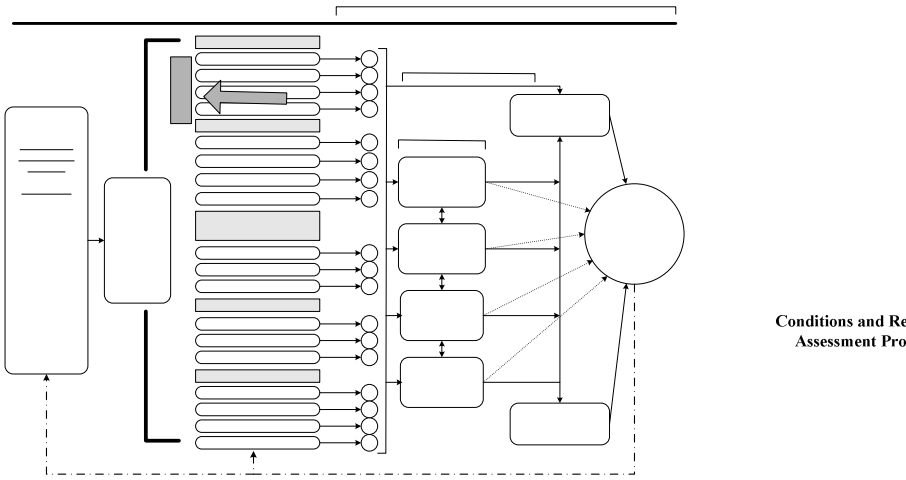
Planning for Sustainability

Taking aim at sustainability

Your expanded school improvement effort will benefit greatly from thinking through strategically the limitations within traditional school reform initiatives, particularly in relationship to sustainability, long-term commitments and overall vision. Essentially, countless studies of school reform have yielded five major findings:



1. Schools change constantly, especially as they implement reform plans and add new programs and services;

2. Many times changes occurring in response to school improvement efforts do not necessarily improve results;

3. Reform initiatives often are incoherent, fragmented and even competing, sometimes causing as many problems as they may solve;

4. School reform initiatives often fail to penetrate the center of the school – namely, life in classrooms for teachers and students and, by extension, the school's climate for learning and healthy development; and

5. Teachers and other school staff become cynical about future changes. For example, teachers' cynicism is evident when they refer to proposed changes as "this year's new thing."

Such is the context for the topic at hand – the sustainability of the OCCMSI. Like the foundation for a building, sustainability-related processes and mechanisms will influence and determine the future viability and success of this new school improvement model.

Essentially, comprehensive school improvement systems cannot be maintained without attention to management, stewardship, ongoing funding support and focused agendas. In this chapter we discuss the important topic of planning for the sustainability of your efforts. We discuss the importance of sustainability plans with strategic visions. Key design principles and strategies for sustainability are provided. We overview the various types of funding that support school and community efforts, as well as discuss creative financing strategies designed to maximize resources and overall results. Finally, we will re-emphasize the importance of collaboration and collaborative leadership, particularly in relation to sustainability and creating long-term investments.

What do we mean by sustainability?

Sustainable initiatives are built to last. In other words, they have "staying power" because they are strategic – aimed at the right priorities – and solid – built on a strong foundation. They also have "sticking power." They are connected to other school improvement processes and structures because they are integral components of school improvement. They are not "tacked on" temporarily causing incoherence, competition, duplication and fragmentation.

While some initiatives may begin as special projects, including those that are created with the support of short-term grants, leaders aiming for sustainability recognize from the beginning that they must complete six crucial tasks. We have had all six in mind as we developed this implementation guide and prepared this chapter.

- Leaders must convince everyone that the new initiative (e.g., a parent/family engagement and support program, an after school program) is a missing piece in the school improvement puzzle; and furthermore, that this new piece is one of the only sure ways to improve results and realize other related benefits. We have had this need in mind as we developed this implementation guide for you. We emphasized how each component in the model contributes to a coherent, comprehensive and more effective school improvement approach, one that helps eliminate and prevent fragmentation, duplication and unhealthy competition among people, programs and organizations. We emphasized these key points with sustainability in mind, and we have been especially mindful of the history of failed and flawed school improvement efforts.

- Leaders must develop "a critical mass" of other leaders, especially leaders representing key organizational partners. This critical mass guards against one of the most important threats to sustainability – key people leave or retire, and no one is able to pick up the slack and maintain the direction and momentum.

