GIFTED CHILD TODAY

The nation's leading resource for nurturing gifted and talented children.

Special issue on
School Partnerships

Guest editor: **Yara Farah**

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NEWS BRIEFS

On the Web

NOVA

https://www.youtube.com/user/NOVAonline

NOVA is the most-watched primetime science series on television and reaches an average of five million viewers each week. NOVA's mission is to make science accessible to everyone so that they can better understand the world we live in. Visit this website for educational videos about eclipses, riding a bicycle, supercapacitors, lava, glaciers, tsunamis, cyber attacks, killer ants, and more! There are shorter videos (2-5 min) that would be perfect for use in the classroom.

Google Sightseeing

http://www.googlesightseeing.com/

This website uses satellite images from the Google Earth program so that you can tour the world. See Paris' Le Bourget Field where Charles Lindbergh landed his aircraft after completing his Trans-Atlantic flight in 1927. View images of different volcanoes, monuments, national landmarks, spacecraft, movie locations, theme parks, world heritage sites, and more from the comfort of your own home! You can even view images of abandoned cities, ghost towns, and underwater cities that are restricted in real life. Compare and contrast images of different crop circles, deserts, or even spacecraft. The images are searchable by country and state.

Plagiarism Checker

http://www.plagiarismchecker.com/

Students, authors, teachers, and publishers can check for plagiarism on the web for free with this website. All you need to do is to copy and paste a phrase, sentence, or excerpt into the search box. You can also submit a web page ULP address to check an entire

Policies for Acceleration

Acceleration is used to provide for individual differences in rates of learning and includes a variety of strategies such as early entrance to schooling at all levels, grade skipping, placement in a higher grade level for instruction in a single subject, continuous progress or accelerating the pace of instruction within and across classes, curriculum compacting, concurrent or dual enrollment, credit-by-examination, advanced placement, and international baccalaureate. Research shows how accelerated students demonstrate superior levels of achievement, attend more prestigious colleges, and earn higher incomes than their nonaccelerated, equally able peers. Moreover, acceleration does not create social or psychological challenges for the majority of talented students who accelerate. Although this strategy is supported by an overwhelming amount of research over the past 70 years, it is infrequently used in schools, particularly at the elementary and middle school levels. To improve the likelihood of its implementation, the Acceleration Institute of the Belin-Blank Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development at the University of Iowa developed checklists for implementing whole-grade, early entrance, and single subject acceleration policies (Lupkowski-Shoplik, Behrens, & Assouline, 2018) in collaboration with the National Association for Gifted Children, the Association for the Gifted, Council for Exceptional Children, and the Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted. The report describes these best-practice principles that should be included in every policy: (a) accessibility, equity, and openness; (b) features preventing unintended consequences; (c) guidelines on administrative matters to ensure fair and systematic use of accelerative opportunities and recognition for participation in those accelerative opportunities; and (d) guidelines for preventing nonacademic barriers to the use of acceleration as an educational intervention. To access policy checklists and other acceleration resources, visit accelerationinstitute.org/policies/

State Support for Academically Talented Low-Income Students

High-ability students from lower income families are less likely identified than their wealthier peers for advanced level work and other high-ability programs. A recent report from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation examined the extent that states are addressing the needs of high-ability, low-income students and how states might improve their support of best practices (Plucker, Glynn, Healey, & Dettmer, 2018). The researchers used eight criteria to grade each state system:

- The extent to which states promote and achieve learning for high-ability students,
- The extent to which states ensure that low-income students have equal access to advanced learning opportunities and are equally

CONTESTS

Grants and Awards

The Discovery Research PreK-12 Program (DRK-12) of the National Science Foundation invites proposals that address immediate challenges that are facing **PreK-12 STEM education** and focus on these research and development strands: (a) assessment, (b) learning, and (c) teaching. While the program recognizes the synergy among the three strands, proposals should identify a clear focus. The program supports six types of projects: exploratory, design and development, impact, implementation and improvement, syntheses, and conferences. All of these six types apply to each of the three DRK-12 strands. Eligible proposers are institutions of higher education, nonprofit and for-profit organizations, state and local governments including K-12 schools, unaffiliated individuals, foreign organizations, and other federal agencies. Grant awards are up to US$450,000 for 3 years, US$3,000,000 for 4 years, and US$5,000,000 for 5 years. Synthesis proposals are up to US$300,000 and 2 years duration. Conference proposals are up to US$100,000 and 1 year duration. Deadline for full proposals are November 13, 2019. For more information, visit https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=500047

