

A Guide for Systems Change:

**Informed by the Office of Early & Elementary Learning's
Development of
West Virginia's Comprehensive System for Early Learning**

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A Guide for Systems Change:

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Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to provide tools and direction to state education agency (SEA) staff teams charged with leading large collaborative groups focused on long-term initiatives. Our development of this guide is informed by the experience of the West Virginia Office of Early & Elementary Learning, which created a comprehensive system of support for early learning in West Virginia through a process that stretched from 2012 through 2017.

Indeed, it is the process of the organization and implementation of the Pre-K through Grade Five (P-5) initiative, rather than a chronology of events, that is the heart of this story. The Office of Early & Elementary Learning adopted a logic model as an organizing principle that has continued to guide the work and managed a collaborative process that has involved hundreds of people. Having observed the development of the P-5 initiative, others within the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE), as well as external stakeholders, have become interested in understanding how to replicate such a process for their own work, particularly in light of how well organized the Early Learning Initiative is, how effective its communication with the state board and constituents is, and how successfully goals and targets have been pursued.

Overview of Use

This guide is designed to be used by an internal facilitator or initiative leader who is responsible for carrying out the process.

Introducing the Guide's Themes

The guide will discuss six core themes fundamental to systems change and consider the experience of the Office of Early & Elementary Learning related to each theme. Under each theme, lessons learned, guiding questions, and tools and resources are featured.

- Establishing the early learning system in West Virginia began with the theme of **collaboration**, because it was mandated by state policies, by best practices for early learning, and by the characteristics of early education programs in West Virginia.
- **Communication** is an essential underpinning of collaboration, and the West Virginia Early Learning Initiative established multiple avenues of communication within the WVDE, with the West Virginia Board of Education, and throughout the state and nation.

- The **logic model**, created early in the West Virginia Early Learning Initiative, became a source of direction, growth, and accountability as it was revisited and revised.
- The **core team**, typically 3-5 staff members, has been essential to the initiative's successful management.
- **Leadership** of the West Virginia Early Learning Initiative centered in the core team and the director of the Office of Early & Elementary Learning, who sustained the vision and managed the activities, but leadership was also widely distributed among many internal and external partners.
- The role of **facilitation** was also essential to the Early Learning Initiative, given the size of the collaborative and its reach over distance and time, to keep everyone and their work knit together by the flexible structure of the logic model.

Collaboration

Definition and Purpose

Collaboration is defined as “the action that groups take together” by Advocacy & Communication Solutions, who further distinguish networks, coalitions, alliances, and partnerships as types of collaboratives. For systems change to occur within an SEA, there are often many individuals and

groups that need to collaborate, within the SEA and externally, often across the state and sometimes nationally. The purpose of this section is to consider key steps and key questions in creating an environment where collaboration will flourish.

“It was hard to do, to convince all the partners around the state to do this together.”

Clayton Burch, Associate Superintendent, WVDE

Importance of Collaboration for the Early Learning Initiative

From the outset collaboration was a core principle of the Early Learning Initiative's operations, because it was necessary to convene the many groups involved in early learning across the state, because it was mandated by state policy, and because it reflected best practices for early learning. The P-5 Early Learning Advisory Council and its six work groups were the contexts within which most of the collaboration occurred. Fundamentally, two levels of collaboration were essential: internally, across WVDE units, and externally across the state, to engage state and local agencies and private entities. All the WVDE Office of Early & Elementary Learning coordinators participated on the Advisory Council and work groups. The success of the pre-K program and the impact of Birth-Five on the Campaign for Grade Level Reading required grades K-5 to look at a pre-K approach. These developments had an impact on revisions to West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510, the primary instructional and support policy for pre-kindergarten through grade twelve in schools. Revised policy 2510 redefined the definition of school readiness statewide and cross-referenced standards and non-standard policies.