- Leaders must develop an infrastructure for school improvement. This infrastructure is vital to sustainability. For example, we emphasized the necessity for collaborative leadership, and we indicated how important this team approach is for key priorities involving leadership (making sure the right things are done), management (making sure things are done right) and governance (oversight and steering toward the future).

- Leaders must figure out how to develop, implement and evaluate training, technical assistance and capacity-building programs. This work is vital because the Community Collaboration Model asks people to learn and do new things. More specifically, it changes job descriptions and responsibilities, making them different AND better. For example, it requires teachers to work in new, better ways with families, youth development leaders, after school program coordinators and social-health service providers. Teachers benefit because they gain much-needed resources, supports and assistance; they no longer have to work alone. It also recasts the roles of principals, benefiting them to be sure, but also requiring new orientations and behaviors. Once again, we wrote this guide with these needs in mind. It is a resource for training, technical assistance and capacity building – and when it is used, sustainability is enhanced.

- Leaders must figure out how to work with school district leaders, state governmental leaders, and in turn, federal governmental leaders to get the policies right. Existing policies may need to be amended and new ones developed. While we have not addressed this aspect of sustainability in this guide, it is on the drawing board for future work.

- Leaders of new programs must figure out how to finance and run the new initiative over the long haul, especially when special, short-term funding from a grant or another special source ends.

You will find that the following pages are designed with this final point in mind. We provide you with special language, design principles and strategies, and examples of how you can plan for sustainability.

Design principles and strategies for sustainability

We provide you an overview here of several design principles and strategies aimed to support the overall financing and sustainability of your school improvement efforts. These concepts will be helpful as you plan over the long-haul, engaging partners and resources in relation to your school improvement vision. Table 11.1 presents these important design principles.

Table 11.1: Design principles and/or strategies for sustainability

Principle and strategy	**What this looks like**
Planning	
Focus and direction	• Financing strategies are driven by well-conceived and focused policies and agendas focused on school improvement priorities • Resources are tied to outcomes and, in turn, the programs and services for achieving them • Leaders ensure that work aimed at implementing the new school improvement model is not presented as a “special project” or a “trial pilot” • A sustainability plan is created and acted upon at early stages of program design and implementation
Priority	• Funding sources and financing strategies are designed to address needs and conditions (i.e., data-informed financing strategies) • Leaders emphasize going to scale and replication from the outset • Funding sources and financing strategies are designed to leverage untapped opportunities and resources • A working group is created that specifically addresses funding and financing strategies
Efficiency and effectiveness	
Cost-effective	• Resources contribute to a positive return in relation to investment • Financing strategies support the prevention and promotion of positive behaviors • Financing strategies take into account “the costs of failure” – i.e., the costs associated with expensive, specialized interventions and treatments (school drop outs, etc.) • Resources are redeployed by shifting costs from higher cost effective programs to lower cost effective programs • Costs are cut by doing the work more efficiently • Leaders ensure they are offering the right programs and services;

Table 11.1: Design principles and/or strategies for sustainability	
Principle and strategy	**What this looks like**
Cost-effective continued	and they cease offering programs that do not work and reallocate their resources • Leaders ensure they have eliminated unnecessary duplication
Results-oriented	• Financing strategies are prioritized in support of key targeted outcomes • Funding sources and financing strategies support research-supported practices, programs and services, thus ensuring the most "bang for the buck"
Minimal overhead	• Administrative costs are minimized • De-centralize decision making so control is in the hands of those most likely to produce positive results (and then hold them accountable for them)
Diversified	
Multiple sources to maximize resources	• Funding sources and financing strategies are tapped from all different levels, such as local, federal, state, public, private, etc. • Multiple sources of human and fiscal resources support implementation • Financing strategies cut across services and programs, as opposed to being compartmentalized in separate areas • Funding and financing strategies include supports for volunteers' and parents' part-time jobs • In-kind resources are integrated (i.e., contributed space, donated equipment, technical assistance) • Resources are maximized through efficient strategic planning and implementation
Efficiency	• Funding sources are redirected or reallocated from less to more effective programs • Partners make better use of existing resources by reallocating funds in support of identified plans and priorities • Revenues are maximized through federal, state and local avenues • Reinvestments are made as funds are "saved" through redeployment or reductions in spending to new or alternative supports and services
Flexibility and adaptability	• More flexibility is created in funding categories • Categorical funding streams are coordinated and aligned across agencies • Resources are pooled from multiple sources to support the program or service strategy • Financing strategies take into account changing programmatic and fiscal needs (i.e., short- and long-term funding needs) • Refinancing strategies are used where other sources of money pay for activities already provided, thereby freeing up money for a new programs and services
Collaboration and partnership	
Shared ownership	• Multiple people and organizational partners contribute resources • Resource sharing is the norm • Partners have a mutual commitment to help ensure the success and sustainability of the program or collaboration • Non-traditional private partners contribute resources to the

