

Communiversality

**Building a Neighborhood-based Culture of
Learning: Evaluating Progress of the East Side
Learning Collaborative**

Prepared in partnership with
East Side Learning Collaborative

Prepared by
Sheetal Rana
Research Assistant

University of Minnesota
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Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA)
University of Minnesota
330 HHH Center
301--19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455
Phone: (612) 625-1551
Fax: (612) 626-0273
E-mail: cura@umn.edu
Web site: <http://www.cura.umn.edu>

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Evaluating Progress of the East Side Learning Collaborative**

**By
Sheetal Rana
University of Minnesota, School of Social Work**

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Executive Summary

Purpose of Evaluation

This evaluation aimed at understanding two important areas related to the establishment and functioning of the East Side Learning Collaborative (ESLC): (1) environment, membership characteristics, structure of the ESLC, and other factors that influence the success of the collaborative, and (2) the process and outcomes of the ESLC, including the accomplishments and challenges.

Background

The ESLC is a network of over 25 organizations and residents of the Dayton's Bluff and Payne Phalen neighborhoods in Saint Paul. Stakeholders from East Side Saint Paul came together in the ESLC and set the following vision for Payne Phalen and Dayton's Bluff neighborhoods: *People of all ages are positive, responsible, contributing partners who know they belong; guide and support all our children; and who work together to create and sustain quality opportunities for young people to learn, grow, and lead.*

Data collection and analysis

Data for this evaluation were collected using 12 in-depth interviews, six with ESLC members and six with participants of the two professional development groups. The interview participants were selected using purposeful sampling and included members who were actively involved in the ESLC and the professional development groups. Data were also collected using an on-line survey. Twenty-seven ESLC members responded to the survey. In addition, a focus group was conducted with the ESLC members. The ESLC's evaluation matrix guided the data analysis.

Findings

Outcome A: Functioning collaborative formed.

The ESLC has established concrete and attainable goals and objectives. It uses a theory of change to plan its activities and evaluate its progress. The ESLC is perceived as having a unique purpose and contributing positively in the neighborhoods in a way that could not have been accomplished by individual organizations. The ESLC has facilitated communication among its members. The members view the ESLC as beneficial to their organizations as well as to the neighborhoods and share a stake in both the process and outcomes of the ESLC activities. Furthermore, the ESLC members perceive the ESLC as having adequate people power to accomplish its goals.

Outcome B: Networks of programs created.

Members of the ESLC have jointly planned and implemented several programs. The KidVenture programs were planned and implemented by the ESLC members. The programs were offered collaboratively for 10 weeks in the summer and 14 no-school days during the school year. A survey conducted for Minnesota After-School Program grant end-of-year one progress report, found that 766 young people participated in at least one of the KidVenture programs and 102 young people participated in 30 or more sessions across the programs.

The ESLC publishes the East Side Youth Guide to disseminate information about its members' programs. Thus far, the ESLC has published four editions and distributed over 8,000 copies of the East Side Youth Guide. Additionally, the ESLC organized community registration events where 15 organizations provided information to young people and families about their summer programs. The members of the ESLC also assist in disseminating information about programs offered by other member organizations.

Outcome D: Circulator transportation

The ESLC members worked together to increase young people's access to out-of-school-time programs in the neighborhoods through the circulator transportation. The circulator transportation operates in the

Payne Phalen and Dayton's Bluff neighborhoods. According to Minnesota After-School Program grant end-of-year one progress report, the circulator provided over 4,000 rides to young people during the summer of 2008.

Outcome G: Youth workers improved knowledge and effectiveness

Participation in professional development meetings led by the University of Minnesota Youth Studies department has increased youth workers' understanding of values and principles of youth work. Youth workers are more articulate about their learning and hold their work and self to high practice standards. The three main principles that they learned from the meetings are "meeting kids where they are," "asking kids what they want," and "co-creating safe space."

Youth workers are applying their learning in their everyday practice. Youth workers make concerted efforts to have meaningful conversations and to establish positive relationships with young people. Youth workers are adapting their approach to meet individual needs of young people. They promote young people's involvement in all aspects of planning, implementation, and evaluation. They understand that youth work takes place in a broad context and encompasses youth, other staff within and outside the organization, parents, and community members and that youth work can engage all of these in the service of young people, community, and the agency.