WVDE succeeded in establishing strong collaborations with the Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) professional development directors, and the work groups were a critical place for that to occur. Since the Early Learning Initiative's inception, West Virginia lawmakers have passed legislation to eliminate the RESAs. Therefore, external collaborative partnerships have become even more important, and include groups such as the West Virginia Early Childhood Advisory Council, Head Start, child care groups, home visiting entities, institutions of higher education, and maternal, child, and infant groups.

Lessons Learned

- Establish a collaborative structure that will enable the initiative to engage critical internal and external partners.
- Design the advisory group/work groups deliberately to establish operational definitions and procedures, ensuring cross-office and cross-organization representation.
- Enable capacity building of local education agencies (LEAs), schools, and others participating in the collaborative structure by giving them a say and ownership.

Guiding Questions

- Who are the key partners for collaboration, both internal and external? Do they share the same vision and mission or does this need to be addressed? If so, how?
- Who should invite them to participate, through what process?
- What structures might best facilitate collaboration within and across organizations for the initiative? Do these structures currently exist or do they need to be established?
- How is capacity within partners currently built? In what ways does that method help or hinder the goals of the initiative? How can capacity-building strategies be refined?
- What is the optimal frequency for the board and work groups to meet? Where should they meet, or should some of their meetings/communication occur virtually?

Suggested Tools and Resources

- **Partnerships: Frameworks for Working Together:** This guidebook by The Compassion Capital Fund (CCF), administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, helps organizations answer several key questions: Why are effective partnerships important? What are the different forms that partnerships can take? What are key steps to establishing effective partnerships? What are key steps to managing effective partnerships to achieve mutually agreed-upon outcomes?
<http://www.strengtheningnonprofits.org/resources/guidebooks/Partnerships.pdf>
- **Assess Your Collaboration:** This tool by Advocacy & Communication Solutions helps collaborative efforts reflect on their progress, no matter what stage they are

in: during planning, throughout implementation, or as your collaborative effort is winding down to completion. Use this tool to: better understand the components of successful collaboration during planning; help to continuously improve or correct your course of action during implementation; or reflect on lessons learned at the conclusion of a collaborative effort. http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/tools_and_resources_2016/ACS_Assess_Your_Collaboration-75.pdf

- **Network Mapping Tool:** This tool by Advocacy & Communication Solutions can be used to identify and prioritize relationships with other organizations and individuals. Collect and use this information during the formation of a collaborative effort or a new strategy. http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/tools_and_resources_2016/ACS_Network_Mapping.pdf
- **Collective Impact Questions: Mutually Reinforcing Activities:** This tool by Advocacy & Communication Solutions provides a set of questions to help shape a collective impact effort and the organizations involved. http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/tools_and_resources_2017/ACS_Collective_Impact_Questions_EDITED.pdf

Communication

Definition and Purpose

“... The ability to get that communication down to a very clean, clear, succinct— one-pagers that a board member or a superintendent can read, understand, and say “I get it.” ... We want to take that leadership down in the weeds of the work too much, and then we lose them.”
Clayton Burch, Associate Superintendent, WVDE

Merriam-Webster defines communication as “a technique for expressing ideas effectively ... [and as] the technology of the transmission of information (as by print or telecommunication).” As an essential underpinning of collaboration, communication will likely require multiple strategies to knit together partnerships and deliver messages to and secure feedback from an array of stakeholders. The purpose of this section is to look at key considerations

and questions in designing a communications plan that will reach significant audiences and provide them with important information and opportunities for feedback.

Importance of Communication for the Early Learning Initiative

The West Virginia Office of Early & Elementary Learning initially faced some challenges in communicating their progress and accomplishments, as one key player noted “It’s that nose to the grindstone... we never took that breath to come up to tell the story.” Through their work with the Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center (ARCC) facilitator, the office

produced a communication tool posted on-line. This one-page brief was produced quarterly the month following the P-5 Advisory Council and work group meetings. The template was simple, easy to follow, designed to communicate progress, and initially a mechanism to communicate to the West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE), but subsequently with Head Start partners, the State Early Childhood Advisory Council, and Department of Health and Human Resources. Posting the briefs on the website and continually updating enabled policymakers to track the work with confidence and with minimal investment of time.