Table 11.1: Design principles and/or strategies for sustainability	
Principle and strategy	**What this looks like**
Shared ownership continued	collaboration and/or program and services • Funding sources and financing strategies include in-kind donations from a variety of sources
Interdependence	• Individuals and organizations realize their successes are mutually dependent upon those of others, thus creating buy-in and the willingness to share resources, etc. • Create ways to share knowledge and technical assistance across the partnership (shared training and professional development, etc.)
Enlightened self-interest	• Multiple funders, partners and stakeholders feed their own or their organization's self-interests and missions as they provide funding, align financing strategies and access new funding streams
Coordinated services	• Organizations, programs and services are coordinated and integrated to maximize resources, accessibility, etc.
Generating additional resources	
Leveraging new resources	• Funding sources and financing strategies are used to leverage, or attract, other public and private sector resources • Revenue is maximized as local, state and private funding is leveraged to bring down additional federal revenues • New partnerships are created that bring additional resources to the collaboration or program and expand the fiscal base • Past successes and achievements attract additional resources to your collaboration or program • Partners incorporate the school improvement vision into their own programs or services as part of their overall mission and accountabilities
Generating income	• Charge fees for services or sliding scale fees to cover some or all or program and service costs • Medicaid, TANF and other dollars are used to support programs and services • Unrelated business income is generated by creating revenue streams (i.e., lease space, parking, etc.) • Fundraising events bring in additional resources • Grant writing teams share opportunities to gain new and expanded resources
Social marketing	
Communication	• Strategies are in place to effectively communicate achievements and successes (i.e., "to tell your story") • Individuals in leadership positions help guide the process and dynamics of working with the media • The public opinion endorses and supports the collaboration and its programs and services • Marketing and public relations activities positively communicate messages about the school improvement efforts
Power and influence	• Relationships are built with key stakeholders in order to support ongoing efforts • Individuals with power and influence are committed to the collaboration and its programs and services

Table 11.1: Design principles and/or strategies for sustainability	
Principle and strategy	**What this looks like**
Power and influence continued	• Individuals with power and influence are educated about what the priorities are and how they relate to their interests, needs and priorities • Individuals in leadership positions help work the right political channels and networks

From: Afterschool Alliance, 2003; Carmela, Cloud, Byrne, & Wheeler, 2003; Hayes, 2002; Walter, 2001; Wright, 2003.

Other considerations in sustainability

We created these multiple design principles and strategies to assist you in your sustainability efforts. In this section, we provide you with an overview of the various types of funding available to support your school improvement efforts. Please note, it is not an exhaustive list. However, it does identify the key funding streams that might serve as a starting place when planning for sustainability. We also provide you with strategies related to creating sustainable partnerships, particularly in relationship to the creation of a resource and financing team that focuses on maximizing resources and generating new funding streams in support of your school improvement efforts.

Sources of funding

Multiple types of funding are available to support the implementation of the Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement. Finance experts call these types of funding "funding streams." They use this language because they analyze how money will flow from its sources to the programs, services and activities it supports.

There are multiple funding streams that may be used to support schools, community organizations, and their programs and services (Afterschool Alliance, 2004; Hayes, 2002; Halpern, Deich, & Cohen, 2000). Public funds may be found at the federal, state and local levels. Private funds exist from independent foundations, faith-based organizations, businesses and their sponsored foundations, and hospitals.

The priorities related to each type of funding opportunity, as well as the processes for tapping into each type of each resource, often are quite different. For example, many sources of funds are based upon eligibility requirements, only targeting certain families and children who match certain requirements (i.e., age of children, family income, employment status, etc.). Some funds flow directly from federal agencies to local grantees (i.e., Head Start), while others are administered by state agencies (i.e., TANF). To complicate things further, certain funds mandate how and when services may be offered. For instance, licensing standards regulate various program qualities such as staff/child ratios and staff qualifications. Some funds are disbursed as subsidies and involve reimbursement after the delivery of services.