Discussion of findings

The findings suggest the presence of several factors in the ESLC that influence its success. The ESLC is perceived in the neighborhood and by its members as having a unique purpose and trying to accomplish goals that would be difficult for any single organizations to accomplish. The ESLC has increased the social capital of the member organizations. There is intellectual and political capital in the ESLC in terms of people power, knowledge, and skills to offer diverse out-of-school time services, support, and opportunities to young people in the neighborhoods. Professional development trainings have increased youth workers' skills and practice standards.

At the same time, there are two major challenges confronting the ESLC. Financial sustainability of ESLC programs and projects is a major challenge. Thus far, the availability of grant support and the City's leadership have been critical in sustaining the ESLC. The collaborative members have yet to develop creative ways to sustain the ESLC. Trust, understanding, and respect between the members of the ESLC are in the formative stages. The members are getting to know each other, but time constraints have been a barrier to communications between ESLC members.

Conclusion

The evaluation shows significant accomplishments of the ESLC, although there are challenges involved with regard to its sustainability and competing time demands of its members. The findings suggest that ESLC has achieved substantial success in providing a space for neighborhood stakeholders to come together, engage in constructive dialogue, collaboratively plan and implement programs that promote a culture of learning for young people in the neighborhoods.

Purpose of Evaluation

This evaluation aimed at understanding two important areas related to the establishment and functioning of the East Side Learning Collaborative (ESLC): (1) environment, membership characteristics, structure of the ESLC, and other factors that influence the success of the collaborative, and (2) the process and outcomes of the ESLC, including the accomplishments and challenges. An earlier evaluation of the ESLC was limited to collecting information on youth participation and program impacts. It yielded limited understanding of the factors that contributed to the outcomes and progress of the ESLC in developing a neighborhood-wide infrastructure that ultimately creates the culture of learning envisioned. This evaluation was designed to examine these aspects of the ESLC. Specifically, the project focused on two goals drawn from the ESLC's theory of change (see Appendix 1):

1. To create a seamless learning environment for youth by enabling diverse stakeholders to work collaboratively, marshal resources, and build a sustainable community infrastructure for youth-focused programs and opportunities.
2. To improve the capacities of youth workers to provide effective programming and leadership within their profession.

Background on the East Side Learning Collaborative

The ESLC is a network of over 25 organizations and residents of the Dayton's Bluff and Payne Phalen neighborhoods in Saint Paul. Stakeholders from East Side Saint Paul came together in the ESLC and set the following vision for Payne Phalen and Dayton's Bluff neighborhoods: *People of all ages are positive, responsible, contributing partners who know they belong; guide and support all our children; and who work together to create and sustain quality opportunities for young people to learn, grow, and lead.*

The ESLC has two interrelated focuses. The first is to build the collaborative capacity of the neighborhood (community-based organizations and youth workers along with parents, residents, and youth) to co-create coordinated learning opportunities that emphasize neighborhood and cultural identity and a commitment to place. Second, the ESLC seeks to increase young people's access to out-of-school learning opportunities and to increase young people's leadership skills, ownership, and opportunities to co-develop relevant enrichment experiences.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data for this evaluation was collected using 12 in-depth interviews, six with ESLC members and six with participants of the two professional development groups. Semi-structured interview guidelines were developed for the ESLC members and professional development groups (see Appendix 2). The interview guidelines aligned with the purpose of the study. Given the focus of this evaluation on understanding the processes and the effect of the collaborative and professional development training over time, it was important to interview informants that had substantial involvement in the collaborative and professional development groups from its initiation and over time. Therefore, the interview participants were selected using purposeful sampling and included members who were actively involved in the ESLC and the professional development groups. In addition to the interviews, an on-line survey was sent to the ESLC members. The survey adapted the *Wilder Collaborative Factors Inventory* developed by Mattessich, Murray-Close, and Monsey (2004). Twenty-seven ESLC members responded to the survey.

The ESLC's evaluation matrix guided the data analysis (see Appendix 3). This evaluation examines four of the intermediate outcomes listed on the ESLC's evaluation matrix: A, B, D, and G. Additional evaluation components are being examined by others. Preliminary analysis of the interview and survey

data mostly provided complementary information. However, there were some areas where survey responses contradicted information from the interviews. Preliminary findings of the evaluation were presented to the ESLC members and two focus group discussions were conducted to clarify the mixed results and to seek more information. Data from the focus groups were incorporated in the final analysis.

Findings

Outcome A: Functioning collaborative formed.

