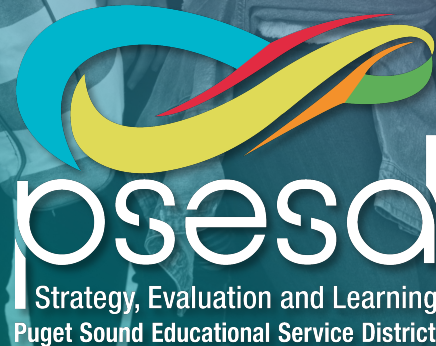


# Best Starts for Kids: Exploring Equitable School Partnerships

Final Evaluation Report

January 2022



King County

Best Starts for  
**KIDS**

*This work was made possible by the King County Best Starts for Kids levy.*



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Introduction

Best Starts for Kids School Partnerships vision is that “School environments are safe, supportive, respectful and engaging environments for young people, staff and families. Race, ethnicity or cultural identity does not impact access to these environments.” Best Starts for Kids (BSK) engaged the Strategy, Evaluation and Learning Team from Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD) to help answer three questions related to partnerships in schools and districts with multiple BSK School Partnership investments:

Evaluation Questions

1. What do **equitable school partnerships look like**, and what are the factors that support them?
2. What is the **relationship between equitable partnerships and school-wide changes** in practices, policies, systems, environments, and student well-being?
3. How do **King County<sup>1</sup> processes and systems** support equitable partnerships?

Key Definitions<sup>2</sup>

**Partnership:** There are many ways of defining and describing the concept of “partnership.” For the purposes of this evaluation, BSK defined those investments that were considered “School Partnership” (SP) investments as those where 1) schools/districts were BSK awardees, or 2) a community-based organization (CBO), healthcare provider, or other organization was a BSK awardee and was working with school/district partner(s) to implement their BSK-funded work.

An **awardee** (of BSK) is an organization that holds a contract (or contracts) with BSK. **Partners** are organizations or agencies working with BSK awardees to implement the funded program(s). Awardees and partners include CBOs, schools, school districts, and healthcare providers. While collaboration between awardees and partner organizations was the primary focus of this evaluation, partnerships could also include students, families, and/or BSK/King County.

**Equity:** The SP Evaluation addressed how equity, a core value of the BSK initiative, affects partnerships. Equitable partnerships are those that attend to issues of equity in 1) how they function (e.g., attention is paid to power and power sharing, decision-making, and relationship- and trust-building) as well as in 2) what changes in practices, policies, systems, school environments, and student well-being are occurring, and to whose benefit. In equitable partnerships, partners and stakeholders that do not hold institutional power feel included and valued, have buy-in, and see themselves in communication and decision-making processes.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the organizations and schools that engaged in partnerships and shaped all parts of the BSK SP Evaluation. (See Acknowledgements for a list of BSK SP Evaluation Advisors, Participants, King County and Best Starts for Kids staff, and other BSK SP evaluators.)

Methods

The BSK SP Evaluation was a mixed-methods evaluation that used quantitative and qualitative approaches. We focused on sites (schools or districts) with multiple BSK SP strategy investments. SP strategy areas include:

- Healthy and Safe Environments (HSE)
- Out-of-School Time (OST)
- School-Based Health Centers (SBHC)
- Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral To Services (SBIRT)
- Trauma-Informed and Restorative Practices (TIRP)
- Youth Development (YD)

Eleven sites with multiple BSK SP strategy investments were included in the evaluation, and are located in Auburn, Bellevue, Kent, Seattle, Snoqualmie Valley, and Tukwila school districts.

Data Sources

- **Interviews and focus groups** with BSK SP awardees, partners, and King County staff
- **Family focus groups**
- **Student focus groups**
- **BSK Awardee/Partner Survey**
- **Secondary data from BSK awardees:** narrative reports and logic models, strategy-specific data collection efforts (e.g., SBIRT interventionist Survey)
- **Secondary data from BSK/King County:** Requests for Proposals (RFPs), scope of work templates, contract monitoring processes, convening agendas
- **Interpretation and meaning-making** with Evaluation Advisors, BSK SP Leads, and evaluation participants

<sup>1</sup> King County refers to King County government, with a focus on the BSK initiative within it.

<sup>2</sup> These and additional definitions are included in the Appendix, pp. 48-49



Key Results

Factors critical to equitable partnership are:

- Leaders who are committed to building relationships and trust and sharing power among schools, CBOs, students, and families
  - Structures to support coordination, including space, resources, and an explicit coordination role or function.
- 
- **Leadership and power sharing** in equitable partnerships includes:
    - A **supportive and welcoming environment** for students and families
    - **Trust and intentional relationship building**
    - **Collaboration** between schools and CBOs
    - **Structures and opportunities for students** to be integrated in their schools and recognized as leaders
    - **Structures and opportunities for families** to be integrated in their schools and recognized as leaders
  - **Structures to support coordination of equitable partnerships** include:
    - **Structures and plans for coordination** (e.g., communication structures such as regularly scheduled meetings) that allow for adaptation
    - **Dedicated and flexible use of resources** for coordination (e.g., space, funding) in response to needs (e.g., during COVID-19 pandemic)
    - **Roles and responsibilities** for coordination (e.g., building champion, coordinator role, network builder)
    - **Access to and sharing of student data/information**

**The relationship between equitable partnerships and the changes partnerships are contributing to in schools works in both directions.** Partnerships contribute to changes in schools, and these changes, in turn, contribute to and strengthen the conditions for equitable partnerships between schools, CBOs, and other partners.

This relationship highlights the importance of partnerships to achieve changes in schools, and the importance of changes in schools to support and strengthen partnership:

- For example, for leadership and power sharing, many partnerships indicated that there were shifts in approaches and supports for family engagement and student leadership. These changes help to create a supportive and welcoming environment for students and families within the partnership and strengthen the opportunities and structures to engage them in shared leadership and power sharing.
- Similarly, shifts in coordination and systems of student supports strengthen the foundation for the structures within schools and across organizations that are central to equitable partnerships.

**BSK is seen as a partner, rather than strictly a funder,** to support the transformative potential of equitable partnerships.

BSK awardees and their partners looked to the BSK initiative and King County staff for support in this challenging work. Awardees and partners particularly appreciated:

- **Strong, trusting relationships between awardees and funder**
- **Opportunities to collaborate and engage in peer learning**
- **Clear communication between awardees and funder that was supported by structural frameworks**
- **Flexible, long-term funding**
- **Provision of training and technical assistance**

**As the first round of BSK came to an end, there was an increased focus on sustainability and accountability to affect change.**

- Sustainability became a growing priority. This focus included sustaining partnerships and the relationships that are inherent in them; financial sustainability of organizations, particularly CBOs that are part of partnerships; and the sustainability of changes to which partnerships have contributed.



- There was increased focus on accountability at all levels, for BSK, and among awardees, partners, schools and communities; and an interest in how to navigate the tension between accountability and equitable practices. On the part of BSK, increased accountability included increased transparency in communication with awardees, partners, and communities, and opportunities to gather feedback.

COVID-19 changed everything.

- The pandemic posed challenges in every aspect of life, including in how partnerships were able to grow and develop throughout this crisis, the changes they were able to contribute to in schools, and how BSK adapted its support to respond to shifting needs.



Implications for Practice

Implications for practice were informed by a range of sources, including student focus groups and interviews, the Awardee/Partner Survey, interviews with BSK SP Program Leads, and meaning-making sessions with evaluation participants:

- To further **support coordination of equitable partnerships**, organizations including schools, districts, CBOs, and BSK can strengthen and expand coordination and communication structures, improve practices around data sharing and use, increase alignment across organizations (e.g., timing of funding and program cycles), and adapt to changing needs.
- To **strengthen partnership leadership and power sharing**, organizations can expand opportunities for leadership, and include students, families, and CBOs in school and district structures (e.g., Multi-tiered System of Support, or MTSS, meetings; student representation at school staff meetings). Organizations, including BSK and those in school-based partnerships, can strengthen a shared vision across partners, and connections across organizations and to this vision. Partners can also further prioritize and collaboratively plan for long-term sustainability.
- Students shared their experiences and ideas via focus groups and interviews and **identified areas where they believe partnerships can have a positive effect** in their schools. They offered the following ideas for their schools and partner organizations:
  - **School climate/positive relationships:** Get to know students as people, and how to support and help them with academics and beyond
  - **Family and community engagement:** Incorporate cultural competence in how schools communicate with families and community
  - **Student leadership:** Provide more opportunities for students to act as leaders and change-makers in school
  - **Discipline practices:** Shift away from current discipline protocols, including suspensions and phone calls home, which often exacerbate the issue



Limitations and Related Strengths

In reviewing results and implications from the SP Evaluation, there are several limitations and related strengths to consider:

- **COVID-19:** The COVID-19 pandemic began in the middle of the three-year evaluation, which upended schools, partnerships, and daily life and created challenges in analyzing data over time. In response, we remained flexible and adapted the evaluation to minimize burden, connect with families, and understand the impacts of COVID-19 relevant to the evaluation.
- **Small sample size:** The evaluation included 11 sites with multiple BSK investments, and this small sample size limits the generalizability to other sites with multiple BSK investments or partnerships. However, the small size allowed us to take a relationship-based approach and develop a deeper understanding of work at these sites.
- **Partial perspectives:** There is a range in the number and type of perspectives we were able to include to inform our understanding, depending on district- and school-level research approval, availability and competing demands of potential participants, available capacity of the BSK SP Evaluation Team, and staff turnover among awardees and partners. Participation of school staff was particularly limited as we did not receive approval from all sites to include district staff in the evaluation.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic limited the capacity of school staff to engage in the evaluation given the demands school closures and re-openings during key data collection periods of spring/early summer 2020 and late summer/early fall 2021. Despite this limitation, we expanded the groups included in the evaluation over time (e.g., students, families, as well as awardees, partners, and school leaders).
- **Self-reported data:** Most data were self-reported by awardees and partners, via data reported to BSK (e.g., awardee narrative reports) or through primary data collected for the evaluation (e.g., interviews, focus groups, surveys).
- **Limited data from students:** We did not have access to quantifiable data about changes for students, such as performance measurement data by BSK awardee (e.g., results from student surveys). We used what awardees and partners described in narrative reports and in primary data collected for the evaluation, as well as data from student focus groups to understand changes for students. We connected with a limited number of students (n=21) across three sites in Year 3.

Next Steps

King County approved the BSK renewal in August 2021. As BSK continues its work to “support every baby born or child raised in King County to reach adulthood happy, healthy, safe, and thriving,” it is our hope that the results and implications from this evaluation can inform and strengthen school partnership work across King County and beyond. We will disseminate results from the SP Evaluation in partnership with Youth Development Executives of King County, BSK/King County, and other partners.



<sup>3</sup> We did not receive approval from one district to include district staff in Years 2 or 3 of the evaluation. A second district approved limited staff participation in Year 3 (e.g., to invite district staff to complete the Awardee/Partner Survey and attend meaning-making sessions) but not in Year 2. We did not have a third district’s approval to include district staff in Year 1. At one school within the third district, we did not we did not have Principal approval to include school staff in any year of the evaluation. In this district, Principal approval is required in addition to district approval to include school staff in research or evaluation projects.



***In this section:***

- This section includes background on the Best Starts for Kids (BSK) School Partnerships (SP) Evaluation, including:
- BSK SP vision and strategy areas
  - SP Evaluation questions and context
  - Role of Evaluation Advisors
  - Equitable partnerships framework

**Best Starts for Kids School Partnerships Vision**

The Best Starts for Kids (BSK) School Partnerships (SP) vision is that “School environments are safe, supportive, respectful and engaging environments for young people, staff and families. Race, ethnicity or cultural identity does not impact access to these environments.” BSK engaged the Strategy, Evaluation and Learning Team from Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD) to conduct a School Partnerships evaluation from August 2018-December 2021.

**BSK SP Evaluation Questions**

The goal of the SP Evaluation was to describe characteristics of equitable partnerships in sites (schools and districts) with multiple BSK SP investments, and the conditions that support them, including King County<sup>4</sup> processes and systems. The evaluation also explored the relationship between equitable partnerships and school-wide changes in practices, policies, systems, school environments, and key student outcomes. Specifically, the evaluation addressed three questions:

1. **What do equitable school partnerships look like, and what are the factors that support them?**
2. **What is the relationship between equitable partnerships and school-wide changes in practices, policies, systems, environments (PPSE), and student well-being?**
3. **How do King County processes and systems support equitable partnerships?**

**Defining Partnership**

There are many ways of defining and describing the concept of “partnership.” For the purposes of this evaluation, BSK defined those investments that were considered “School Partnership” (SP) investments as those where 1) schools/districts were BSK awardees, or 2) a community-based organization (CBO), healthcare provider, or other organization was a BSK awardee and was working with school/district partner(s) to implement their BSK-funded work.

An **awardee** (of BSK) is an organization that holds a contract (or contracts) with BSK. BSK awardees include CBOs, schools, school districts, and healthcare providers. **Partners** are organizations or agencies working with BSK awardees to implement the funded program(s). Partners include CBOs, schools, school districts, and healthcare providers. While collaboration between awardees and partner organizations was the primary focus of this evaluation, partnerships could also include students, families, and/or BSK/King County.

Equity is a core value of the BSK initiative. **Equitable partnerships** are those that attend to issues of equity in 1) how they function (e.g., attention is paid to power and power sharing, decision-making, and relationship- and trust-building) as well as in 2) what changes in practices, policies, systems, school environments, and student well-being are occurring, and to whose benefit. In equitable partnerships, partners and stakeholders that do not hold institutional power feel included and valued, have buy-in, and see themselves in the communication and decision-making processes. This definition of equitable partnerships was informed by partnership literature, with a particular focus on the concepts of equity and synergy, and developed in collaboration with SP Leads at BSK.<sup>5, 6, 7, 8</sup>

**Context**

The COVID-19 pandemic affected all aspects of the SP Evaluation beginning in March 2020, which was early in Year 2 of the three-year evaluation. The focus on racial equity in the context of equitable partnerships was reinforced and heightened with the growing movement for racial justice and protests in the wake of George Floyd’s murder in May 2020. This context affected our approach to the evaluation (e.g., timing, methods of engaging participants, when/how to connect with students and families) and what we focused on (e.g., understanding the impacts of COVID-19 related to each evaluation question, including interview/focus group questions about the movement for racial justice as context for partnership work).

**BSK SP Strategies**

- For this evaluation, we focused on sites (schools or districts) with multiple BSK School Partnership strategy investments. Strategy areas include:
- Healthy and Safe Environments (HSE)
  - Out-of-School Time (OST)
  - School-Based Health Centers (SBHC)
  - Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral To Services (SBIRT)
  - Trauma-Informed and Restorative Practices (TIRP)
  - Youth Development (YD)

<sup>4</sup>King County refers to King County government, with a focus on the BSK initiative within it.  
<sup>5</sup>Lasker, R. D., Weiss, E. S., & Miller, R. (2001). Partnership synergy: A practical framework for studying and strengthening collaborative advantage. *The Millbank Quarterly*, 79 (2), 179-205.  
<sup>6</sup>Green, T. (2017). Community-Based Equity Audits: A Practical Approach for Educational Leaders to Support Equitable Community-School Improvements. *Educational Administration Quarterly*. Vol. 53(1), 3-29.  
<sup>7</sup>Gulbranson, M. (2017). Transformational Relationship & Partnerships Framework. Renton, WA: Puget Sound Educational Service District.  
<sup>8</sup>Youth Development Executives of King County (n.d.). School and Community Partnership Toolkit. Retrieved November 2018, from <https://ydekc.org/resource-center/school-community-partnership-toolkit-full-version/>

Evaluation Advisors

We sought to understand partnership by taking an evaluation approach that was also based in partnership. Representatives of awardee organizations from each BSK SP strategy area and partner organizations served as Evaluation Advisors. They guided each phase of our evaluation including data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and the development of implications for practice.

Where possible, we engaged PSESD Leaders in Training student interns as Evaluation Advisors who also supported implementation of the evaluation (e.g., Year 1 analysis and interpretation of results, student focus group planning in Year 3).

We also engaged BSK SP Leads (this group included BSK staff who manage each of the School Partnership strategy areas, the Strategic Advisor for Trauma-Informed Systems, the 5-24 Policy and Program Manager, the BSK Implementation Manager, BSK evaluation staff, and others) and evaluation participants through regular meetings and meaning-making sessions to help interpret evaluation results and consider how they can inform improvements. In Year 3, we also connected several times with the TIRP Liberated Village Evaluation Committee to share our plans and emerging findings for feedback. Several TIRP awardees served as SP Evaluation Advisors across all three years, as well.

Equitable Partnerships Framework

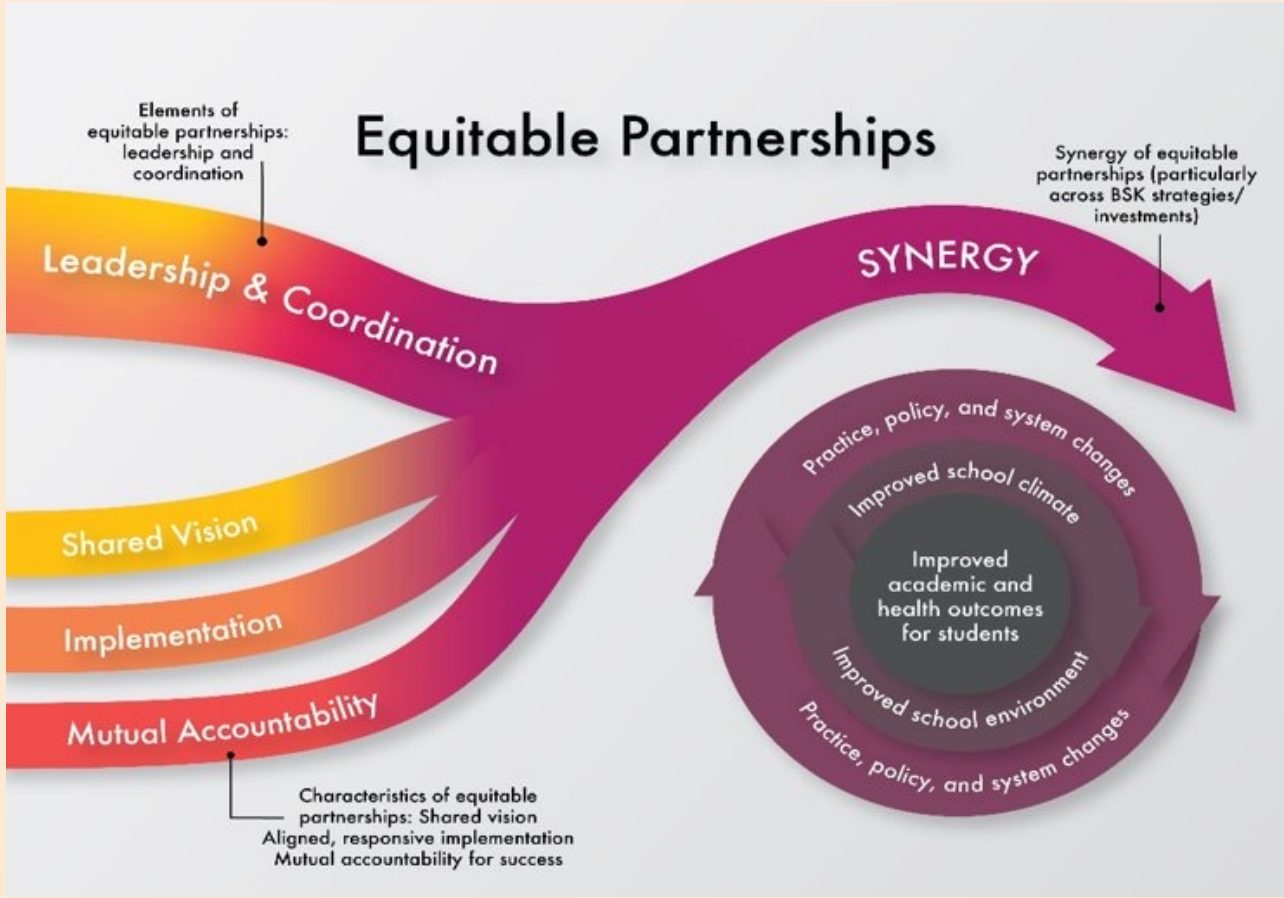
Exhibit A shows the relationship among the evaluation questions, particularly how equitable partnerships relate to synergy – the idea that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts – and school-wide changes in practices, policies, systems, environments, and student outcomes. This framework is adapted from the Youth Development Executives of King County (YDEKC) School and Community Partnership Toolkit.<sup>9</sup>

Report Audiences

This evaluation report is intended for those participating in, supporting, and interested in partnerships between schools and other organizations, including BSK SP Leads and evaluation staff as well as school, district, and CBO leaders and staff.

This report is a synthesis of the three-year SP Evaluation, and additional detail is available in the [Year 1](#)<sup>10</sup> and [Year 2](#)<sup>11</sup> reports.

Exhibit A: Equitable Partnerships Framework



<sup>9</sup> Youth Development Executives of King County (n.d.). School and Community Partnership Toolkit. Retrieved November 2018, from <https://ydekc.org/resource-center/school-community-partnership-toolkit/>

<sup>10</sup> Year 1 BSK SP Evaluation Report: <https://strategy.psesd.org/fs/resource-manager/view/7c4e9ede-84f1-43b8-9b78-6d36cba5ad9f>

<sup>11</sup> Year 2 BSK SP Evaluation Report: <https://strategy.psesd.org/fs/resource-manager/view/063ac8bc-96ac-41ad-8586-637b3fcf8e42>



***In this section:***

This section includes an overview of the BSK SP Evaluation methods, including:

- SP Evaluation sites
- Data sources
- Evaluation focus over time
- Analytical approach

SP Evaluation Sites

The SP Evaluation included sites (schools and districts) with multiple BSK investments. The Year 1 evaluation included 9 sites across 5 districts. In Years 2 and 3, the evaluation included 11 sites across 6 districts.