Here we will provide a brief description of each type of funding stream, providing you with some initial guidance in relation to the multiple sources of funding that are available to your school community.

Public and private funds

Entitlement programs are public sector programs – meaning they are available to everyone who meets their eligibility criteria. Federal dollars (and policies) support these special programs and their state counterparts. These federal dollars are uncapped appropriations, are open-ended, and no competition exists for these funds. Example entitlement programs include Medicaid, Medicare, and Title IV-E of the Social Security Act (child welfare).

Block or formula programs provide a fixed amount of federal funds to states based on formulas that are established on population characteristics such as income status, geographic residence or disabilities. They involve capped appropriations that provide a fixed amount of funding to states or localities based on pre-established formulas. Example block or formula programs include Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the Child Care Development Block Grant. Similarly, Title I is distributed based on the number of low income families served within a school.

Discretionary programs offer federal funds for certain types of programs and services based upon a competitive process. These programs involve capped appropriations for specific project grants which are awarded based on competitive applications (i.e., AmeriCorps, Safe Schools/Healthy Students, Youthbuild; Head Start; 21st Century Community Learning Centers, GEAR UP). These dollars can be accessed by applying directly to the federal government; but many times the federal government passes these dollars to state agencies who then allocate these discretionary funds. Table 11.2 presents various federal and state funding sources.

Table 11.2: Select federal entitlement and state block grant programs
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). This program promotes job preparation and work through education, training, professional development and work-related career planning. States have the option of spending TANF funds directly on various forms of assistance, including after-school programs or social services Medicaid. Medicaid provides financial assistance to states for medical assistance payments and administrative expenses made on behalf of low-income children and adults who meet income, resource and categorical eligibility requirements. States have flexibility in designing and operating their programs within federal guidelines Social Services Block Grants. This block grant is to be used on a range of social services such as child care, substance abuse prevention, information and referral services, counseling, and other related services The Child and Adult Care Food Program. This federal program provides funding for meals, snacks and nutrition education within childcare programs and after-school programs operating in low-income neighborhoods The Child Care and Development Fund (also known as the Child Care and Development Block Grant). Most of this money provides subsidies to help low-income working families access childcare. Subsidies are distributed through vouchers to families or slots funded by contract with licensed providers Title I Grants to Local Education Agencies. This program helps local education agencies and schools meet state academic standards by providing funds to address various needs evident among children who are disadvantaged and at risk of failing Safe and Drug Free Schools. This program provides funding for drug and violence prevention activities

Table 11.2: Select federal entitlement and state block grant programs
and other offerings that promote the health and well being of students Community Development Block Grants. This program provides states and localities funding for a wide variety of activities such as neighborhood revitalization, economic development or provision of improved community facilities and services (i.e., child care) Community Services Block Grants. This program helps states provide services and activities that alleviate poverty, assist with self-sufficiency, address needs of low-income youth and improve social service systems Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention – (Title V) Block Grants. This program provides grants to states to improve their juvenile delinquency prevention, treatment and rehabilitation programs and justice systems Child Welfare Services, Title IV-B. This program provides states with a range of child welfare activities that enable children to remain in their own homes or provide alternative placement for them (i.e., family preservation, kinship care, etc) Title IV-E Foster Care. This program provides funds to states to assist with the costs of foster care, which may include child care and other goods and services for eligible children. It also pays for program administrative and training costs Title IV-E Independent Living. Grants under this program helps states assist youth in foster care to successfully transition to independent living

Adapted From: Halpern et al., 2000.

Direct payments also provide direct financial assistance to individuals who satisfy certain federal eligibility requirements. These involve capped appropriations such as Supplemental Security Income, Section 8 Housing Assistance, and Refugee and Entrant Assistance.

Furthermore, *state and local governments* often disburse funds through human service departments that are passed down from the federal government or generated from local taxes. For instance, state departments in Ohio often provide grants related to specific targeted program areas (i.e., alternative education, prevention and community youth development, truancy interventions). Table 13 overviews competitive funding opportunities offered through the Ohio Department of Education.