The ESLC has established concrete and attainable goals and objectives. It uses a theory of change to plan its activities and evaluate its progress. Eighty-eight percent of the 27 survey respondents agree that the ESLC has established reasonable goals. In the qualitative interviews, the ESLC members said that they have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the ESLC and describe them as participating in monthly meetings, contributing in the planning and implementation of the ESLC's activities, and disseminating information about the ESLC's programs in the neighborhood. However, in the survey, only 48 percent of the 27 people agreed that members of the ESLC have a clear sense of roles and responsibilities. The lack of a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities by over half of the survey respondents suggests varying levels of commitment and participation in the ESLC. The survey respondents ranged from those who do not participate or are passive participants (9 respondents) to moderately active (14 respondents) and very active participants (4 respondents).

The ESLC is perceived as contributing positively in the neighborhoods in a way that could not have been accomplished by individual organization. Eighty-four percent of the survey respondents agree that what the ESLC is trying to accomplish would be difficult for any single organizations to accomplish. The ESLC members note that the programs implemented by the ESLC would not have been as successful if they were offered by individual organizations. The ESLC has brought together neighborhood stakeholders to share resources, knowledge, and skills to plan and implement innovative programs. Two such examples discussed in this report are the circulator transportation and KidVenture.

The ESLC has facilitated increased communication between neighborhood-based organizations that serve young people. Members of the ESLC consist of a broad spectrum of public, non-profit, and community-based organizations. Activities in the meetings and collaborative planning and implementation of programs have increased communication and interaction among member organizations. The ESLC meetings include a "one-to-one" activity that allows members to talk and get to know other members and this "helps in making connections personally and professionally." ESLC programs, such as KidVenture, and small work groups allow members to work collaboratively during and outside the regular meetings. Sixty-six percent of the 27 survey respondents said that they communicate openly with other members of the collaborative. The ESLC members experience respect during the collaborative meeting when they express their opinions and ideas.

Most communications between members take place at formal level and during the ESLC meetings, although there is interest among ESLC members to increase inter-agency communication and interaction. According to some members of the ESLC, time constraints and frequent staff turnover of member organizations have hindered their active communication and interactions. Furthermore, the ESLC members are still in the process of getting to know other collaborative members, and some express uncertainty about the presence of trust among the ELSC members.

The ESLC members view the collaboration as beneficial to their organizations and share a stake in both process and outcomes of the collaborative activities. The ESLC has increased its members' visibility in the neighborhood and provided greater access to information about other organizations' activities. In addition, the ESLC has provided a space for members to co-create and implement out-of-school time

programs. For instance, the ESLC members collaboratively developed and applied for the Minnesota Department of Education After School Community Learning grant. This grant application was successful and the ESLC was awarded \$448,344 over 2 years (October 1, 2007 – August 31, 2009). The members then worked jointly to plan and implement various out-of-school time activities. This positive experience increased legitimacy for the ESLC and even motivated other organizations to become involved in the ESLC. The second grant that the ESLC applied for was the 21st Community Learning Centers grant. A group of ESLC members and colleagues doing neighborhood-based work on the West Side actively participated in the grant writing process. The ESLC facilitator wrote the grant based on the outcomes of this collaborative process. Unfortunately, this grant proposal was not funded.

The ESLC members perceive the ESLC as having adequate people power to accomplish its goals. However, the members also perceive the need for more and continued funding to sustain as well as expand its current initiatives. The ESLC has facilitated knowledge, skill, and resource sharing among neighborhood stakeholders to increase young people's access to programs in the neighborhood. The success of the circulator transportation and KidVenture programs has increased ESLC members' confidence in the collaborative. The role of the ESLC facilitator is viewed by its members as critical and contributing to the success of the ESLC. However, continuity of the ESLC programs depends on sustained availability of grant support. Some ESLC members noted that the collaborative has yet to address its sustainability. A major hindrance is that many continue to view the ESLC as an extension of the City, and the members rely on the facilitator to address the sustainability issues of the collaborative.

Outcome B: Networks of programs created.