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) supports **7-12 Classroom Research Grants**. The purpose of this grant is to support and encourage classroom-based research in precollege mathematics education in collaboration with college or university mathematics educators. The proposal may include, but is not restricted to, research on the following topics: curriculum development and implementation, involvement of at-risk students or students from diverse backgrounds and experiences, students' thinking about a particular mathematics concept or set of concepts, connection of mathematics to other disciplines, focused learning and teaching of mathematics with embedded use of technology, and innovative assessment or evaluation strategies. Proposals must address research design, the plan for collecting and analyzing data, and the anticipated impact on students' learning. Eligible applicants must be a member of NCTM and mathematics educators or classroom teachers currently teaching mathematics at Grades 7 to 12. The research must be a collaborative effort involving a college or university mathematics educator (a mathematics education researcher or a teacher of mathematics learning, teaching, or

Contests

Annual Youth Art Contest

The Ned Smith Center in Millersburg, PA, was founded in 1993 to celebrate the works and life of nationally recognized wildlife artist, Ned Smith. The purpose of this scholarship is to inspire the next generation of wildlife artists. Applicants must be enrolled in Grades 1 to 12 during the 2017-2018 school year. The artwork must represent a young, yearling, or baby of any wildlife species in its natural habitat from any part of the world. Entries should measure 9 × 12 inches and should be submitted along with an application form and an US$8 entry fee. First, second, third place prizes and honorable mentions will be awarded a certificate, a ribbon, and additional prizes in each of these categories: first to third grade, fourth to sixth grade, seventh to ninth grade, and 10th to 12th grade. Winning entries are exhibited at the Ned Smith Center during the Nature and Arts Festival as well as the Gratz Fair in Gratz, PA. The deadline for applications is June 1, 2019. For more information, please visit http://www.nedsmithcenter.org/youthartcontest/.

Ocean Awareness Contest

Bow Seat Ocean Awareness Programs, Inc., is a nonprofit organization based in Massachusetts that offers award-winning programming to emphasize creative thinking and ocean science. The 2019 contest theme is "Presence of Future," and the worldwide contest is open to students aged 11 to 18 years. Students aged 11 to 14 will enter the junior division. Students aged 15 to 18 will enter the senior division. Students may submit one entry for each of the following categories: art, poetry, prose, film, and music. A 100- to 250-word written reflection must accompany each submission that describes the inspiration for the work, what was learned, what the student felt, how that affected the student or the work, what was challenging, and what the student wants others to know about the work. Submissions are judged on the following categories: how well it addresses the annual theme of the contest, artistic voice, originality, and imagination, craftsmanship, including quality, technique, attention to detail, and accuracy of communicating issues, and meeting the submission requirements. All submissions must be received by June 17, 2019. Winners can win scholarships of up to US$1,500. Winners can expect their work to be promoted through social media channels and art exhibits, film showings, and the publishing of poetry and writing in various outlets. For more information,

MEETINGS

Did you know . . .

. . . 10.4% of children under age 18 had parents with less than a high school education.

. . . 39.7% of children under age 18 had parents who had a bachelor's or higher degree.

. . . 39% of children ages 3 and 4 used the Internet at home.

. . . 76% of children ages 15 to 18 used the Internet at home.

. . . 54% of 3- to 5-year-olds enrolled in preschool had parents with a graduate or professional degree.

. . . 30% of 3- to 5-year-olds enrolled in preschool had parents with less than a high school credential.

. . . 19.7% of students attend public low-poverty schools.

. . . 45% of Hispanic students and 45% of Black students attended high-poverty schools.

. . . 8% of White students attended high-poverty schools.

. . . 10.2% of all students (pre-k through 12th grade) were enrolled in private schools.

. . . 9.5% of public school students were English learners compared with 8.1% in 2000.

. . . 5.7% of public school students attend charter schools, a 5% increase since 2000.

. . . 57% of public charter schools were located in cities versus 25% of public schools.

. . . 13.2% of public school students received special education services.

. . . 84% of public high school students graduate within 4 years of starting ninth grade.

. . . 91% of Asian/Pacific Islanders and 88% of Whites graduate from high school within 4 years of starting ninth grade.