Table 11.3: Ohio Department of Education competitive funding opportunities	
Program	**Purpose**
21st Century Community Learning Centers	• Provides opportunities for academic enrichment, particularly those who attend low-performing schools, to meet state and local student performance standards in the core academic areas of reading and mathematics • Offers students a broad array of additional services, programs and activities, such as youth development activities, that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students • Offers families of students who are served by community learning centers the opportunities for literacy and related educational

Table 11.3: Ohio Department of Education competitive funding opportunities	
Program	**Purpose**
	development
Alternative Education Challenge	• Allows local school districts to work with community partners to develop alternative education strategies for at-risk children and youth • Serves children and youth who: have been suspended or expelled; have dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out; are habitually or chronically truant; are disruptive in class; are on probation from the juvenile court; and/or are on parole after having spent time in an Ohio Department of Youth Services facility
Homeless Education Program—McKinney-Vento Act	• Assures that each homeless child, and homeless youth of a homeless individual, shall have access to a free, appropriate public education • Provides educational activities and services to homeless children and youth that enable them to enroll in, attend and achieve in school • Develops and implement programs for school personnel and the general public to heighten awareness of specific problems related to the education of homeless children and youth
Even Start Family Literacy	• Helps break the cycle of poverty and low literacy by improving the educational opportunities of low-income families through a cooperative learning effort • Creates interactive literacy activities between parents and their children (PACT) • Trains parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children (Parenting Education) • Teaches parent literacy preparation that leads to economic self-sufficiency (Adult Education) • Creates an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences (Early Childhood Education)
Learn and Serve America	• Creates high-quality service-learning programs that provide youth with opportunities to learn and develop by bringing together classroom instruction and community service • Expands the awareness of the value of engaging young people in service to their community • Transitions service-learning programs and activities from being primarily supported by the Ohio Department of Education to local support
Public Preschool	• Serves children between the ages of three and five that are not age eligible for kindergarten whose families earn no more than 185 percent of the federal poverty level • Provides an age appropriate education to all children enrolled in the public preschool program
Reading First	• Supports teachers and students in low-performing, high-poverty schools and targets children in kindergarten through grade three • Helps states, school districts and schools use scientifically based reading research and proven instructional strategies and tests to ensure that all children can read at or above grade level by third grade • Helps teachers learn to identify and monitor the progress of students' reading abilities • Helps schools align reading instruction with Ohio's academic content

Table 11.3: Ohio Department of Education competitive funding opportunities	
Program	**Purpose**
	standards in reading • Allows schools and districts to develop teacher expertise to make sound decisions about materials, programs and interventions
Title II-D Special Education—ACCESS	• Ensures students with disabilities have access to the general curriculum aligned with Ohio's academic content standards, regardless of the educational setting(s) in which they receive special education services • Identifies and supports evidence-based strategies for increased student achievement • Assists schools in building the capacity to include children with disabilities in standards-based reform efforts designed to improve the academic performance of all children
Title II-D Special Education—ASD	• Identifies and supports current resources and programs that show evidence of increased student achievement for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) • Builds the capacity of principal-led building-level teams to provide services and supports to students with ASD • Grants under this program priority must be used to improve results for students with ASD by increasing knowledge in educational assessment and instructional strategies of building-level teams providing services and supports • Project activities may include strategies that increase students' time in the general education environment and focus on increased academic performance and effective data management
Title II-D Special Education—Positive Behavior Support	• Implements school-wide positive behavior support for students based on the model provided in the Ohio Department of Education's "*Positive Behavior Support Toolkit*" • Will improve results for students by aligning instructional goals with Ohio's academic content standards
OhioReads	• Help schools purchase books and other materials • Funds schools reading programs • Provides teachers with professional development opportunities in the area of reading

From: NCLB, 2001.

In addition, children's trust funds have a designated account in the public treasury (i.e., certain taxes flow directly to these trusts). City and county municipalities provide local funding through park districts, city school districts, youth service bureaus, or the police department. Special taxing districts create independent units of government with taxing authority; and special tax levies are passed through local ballots and add to existing taxes with earmarked revenues for certain types of programs and services. Finally, taxes also may be applied to specific economic activities such as the purchase of cigarettes, marriage licenses, and licenses to practice in certain professional occupations. These funds are often directed toward certain program and service priorities established at the local level.

