National **Charter School** Resource Center
at **Safal Partners**

DISTRICT-CHARTER COLLABORATION:

A User's Guide

National **Charter School** **Resource** Center

at **Safal Partners**

The National Charter School Resource Center (NCSRC) is dedicated to supporting the development of high-quality charter schools. The NCSRC provides technical assistance to sector stakeholders and has a comprehensive collection of online resources addressing the challenges charter schools face. The website hosts reports, webinars, and newsletters focusing on facilities, funding opportunities, authorizing, English learners, special education, military families, board governance, and other topics. The NCSRC is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and led by education consulting firm Safal Partners.

www.charterschoolcenter.org

Safal, meaning "good outcomes" in Sanskrit, is a mission-driven strategy consulting firm that supports education reform efforts at the federal, state, district, and school level. We bring deep domain knowledge in the charter sector, human capital management systems, and next generation learning. Safal Partners' clients include the U.S. Department of Education, leading foundations and non-profits, and state and district agencies.

www.safalpartners.com

Project Contributors

Authors
Mukta Pandit, Marina Walne, and Mina Kumar

Table of Contents

Introduction

When the first public charter schools opened in the early 1990s, many charter school supporters thought these incubators for innovation would easily transfer new ideas to the traditional public school sector. The membrane separating charters from traditional public schools, however, turned out to be more impermeable than porous.

Bill Kurtz, CEO of Denver School of Science and Technology (DSST) Public Schools in Denver, a charter management organization, remarked:

> *"Al Shanker [United Federation of Teachers, President] believed in a central premise: Charters would give teachers a vehicle to innovate in their craft and then share these innovations back into district schools. Both districts and charter schools have struggled to make good on this promise of innovation sharing, largely because the relationship between charters and districts has suffered from political divisions, territorial control issues, and perceived 'competition' between the two."[1]*

Numerous small-scale district-charter collaborations have been initiated since the early days of the charter school movement.[2] For example, KIPP Academy and YES Prep shared space with Houston Independent School District in their formative years. In recent years, the federal government and philanthropic organizations have initiated efforts to catalyze a transfer of best practices between these two types of public schools. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has invested over $40 million since 2010 to jump-start district-charter collaborative compacts in 21 cities.[3] In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education also gave grants to high-performing charters to share lessons learned with other schools. These grants total $1.2 million.[4]

Another factor energizing district-charter collaborations may be the growth of the charter-school sector. Forty-two states and the District of Columbia now authorize charter schools,[5] and the number of students served by the charter sector has grown eight-fold from 0.3 million[6] to an estimated 2.5 million students from 1999 to 2014.[7] The U.S. Department of Education has commissioned the National Charter School Resource Center to examine the scope of formal district and charter school collaborations, the nature of such collaborations, and the success factors and barriers to collaboration. Although informal collaborations (e.g. shared professional-development programs between a charter school and a district school) are fairly common, we focus primarily on formal

collaborations, which we define as those that have at a minimum a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or contract.

This paper is intended for use by district and charter representatives interested in establishing a new collaboration or in increasing the effectiveness of an existing collaboration. The paper presents our methodology, an overview of the nature of district-charter collaborations, and a framework based on lessons learned from leaders involved in various capacities over the last fifteen years of these efforts. The framework focuses on six factors critical to enabling a successful collaboration:

> ❱ Identify the Motivations for a District-Charter Collaboration

> ❱ Identify and Articulate a Theory of Change

> ❱ Identify Desired Outcomes from the Start

> ❱ Create Conditions for Success

> ❱ Anticipate and Plan for Potential Challenges

> ❱ Go for a Quick Win Early to Energize the Collaboration

At the end of each section, we present a set of reflective questions we believe charter and district leaders should ask themselves to enable successful collaboration.

Methodology

We have based our analysis on primary research, including interviews with leaders of districts and charter schools involved in seven formal collaborations (see Table 1 on page 8) across the country, as well as, interviews with subject matter experts and an extensive literature review. This paper represents, where possible, both the district and charter perspectives from the same city and, in several cases, the views of leaders who have been involved in these efforts in multiple cities or in multiple roles, such as working in a district, as well as, the mayor's office. Most of our interview subjects were involved in formal collaborations that have been recognized and funded by the Gates Foundation as a District-Charter Compact city. In some cases, these collaborations preceded the Gates grants. One of our interview subjects was involved in an early-stage collaboration that has not been funded by Gates; another was involved in a collaboration ultimately dissolved by his school board. Appendix 1 contains a list of the individuals interviewed for this paper.

Nature of District-Charter Collaborations

District-charter collaborations undertake a wide range of activities depending on the depth and scale of the desired collaboration. Building on secondary research,[8] we have grouped the activities undertaken by different collaborations as follows:

› **Shared vision:** Formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or partnership agreements, informal agreements or shared goals

› **Shared practice:** Shared professional development for teachers and leaders and instructional practices, joint efforts at recruiting teachers or leaders

› **Shared resources:** Shared or contracted facilities, technology, special education, transportation, etc.

› **Shared policy and initiatives:** Advocacy for equitable funding, turnaround of failing schools by charters or facilitating the growth of successful charters

› **Shared systems:** Common data, accountability and/or enrollment systems

The extent to which each of these activities is pursued depends on two features: the depth and the scale of desired collaboration. For instance, a light collaboration might be comprised of two schools that share a vision and perhaps informal agreements, whereas a deep collaboration would involve, at a minimum, a formal MOU and often includes shared practices, resources, policies, initiatives, and systems as described above. In some cases, collaboration may begin with a strong focus on a single issue, such as improving instruction for English Learners (ELs). A partnership at a small scale might involve one charter school and a single district school. A larger-scale collaboration, such as the Philadelphia Great Schools Compact, could be city-wide involving a district and multiple charter schools, as well as, private schools, nonprofit organizations, and public officials.

Table 1 on the next page includes key facts about the nature and progress of the district-charter collaborations in the cities examined according to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools as of June 2013. The Center for Reinventing Public Education (CRPE) describes each of these collaborations in terms of success to-date from starting to getting to know each other to collaborating to successful partnership, but that level of success is not evaluated here.[9]