January 2019

29-February 2

Council for Exceptional Children Annual Convention & Expo in Indianapolis, IN. For more information, please visit http://www.cec.sped.org/

February 2019

7-8

Young Child Expo & Conference in Los Angeles, CA. For more information, please visit http://www.youngchildexpo.com/

22-24

California Association for the Gifted (CAG) conference in Palm Springs, CA. For more information, please visit https://cagifted.org/

27-March 1

Arkansas Gifted and Talented Education (AGATE) Conference at the Little Rock Marriott Hotel in Little Rock, AR. For more information, please visit https://www.agatearkansas.org/

28-March 1

Montana Association of Gifted and Talented Education annual conference in Missoula, MT. For more information, please visit http://www.mtagate.org/

March 2019

4-5

Georgia Association for Gifted Children annual convention at the Georgia Center in Athens, GA. For more information, please visit http://www.gagc.org/

7-8

National Curriculum Network Conference at William & Mary in Williamsburg, VA. For more information, please visit https://education.wm.edu/centers/cfge/profdev/conferences/ncnc/index.php

North Carolina Association for Gifted and Talented Conference at the Winston-Salem Marriott and Embassy Suites in Winston-Salem, NC. For more information, please visit http://www.ncagt.org/

22

New Jersey Association for Gifted Children annual conference at the Conference Center at Mercer (Mercer County Community College) in West Windsor Township, NJ. For more information, please visit http://njagc.org/

April 2019

3-6

National Council for Teachers of Mathematics Research Conference in San Diego, CA. For more information, please visit http://www.nctm.org/Conferences-and-Professional-Development/Annual-Meeting-and-Exposition/

A Highly Successful School–University Partnership

Tracy L. Cross, PhD[1]

Abstract: This column introduces a collaborative partnership between the Center for Gifted Education at William & Mary and the Paradise Valley School District in Phoenix, Arizona. It describes its history and the leadership of the project.

Keywords: gifted children, collaboration, partnerships

I am excited to contribute a column for the *Gifted Child Today* introducing a wonderful collaboration between the Center for Gifted Education (CFGE) at William & Mary and the Paradise Valley School District in Phoenix, Arizona. In my 35 years in higher education, this collaboration between a school district and a university has proven to be the most substantial and productive effort I have ever seen. To tell this part of this story, we need to shift from institutions to individuals. We also need to include the important mission of the collaboration that guided the work and provided an important rallying point for the professionals involved.

This partnership idea originated about 5 years ago. It emerged from a problem-solving session among the directors at the CFGE. At that time, we decided that we wanted and needed to complete a large-scale investigation into the efficacy of some of the CFGE curriculum materials. Unfortunately, there were very limited grant opportunities available, so I began the process of saving CFGE money for this purpose. We presented the issue to our National Advisory Board (NAB) members and they recommended we hire a postdoctoral research fellow to help conduct the curriculum study. The CFGE Directors heeded the NAB members' advice and created the new position. Three years ago, Dr. Yara Farah was hired as a

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postdoctoral research fellow with a primary focus on the curriculum study.

The earliest plan paired Drs. Kim Chandler, then Director of Curriculum, and Yara Farah as the primary research and implementation team. Drs. Jennifer Robins, Director of Professional Development and Publications, Jennifer Riedl Cross, Director of Research, and myself as Executive Director of the CFGE and the Institute for Research on the Suicide of Gifted Students, all provided technical assistance, research advice, and financial support for the study itself. We helped craft the research design as well. During the three years of the study, Dr. Chandler retired, and Dr. Robins worked more closely with Dr. Farah and their colleagues in Arizona. Dr. Jennifer Riedl Cross worked much more closely with Dr. Farah on the research piece as well.

The hard work of building a partnership from the CFGE side fell to Drs. Chandler and Farah. They had contacts in Arizona who grew into the other side of the partnership. Drs. Dina Brulles and Karen Brown became the champions for the project as well as part of the planning team, and were the individuals who planned and made sure the myriad decisions were made and the incredible number of details were seen to. The sheer amount of logistics associated with creating and running all aspects of the study was staggering. In addition, the planning and travel needed to span the 2,500 miles between Phoenix, Arizona, and Williamsburg, Virginia, required careful coordination, as it affected all aspects of the training of teachers and collection of data.

The study itself was originally designed to last 2 years. The early planning relative to logistics revealed that we needed to add a third year to the project, even though this had significant financial ramifications for the CFGE. This proved to be a very

Collaborative Partnership

Opening Doors Between Schools and Universities

Yara N. Farah, PhD[1]

Abstract: Although K-12 schools and universities are two separate and distinct systems, fundamentally both have the same broad goal: the education of students. This leads one to ponder, "How can these two entities work together to promote, foster, and support this goal?" In this article, I share and discuss the key elements for building a successful school–university collaborative partnership. A type of partnership that includes ongoing commitment founded on mutually beneficial goals, trust, equitable decision making, and communication. A partnership that produces high-quality research, improves educational practices in schools, and contributes to the field.