Lessons Learned

- Create succinct communication vehicles for reaching out to the state board of education and other policymakers.
- Give state legislators data that enable them to see the impact of the initiative on the individual district that they represent.
- Make use of the logic model as a vehicle to promote transparency of communication, because the logic model shows the work, the roles of multiple partners, and emphasizes the importance of all its elements in achieving the proposed work.
- Identify easily measured or recognized assessments or results of the work to communicate to stakeholders and policymakers. One aspect may be to provide collaborative members with communications that they can send out as their own.

Guiding Questions

- Who are the people and groups with whom it is most important that you communicate? Who are the second tier of audiences?
- What communication channels might be most effective in reaching each of these groups? Do they currently exist or would you need to establish them? Should these be two-way communication channels that enable you to receive suggestions and feedback?
- How should you communicate with and engage senior leaders, whether internal to the SEA or external?
- What communication channels will enable you to most efficiently communicate with a minimum of staff time commitment? Which ones will allow you most efficiently to keep the messaging current?

Suggested Tools and Resources

- ***The BSCP Center Strategic Communications Toolbox:*** This toolkit by the Building State Capacity and Productivity (BSCP) Center provides SEAs a framework for developing effective communication strategies or processes—resulting in clear, aligned, and proactive communication tied to the SEA’s vision, mission, goals, and strategies. The communication strategies can be integrated into an existing plan or used to create a new communications plan. By working in teams to discuss key questions, studying examples from other SEAs, and using sample tools and

resources, the Toolbox guides a team through the development of a plan that can be tailored to meet their agency's specific communication needs.

<http://www.bscpcenter.org/toolbox/>

- **The BSCP Center List of Strategic Communication Tools:** The BSCP Center is gathering and reviewing various resources that can be used by SEAs in their strategic communication efforts. The resources are organized around the strategic communication framework topics (Leadership/Organizational Structures and Processes, Message/Campaign, External Communication, and Evaluation Tools and Practices) and will continue to grow as we collect and review additional resources. <http://www.bscpcenter.org/communications/>
- **Framing Public Issues Toolkit:** This Toolkit was created by the FrameWorks Institute to help advocates learn and apply new communications thinking to frame their work for better public understanding and engagement. <http://www.frameworksinstitute.org/assets/files/PDF/FramingPublicIssuesfinal.pdf>
- **The Value-Added Research Dissemination Framework:** This resource from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, was developed based on the results of a broad, multidisciplinary literature review. The framework emphasizes six elements: 1) The core challenges, or the persistent issues that face disseminators; 2) organizational factors, such as institutional logics and limited time and access to research; 3) the disseminator's role; 4) a flow of activities that address the core challenges; 5) communication concepts that can help disseminators respond to common dissemination obstacles; and 6) the characteristics of the research findings shared as well as those of the target audience can substantially affect the success of dissemination. <https://ictr.wiscweb.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/163/2016/10/valueadded.pdf>

Logic Model

Definition and Purpose

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation defines a logic model “as a picture of how your organization does its work – the theory and assumptions underlying the program. A program logic model links outcomes (both short- and long-term) with program activities/processes and the theoretical assumptions/principles of the program.” The purpose of this section is to explain how the logic model is introduced, continually revisited and revised, and referenced as a set of guiding principles that keeps the team on track, accountable, and on the same page, but simultaneously allows the work to grow and mature.

Procedurally our work actually revolves around the logic model. If we're doing something and it doesn't fit, then we need to ask ourselves why we are doing it.