District	School	BSK Strategy Investments <i>(district = funding was for work across the district)</i>
Auburn	Cascade Middle School	HSE (district), OST, SBIRT, TIRP
Bellevue	Highland Middle School	OST (district), SBHC, TIRP (district)
Kent	Meeker Middle School	HSE (district), SBIRT (district), TIRP
	Mill Creek Middle School	HSE (district), SBIRT (district), TIRP
Seattle	Interagency Programs	HSE, TIRP
	Leschi Elementary School <i>(added in Year 2)</i>	TIRP (3 investments)
	Meany Middle School	SBIRT (district), TIRP
	Seattle World School	OST, SBHC, SBIRT (district), YD
	South Shore K-8 <i>(added in Year 2)</i>	OST, TIRP
	Washington Middle School <i>(Year 1 only)</i>	TIRP (2 investments in Year 1)
Snoqualmie Valley	Across district <i>(added in Year 2)</i>	HSE, SBIRT (district), TIRP
Tukwila	Showalter Middle School	OST, SBIRT (district), TIRP

**Data Collection**

The SP Evaluation was a mixed-methods evaluation that used qualitative and quantitative information to understand the implementation and outcomes of partnerships in sites with multiple SP investments. We included different stakeholders to understand a range of perspectives and experiences, including those of awardees, partners, school and district leadership and staff, BSK staff, students, and families.

Data Sources by Year (n=number of participants)			
Stakeholder Group	Year 1 School Year (SY) 2018-19	Year 2 SY 2019-20	Year 3 SY 2020-21, fall 2021
Awardee and Partner organizations (CBOs, districts, and schools)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interviews (n=29)</li><li>• Awardee narrative reports, logic models, SBIRT Interventionist Survey</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focus groups/ interviews (n=58)</li><li>• Meaning-making sessions (n=30<sup>12</sup>)</li><li>• Awardee narrative reports</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Awardee/Partner Survey (n=33)</li><li>• Meaning-making session (n=26)</li><li>• Awardee narrative reports</li></ul>
BSK/King County staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interviews with BSK SP Leads (n=12) and King County Contracts and Procurement staff (n=1)</li><li>• Secondary data (e.g., strategy logic models, Requests for Proposals, Scopes of Work)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meaning-making sessions (n=5<sup>12</sup>)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Group interviews (n=12)</li><li>• Meaning-making session (n=7)</li></ul>
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• N/A</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focus groups (n=12)</li><li>• Meaning-making sessions (n=2<sup>12</sup>)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focus groups (n=4)</li><li>• Reports on COVID-19 impacts</li></ul>
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• N/A</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• N/A</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focus groups/ interviews (n=21)</li><li>• Reports on COVID-19 impacts</li></ul>
Evaluation Advisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular Advisor meetings to inform evaluation design, implementation, and interpretation of results</li></ul>		

<sup>12</sup> Year 2 meaning-making sessions in January 2021 focused on sharing Year 2 results and gathering data for Year 3.

Within the three evaluation questions, the focus and analytical approach evolved over time. Priority areas of focus and methods were informed by Evaluation Advisors, the broader context, and learnings from the evaluation.

Areas of Focus by Evaluation Question

Q1: What do equitable school partnerships look like, and what are the factors that support them?

Shifted from categorizing partnerships as Cooperative, Collaborative, or Integrated<sup>13</sup> to providing concrete descriptions and examples of partnership, given evaluation participant and Advisor feedback on the fluidity of partnerships and interest in actionable information

Q2: What is the relationship between equitable partnerships and school-wide changes in practices, policies, systems, environments (PPSE), and student well-being?

Initially identified school-wide changes that partnerships were *focused on affecting*, and as their work progressed, looked at how partnerships were *contributing* to changes, including impacts of COVID-19 on school-wide changes

Q3: How do King County processes and systems support equitable partnerships?

Initially analyzed BSK processes and supports within each SP strategy area and identified opportunities for alignment, then shifted to how BSK was responding to COVID-19 in its supports to awardees and partners

With the COVID-19 pandemic and growing movement for racial justice, we examined the impacts of this context across all questions. In Year 3, we included areas of interest to Evaluation Advisors, BSK SP Leads, and the Liberated Village Evaluation Committee including:

- Contributions of each SP strategy area to partnership work and changes
- Sustainability
- Connecting with students and families to hear their perspectives and experiences

Areas of Focus by Year		
Year 1 SY 2018-19	Year 2 SY 2019-20	Year 3 SY 2020-21, fall 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore types of school partnerships and role of equity in the “what” and “how” of partnership</li><li>• Develop attributes of equitable partnerships</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand how partnerships develop over time</li><li>• Incorporate focus on power sharing within equitable partnerships</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide concrete examples of partnership attributes and activities to inform practice through driver maps, including contributions from individual strategy areas</li><li>• Deepen understanding of shared accountability for success</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify types of changes partnerships seek to achieve in schools</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify how partnerships contribute to changes in practice, policies, systems, and environments (particularly before COVID-19)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand how the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racial injustice affect changes in schools</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review BSK processes and supports in SP strategy areas</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand BSK response to COVID-19 pandemic in each SP strategy area</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand BSK staff perspectives on supporting equitable partnership</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Address impact of COVID-19 and movement for racial justice on partnership development, changes in schools, and BSK supports</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Highlight contributions of individual SP strategies</li><li>• Examine student and family experiences</li><li>• Explore sustainability (of partnerships, changes, and funding/resources)</li></ul>

<sup>13</sup> Youth Development Executives of King County (n.d.). School and Community Partnership Toolkit. Retrieved November 2018, from <https://ydekc.org/resource-center/school-community-partnership-toolkit/>



The table below outlines how we analyzed data over time and built on what we learned in each year of the evaluation.<sup>14</sup>

	Year 1 SY 2018-19	Year 2 SY 2019-20	Year 3 SY 2020-21, fall 2021
<b>Equitable partnerships (Q1)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Coded interviews and developed partnership look fors, or attributes of equitable partnerships, based on key frameworks and awardee/partner interviews.<sup>15</sup> Example look fors include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>People who are affected by decisions are included in and influence decision-making</li><li>Partners communicate regularly with each other</li><li>Partners share information about students (and understand limitations to sharing) in order to provide and improve supports</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Refined look fors to include power sharing and coded awardee/partner primary data (focus groups and interviews)</li><li>Triangulated with secondary data to identify what was confirmatory or new</li><li>Categorized partnerships (Cooperative, Collaborative, Integrated) and assessed supporting and inhibiting factors to partnership for each type of partnership</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identified drivers of equitable partnerships based on Years 1 and 2, early Year 3 data</li><li>Used drivers to code additional Year 3 data, and identified related activities</li><li>Triangulated with Awardee/Partner Survey data</li><li>Developed themes from student/family data re: leadership opportunities</li></ul>
<b>Lasting changes in schools (Q2)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Synthesized secondary data (e.g., awardee narrative reports) with primary data to identify strengths and opportunities for partnerships</li><li>Assessed types of partnership (Cooperative, Collaborative, Integrated) and categorized school-wide changes partnerships seek to affect</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Categorized reported changes (from primary and secondary awardee/partner data) per categories from Year 1</li><li>Analyzed relationship between partnership type and school-wide changes reported</li><li>Identified common changes reported by partnerships in the same site</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Categorized reported changes from primary and secondary data, per categories from Years 1 and 2</li><li>Triangulated with Awardee/Partner Survey data</li><li>Identified common changes reported by partnerships in the same site</li><li>Developed themes from student/family data re: changes in schools</li></ul>
<b>BSK supports (Q3)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Reviewed documents from BSK/King County</li><li>Coded BSK/King County interviews for priority and emergent topics</li><li>Developed themes informed by Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO) framework<sup>16</sup></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Coded awardee/partner primary data</li><li>Analyzed data to identify strengths and opportunities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identified common themes based on Years 1 and 2, early Year 3 data</li><li>Coded additional Year 3 data</li><li>Triangulated with Awardee/Partner Survey data re: feedback on BSK supports</li></ul>
<b>Across questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shared and validated preliminary results with Evaluation Advisors</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identified connections across findings for each question</li><li>Shared preliminary results with Evaluation Advisors and evaluation participants (at January 2021 meaning-making sessions)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shared preliminary results with evaluation participants (at November 2021 meaning-making session)</li><li>Synthesized key reports to provide context on COVID-19 impacts on students and families</li></ul>

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix, p. 70 for additional information on methods over time. Year 1 and Year 2 methods are described in detail in the Year 1 and Year 2 reports: Year 1 BSK SP Evaluation Report: <https://strategy.psesd.org/fs/resource-manager/view/7c4e9ede-84f1-43b8-9b78-6d36cba5ad9f>  
Year 2 BSK SP Evaluation Report: <https://strategy.psesd.org/fs/resource-manager/view/063ac8bc-96ac-41ad-8586-637b3fcf8e42>

<sup>15</sup> See Appendix, pp. 66-69, for full list of equitable partnership look fors.

<sup>16</sup> Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, The Smarter Grantmaking Playbook: <https://www.geofunders.org/what-we-offer/the-smarter-grantmaking-playbook>

What do equitable school partnerships look like, and what are the factors that support them?

In this section:

This section highlights **results for Evaluation Question 1**, including:

- Equitable partnerships include schools, districts, CBOs, students and families.
- Partners collaborated to deliver services, learn from and assess their work, and accomplish more than they could alone.
- Evaluation results from Years 1 and 2 informed Year 3.
- Leadership, power sharing, and coordination are drivers of equitable partnerships.
- Equitable partnerships include leaders that are committed to building relationships and trust and sharing power among schools, CBOs, students, and families.
- Equitable partnerships have structures to support coordination, including space, resources, and an explicit coordination role or function.
- Student experiences with leadership and power sharing are varied.
- Sharing power and information engages families to partner with schools.

Beginning in 2019 through 2021, we worked with awardees<sup>17</sup> and partners<sup>18</sup> to explore their partnership experiences. In Year 2 and Year 3, families and students shared their perspectives and, across three years, Evaluation Advisors, and BSK SP Leads<sup>19</sup> provided input and insight.

In 2021, we asked awardees and partners **who they considered partners in their work**, in the Awardee/Partner Survey (n=33). Survey results are highlighted in Exhibit B.

- Awardees and partners identified a range of organizations and individuals as partners, including schools, districts, CBOs, students and families.
- Some cross-strategy relationships (i.e., connections across different SP strategies) were identified:
  - HSE and SBHC awardees considered OST awardees as partners
  - TIRP awardees named SBIRT district awardees as partners
  - A SBHC partner identified a YD awardee as a partner
  - OST awardees identified YD service providers as partners

- Awardees representing 5 strategy areas (HSE, OST, SBHC, SBIRT, TIRP) identified both **schools and school districts as partners**.<sup>20</sup>
- Respondents representing 5 strategy areas (HSE, OST, SBHC, SBIRT, TIRP) considered **students as partners** in their BSK work.
- Awardees and partners representing 4 strategy areas (HSE, SBHC, SBIRT, TIRP) named **families as partners**.
- Respondents representing **schools identified students and families as partners**.

<sup>17</sup> An awardee (of BSK) is an organization that holds a contract (or contracts) with BSK. BSK awardees include CBOs, schools, school districts, and healthcare providers. (See Appendix for definitions, pp. 48-49)

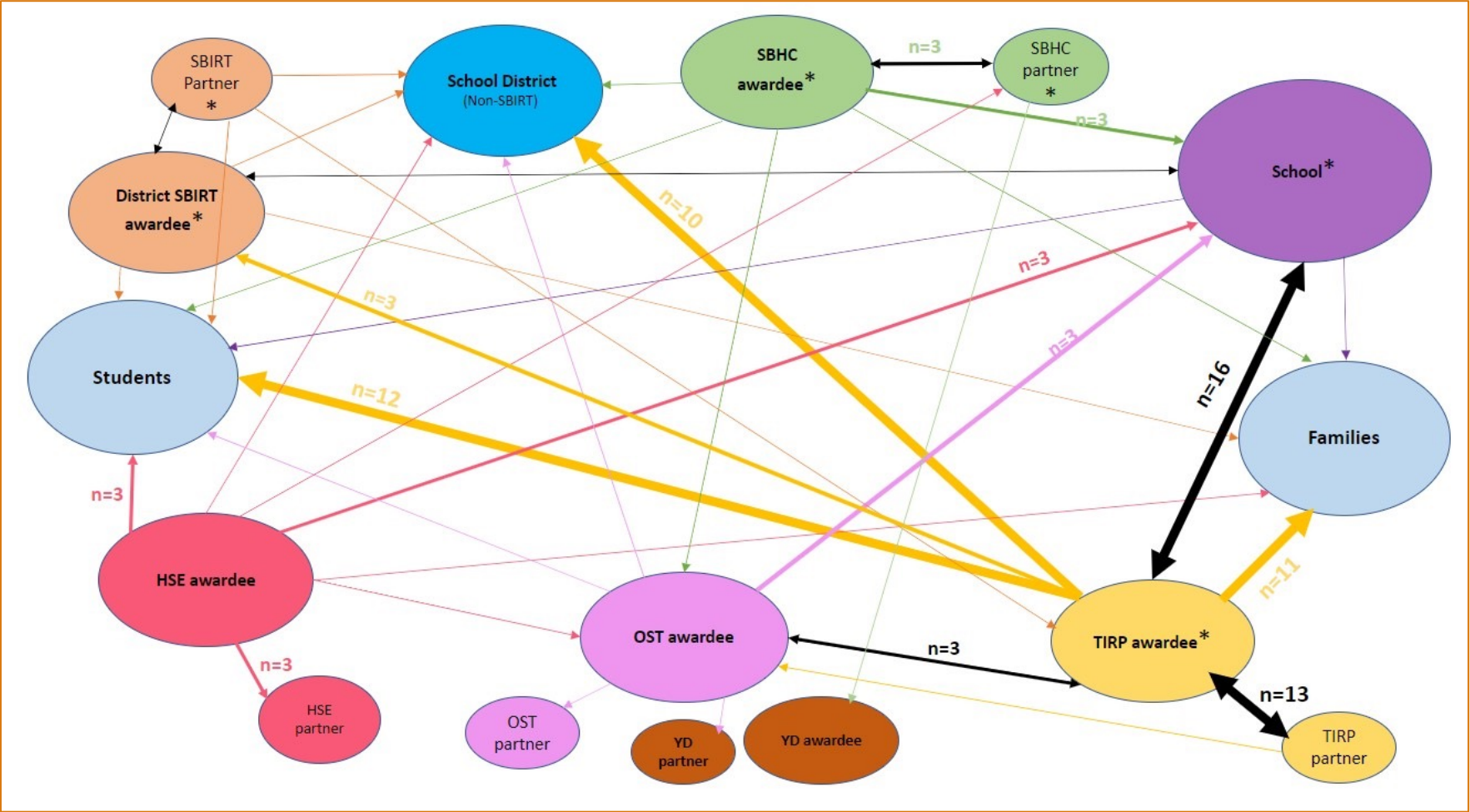
<sup>18</sup> Partners are organizations or agencies working with BSK awardees to implement the funded program(s). Partners include CBOs, schools, school districts, and healthcare providers (See Appendix for definitions, pp. 48-49)

<sup>19</sup> BSK SP Leads included King County staff from six SP strategies: Healthy and Safe Environments (HSE); Out-of-School Time (OST); School-Based Health Centers (SBHC); Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral To Services (SBIRT); Trauma-Informed and Restorative Practice (TIRP); and Youth Development (YD), as well as the Strategic Advisor for Trauma-Informed Systems, the 5-24 Policy and Program Manager, the BSK Implementation Manager, and BSK evaluation staff.

<sup>20</sup> SBIRT school district awardees identified other school districts as partners.



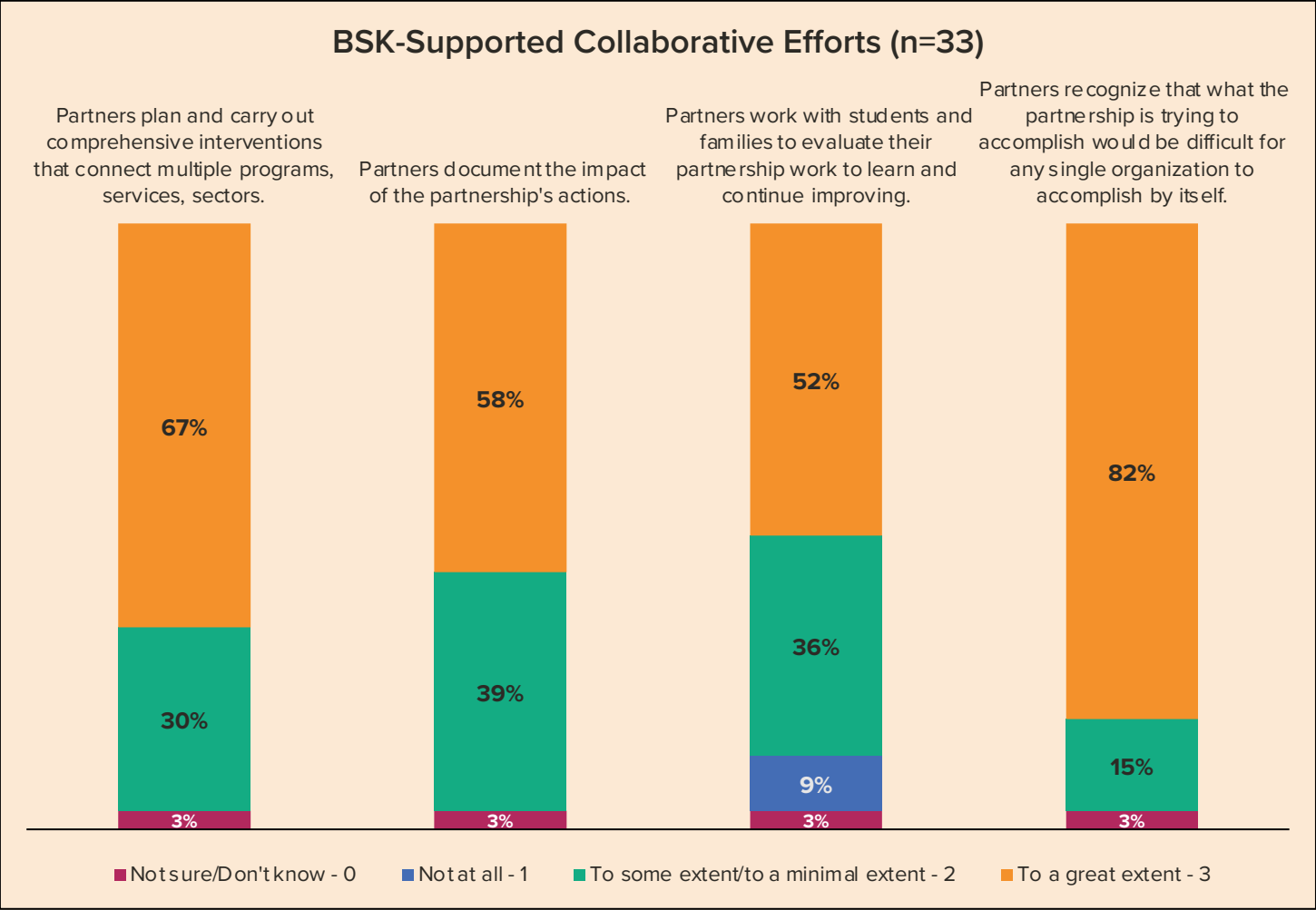
Exhibit B: Partners identified by BSK Awardees and Partners



How to read Exhibit B.

- Awardee/Partner Survey respondents represented five of the six strategies. Youth Development (YD) is the only strategy area that was not represented by any survey respondent.
- While school districts are SBIRT awardees, the separate District icon stands for district staff who are not only related to SBIRT work.
- Bidirectional arrows in black highlight that entities connected by such arrows considered each other as partners.
- Thickness of arrows signify the number of respondents who named particular partners. Three and higher numbers of survey respondents are noted.
- Entities with asterisks indicate that respondents identified others within the same group or strategy area (e.g., TIRP awardee identified other TIRP awardees) as partners.

Exhibit C: Year 3 Awardee/Partner Survey Results on Collaboration



In Year 3, we continued to investigate **how partnership work is happening in various ways**. This included analysis of awardee narrative reports and meaning-making sessions with those involved in BSK SP work. In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we asked awardees and partners to reflect on collaborative efforts via the Year 3 survey. Following are highlighted results (i.e., focused on respondents who responded "To a great extent" to the survey items on collaboration) shown in Exhibit C.

- Almost all participating awardees and partners (82%) considered that *what the partnership is trying to accomplish would be difficult for a single organization to achieve*.
- 67% of survey respondents agreed that, to a great extent, their partnerships carried out *comprehensive interventions that connect multiple programs, services, and sectors*.
- 58% of respondents determined that, for the most part, *partners document the impact of their actions*.
- And over half (52%) of survey respondents indicated that, for the most part, *they work with students and families to evaluate their partnership for the purposes of learning and continuing to improve their work*.



In Year 1, as schools and organizations began to negotiate and establish their partnerships, we found that **partnerships could be categorized as Cooperative, Collaborative, or Integrated** as illustrated in Appendix p. 71. The following lessons were emphasized:

- Relationships are central to strong partnerships.
- Developing trust in partnerships takes time.
- **Developing and strengthening cross-strategy partnerships** (i.e., partnerships across multiple BSK strategy areas) **required the same intentionality as within-strategy partnerships** (i.e., partnerships within a single BSK strategy area, such as between a district and CBOs/service providers to implement SBIRT). These partnerships included a shared purpose of “whole child” supports across multiple strategies, cross-strategy relationship-building, dedicated coordination, and strengthening partnerships among CBOs as well as between CBOs and schools/districts.
- **Equitable partnerships are inclusive partnerships.** The collective and complementary expertise that students, families, CBOs, schools and districts have to offer were highlighted. The importance of student leadership and family engagement in partnerships, two areas in which many CBOs have expertise to share with schools, districts, and other CBOs, was marked.

In Year 2, we established that

- **COVID-19 shifted, and in many cases strengthened, how partners work together.**
- Partnerships helped **build student and family leadership** in schools.
- Partnerships thrived when there were **people who ensure that connections and collaborations occur.**
- **How partners shared power** with each other impacted the strength of their partnership.
- Most importantly, awardees and partners indicated that they regarded their partnerships as **flexibly Cooperative, Collaborative, or Integrated depending on circumstances and need.**

Given these insights, in Year 3 **we examined what drives equitable partnership work and leads to changes.**



Drivers of Equitable Partnerships

In Year 1, we established that leadership and coordination support partnerships to have a shared vision; aligned, responsive implementation; and mutual or shared accountability for success.

