and school districts at systems level to address a complex set of problems through a comprehensive community change initiative.

<center>**Appendices**</center>

A. Site Visit Interview Requests

Dear _____,

Thank you for participating in the Coalition for Community Schools' study, *A Collaborative Approach to Achieving Ready Schools and Ready Students,* for your assistance in coordinating schedules, and for your enthusiasm in permitting us to visit your community. As we discussed, we will be visiting from **May 24th to May 26th** (we leave around 5 PM) and plan to observe meetings and interview key stakeholders. We would appreciate any help that you can give us in securing interviews and site visits. We don't want to create extra work for you, so if you can give us the names and contact information for people we should contact, we will reach out to them for interviews. If you are also able to help arrange interviews, we'd be indebted as well.

We hope this document will be an easy way to help secure names and interview times with people.

One strategy that we suggest is combining a focus group with one of your regularly scheduled meetings. For example, if you assemble your school coordinators as part of your work, then that may provide an opportunity for us to conduct a focus group with a number of those individuals.

Interviews/Focus Groups

We know that each initiative has a unique composition of leaders and participants. We also know that each community may have a number of collaborative working in the school and early childhood spaces. Based on initial internal conversations, we have identified the following people/groups that we would like to interview:

Name	Contact Info	Interview Time
• school board		
• United Way		
•		

In addition, there may be other key stakeholders that we don't know about that you think we should speak with. The chart at the end of this document provides examples of people that we would consider interviewing. We present this list not as a suggestion that we need to interview someone from *every* category. Rather, we hope it may "jog your mind" when thinking about the people who are *most important* in your initiative. We expect to capture a range of perspectives on the community school work so please don't only present your most ardent supporters. (See chart at the end of this letter)

***We would also be interested in interviewing leaders who have a history with the initiative in any of the above categories (for example, the original initiative founders).

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Name	Contact Info	Interview Time
•		
•		
•		

School Site Visit

It would be very helpful for us to see how the community school and its connections to early childhood works at a school site. Perhaps we could spend one morning or afternoon in one of these schools. Please recommend the school that you think we should visit and describe their connection to your early childhood work (or that of another initiative) below. (See chart for types of school people we could speak with).

School: _____

Connection to Early Childhood Work: _____

Best time to visit: _____

Meeting Observations

As we have already discussed, we plan on observing the following meetings:

Meeting	Location	Date and Time
• MindPeace		5/25 1:00 PM
• Cross-Boundary Leadership Team		5/26 10:30 AM
• Oyler EC		5/26 lunch or 1:30

If there are any other meetings that you think we should attend, please provide a description and information below:

Meeting & Description	Location	Date and Time
•		
•		

If you have any questions, please be in touch with Reuben. Thank you and we look forward to visiting and learning.

Sincerely,

Reuben Jacobson

(202) 822-8405 ext. 131, jacobsonr@iel.org

Examples of Key Stakeholders for Interviews			
Positions	**Names (Contact Info in brackets)**	**Better for a focus group or interview?**	**Date and Time**
1. Community-Wide Leadership			
a. Elected Officials			
b. Funders			
c. School district (superintendent and/or relevant staff)			
d. Other key partners at the community level, for example:			
i. Nonprofit organizations			
ii. Community agencies			
iii. Faith-based agencies			
iv. Public agencies			
v. Parent leadership groups			
vi. Local government (e.g., mayor's office, county, _____ representatives)			
vii. Others			
2. Intermediary Leadership			
a. Intermediary director			
b. A selection of key staff at the intermediary office			
3. School Site Leadership			
a. Lead agency leaders (if applicable)			
b. Site coordinators			
c. Community Members			
i. Families			
ii. Residents			
d. School Personnel			
i. Teachers and school staff			
ii. Principals			
e. Other key partners at the school site level, for example:			
i. Nonprofit organizations			
ii. Community agencies			
iii. Faith-based agencies			
iv. Public agencies			
v. Local government (e.g., mayor's office, county, _____ representatives)			
vi. Others			
4. Early Childhood Leadership, may not be connected to the community school initiative			
a. A central focus of our study is on the way community schools are organized to integrate the early childhood community. You may have early childhood leaders in your community that aren't (yet) connected to your community school work. If so, who are these leaders?			
5. Other stakeholders you would suggest we speak with to learn more about your community school initiative			

B. Interview Protocol

<div style="text-align: center;">**Collaborative Approach Study: Full Interview Protocol**</div>

Interviewee: _____   **Position:**   _____   **Date**: _____   **Time:** _____to _____   **Location**:   _____   **Setting**:   **Codes for participants in this meeting:** RJ (Reuben Jacobson), LJ (Linda Jackson)

We'd like to ask you a few questions about community schools in ____, their history, how they are organized, and your connections to the work.

General Characteristics

1. Please describe *your role* with ____ community schools.
   a. Probe: How and when did you first become involved?

History and Development

2. From your perspective, how did ____ community schools *develop*?
   a. Probe: Key leaders? Finance? Challenges?
   b. Probe: *Why* did it develop?
3. What were the key political, financial, and organizational issues that the initiative had to address?
   a. Political:
   b. Financial:
   c. Organizational:
4. Describe ____ community schools' overall strategy.
   a. Probe: How are partners selected? What supports/activities does the CSI offer?
5. What were the initial plans for ____ community schools to *scale up*?
   a. Probe: Were there formal plans? What *steps* did initiative leaders take from the *idea* of community schools to implementation of the first community school(s)?