There also are multiple sources of *private funds* that exist within communities. To name a few, businesses and company-sponsored foundations often provide funding to address certain program areas and geographical locations. Independent and community foundations (i.e., United Ways) establish priority areas that target certain population groups and service delivery arenas. Resources from faith-based organizations, civic organizations, police athletic leagues, chambers of commerce, hospitals and universities also might be tapped.

Many times these entities offer *in-kind resources*. For instance, programs may be able to use space for free, or rent space at below-market rates. Services for low income children and families are sometimes subsidized by other paying participants. Also, many organizations or businesses provide reduced cost or free activities for certain special populations (i.e., free or reduced cost tickets, etc). In addition, never underestimate the value of human in-kind resources through volunteerism, service learning and community service opportunities.

Finally, schools and organizations also *generate revenue* through varying strategies. Some charge fees for services and generate resources through unrelated business income (i.e., leasing fees, etc.). Lottery and gaming systems generate funding for certain services. And organizations often create their own fundraising campaigns that solicit donations and support from various community entities and individuals.

Financing strategies

To build upon these design principles and strategies, here we overview five primary financing strategies that aim to support your school improvement efforts (Flynn & Hayes, 2003; Hayes, 2002; Walter, 2003).

Making better use of existing resources

One way to maximize funding involves making better use of existing resources allocated towards your efforts. The most basic example of this strategy is presented in the academic learning chapter, as strategies are provided that focus on maximizing academic learning time in schools, homes and in the community. *Efficiency* is central to this idea and involves activities such as streamlining management, sharing professional development and training opportunities, joining together on benefit plans, co-locating programs and services, and providing effective linkages between schools and community organizations.

Effectiveness also is important, as few results are found when resources are allocated to poorly implemented programs and services. As such, professional development efforts must be created that support quality teaching and instruction strategies, as well as the implementation of efficient, effective and research-supported programs and services. We also need strong evaluation processes that provide continuous feedback to school leaders and others, allowing for the critical examination of key data that informs planning and program implementation.

Two additional strategies aimed at making better use of existing resources are helpful. First, *redeployment strategies* shift funding from higher to lower cost programs and services. Second, entities may use *reinvestment strategies* involving the transfer of “saved” funds into new or alternative programs and services. In either case, intervention-related dollars are reallocated or invested to support prevention and related health promotion activities.

Creating new revenue streams

Funds also are generated by the *creation of new revenue streams*. One way in which local entities can maximize revenues is by applying for and receiving discretionary and other types of grants. In addition, organizations may create financing plans that charge fees for services. Others may generate resources through unrelated business income (i.e., charging parking fees, leasing fees, or generate income through the sale of various goods and services). Fundraising campaigns also are extremely successful in some school communities, generating flexible funding streams that may be used for a multitude of purposes.

Maximizing federal and state revenues

In addition, oftentimes federal revenues are allocated contingent upon state, local and private funding levels (i.e., TANF). In other words, the better able a local entity can demonstrate investments and expenditures (i.e., state or local, public or private), the more federal funding is able to be drawn down to match these local efforts. This financing strategy, called *leveraging*, allows for the maximization of federal revenue allocated to the local level.

You also might consider using *refinancing strategies* that use certain sources of funding to pay for activities already provided within your programs and services. For instance, schools might substitute federal and state entitlement funding (i.e., Federal Child and Adult Food Care Program) for discretionary funding, thus freeing up additional resources for new program and service areas. This is particularly helpful as entities claim for the *coverage of administrative costs* through federal approved programs such as Medicaid and Title IV-E (i.e., child welfare).

Creating more flexibility

A primary way to create more flexibility within funding streams is through the pooling of resources. *Pooling* involves combining funds from several agencies and programs into one funding stream. It is most often used by state agencies, where a portion of state program funding across systems can be “pooled” to support comprehensive programming.

Coordinating, or “*braiding*” separate categorical streams together to support the seamless delivery of services is another effective funding strategy. There is often reduced duplication as services are integrated to support comprehensive programs and services. On a more macro level, *decategorizing* involves the removal of narrow eligibility requirements from existing funding streams. This strategy involves state-level policy changes that promote more flexibility in relation to the delivery of programs and services.

For instance, ODE utilizes a tool known as the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP) to categorize and create ease of use in their funding. In Table 11.4, you will see all of the funding streams in the consolidated application on the CCIP. These are funds allocated to districts based on a number of formularies, but due to their similar nature they share one common application at ODE.