Members of the ESLC have jointly planned and implemented several programs. As mentioned above, the ESLC members collaboratively applied for Minnesota Department of Education After School Community Learning grant and were awarded \$448,344. A survey conducted in 2008 for Minnesota After-School Program grant end-of-year one progress report found that 766 young people participated in at least one of the KidVenture programs and 102 young people participated in 30 or more sessions across the programs. The ESLC's joint initiatives for KidVenture have increased young people's learning. According to the 2008 survey, 92% of 129 young people in 1st- 4th grades increased their connectivity or relationships with adults outside their families that they know care about them and who they can depend on. Furthermore, 88% of the 61 young people in 5th- 8th grades improved their basic skills, such as increased self-confidence and ability to work well with others. The KidVenture camps, which were offered for 10 weeks in the summer and 14 no-school days during the school year, were collaboratively planned and implemented by the ESLC members, rather than being owned by any one member. The ESLC members worked together to raise funds for and to hire a staff to coordinate the KidVenture program activities.

The ESLC members coordinate to disseminate information about their programs in the neighborhoods. The ESLC produces the East Side Youth Guide that includes programs offered by member organizations in Payne Phalen and Dayton's Bluff neighborhoods. The ESLC has published four editions and distributed over 8,000 copies of the East Side Youth Guide. Additionally, the ESLC has organized community registration events where 15 organizations provided information to young people and families about their summer programs. The members of the ESLC also assist in disseminating information about programs offered by other member organizations. During the ESLC meetings, the members share their program information and hand out brochures/fliers to other members for distribution in the neighborhood.

Outcome D: Circulator transportation

The ESLC members worked together to increase young people's access to after-school programs in the neighborhoods. The circulator transportation operates in the Payne Phalen and Dayton's Bluff neighborhoods. This free service increases young people's access to after-school programs and ensures their safety by having stops in front of program locations. The ESLC has formed a circulator work group comprised of members from different organizations. This work group is tasked with planning the

circulator transportation routes and stops and monitoring ridership. The work group shares and seeks input from ESLC members when they change the circulator routes, stops, and schedules. The ESLC members use their neighborhood connections to inform young people and their families about the circulator transportation and its schedules. According to Minnesota After-School Program grant end-of-year one progress report, the circulator provided over 4,000 rides to young people on the East Side during the summer of 2008. Furthermore, the circulator transportation has staff time for at least one member organization. That organization uses its vehicle and staff to pick up and drop off young people participating in its programs. With the circulator, less time and resources are being allocated to pick up and drop off services.

Outcome G: Youth workers improved knowledge and effectiveness

The findings in this section apply to youth workers who participated in professional development training series, which started in Fall 2007 with two cohorts. Youth worker professional development is a part of the ESLC's initiative to increase young people's access to formal and informal out-of-school learning opportunities. The ESLC recognizes that when youth workers receive appropriate training, they are able to connect young people to the services and opportunities more effectively. Youth workers from Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Centers, schools, East and West side community youth agencies and neighborhood residents participate in two cohorts of professional development training with Professors Mike Baizerman and Ross VeLure Roholt from University of Minnesota's Youth Studies Department.

There are two main objectives of the professional development training. First, to increase the skills necessary for youth workers to penetrate their own taken for granted, ordinary, everyday lives, so that they can master the ways of seeing and acting basic to co-creative youth work. Second, help youth workers master the necessary skills to understand youth in their context and on their terms, so young people and youth workers can work together. The professional development training pedagogy reflected these objectives. The instructors co-created with individuals the two groups and the two groups co-created their learning goals and curricula, demonstrating in this way the approach the instructors wanted to teach youth workers to use with young people. The curricula are based on everyday practice issues, which the instructors connect to theories of community based healthy youth development and to theories, methods and practices of youth work in community context.

The following findings are based on six in-depth interviews with training participants, three from each group, and observation notes of one of the professional development groups.

Youth workers increased their understanding of the youth work profession. Participation in the meetings has increased youth workers' understanding of values and principles of youth work. Youth workers are more articulate about their learning and hold their work and self to high practice standards. They emphasize understanding young people as individuals, as a group, as community members, and as citizens. Youth workers who participated in the meetings reported the three main principles that they learned from the meetings were "meeting kids where they are," "asking kids what they want," and "co-creating safe space." Youth workers are applying what they learned in the following ways.

Youth workers make concerted efforts to have meaningful conversations and to establish positive relationships with young people. One youth worker noted that she talks to young people and has relationships with each of the young people in her program. Another youth worker said that he now understands youth work as mentoring young people, "giving them positive atmosphere, something to build on where they can have structure, where they would want to give back." Another youth worker noted, "I've learned that kids [today] are not like 10 years ago. We have to deal with them differently; you have to deal with every one of them differently."