Keywords: leadership, program evaluation, best practices, gifted

Although K-12 schools and universities are two separate and distinct systems, fundamentally both have the same broad goal: the education of students. This leads one to ponder, "How can these two entities work together to promote, foster, and support this goal?" Over the years, schools and universities have joined for various purposes and alliances have evolved into a number of different forms. The purpose of this article is to share and discuss some of the tenets that lead to a successful school–university collaborative partnership (SUCP). The following

articles center on a successful 3-year SUCP between The Center for Gifted Education (CFGE) and Paradise Valley Unified School District (PVUSD). Each is written to provide the perspective and work of those participating in this collaborative partnership.

What Is a Collaborative Partnership?

Partnership is an agreement where two or more people or groups work together to accomplish a goal (Turley & Stevens, 2015). However, partnership can describe a range of interrelationships from the most superficial to the most complex. These can range from symbolic to meeting some externally imposed need, to offering a one-sided service, to exchanging services, to working on separate goals using same resources, to achieving shared goals, values, and products.

The kind of school–university partnership being discussed in this article is on the more complex end of the continuum—one that leads to collaboration. This type of partnership includes ongoing commitment founded on mutually beneficial goals, trust, equitable decision making, and communication (Kezar, 2007). Most commonly, this collaborative partnership is initiated to further knowledge in the field as well as to improve teaching and learning in schools. For instance, the collaborative partnership can focus on piloting curriculum, examining new instructional strategies, or exploring new assessment approaches.

> " **THIS COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP IS INITIATED TO FURTHER KNOWLEDGE IN THE FIELD AS WELL AS TO IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SCHOOLS**"

In addition, SUCP usually has a more complex configuration. Rather than having a simple and straightforward configuration in which university professors work directly with classroom teachers in the school, there is involvement of classrooms, whole schools, and the network of schools. This complex configuration most commonly includes a small group of university faculty working with teachers, principals, and district administrators to carry out relatively complex tasks at various grade levels.

The Core of SUCP

The core of SUCP is the critical bridge of theory and research with implementation and practice (Walsh et al., 2000). As schools constantly seek to find new instructional strategies, curriculum, and assessment to support student growth, universities seek to identify new approaches based on theory and research and to evaluate innovation in practice (Levin, 2013). In reality, the situation is based on two assumptions: (a) although schools have the capacity to design, implement, and evaluate instruction, curriculum, and assessment, they lack the resources to evaluate their effectiveness and (b) although universities have the capacity to design, implement, and evaluate instruction, curriculum, and assessment, they lack the naturalistic environment to conduct their study. For this reason, SUCP can become "win-win" for both partners, yielding advances in practice, research, and theory (Coburn & Penuel, 2016).

SUCP includes three systems: (a) schools/districts, (b) universities/departments, and (c) the joint entity recognized as the collaborative partnership (Baker, 2011). The structure of these three systems is distinct because differences between universities and schools are engraved in their culture (Hartman, 2017). These cultural differences relate to work tempo, work focus, rewards, degree of power, and autonomy. On one hand, schools are described as a culture of practice and, on the other hand, universities are described as cultures of research and theory. Teachers teach when the bell rings; faculty tend to do research on the day that accommodates their schedule. So how do these two unique systems work together to create a successful system for collaborative partnership?

Key Elements to Building a Solid Foundation for SUCP

One of the most difficult hurdles in making school-university partnerships work is helping people to realize that it is not just a bag of tricks, a list of "how-to-do-its." Rather, it is an amalgam of principles and concepts, beliefs and values, conditions and process, people and programs, and hard work—work that is not neatly packaged for implementation elsewhere, but that originates and develops and improves in context. (Sirotnik, 1991, p. 15)

An SUCP involves merging two systems (i.e., schools/districts and universities/departments) to create the third one (Baker, 2011). There is no universal formula for developing this system.

Effective practices are developed progressively on site over time (Coburn & Penuel, 2016). However, just like any type of partnership, SUCP goes through phases. Several key elements identified in the literature provide the road map to blend, develop, and build this new school–university collaborative system (see Table 1). Most of the key elements focus on strategies for bridging the two systems to create a viable merged system. I strongly suggest for those who would embark on such efforts to be mindful of the stages, as well as take to heart and adopt the following key elements. To understand how these phases and elements unfold in real life, the following article will describe in detail the development of a 3-year SUCP between The CFGE and PVUSD.