*Monica DellaMea, Executive Director,
WVDE Office of Early Learning*

Importance of the Logic Model for the Early Learning Initiative

The logic model became an organizational tool that sustained the Early Learning Initiative over several years, providing both stability and a route to continually revise the work as needed. Staff members literally used the logic model to organize their calendars as well as monthly staff meetings and weekly standing meetings. The leader of the Office of Early & Elementary Learning covered an entire office wall with poster-sized prints of the logic model to allow him to easily reference the model in his personal reflections and in conversations with others: “Everybody in this building is reminded of what that P-5 group does when they come to my office.” Staff members of the Office of Early & Elementary Learning also credit the logic model with having helped them become more efficient in delivery and achieve the necessary statewide reach, as well as create connections with LEAs and RESAs that became avenues for capacity building.

The P-5 initiative team spent substantial time identifying ways to measure the outcomes of the logic model, think critically about indicators of success, and, ultimately, evidence. Part of the conversation was to consider available data, “the low-hanging fruit,” easily accessible evidence relevant to the indicators of success. Although the day-to-day work encourages focus on the logic model’s outputs, the transition to outcomes is essential.

Lessons Learned

- Make the logic model the **organizing principle** for the initiative.
- Create visual and process reminders of the logic model.
- Identify and communicate **outcomes and measures** that enable the team to assess progress towards the results the logic model promises to accomplish.
- Use the logic model as a vehicle for continuous quality improvement; because it is constructed as a living, flexible document, it can grow and improve with the work.
- Further the **core team’s efficiency and reach** by using the logic model as the organizing principle.

Guiding Questions

- Who are the key people and groups to engage in the process of creating and sustaining the logic model?
- Is there already a logic model in place that we can build upon, or is research needed to determine options for models?
- Through what process, over what time period, should we plan to construct the initial logic model?

Suggested Tools and Resources

- ***Logic Models for Program Design, Implementation, and Evaluation: Workshop Toolkit***: This toolkit by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northeast and Islands is designed to help practitioners learn the overall purpose of a logic model,

the different elements of a logic model, and the appropriate steps for developing and using a logic model for program evaluation. This toolkit includes a facilitator workbook, a participant workbook, and a slide deck.

<https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=REL2015057>

- **Logic Models: A Tool for Effective Program Planning, Collaboration, and Monitoring:** This guide by REL-Pacific describes the role of logic models in effective program planning, collaboration, and monitoring. It defines the four components of these models—resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes—and explains how they connect. <http://relpacific.mcrel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/LogicModelsELMORG21.pdf>
- **Logic Models: A Tool for Designing and Monitoring Program Evaluations:** This guide by REL-Pacific introduces logic models as a tool for designing program evaluations and defines the major components of education programs—resources, activities, outputs, and short-, mid-, and long-term outcomes—and uses an example to demonstrate the relationships among them. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2014007.pdf
- **Using Logic Models to Bring Together Planning, Evaluation, and Action: Logic Model Development Guide:** This guide by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation provides an orientation to the underlying principles and language of the program logic model so it can be effectively used in program planning, implementation, and dissemination of results. <https://ag.purdue.edu/extension/pdehs/Documents/Pub3669.pdf>

The Core Team

Definition and Purpose

The National Implementation Research Network defines implementation teams as “actively involved on a daily basis with implementation efforts devoted to assuring the full and effective uses of effective innovations.” They consist of a core group of people (3-5) with

“The core team is the most important part of the process. We hash out issues together because we want to do the best for kids.”

Karen Browning, Early Childhood County Collaborative Panelist

adequate FTE for the task “who are accountable for guiding the overall implementation of an initiative.” The purpose of this section is to explain the role of a core team, emphasizing the functions of overseeing the collaborative network, the logic model process, and communications.

Importance of the Core Team to the Early Learning Initiative

West Virginia had taken important policy steps to support a statewide early learning initiative before the 2012 establishment of the Office of Early & Elementary Learning, but it was with the creation of that core team that the initiative began to gain momentum. The ARCC came in to assist the Office of Early & Elementary Learning in the creation of the P-5 Advisory Council and its work groups, the logic model, and the communication plan.