A youth worker described the change in his communication with young people in the following way.

Last week, there is this kid. I was sitting in office, and I see him do something. I had put him out before. This time I called him. He said, “Yeah, yeah, I got to go.” I asked him, “Why do you have to go?” He didn’t want to talk but was willing to leave. I talked to him. He told me about his brothers and how he feels being the youngest in the family. I listened to him and understand where he was coming from. The kid said that I am doing some type of “mind stuff.” So now when he sees me, he tells me how he is doing.

Another youth worker described his experience in a program for young people aged around 17 to 18. The youth worker and his colleagues would lecture young people and leave the program hoping that the young people understood them. After participating in the meetings and learning the concepts of “meeting the kids where they are and finding out what the kids think,” the youth workers asked young people if they understood the lectures and found out that they did not. The youth workers changed the lectures to make it more understandable to young people.

“Then instead of talking *at* the kids, we started taking *with* the kids. We now know that kids know best what they want. Kids started telling us what they want. We started to get their trust. This goes with every kid we deal with now.”

Youth workers are adapting their approach to meet individual needs of young people. Youth workers practice reflexivity to understand their own taken-for-granted reality and to understand young people and situations in their uniqueness, similarity, normalcy, and possibility. One youth worker said, “I explain my point of view and do not dismiss the other person.” Another youth worker said, “I don’t have a one-sided perspective. I have an open mind when I talk to people.” Youth workers are also resolving conflicts between youth differently. Two youth workers said that in situations involving fights between young people they talk to young people to understand the issue and help young people resolve the issues instead of their earlier approach of warning young people or asking them to leave the recreation center. A youth worker said, “From then and till now, I feel changed in how I deal with people and how I deal with situations.”

Youth workers promote young people’s involvement in all aspects of planning, implementation, and evaluation. According to a youth worker, “asking kids what they want and what they think” is one of the most important learnings from the professional development meetings. Another youth worker noted that when involving young people, it is importance to ensure that every one has a voice and respect. One group has been working together with young people to co-create a mentor program. The young people in this group have provided valuable input to the design and implementation of the program. A youth worker said that she applied this experiential learning in a program. She helped young people in this program prepare a proposal using the logic model. The youth worker found that it was challenging to engage young people in this exercise, as it came to resemble formal classroom learning, but it allowed young people to co-create a proposal for a program.

Youth workers understand that youth work takes place in a broad context and encompasses youth, other staff within and outside the organization, parents, and community members and that youth work can engage all of these in the service of young people, community, and the agency. According to one youth worker, “I’ve learned about what’s its like to be person responsible for youth programs, the complexities of relationships with program administration, how to navigate that with knowing that youth is who you are working for.” Youth workers perceive collaboration within their organization and outside of the organization as an important aspect of youth work. Youth workers in one group are collaborating with their colleagues from other agencies. The group members use each other as resources for their programs. For instance, a youth worker invited another colleague to his program to provide computer lessons. This group is developing a program and is collaborating with other program staff to learn from them. “We are

looking at Dayton's Bluff and Margaret [recreation centers]. One of the sites we are hoping to look at is the Burnsville Garage, that's a really popular program. We are hoping to go there, observe, and learn from the program."

Discussion of Findings

The findings suggest the presence of several factors in the ESLC that influence its success. The ESLC is perceived in the neighborhood and by its members as having a unique purpose and trying to accomplish goals that would be difficult for any single organizations to accomplish. The ESLC has increased the social capital of the member organizations, and the members view the ESLC as beneficial to the neighborhoods as well as their organizations. There is intellectual and political capital in the ESLC in terms of people power, knowledge, and skills to offer diverse out-of-school time services, support, and opportunities to young people in the neighborhoods. The members share a stake in both process and outcomes of the collaborative activities and have co-created and implemented innovative programs to achieve the ESLC goals. Professional development trainings have increased youth workers' skills and practice standards, and youth workers are applying their learning to offer more meaningful and effective services and support to young people. These factors reflect the first- and second-order effects of collaboration described by Innes and Booher (1999) and suggest that the ESLC is progressing in a positive direction.

