

Diagnostic Rubric: Are We a Partnership Yet?

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Based on a framework developed by:

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When you first begin to collaborate with a university or educational organization, your collaboration is not yet a partnership. There are some markers, though, that you can use to help you diagnose where you are on the path to becoming a partnership. The table below is a rubric that is based on a framework for assessing the development and impacts of research-practice partnerships developed by Erin Henrick, Paul Cobb, Kara Jackson, Tiffany Clark, and Bill Penuel with funding from the William T. Grant Foundation.

You can use this rubric as the basis for a discussion with your partners about your partnership's development. You could begin by asking individuals to write down where they think the partnership is along each of the dimensions of the framework. Then, ask individuals to share their ideas and reasons for locating the partnership where they did. In the whole group discussion, encourage everyone to listen carefully to one another. Expect that different participants will have different views on where the partnership is in its development. Not everyone needs to have the same viewpoint, either, for the participants to learn from this discussion.

There are two types of dimensions we've identified:

Process Dimensions: These are foundations for effective partnership that are necessary to yield positive outcomes. People inside mature research-practice partnerships often consider them to be important outcomes in their own right of partnership work, because developing relationships and capacity enables more ambitious joint work.

Impact Dimensions: These are impacts that many research-practice partnerships aim to accomplish on both practice and research.



Process Dimensions

Dimension	Early Phase	Middle Phase	Maturing
<i>Cultivate Partnership Relationships</i>	<p>We have an intention to learn from one another and expectation that partners bring relevant expertise to solving problems.</p> <p>We have a willingness to try on new and different roles from what is typical of researchers and educators.</p> <p>We are curious about how we can help each other.</p>	<p>We are clarifying new roles within partnerships where authority is shared among educators and researchers.</p> <p>We are developing a sense of where we can best help each other.</p>	<p>We have a strong identity as a partnership and an open-ended commitment to ongoing partnership.</p>
<i>Develop Capacity to Engage in Partnership Work</i>	<p>We have human, social, and material resources needed to work in the short-term on a specific engagement.</p> <p>We are seeking funding or have a first project that is newly funding.</p>	<p>We have human, social, and material resources needed to work a single line of work involving more than one project.</p> <p>We have two or more projects current funding.</p>	<p>We have human, social, and material resources needed to engage in multiple lines of work that evolve.</p> <p>We have sought and won funding together multiple times.</p>



Impact Dimensions

Dimension	Early Phase	Middle Phase	Maturing
<i>Impact Local Improvement Efforts</i>	We are identifying a specific strategy for improvement and develop strategies for evaluating the strategy, once the problem is specified.	We are improving organizational policies and processes that directly impact classrooms. We are making use of evidence and professional judgment about progress toward our aims.	We are impacting classroom outcomes. We are using our professional judgment and evidence about variation to improve reliability of implementation and outcomes.
<i>Conduct and Use Rigorous and Relevant Research</i>	We are developing evidence of the nature and relevance of the focal problem of practice to different stakeholders. We are identifying available datasets and needs for additional data. We are analyzing data to specify the problems we're trying to solve.	We are designing and carrying out rigorous research on implementation and outcomes to inform local improvement efforts. We are building a data infrastructure. We are designing instruments that can inform their work.	We are focusing on the development of research evidence related to variability in implementation and outcomes and use this evidence internally in the educational system for continuous improvement.
<i>Inform the Work of Others</i>	We are identifying what new knowledge can be developed that also is relevant to practice. We are identifying potential strategies for organizing joint work.	We are sharing strategies for organizing work of partnership within professional networks doing similar work. We are adapting other partnerships' strategies for organizing our partnership.	We are sharing improvement strategies and results within professional networks of researchers and practitioners working on other problems of practice. Others are using our ideas, tools, or research evidence in their own work.