Lessons Learned

- Engage state leaders from other agencies, not just to receive information, but to become part of work groups and feel that they play contributing roles in the initiative.
- Create processes to sustain momentum between meetings of the collaborative group, like pre-meeting planning, post-meeting consultation, and extensive note taking to preserve the discussions and decisions that occur at meetings.
- Support other SEA team leaders who attend meetings and return to implement their responsibilities through the logic model with their own teams. They are likely to adapt structures and tools shared at the larger meeting, a process that also serves to build the capacity of their teams.

Guiding Questions

- Is an administrative team already in place that will serve as the basis for the core team, either because it is assigned to the initiative or because that team is the most qualified?
- How do the roles of the administrative team intersect with the logic model?
- What is the optimal frequency for the board and work groups to meet? Where should they meet, or should some of their meetings/communication occur virtually? How will the team assign staffing to the board and work groups?

Suggested Tools and Resources

- **Active Implementation Module 3: Implementation Teams:** Implementation teams support the implementation, sustainability, and scale-up of usable innovations by integrating the use of implementation stages, drivers, and improvement cycles. This module by the National Implementation Research Network's Active Implementation Hub is designed to assist new and existing implementation teams in actively building capacity and scaling-up programs and innovations.
<http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/module-3>
- **State Capacity Assessment (for Scaling Up Evidence-Based Practices):** This tool—produced by the National Implementation Research Network, State Implementation and Scaling-Up of Evidence-Based Practices Center, is intended to assist state agencies, regional education agencies, and school districts implement effective innovations that benefit students. The capacity of a state to facilitate implementation refers to the systems, activities, and resources that are necessary to successfully adopt and sustain effective innovations.
<http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/NIRN-SCA-v25.3.pdf>
- **Stages of Implementation Analysis: Where Are We?:** This planning tool by the National Implementation Research Network, State Implementation and Scaling-Up of Evidence-Based Practices Center, provides an implementation team with the

opportunity to assess, plan, and track stage-based activities and improve the success of implementation efforts across stages.

<http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/NIRN-Education-StagesOfImplementationAnalysisWhereAreWe.pdf>

- **Implementation Drivers: Assessing Best Practices:** This planning tool by the National Implementation Research Network, State Implementation and Scaling up of Evidence-Based Practices Center, can be used by implementation teams during any implementation stage of an innovation to assess the implementation drivers, or key components of capacity and the functional infrastructure supports that enable a program’s success.
<http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/NIRN-Education-ImplementationDriversAssessingBestPractices.pdf>
- **Strategic Performance for Your Branch: Organizing People and Their Work in an LEA or SEA Division:** This guidebook by the Building State Capacity and Productivity Center provides information on how to apply the multistep Strategic Performance Management process to a single division within an organization or a strand of work across an organization.
<http://www.bscpcenter.org/strategicperformancemanagement/resources/SPM%20for%20Division%20or%20Branch.pdf>

Leadership

Definition and Purpose

Education reform guided by an SEA necessarily engages a web of leadership—from the state department itself, individual offices within that agency, the state superintendent, district superintendents, other government agencies, and private organizations engaged in

“Without leadership from the state we could not have strong collaboration at the local level.”

Karen Browning, Early Childhood County Collaborative Panelist

the collaboration as well. It is also evident that “leadership” is not a capacity reserved for those in formal leadership roles. Particularly in an enterprise that requires collaboration among many entities and individuals, leadership is distributed widely to different people carrying out different functions at varying levels of each

organization. Thus the attributes of leadership may also be dispersed and shared among many different people.

Importance of Leadership to the Early Learning Initiative

Early learning in WV has benefitted from strong leadership and support – from governors, the legislature, the WVBE, state superintendents, public and private partner organizations, and the Office of Early & Elementary Learning itself. Strong support from the highest state leadership is credited with helping the P-5 initiative succeed, and sustaining that support has fueled the commitment of the Office of Early & Elementary Learning staff to articulating their progress and communicating that succinctly and frequently among these leaders.