Year 2 and Year 3 evaluation findings documented how partnerships' activities (or change ideas) help define leadership, power sharing, and coordination as shown in the Drivers and Activities maps in Exhibit D and Exhibit E and described in the next sections.<sup>21</sup>

**Drivers for change** identify what BSK awardees and partners were doing to establish equitable partnerships and to effect changes in practices, policies, systems, and school environments. We identified drivers and associated activities in response to Evaluation Advisors' feedback and requests for **more concrete, actionable information**. The Driver Maps reflect which strategies employed which change ideas, to identify the contributions of individual SP strategies in the 11 sites with multiple SP investments.

Leadership and Power Sharing Driver Map

Exhibit D shows Leadership and Power Sharing as a driver of equitable partnerships, and how engagement and leadership across the various groups that were involved in and impacted by BSK-funded efforts was needed. As a TIRP awardee noted: *"what partnerships mean at the highest level is really important. [It means] relationships with people."* The primary driver statement is a synthesis of the five secondary drivers included in the map—such as trust and intentional relationship building—that, in turn, are illustrated by activities reported by awardees and partners from all six SP strategy areas.

*"I like the driver about power sharing... and what we saw in our work in [the school] was that in action. That was in the works before we got there, and we had a catalyst. The principal was very open to sharing power and opening doors and understood early on what it meant to share with the community. 50-60 languages are spoken there and if he didn't share power, his school wouldn't function and there was no opportunity to share with his community and grow. We partnered with [TIRP awardee] and saw them invited to meetings their organization didn't usually get invited to, but physical presence is a big part of what power sharing means - just to be in the room...[P]ower sharing...operationalized...we really saw in action."*  
- SBIRT Partner

Coordination Driver Map

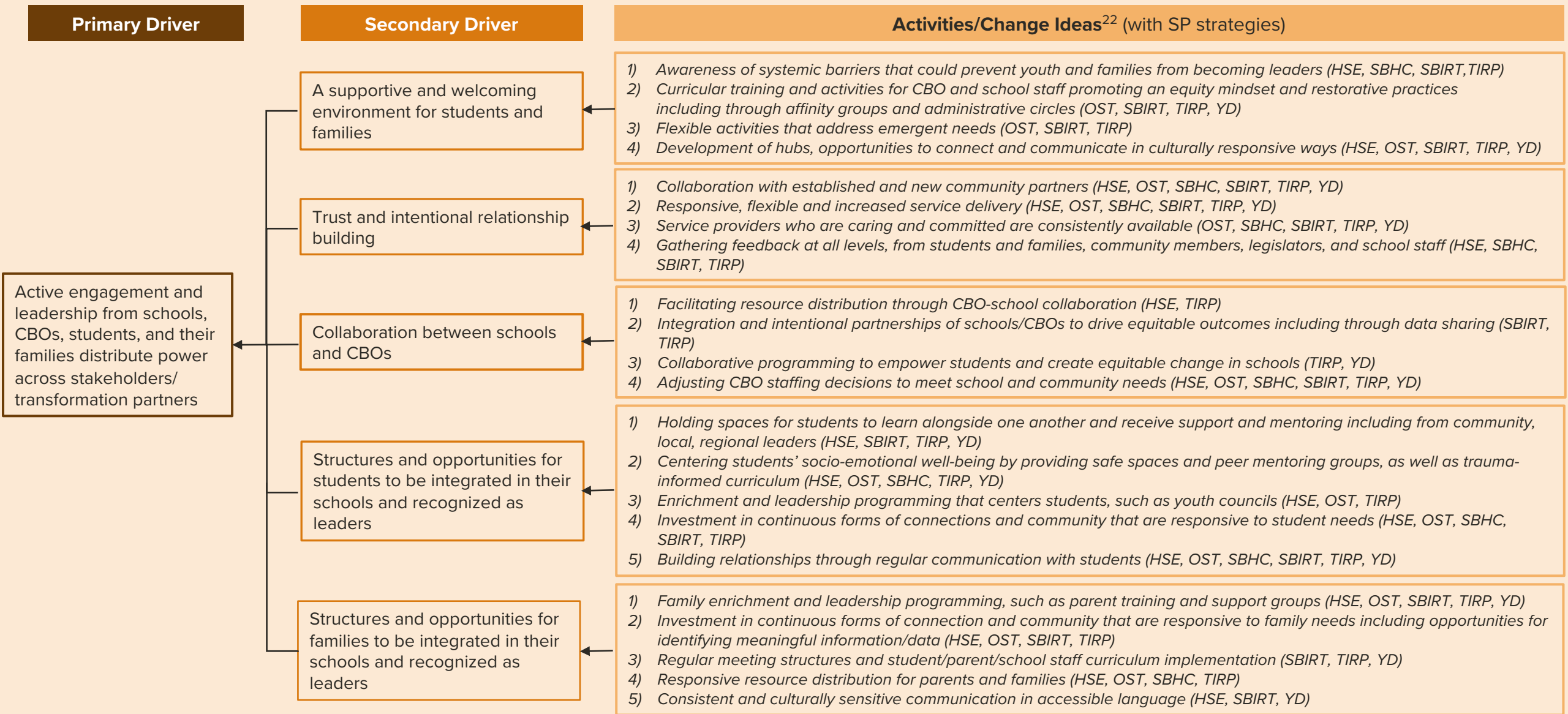
The primary driver in the Coordination map in Exhibit E illustrates what supports the work of the various stakeholders—e.g., clear roles and responsibilities. As another Awardee shared: *"There can be ways to collaborate, making it very clear what roles everyone plays to provide support to build young people and families that we serve. [It] does not have to be one particular program or organization. It does take a village to connect youth and families to resources."* Activities that help define such secondary drivers are also included in Exhibit E.

*"...with the MTSS system, every driver you had fit into the MTSS work we're doing in our district. Several schools have partners both on the Tier 1 and 2 teams that determined which aspects of support are necessary for interventions. You see them assessing the students and their needs and gauging the organization's capacity to identify their prime audience; they're really integral."*  
- District Partner

<sup>21</sup> The primary and secondary drivers in these maps reflect a synthesis of Year 1 and 2 key findings, with activities (or change ideas) based on data from Year 3 meaning-making sessions, the January and July 2021 narrative reports, and results from the Awardee/Partner Survey. Quotes cited from partners and awardees are from the November 2021 meaning-making session.

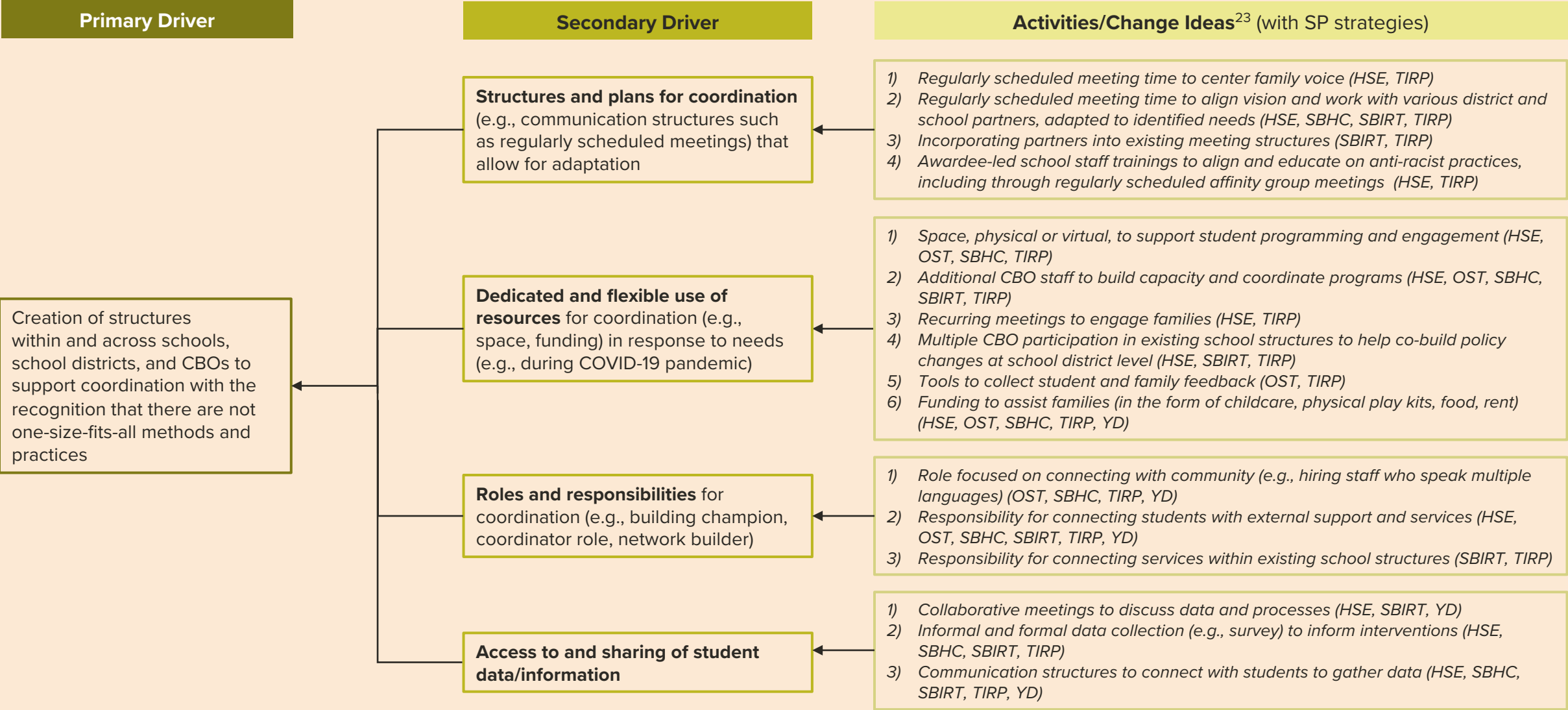


Exhibit D: Leadership and Power Sharing Driver and Activities Map



<sup>22</sup> Drivers/activities are based on Year 1 and 2 findings (school years 2018-19 and 2019-20) and additional data collected in January-early December 2021 that come from July 2021 narrative reports and supporting confirmatory findings from the Awardee/Partner Survey and fall 2021 meaning-making and focus group sessions.

Exhibit E: Coordination Driver and Activities Map



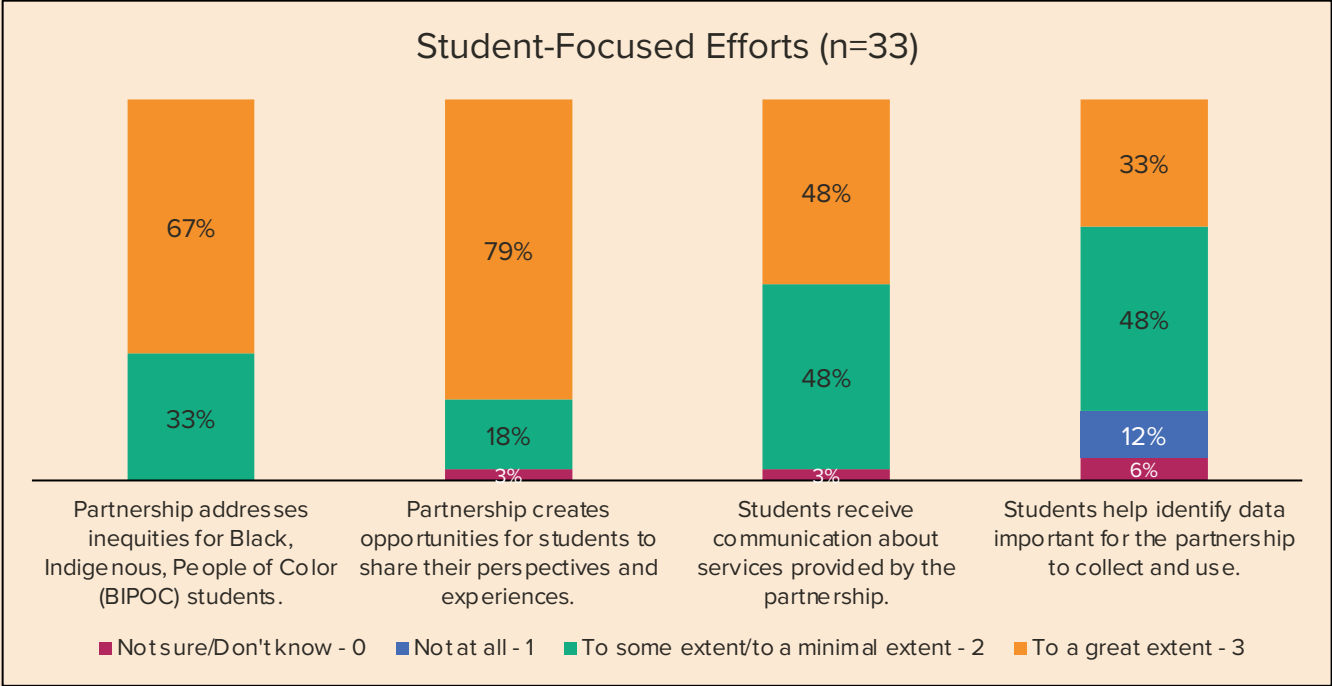
<sup>23</sup> Drivers/activities are based on Year 1 and 2 findings (school years 2018-19 and 2019-20) and additional data collected in January-early December 2021 that come from July 2021 narrative reports and supporting confirmatory findings gleaned from the Awardee/Partner Survey and fall meaning-making and focus group sessions.



The importance of **empowering student voice** (as well as family engagement) is captured in the following statement from a TIRP awardee shared during the November 2021 meaning-making session: *"For the whole structure to work, you have to check in with all partners to be transformative."* From fall 2021 focus groups with students, we identified the following themes:

- Students who were aware of or were involved in BSK-supported programs agreed that the **programs helped them**:
  - **Learn and develop skills** in leadership, communication, and conflict resolution
  - Feel that **they could make a difference in their school** (e.g., presenting to teachers/staff, peer mediation)
- Overall, students—whether they were aware of, were involved in, or had not heard of BSK-supported programs—felt that there were **limited school-wide opportunities to engage in leadership and decision-making**.
- There was an opportunity for schools and CBOs to **work together to build broader awareness of BSK-supported programs**. Students not participating in these programs had limited awareness of them.
- During COVID-19, **student participation in groups (e.g., peer mediation) changed**. It was difficult to engage students due to students' reported sense of disconnection from one another and because of Zoom fatigue.
- As shown in Exhibit F, BSK Awardee/Partner Survey results about student-focused efforts include:
  - A majority of respondents reported that their partnership addressed inequities against BIPOC students (67%) and created opportunities for students to share their perspectives (79%)
  - However, more than half of respondents could improve in communication about services (52%) and engagement of students in identifying data that would be important to collect (67%).

Exhibit F: Awardee/Partner Survey Results Focused on Students



Note: Because of rounding the sum of percentages may, in some cases, not equal 100%.

We further found the following response patterns by strategy area:

- HSE, SBHC, TIRP respondents (n=22) agreed that their work addressed inequities for BIPOC students to a great extent.
- HSE and SBHC respondents (n=7) reported that, to a great extent, their partnership created opportunities for students to share perspectives.
- HSE and SBIRT respondents (n=7) stated that students received communication about their partnership's services.

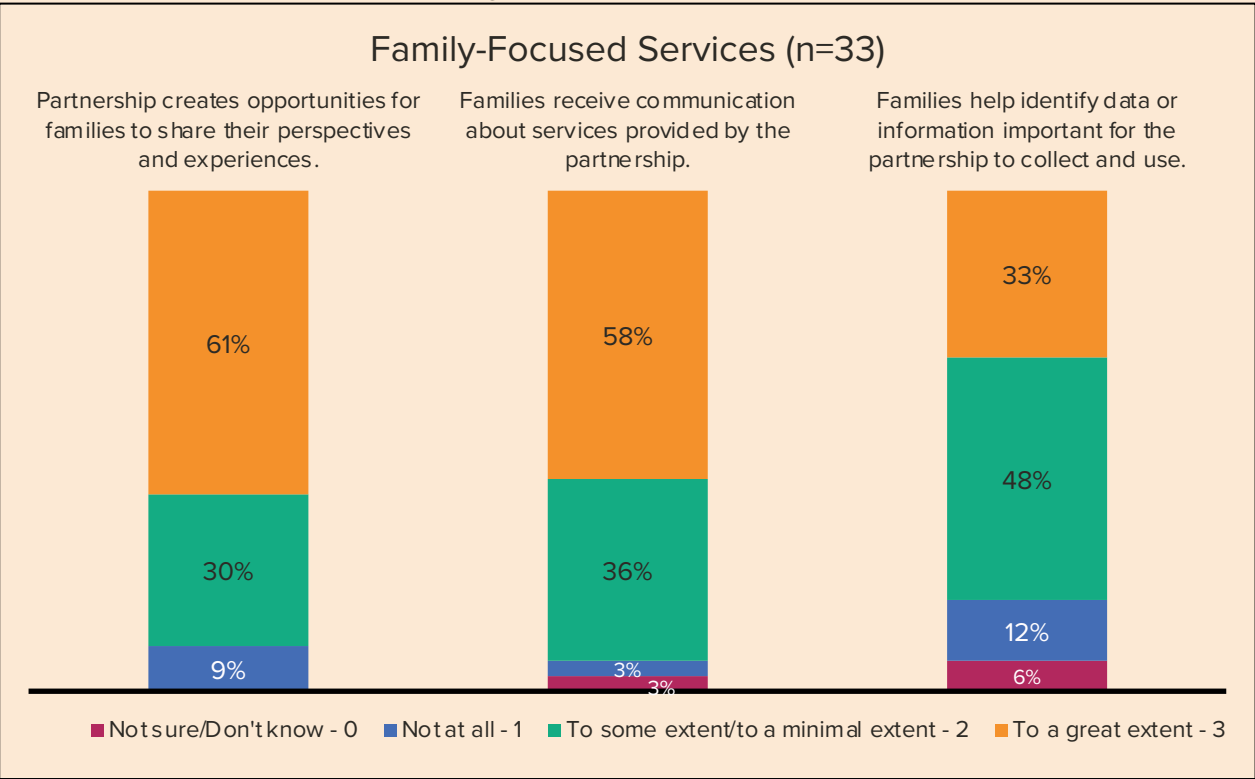
We conducted focus groups with families<sup>24</sup> in Year 2 and Year 3. The children of the parents who participated in Year 2 were 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade students or recent graduates of their middle schools.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, children of parents who participated in Year 3 were newly enrolled in the participating middle school.

- The Year 2 focus group **parents focused on power sharing and their desire to be considered as partners** which requires feeling welcomed and valued in a way that pushes past traditional educational structures. **Families felt that school structures often serve as barriers to an equal partnership** and a welcoming environment.
- The Year 3 focus group **parents reported having varying levels of familiarity and experiences with school structures** (e.g., classroom, staffing, PTA). They also **agreed that reliable and intentional communication from schools can invite and involve families as decision-makers**, building a sense of community.
  - One Year 3 participant thought that *there should be more parent teacher meetings about how the student is doing*. She further suggested that *having social emotional development conversations is helpful because... mental health should come first before grades*.

**When BSK awardees and partners who participated in the fall survey were asked to reflect on their work for families, we found that:**

- More than half of Awardee/Partner Survey respondents thought they created opportunities for families to share their perspectives and that families receive communication about services. However, most partnerships can improve on inviting families to help identify data and information that are important for schools and CBOs to collect and use. See Exhibit G.

Exhibit G: Awardee/Partner Survey Results Focused on Families



- We also found the following response survey trends by strategy area:
  - HSE and OST respondents (n=4) indicated that, to a great extent, their partnerships created spaces for families to share their perspectives.
  - HSE and SBIRT respondents (n=7) indicated that, for the most part, families received communication about their services.
  - Many TIRP respondents (n=7) reported that families helped identify data for partners' collection and use.

<sup>24</sup> In Year 2, we had one grandparent/guardian who participated in the focus group. Otherwise, all other participants in the focus groups in Years 2 and 3 were parents.  
<sup>25</sup> While BSK School Partnerships include investments in elementary, middle, and high schools (and district-wide work), sites in the SP Evaluation are primarily middle schools. 9 of 11 SP Evaluation schools are middle schools or Grades K-8/6-12 schools that include middle school grades.

What is the relationship between equitable partnerships and school-wide changes in practices, policies, systems, environments (PPSE), and student well-being?

*In this section:* This section highlights **results for Evaluation Question 2**, including:

- From Year 2 to Year 3, more partnerships contributed to improved family engagement and fewer affected school climate.
- Partnerships most commonly contributed to improved coordination/system of student supports and increased access to services.
- Partnership-reported changes that influence students included improvements in student outcomes and school climate, as well as an increase in student leadership opportunities.
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, partnerships increased their family engagement efforts.
- All SP Evaluation sites had at least one change area (e.g., coordination/system of student supports) where multiple partnerships contributed to change.
- The relationship between equitable partnerships and the changes partnerships are contributing to in schools works in both directions.

Through this evaluation question, we addressed the extent to which, and in what ways, multiple BSK SP partnerships in schools influenced school-wide changes in practices, policies, systems, environments and student well-being and outcomes.