Initiation Phase

The initiation phase is where everything begins from just an idea sparking in one person's mind to suggesting it to colleagues, to contacting other institutions, to embarking on an SUCP. Most commonly, a written proposal is submitted from one institution to another to identify if there is any interest in forming a collaborative partnership (Fueyo & Lewis, 2002). Once interest has been shown, then the partnership should begin by establishing a boundary spanners committee (BSC) and developing clear mutually derived vision.

Establish a BSC

A BSC is a group of individuals whose roles and responsibilities include building a "bridge" and sustaining the connection between two systems (Kousgaard, Joensen, & Thorsen, 2015; Stevens, 1999; Weerts & Sandmann, 2010). First, it is important to recognize that I am talking about a committee and not one individual. Although a simple, charismatic individual may have considerable influence on a partnership, the presence of one leader, no matter how effective, is insufficient for such a complex partnership (Coburn & Penuel, 2016; Hartman, 2017). However, it is common to have an initiator in any kind of partnership. For an SUCP, this initiator should reach out to appropriate stakeholders to form a BSC, often described as liaison or convener.

The purpose of having a BSC is not to encourage hierarchical leadership but to play the role of blending these two systems. (Kezar, 2007; Peel, Peel, & Baker, 2002; Sirotnik, 1991). To do so, the "right" people need to participate in this committee—individuals who represent the various perspectives of those affected by this collaborative partnership (Baker, 2011; Kousgaard et al., 2015; Stevens, 1999). The BSC should include diverse representation in terms of roles, responsibilities, gender, ethnicity, race, language, or other characteristics. The spanners are making decisions influencing them as well as the population within both systems involved in this partnership. The diverse representation can avoid facing hidden barriers related to mismatch and clash in perspectives (Baker, 2011; Clark, 1999; Kezar, 2007). In terms of roles and responsibilities, this committee should include at least one individual representing the various entities within each institution

Table 1. School–University Collaborative Partnership Phases

Phases	Activities	Key elements
Initiation phase	BSC	• Composition: At least one individual representing the various entities within each institution • Role: Blending these two systems; a link or bridge between two systems • Responsibilities: Monitoring the collaboration partnership, maintaining communication, building positive group dynamics, resolving conflicts, ensuring that barriers are overcome, and facilitating the move forward
	Develop a clear mutually derived vision	• A vision statement: Describes the partnership's overarching aspirations; encompasses the big picture and envisions where this partnership is heading • Mutually derived vision to convey a sense of why this partnership exists to both members of this collaboration • Both research questions and district issues should be taken into consideration • Use of terminologies highlighting collaborative nature of the work (e.g., common vision, cooperative goals setting, shared vision, and joint vision)
Program design phase	Agenda	• Include goals, deliverables, responsibilities, timeline, and resources • Keep the agenda to three to four major goals, with four to five specific deliverables under each goal • Identify if any resource can be recycled and reused at different stages of the collaboration • Be cognizant of the various schedules and holidays when thinking of the timeline • Formally discuss and put into writing the expectations about the work of each partner • Develop a sense of trust
	Communication system	• Create a sustainable communication system across all levels (e.g., within the school, within the university, between school and university, and between district and university) • Designate different vehicles of communication (e.g., email, group meeting, and conference call), frequency, and purpose (e.g., update work, sharing of challenges, feedback) • Develop a system for informal communications
Execution phase	Implementation	• Every participant should be able to affirm the necessity of the partnership and have a clear understanding of the vision statement, their role, and their responsibilities • Participants should also be flexible and understanding • Participant will learn new ways to work together • BSC should facilitate learning by checking with the participants
	Evaluation	• Conduct ongoing evaluations • Collect evidence of partnership's impact • Identify problem areas that partners can address • Reevaluate the agenda elements

Note. BSC = boundary spanners committee.

involved in this partnership. For example, a good combination to form a BSC includes a gifted coordinator representing the district office, a program facilitator representing the teachers, a university faculty with expertise in research design, and a university faculty with expertise in curriculum development and implementation. With this configuration—which should also include diverse representation of gender, ethnicity, race, and language—various perspectives may be represented and ambiguity is diminished. Any questions, comments, concerns, or directions for either the university or the public schools goes directly to the BSC; they then determine who should be involved in solving each situation (Peel et al., 2002). This BSC serves as a link or bridge between two systems, speaking both languages and helping them to understand each other (Clark, 1999; Kezar, 2007).