At the same time, there are two major challenges confronting the ESLC. Sustainability of the ESLC is a major challenge. Inadequate attention to sustainability has implications not only for the continuity of the current initiatives but also for their expansion. Thus far, the availability of grant support and the City's leadership have been critical in sustaining the ESLC. The collaborative members have yet to develop creative ways to sustain the ESLC. Ownership of the ESLC by its members is low, as it continues to be viewed as an extension of the City, and the members rely on the facilitator to address the sustainability issues of the collaborative. Time and resource constraints and frequent staff turnover of the ESLC member organizations pose additional barriers to addressing the sustainability of the ESLC.

Trust, understanding, and respect between the members of the ESLC are in the formative stages. The ESLC members have been interacting with each other during the meetings and in work group activities. The members are getting to know each other. However, competing work demands prevent ESLC members from allocating time to communicate or interact with other members in a way that foster greater trust, understanding and respect. A lack of understanding among some members of their roles and responsibilities further impedes development of trust and support structures needed to sustain and implement ESLC activities.

Conclusion

Although there are challenges involved with regard to its sustainability and competing work demands of its members, the evaluation shows significant accomplishments of the ESLC. The evaluation of the environment, membership characteristics, structure and other factors of the ESLC suggest that its stakeholders support and value the ESLC. This has provided the ESLC with people power, in terms of social, political, and intellectual capital. The evaluation of the process and outcomes of the ESLC suggest that its members share a stake in the collaborative activities and are working together to offer various out-of-school time programs in the neighborhoods. Youth workers who participated in the professional development trainings are developing meaningful relationships with young people and offering more effective services and support. These findings suggest that ESLC has achieved substantial success in providing a space for neighborhood stakeholders to come together, engage in constructive dialogue, and

collaboratively plan and implement programs that promote a culture of learning for young people in the neighborhoods.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Theory of Change

East Side Learning Collaborative - Theory of Change

Read our Theory of Change from bottom to top. S = strategy and O = objective. The bottom is year 1 and the top boxes are year 2.

Our **VISION** for our diverse Payne Phalen and Dayton's Bluff neighborhoods:
 People of all ages are positive, responsible, contributing partners who know they belong; guide and support all our children; and work together to create and sustain quality opportunities for young people to learn, grow, and lead.
(We include as partners in our vision all people who live, work, own a business or property, or attend school here)

STREAM 1: Connect the Circle	STREAM 2: Learning, Learning Everywhere	STREAM 3: Expand Capacities to Work with Youth	STREAM 4: Broadcast It!
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Strategies & Objectives (Sept. 08'-Aug. 09)</u> <u>WORKING NOTES:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inventory possible learning sites to expand 2. Parents and residents are engaged as teachers and planners so that residents are seen as contributors who guide & support children 3. new people & audiences get involved 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Strategies & Objectives (Sept. 08'-Aug. 09)</u> <u>WORKING NOTES:</u></p> <p>Kidventure continues and engages teachers with ties to neighborhood/kids Teen Teacher corp strengthens team building and training Eval results to see what is working & continue those programs</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Strategies & Objectives (Sept. 08'-Aug. 09)</u> <u>WORKING NOTES:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workshops on are offered by West Side to create synergy and shared approach across neighborhoods. 2. UofMN led learning cohorts result in new roles/improved programming 4. Nurture people from the neighborhood to be emerging leaders who work with youth (nurture future youth workers) 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Strategies & Objectives (Sept. 08'-Aug. 09)</u> <u>WORKING NOTES:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teen articles in Dayton's Bluff and east side papers 2. Young people learn the history of the neighborhood and tell their stories through video and audio technologies.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Strategies & Objectives (Oct. 07-Aug. 08)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (s) Builds relationships with schools so (o) learning is seamless and coordinated 2. (s) Organize a coordinating body & work groups that engage broad stakeholder groups to (o) coordinate efforts toward a common vision (above). 3. (s) 2 summer circulator buses so that (o) youth can access learning. 4. (s) Community registration events happen so (o) East Side families can connect youth to learning opportunities. 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Strategies & Objectives (Oct. 07-Aug. 08)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (s) Kidventure is designed by many people (across roles & organizations) so that (o) youth build relationships with caring adults. 2 (s) Teen Teacher Corps and Teen advisory groups are started so that (o) teens mentor younger youth and are engaged in leadership and planning roles 3. (s) Additional after-school classes in schools are established so that (o) schools are better connected & youth develop the skills to lead and work with well in groups. 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Strategies & Objectives (Oct. 07-Aug. 08)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (s) 1 Workshop on capacity building are offered by West Side to (o) strengthen the neighborhoods ability to work together & Develop relationships with West Side 2. (s) M. Baizerman & R.V. (UofMN) lead learning cohorts for people who work with youth to (o) foster and support youth ownership and leadership and reflect on successful strategies when working with youth. 3. (s) Saint Paul Youth Services workshops result in (o) adults ability to engage a broader and more diverse range of neighborhood youth. 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Strategies & Objectives (Oct. 07-Aug. 08)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (s) Program guide that addresses language needs (o) informs new families of positive options for youth 2. (s) Community registration events that celebrate culture happen (o) East Side families, especially those not involved, learn about opportunities for youth. 2. (s) New youth-created bus stop signs (o) makes bus positively visible 3. (s) Oral history project has public opening/display & (o) tells story/multiple identities of neighborhood and its people
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Assumptions