Table 11.4: Funding streams within ODE's CCIP
Title I-Part A: Professional development
Title I-C: Education of migratory children
Title I N & D: Neglected and delinquent children
Title I: Comprehensive school reform and school improvement grants
Title II-A: Improving teacher quality
Title II-D: Enhancing education through technology
Title III: Language instruction for limited English proficient and immigrant students
Title IV-A: Safe and drug-free schools and communities
Title V: Innovative education
Title VI-B: Rural education achievement program (REAP)
Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)-Part B: Exceptional children
Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE): Pre-K

Many of these funding streams can be blended or braided to create large amounts of money for a particular purpose. For example, Title I, Title III, Title IV-A, Title V and ECSE all require programs and services focused on family engagement and support. If the dollars across these various funding streams were blended, school districts would have a large pool of money for parent engagement and support activities. Likewise, these dollars can and should be complemented by community-based funding streams that also support family and parent involvement strategies (i.e., local settlement house programs, victims advocate funding through police departments, etc.).

Finally, *devolution* involves the delegation of authority for the allocation of funds from higher to lower levels of authority (i.e., federal to state, state to local county, etc.). The assumption here is the decentralized decision-making will more likely produce outcomes, as those that are directly responsible for creating outcomes are influencing decisions about programs and services.

Building public-private partnerships

Partnerships are at the core of our school improvement model. Essentially, new funding streams and resources are created and leveraged as new and expanded partnerships are developed and nurtured. These partnerships are strengthened as leaders develop strategic infrastructures centered on school improvement efforts.

This infrastructure is vital to sustainability. For example, we emphasized the necessity for collaborative leadership in our toolkit, and we indicated how important this team approach is for key priorities involving leadership (making sure the right things are done), management (making sure things are done right), and governance (oversight and steering toward the future). In the end, these collaborative leadership structures ultimately influence resource generation and utilization.

We propose here that you work with your core school improvement team members and primary community partners to determine the types of partnerships you want and need. Candidates for your collaborative leadership team might include individuals such as the Title 1 coordinator, a special education coordinator, a representative from Ohio's Children and Family First Council, and a local school board member. Each of these persons has access to resources. Each, therefore, is a key to sustainability. The linkage between collaborative leadership and sustainability is further described in the following.

Collaborative leadership and sustainability

In several of the preceding chapters, we emphasized the need to complete these four related tasks:

- Identifying and capitalizing on school-owned and operated and community-owned and operated resources;
- Identifying needs and gaps in school and community offerings, and then planning programs, services, strategies and activities that you will initiate at your school or that will be linked to it;
- Developing the connective mechanisms and people for your partnership, including people and mechanisms for communications, referral and boundary crossing; and
- Ensuring that all of it fits together, i.e., that what results is a comprehensive, coherent and integrated system that yields the maximum number of benefits to the greatest number of people, including the achievement of your school's mission.

But there's more. While educators will come to appreciate the need and importance of reaching out – expanding walled-in school improvement models – most of the school staff will expect someone else must handle everything external to "the regular school." For example, if you are an after-school program director, they will expect you to run the after school program, make connections to community social and health service providers, develop solid working relationships with youth development organizations, engage local community residents, and recruit, organize and mobilize parents and entire families, getting them more involved in the school and their children's education.

They are right; all are essential functions, and all require someone to look after them. But you can not do them all. You and they need to develop an infrastructure around these essential functions.

For example, and as indicated in the collaboration and collaborative leadership chapter, principals delegate responsibilities to key persons. To reiterate, they appoint a part-time or full-time parent and family coordinator. They appoint a part-time or full-time social and health services coordinator. They appoint a part-time, or full-time, after-school coordinator.

Some of these special positions usually are funded jointly by schools and their community partners. For example, schools contribute Title 1 dollars (federal funds earmarked for schools serving lots of kids eligible for free and reduced lunch programs) and special education dollars (called Title XI dollars because of the federal funding stream for this money). Child welfare agencies contribute child welfare dollars (called Title IV-E funds). Youth development agencies contribute some money. In short, they braid existing funds to create the full- and part-time positions they need.

As you know by now, these special people who fill them also perform the roles of boundary crosser, intermediary and linkage agent. They give life to partnerships.

The point is you do not have to perform all of these functions. You need to know they are vital; and that someone needs to do them. This means that you will need to find out what is already in place; what is missing and needed; and work with your partners to bridge the gaps you identify.