Because of the national as well as state recognition received by the Early Learning Initiative, it now has sustained credibility over several years.

Core team leadership, including planned succession of leaders, has also contributed significantly. The individuals who have directed the Office of Early & Elementary Learning are all credited with leadership that articulated the vision for statewide early learning and held that up as a continual commitment. In addition, they exercised the management skills to carry out the work, including the decision to adopt a logic model to guide the collaborative process. The current executive director of the Office of Early & Elementary Learning worked within that office for several years on the initiative before advancing to her current position upon the promotion of the former director.

Lastly, the Early Learning Initiative has engaged the leaders of other agencies and organizations across the state within the collaborative process. They, in turn, have taken the tools and processes acquired through the collaborative and used them in working with their own teams. In this way, leadership has been distributed broadly throughout the state to carry out the many elements of the initiative.

Lessons Learned

- Look to leaders who sustain a long-term vision and commitment to the outcomes of the initiative.
- Adopt a logic model to guide the initiative, permitting less experienced staff members to lead in part by relying on that structure throughout implementation.
- Distribute leadership throughout the initiative: to work group and team leaders, to key collaborative partners.
- Ensure that the distributed leaders are engaged with the logic model and identify ways to measure their outcomes using its logic.
- Support leaders using information and tools acquired through the initiative with their own teams to build staff capacity.
- Articulate progress and milestones in ways that keep state political leaders and educators informed about the initiative’s momentum, ensuring that its accomplishments and successes are visible statewide.

“I had no doubt where we were going to go [in the beginning of the early learning initiative].”
Clayton Burch, Associate Superintendent, WVDE

Guiding Questions

- What are the key functions that leaders will play to ensure this initiative succeeds? Sustaining the vision? Guiding a collaborative? Assessing progress against the logic model? Others?
- Are people in place to carry out each of these key functions? Do they have the capacity to accomplish what they need to?

- Would coaching or training help these leaders accomplish their functions better?
Could they partner with others to succeed?

Suggested Tools and Resources

- **The CEELo Leadership Academy:** The Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) manages a one-year leadership academy for individuals with responsibilities for state early childhood education programs. Composed of four in-person sessions, intensive coaching, and interim online learning, the academy's purpose is to build SEA leadership and management capacity to advance state agency visions for early childhood education.
<http://ceelo.org/about-leadership-academy/>
- **Great State Leaders: A Competency Framework for Growing Talent in a State Education Agency:** The U.S. Department of Education funded this competency framework through its Reform Support Network. Its purpose is to help state education agencies systemically examine the leadership skills of staff, identify weaknesses, and support improvement of staff in specific functions. Designed for use either individually or with a team, this framework relies on a four-point scale of progressively advancing levels of capacity. Completing the exercises could lead to designing professional development plans, opportunities for cross-team learning, mentoring, or criteria for new hires.
<http://www.schoolturnaroundsupport.org/resources/great-state-leaders-competency-framework>
- **State Consortium on Education Leadership (SCEL) Toolkit for SEAS to Increase District Leadership Capacity:** The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) has produced a draft toolkit to guide SEAs seeking to build the capacity of school district leaders. Topics include state leadership policy; building an effective leadership team; developing high quality leaders through recruiting, training, retaining, and succession planning; and building partnerships.
http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2010/SCEL_Draft_Toolkit_2010.pdf
- **Supporting Principal Leadership for Pre-K—3rd Grade Learning Communities:** Presented by CEELo, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education, the purpose of this webinar was to enhance SEA and LEA leadership capacity building. Topics including cultivating standards of effective practice and developing practical implementation strategies for principals and related leaders of P-3 grades.
<http://ceelo.org/supporting-principal-leadership-pk-3-learning-communities/>

Facilitation

Definition and Purpose

The National School Reform Faculty describes facilitation as “a crucial part of any kind of collaborative work.” The purpose of this section is to explain the role of facilitation, emphasizing the functions of supporting the collaborative process, the logic model process, and communications.