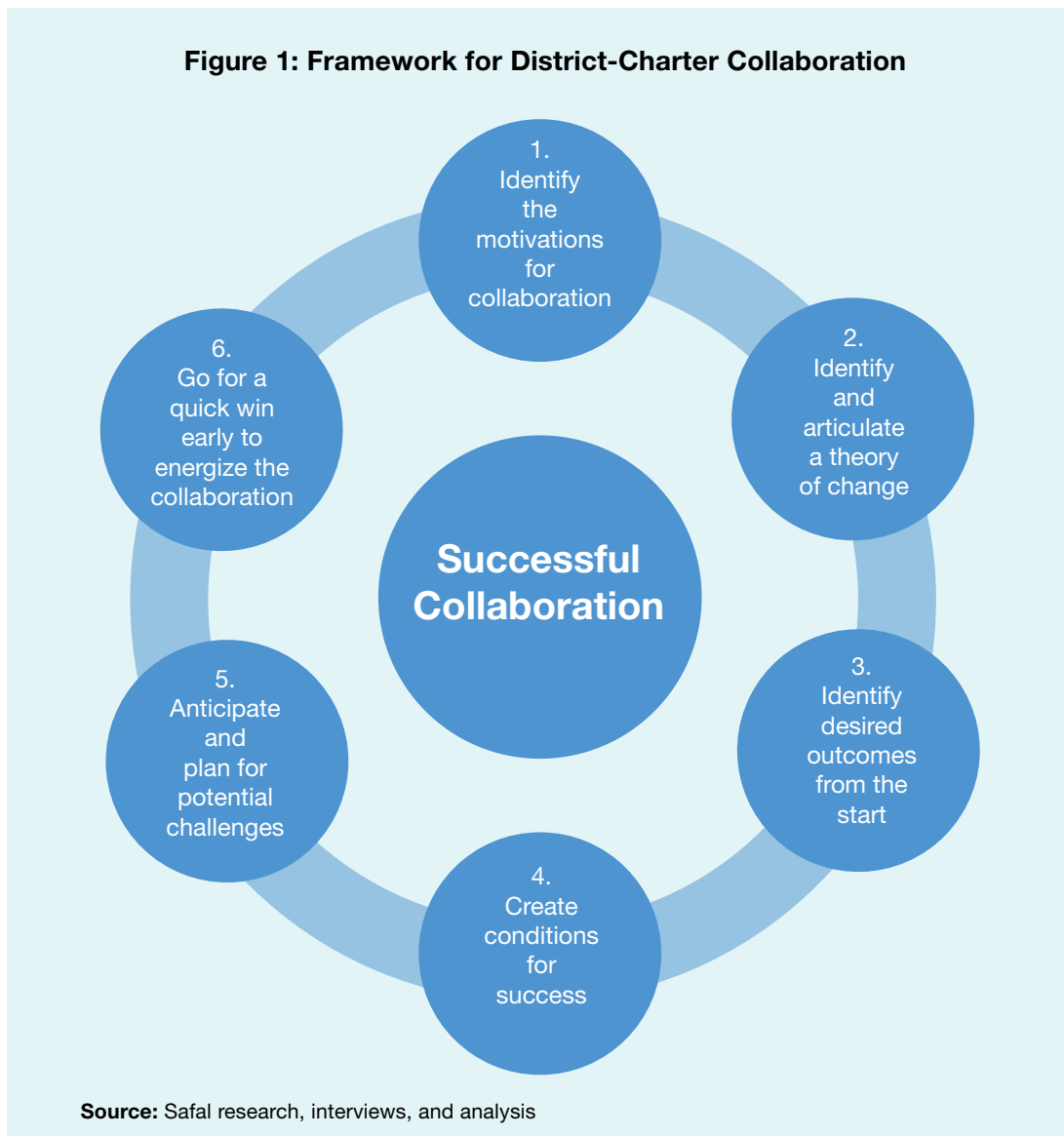| Table 1: Key Facts about District-Charter Collaboration in Cities Interviewed			
Name of city	Year of Gates Compact MOU signing	# of students and % of charter school students	Key collaborative activities
Denver, CO	2010	71,584 students, 12.3% charter (2011-12)	**Shared systems:** Established universal enrollment system where parents choose between charter or district schools, **Shared resources:** Ensured growth of successful charters through co-location on district facilities
Spring Branch, TX	2011	32,330 students, 4.0% charter (2011-12)	**Shared resources:** Ensured growth of successful charters co-location between charters and district schools; contract ensures equitable funding; **Shared practice:** Established systems, including summer leadership institute, and opportunities for teachers to observe each other, to ensure cross-fertilization of ideas and best practices
Hartford, CT	2010	21,460 students, 6.2% charter (2012-13)	**Shared policies and initiatives:** Advocated at state legislature for equitable funding of charter schools and charter school take-over of failing schools; **Shared practice:** Started charter-run leadership training program for district teachers
Boston, MA	2011	55,114 students, 12.6% charter (2012-13)	**Shared resources:** Charters worked with district to recruit from surrounding neighborhoods and lower district transportation costs; district leased facilities to charters; **Shared practice:** Teachers from charters and district schools participated in shared professional development opportunities
Spokane, WA	2014	28,478 students (2012-13), first charter school to open 2014	**Shared vision, policies, and initiatives:** Both sectors had desire to be proactive when it came to establishing a charter sector in Spokane (first in state); this historic move supported by District-leaders who wanted to create more school options especially at the middle-school level
Shelby County, TN	Not Compact city	140,000 students, 10.2% charter (2014-15)	**Shared vision:** Has established a leadership team with strong district and charter leaders who are in favor of increasing school choice and equitable conditions for high performing charters in Shelby County
Rochester, NY	2010; 2013 Board voted to return funding to Gates	29,195 students, 7.5% charter (2012-13)	**Shared practice:** Joint charter-district professional development efforts received mixed-reviews
Source: National Alliance for Public Charter School's "Dashboard" accessed May, 2014; Shelby County and Spokane District data; Safal interviews and analysis, February – April, 2014.			

A General Framework for District-Charter Collaboration

Successful collaborations can take many paths. Based on our research, we have distilled the various paths into a general framework for district-charter collaboration that identifies six enabling factors (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Framework for District-Charter Collaboration

- 1. Identify the motivations for collaboration
- 2. Identify and articulate a theory of change
- 3. Identify desired outcomes from the start
- 4. Create conditions for success
- 5. Anticipate and plan for potential challenges
- 6. Go for a quick win early to energize the collaboration

Successful Collaboration

Source: Safal research, interviews, and analysis

As outlined in the previous section, the central circle of our framework, "Successful Collaboration," involves establishing open, honest communication; building strong relationships; and achieving several important shared goals. Successful collaboration can hold a different meaning for different types of district-charter collaborations, depending on the scale and depth of the collaboration. For example, for a collaboration involving just one charter school and one district school, success could mean the sharing of professional development that leads to improved student outcomes in both schools. For a city-wide district-charter collaboration, success may be defined as the expansion of high-quality seats for students by expanding high performing charter schools and/or improving district schools by adopting innovative charter school practices. Success will involve a variety of activities such as those outlined in the preceding section; however, it is important for collaborating groups to focus on outcomes, such as improved student access and school quality.

The six enabling factors that our research shows contribute to the success of the collaboration surround the central circle in the figure. These enabling factors include:

> ❯ Identify the Motivations for a District-Charter Collaboration

> ❯ Identify and Articulate a Theory of Change

> ❯ Identify Desired Outcomes from the Start

> ❯ Create Conditions for Success

> ❯ Anticipate and Plan for Potential Challenges

> ❯ Go for a Quick Win Early to Energize the Collaboration

We recommend that organizations considering a partnership deliberate thoughtfully on each of these enabling factors, both individually and jointly, and identify ways to strengthen the presence of these factors in their collaboration. We provide further detail on each of the enabling factors in this section.
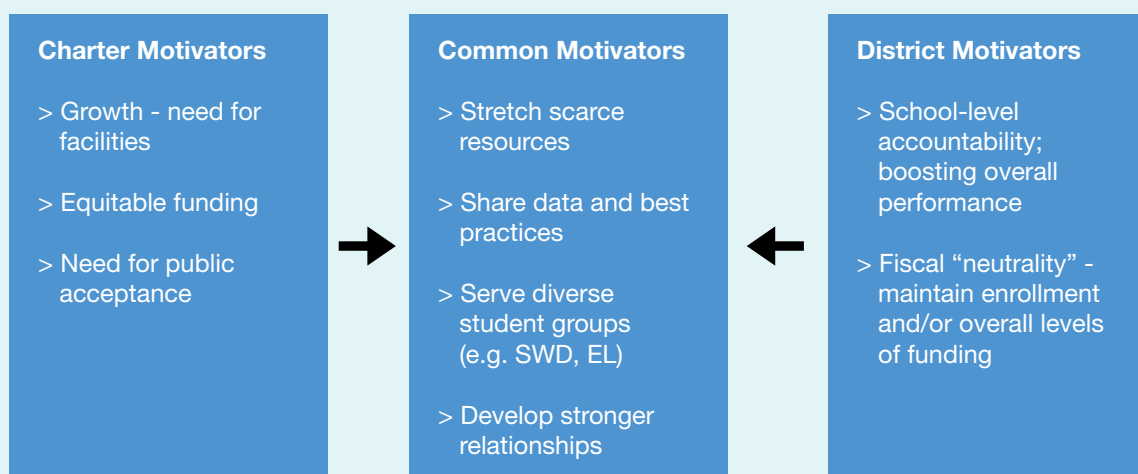
Enabling Factors

Enabling Factor 1. Identify the Motivations for a District-Charter Collaboration

Based on our interviews and review of the field, we have found that the leaders of some of the most successful and well-established collaborative efforts started with a specific, honest view of their respective motivations for collaboration. Creating an opportunity for all key personnel in the districts and charters involved in the collaboration to contribute to and learn or gain from the collaboration is a critical step toward achieving a transformational collaborative effort.

Successful collaborative leaders, rather than shying away from controversy or points of contention, were able to develop strategies to resolve differences by offering their collaborative partners something of value, accentuating areas of mutual interest, or finding ways to compromise.