Recruiting key people to support sustainability and financing plans

Work with your core partners to determine key leaders who can support your sustainability and financing efforts. Where other organizations are concerned, you will want to tap their managers and top level leaders. For example, invite your local superintendent to serve. Invite a member of the school board to serve. Invite a local city or town council member. Invite two or more key parents. Invite someone who understands state government. Invite two or more persons from the business community. Invite at least one higher education faculty member.

Here are other potential candidates for service on your collaborative leadership team:

- The school district's Title 1 coordinator
- The school district's special education coordinator
- The school district's student support (social-health services) coordinator
- The school's athletic director
- A representative from the juvenile justice system
- Student services personnel (i.e., school social workers, counselors, etc)
- Top level officials from the County Department of Job and Family Services
- Representatives from Partnerships for Success and Ohio's Children and Family First Councils
- Representatives from Communities that Care and other collaboratives designed to foster positive youth development
- Others…

Each of these persons has access to resources. Each, therefore, is a key to sustainability.

When you convene these important officials, make sure you educate them about what you are going to accomplish and how it relates to their interests, needs, and priorities. Above all, make sure you tap and use their expertise. More specifically:

- Do not give them the impression you are going through the motions, asking for them to "rubber stamp" what you have done and plan to do, and, all in all, wasting their time;

- Seek their help in planning and getting resources, supports and assistance that will make your partnerships, programs and services sustainable;

- Get their help in working the right political channels and networks; and

- Have them guide you and your leadership team through the process and dynamics of working with the media. The media may prove to be the most important resource-generating and sustainability mechanism of all.

You also will want to think through strategically the creation of your financing and sustainability plans. The following checklist shown in Table 11.5 will help guide your efforts.

Table 11.5: Steps in creating strategic sustainability plans
☐ Clarify what it is you need financing for (i.e., clear vision) ☐ Articulate a common vision that drives the types of funding sources you solicit ☐ Create a working group to focus on financing and funding ☐ Create a funding and sustainability plan that focuses your financing priorities ☐ Decide what types of programs you want to implement or sustain (i.e., a certain program administration, collaboration efforts, etc.) o Number of clients o Number of sites o Target population o Range of programs and services o Level of quality of the programs and services o Number of years funding is needed ☐ Align your financing strategies with the needs, programs and services they are intended to support ☐ Estimate your fiscal needs (how much money do you need and for what) ☐ Conduct a needs and resources assessment ☐ Identify present and potential partners who might help you achieve your vision ☐ Build upon past history and achievements related to partnership and collaboration ☐ Examine your gap analysis and identify current resources needs ☐ Identify potential funding sources and financing strategies ☐ Determine what you need to sustain the work over time ☐ Explore ways to maximize existing resources in support of the vision ☐ Maximize the use of resources already in the system (non-monetary, in-kind, volunteer, contributed space, donated equipment, technical support, etc.) ☐ Assign responsibility to someone to identify and pursue other potential funding streams ☐ Engage partners in pursuing additional funding opportunities ☐ Create communication and outreach efforts to publicize your successes and achievements ☐ Identify important stakeholders with power and influence who can advocate for your programs and services ☐ Create new funding sources with your community partners

From: The Finance Project, 2003; Flynn & Hayes, 2003; Hayes, 2002.

Final thoughts

As you can see here, local, state and federal governments, as well as private funding sources, have long histories of funding special, often single-issue programs and services. For example, separate funding streams exist for school reform, after-school programs, youth development programs, teen pregnancy programs and juvenile delinquency prevention programs. These special programs and the special funding streams that support them are called “categorical programs and funding streams.” They are sector-, need-, and problem-specific.

You and other school leaders implementing this new school improvement model have the opportunity to work together, indeed genuinely collaborate, as you figure out which categorical funding streams are available to you. In some cases, you will stop competing for the same funds. In other cases, you will develop new strategies for working together to get new funds from untapped categorical funding streams.

As you gain skill in working together, and as you develop more trust with each other, you will be able to move to a higher level of funding-related work. For example, you will share existing resources. You will gain net new resources as you eliminate duplication and unnecessary competition.

Above all, you will have the opportunity to pool and braid existing resources. You and other school leaders will be able to extract dollars from existing funding sources and streams and use the newly-created “pool” of funds to support new programs and services. Ideally, you will braid these funds to the point where they are interwoven and integrated.

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