- In Year 1, we explored the types of changes partnerships were working on, while in Years 2 and 3, we explored the changes partnerships were reporting over this time period.
- The ways in which we looked at these changes progressed for each year of the evaluation, and our review of changes in Year 3 was informed by how we approached Year 1 and Year 2. This included the categories of change and how partnerships working within the same site were contributing to common areas of change.
- Data sources include primary data (awardee/partner interviews, focus groups, meaning-making sessions, Awardee/Partner Survey) and secondary data (awardee narrative reports, logic models) collected in Years 1-3. We used multiple data sources to triangulate or compare across sources.
- The **categories of changes** we explored include the following areas:

- |                      |                |                     |                  |                      |
|----------------------|----------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| • Attendance         | • Coordination | • Discipline        | • School Climate | • Student Leadership |
| • Access to Services | • Data Systems | • Family Engagement | • Staff Growth   | • Student Outcomes   |

Since March 2020, the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racial injustice affected changes in schools, such as a growing need for and use of restorative justice practices. As such, we assessed how racial equity and COVID-19 affected changes in schools:

**A focus on equity emerged** as a central element to the changes partnerships sought. In Year 3, **nearly all partnerships (27 out of 31)** reported working within areas that had a specific equity focus. These included:

- Racial equity training for staff (HSE, SBIRT, TIRP)
- Use of data to better inform equitable practices (SBIRT, TIRP)
- Provision of resources and equity-specific implementation (HSE, SBHC, SBIRT, TIRP, YD)
- Use of restorative practices with a racial equity focus (TIRP)
- Advocacy efforts related to more equitable practices and systems (HSE, SBHC, TIRP)

**COVID-19** affected the types of changes and support partnerships focused on in response to student, family, and community needs. In Year 3, **19 out of 31 partnerships reported changes** that included:

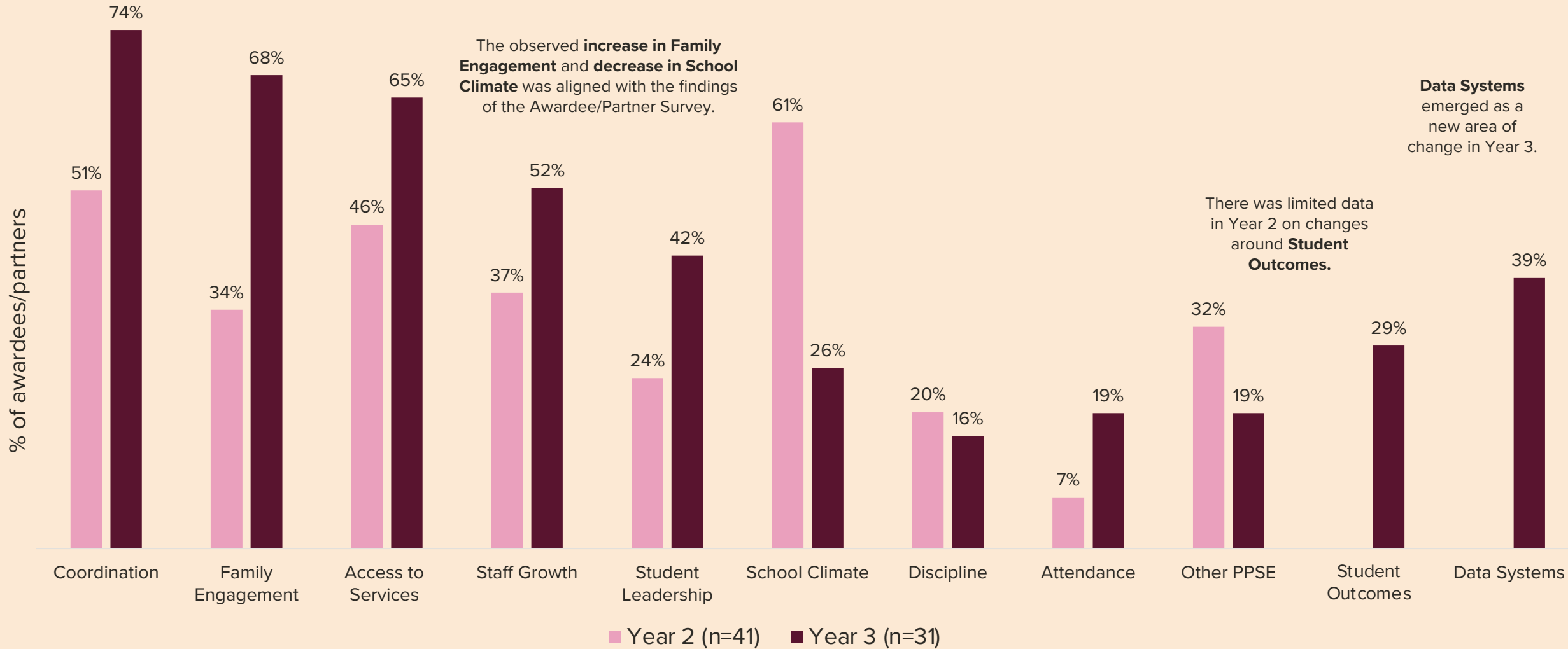
- Addressing the urgent and basic needs of students, families and the community (HSE, OST, SBIRT, TIRP, YD)
- Leveraging virtual spaces and technological resources (SBIRT, TIRP)
- Providing programming for academic and social-emotional learning support (SBIRT, TIRP)
- Increasing collaboration among partners to support (SBHC, SBIRT, TIRP)



From Year 2 to Year 3, more partnerships contributed to improved family engagement and fewer affected school climate.

Coordination and Access to Services was a top area of focus for partnerships from Year 2 to Year 3.

Policy, Practices and Systems Changes + Student Outcomes  
Year 2 to Year 3 Comparison<sup>26</sup>



<sup>26</sup>Year 2 included both within-strategy and cross-strategy partnerships (n=41) while in Year 3 only within-strategy were included (n=31). This is due to the data available, and if it included cross-strategy perspective (e.g., focus groups) or perspectives from a single within-strategy partnership (e.g., awardee narrative reports). Data sources include primary data (awardee/partner interviews, focus groups, meaning-making sessions, survey) and secondary data (awardee narrative reports, logic models) collected in Years 1-3. We used multiple data sources to triangulate or compare across sources.

In Year 3, school partnerships reported changes in systems, with a focus on coordination, access to services, attendance, and data systems, with the most commonly reported change areas being coordination and access to services. Additionally, partnerships contributed to efforts to support staff growth. Specific changes within these areas are detailed below.

- 23 out of 31 partnerships reported changes around **coordination**. These changes included:
- Use of committees and collaborative structures (OST, SBIRT, TIRP)<sup>27</sup>
  - Flexible use of resources (phone communication, committee time, site partners, existing programming) for increased coordination (OST, SBIRT, TIRP)
  - Alignment of school and CBO in program delivery, language, data (HSE, OST, SBIRT, TIRP)
  - Data analysis and data-driven implementation decisions (SBIRT, TIRP, YD)
  - Leveraging mentorship and building community connections (HSE, SBIRT, TIRP)

- 20 out of 31 partnerships reported changes around **access to services**. These changes included:
- Community-centered approaches, outside of school-time opportunities and small groups or one-on-one support to access (e.g., home visits, network of educators, provision of basic and urgent needs) (OST, SBIRT, TIRP)
  - Support to students and families to increase access (e.g., mobile units for health, supplemental school programs, in-school mental health supports) (OST, SBIRT, TIRP)
  - Explicit focus on mental health supports and social-emotional learning (HSE, OST, SBHC, SBIRT, TIRP)
  - Technological supports and virtual space to increase access (SBIRT, TIRP)
  - Collaboration and partnership to support access to services (SBIRT, TIRP)

- In Year 3, **data systems** emerged as a new area of focus, with 12 out of 31 partnerships reporting changes in this area. These changes included:
- Data collection systems (HSE, SBIRT, TIRP, YD)
  - Data informing practice and specific equity work (SBIRT)
  - Focus on collection of student and family qualitative data (HSE, SBIRT, TIRP)

- 16 out of 31 partnerships reported changes around **staff growth**. These changes included:
- Equity-focused restorative practice trainings and racial equity trainings (SBIRT, TIRP)
  - Trainings surrounding positive and affirming spaces for students and staff, as well as social-emotional learning work (SBIRT, TIRP)
  - Trainings surrounding implementation of practice (HSE, OST, TIRP)

- 6 out of 31 partnerships reported changes around **attendance**. These changes included:
- Alignment with family engagement as a support to increased attendance (TIRP)
  - Shifts from punitive to more restorative approaches with truancy and attendance (HSE, TIRP)
  - Collaborative effort between partners to address concerns of low attendance among students of color (TIRP)

- 6 out of 31 partnerships contributed to other types of changes, including:
- Policy and advocacy efforts to impact system change (HSE, SBHC, TIRP)

- 4 out of 31 partnerships contributed to changes related to **discipline**. These changes included:
- Use data to support restorative practices (SBIRT)
  - Workshops and coaching around a more trauma-informed and less punitive approach to discipline (TIRP/HSE)

<sup>27</sup> Strategy areas related to each type of change are noted in parentheses. SP strategies are Healthy and Safe Environments (HSE); Out-of-School Time (OST); School-Based Health Centers (SBHC); Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral To Services (SBIRT); Trauma-Informed and Restorative Practice (TIRP); and Youth Development (YD). Data sources include primary data (awardee/partner interviews, focus groups, meaning-making sessions, survey) and secondary data (awardee narrative reports, logic models) collected in Years 1-3. We used multiple data sources to triangulate or compare across sources.

Ultimately, the goal of BSK School Partnerships is to affect the experiences of students, with the SP vision that “School environments are safe, supportive, respectful and engaging environments for young people, staff and families. Race, ethnicity or cultural identity does not impact access to these environments.”

In Year 3, school partnerships reported several types of changes for students, described below.

- 13 of 31 partnerships reported **increased student leadership opportunities**, such as:
  - Centering student voice (i.e., student committees, structured opportunities to gather student feedback and input) (OST, SBIRT, TIRP)
  - Student-led events and learning opportunities (i.e., student ambassador programs, mentorship, youth-led philanthropy and community work) (OST, TIRP)
  - Students involved in policy work (HSE, TIRP)
  - Students as leaders in restorative justice work (TIRP)
  - Student support for facilitation of workshops/trainings (OST, TIRP)
- 9 of 31 partnerships reported **improved student outcomes**, including:
  - Increased self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-confidence (SBIRT, TIRP)
  - Increased engagement stemming from events and program delivery (SBHC)
- 8 of 31 partnerships reported incorporating strategies that improve **school climate** in Year 3. As noted, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the extent to which partnerships could affect school climate, particularly during school closures. The contributions of partnerships to improve school climate included:
  - Focus on how relationship-building and community-centered approaches (i.e., home visits, family engagement practices) can lead to more positive school climate (OST, SBIRT, TIRP)
  - Promotion of racial equity and racial justice to create more positive environment for students of color with an explicit focus on history of systemic racism, trauma-informed practices (TIRP)
  - Collaborative mindset that includes the community to improve school climate (TIRP)

Students from three SP Evaluation sites also shared their experiences with and perspectives on student leadership opportunities, changes for themselves, and changes in their schools:

**Student leadership**

Students who were aware of and engaged in BSK-supported programming agreed that these programs offered ways for them **to develop leadership skills and supported their ability to make a difference in their school.**

**Student engagement and outcomes**

There was a lack of student awareness of BSK-supported programs among those not involved, which has implications for the potential impact programs can have. While students who participated in BSK-supported programs benefited from it, others did not have the opportunity to engage in activities that could benefit their growth and well-being (academic, socio-emotional, mental health).

**School climate**

The ability for partnerships to impact school climate was limited in Year 3 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures. Students reported experiencing difficulties adjusting to remote learning and maintaining a sense of connection amongst their peers. Since the return to in-person learning, students report challenges with student behaviors (increase in fighting/bullying) and an unwelcoming and unsafe school environment.

When referring to participation in BSK-supported programs, a student shared:

*“I think it has helped me talk to people and communicate and help people out when I see someone is in trouble. It has given me some more skills.”*

Another student reflected:

*“Kids are a little more standoffish than they were before the pandemic – I don’t connect with friends on a deeper level, we don’t have a real connection, we talk to each other, but we are not technically friends.”*



In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, partnerships increased their family engagement efforts.

**In Year 3, school partnerships reported a focus in engaging and supporting families, prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic.**

- 23 of 31 partnerships reported **increased family engagement**, such as:
  - Intentional engagement strategies and structures that focus on amplifying family voice and increasing family engagement (OST, SBIRT, TIRP)
  - Racial identity trainings for families (TIRP)
  - Providing health related resources, workshops, and events with families (HSE, SBHC, TIRP)
  - Utilizing a more holistic and community-centered approach (SBHC, SBIRT, TIRP)
  - Using qualitative data collection (e.g., focus groups and surveys) to better understand family concerns around racial equity and to identify emergent needs of families (HSE, TIRP)

As part of the evaluation efforts, families from three SP Evaluation sites participated in focus groups in which they were invited to share their experiences and perspectives on student leadership opportunities, changes they have observed for themselves, and changes in their schools. Overall, families:

- Felt that communication from schools had been reliable and intentional
- Had varying levels of access and familiarity with school structures
- Recognized and appreciated programming that allows a space for their student to grow and learn
- Had a general interest in learning more about getting their students connected to mental health and racial justice initiatives

*“You’d mentioned a couple of programs that had to do with mental health and post trauma. Those would be of interest because there have been things that happened.”*

– Family focus group participant

*“I will say this for the school system, they do communicate well, there’s lots of emails, more than just like the monthly newsletter. We have been involved in some schools, where that’s all you get. I do appreciate that.”*

– Family focus group participant



All SP Evaluation sites had at least one change area (e.g., coordination/system of student supports) where multiple partnerships contributed to change.

To further understand the relationship between partnerships and lasting changes in schools, we analyzed whether different partnerships working in the same sites contributed to the same types of change (i.e., common changes). This approach built on Year 1 and 2 findings, where we assessed the relationship between type of partnership (Cooperative, Collaborative, Integrated) and contributions to changes in schools. There was a not a pattern to this relationship. As we moved away from categorizing partnership types, we focused the Year 3 analysis on understanding common areas of change within sites and if/how different combinations of strategies related to similarities in reported changes, as described below.

What we analyzed	What we found	Examples
Analysis	Results	
If multiple partnerships in a site reported similar types of change (e.g., improved school climate, improved system of coordination, increased family engagement)	All SP Evaluation sites had at least one change area where multiple partnerships reported change in the same area.	<div>Common areas of change within a site:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 sites had multiple partnerships that reported <b>improved coordination</b></li><li>9 sites had multiple partnerships that reported <b>increased access to services</b></li><li>8 sites have multiple partnerships that reported <b>improved family engagement</b></li></ul></div> <div>At one site, OST/SBIRT/YD partnerships contributed to improved coordination by facilitating the creation of a contact system which led to increased attendance and participation, conducting weekly check-ins with staff (OST/YD) and engaging in cross-partnership collaboration to provide tiered levels of support (SBIRT).</div> <div>At one site, HSE/OST/TIRP contributed to increased access to services by strengthening relationships between school administrators and CBOs to improve community access to resources (TIRP), establishing a connection between the CBO and school to tailor supports to students (OST) and the formation of a health committee that includes staff and families so that services can be better promoted to families (HSE).</div> <div>At one site, OST/TIRP contributed to improved family engagement by conducting one-on-one meetings with families and incorporating family feedback into programming (OST) as well as utilizing wraparound support networks in an effort to think innovatively in how to engage with families during virtual learning (TIRP).</div>
How commonly areas of change were reported by multiple partnerships within a site	Coordination, access to services, and family engagement were the most common areas where multiple partnerships reported changes within a site.	
If there were patterns in the combination of BSK strategy areas (e.g., sites that have SBIRT/TIRP investments compared to site with OST/SBHC investments) and the extent to which common changes were reported	There was <u>not</u> a pattern of specific strategy combinations having greater alignment in the changes they report.	<div>Common areas of change across strategies:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 different combinations of strategies<sup>28</sup> in a given site reported changes in the same areas:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improved family engagement</li><li>Increased access to services</li><li>Improved coordination</li></ul></li><li>6 different combinations of strategies reported contributing to staff growth</li><li>3 different combinations contributed to student leadership and school climate</li></ul></div>

<sup>28</sup> For example, for family engagement, the 7 strategy combinations where partnerships were reporting areas of change within a site were: HSE/OST/TIRP; HSE/TIRP; OST/SBHC/SBIRT; OST/TIRP; SBHC/TIRP; SBIRT/TIRP; and in one site, while there was only one strategy (TIRP), changes were reported by multiple TIRP awardees in that site.

All SP Evaluation sites had at least one change area (e.g., coordination/system of student supports) where multiple partnerships contributed to change.

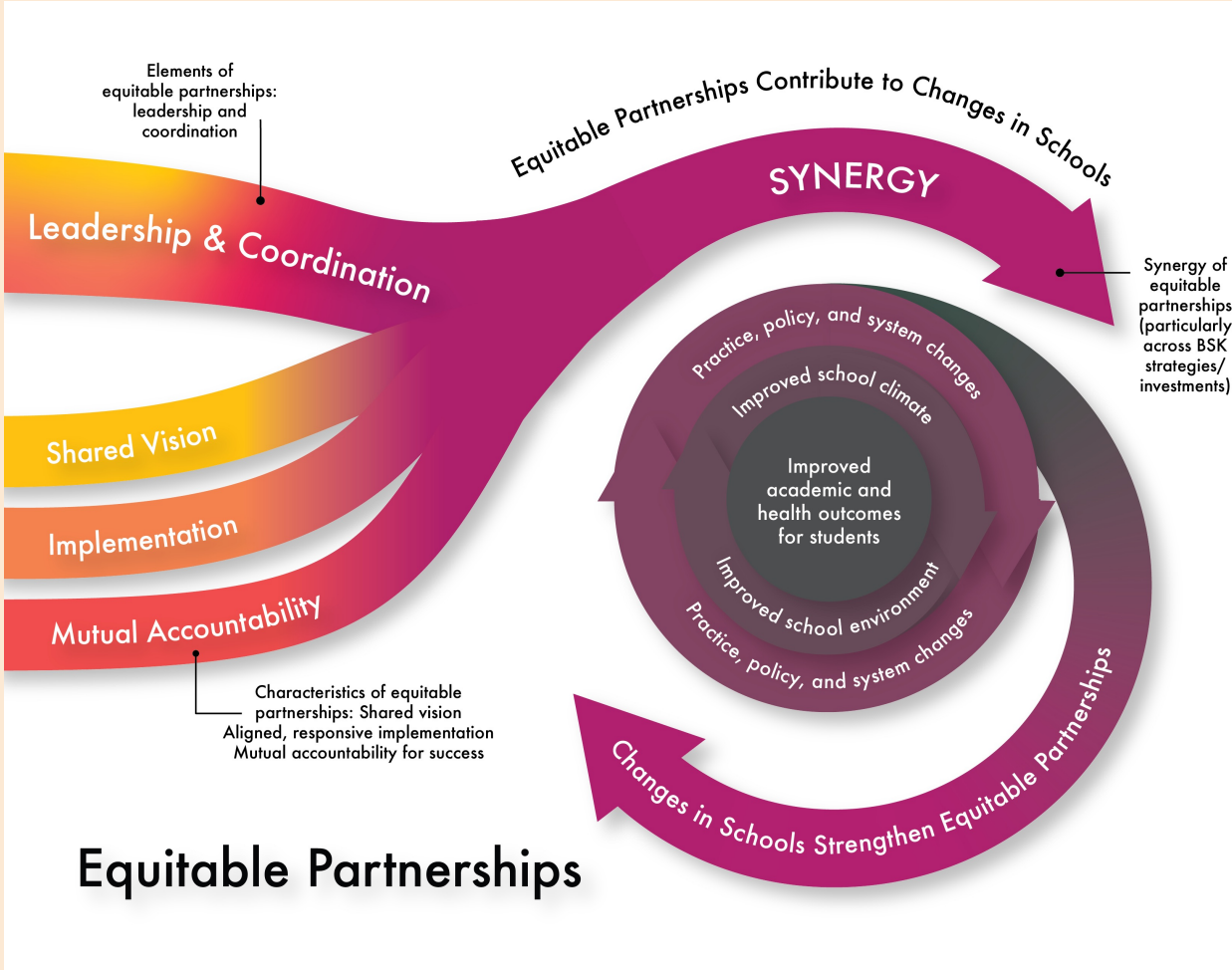
**The relationship between equitable partnerships and the changes partnerships are contributing to in schools works in both directions.**

Partnerships contribute to changes in schools and these changes, in turn, contribute to and strengthen the conditions for equitable partnerships between schools, CBOs, and other partners. See Exhibit H.

This relationship highlights the importance of partnerships to achieve changes in schools, but also the importance of changes in schools to support and strengthen partnership:

- For example, for partnership leadership and power sharing, many partnerships indicated that they improved family engagement and student leadership, in terms of how they were contributing to changes in schools.
  - These changes help to create a supportive and welcoming environment for students and families within the partnership and strengthen the opportunities and structures to engage them in shared leadership and power sharing, a primary driver of equitable partnerships.
- The positive relationships at the heart of shifting school climate are also central to the trust and relationship-building critical to partnership leadership.
- Expanding access to services, a common area of change reported in these schools particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, strengthens the foundation for the collaboration between schools and CBOs that is central to power sharing in partnership leadership.
- Similarly, shifts in coordination and systems of student supports strengthen the foundation for the structures within schools and across organizations that are central to equitable partnerships. Shifting structures and processes around data systems and data sharing, an area of change that emerged in Year 3, impacts how partnerships can access and use data – key attributes of strong coordination.

Exhibit H: Relationship between Equitable Partnerships and Changes in Schools





How do King County processes and systems support equitable partnerships?

In this section:

This section highlights **results for Evaluation Question 3**, including:

- BSK was seen as a partner, rather than strictly a funder, to support the transformative potential of equitable partnerships.
- Strong relationships, collaboration, and communication were important BSK supports, before and since COVID-19.
- BSK awardees and partners appreciated flexible, long-term funding as well as training and technical assistance.
- There were opportunities for additional support related to:
  - Coordination
  - Capacity building
  - Alignment of expectations and structures between BSK, districts/schools, CBOs and other partner organizations.

Strengths of BSK Supports

With this question, we examined the extent to which, and in what ways, funding agency practices and cross-strategy work among BSK/King County SP Leads helped support and influence collective action in schools that received multiple SP strategy investments. In this section, we describe how BSK SP Leads helped support equitable partnership development and implementation.