Neighborhoods that have the capacity to work together across stakeholder groups (including schools, faith-based communities, community-based organizations (CBOs), youth, residents, parents and business) create a seamless learning environment for youth. Collaborative infrastructure & resources are needed to develop a culture of learning for youth.

Assumptions

Voluntary, intentional learning opportunities help children build self-confidence, leadership and develop work habits. Youth development and community building efforts help young people develop a sense of belonging and a stake in the place where they live. Relationships with caring adults create a safe environment where learning can happen.

Assumptions

When adults who work with children are in an environment of life long learning, where they have opportunities to reflect on their work, develop their skills and receive support from a community of colleagues – their capacity to work effectively with young people expands and improves. The resulting learning opportunities are of better quality and are more effective.

Assumptions

A neighborhood's identity and collective self-confidence is influenced by how its strengths and weaknesses are reflected back to it in local communication tools. When positive, community-changing work is visible, people feel a deeper sense of pride in place and will get engaged in the work.

Appendix 2: Interview Guidelines

I. ESLC Members

INTERVIEWEE INFORMATION

1. Can you tell me a little bit about your work and your organization?

PROCESS

History of Collaboration and Cooperation in the Neighborhood

1. Have you ever been a part of neighborhood collaborative before this ESLC initiative?
2. If yes, how is ESLC different from or the same as other initiatives you have been a part of?

Collaborative group seen as legitimate leader

3. Do others (who are not a part of this collaborative) know about this collaboration? Do they ask you about this collaboration?
4. How do you think neighborhood members/other organizations in the neighborhood perceive the work of this collaborative?

Development of clear roles and policy guidelines

5. What are your roles and responsibilities in the ESLC?
6. How are decisions made in the ESLC? Can you describe an experience?

Communication/Informal Relationships

7. Do you know all the members of the collaborative and their work? Do you talk to them or communicate with them for work not related to ESLC?

Mutual respect, understanding, and trust

8. Do the members of the ESLC trust and respect one another? How can you tell? Can you give an example where you and other group members demonstrated that trust and respect?

OUTCOMES

For members:

1. When you joined this collaborative, what were your expectations? Were your expectations met? Describe.
2. What happened that you didn't expect?
3. Has being a part of the ESLC changed the way you communicate or interact with your counterparts from other organizations? If yes, in what ways? Describe an experience where you have done things differently.
4. Would you say that you are doing your job differently because of being in this collaborative? Describe an experience in your work where you have done things differently from before.
5. Do your co-workers see a change in you? How would they describe the change?

For the organizations:

6. Do you think that your organization has benefited from your participation in this collaborative? If yes, describe how?

For the group:

7. What has worked well in this collaboration? What contributed to the success of those aspects?
8. What do you think the group needs to do to reach the vision of this collaborative?

For the neighborhood:

9. Has the ESLC contributed to the neighborhood? If yes, describe how.
10. Have kids benefited from the work of this collaborative?
11. Do you think the benefit to the kids comes from the fact that it was a collaborative? If yes, describe how? Would it have been any different if organizations had implemented these programs on their own?
12. What more can the ESLC do?

Suggestions for the collaborative

13. If you had an opportunity to start this collaborative from scratch, how would it look like? Describe.
14. Anything else you would like to share about the ESLC

II. Professional Development group

Start by explaining the ESLC and professional development for youth workers as being a part of the ESLC. Describe how the information collected from the interviews and focus group discussion will be used. Explain how the group will be consulted at various stages of the evaluation, and inform that the final report will be shared with them.