In this section, we examine unique motivators for charter schools and districts, as well as, common motivators for addressing diverse school populations, stretching scarce resources, sharing data and best practices, and developing stronger relationships.

Figure 2: Motivations for Collaboration

Charter Motivators

> Growth - need for facilities

> Equitable funding

> Need for public acceptance

Common Motivators

> Stretch scarce resources

> Share data and best practices

> Serve diverse student groups (e.g. SWD, EL)

> Develop stronger relationships

District Motivators

> School-level accountability; boosting overall performance

> Fiscal "neutrality" - maintain enrollment and/or overall levels of funding

Source: Safal research, interviews, and analysis

Unique motivators for charter schools:

Gaining facilities, funding, and public acceptance: Among the charter leaders we interviewed, the most common motivator for entering a formal collaboration was the need for facilities. Charter leaders also articulated the hope for equitable per-student funding that is on par with what is received by traditional public schools. In order to achieve these goals, charter leaders needed to gain widespread acceptance of public charter schools by educating the public about the mission and role of the charter sector. Mike Feinberg of KIPP and Jason Bernal, formerly of YES Prep, each commented on how important it was for members of Spring Branch Independent School District (ISD) in Texas to understand that charter schools are open-enrollment public schools, to spend time on their campuses, to examine their results, and to come to accept these charters as valuable partners in improving college access and success prior to partnering.[10]

Unique motivators for districts:

Boosting student and school-level performance and maintaining funding levels: The most common motivators articulated by district leaders for entering into a formal collaboration were a desire to close the achievement gap between low-income and middle- and upper-income students (including, but not limited to, a desire to turn around one or more failing schools, in some cases), boost overall student performance, and increase college-completion rates. District leaders were able to recognize the added value of high-performing charter schools with strong student performance in their community and were interested in developing strategies to help replicate their results on a larger scale. Another unique motivator for districts, especially those with declining enrollment, is to maintain overall levels of funding. This motivation is discussed further in the section below on "Possible points of tension and compromise."

Common motivators for districts and charters:

Stretching scarce resources: There are many examples of district-charter collaborations forming around the desire to stretch scarce resources. Michael Hanson, Superintendent of the Fresno Unified School District in California, stated that, *"A public dollar spent once should be spent only once."* In other words, charter schools and districts, both publicly-funded entities, should collaborate and share resources for which taxpayers have already paid. In addition to examples of major resource sharing, such as the sharing of facilities, either through co-location agreements or through charters' leasing of district facilities, there are many examples of smaller benefits, such as charter schools' benefiting from district-provided transportation. In Arizona, an open-source textbook program called Beyond Textbooks has successfully cut textbook costs by more than 90% in 86 schools, including eight charter schools. Some of these schools are in rural areas where resources are even more scarce than average.

Sharing data and best practices: Another common motivation on both sides is to learn from one another by sharing data and best practices. In New York, the principals' union approved a program that allows district principals to take a leave of absence to work in a charter school, thereby promoting the exchange of ideas.[11] In Hartford, Connecticut, Achievement First Public Charter

Schools successfully enrolled district teachers in their proven leadership-training program for the same reasons.[12]

Serving specific student groups: District and charter leaders are commonly motivated to work together to serve diverse student groups such as English Learners (ELs). An example comes from Boston, where the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights was following up with Boston Public Schools to ensure equitable and quality instruction for EL students. The charter sector in Boston was also struggling to serve this population. To provide consistent-quality EL instruction, one district school, one charter school, and one Catholic school collaborated as a triad to send 20 teachers to English language-instructor training, which was provided by WestED and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The collaboration has since invested in English as a Second Language coaches at each of the three schools, who then share and demonstrate new strategies at different grade levels. It has also created a network of teachers across the schools, who have close working relationships with each other.

Due to the additional expertise and resources required to address the needs of students with disabilities, both charter and district leaders are often motivated to collaborate in this area. Examples of attempts to address this issue through collaboration include the formation of a Special Education Collaborative in New York City.[13] The Collaborative is a nonprofit, city-wide membership organization offering a wide range of services to 125 charter-school members, as well as, district members to enhance programs for students with disabilities. Similarly, in California, some of the 124 regional special education service-delivery systems called SELPAs, including Los Angeles County, allow charter schools to participate.[14]

Developing stronger relationships: In some cases, charters and districts are motivated to begin meeting on a regular basis to develop stronger, trusting relationships among all key stakeholders. For example, members of the Austin District-Charter Compact met regularly in the 2013-14 school year to further develop relationships that began to form during a Gates-funded District-Charter Compact.

Possible points of tension and compromise:

Maintaining funding levels: Charter schools' concerns about equitable per-student funding are matched by districts' concerns about maintaining enrollment and overall levels of funding. Districts with high-performing, popular charter schools may perceive losing increasing levels of student enrollment to charter schools as a threat. In most of the cities examined in this white paper, the district's revenue declines when a district-enrolled student transfers to a charter school or when a district school becomes a charter school.

Despite losing some per-student funds, district leaders in several Compact cities have elected to expand the role of charter schools because a high-performing charter sector can help districts to better serve all students in the district.

Our analysis suggests that districts allowed to count charter school student performance results in their district's performance at the state level may be more motivated to collaborate with charters. For example, in Denver, the district is the charter authorizer, and the charter test scores are automatically included in the district's accountability ratings. Another example is the SKY Partnership in Spring

Branch, Texas; KIPP Houston and YES Prep are charters authorized by the district[15] whose scores count in the Spring Branch ISD accountability ratings. Thus, if the charter sector in a city is high-performing, the district might have an interest in providing resources to grow the number of quality charter seats. In this case, the district might offer high-performing charters help with the cost of facilities and a simpler renewal process. Charter schools might offer the district an increasing number of high-quality seats and contribute to a boost in their overall performance rating.

In other cases, the charter schools' academic scores do not affect district scores. In these cases, some other benefit to the district should be offered to entice districts to collaborate. For example, CRPE reports that in Minneapolis the district helped to pass legislation offering charter schools access to district facilities, transportation, and other services in exchange for sharing best practices and counting their test scores for the district. In Indiana, new legislation passed unanimously in the Indiana House of Representatives that allows charter schools and public school districts to enter into a contract for a broad range of items, including facilities and facility improvements, transportation, and support for special education or EL students. In exchange, the public school district was permitted to count charter schools' performance data toward their statewide accountability scores.[16]

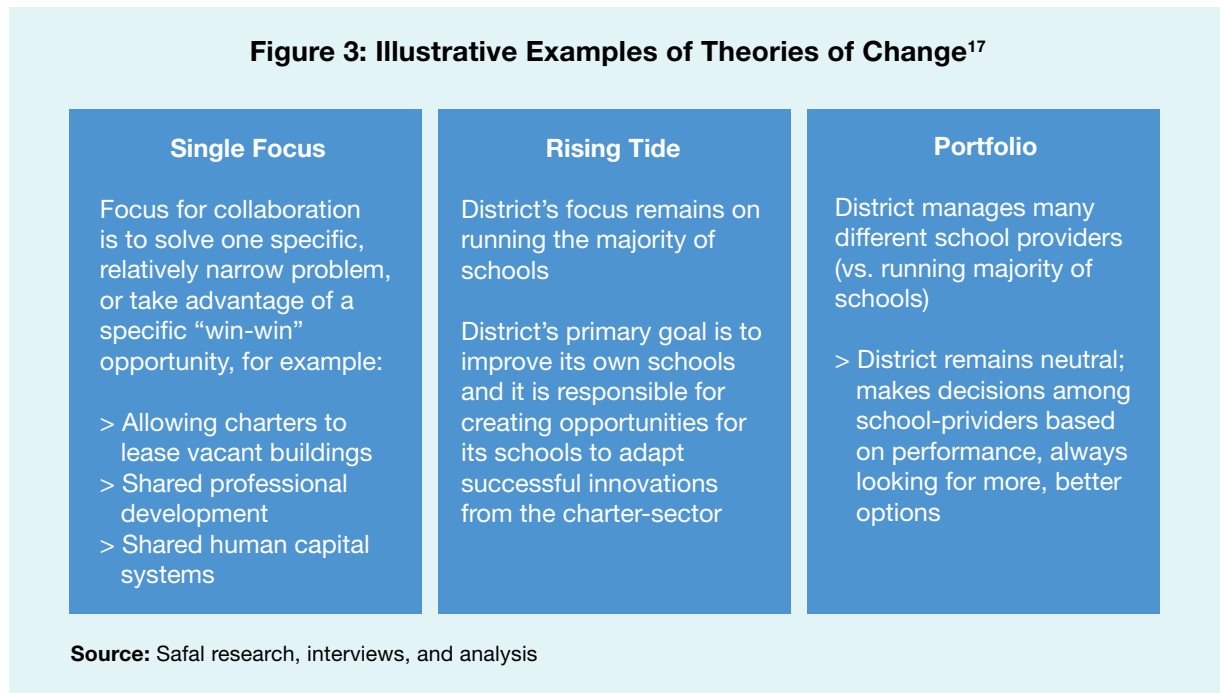| Questions for Collaborators to Consider |
|---|
| What do we hope to gain from collaboration? What are our primary and secondary objectives? |
| Are our relationships strong enough such that we can have an honest conversation about our respective interests? If not, how can we strengthen those relationships? |
| Where are the points of alignment? How can we design a collaboration to emphasize areas where both parties clearly benefit? |
| What are points of potential tension? How can we proactively resolve such tensions? Is there something we can offer our collaborative partner or a compromise we can reach? |