BSK awardees and partners looked to the BSK initiative and King County staff for support in this challenging work. Across all three years, BSK awardees and partners named the most useful supports provided by the County:<sup>29</sup>

- **Strong, trusting relationships** between awardees and the funder where the funder was viewed as a genuine, supportive partner (HSE, OST, SBHC, TIRP)
- Opportunities to **collaborate and engage in peer learning** with other awardees (HSE, OST, SBHC, SBIRT, TIRP, YD)
- **Clear communication between awardees and the funder** that was supported by structural frameworks; this was especially pertinent for grant expectations (HSE, OST, SBHC, SBIRT, TIRP)
- **Flexible, long-term funding** (HSE, OST, SBIRT, TIRP, YD)
- Provision of **training and technical assistance** (OST, OTHER<sup>30</sup>, SBHC, SBIRT, TIRP)

Opportunities for Improvement

Awardees and partners also identified several opportunities for improvement in BSK supports for equitable partnerships:

- They would appreciate more support in **communicating and coordinating across BSK strategy areas** for sharing, learning, supporting, and partnering with other awardees
- Awardees and partners would appreciate **additional capacity building and technical assistance focused on business and strategic planning and sustainability**. **Support for family engagement** also emerged as an area of need in Year 2, concurrent with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures.
- They noted the importance of clear and transparent vision for this work, and processes that align with this vision. They named **opportunities for BSK, schools, districts, CBOs, and other partners to collaborate from the start** to support shared understanding of the work, expectations, and processes for collaboration.
- Awardees and partners also noted barriers related to BSK and school district structures (e.g., need for increased clarity around organizational structure, roles and responsibilities), and opportunities to **align BSK funding to the school-year calendar** and **engage partner organizations in district and BSK decision-making loops**

Year 3 Analysis of BSK Supports

Though these overarching themes remained consistent throughout the SP Evaluation, new findings within themes emerged from the analysis of Year 3 data.

Exhibit I highlights changes that emerged during Year 3, with particular emphasis on changes resulting from the continued COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>29</sup> Strategy areas related to each theme are noted in parentheses. SP strategies are Healthy and Safe Environments (HSE); Out-of-School Time (OST); School-Based Health Centers (SBHC); Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Services (SBIRT); Trauma-Informed and Restorative Practice (TIRP); and Youth Development (YD).

<sup>30</sup> Other indicates themes that were supported by SP Leads who are not working specifically in one of the six SP strategy areas (e.g., Positive Family Connections Program Manager, 5-24 Policy and Program Manager)

Exhibit I: BSK Supports in Year 3/COVID-19 Response (part 1 of 2)

Theme	Year 3 Findings	Changes due to COVID-19
<b>Strong, trusting relationships between awardees and funder:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Funder viewed as genuine, supportive partners</li><li>Awardees recognized as leaders in the work</li></ul>	<b>Having a clear shared vision of the work created the foundation for strong awardee/partner and SP Leads relationships.</b>  <i>“[A]s the pandemic hit, we held a weekly meeting for districts, schools, and counselors to brainstorm... We held the space; they talked to each other. [W]e stood back and let them work their magic because they were figuring out how we were going to do this initiative in a virtual world.” - SP Lead</i>	<b>Holding space for awardees and partners to engage and collaborate as leaders in the work became even more critical during the COVID-19 pandemic. (SBIRT)</b>
<b>Opportunities to collaborate with and learn from other awardees:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Through BSK-established structural frameworks for collaboration (e.g., learning cohorts, communication networks)</li><li>To enhance their ability to meet the emergent needs of students</li></ul>	<b>SP Leads sought to enhance collaboration through contract agreements and staff roles dedicated to facilitating partnerships</b>  <i>“I was just so impressed by how quickly organizations were able to pivot during COVID and fill gaps that, quite frankly, major systems couldn’t fill. We saw so many examples of partnerships come up through that work. In that..., partnership really elevated as one of the mechanisms that allowed for organizations to scale out the immediate response.” - SP Lead</i>	<b>SP Leads noticed that awardees who were resistant to collaborating prior to COVID-19, then saw the value of collaboration with one another to center families and increase family engagement in programs. Partnerships became a critical mechanism to respond to emergent needs. (OST, SBHC, TIRP)</b>
<b>Strong communication, specifically clear expectations and structural frameworks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Awardees and partners continue to seek opportunities to gain clarity on grant requirements and expectations (i.e., information sessions, orientations on grant processes).</li></ul>	<b>Ongoing structural frameworks facilitated awardee/partner communication (e.g., recurring meetings, cohort models) and allowed for awardees and partners to support each other in meeting grant expectations.</b>  <i>“I think to truly be successful, we need to, up front, identify potential partnerships for a school building that might be needed as a call from community, and then push that as part of the planning process. And then embed it within the agreement so that it actually happens. When it’s outside the requirement, it’s just very difficult to find the time and energy to get it done, as much as it is valuable. So, I don’t think it’s coordination, I think it’s more an expectation. It’s almost that we need someone to say that we required it as part of the agreement and the accountability to the agreement.” - SP Lead</i>	<b>N/A</b>

Exhibit I: BSK Supports in Year 3/COVID-19 Response (part 2 of 2)

Theme	Year 3 Findings	Changes due to COVID-19
<b>Flexible, long-term funding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Awardees appreciate flexible long-term funding and multi-year grants to make deep change in schools.</li></ul>	<b>Awardees communicated the importance of funding to increase capacity and support development of their staff.</b>  <i>"Maintaining funding for travel and more resources to close the digital divide would be more than helpful to overcome many of the challenges. We believe providing funding resources for making personal contact, coaching and support for low-income families of color, who are taking the brunt of the pandemic would provide the tools for success not only for the youth, but for the community as a whole when children feel and know their future and education will not be disrupted." - CBO awardee/partner</i>	<b>With flexible funding, awardees continued to respond to emergent student and family needs during the pandemic (e.g., basic needs, rent and bills support). Additionally, awardees utilized funds to purchase training and curriculum resources for teachers that facilitated the transition to remote learning. (HSE, TIRP)</b>
<b>Provision of training and technical assistance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Awardees/partners and SP Leads see value in technical assistance that addresses gaps in knowledge needed to meet grant requirements (i.e., grant reporting, data sharing agreements, community engagement).</li></ul>	<b>Some SP Leads believed part of their role was to help awardees consider how to apply learned skills and information in ways that lead to equitable change/improved outcomes for students.</b>  <i>"So we are in the process of planning for [BSK] 2.0 and really thinking about more generally how to support organizations in their evaluation planning and really honing-in on their data collection strategies and building capacity. And, anticipating that organizations will come in and some of them will want to focus on academic improvement or growth, I think we'll be suggesting or offering a variety of data sources that they could explore for measurement." - SP Lead</i>	<b>The nature of work in a virtual setting increased accessibility to training opportunities. Things that were obstacles to attendance prior to COVID-19 (e.g., time or location of trainings) were not as much of a hindrance. This allowed SP Leads to create more opportunities for training and technical assistance for awardees and partners. (SBIRT)</b>



*In this section:*

This section highlights **results related to all three evaluation questions and contextual factors**, including:

- As the first round of BSK came to an end, there was an increased focus on sustainability and accountability to affect change.
- The COVID-19 pandemic affected students, schools, and partnerships in a range of ways.
- Families also faced many challenges related to COVID-19.

**Sustainability and accountability were topics that emerged in Year 3 of the evaluation, and related to all three evaluation questions, as described below.**

**Sustainability of Partnerships, Organizations, and Change**

As partnership work progressed over these three years, there was increased focus on sustainability, which was a central theme at the November 2021 meaning-making session with evaluation participants. As funding from the first round of BSK funding came to an end (with preparations underway for BSK 2.0), awardees and partners were thinking about:

- **Sustainability of partnerships:** The relationships and connections among individuals, organizations, and systems take time and commitment. Throughout this evaluation, partnerships were challenged by staff turnover, and the need to establish new relationships as leaders and staff (at districts, schools, and CBOs) change. Building new relationships and navigating different levels of commitment to partnership was an ongoing challenge to those doing partnership work. As funding from the first round of BSK came to a close, schools and organizations – particularly in those cases where BSK supported the development of new partnerships – were considering how to sustain their work and build on the progress they made over the past three years.
- **Sustainability of organizations:** BSK provided funding and support to many small CBOs who had not had access to significant government funding or grants in the past. Attending to capacity-building within organizations, particularly related to sustainability planning and fundraising, was important for awardees to be able to continue their work beyond BSK.

- **Sustainability of changes:** The intention of BSK School Partnerships was to shift school environments, with lasting changes that would affect students now and into the future. As these changes contributed to conditions for partnership and partnerships contributed to changes, it was important for schools, districts, and partner organizations to consider if and how these shifts could be embedded into their systems, structures, and processes to ensure that they would continue beyond BSK or other time-limited funding opportunities.

As BSK plans for the new round of BSK funding and schools, districts, and CBOs consider the future of their partnerships, attending to each of these dimensions of sustainability is important to ensure the longevity of this work and its impact in schools and for students.

**Accountability**

Towards the end of the evaluation, there was also an increased focus on accountability related to equitable partnerships, in several ways:

- **Partnerships’ accountability for change:** A shared commitment to creating changes in schools and for students was a newer area of focus for many partnerships. In focusing more explicitly on this area in the Year 3 evaluation, we learned this was an area where partnerships are still growing and additional supports (such as how to collect and use data to set goals, track progress, and make improvements) would be helpful.
- **Systems for shared accountability:** Similarly, improving data systems and data sharing processes was an area of change in schools that emerged in Year 3. This included improvements to data collection systems, increased use of data to inform practice and focus on equity, and increased focus on student and family input to inform partnership work.
- **Accountability to and from BSK:** Over time, there was increased focus on how accountability relates to BSK support for school partnerships. On the part of BSK, a growing focus on accountability included increased transparency in communication with awardees, partners, and communities, and opportunities to gather feedback. BSK was particularly focused on accountability:
  - For positive changes in student outcomes, including BIPOC and gender diverse students
  - To communities and CBOs to effectively serve them; and
  - To BSK awardees and partners in the supports they provide.

COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic was an ongoing challenge that impacted school partnerships (as well as all aspects of life) in many ways. During Year 3, many schools that began the year in remote learning moved to hybrid and eventually resumed in-person learning. We reviewed a mix of both BSK and non-BSK secondary sources (e.g., K-12 student, family, educator community conversations or interviews; community, student, and family surveys; district reports; BSK staff interviews). This served to expand our understanding of the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on students and families, particularly in 2020-21, and contextualize what we heard directly from students (in 2021-22) and families (in 2020-21, 2021-22).

A benefit of virtual learning for many students was the opportunity to learn in safer, more accommodating environments

- BIPOC students expressed relief to be away from an education system that disproportionately polices, punishes, and pushes them out
- Students appreciated having access to phones, diverse materials, and regular bathroom breaks
- While some students who received mental health supports appreciated virtual support, other students found the experience challenging, citing lack of privacy in tight quarters, feeling unsafe or apprehensive to be open regarding mental health and gender/sexual identity issues in the context of their cultural background

Over the course of the pandemic, students generally experienced an increase in feelings of anxiety, depression and social isolation, as well as trauma resulting from two simultaneous pandemics

- Students expressed that the COVID-19 pandemic affected them and their families in several ways including grief of lost loved ones, financial hardship due to job loss, and lack of stable resources/housing
- Systemic racism was in the national spotlight in many ways during 2020-2021. Students talked about continued and increasing acts of racism, protests amid continued police brutality, increased hate crimes, particularly aimed at the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, and disparate effects of pandemic experiences

Students spoke to the complexity of school environments, focusing on ways schools can make students feel safe, welcome, and supported

- Students were grateful for educators that led with grace by showing care, being flexible with deadlines, and allowing space for students to show up as their full selves
- Conversely, students expressed that rigid systems that focus heavily on academics or discipline while de-prioritizing social emotional support or mental well-being contribute to the lack of a safe learning environment. This was of particular importance for BIPOC students who are most impacted by said systems

As students were preparing to return to in-person learning, they hoped that their voices and perspectives would be included in decision-making processes, particularly for changes in systems and structures that impact their school experiences. Students shared ideas for change in the following areas:

- Creating a physically and mentally safe learning environment
- Aligning school practices with renewed commitments to anti-racism and educational equity
- Developing positive, trusting relationships among students, as well as between students and teachers

Family Perspectives

- Over the course of the pandemic, families in districts and communities served by BSK-supported programs experienced hardships that necessitated increased supports to meet basic needs (e.g., rent, utilities, and other direct financial costs; food; masks and Clorox wipes; access to technology and reliable internet)
- Parents expressed their appreciation for the communication structures schools and programs utilized during the pandemic that enabled them to be more engaged in their students’ education (e.g., translation services, access to translated materials, being informed of students’ academic and behavioral performance at school)
- As their children prepared to return to in-person learning, parents and families hoped to be included in decision-making processes for creating systems and structures that impact their children, families, and communities

Context beyond COVID-19

Beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, other contextual factors first surfaced in the Year 1 evaluation and continued to affect the work of partnerships in schools, including leadership and staff turnover/changes at districts, schools, and CBOs; available capacity across partners and service providers to meet the needs of students and families; and existing partnerships and community/school connections prior to BSK funding.<sup>31</sup>

Data sources re: COVID-19 Impacts on Students and Families

- **Seattle Public Schools Fall 2020 Remote Learning Survey**
- **SBIRT 2020-21 Student Survey:** *Seattle Public Schools and Auburn School District*
- **Bellevue School District 2019-20 Family Engagement Report**
- **Kent School District Dec. 2020 Student Equity and Inclusion Survey**
- **Best Starts for Kids COVID-19 Impacts Report:** *How the BSK community changed and adapted from March through August 2020*
- **Road Map Project 2020 report** *In Their Own Words: Young people describe the impact of COVID-19*
- **Kent School District Behavioral Health Navigator Interview**
- **PSESD-Road Map Improvement Collaborative's** *Community Conversations with Youth of Color in South King County: Pandemic Learning and Returning to School in South King County*
- **Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee 2021 report** *Two Pandemics: Addressing the experience of racial violence and the COVID-19 pandemic for students and families of color*
- **The Seattle Times** *Growing Up in a Pandemic: Washington children reveal what they learned during a turbulent year*
- **The Seattle Times Education Lab:** *Most Washington high schoolers felt sad or depressed during the pandemic, state survey finds*

<sup>31</sup> For more on context, see Year 1 SP Evaluation report, pp. 48-49: [https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1591821488/psedorg/j24s1k6qi7bq4jzn9sf/BSKYear1FinalReport\\_Accessible.pdf](https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1591821488/psedorg/j24s1k6qi7bq4jzn9sf/BSKYear1FinalReport_Accessible.pdf).



Question 1: What do equitable school partnerships look like, and what are the factors that support them?

What we learned:

- Factors critical to equitable partnership include:**

  - Leaders who are committed to building relationships and trust and sharing power among schools, CBOs, students, and families; and
  - Structures to support coordination, including space, resources, and a coordination role or function.
- **Leadership and power sharing** in equitable partnerships includes:
    - A **supportive and welcoming environment** for students and families
    - **Trust and intentional relationship building**
    - **Collaboration** between schools and CBOs
    - **Structures and opportunities for students** to be integrated in their schools and recognized as leaders
    - **Structures and opportunities for families** to be integrated in their schools and recognized as leaders
  - **Structures to support coordination of equitable partnerships** includes:
    - **Structures and plans for coordination** (e.g., communication structures such as regularly scheduled meetings) that allow for adaptation
    - **Dedicated and flexible use of resources** for coordination (e.g., space, funding) in response to needs (e.g., during COVID-19 pandemic)
    - **Roles and responsibilities** for coordination (e.g., building champion, coordinator role, network builder)
    - **Access to and sharing of student data/information**

**Why it matters:** These results affirm the elements critical to school and community partnerships that center equity in their work – coordination and leadership that promotes power sharing, particularly with students and families. Together, these dimensions support partners to develop a shared vision, to align their work to that vision and with one another’s efforts, and to develop shared accountability for achieving change that benefit and are informed by the communities served.

Question 2: What is the relationship between equitable partnerships and school-wide changes in practices, policies, systems, environments (PPSE), and student well-being?

What we learned:

- The relationship between equitable partnerships and the changes partnerships are contributing to in schools works in both directions.** Partnerships contribute to changes in schools, and these changes, in turn, contribute to and strengthen the conditions for equitable partnerships between schools, CBOs, and other partners.
- This relationship highlights **the importance of partnerships to achieve changes in schools, but also the importance of changes in schools to support and strengthen partnership:**
    - For example, for leadership and power sharing, many partnerships indicated that there were shifts in approaches and supports for family engagement and student leadership. These changes help to create a supportive and welcoming environment for students and families within the partnership and strengthen the opportunities and structures to engage them in shared leadership and power sharing.
    - Similarly, shifts in coordination and systems of student supports strengthen the foundation for the structures within schools and across organizations that are central to equitable partnerships.
  - In terms of changes in schools, partnerships **most commonly contributed to improved coordination/system of student supports and increased access to services.**
  - From Year 2 (2019-20) to Year 3 (2020-21), **more partnerships contributed to improved family engagement** and **fewer affected school climate.**
  - All SP Evaluation sites **had at least one change area (e.g., coordination/system of student supports, family engagement) where multiple partnerships contributed to change.** This may be an opportunity to consider aligning goals and actions across multiple partnerships within a school.

**Why it matters:** This insight expands our understanding of the relationship between partnerships and change to be bidirectional (rather than simply partnerships contributing to change). Shifts in school structures and processes further strengthen partnerships and their potential to ultimately benefit students.

Question 3: How do King County processes and systems support equitable partnerships?

What we learned:

**BSK was seen as a partner, rather than strictly a funder,** to support the transformative potential of equitable partnerships.

BSK awardees and their partners looked to the BSK initiative and King County staff for support in this challenging work. Across all three years, BSK awardees and partners named the most useful supports:

- **Strong, trusting relationships between awardees and the funder where the funder is viewed as a genuine, supportive partner**
- **Opportunities to collaborate and engage in peer learning with other awardees**
- **Clear communication between awardees and funder that was supported by structural frameworks; this was especially pertinent for grant expectations**
- **Flexible, long-term funding**
- **Provision of training and technical assistance**

**Why it matters:** BSK and King County’s approaches to providing support mirrored many of the attributes central to equitable partnerships in schools: relationship-based, collaborative, and flexible, with clear communication and supports to build capacity. In building on these supports in the future, the County can continue to serve as a partner in this work rather than strictly a funder. Awardee and partners organizations shared several ways to strengthen BSK supports, as described in implications for practice.

Cross-cutting Results

What we learned:

**As the first round of BSK came to its end, an increased focus on 1) sustainability (of partnerships, changes, and funding); and 2) accountability to effect change (in systems and in for students) emerged.**

As BSK funding came to an end in Year 3, sustainability was a growing priority. This included sustaining partnerships and the relationships that are inherent in them; the financial sustainability of organizations, particularly CBOs that are part of partnerships; and the sustainability of changes to which partnerships contributed.

There was increased focus on accountability in a range of ways: for BSK to affect change through the funding it provides; among awardees, partners, schools and communities; and in navigating the tension between accountability and equitable practices. On the part of BSK, increased accountability included increased transparency in communication with awardees, partners, and communities, and opportunities to gather feedback from these groups as well as students and families.

**Why it matters:** Sustainability – of both organizations and partnerships – is needed for long-term work of partnerships, and for the ultimate vision of BSK School Partnerships: *Ensuring school environments that are safe, supportive, respectful and engaging environments for young people, staff and families.* Similarly, achieving this vision requires a shared commitment to and accountability for change that ultimately benefits students.

Context

What we learned:

**COVID-19 changed everything.**

The pandemic posed challenges in every aspect of life, including in how partnerships were able to grow and develop throughout this crisis, the changes they were able to contribute to in schools, and how BSK adapted its support to respond to shifting needs.

**Why it matters:** Context is key. Understanding the context of partnership work, and how it is evolving, is critical for understanding how partnerships developed, the changes they affected, and how BSK supported them given the context in which they functioned.

In reviewing results and conclusions from the SP Evaluation, there are several limitations and related strengths to consider:

Limitations	Related Strengths
<p><b>COVID-19:</b> The challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic affected the evaluation beginning in March 2020, as schools closed, and every facet of daily life was affected for students, families and staff. This created challenges in analyzing data over time and making meaningful comparisons, and in connecting with participants for the evaluation, given the stress and demands of this time.</p>	<p>We remained flexible in our approach to the evaluation, and heeded the thoughtful guidance of our Evaluation Advisors, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize connecting with families sooner, given their heightened role with school closures,</li> <li>• Leverage and complement existing data to lessen the burden of additional data collection for awardee and partner organizations</li> <li>• Assess the impacts of COVID-19 on partnerships, changes and BSK supports</li> </ul>
<p><b>Small sample size:</b> The evaluation included 11 sites with multiple BSK investments, selected from an initial group of 19. This approach provides a deeper understanding of partnerships in these sites, but results are not generalizable to other sites.</p>	<p><b>Relationship-based approach:</b> We focused on building relationships early on and following the same partnerships over time to get to know the people who are part of them and understand the nuances of their work. This extended from our work with evaluation participants to partnering with the Evaluation Advisors, who guided and informed the design, data collection, analysis, and reporting phases of this evaluation.</p>
<p><b>Partial perspectives:</b> There is a range in the number and type of perspectives we included to inform our understanding, depending on district- and school-level research approvals, availability and competing demands of potential participants, available capacity of the BSK SP Evaluation Team, and staff turnover among awardees and partners. Different methods also had different rates of participation, such as the Awardee/Partner Survey, which had stronger participation from CBO staff than school/district staff. Across schools, school staff participation (beyond building leaders) was very limited. We did not receive approval from all sites (districts and schools) to include district staff in the evaluation.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic limited the capacity of school staff to engage in the evaluation given the demands school closures and re-openings during key data collection periods of spring/early summer 2020 and late summer/early fall 2021.</p>	<p><b>Multiple perspectives:</b> Over the course of the three years, we included a broader range of groups in the evaluation. In Year 1, we focused on connecting with BSK staff, BSK awardees, and school building leaders to inform our initial understanding of the partnerships that were taking shape in each site. In Years 2 and 3, we included additional partner organizations (those who partner with BSK awardees, who hold the contract with BSK, to implement the funded work) as well as families and students in our data collection activities.</p>
<p><b>Self-reported data:</b> Most data were self-reported by awardees and partners, via data reported to BSK (e.g., awardee narrative reports) or through primary data collected for the evaluation (e.g., interviews, focus groups, surveys).</p>	<p><b>Engaging students:</b> In Year 3, we prioritized connecting directly with students (as well as families) to understand how BSK-supported work has affected them and their schools, and their ideas to strengthen partnerships in the future. We conducted student focus groups/interviews with students at three sites. These student perspectives complemented data from awardees and partners.</p>
<p><b>Limited data from students:</b> We did not have access to quantifiable data about student outcomes. Instead, our understanding was based on what awardees and partners described in narrative reports and primary data collected for the evaluation, and limited data from student focus groups.</p>	

<sup>32</sup> We did not receive approval from one district to include district staff in Years 2 or 3 of the evaluation. A second district approved limited staff participation in Year 3 (e.g., to invite district staff to complete the Awardee/Partner Survey and attend meaning-making sessions) but not in Year 2. We did not have a third district's approval to include district staff in Year 1. At one school within the third district, we did not have Principal approval to include school staff in any year of the evaluation. In this district, Principal approval is required in addition to district approval to include school staff in research or evaluation projects.