Results, Vision

6. From your perspective, what are the *results* ____ community schools are working towards?

Infrastructure

7. What types of *community leadership arrangements*, or structures, were created to govern and support the initiative?

a. What are their key roles?
8. What types of *school site leadership arrangements*, or structures, govern and support the initiative at the school level?
    a. What are their key roles?
9. How would you characterize the typical *partner*?
    a. Probe: Community-level
    b. School-level.
    c. Probe: Type, Origin (who selects), Form (formal or informal – e.g., are there MOUs), Depth?
10. How would you characterize the role of _____, what we call the community schools *intermediary*?
11. What is the role of the *school district(s)*?
    a. Probe: Characterize the relationship with the school district. How is the CSI *aligned* with the school district?
12. What is the role of local government (city, county, state)?
    a. Probe: Characterize the relationship with local government. How is the CSI *aligned* with the local government initiatives?

Policies and Funding

13. What *policies* support the initiative, both official school policies and partner policies?
14. How is the initiative *funded*?
    a. Probe: How are collaboration functions funded as opposed to specific programs?

Other Collaboratives

15. In many communities there are multiple collaboratives and strategies being used to support students, families, and communities. What are some of the other collaborative or major strategies in your community?
    a. Probe: Is there an EC Collaborative? P-16/20 Council?
16. What is the relationship between each of those collaboratives/strategies and _____?
17. What are the *advantages* of the way the CSI is organized to support students, families and communities?
18. What are the *disadvantages* of the way the CSI is organized to support students, families and communities?
19. (If not sufficiently addressed): How have the community schools changed policies and practices (e.g., deep structural changes)?

Early Childhood Education Work

20. Tell us about the *history of early childhood* work in your community.
21. Which *groups* currently offer early childhood services? (Probe: does the school district?)
22. What *coalitions* are organized to support early childhood work?
23. How did the community schools *start working* with ECE?
24. How are _____ *community schools organized to support* early childhood work?
    a. Probe: What supports does the CSI offer to EC programs?
    b. Does the CSI support EC work directly or indirectly?

      c.   How does the CSI address transitions from EC to K-12?
      d.   How do _____ community schools think about EC work?

25. How *has EC changed* as a result of the linkages to community schools?
      a.   Probe: How has the structure and organization of the community school helped the EC systems integrate with other sectors (e.g., health, family support)?
26. What are the *challenges in aligning* the community school work with EC?
      a.   Probes: Structural/organizational, cultural, financial, and political?
27. How is the EC work funded?

Data and Evaluation

28. Which indicators are used to track progress of the CSI efforts?
      a.   Which indicators are used to track EC progress specifically? For example, how do you measure whether children are *ready for school*?
29. Describe the data system you use to track data.
      a.   How is the data system linked with the EC work?
30. From your perspective, what has been the *impact* of the _____ CSI?

Looking Forward

31. How is _____ planning for sustainability of its community schools?
      a.   Probe: What policies and practices need to be in place in order to sustain and grow the CSI?
32. Where do you see _____ community schools in 5 years?
33. What should we have asked that we didn't get to?
34. Is there anyone else you recommend that we speak with?

Glossary

Collaborative Leadership Group: A group of leaders working together within a CCI across institutions. Each CCI has multiple collaborative leadership groups.

Community Service Council: The Tulsa intermediary organization supporting the TACSI CCI. The TACSI Resource Center is one program of the Community Service Council.

Coordinating Council (Multnomah): A broad group of stakeholders including representatives from school districts, city, county, state, higher education, community groups, business, and more. The Council was created as a way to broaden and share leadership over the growing CCI. Its purpose is to oversee the CCI, coordinate activities, and support implementation.

Intermediary: The institution with primary responsibility for supporting CCI leadership and maintaining implementation of the CCI.

Management Team (Tulsa): The Tulsa Management Team comprises mid-level staff that are able to meet frequently and provide additional implementation support on behalf of their organizations.

Metropolitan Human Services Commission (MHSC): Tulsa's MHSC is a network of community organizations, including the school districts, the Tulsa Community College, city and state health departments, county and city government agencies, the United Way, and ad hoc members such as the Metro Tulsa Chamber and foundations.

Partner: An institution participating in the CCI at the systems or school-site level.

Partners Group (Tulsa): All partner institutions in the Tulsa CCI.

Sponsors Group (Multnomah): One collaborative leadership group in the CCI. It is comprised of the directors and heads of organizations with decision-making authority (e.g., superintendents and county chair) and that fund a portion of the CCI.

Steering Committee (Tulsa): A collaborative leadership group that is responsible for overseeing the CCI and making key policy and funding decisions. It includes representatives from the districts, funders, non-profit partners, and university partners.

SUN: Schools Uniting Neighborhoods, the Multnomah County (OR) community change initiative.

Systems-Level: Refers to the level of analysis. The community change initiative is a systems-level approach, rather than a strategy that takes place at an individual school site.

TACSI: Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative, the Tulsa community change initiative.

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