A BSC may be the most critical element in helping two distinct systems to understand each other, creating an SUCP, and facilitating movement across the phases. (Firestone & Fisler, 2002; Kezar, 2007; Sirotnik & Goodlad, 1998). The BSC should take responsibility for monitoring the collaboration partnership, maintaining communication, building positive group dynamics, resolving conflicts, ensuring that barriers are overcome, and facilitating the move forward (Kezar, 2007). A variety of partnerships fail because they had no BSC to play this role. In fact, it is important to have the right people on this committee to take the responsibility for leading the effort in his or her system and accomplish the purpose of this partnership (Sirotnik, 1991).

Develop a clear mutually derived vision

Once the BSC has been established, a good first step is to formulate a vision statement. A vision statement should serve as a description of the partnership's overarching aspirations (Fuentes & Spice, 2015; Hartman, 2017; Opolot-Okurut & Bbuye, 2014). It encompasses the big picture and envisions where this partnership is heading. For this reason, the vision statement should be mutually derived to convey a sense of why this partnership exits to both members of this collaboration. The vision statement will then be broken down into small pieces or components to serve as a tool for strategic decision making and developing goals in the next phase.

To ensure a mutually derived vision, both research questions and district issues should be taken into consideration. In other words, the research questions should be thought of as how the district could feasibly move forward with the findings, as well as the district issues should align and inspire potential impact in the field of education. Terminologies such as "common vision" (Anyon & Fernandez, 2007), "cooperative goals settings" (McNall, Reed, Brown, & Allen, 2009), "shared vision" (Buly, Coski, Aucutt, & Finch, 2015), and "Joint Vision" (Reardon & Leonard, 2017) are prevalent and encouraged in the literature. The vision statement should reflect the collaborative nature of the work, as well as align with both the school and university systems to ensure that the work that will be conducted is integrated within and supported by the systems. Successful

partnerships reach agreement early on about the vision of the partnership (Reardon & Leonard, 2017).

Program Design Phase

After the initial phase, the heavy lifting begins. At this time, it is crucial to solidify the partnership and make sure the shared vision will be accomplished. The focus of SUCP is not one classroom but rather to a more complex consideration of the classroom, the whole school, and the network of schools. The BSC is central in the program design phase and should conduct intensive planning to develop a well-defined agenda and a communication system.

Agenda

The agenda should go beyond the shared vision to outline how the partnership can best work together (Buly et al., 2015; Butcher, Lchini, Ball, Barkle, & Martin, 2016; Coburn & Penuel, 2016); however, its development should stem from the shared vision to include but not be limited to

- Goals that describe the elements necessary to accomplish the vision statement;
- Deliverables that are specific steps, products, outcomes, or tasks that must be completed to reach the goal;
- Responsibilities that define the role and duties of each individual;
- Timeline that outlines what should be accomplished by a certain time; and
- Resources that outlines the budget, materials, and location.

When establishing the goals and deliverables, it is important to consider the old saying: "Don't bite off more than you can chew." The tendency is to want to solve all the world's problems at once. Partnerships work best when they have three to four major goals, with four to five specific deliverables under each goal (Coburn & Penuel, 2016; Fuentes & Spice, 2015). The agenda should highlight the small steps that need to be taken toward addressing the vision statement.

Any expectation needs to be clarified as well: Who will monitor what? Who will implement what? When should specific deliverables be reached? What materials are needed? What are associated budget items? In other words, the roles, responsibilities, timeline, and resources, should be also be part of the agenda. These expectations should (a) specify the support mechanism, (b) create a climate of mutual accountability, and (c) foster trustworthy relationships (Fueyo & Lewis, 2002; Kezar, 2007).

When assigning responsibilities, the BSC should examine their resources and timeline to determine how each party can contribute (Opolot-Okurut & Bbuye, 2014; Turley & Stevens, 2015). These three items go hand in hand. When thinking of resources, try to identify if any can be recycled and reused at different stages of the collaboration. When thinking of the timeline, be cognizant of the various schedules and holidays.

Through this process, expectations about the work of each partner should be formally discussed and put into writing. Getting the right people to participate to accomplish the deliverables is critical. The more spread around, the better off the partnership will be. Authentic partnerships between schools and universities require mutuality in role and relationships (Walsh & Backe, 2013; Weerts, 2007). Truly collaborative relationships are based on coconstruction rather than being powered; they are oriented toward building and working together. At the heart of developing mutual relationships is the formation of trust (Peel et al., 2002; Thorkildsen and Stein, 1996; Walsh & Backe, 2013; Weerts, 2007).

Each participant should have the same clear understanding of the collaboration's vision and goals. In addition, each participant should be aware of how his or her efforts and efforts of others will contribute to the vision. Trust is often lost in collaborative efforts when decision-making processes appear not to be mutual, decisions appear to be capricious, or one partner waits an inordinate amount of time for decisions to be made (Hartman, 2017; Walsh & Backe, 2013; Weerts, 2007). The success of the partnership is hinged on each partner trusting the other to do his or her part. No one should feel the need to point fingers and blame others for situations that arose in this joint venture.

Although this may sound like tremendous amount of work, this process saves times in the long run. It creates a mutual culture that avoids misunderstanding. The extended planning time helps the school and university to understand each other's culture, develop trust, and learn to work and avoid barriers together (Buly et al., 2015; Thorkildsen & Stein, 2015; Walsh & Backe, 2013; Weerts, 2007).

Communication system

SUCPs are sustained through communication. For this reason, a major step is creating a sustainable communication system across all levels (e.g., within the school, within the university, between school and university, and between district and university). Communication gaps or poor communication is noted as one of the most frequent reasons for a partnership to fail (Anyon & Fernandez, 2007; Baker, 2011; Buly et al., 2015; Chu, Jones, Clancy, & Donnelly, 2014; Clark, 1999; Kezar, 2007). One solution to these problems is to develop a communication plan as part of the partnership's program design (Hartman, 2017; Kezar, 2007; Sutherland, 2017; Turley & Stevens, 2015). A communication plan designates different vehicles of communication (e.g., email, group meeting, and conference call), frequency, and purpose (e.g., update work, sharing of challenges, feedback).

While formal communication built into a communication plan is important, informal communication is just as significant (Kezar, 2007). This is often where honest exchange occurs and problems are identified early. The BSC plays a key role in this type of communication, informally checking with various members of the partnership. While informal communication is too hard to plan, it should exist. Successful partnerships have

noted it as one of the key factors that organizations need to consider as it helps them to understand each other and identify problems early (Hartman, 2017; Kezar, 2007; Sutherland, 2017; Turley & Stevens, 2015).

The sum total of these practices helps the two systems to move from two distinctive cultures toward a new shared culture with a common vision and mutual understanding of the issue. It also addresses the challenges that destroy partnerships, such as incompatible goals, lack of trust, and infrequent communications.

Execution Phase

The last phase of the partnership is the execution. At this phase, the collaboration is focused on the implementation and evaluation of the program that has been designed. Often, the collaboration flounders if the execution phase begins with inadequate planning, limited clarification of role and responsibilities, and an absence of a communication system.

Implementation

From the outset of this stage, every participant should be able to affirm the necessity of the partnership and have a clear understanding of the vision statement, his or her role and responsibilities (Anyon & Fernandez, 2007; Baker, 2011; Hartman, 2017; Kezar, 2007; Sutherland, 2017; Turley & Stevens, 2015). Such focus will help the agenda unfold. However, all participants should also be flexible and understanding. Unfortunately, the collaborative partnership rarely flows as smoothly as the description on paper (Baker, 2011; Hartman, 2017; Turley & Stevens, 2015). Participants should have a "We can do it, we can make it work" mind-set. The flexibility should be driven by the conviction for the partnership and by the vision statement.

At this stage, learning is particularly important (Turley & Stevens, 2015). Each participant must learn new ways to work together—exchanging information, implementing new procedures, and engaging in constant communication. New habits are being developed. Through this learning, the new shared culture emerges. The BSC should facilitate learning by checking with the participants to troubleshoot issues as they emerge (Walsh & Backe, 2013). In addition, communication is significant at this point. The partnership vision and goals need to be continually reiterated and clarified.

Evaluation

Evaluation is essential to maintaining partnerships and serves a variety of important purposes (Clark, 1999; Fueyo & Lewis, 2002; Kezar, 2007; Thorkildsen & Stein, 1996; Walsh & Backe, 2013). First, evaluation helps partners determine if they are creating a shared culture within the vision statement and if their processes are aligned. Second, partners will not understand if they are closer to achieving their goals unless they conduct ongoing evaluations. Partnerships are often difficult and laborious to maintain. Without evidence of the partnership's impact, it is often difficult to keep both systems involved and to

maintain momentum toward creating a new culture and working through the stains of culture clash. Although evaluations may not always show success, they can identify problem areas that partners can address, allowing them to get closer to meeting their goals and developing a mutual culture. Identifying a problem might sometimes be discouraging and hence lead to punitive actions such as pointing fingers toward one individual or pulling out of the partnership. For this reason, it is crucial to understand that the intent of ongoing evaluation is to identify issues early on and be proactive. The ongoing evaluation should be a tool that develops a dynamic decision-making process rather than judging the situation as "good" or "bad." Third, evaluation helps identify whether participants understand their roles, if the structure in place is clear, communication is working, and appropriate resources are available for the partnership to work.

Partnerships should continuously build on past success and use past failures as a guide to identifying what they should avoid. Evaluation is a reality check to ensure that partnership activities are on target (Fuentes & Spice, 2015; Fueyo & Lewis, 2002; Kezar, 2007; Thorkildsen & Stein, 1996; Walsh & Backe, 2013). Incorporate systematic procedures for justifying and initiating changes in goals, deliverables, and timelines. Project objectives and goals need to be continually reiterated, clarified, and, at times, renegotiated.

A large number of elements are to be considered when developing an SUCP. I shared some of the main conditions necessary to create and sustain a successful collaborative partnership. An awareness of the importance of planning is crucial to the success of the partnership, as well as viewing planning and implementation as separate developmental stages within the formation of the partnership (Anyon & Fernandez, 2007; Baker, 2011; Chu et al., 2014). I would also like to emphasize that an SUCP should be viewed as coalition. When developed, there should be respect for the wants and needs of all players to create a climate of respect, collaboration, and trust. Otherwise, the chances of success are minimal.

Concluding Thoughts

For real improvement in the field, university and school districts cannot afford to simply collaborate for occasional research projects (Coburn & Penuel, 2016). There should be a formation of a long-term partnership centered on mutual commitment to produce high-quality research, improve educational practices in schools, and contribute to the field. When established properly, an SUCP can help solve many of the problems that educators face. As Dixon and Ishler (1992) stated, a collaborative partnership between universities and schools is a "time for reevaluation and renewal, an opportunity for reflection, and a mechanism for preventing a return to the old ways" (p. 32). Both university faculty and school personnel need to recognize the value of such partnership. However, these partnerships are not common because of time, funding, and resources needed to initiate and support these partnerships (Dixon & Ishler, 1992).

In the past, federal funding was provided to support partnerships between educators and other organizations. As an example, in 1999, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs provided funding for the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Partnership, a partnership between professional and family organizations to support practices and research-based interventions by connecting research, policy, practice, and people (IDEA Partnership, 2014). Within the next 15 years, more than 50 organizations joined IDEA Partnership to improve outcomes for all students by bridging the work of decision makers, researchers, and stakeholders in education (IDEA Partnership, n.d.). With the strength of the partnerships, IDEA Partnership was able to support practice changes that have been called *landmark changes* in the education of students with disabilities. Unfortunately, IDEA Partnership came to a close by the end of 2016 due to limited available funding. However, their work and accomplishments have been made available to the public by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (n.d.) and can be found at http://www.nasdse.org/Projects/ IDEAPartnership. *Leading by Convening* is a document detailing the kind of collaboration that IDEA Partnership believes is necessary to achieve change in educational practice (IDEA Partnership, 2014).

Given this past success, leadership is needed to form a new national network to support work between university faculty and school personnel in the general field of education. This network could facilitate the sharing of information about the most effective ways to collaborate. Such efforts might include hosting a conference for university and school representatives or opening an online forum for exchanging strategies for creating and maintaining these types of partnerships. Working toward establishing a national network is important because it might be the only way to support work between school personnel and university faculty, reducing the current gap between research and practice.

Conflict of Interest

Funding

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Bio

Yara N. Farah, PhD, received her doctorate in educational psychology from Baylor University, specializing in gifted education and measurement. She has a master's degree in special education, mild to moderate, from California State University Northridge (CSUN, '11) and a bachelor's degree in elementary education, with a minor in psychology and a minor in philosophy, as well as a diploma in special education from the American University of Beirut (AUB, '09). For the past 3 years, she coordinated and provided research support for the partnership between Center for Gifted Education at the College of William and Mary and a large school district in Arizona. Since 2013, she has served on the board of directors for The Association for the Gifted (TAG)—Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Previously, she worked as a special education teacher in international baccalaureate schools and as a paraprofessional in fully inclusive classrooms.