Informed by a range of sources, including student focus groups and interviews, the Awardee/Partner Survey, interviews with BSK SP Program Leads, and meaning-making sessions with evaluation participants, implications for practice for CBOs, schools, and districts as well as BSK are outlined below.

Supporting and Strengthening Equitable Partnerships: Coordination

CBOs, schools, and districts	BSK
<p><b>Communication and coordination structures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support shared understanding of a school’s ecosystem, such as existing or potential partner organizations and the services they provide, and a school’s internal structures (e.g., through a system map, graphic, or similar resource)</li><li>• Make connections between schools and CBOs to support readiness, aligned expectations, and clear roles and responsibilities for the partnership, such as through regular meetings across partners</li><li>• For partnerships across BSK investments, hold regular all-awardee meetings to become familiar with other awardees’ work</li><li>• Share information with families and students about school partnerships and the supports provided, to build awareness of the programs and how they are funded</li></ul> <p><b>Data sharing and use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop practices around sharing and using data to inform supports for students, including documentation of work, formal Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), and co-creating data-sharing approach</li><li>• Collect student/family feedback such as through focus groups, surveys, and/or including students/ families on committees</li></ul>	<p><b>Communication and coordination structures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide more opportunities to share learnings, knowledge, and resources among partners and from the first round of BSK</li><li>• Provide transparency and clarity about expectations and accountability for BSK funding, while acknowledging the power dynamics and inequities in government funding opportunities</li><li>• For partnerships across BSK investments:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide networking events/workshops for partners</li><li>• Develop coordinator role to support partnerships between awardees whose work is aligned</li></ul></li></ul> <p><b>Alignment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create greater alignment between King County and school districts, with funding for school partnership work aligned to the school year calendar</li></ul> <p><b>Adapting to changing needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Frontload future capacity-building in areas where awardees have needed the most support in the past</li><li>• Maintain flexible funding to allow awardees to adapt and respond to emergent needs</li></ul>

Supporting and Strengthening Equitable Partnerships: Leadership/Power Sharing and Sustainability

	CBOs, schools, and districts	BSK
Leadership and Power Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(Schools/districts) Embrace and invite partners (CBOs, students, families) into the school in service of the shared work to support students and families. Include partners in school structures, such as Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) meetings or having student representation at school staff meetings</li></ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provide opportunities for leaders and managers to see and experience the work happening in schools to make connections between decision makers and those working directly with students</li><li>Develop goal(s) for BSK SP work overall and related plans for tracking progress toward goals and supporting aligned implementation, learning and mutual accountability across BSK, schools, districts, and CBOs</li></ul>	
Support for Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Work together to develop and implement sustainability plans for partnerships</li><li>Advocate for legislative changes to reflect that CBOs are an integral part of the education system</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provide capacity building support for sustainability of organizations and the relationships that are built via school partnerships, particularly for small CBOs, so organizations and partnerships can be sustained beyond BSK funding</li><li>Consider opportunities for matched funding, with King County inviting other funders to match funding from BSK</li></ul>

Student Perspectives and Recommendations on Potential Changes in Schools

Students identified areas where they would like to see changes in their schools, and their ideas for how schools and partners can support improvements:

- School climate/positive relationships:** Get to know students as people, and how to support and help them with academics and beyond
- Family and community engagement:** Incorporate cultural competence in how schools communicate with families and community
- Student leadership:** Provide more opportunities for students to act as leaders and change-makers in school. This could include:
  - Students helping more within existing structures (e.g., morning announcements, classroom tasks, and helping teach in some classes)
  - Create or expand students' opportunities to help one another (e.g., through Leadership electives; peer tutoring, peer mediation)
  - Add more structures for students to share their experiences and give critical feedback (e.g., the SP Evaluation focus group)
- Discipline practices:** Shift away from current discipline protocols, including suspensions and phone calls home, which often exacerbate the issue. Instead:
  - Address the underlying problems through conversations that get to the root issue of student behaviors
  - Increase use of in-school suspension as an alternative to out of school suspensions so students do not miss academics
  - Use fewer and shorter out of school suspensions

Next Steps

King County voters approved the BSK renewal in August 2021. As BSK continues its work to “support every baby born or child raised in King County to reach adulthood happy, healthy, safe, and thriving,” it is our hope that the results and implications from this evaluation can inform and strengthen school partnership work across King County and beyond. We will disseminate results from the SP Evaluation in partnership with Youth Development Executives of King County, BSK/King County, and other partners.





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Please note that organizational affiliations are from when each individual served as an Advisor to the SP Evaluation.



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  - 7 Mill Creek Middle School parents/family members
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- Seattle Children’s Research Institute Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral To Services (SBIRT) Evaluation Team
- Trauma-Informed and Restorative Practices (TIRP) Liberated Village (LV) Evaluation Committee and TIRP Evaluators, including Educate to Liberate Consulting and MPHI

<b>BIPOC</b>	Black, Indigenous, and People of Color
<b>BSK</b>	Best Starts for Kids
<b>CBO</b>	Community-based organization
<b>GEO</b>	Grantmakers for Effective Organizations
<b>HSE</b>	Healthy and Safe Environments
<b>MTSS</b>	Multi-tiered System of Support
<b>OST</b>	Out-of-School Time
<b>PPSE</b>	Practice, Policy, System, Environment
<b>RFA</b>	Request for Application
<b>RFP</b>	Request for Proposal
<b>SBHC</b>	School-Based Health Center
<b>SBIRT</b>	Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral To Services
<b>SOW</b>	Scope of Work
<b>SP</b>	School Partnership(s)
<b>TIRP</b>	Trauma-Informed and Restorative Practices
<b>YD</b>	Youth Development
<b>YDEKC</b>	Youth Development Executives of King County

- **Aligned, responsive implementation:** Within a partnership, aligned, responsive implementation means that services align with needs and that partners use a data and equity lens to identify community needs and disparities. In aligned, responsive implementation, there is an efficient use of existing assets, new partners are incorporated when needed, and there is a focus on building trust and relationships among partners.<sup>33</sup>
- **Awardee:** An awardee (of BSK) is an organization that holds a contract (or contracts) with BSK. BSK awardees include community- based organizations (CBO), schools, school districts, and healthcare providers.
- **Collaborative partnership:** CBO and school partners share goals and communicate about progress on a regular or semi-regular basis. The school and partner organization(s) maintain ultimate decision-making authority over their own activities (adapted from the YDEKC School and Community Partnership Toolkit).<sup>33</sup>
- **Cooperative partnership:** In a Cooperative partnership, CBO and school partners operate autonomously from one another. Program goals are primarily established by the primary awardee (CBO or school), though they may share one or more goals with the other partner organizations (adapted from the YDEKC School and Community Partnership Toolkit).<sup>33</sup>
- **Coordination:** Coordination is the concept of organizations and individuals working together in an organized way, where partners engage in creating norms, protocols, and structures in inclusive ways that define and drive decisions and communication. The school and partners are working toward shared goals, and people understand how working together will improve performance. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and agreed upon among partner organizations and within the context of the partnership’s work (from Transformational Relationship & Partnerships Framework).<sup>34</sup>
- **Equitable partnerships:** Equitable partnerships are those that attend to issues of equity in 1) how they function (e.g., power, decision- making, and relationship and trust-building) as well as in 2) what changes in practices, policies, systems, school environments, and student well-being are occurring, and to whose benefit. In equitable partnerships, partners and stakeholders that do not hold institutional power feel included and valued, have buy-in, and see themselves in the communication and decision-making processes. People who are affected by decisions are included in and influence decision-making (from Transformational Relationship & Partnerships Framework).<sup>34</sup>

- **Evaluation Advisors:** Evaluation Advisors include awardee organizations from each BSK School Partnerships strategy area and partner organizations who helped guide each phase of our evaluation, including data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and development of recommendations.
- **Integrated partnership:** The CBO partner(s) play(s) a major role in site planning processes, and shares data, resources, and decision- making authority with the school (from the YDEKC School and Community Partnership Toolkit).<sup>33</sup>
- **Investment:** A BSK investment is a contract awarded by BSK to an awardee. Thus, a school with multiple BSK investments is one that has received an award and is working with at least one other BSK awardee, or it is a school that is working with more than one BSK awardee.
- **Leadership:** The concept of leadership includes both questions of who serves as leaders of partnerships and how they lead. In equitable partnerships, CBOs, students, and families are named and described as leaders, in addition to institutional leaders like schools, districts, or King County. Leadership approaches can include visioning, trust-building, power sharing, inclusive decision-making, and the facilitation and support of program implementation including through mobilization of resources and other community partners.<sup>35, 36</sup>
- **Look fors:** Look fors are characteristics used to understand and assess how equitable partnerships are developing, the changes they seek, and BSK’s support for partnerships. Look fors focus on concepts of racial equity, based on the Transformational Relationship & Partnerships Framework, and partnership, based on the YDEKC School and Community Partnership Toolkit. Look fors related to BSK supports are based primarily on the Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO) Smarter Grantmaking Playbook.
- **Mutual accountability for success:** Within an equitable partnership, mutual (or shared) accountability for success includes building evaluation and data sharing to support continuous improvement and high-quality services. The partnership collects and uses sufficient quantitative and qualitative information disaggregated by race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language, or gender to effectively support equity efforts. Partners discuss data trends and check their understanding and interpretation with communities from which data are collected. In addition, partners leverage their collective resources to create and execute a sustainability plan (adapted from the YDEKC School and Community Partnership Toolkit).<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Youth Development Executives of King County (n.d.). School and Community Partnership Toolkit. Retrieved November 2018, from <https://ydekc.org/resource-center/school-community-partnership-toolkit-full-version/>

<sup>34</sup> Gulbranson, M. (2017). Transformational Relationship & Partnerships Framework. Renton, WA: Puget Sound Educational Service District.

<sup>35</sup> Butterfoss, Lachance, & Orians, 2006.

<sup>36</sup> Butterfoss, Goodman, & Wandersman, 1996.



- **Narrative reports:** BSK awardees are required to submit regular narrative reports to King County to document program changes, successes, and challenges for their BSK contract.
- **Partner:** Partners are organizations or agencies working with BSK awardees to implement the funded program(s). Partners include CBOs, schools, school districts, and healthcare providers.
- **Shared vision:** A shared vision guides and brings focus to an equitable partnership in a school by focusing on what families, youth, educators, youth development professionals, and other partners want for the partnership and the students it serves. A shared vision based in equity acknowledges inequities of systems, schools, and opportunities for students, and is focused on addressing those inequities. In equitable partnerships, a shared vision and related goals speak to how partners want to do their work (i.e., process goals), not just what partners want to do.<sup>37</sup>
- **School Partnerships (SP) Leads:** This includes BSK staff who manage each of the School Partnership strategy areas, the Strategic Advisor for Trauma-Informed Systems, the 5-24 Policy and Program Manager, and BSK evaluation staff.
- **School Partnerships strategies:** BSK School Partnerships include six strategies: Healthy and Safe Environments (HSE), Out-of-School Time (OST), School-Based Health Centers (SBHC), Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral To Services (SBIRT), Trauma-Informed and Restorative Practices (TIRP), and Youth Development (YD).
- **Sites:** Schools and districts that have received multiple BSK investments.
- **Student outcomes:** Student outcomes include positive changes sought for students, such as improvements in social-emotional, mental, and/or physical health, or academic performance. Changes in student outcomes address the question of “Is anyone better off?” which is part of BSK’s Results-Based Accountability framework.<sup>38</sup>
- **Synergy:** A partnership that has maximized synergy has achieved the full potential of collaboration. Synergy is the degree to which the partnership combines the complementary strengths, perspectives, skills, values, and resources of all the partners in the search for better solutions to issues that matter to the community. It is generally regarded as a product of strong and trusting working relationships among partners.<sup>39</sup> For the purposes of this evaluation, synergy is defined as a product of equitable partnerships across BSK strategies or investments.

<sup>37</sup> Adapted from the YDEKC School and Community Partnership Toolkit and Gulbranson, M. (2017). Transformational Relationship & Partnerships Framework.

<sup>38</sup> Best Starts for Kids Evaluation and Performance Measurement Plan, September 13, 2017. Retrieved January 7, 2022 from [https://beststartsforkids.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/bsk-evaluation-and-performance-measurement-plan\\_-2017\\_adopted.pdf](https://beststartsforkids.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/bsk-evaluation-and-performance-measurement-plan_-2017_adopted.pdf).

<sup>39</sup> Lasker, Weiss, & Miller, 2001

	Interview/Focus Group Questions	Possible Probe Questions
1	WARM-UP: Let us begin by going around the table and introducing ourselves. Please state your name, your organization, your role, and the BSK strategy that you are associated with.	
2	When you hear the word “partnership,” what comes to mind?	
3	We would like to better understand your partnerships at ____ school. Could you describe the origin of your partnership?  What is the partnership’s vision at ____ school(s)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How was the vision developed? Who was involved?</li><li>• What issues of equity is your partnership working on and how?</li><li>• How are underrepresented student or family groups impacted by this vision?</li><li>• Have you undergone changes or adaptations to this vision? What has that process looked like?</li></ul>
4	What changes are you trying to achieve in ____ school(s)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What education system inequities are you targeting?</li><li>• For which group of students?</li><li>• What changes have you seen as a result of the work the partnership is doing?</li><li>• What aspects of the partnership have contributed to these changes?</li></ul>
5	Who are considered leaders of these partnerships?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How are they demonstrating leadership?</li><li>• Who is included in decision-making processes? Who holds decision-making power?</li><li>• How do you support and build the voices of students, families and staff?</li></ul>
6	Describe coordination in your partnership. What coordinating structures exist to support your work?  Examples of structures may include scheduled meetings, norms, protocols, workspaces, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How were these structures created?</li><li>• Who created these structures?</li><li>• What resources has [SCHOOL] or [DISTRICT office] shared with you to support your work?</li><li>• What resources have you and your partners shared with one another?</li><li>• What other resources are needed to support your work?</li></ul>
7	Reflecting on the changes you hope to make through your partnership, how do you know your programs are working?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do you evaluate the success of your program?</li><li>• Do you involve students and families in identifying what data is important to examine?</li><li>• In what ways do you look at data? For example, do you use race, gender, language, etc.?</li><li>• Are there additional resources that you think could be helpful in the work you and your partners are doing, data or otherwise?</li></ul>

	Interview/Focus Group Questions	Possible Probe Questions
8	Describe the relationship among members of the partnership within and outside of your strategy. How do members of the partnership work together?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are you aware of other partners in the school, district and community?</li><li>• How do you collaborate with other organizations within the school and district?</li><li>• How do you share information about students with other partners in order to provide and improve supports?</li><li>• How do you know that the school and other partners are invested in your success?</li></ul>
9	What are your hopes and plans for your partnership next year?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is the shared vision reflected in these hopes?</li></ul>
10	Thinking about your interactions with King County, how have supports from the BSK team been helpful to your partnership in _____ school(s)?  How could King County/BSK improve their supports for your partnership?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How has BSK helped you improve structures and relationships within your partnership/organization?</li><li>• In what ways has BSK help you transform systems in order to support students and families of color? Example: BSK helps establish structures to include students and families in decision-making.</li><li>• How do you know that BSK is invested in your partnership and its success?</li></ul>
11	Is there anything we didn't ask but should have?	

**COVID-19 experiences and working with schools**

- 1. **Since COVID-19 has been a big part of life in the past months, we would like to hear what it has been like for you to manage everything, especially your children’s schooling at home. What help did you and your child(ren) receive from [school] and CBO partners/programs during the COVID-19 school closure period?**
  - a) What has been most helpful?
  - b) How much did your child(ren) get to talk to their teachers and classmates?
  - c) Did you get lesson materials from your child(ren)’s teachers?
- 2. **How did you get information from/give information to [school] and CBO partners/programs?**
  - a) How much or how often did the school and community partners get in touch with you?
  - b) Who else from the school or from the district got in touch with you during COVID-19 school closure?
  - c) What could have worked better about how [school] and CBO partners/programs gave information to you?
- 3. **What have you noticed that [school] and CBO partners/programs do to make sure that your student(s) and family feel welcome, valued, and that you are treated fairly?**
  - a) How & when do they ask you to let them know which services make school feel positive and welcoming? What could they do better?

**Working Together**

- 5. How do you and other families help make decisions at school?
- 6. What could the school and community partners do more of, or do differently, to better involve parents at school? Especially how could they do better in providing you leadership and decision-making opportunities that help students?
- 7. Overall, what would it look and feel like to you if schools, families, and community organizations work well together?
- 8. Is there anything else that you would like to add or share about working with schools and community organizations to support students?



**Meaning making participants choose two findings from among the Year 2 findings to discuss in two breakout sessions.**

- During Breakout Session 1 participants choose among Findings 1-3; and in Breakout Session 2, participants choose between Findings 4-5.
  - **Finding #1:** COVID-19 has prompted shifts in how partners work together.
  - **Finding #2:** Partnerships are helping build student and family leadership in schools.
  - **Finding #3:** Partnerships thrive when there are people who ensure that connections and collaboration occur.
  - **Finding #4:** How partners share power differentiates partnership type.
  - **Finding #5:** Partnerships contribute to a wide range of changes, and there is greater alignment in changes achieved in sites with fewer investments.
- **Questions to consider during each session:**
  - How do these findings resonate with you?
  - What is new or surprising?
  - What questions do you have about the findings?

**Background & Coordination:** We would like to begin our conversation by inviting you to share about your work in general, and then exploring coordination approaches in your work with awardees. Coordination includes things like structured and regular meetings, dedicated resources, and times, having defined roles/responsibilities, etc.

1. In the beginning, what were the considerations in determining how to award BSK funds for school partnerships?  
For example, some strategies like SBIRT funds at the district level while others like TIRP awarded funds primarily to community-based organizations in partnership with schools.
2. To what extent has facilitating partnerships been part of your work? When we refer to partnership, this can refer to partnerships between:
  - Your awardees & their partners (e.g., schools, other CBOs, students and families)
  - Multiple Strategy Awardees
  - **Probes:** *What has worked well in facilitating partnerships? What were some barriers to facilitating this engagement between awardees?*
3. How have issues of equity and power surfaced in your work with awardees and partners?
  - **Probe:** *To what extent have you been able to support students/families in the development of partnerships?*
4. Given sites with multiple BSK strategies, what were your expectations regarding cross-strategy coordination or coordination between your awardees and the awardees of other BSK strategy areas?
  - What has been helpful for supporting cross-strategy collaboration?
  - What would be helpful for cross-strategy collaboration?
  - **Probe:** *If relevant, probe on thoughts regarding having a cross-strategy coordinator at the site.*
5. What King County systems helped with BSK support for equitable partnerships and cross- strategy partnership? Why? How do County systems impede this work?

**Student Impact and Shared Accountability:** Shared accountability is a commitment to collecting and sharing data (numbers, stories, and other information) to be able to learn and improve your partnership’s work and increase its impact.

6. Overall, what would you say has been the impact of your school partnership investments on student health, wellbeing, and other student outcomes?

➤ ***Probe:** How have you and your awardees supported the **socioemotional wellbeing of students, especially Black & brown students?***

7. What supports have you provided so that awardees have access to relevant student data (including attendance, discipline, etc.)?

- What have been challenges to providing this support?
- What have been successful approaches?

**Lasting Changes & Sustainability:** We would like to conclude our conversation exploring ideas around sustainability and thoughts of what future work may look like.

8. Where do you see equitable partnerships contributing to lasting change, including since COVID- 19? What would you say are the key factors to these successes?

9. Considering successes and challenges, what are some key lessons that you will use in the next phase of this work?

➤ ***Probe:** Are there any lessons/approaches that have come out of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic that you would like to carry forward?*

10. Additional thoughts on school partnerships, other things to share not asked about?

Background

- 1. What is the name of your organization?
- 2. What is your role?
- 3. What is your name? *We ask this so that we may follow-up with you for any clarification or additional information. Your responses are confidential and will be reported in aggregate (combined) with other responses.*
- 4. Whom do you consider partners in your work supported by BSK?

Partners are those organizations/individuals who work to implement programs funded by BSK. Select all that apply.

- a) School staff/leader(s)
  - i. Who are the school staff/leaders with whom you work the most?
- b) District staff/leader(s)
  - i. Who are the district staff/leaders with whom you work the most?
- c) Community-based organization staff/leader(s)
  - i. Which are the community-based organizations with whom you work the most?
- d) Students
- e) Families
- f) Other- please specify

5. Which BSK School Partnership strategy areas do you work on with the partners identified above? Select all the apply.

- a) Healthy and Safe Environments
- b) Out-of-School Time
- c) School-Based Health Centers
- d) Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral To Services
- e) Trauma-Informed and Restorative Practices
- f) Youth Development
- g) I don't know

6. In which district(s) and/or schools do you work with the partners identified above?

- a) Auburn (Follow-up: Cascade, District-wide, or other)
- b) Bellevue (Follow-up: Highland, District-wide, or other)
- c) Kent (Follow-up: Meeker, Mill Creek, District-wide, or other)
- d) Seattle (Follow-up: Interagency, Leschi, Meany, Seattle World School, South Shore, District-wide, or other)
- e) Snoqualmie Valley (Follow-up: Chief Kanim, Snoqualmie, Twin Falls, Two Rivers, District-wide, or other)
- f) Tukwila (Follow-up: Showalter, District-wide, or other)



Student Focus: Working for and with students

7. To what extent are the following statements reflective of the BSK-supported partnership (with the partners you identified above), in terms of work for and with students?

	To a great extent	To some extent	To a minimal extent	Not at all	Not sure/ don't know
The partnership addresses inequities for Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) students, such as providing access to resources or supports for BIPOC students, addressing inequities in schools that disproportionately impact BIPOC students.					
The partnership creates opportunities for students to share their perspectives and experiences.					
Students receive communication about the services provided by the partnership					
Students help identify data (including numbers, stories, and other information) that is important for the partnership to collect and use.					

Family Engagement: Working for and with families

8. To what extent are the following statements reflective of the BSK-supported partnership (with the partners you identified above), in terms of work for and with families?

	To a great extent	To some extent	To a minimal extent	Not at all	Not sure/ don't know
The partnership creates opportunities for families to share their perspectives and experiences (e.g., through family surveys or meetings).					
Families receive communication about the services provided by the partnership.					
The partnership provides opportunities for families to help identify data or information that is important for the partnership to collect and use.					

Collaborative Efforts

9. To what extent are the following statements reflective of the BSK-supported partnership (with the partners you identified above), in terms of collaboration of partners?

	To a great extent	To some extent	To a minimal extent	Not at all	Not sure/ don't know
Partners plan and carry out comprehensive interventions that connect multiple programs, services, sectors.					
Partners document the impact of the partnership's actions.					
Partners work with students and families to evaluate their partnership work to learn and continue improving.					
Partners recognize that what the partnership is trying to accomplish would be difficult for any single organization to accomplish by itself.					

*Shared Accountability for Positive Impacts: Shared accountability is a commitment to collecting and sharing data (numbers, stories, and other information) to be able to learn and improve your partnership's work and increase its impact.*

10. What actions or supports have been helpful to developing a shared accountability for positive impacts (for students, families, staff, and/or systems) among partners?
11. What have been challenges or barriers to developing a shared accountability for positive impacts (for students, families, staff, and/or systems) among partners?

Lasting Changes for Students, Families, Staff and Schools

12. To what extent, if any, have you observed that BSK-supported partnerships have contributed to the following changes in the district/school where you work before and since the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures?

	BEFORE COVID-19 Pandemic			SINCE COVID-19 Pandemic		
	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all
Changes for students						
a) Expanded student leadership opportunities						
b) Improved school climate (school environments that are safe, supportive, respectful, and engaging environments for young people, staff, and families)						
c) Improved sense of belonging for students						
d) Increased student engagement in school						
e) Improved outcomes for students (e.g., improved sense of self including identity, improved social emotional or physical health, improved attendance, improved academic performance).						
Changes for families						
f) School has increased family engagement opportunities						
g) School and/or partner staff have increased their cultural competence in working with families						
h) Families feel more welcome in the school						
i) Families are more engaged in the school						
Changes for staff						
j) Growth in staff practices in your organization (e.g., teaching practices centered in racial equity, restorative justice, or whole child approaches).						
Changes in systems						
k) Improved coordination and system of student supports						
l) Increased access to student services, supports, activities						
m) Improved discipline policies and practices						
n) Improved attendance policies and practices						
o) Other changes in policies, systems, environments						

Follow-up questions (these are prompted based on answers above)

13. What **student outcomes have you observed** your BSK-supported partnership **contributing to**? Please distinguish changes from before COVID-19 and since COVID-19, as relevant.
14. Which **areas of staff practice have you observed** your BSK-support partnership **contributing to**? Select all that apply, and please distinguish changes from before COVID-19 and since COVID-19, as relevant.
- a) Racial equity-centered practices
  - b) Restorative justice
  - c) Whole-child approach
  - d) Family engagement
  - e) Cross-cultural communication
  - f) Other-please specify
- How are changes in staff knowledge, abilities, behaviors, and practices different pre-COVID and since COVID?
15. Please specify other changes in policies, systems and environments to which your partnership has contributed.

Sustainability and Future Work

16. Do you plan to sustain your BSK-supported partnership beyond current BSK funding?
- a) Yes
  - b) No
  - c) I don't know

17. How do you plan to sustain this partnership beyond BSK funding?
18. What supports from BSK would be helpful in sustaining this partnership beyond BSK funding?
19. What changes to your partnerships, prompted by COVID-19 and school closures, do you hope to sustain into the future?

Partnering across BSK Investments

20. To what extent did you expect to partner across different BSK investments at the start of your BSK grant?

To a great extent	To some extent	To a minimal extent	Not at all	Not sure/ don't know
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21. To what extend have you partnered across different BSK investments during your BSK grant?

To a great extent	To some extent	To a minimal extent	Not at all	Not sure/ don't know
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22. What would be helpful from BSK in supporting partnerships across BSK investments?

Other Comments

23. Do you have any other comments about BSK supports for your partnership, in terms of what has been helpful, not helpful, or would be helpful in the future?
24. Do you have any additional comments to share?

Family Engagement and Leadership Findings	Questions
<p>We will share key emerging findings from the three-year BSK School Partnerships evaluation (to be identified in early Fall 2021), as a jumping off point for the questions at right. As an example, findings shared at the January 2021 meaning-making sessions included:</p> <p>Partnerships are focused on increased opportunities for student and family engagement in school and encouraging staff growth around working and communicating with students and families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 15 partnerships (of 41) reported building staff knowledge, abilities, and practice</li><li>• 14 partnerships reported positive changes in family engagement</li><li>• 10 partnerships reported changes in student leadership</li></ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. How do these findings relate to your experiences in your student’s school?</li><li>2. What is new or surprising to you?</li><li>3. What questions do you have about the findings?</li><li>4. [If they are aware of BSK-supported programs] How do you think [BSK-supported programs] support family engagement and leadership in your student’s school?</li><li>5. How do you think schools and partner organizations [like BSK-supported organizations, if they are familiar] can support family engagement and leadership in schools?</li></ol>
Findings about Changes in Schools	Questions
<p>We will share key emerging findings from the three-year BSK School Partnerships evaluation (to be identified in early Fall 2021), as a jumping off point for the questions at right. As an example, findings shared at the January 2021 meaning-making sessions included:</p> <p>Many partnerships reported improved school climate through strengthened relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 25 partnerships (of 41) report strengthened relationships among students; among students, staff, mentors and other adults; among staff; and between CBOs and schools through restorative justice practices, mentorship programs, and other supports.</li><li>• Shifts to restorative practices, with relationship-building at the core, has affected a range of changes in several sites.</li><li>• 4 partnerships focused on restorative practices, reported changes in at least 6 of the 9 areas of practice, policy, system, and environment change.</li></ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>6. How do these findings resonate with you?</li><li>7. What is new or surprising to you?</li><li>8. What questions do you have about the findings?</li><li>9. [If they are aware of BSK-supported programs] How have [BSK-supported programs] contributed to changes in your student’s school, such as [identify what changes have been reported by awardees/partners working in their school]?</li><li>10. How do you think schools and partner organizations [like BSK-supported organizations, if they are familiar] can make positive changes in schools, such as improving school climate for students and for families?</li></ol>
Other Questions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is there anything else you would like to tell us about family engagement and leadership in this school?</li><li>• Are there other things you would like to tell us about how the school makes sure your voices are heard?</li><li>• Is there anything else you would like to tell us about changes you have seen or experienced in this school?</li></ul>	



Introduction

- 1. What is your name and what grade are you in? How long have you attended this school?
- 2. How have you been involved with BSK-supported programs in this school? *(Provide students with examples of BSK-supported programs in their school).*

Student Leadership

- 3. Do students have opportunities to lead or participate in making decisions at your school? How does the school make sure your voices are heard?  
➤ **Probe:** *How has the COVID pandemic affected how students can lead at the school?*
- 4. How do you think [BSK-supported programs] support student leadership?
- 5. How do you think schools and partner organizations [like BSK-supported organizations, if they are familiar] can support student leadership in schools?

Changes in Schools

- 6. What changes have you seen at this school over the past few years? This could be related to school climate and positive relationships among students, staff, and families, and increasing supports or services for students and families, or other changes in this school.  
➤ **Probe:** *[If they are familiar with BSK-supported programs] How have [BSK-supported programs] contributed to these changes at your school?*
- 7. How do you think schools and partner organizations [like BSK-supported organizations, if they are familiar] can make positive changes in schools, such as improving school climate for students and for families?

Other Questions

- 8. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?
  - a) About student leadership or decision-making in your school, how the school makes sure your voices are heard?
  - b) About changes you have seen or experienced in this school?



11/3/21

Dear [Name of School] Middle School Parent,

We are writing to invite you to consider having your child participate in a Student Focus Group with Showalter Middle School as part of the Best Start for Kids (BSK) School Partnerships evaluation. With participation from a group of 7-10 students, a focus group session will be held on \_\_\_\_\_. During the focus group session, we will be asking students about their leadership experiences and opportunities in the school and viewpoints about changes in their school, and in the school environment. We will also ask about their familiarity with BSK-supported programs and organizations, such as [list of Programs or program providers]. *(Please see enclosed copy of Student Focus Group questions.)*

**What are Best Start for Kids School Partnerships?** In 2015, King County voters approved an initiative to invest in the health and well-being of their neighbors and communities. The initiative, called Best Starts for Kids (BSK), invests \$65 million every year for six years to build strong communities, resilient families, and happy, healthy, safe, and thriving young people.

Specifically, BSK has invested in school and community-organization partnership programs for youth between 5 and 24 years old. Some of these investments include School Based Health Centers, mentorship and peer coaching programs, after school programs and summer learning programs. These programs all play a critical role in achieving BSK School Partnership's vision that "School environments are safe, supportive, respectful and engaging environments for young people, staff and families. Race, ethnicity or cultural identity does not impact access to these environments."

**Why Student Focus Groups?** In order to understand how BSK investments in school-community partnership programs are working towards the BSK vision, King County-BSK staff engaged the Strategy, Evaluation and Learning team from Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD) to conduct the evaluation of BSK School Partnerships. During the 2018-2019, 2019-20, and 2020-21 school years, we interviewed BSK program managers, and community organization and school staff and district leaders who are working on BSK-funded programs in schools to understand their perspective on how these partnerships are working together to support students. As well, we were able to have conversations with a small group of parents in fall 2020. In fall 2021, we want to understand the perspective of students (including students who have participated in BSK-funded programs) regarding their school environment and opportunities and experiences they may have had that engaged them and other students as leaders or decision-makers at their school.

We will conduct the Student Focus Group in-person. Prior to the start of the Student Focus Group session, PSESD evaluation team members will explain the focus group process and they will confirm with students if they understand the described process. Students will also be made aware that what they say individually will only be shared anonymously unless any one student describes a situation that could be dangerous to

the student or to others in which case members of the PSESD team will have to share the information with people who are responsible for protecting children and keeping them safe.

We will not ask students about sensitive topics. At the same time, even though the PSESD team is not going to be asking for information about sensitive topics, we want you to be aware that members of the team have an ethical and legal responsibility to report situations of child abuse, child neglect or any life-threatening situation to appropriate authorities.

Students will be asked to give their assent (agree verbally) to participating. Students also will receive assurance that participation is voluntary and that they can choose to stop participating at any time during the Focus Group session without any repercussion related to participating in BSK activities in the school.

During the focus group session, we will ask student participants to share their thoughts and honest opinions, assuring them that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions and that every participant also does not have to answer every question. We will be audio recording to ensure that what gets said is captured with accuracy. However, reports written based on the information collected during the Student Focus Group session will only include what was said and not who said it, so students' responses will be made anonymous. Information collected from Focus Group participants can only be accessed by PSESD evaluation team members and will be kept in secure locations. Electronic notes and recordings will be kept in secure folders filed in secure agency servers and any handwritten or printed notes will be kept in locked filing cabinets.

Should you agree to have your child participate in the Student Focus Group conversations, students will receive a small gift as a token of appreciation for their participation.

We hope that you will encourage your child to join their peers in a Student Focus Group session. Enclosed is a copy of the questions we will be asking students at the focus group session and the parental consent form for your review and signature should you agree to permit your child to participate.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Nathalie Jones at [njones@psed.org](mailto:njones@psed.org) or by phone at (425) 917-7719.

Sincerely,

Nathalie Jones on behalf of the PSESD Team



Parental Consent Form

After reading the attached letter describing the **Best Start for Kids (BSK) School Partnerships Evaluation Project**, I understand that my child, \_\_\_\_\_ [ Please print NAME OF CHILD], will participate in a Student Focus Group with other students from her/his/their school. This focus group will be scheduled on a day/time scheduled in agreement with school staff. The Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSED) team that is evaluating the BSK School Partnerships will lead the focus group.

I understand that responses from my child and other students will provide information about students' experiences with leadership opportunities at their school and their school climate (how students feel being at their school). My child will be asked to share their thoughts and honest opinions. There are no right or wrong answers to questions and students do not have to answer every question. Having read the Student Focus Group questions, I also understand that my child will not be asked about sensitive topics. At the same time, even though the PSED team is not going to be asking for information about sensitive topics, I understand that members of the team have an ethical and legal responsibility to report situations of child abuse, child neglect or any life-threatening situation to appropriate authorities.

I understand that the PSED evaluation team will record the session to make sure that students' responses are captured accurately. However, the PSED team will only report results of the focus groups based on what was said and *not* who said it. Otherwise, my child's and all other students' responses will be made anonymous. Information from the focus group can only be accessed by PSED evaluation team members. Typed notes and audio recordings will be kept in secure folders filed in secure PSED servers. Any handwritten or printed notes will be kept in locked filing cabinets.

I also understand that prior to the start of a Student Focus Group session, PSED evaluation team members will explain the focus group process and then confirm with the students if they understand the described process. Students will also be made aware that what they say individually will only be shared anonymously unless any one student describes a situation that could be dangerous to the student or to others in which case members of the PSED team will have to share the information with people who are responsible for protecting children and keeping them safe. My child will be asked to agree to participate. They will be informed that participation is voluntary. My child can choose to stop participating at any time during the Focus Group session without any consequences related to participating in BSK activities in the school. Following the focus group, students will receive a small gift as a token of appreciation for their participation.

Finally, if I have any questions about the Student Focus Group, I can contact Nathalie Jones at [njones@psed.org](mailto:njones@psed.org) or at 425 917-7719.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Participant's Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of School

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature & Date

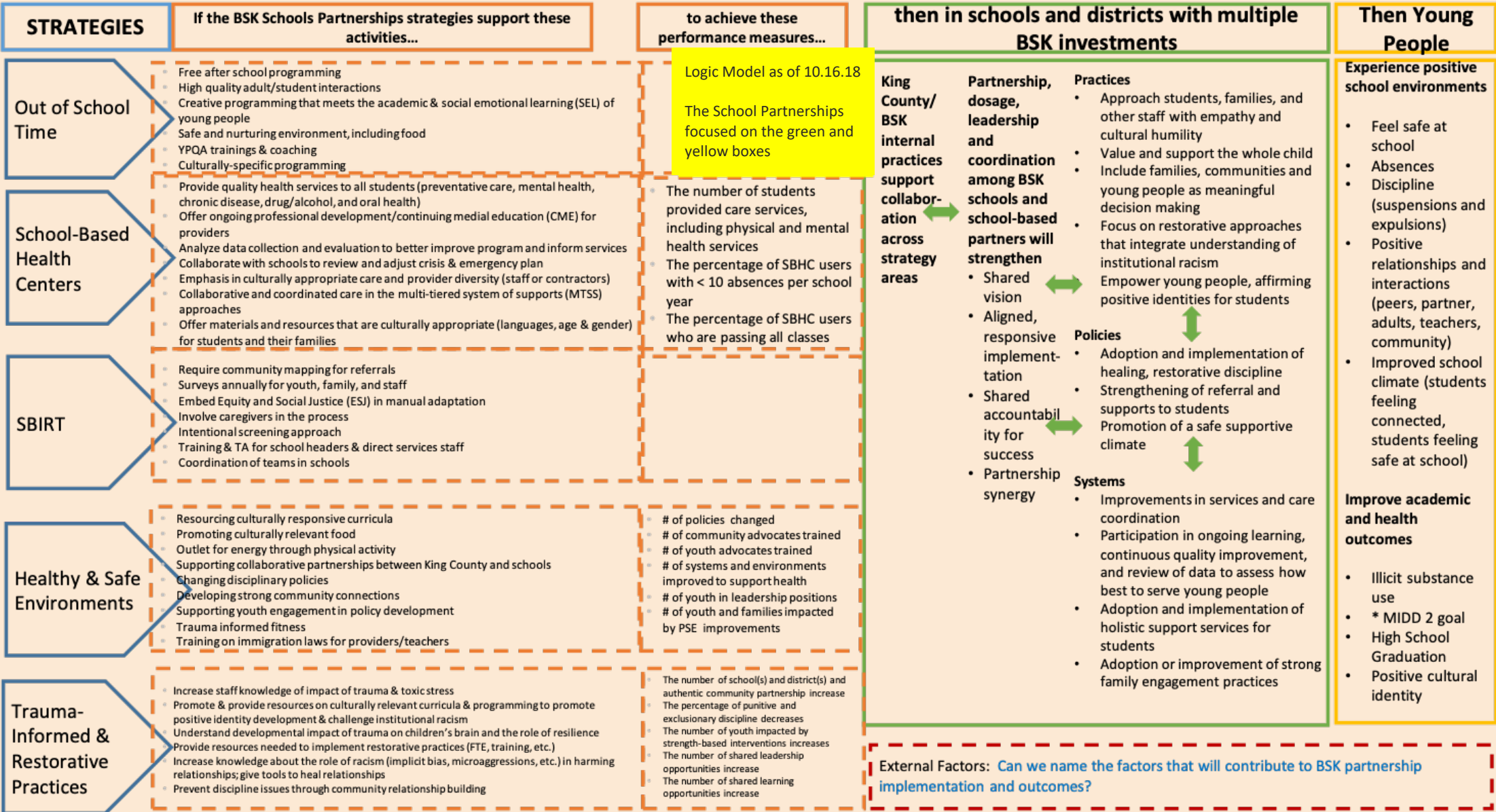
# Meaning-Making: What, So What, Now What? (W<sup>3</sup>)<sup>40</sup>

**Purpose:** Generate learning from shared experiences, make sense of complex challenges in a way that supports action

Phase	Guiding Questions	Process	How input will be used
What (Analysis) and So What (Interpretation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What do you notice?</li><li>What is important?</li><li>What questions do you have?</li><li>Where would you like to see examples to illustrate findings?</li></ul>	<p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Select one evaluation question</b> to focus on in a breakout group</li><li>Reflect and discuss <b>in breakout groups</b></li><li><b>Share out</b> with large group</li><li>In large group, <b>prioritize implications for BSK, Schools/Districts, CBO partners</b> for BSK 2.0 and future work</li></ul>	<p>To inform final report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Clarify and refine findings</li><li>Identify examples to illustrate findings</li><li>Inform implications for practice</li></ul>
Now What (Implications or Actions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What actions make sense for BSK to consider?</li><li>For schools and districts?</li><li>For CBO partners?</li></ul>		

<sup>40</sup> Protocol adapted from Liberating Structures: <https://www.liberatingstructures.com/9-what-so-what-now-what-w/>





Element or Characteristic	Look fors
Leadership	Community-based organizations, students, families are named/described as leaders, in addition to schools/districts/King County
	People who are affected by decisions are included in and influence decision-making
	Partners and stakeholders that do not hold institutional power feel included and valued, have buy-in, and are part of communication and decision-making processes
	Shared leadership: Partners are clear on their role and how it contributes to achieving the vision
	School and organizational leaders support and build the voice of students, families, and staff
Coordination	Partners engage in creating norms, protocols, and structures in inclusive ways that define and drive decisions and communication
	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and agreed upon among partner organizations and within the context of the partnership’s work
	The school and partners are working towards shared goals and people understand how working together will improve performance
	There is a person or team (can be from the school, partner orgs, parent volunteer, or combination) that serves as the central point of contact for community partners and others providing support services; this person/team works closely with school leadership
	There are structures (e.g. scheduled meetings, partners sharing a work space) to support regular communication among partners
	Partners communicate regularly with each other
	Partner organizations are aware of and share the services and supports provided by other organizations
	Organizations communicate about and are open/flexible to learn from what is working (and not) to be able to better support each other and students
	There are resources (time, funding) committed to coordination
	Partners identify the need for and value of sharing data and information about students.

Element or Characteristic	Look fors
Power Sharing	Schools & partner organizations acknowledge differentials in access to resources (time, funding, etc.)
	Schools and partner organizations are willing to sacrifice (give/offer up) control/resources in areas where the other body requires more pull or support
	Internally, schools and partner organizations are working to improve equitable structures and relationships within their own organization (i.e., For schools: are relationships equitable between students, families, teachers, administration, and staff?; For CBOs: are relationships equitable between staff members and with students and parents?)
	Schools and partner organizations lean into complexities and tensions that arise in their partnerships
	Partners see the partnership as a means to disrupt systems of power and create more equitable ways of being OR Partners see the partnership as a means to transform power from white cultural norms toward community-centered ways of understanding
	Schools and partner organizations are invested in each other's successes
Vision Process	Students, families, partner organizations, and school leadership and staff feel they are part of the vision and can speak into the process of developing and refining the vision (e.g., It is clear how partners will work together in service of the vision; Families/caretaking adults, students, school leadership and staff and partner organizations are engaged in how vision will be achieved)
	The vision process attends to the differences in power between schools, districts and large institutions and students, families and CBOs
	The vision of the partnership and how it supports the broader vision are not static and evolve over time
Shared Vision	The vision acknowledges and addresses historic and present-day inequities of systems, schools, and opportunities for students, and is focused on addressing those inequities
	The vision is explicit about supporting/improving outcomes for students of color
	Partners have a common understanding of systemic barriers to positive educational outcomes, especially for students of color, and are committed to working together to address them
	Goals speak to how you want to do your work (process goals), not just what you want to do (Humanistic mindset/quality in relation to quantity)
	The vision reflects what families, students, school leaders and staff, and partner organizations want for the partnership and the students it serves
	Common outcomes have been identified and are the focus for helping to achieve the vision




Element or Characteristic	Look fors
Aligned, responsive implementation	Services are aligned with vision and needs – partners use data and equity lens to identify community needs and disparities. Make sure there is a structure in place to identify individual student needs
	Partners efficiently use of [remove] existing assets – take advantage of partnership, strengths, opportunities already present in the community, without overburdening one resource, and also not reinventing the wheel and duplicating efforts*
	Partnership incorporates new partners when needed – if there are needs identified that current partners do not have the expertise in filling, respond by finding partners that can fill that need
	Partnership builds trust and strong relationships – partners communicate continuously and engage in opportunities to connect, share, collaborate, celebrate, and learn together. Partners set up clear and regular communication for progress and goals. Partners give, receive, and value robust feedback*
	Community partners are reflected in school improvement goals.
	School and community partners commit to working together toward school improvement goals.
	Partners share information about students (and understand limitations to sharing) in order to provide and improve supports
Shared accountability for success	Partners build evaluation into program to promote continuous improvement, engage in improvement efforts by collecting and sharing data to improve services to students. Partners commit to high-quality point of service by participating in quality improvement processes.
	The group collects and uses sufficient quantitative and qualitative information disaggregated by race & ethnicity, FRPL, language, or gender effectively to support equity efforts.
	Families help identify or prioritize the data that is important for the partnership to collect and use
	Partners discuss data trends and check their understanding and interpretation with community from which data are collected.
Partnership Synergy (includes totality of concerted & collaborative comprehensive efforts, enhanced services, benefits for partners, sustainability)	Partners think about the partnership's work in creative, holistic, & practical ways
	Partners develop realistic goals that are widely understood and supported
	Partners plan and carry out comprehensive interventions that connect multiple programs, services, sectors
	Partners understand and document the impact of the partnership's actions
	Partners incorporate the perspectives and priorities of community stakeholders, including the target populations
	Partners communicate how the partnership's actions will address community problems
	Partners recognize that what the partnership is trying to accomplish would be difficult for any single organization to accomplish by itself
	Partners obtain support of community (i.e., immediate school community [includes students and school & district staff]; larger community where students live [may include neighborhood, local businesses, faith houses, local town/city agencies, etc.])



Element or Characteristic	Look fors
Aligned, responsive implementation	Services are aligned with vision and needs – partners use data and equity lens to identify community needs and disparities. Make sure there is a structure in place to identify individual student needs
PPSE Changes	Partners acknowledge the inequities of education system, and focus on PSE changes in order to improve outcomes for students of color
	There is a focus on changing school environment (climate and culture) particularly for students of color, including the knowledge, attitudes, behavior, and skills (KABS) of staff
	There is alignment in the PSE changes and student outcomes across BSK investments
Student Outcomes	Partners are focused on affecting student outcomes, with a focus on students of color
	Add in Years 2 & 3: Within investments areas, organizations articulate relationships between PSE changes and student well-being and outcomes, including changes in knowledge, attitudes, behavior, and skills (KABS)
	Add in Years 2 & 3: Students indicate that the same student KABS changes are happening for them
Hopes	Partners describe the need for ongoing planning, creating a sustainability plan and leverage resources – getting help with identifying diverse funding sources, aligning strategies, and making time to combine efforts in creating and executing a sustainability plan
	Partners express hope to maintain their current type/level of partnership or for partnership to shift/deepen over time
	Partners describe synergy as their hope for the future of the partnership
Context	Context includes changing demographics, increasing diversity, a teaching/school staff that do not reflect students.
	Describe existing relationships among partners/school including how do staff/leadership transitions affect relationship and trust building that is necessary for authentic partnership
	Describe broader district context for supporting partnership

	Year 1 SY 2018-19	Year 2 SY 2019-20	Year 3 SY 2020-21, fall 2021
Equitable partnerships (Q1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Coded interviews for priority and emergent topics</li><li>Developed look fors of equitable partnership based on YDEKC framework, Transformational Relationship &amp; Partnership Framework, and emergent topics from interviews</li><li>Synthesized interview data with secondary data, using look fors to identify strengths and opportunities across partnerships</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Refined look fors to include power sharing attributes and used them to code primary data (focus groups and interviews) with looks fors</li><li>Triangulated secondary data for what was new, confirmatory, and additional evidence of look fors</li><li>Categorized partnerships as Cooperative, Collaborative, or Integrated and analyzed factors supporting and inhibiting partnerships in each group</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Based on Advisor and meaning-making feedback, moved away from partnership categorization to provide concrete examples of partnership attributes with contributions of SP strategies</li><li>Identified drivers of equitable partnerships based on Year 1 and 2 findings, and Jan. 2021 meaning-making sessions</li><li>Coded Year 3 data with partnership drivers, and identified related Year 3 activities from each SP strategy</li><li>Triangulated with Awardee/Partner Survey data on partnership attributes</li><li>Developed themes from student/family data re: leadership opportunities</li></ul>
Lasting changes in schools (Q2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Categorized partnerships as Cooperative, Collaborative, or Integrated</li><li>Categorized practice, policy and system changes (e.g., staff growth, coordination/system of supports); changes to school environments; and changes in student outcomes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Reviewed primary and secondary data related to Year 1 categories, and synthesized into nine types of lasting changes in schools</li><li>Identified most to least frequently reported changes</li><li>Distinguished patterns of reported changes by partnership type (Cooperative, Collaborative, Integrated)</li><li>Identified common changes (changes reported by multiple partnerships) within each site</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Analyzed Year 3 primary data (Jan. 2021 meaning-making sessions, July 2021 SP Leads interviews) and secondary data (awardee narrative reports) into 10 types of change (nine from Year 2, and emerging area related to data sharing)</li><li>Compared frequency of reported changes in Year 2 to Year 3 to understand impacts of COVID-19</li><li>Triangulated with Awardee/Partner Survey data on changes before and since COVID-19</li><li>Analyzed common types of change by site and combinations of SP strategies</li><li>Developed themes from student/family data re: changes in schools</li></ul>
BSK supports (Q3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Reviewed documents from BSK/King County</li><li>Coded BSK/King County interviews for priority and emergent topics</li><li>Developed emerging themes, informed by Grantmakers for Effective Organizations’ (GEO) Smarter Grantmaking Playbook<sup>41</sup></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Coded primary data (interviews and focus groups) using attributes of equity-focused grantmaking, adapted from the GEO Smarter Grantmaking Playbook</li><li>Analyzed coded data to identify strengths and opportunities related to: connections among partners; rapid, community-led responses; family engagement; unique strengths and needs of small CBOs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identified themes across Year 1 and 2 findings, and Jan. 2021 meaning-making sessions</li><li>Coded additional Year 3 data (SP Leads interviews, secondary data) using identified themes and emerging topics</li><li>Triangulated with Awardee/Partner Survey data re: feedback on BSK supports</li></ul>
Across questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shared and validated preliminary results with Evaluation Advisors</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identified connections across findings for each question</li><li>Shared preliminary results with Evaluation Advisors and at Jan. 2021 meaning-making sessions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shared preliminary results at Nov. 2021 meaning-making session</li><li>Synthesized key reports to provide context on COVID-19 impacts on students and families</li></ul>

<sup>41</sup> Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, The Smarter Grantmaking Playbook: <https://www.geofunders.org/what-we-offer/the-smarter-grantmaking-playbook>

			
	Cooperative	Collaborative	Integrated
Adapted from YDEKC* Toolkit	<p><b>Cooperative:</b></p> <p>In a cooperative partnership, CBO and school partners operate autonomously from one another. Program goals are primarily established by the primary awardee (CBO or school), though they may share one or more goals with the other partner organizations.</p>	<p><b>Collaborative:</b></p> <p>CBO and school partners share goals and communicate about progress on a regular or semi-regular basis. The school and the partner organization(s) maintain ultimate decision-making authority over their own activities.</p>	<p><b>Integrated:</b></p> <p>The CBO partner(s) play(s) a major role in site planning processes, and shares data, resources, and decision-making authority with the school.</p>
Examples from BSK SP Evaluation (within-strategy and cross-strategy partnerships)	<p>1. There is awareness of all BSK strategies/funding in the district and there is a district lead who wants to coordinate.</p> <p>2. CBO operates autonomously from the school – the organization has access to students and space, and students have access to the program.</p> <p>3. Partners in one BSK strategy refers students to services covered by another BSK strategy.</p>	<p>1. CBO along with school staff and leaders work together to improve process of providing services to students. The CBO makes decisions about its own work.</p> <p>2. CBO staff from across two BSK strategies connect with teachers to stay on the same page regarding student supports. CBOs look to and support equity advocacy of district leadership.</p> <p>3. A high level of trust is established between CBO and school partners. More relationships are built, leading to more collaborative efforts.</p>	<p>1. Partners across different strategy areas are involved in school decision-making around student support in the school.</p> <p>2. Effort expended to support students tends to be fluid across partners from the school and the different BSK strategies. Communication is regular and timely, and responsibilities are defined and connected.</p> <p>3. There is a long-standing relationship where partnership between CBO and the school preceded BSK funding. CBO staff is integrated into school and engaged in school activities &amp; decision-making.</p>

\* Youth Development Executives of King County School and Community Partnership Toolkit. <https://ydekc.org/resource-center/school-community-partnership-toolkit/> Accessed October 1, 2019

	COOPERATIVE	COLLABORATIVE	INTEGRATED
Leadership	<p>Year 1: Single agency leadership at district or school or CBO level, with limited communication. Plans to add student and family voices are either vague or still in very early or nascent stage.</p> <p>Year 2: Comparatively greater participation and engagement of CBOs and other community partners including parents. Student voices are also given more opportunity to be heard and responded to especially by CBO partners. However, issues related to poor communication with school partners continue to limit community partners' roles, including by not fully integrating them into decision-making roles that can help achieve common vision.</p>	<p>Year 1: Leaders recognize need for partners and their essential roles towards achieving student support in their own ways and together. There is clear acknowledgment of the need for including perspectives of stakeholders such as students, families, and staff while increasing information-sharing amongst partners.</p> <p>Year 2: Community, student, and family leadership and voices and participation are more actively sought to ensure improved services that are culturally sensitive and attend to equity. At the same time, there is still a tendency for district and school voices to predominate in leadership roles.</p>	<p>Year 1: Given long-term relationships and built trust, CBO partners from across strategies recognize each other’s contributions and are very much part of building-level work with students. Student input or feedback is sought after and parent engagement or staff participation in work is part of the ideal status of the whole effort. The various partners see themselves as involved in decision-making. It is almost difficult to separate each contributing entity from one another in their interdependent effort.</p> <p>Year 2: Interdependent, harmonious efforts of multiple school (leadership, staff, and students) and community partners are geared towards the provision of committed, caring services for multiracial, multicultural students and upholding student voices in the process. Parent voices especially in decision-making can be made more robust through increased family engagement.</p>
Coordination	<p>Year 1: Partnerships are defined differently depending on school and strategy. There may or may not be an identified coordinator. Coordination structures, especially around communication, are basic depending on requirements within individual strategy activities. Desire for better communication is expressed.</p> <p>Year 2: For the most part, schools appreciate and welcome the services that community partners offer. However, school sites are not clear about what they are willing to do to work with community organizations. In some cases, school site staff make decisions unilaterally about what CBOs can do at sites. Communication between schools and community partners continues to be poor.</p>	<p>Year 1: There is better coordination of efforts across partners and across strategies. Coordination is helped by sharing resources such as spaces or timing of activities, i.e., the how, when, and what of work. There is increased information flow between partners and between partners and stakeholders and acknowledgment of need to improve the process.</p> <p>Year 2: Communication among community and school partners with established relationships remains strong and receive extra boost by the creation of formal and informal structures to support integration of services. Coordination is happening but can benefit from dedicated resources specially to support sharing information with small CBOs and that are related to student data.</p>	<p>Year 1: With built trust, every partner engages in work that supports, facilitates, or enables work of other partners. Regular communication between partners is supported by built-in structures such as building-level meetings. Highly coordinated efforts is demonstrated within and across strategies.</p> <p>Year 2: Established and trusting relationships, regular and open communication especially with primary school contact, active participation/membership on school-based structures, acknowledgement of partner strengths, readiness to step in and offer resources and provision of dedicated funding for common-purpose efforts facilitate well-coordinated cross-strategy work even in times of crisis. At the same time, it is hoped that common purpose will move partnerships towards creating common data collection and sharing practices as well.</p>



Results: Partnership Elements and Characteristics			Appendix
	COOPERATIVE	COLLABORATIVE	INTEGRATED
Shared Vision	<p>Year 1: Vision is developed and led by district or school or CBO. Not clear on how the vision is shared across all partners and across strategies. No reference to input or feedback from students, staff or families.</p> <p>Year 2: Schools depend on community awardees/partners to develop services and fill gaps that build student voice or provide them access to resources. However, schools do not seem to play an active role in ensuring deeper connections and there are opportunities for working together with and among community partners.</p>	<p>Year 1: There is commitment to continue building on relationships and working together across partners while gathering input or feedback from stakeholders in order to provide support services to students of color, whilst respecting different cultures.</p> <p>Year 2: There is increased recognition of the need to find ways to develop cultural sensitivity and culturally appropriate ways to offer support to parents as part of acknowledgment of need to respond to multiple needs brought about or exacerbated by the pandemic. Schools are leaning on community partners to help keep track of students and identify needs and provide support. At the same time, there was expressed hope for flexibility in BSK expectations regarding stated practice, policy, system and environment changes and student outcomes.</p>	<p>Year 1: There is clear sense of what the common purpose is and what and how contributions from partners will be needed or used and how stakeholders' input is gathered from students, families, and staff.</p> <p>Year 2: Common purpose both shifts in response to student and family needs in times of crises and reflects partnerships' recognition of historical and systemic challenges. And while school and community partners find ways to solicit student input and feedback, school partners in particular desire greater and more authentic engagement and participation from racially diverse, multicultural, and multilingual parents.</p>
Power Sharing (Year 2)	<p>School site leaders and staff are able to depend on community partners to step into breaches or gaps especially during crisis moments like the pandemic. Trusting relationships built over time helps in organizations being invested in each other. Unfortunately, there were noted needs to have district pay greater attention to school needs and for school leads and staff to communicate with and allow community organizations to share in decision-making.</p>	<p>In best case scenario, awardees and partners are able to look to and lean on one another as co-contributors of services to students and families. They acknowledge that services are better when informed by students and families. Services are also more timely and relevant when all school and community partners alike recognize each other's strengths and needs, listen to one another, and work closely together especially during crisis period like during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>However, some schools/districts continue to look to community partners primarily to fulfill work that they have identified as needing to get done, including culturally sensitive work.</p>	<p>School and community partners assume and demonstrate interdependency. Partners' functions and roles connect and play out smoothly and flexibly in serving students and families, even in crisis when they readily step in to ensure continuous response to student and family needs. They fully acknowledge and deeply trust one other's strengths and essential commitment to engaging students and parents in the work.</p>

	COOPERATIVE	COLLABORATIVE	INTEGRATED
Aligned, Responsive Implementation	<p>Year 1: Calls for trust-building. Mostly describes work as within strategy. Even within strategy, there is need for more information to be shared across partners and stakeholders.</p> <p>Year 2: School partners see community partners as vital participants in working toward school goals and working with the community. However, community partners do not feel they are contributing to decision-making, more just being asked to support and participate where the school decides. Community partners acknowledge that there is the opportunity for partners to collaborate and work together, building a community. They also see it as a way to model community for students. However, community partners do not feel this ideal exists at this time, as they feel many partners are protective over the work, which created isolation instead of collaboration. Overall, aligned implementation is not as present in cross-strategy as it is within individual partnerships.</p>	<p>Year 1: Greater alignment of support for students by identifying and leveraging resources from partners within or across strategies and from the larger community according to identified needs.</p> <p>Year 2: Directly in response to the pandemic, partnerships are engaging across strategies to address urgent needs and services for students and families. Partnerships are also engaging across strategies and within schools to discuss inequities and the impacts. However, the work itself to address those inequities within the school structure has not yet taken shape in collaborative work across strategies. Partners, especially school partners, could be doing more to engage with those in the community who reflect different cultures and backgrounds in order to better serve students' needs. Overall, all partners are aware of the need to collaborate to address mental health needs of students, especially in response to the pandemic.</p>	<p>Year 1: Partners report being very much part of, on the same page with, embedded, or integrated into, or supported by the work of other partners within or across strategies.</p> <p>Year 2: While new partnerships are not necessarily being established currently, strong relationships are prevalent. Partners work across strategies and within the school to focus explicitly on students' needs. Partners are integrated within the school structure, using collaboration to discuss and engage with resources and services. Partners have a growth mindset in terms of cross-strategy work. Community partners are not mentioned explicitly in school improvement goals, but they are partners in the creation and implementation of the School Improvement Plan (SIP).</p>
Mutual/ Shared Accountability	<p>Year 1: Though sparsely identified, there is some indication of an understanding of need for and engagement in continuous improvement activities within strategy, though efforts are not clearly delineated.</p> <p>Year 2: While no evidence of cross-strategy work towards mutual accountability, partners are intent on using data to evaluate their actions, along with working towards having data-driven conversations that also take into account the context of the community the data is taken from.</p>	<p>Year 1: In order to provide better aligned services for students, there is acknowledged need to share information between partners within or across strategies by more definite means (e.g., via Google document system) while recognizing some real limitations to data sharing.</p> <p>Year 2: While there is no evidence of cross-strategy sharing of data or evaluative practices, partners do incorporate evaluation within their practices. Some partners explicitly analyze the data from an equity lens. There do need to be more conversations surrounding data trends and the communities within which the data exists.</p>	<p>Year 1: While still a mostly within-strategy endeavor and acknowledging constraints surrounding student data, efforts of varying degrees for collecting, using, and sharing of information with partners and, to a more limited extent, with stakeholder groups such as staff, students, and parents are reported.</p> <p>Year 2: Accountability continues to be mostly within-strategy work, where partners engage in evaluation and data-focused conversations. Partners seek to engage more with families in regard to evaluation processes, but they acknowledge that work is at the beginning stages, especially in relation to empowering families to be involved in the data collection process.</p>

Results: Partnership Elements and Characteristics				Appendix
	COOPERATIVE	COLLABORATIVE	INTEGRATED	
<b>Partnership Synergy (Year 2)</b>	Partners work within strategies and partnerships to carry out wraparound support and comprehensive support to students. However, work across strategies to carry out interventions and work together to address student needs is not very present. Partners acknowledge the need to connect across strategies but experience barriers to doing this work.	Within-strategy work to carry out comprehensive interventions that offer wraparound support is strong, along with a within-strategy focus on incorporating the perspective and priorities of the community. Work is being done to better connect with the community as well. Cross-strategy work has come about especially during the pandemic, with partners working together to address urgent student and community needs. Community partners are leading this work. However, there is still a lack of consistent and structural work across strategies.	Partners work across strategies to meet student and community needs in comprehensive ways that provide wraparound support. Partners have built relationships with students, families, and the community and prioritize their needs and perspectives. Part of this work connects with incorporating the community into the partnership. Additionally, partners ensure that their staff reflects the community being served. The work across strategies is consistent and structural in a way that allows it to be sustainable.	
<b>Policies, Practices, Systems and Environment (Year 2)</b>	While most PPSE work exists more so within-strategy, partners together acknowledge system inequities. However, partners have not yet communicated explicitly how their work addresses systemic inequities. School partners see, both within and across strategies, community partners' work as transformative and system-changing. School structures can serve as a barrier to allowing community partners to fully immerse in the system-changing work at the school.	Partners are explicit about system inequities and communicate how their programs can support students as they navigate systems. Partners are focused on supporting students that have been identified through cross-strategy collaboration. However, system change and outcomes coming out of the work is not detailed.	Partners are explicit about system inequities and explicit about how their work addresses system inequities. The work to address system inequities takes place across-strategies and incorporates family engagement practices. Partners detail the way they focus on students and families in a way to uplift them as opposed to falling into traditional school hierarchies. Partners view system-change as involving collaboration, wraparound support, and also name the importance of those who work with students to reflect the student, family, and community population.	
<b>Student Outcomes (Year 2)</b>	Partners are working towards student outcomes, but not together across strategies. Community partners especially are focused on supporting student wellbeing.	Partners are focused on student outcomes, specifically for students of color. Within each strategy, there is work connecting PPSE changes and student well-being and outcomes, but it is not present across strategies. Partners also note that they need to better support students from different cultural backgrounds.	Across strategies, partners are focused on student well-being and explicit about targeted work to support students of color. Partners across strategies work together toward system change, focusing not only on supporting students, but also supporting adults in being better prepared to address students' needs.	

	COOPERATIVE	COLLABORATIVE	INTEGRATED
Hopes (Year 2)	While evidence for cross-strategy is lacking, partners hope to continue their work and see the opportunity for cross-strategy work as one that will work if they navigate AROUND school partnerships and structures.	Partners are explicit about their hopes to deepen cross-strategy work, especially working across partnerships to center anti-racism and to support those who work with students in better understanding how to be anti-racist and confront the impacts of the pandemic.	Partners acknowledge that their cross-strategy work to address urgent needs that stem from the pandemic and impacts of systemic racism will not be going away anytime soon. They seek to continue that work together. Additionally, partners hope to see support for students' needs move beyond roles and buckets that exist in what we view as education and transcend those structures to focus on what students need in all aspects of their lives.
Context (Year 2)	While evidence for cross-strategy is lacking, community partners are explicit about their focus in addressing inequities, especially for students from nondominant backgrounds. However, there are persistent barriers that stem from school and district partners. Community partners note the need for buy-in and commitment to work together as partners, specifically citing school and district partners as those most hesitant to be true partners in the work.	While evidence for cross-strategy is lacking, partners are explicit about working to address inequities and students from nondominant backgrounds. Partners cite relationships with school leadership as ways to continue to work. Partners cite barriers not traditionally associated with education as those that are most overwhelming to overcome in order to best support students.	While evidence for cross-strategy is lacking, structural and long-term support for partnerships is what has allowed these partnerships to thrive and provide wraparound support. However, partners acknowledge that the transition out of remote learning may be a challenge as everyone wants to use their services to support the many needs students will have coming out of remote learning and a pandemic.



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