INTERVIEWEE INFORMATION

2. How long have you been working with kids and young people?
3. How long have you worked in your current job?
4. Can you tell me briefly about your work with children and youth?

PROCESS

1. Describe what your group does during the weekly meetings.
2. What aspects/practices of the weekly meetings do you find most helpful to your learning and why?
3. What aspects/practices of the weekly meetings do you find least helpful to your learning? What can the facilitator do to make your learning better? What can you do to make your learning better?
4. Do you feel respected, heard, or listened to during the training?
5. What motivates you to participate in the meeting every week?

OUTCOMES

1. When you started coming to these meetings, what were your expectations? Were your expectations met?
2. Do you think you know more about youth work now than before? Can you tell me some of the key lessons that you have learned?
3. Would you say that you are doing your job differently because of being in this group? Describe an experience in your work with young people where you have done things differently from before. How did the youth respond?
4. Has the meetings changed the way you communicate or interact with other people? If yes, in what ways? Describe an experience where you have done things differently.
5. Do you find your work with young people more meaningful now than before? If yes, in what ways?
6. Do young people that you work with see a change in you? How would they describe the change?
7. Do your co-workers and your supervisor see a change in you? How would they describe the change?

Suggestions

8. If these sessions were to start all over again, what advice would you give to improve it?
9. If you were asked to start and run these meetings, how would you do it? Describe from the beginning.

Appendix 3: Evaluation Matrix

LINKING THEORY OF CHANGE ASSUMPTIONS TO MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Intermediate Outcomes and Evaluation Questions for East Side Learning Collaborative 2007-09

GOAL: A strong community for youth, grounded in a neighborhood-based culture of learning designed and sustained by a diverse collaborative

THEORY OF CHANGE ASSUMPTIONS	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	DATA SOURCES
<p>#1: Stakeholder groups working together create seamless learning environment. Collaborative infrastructure/resources are needed to develop culture of learning.</p> <p><u>Intermediate Outcomes:</u> A. Functioning collaborative formed B. Network of coordinated programs created C. Neighborhood youth participated D. Participation enhanced by busing</p>	<p>How effective has the collaborative been in creating a seamless learning environment for youth?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How well does ESLC align with research-based factors for successful collaboration? 2. Are diverse neighborhood stakeholders working together in new and sustainable ways? 3. Has ESLC changed communication and interaction patterns within and among partner organizations? 4. How has ESLC contributed to the neighborhood? 5. What benefit does ESLC offer to kids, beyond what its participating entities already offer? 6. What is the value of providing transportation for participants? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews and focus groups with ESLC participants • Survey of ESLC participants • Reflective sessions with ESLC participants • Comparative study of Circulator • Participation data
<p>#2: Learning opportunities help children and youth build self-confidence, leadership, and work habits. Relationships with caring adults create safe learning environments.</p> <p><u>Intermediate Outcomes:</u> E. Children felt safe and experienced adults as trustworthy. F. Children gained knowledge and skills.</p>	<p>To what degree and in what ways have participating children and youth benefited from the programs and activities of the collaborative?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. To what degree did participating youth in grades K-4 improve their connectivity to caring adults? 8. To what degree did participating youth in grades 5-12 gain new knowledge and improve basic life skills? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys of participating youth • Focus groups with sample of participating youth • Observations of K-6th grade participants
<p>#3: Professional development for youth workers improves their capacity and results in programs of better quality.</p> <p><u>Intermediate Outcome:</u> G. Youth workers improved knowledge and effectiveness.</p>	<p>Have youth workers gained knowledge and developed skills as a result of their participation in learning cohorts?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. What have participating youth workers learned about themselves and their profession? 10. To what degree and in what ways are participants doing their jobs differently? 11. To what degree and in what ways are participants interacting and communicating with others differently? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews and focus groups with participating youth workers • Observations of learning cohorts
<p>#4: Neighborhood identity is influenced by images portrayed in various media. Positive images generate pride and involvement.</p> <p><u>Intermediate Outcome:</u> H. Positive images created and publicized.</p>	<p>Has the work of ESLC communicated strengths and successes of the neighborhood?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Have effective communication tools and messages reached large numbers of stakeholders? 13. What do stakeholders hear about ESLC's perceived impact on the neighborhood? 14. Has the initial work of the collaborative attracted involvement from new people? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting notes and reflective sessions with ESLC • Interviews and focus groups with ESLC participants