... The ability to facilitate such a diverse group of stakeholders and keep them on task. Because when you only meet quarterly you’ve got to get your biggest bang for your buck in those meetings. The ability to facilitate was the number one skill that we probably need to recognize.
Clayton Burch, Associate Superintendent, WVDE

Importance of Facilitation to the Early Learning Initiative

For the Office of Early & Elementary Learning staff, the facilitation provided by the ARCC staff is often the assistance that they highlight above all others: “Having someone you could count on to come in and facilitate such a mixed group.” Facilitation—the ability to coordinate a diverse group of stakeholders and keep them on task—is a critical skill. Facilitation in this sense included pre-meeting planning with the Office of Early & Elementary Learning staff as well as post-meeting reflection, which included both reflection on the meeting just ended and discussion of next steps. The work groups viewed the ARCC facilitation role as incorporating assistance designed to help everyone in the collaborative make connections and communicate back out to the field.

Lessons Learned

- Plan meetings in advance, record discussion at meetings, and reflect about meetings afterward in order to sustain momentum and connections from meeting to meeting and avoid a sense of disconnect.
- Enter meeting notes into the logic model so that others can see what occurred.
- Ensure that the steps taken and agreements secured at a meeting are not lost.

Guiding Questions

- Does the team have access to logistical support for facilitation, note taking, sustained communication?
- Are there opportunities for distributed leadership across the core team?

Suggested Tools and Resources

- **Considerations for Responsive Facilitation:** This resource by The National School Reform Faculty is intended as both a general reminder of important skills and a checklist of areas one might want to focus on for personal growth.
https://www.nsrffharmony.org/system/files/protocols/responsive_facilitation_0.pdf
- **Facilitator Tool Kit: A Guide for Helping Groups Get Results:** This facilitator tool kit by the Office of Quality Improvement, University of Wisconsin-Madison, is a

comprehensive, easy-to-use guide to tools, methods, and techniques for assisting groups with planning and improvement projects and interactive meetings. Clear, simple explanations and directions lead the reader through the selection and application of practical tools tested with university groups.

<https://oqi.wisc.edu/resourcelibrary/uploads/resources/Facilitator%20Tool%20Kit.pdf>

- **Facilitating Learning, Logistics and Longevity:** This Venn Diagram from the National School Reform Faculty identifies actions a leader can take to effectively facilitate learning, logistics, and longevity of an initiative.
https://www.nsrffharmony.org/system/files/protocols/facilitating_chart.pdf
- **Pocket Guide to Probing Questions:** This guide by the National School Reform Faculty distinguishes between clarifying and probing questions and provides examples of each.
https://www.nsrffharmony.org/system/files/protocols/probing_questions_guide.pdf

Milestones for the West Virginia Office of Early & Elementary Learning

- 2004: Early Learning Standards Framework developed (revised 2010, 2015, and 2017)
- 2004: Universal Pre-K policy developed (revised 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017)
- 2008: State Board of Education establishes comprehensive definition of School Readiness
- 2008: Equal state-aid funding for all Universal Pre-K students, regardless of setting
- 2010: WVDE Office of School Readiness established
- 2012: Policy 2510 breaks early learning into programmatic areas
- 2012: WVDE Office of Early & Elementary Learning established
- 2013 Multi-Stakeholder Meeting to establish the WV Leaders of Literacy: Campaign for Grade-Level Reading
- 2014: Legislation and policy to support a comprehensive approach to closing the third grade literacy achievement gap. *WVBE Policy 2512: A Transformative System of Support for Early Literacy* was established to ensure county boards of education are working from the same framework to support a comprehensive system of support for early literacy, now known as the *WV Campaign for Grade Level Reading*.
- 2015: All 55 WV counties join the National Campaign for Grade-Level Reading
- 2016: WV becomes one of six states that meet all 10 National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) quality benchmarks