Enabling Factor 2. Identify and Articulate a Theory of Change

As outlined in the previous section, a number of factors motivate leaders of charter schools and districts to begin a collaborative effort. As we researched the key elements of successful collaborations, we found that leaders often articulated and agreed upon a "theory of change" for collaboration before embarking on implementation. In this section, we put forward three theories of change identified through our interviews and research. Please note that this is not meant to be an exhaustive or prescriptive list, but is meant to provide illustrative examples based on our synthesis of several different viewpoints.

Figure 3: Illustrative Examples of Theories of Change[17]

Single Focus	Rising Tide	Portfolio
Focus for collaboration is to solve one specific, relatively narrow problem, or take advantage of a specific "win-win" opportunity, for example: > Allowing charters to lease vacant buildings > Shared professional development > Shared human capital systems	District's focus remains on running the majority of schools District's primary goal is to improve its own schools and it is responsible for creating opportunities for its schools to adapt successful innovations from the charter-sector	District manages many different school providers (vs. running majority of schools) > District remains neutral; makes decisions among school-prividers based on performance, always looking for more, better options

Source: Safal research, interviews, and analysis

"Single Focus": Through our research, we have determined that some district and charter school leaders identify specific opportunities for mutual benefits and efficiencies. District-charter collaborations subscribing to this theory of change may focus on shared professional development between two schools, agreements regarding specific services or goods, or an exchange of ideas and information related to a specific challenge. These collaborations are not necessarily in service of widespread education reform, but rather serve to promote sharing between several schools or solve a mutual problem that is more limited in scope. Examples of single-focus collaborations include:

› the Growing Readers initiative in Central Falls, Rhode Island, which is a professional-development partnership between a school district and an individual charter school to share best practices and data analysis;

› the Monte del Sol charter school in Santa Fe that disseminates its successful Mentorship Training Program to a district high school in Santa Fe; or

› a collaboration between districts and charters in Ohio to meet new state requirements and share social-service expertise and training.[18]

It should be noted that some collaborations start out as single-focus and, over time, grow significantly as relationships, trust, and mutual understanding develop. For example, a charter school, IDEA Public Schools, and a district, Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District in the Rio Grande Valley in Texas, started a limited initiative to address the shared challenge of recruiting high-quality teachers. Over time, the initiative has transformed into a much wider-scale collaboration between IDEA and multiple districts to transform their human-capital systems.[19]

"Rising Tide": This theory of change primarily focuses on the ability of charter schools to test innovations in a district environment and determine how district schools can adopt the best new practices and methods. Charter schools' ability to test innovations is often well-accepted. For example, President Barack Obama stated during National Charter Schools Week in 2013:

> *"[Charter schools are]…learning laboratories [that] give educators the chance to try new models and methods that can encourage excellence in the classroom and prepare more of our children for college and careers. In return for this flexibility, we should expect high standards and accountability, and make tough decisions to close charter schools that are under-performing and not improving. But where charter schools demonstrate success and exceed expectations, we should share what they learn with other public schools and replicate those that produce dramatic results."[20]*

While the rising-tide theory of change focuses more on collaboration than competition, the mechanisms by which innovations from the charter schools transfer to district schools are not always clear; therefore, it is quite important to make those mechanisms explicit when planning for district-charter collaboration. In Texas, the SKY Partnership is an example of a district-charter collaboration that was explicit in spelling out these mechanisms, without which wholesale change would not have been possible. Part of their original Compact agreement included provisions for intensive, shared professional development for teachers and other leaders, delivered mostly by the two charter management organizations in an effort to raise the level of instruction of all teachers involved in the collaborative.

Leaders at Achievement First, believing that best practices for closing the achievement gap at scale should be shared and replicated, co-designed the Residency Program for School Leadership with New Haven Public Schools in Connecticut. Achievement First describes the program as a *"unique opportunity for talented teachers and school leaders to learn and leverage best practices from both the public charter school and traditional district school sectors,"*[21] and the program has been expanded to prepare future leaders for Hartford and Bridgeport public schools.

"Portfolio": Dr. Paul Hill, who created the CRPE, developed the "portfolio" theory.[22] The basic premise of a portfolio district is that district leaders, constantly searching for new and innovative providers, judge schools based on performance and remain neutral toward who governs and runs a school, whether a district or charter entity.

In this case, the district contracts with and manages individual charter providers in a portfolio of schools by monitoring their student-achievement results and financial operations. The district leaves it up to individual charter providers to determine their own critical processes, including curriculum and human-resource responsibilities, while still, in many cases, operating traditional public schools and maintaining accountability standards.[23] This approach allows each individual provider significant

freedom to innovate. In addition, the district may develop incentives for providers to try diverse approaches and establish clear consequences, such as school closure when efforts are unsuccessful.

One of the possible mechanisms for change that is at least *implicit* in the portfolio theory of change is competition: competition for funding, students, or other resources. As Paul Hill[24] and Robin Lake from CRPE write:

> *"Remaining neutral about who runs a school…opens possibilities for innovation and sends a message that student performance matters…. Seeking new providers does not always lead to better results, but it makes better results possible. It creates possibilities for competition and innovation, more aggressive improvement efforts in existing schools, and recruitment of employees (for example, teachers) from new sources. New providers may bring different attitudes and beliefs about what kinds of student achievement are possible. When districts announce a willingness to consider outside providers, they also send a strong message to district employees that schools are not guaranteed a right to exist if they are not performing."*[25]

Often, the portfolio approach is characterized by increased school choice for parents and students, so that individual school providers are subject not only to accountability to the district or other governing bodies but also to the market pressures of school choice. Two districts that subscribe to the portfolio approach, Denver and the New Orleans Recovery School District, have made it easier for families to select a school by adopting a universal-enrollment system where parents are able to use one application to apply to their schools of choice, regardless of how it is governed.

In theory, there is no limit to the number of charter schools and charter-school providers in a school district using the portfolio model, as long as those providers are meeting district and public stakeholder-accountability standards. The most prominent and well-developed examples of school districts implementing the portfolio model have seen large gains in the number of students served by charter schools. For example, New Orleans is now served by two school districts: Orleans Parish Public Schools, which houses traditional, as well as, charter public schools, and the New Orleans Recovery School District (RSD), which has operated 100% charter schools since September 2014.[26] Additionally, over the last seven years, the New Orleans RSD has closed the achievement gap compared to that of the state by 70%, cut in half the number of low-performing schools, and increased the percent of students achieving postsecondary readiness by 14%.[27]

Again, these aforementioned theories, derived from our research and interviews, are not exhaustive and serve merely as illustrative examples that district-charter collaborators might consider. What is important to note is that district and charter leaders' ability to clearly articulate a theory of change for their collaboration can contribute to developing a foundation for a stronger working relationship and creating the necessary infrastructure that could sustain the collaboration over time.

Questions for Collaborators to Consider
What is our theory of change as a collaboration? How do we see charter schools and districts schools working together to bring about change?
How deep or sustained will the change be? Is this a wide-reaching, broader effort or does it have a single focus?
Do we have the support of other leaders with a city-wide perspective (e.g. not purely a district or charter perspective)? How do we engage them in a discussion about the collaboration?

Enabling Factor 3. Identify Desired Outcomes from the Start

Although the ultimate goal for most district-charter collaboration is to provide a high-quality education to more students, there are varying perspectives about what success will look like. These differences in perspective are important to understand upfront – and to take into account while laying out a process, structure, and goals for collaborative efforts. Leaders should not shy away from opportunities to discuss differing perspectives and should eventually converge around clear, achievable goals to provide direction for the collaboration.

While having a long-term vision is important, it is critical to go beyond aspirational language. For instance, prior to its collaboration with the charter sector, Spring Branch ISD developed a seven-year strategic initiative. The goals of this initiative were quite measurable: to double the number of their graduates who received certification from technical schools, two-year associate degrees, or four-year bachelor degrees. KIPP and YES Prep focused on college completion, as well, so it was natural for the three organizations with the same goals to join forces.

In Spokane, Washington, all parties within the Compact share a vision of providing students with quality school options, but they have also articulated more specific goals. The goals are: improved outcomes for all students through a clear framework to measure performance of schools and the Common Core implementation; shared professional-development opportunities for charter school and district staff; and more equitable access to high-quality seats for Spokane students through a common enrollment system. Jeannette Vaughn, Director of Innovative Programs in Spokane summed up Spokane's district-charter compact with the statement: "Collaboration is dependent on all parties having a shared interest in providing quality outcomes for students, whether they are charter or district schools."
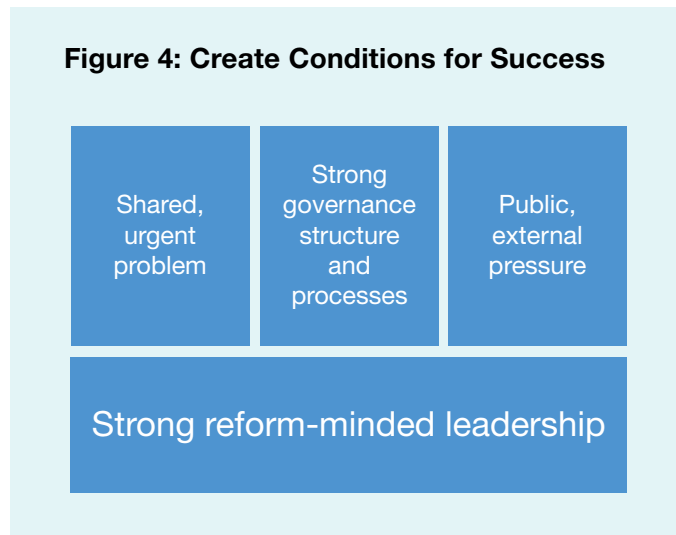
Questions for Collaborators to Consider
Have we developed clear, attainable, measurable outcomes that align with the respective missions of the collaborative partners?
What do we mean by growth in high-quality seats? How will we measure improvement?
In the long run, how are we supporting growth in the number of high-performing seats in both district and charter schools? How much of that growth do we hope will be in high-performing traditional public schools, and how much of that growth do we hope will be in high-performing charter schools?

Enabling Factor 4. Create Conditions for Success

Through our research, we have identified a number of conditions that appear to accelerate district-charter collaborative efforts. Reform-minded leadership in both the district and charter sectors emerged as the most fundamental aspect of fostering collaboration. Once the foundation of visionary leadership is established, other factors can further contribute to creating conditions for success and facilitating collaborative efforts.

Figure 4: Create Conditions for Success

Shared, urgent problem	Strong governance structure and processes	Public, external pressure
Strong reform-minded leadership		

Strong, reform-minded leadership at multiple levels: The most critical enabling factor that emerged from our research is the need for sustained involvement of reform-minded leadership at the executive and board levels. As Mike Feinberg of KIPP stated,

> *"It starts at the top. You need the leaders of all school systems involved to be truly engaged. The board has to buy in as well. A strong leader can shift the district attitude toward charters from an "us versus them" to a "we," send a clear signal from the top that we're going to make this collaborative happen, and then empower the deputies and chiefs to make it happen."*[28]

Spring Branch's superintendent was supported by a cohesive board united in their belief that they were engaging in this collaboration, "because they are all our children," which later became the motto of the partnership. Strong reform-oriented district leaders, who understood the power of both sectors, initiated many examples of successful district-charter collaboration. Some of these district leaders, such as those interviewed in Spokane, Washington and Denver, Colorado, had direct prior experience working in or leading charter management organizations.[29]

It is important to note that developing relationships and trust takes time. Diana Lam, the head of school for Conservatory Lab Charter School in Boston, pointed out that laying the

> *"The major challenge is time. It takes an incredible amount of time - not just attending meetings - but time to start such a Compact, nurture it, and maintain it."*
>
> — Diana Lam,
> Head of School,
> Conservatory Lab Charter School,
> Boston

foundation for collaboration takes an enormous amount of time and trust: *"The major challenge is time. It takes an incredible amount of time – not just attending meetings – but time to start such a Compact, nurture it, and maintain it."* In the most successful collaborations there were deep, long-lasting, productive relationships between district and charter school leaders, sometimes going back at least a decade to before they were catalyzed by grants and formalized by MOUs. We also heard that it was important that these relationships go beyond the top levels of leadership to other levels of the organization responsible for the implementation of initiatives. Time invested by Spring Branch leaders and teachers to visit KIPP and YES Prep paid off in dividends as the *"myths about charter schools began to be dispelled."*[30] A KIPP board leader hosted a social function in his home for board members of Spring Branch, KIPP, and YES Prep that fostered good will and stronger relationships among board members that were critical to the success of the SKY Partnership.

Mitigating potentially strong interests in preserving the status quo often requires some political clout from elected officials or philanthropic leaders and a bigger-picture view. This may be a reason why we see citywide leaders, such as mayors, initiate and support such collaborations. As CRPE pointed out in its 2013 interim review of Compact cities' progress, mayoral control of the public school system is much more prevalent in Compact cities than in the nation as a whole. Six of the 16 Compact school districts were under mayoral control when Compacts were signed and three were under state oversight or partial state control.[31]

Shared, urgent problem: Collaborations seem to be more successful if leaders coalesce around a shared, specific, urgent, problem, such as a challenge in boosting college-completion rates in Spring Branch or strengthening the educational opportunities for ELs in Boston. But this problem should just be a starting point. CRPE states in its evaluation of the Gates Compact cities:

> *"It matters how the Compact documents are crafted. Compacts were most effective when their language was specific, assigned responsibilities, and pushed tangible accomplishments. However, while this type of content helped move collaboration agreements, if the document failed to frame broader policy goals, the work sometimes stalled out."*

Strong governance structure and processes: Collaborations also benefit from strong processes and governance structures that take into account the significant amount of time required to develop and sustain these collaborations, as well as, the different decision-making processes of different sets of stakeholders. Boston, Spring Branch, and Shelby County Schools in Tennessee have established steering committees that they believe have the right people at the table. Boston and Spring Branch have also established role-alike working groups, so buy-in to the partnership and working relationships can go deeper than the senior management level. Working groups under the Spring Branch Steering Committee structure include personnel responsible for transportation, special education, finance, and human resources. *"These working groups were key in that they allowed the individuals on the ground floor that actually make the partnership work to have responsibility for micro decision-making and helped them build relationships that would need to be leveraged during the course of launching the first year,"* said Ken Goeddeke of the KIPP Houston leadership team.

Public, external pressure: It helps when there is some public, external support for collaboration or pressure to collaborate. This pressure is most helpful when there is a particularly successful charter sector in high demand that gets the attention of district leaders. Foundations can also accelerate collaboration by adding legitimacy to pre-existing collaborative efforts and providing incentives to collaborate. One such example of foundation acceleration is the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Gates designated the term Compact Cities and supported the initial Compacts, adding legitimacy to pre-existing collaborative efforts, as in Denver, and incentives in the form of grants. These grants can be used to fund a convening organization, such as the Philadelphia Great Schools Compact, which helps to manage the collaboration and maintain momentum.

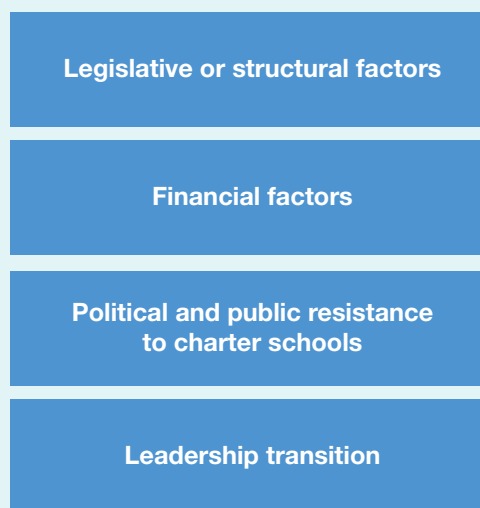| Questions for Collaborators to Consider |
|---|
| What external pressures do we face now or expect to face in the future that suggest that we should prioritize this collaboration? |
| Do we have strong, reform-minded leadership at the executive and board levels to support collaboration at this time? |
| How extensive are our relationships? Do we have broad-based support for this initiative? Are the right people being appropriately engaged? If not, how can we better engage them in this work? |

Enabling Factor 5. Anticipate and Plan for Potential Challenges

In any nascent collaboration, candidly discussing the needs and interests of the partners at the table and addressing potential risk factors may help develop a viable strategy to plan for potential hurdles.

Legislative or structural factors: In some cases, there are legislative and/or structural factors that hinder collaborative efforts. For example, it can make a difference if it is the district, state, or another entity that makes decisions on charter authorization and funding. District authorizers can, in some cases, make it very difficult for new charter schools to get approved and can block collaborative efforts. In other cases, a district authorizer that counts successful charter schools' scores in their accountability ratings might accelerate district-charter collaboration. Other structural factors, such as MOUs or contracts signed with districts, could potentially threaten charter-school autonomy to implement the school's model in a district setting if specific conditions to ensure such autonomy are not established proactively at the onset.

Figure 5: Anticipate Potential Challenges

Legislative or structural factors
Financial factors
Political and public resistance to charter schools
Leadership transition

Financial factors: As districts and charters enter into a financial partnership, it is important to codify the underlying assumptions and the impact external factors could have on funding decisions. For example, in the SKY Partnership, Spring Branch ISD controls the funding it receives from the state. At the same time, however, Spring Branch ISD, KIPP Houston, and YES Prep agreed on a financial model that provided more per-pupil funding for the two charter schools than the district schools initially; that disparity decreases over time to levels closer to district-school funding. This funding structure allows time for new charter schools to mature and reach enrollment capacity. Duncan Klussmann, Spring Branch superintendent, and his board recognized that the KIPP and YES models required longer school days and years, necessitating additional funding. This arrangement was codified in a very tight MOU and honored by Spring Branch ISD despite reductions in state funding during this time period.[32]

Political and public resistance to charter schools: Political and public resistance to charter schools can often be a barrier to district-charter collaborations. Understanding existing political pressures and, when possible, bringing union leadership to the table can smooth the start of a district-charter collaboration. Recognizing this relationship, some collaborations have taken early steps to assuage political concerns and counter resistance. For example, the superintendent of Spokane engaged teachers' unions early in the charter authorization process itself, thereby laying the foundations for the Spokane District-Charter Compact. Although charter employees typically are not union members,[33] the Baltimore Compact requires that charter-school teachers enroll in the teachers' union in their school district. As CRPE reports, *"This unusual set of conditions formed the backdrop for the signing of the Compact agreement and clearly played a role in its progress and sticking points...."*[34]

Aided by this approach, Baltimore was able to make some progress in its district-charter collaboration effort, particularly in aligning advocacy efforts at the state level.

Leadership transition: Given that the average tenure of an urban public-school superintendent is 3.6 years,[35] there is always the risk of leadership turnover in any collaboration effort. Of the 16 original Gates-funded District-Charter Compact cities, nine of the superintendents who signed the original Compact are no longer at the helm just three years later.[36] Leadership transition at the district or charter level can be mitigated only through ensuring multiple leaders and multiple levels have bought into the collaboration effort, in addition to formal documentation such as an MOU. Spring Branch, Denver, and Boston attribute much of their success to establishing working groups that extend the decision-making to middle managers.

Ensuring sustained leadership at the district school-board level can be even more of a challenge. Since school-board elections in most communities occur every two years, there is even more opportunity for a change in course that can happen with new leaders. For instance, in Rochester, New York, even as the current superintendent identified charter schools as an essential component in serving the highest-need children in his district, members of his board were not interested in a formal district-charter collaboration.[37] Longevity of charter school boards is often less of a problem, since charter schools are not subject to two-year public election cycles. Instead, as nonprofit organizations, they have self-governing boards to which members of the board nominate new members from the community.

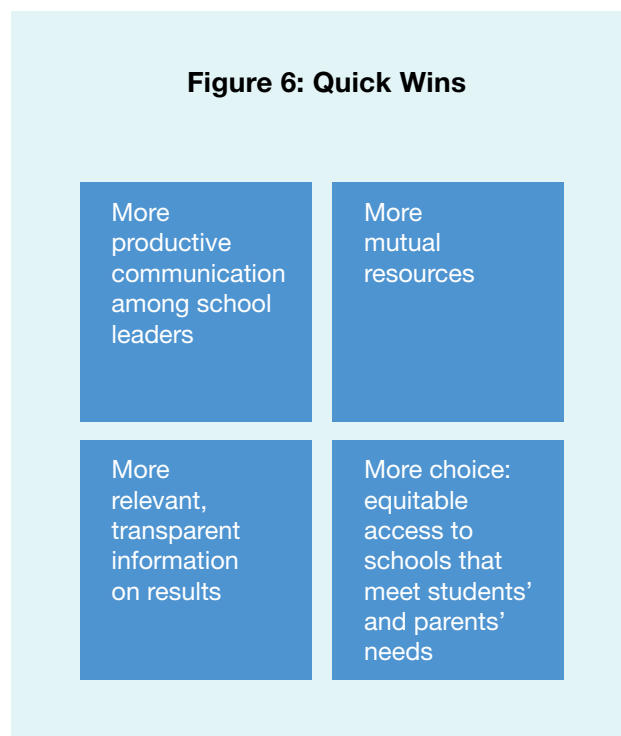| Questions for Collaborators to Consider |
|---|
| Who controls the charter authorization process? How do districts and charters work together to enable charter schools' ability to operate autonomously and to transfer best practices? |
| Who controls the funding decisions? How does the collaboration provide the necessary funding for district and charter partners to succeed? |
| How and when do districts and charter schools work with the teachers unions in the collaboration? |
| How does the collaboration ensure continuity of leadership engagement through school-district board elections and charter-school trustee changes? |
| How deep are the relationships between district and charter partners? Will they sustain leadership turnover? |

Enabling Factor 6. Go for a Quick Win Early to Energize the Collaboration

As previously mentioned, changing student performance through innovations at the school and/or school-system level is a complex, long-term project. As a result, it is too early to say in most cases whether most existing district-charter collaborations are fundamentally successful, but there are a number of impressive interim outcomes. Common shorter-term aspirations for collaborations include more mutual resources through shared professional-development opportunities, joint facilities access, increased transparency regarding student achievement, and improvements in serving diverse populations such as students with disabilities and ELs. In many cases, identifying that "quick win," or interim outcome – often either by finding a mutually-beneficial scenario or addressing a common challenge – can pave the path for future collaborations between district and charter schools.

Figure 6: Quick Wins

More productive communication among school leaders	More mutual resources
More relevant, transparent information on results	More choice: equitable access to schools that meet students' and parents' needs

The following are examples from our research of district-charter collaborations that have achieved some form of interim outcome, though some came more quickly than others.[38]

More productive communication among school and community leaders: In Spokane, WA, and Shelby County, TN, district-charter collaborations have led to more open, honest, and productive communication among school, community, and union leaders. As noted earlier, Spokane included union leaders early in the process of authorizing its first charter, leading to a smoother process. In Shelby County, the collaborative leadership structure was carefully designed to include district, charter, and community representatives and to build strong relationships, starting with a two-hour kick-off meeting to learn about each member's individual motivation for joining the collaborative. One of the key outcomes of the Austin district-charter collaboration was the desire to sustain the collaborative without additional funding, in order to continue a platform for ongoing communication between the two sectors.

More mutual resources: In Boston, the district, charter school, and Catholic school garnered more resources for supporting EL students by teaming up to secure a grant to fund training and ongoing staff positions. In the SKY Partnership, the charter schools have access to excellent district facilities, whereas the district has access to the KIPP leadership-training program and the YES Prep Teacher Excellence training program.

More relevant, transparent information on results: In Los Angeles, participating district and charter schools adopted a joint school performance feedback framework, the goal of which was to produce objective, transparent information on results from all participants, enabling better decision making for parents. The Denver Compact also provides clear information on common metrics for the charter and district schools in its portfolio.[39]

More choice and equitable access to quality schools: Denver's universal enrollment program allows parents and students to choose from among any district or charter school that they feel meets their needs. Parents and students list their top choices, and a sophisticated matching system helps ensure that parents/students will receive one of their top three choices. The district-charter collaboration has resulted in the growth of Denver's high-performing charter sector, leading to an increase in high-quality seats, including those which serve diverse student populations.

Questions for Collaborators to Consider
Before we achieve our ultimate vision, what are some meaningful quick wins and interim outcomes that will serve to motivate leaders and staff?
Halfway through our initiative, how will we know if we are on track toward success, or if we need to change course?

Conclusion

Although many district-charter collaborations are in their early stages, preliminary results are promising. School-to-school collaborations share professional development to improve instructional practices for ELs and special education students. Charter schools are co-locating in district facilities, sharing co-curricular instructors, and charter school staff members are attending teacher and leader trainings with district staff. Districts have invited charter schools to turn around some of their lowest-performing schools. Some districts are developing common enrollment systems, enabling parents to choose among quality options.

The pioneers in district-charter collaborations have lessons to share with those who are just now beginning this challenging work. Honest discussions about motivations for collaborating and identifying a theory of change for collaboration are good places to start. Reform-minded leadership at the board and top-management level matters. Well-crafted, sustainable governance structures and processes that delegate decision-making to middle level management are critical to long-term success. Establishing clear, measurable outcomes from the outset provides focus. Securing early wins, often around a shared, urgent problem, can develop momentum. Allocating the time and energy to develop strong, trusting relationships between sectors helps a collaborative endure the challenges that will inevitably ensue. Bill Kurtz, CEO of DSST, summarizes with the following statement: "*Deep collaboration over time is a long-term project. It can be accelerated by a grant, but ultimately must be based on trusting relationships, self-interest in the collaboration on the part of both parties, and a sustained, common vision shared by leadership on both sides.*"[40]

It is our hope that by laying out a framework for district-charter collaboration in this white paper, as well as enabling factors and questions to guide this challenging work, more district and charter school leaders will undertake these collaborative efforts. The work is not easy; the time requirements are intense; and there are often political battles to be fought along the way. But the outcome of this work – growth in high-quality seats – is an important step to ensuring that every student in America receives a quality education.

Appendix 1: Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the following people and organizations whose input and expertise helped inform this paper

Name	Organization
Chris Barbic	SME, Superintendent, Achievement School District, Tennessee
Jason Bernal	President & CEO, YES Prep Public Schools
Andrew Broy	SME, NCSRC Advisory Board
Susana Cordova	Chief Academic Officer, Denver Public Schools
Mike Feinberg	Co-Founder, Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP) Public Charter Schools
Dan Fishman	SME, Philanthropy Roundtable
Ken Goeddeke	Head of Schools, KIPP Houston Public Schools
Bill Kurtz	Chief Executive Officer, Denver School of Science and Technology Public Schools
Robin Lake	SME, Center on Reinventing Public Education
Diana Lam	Executive Director, Conservatory Lab Charter School, Boston
Bradley Leon	Chief Innovation Officer, Shelby County Schools
Christi Martin	SME, Principal, Martin Consulting Group, LLC
Adam Porsch	SME, Gates Foundation
Kelvin Roldán	Chief Institutional Advancement Officer, Hartford Public Schools
Don Shalvey	SME, Gates Foundation
Dr. Bolgen Vargas	Superintendent of Schools, Rochester City School District
Jeannette Vaughn	Director of Innovative Programs, Spokane Public Schools
Sarah Yatsko	SME, Center on Reinventing Public Education

Appendix 2: References and Suggested Resources

1. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. "Gates Foundation Announces Additional District-Charter Compacts." January 2014. http://www.gatesfoundation.org/Media-Center/Press-Releases/2014/01/Gates-Foundation-Announces-Additional-District-Charter-Compacts.

2. Center on Reinventing Public Education. "The Last Eight States without Charter Laws." January 2013. https://www.edreform.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/CharterLaws2013-Last-8-States.pdf.

3. Center on Reinventing Public Education. The Evidence Project. "Stakeholder Engagement for Common Enrollment System ISSUE BRIEF." March 2014. http://www.crpe.org/sites/default/files/CRPE_brief_Stakeholder-engagement-common-Enrollment-Systems-march14.pdf.

4. Center on Reinventing Public Education. Portfolio School Districts Project. "Coordinating Enrollment Across School Sectors: An Overview of Common Enrollment Systems." February 2014. http://www.crpe.org/publications/coordinating-enrollment-across-school-sectors-overview-common-enrollment-systems.

5. Feinberg, Mike. Phone Interview. April 21, 2014.

6. Hill, Paul. "Reinventing Public Education: How Contracting can Transform America's Public Schools." University of Chicago Press. 1997.

7. Hill, Paul T. "Strife and progress: portfolio strategies for managing urban schools." Brookings Institution Press. 2012.

8. Kurtz, Bill. "Why Denver is a Model for Education in America." http://www.good.is/posts/why-denver-is-a-model-for-education-in-america#comment_stream.

9. Lake, Robin J. and Hill, Paul. "Performance Management in Portfolio School Districts." August 2009. Center on Reinventing Public Education.

10. Lake, Robin J. and Gross, Betheny. "Hopes, Fears, & Reality: A Balanced Look at American Charter Schools in 2011." http://www.charterschoolcenter.org/sites/default/files/1293%20Hopes%20Fears%20Reality_d8.pdf, Center on Reinventing Public Education, January 2012.

11. New Schools for New Orleans. Accelerating Academic Gains in New Orleans: 2012 Update. http://www.newschoolsforneworleans.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/NSNO-Annual-Update-2012.pdf.

12. Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools. "Best cooperative practices charter & traditional public schools proceedings publication." December 2010. http://www.oapcs.org/files/u115/NBCP_Publication_FINAL_SPREADS_LR__2.pdf.

13. Slavin, Robert E. "Taking a Charter Network to Scale: IDEA Public Schools." The Huffington Post. March 21, 2013.

14. U.S. Department of Education. "U.S. Department of Education Announces Grants Totaling More Than $1.2 Million to Charter Schools." October 3, 2012. http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-announces-grants-totaling-more-12-million-charter-school.

15. Yatsko, Sarah, Elizabeth Cooley Nelson, and Robin Lake. "District/Charter Collaboration Compact: Interim Report." June 2013. Center on Reinventing Public Education.

Websites

16. http://www.achievementfirst.org/

17. http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/4/Supt_Survey2010.pdf

18. http://www.crpe.org/

19. http://www.crpe.org/research/district-charter-collaboration/compact-documents

20. http://www.gatesfoundation.org/

21. http://www.lipscomb.edu/now/filter/item/0/24397

22. http://nces.ed.gov/

23. http://www.nola.com/education/index.ssf/2013/12/recovery_school_district_will_3.html

24. http://www.nyccharterschools.org/specialeducation

25. https://responsiveed.com/

26. http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/03/presidential-proclamation-national-charter-schools-week-2013

Appendix 3: Questions for Collaborators to Consider

Motivators

❯ What do we hope to gain from collaboration? What are our primary and secondary objectives?

❯ Are our relationships strong enough that we can have an honest conversation about our respective interests? If not, how can we strengthen those relationships?

❯ Where are the points of alignment? How can we design a collaboration to emphasize areas where both parties clearly benefit?

❯ What are points of potential tension? How can we proactively resolve such tensions? Is there something we can offer our collaborative partner or a compromise we can reach?

Theory of Change

❯ What is our theory of change as a collaboration? How do we see charter schools and districts schools working together to bring about change?

❯ How deep or sustained will the change be? Is this a wide-reaching, broader effort or does it have a single focus?

❯ Do we have the support of other leaders with a city-wide perspective (e.g. not purely a district or charter perspective)? How do we engage them in a discussion about the collaboration?

Outcomes

❯ Have we developed clear, attainable, measurable outcomes that align with the respective missions of the collaborative partners?

❯ What do we mean by growth in high-quality seats? How will we measure improvement?

❯ In the long run, how are we supporting growth in the number of high-performing seats in both district and charter schools? How much of that growth do we hope will be in high-performing traditional public schools, and how much of that growth do we hope will be in high-performing charter schools?

Contributing Factors

❯ What external pressures do we face now or expect to face in the future that suggest that we should prioritize this collaboration?

❯ Do we have strong, reform-minded leadership at the executive and board levels to support collaboration at this time?

❯ How extensive are our relationships? Do we have broad-based support for this initiative? Are the right people being appropriately engaged? If not, how can we better engage them in this work?

Barriers

❯ Who controls the charter authorization process? How do districts and charters work together to enable charter schools' ability to operate autonomously and to transfer best practices?

❯ Who controls the funding decisions? How does the collaboration provide the necessary funding for district and charter-school partners to succeed?

❯ How and when do districts and charter schools work with the teachers unions in the collaboration?

❯ How does our proposed collaboration ensure continuity of leadership engagement through school district board elections and charter school trustee changes?

❯ How deep are the relationships on the district and charter side? Will they sustain leadership turnover?

Quick Wins/Intermediate Outcomes

❯ Before we achieve our ultimate vision, what are some meaningful quick wins and interim wins that will serve to motivate leaders and staff?

❯ Halfway through our initiative, how will we know are on track toward success or if we need to change course?

END NOTES

[1] Kurtz, Bill. "Why Denver Is a Model for Education in America." Good Magazine, 16 June 2011. Note: at the time that Albert Shanker was talking about charter schools as a vehicle for reform, he saw them more as "schools-within-schools" (Shanker, Albert. National Press Club. 31 March 1988. Speech.).

[2] The Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools. "Promising Cooperative Practices." December 2010. **http://www.oapcs.org/files/u115/NBCP_Publication_FINAL_SPREADS_LR__2.pdf**.

[3] In December 2010, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation announced its District-Charter Collaboration Compact Initiative. At that time, the Foundation provided $100,000 grants to each of 16 cities for public charter and district schools to spend on collaborative initiatives in support of student success. The original 16 cities included: Austin; Baltimore; Boston; Central Falls (RI); Chicago; Denver; Hartford, (CT); Los Angeles; Minneapolis; Nashville; New Orleans; New York City; Philadelphia; Rochester (NY); Sacramento; and Spring Branch (TX). Five additional school districts were added in January, 2014: Aldine (TX); Lawrence (MA); Franklin-McKinley School District (San Jose, CA), Spokane; and Tulsa. Adam Porsche of the Gates Foundation stated on August 3, 2014, that the total amount to date has been $40 million.

[4] U.S. Department of Education. "U.S. Department of Education Announces Grants Totaling More Than $1.2 Million to Charter Schools." October 3, 2012. **http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-announces-grants-totaling-more-12-million-charter-school**.

[5] The eight states that do not have charter school laws are: Alabama, Kentucky, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, and West Virginia (The Center for Education Reform, 2014).

[6] National Center for Education Statistics. "Fast Facts: Charter Schools." **http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=30**.

[7] National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. "Estimated Number of Public Charter Schools & Students, 2013-2014." February 2014. **http://www.publiccharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/New-and-Closed-Report-February-20141.pdf**.

[8] Yatsko, Sarah, Elizabeth Cooley Nelson, and Robin Lake. "District-Charter Collaboration Compact: Interim Report." (2013): P. 12 and Appendices. Center on Reinventing Public Education. Web. **http://www.crpe.org/publications/district-charter-collaboration-compact-interim-report**.

[9] Yatsko, Sarah, Elizabeth Cooley Nelson, and Robin Lake. "District-Charter Collaboration Compact: Interim Report." (2013): P. 17. Center on Reinventing Public Education. Web. **http://www.crpe.org/publications/district-charter-collaboration-compact-interim-report**. Note: CRPE uses different terminology: new to collaboration; getting to know each other; mature collaborators; sustainable partners. Our assessment mirrors those of CRPE except for Hartford, which has had a change of leadership since the CRPE report.

[10] Feinberg, Mike. Phone Interview. April 21, 2014, and Bernal, Jason. Phone Interview. April 3, 2014.

[11] Yatsko, Sarah, Elizabeth Cooley Nelson, and Robin Lake. "District-Charter Collaboration Compact: Interim Report." (2013). Center on Reinventing Public Education. Web. **http://www.crpe.org/publications/district-charter-collaboration-compact-interim-report**.

[12] **http://www.achievementfirst.org/our-approach/residency-program/**

[13] "Special Education Collaborative." New York City Charter School Center. Web. **http://www.nyccharterschools.org/specialeducation**.

[14] Yatsko, Sarah, Elizabeth Cooley Nelson, and Robin Lake. "District-Charter Collaboration Compact: Interim Report." (2013). Center on Reinventing Public Education. Web. **http://www.crpe.org/publications/district-charter-collaboration-compact-interim-report**. "What Is a SELPA?" California Charter Schools Association. Web. **http://www.calcharters.org/2010/05/what-is-a-selpa.html**.

[15] In Texas, charter schools may be authorized and funded by the state (open-enrollment charter schools), authorized and funded by the district (district-charter schools), or authorized and funded by a university (university- sponsored charter schools). In the case of the SKY Partnership, KIPP and YES elected to be authorized by the district and receive their funding directly from the district.

[16] Schneider, Chelsea. "Bill Paves Way for Charter and Public School Ventures." Evansville Courier & Press, 25 Jan. 2014. Web. **http://www.courierpress.com/news/bill-paves-way-for-charter-and-public-school**. Note: Before this legislation was passed in the Indiana House, Evansville Vanderburgh School Corp. already sponsored the city's two charter schools, and offered them services. However, the charter schools remain separate entities; EVSC Superintendent David Smith reported in this article that he doesn't believe the district should share in the charter schools' scores because, "They're not generated by our students or the work of our teachers."

[17] Note: content developed by Safal Partners.

[18] "Promising Cooperative Practices." Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 1 Dec. 2010. Web. **http://www.oapcs. org/files/u115/NBCP_Publication_FINAL_SPREADS_LR__2.pdf**., December 2010.

[19] Slavin, Robert. "Taking a Charter Network to Scale: IDEA Public Schools." The Huffington Post, 21 Mar. 2013. Web. **http://www.huffingtonpost.com/robert-e-slavin/taking-a-charter-network-to-scale_b_2907958.html**.

[20] Obama, President Barack. "Presidential Proclamation." Speech. May 3, 2013. **http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/03/presidential-proclamation-national-charter-schools-week-2013**.

[21] Achievement First. Web. **http://www.achievementfirst.org/**.

[22] Hill, Paul. Reinventing Public Education: HOW CONTRACTING CAN TRANSFORM AMERICA'S SCHOOLS. U of Chicago, 1997. