The Good, Bad & Messy of Working in Collaboratives

I Belong, I Can Improve, I Will Persist! Nurturing Social-Emotional Learning in Out-of-School-Time
November 10, 2016
Sobrato Nonprofit Center, Redwood Shores, CA
SEL Challenge Partners

A collaboration between:

- expert practitioners delivering exemplary SEL programs in 8 unique communities
- a team of researchers
- a national foundation
- ADD DOLLAR & TIME INVESTMENT HERE
A Video Overview

Vimeo link [here](#)
SEL Challenge Learning Community
2014-2016

• GOOD
  – Safe space for innovation
  – Bottom up approach/defer to the experts
  – Convening under one roof
  – Continuous improvement fueled by data

• BAD
  – Time commitment: more hands on than traditional grants

• MESSY
  – Build and sustain momentum
  – Consensus from a variety of program types
  – Defining final product/disseminating findings
  – Communication in between convenings
  – Finding right “entry point” for other organizations to engage in the work
Silicon Valley Out-of-School-Time Collaborative

A collaboration between:

• 9 regional OST organizations with strong academic programs and a desire to improve

• 4 local funders

• 2 local evaluation and program quality consultants

• $2.6M over six years
Silicon Valley Out-of-School-Time Collaborative
2010-16

• GOOD
  – Real time learning for all
  – Relationships & support systems established
  – SEL now baked in!
  – PQA and resources provided
  – Chance to speak as a cohort to funders

• MESSY
  – Trust & competition
  – Takes time to implement new things and iterate
  – Defining success
  – Staff turnover during collaborative time
  – Variable commitment to the processes

• BAD
  – Costs in time and money
  – Rigid goals

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We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses.

- Abraham Lincoln
A Few Solutions
A Few Solutions

• On the funder side
  – Map out all project components without losing adaptability
  – Build in ways to share findings and lessons with the field
  – Keep open the pluralism
  – Plan flexibility into the budget & strategy

• On the nonprofit side
  – More rigor and higher expectations of collaborators
  – Assess your organizational needs
  – Work with experts to ensure correct strategy is implemented
For More Information….

• SEL Challenge
  – scefdn.org
  – SELpractices.org
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• Silicon Valley Out-of-School-Time Collaborative
  – sandhillfoundation.org
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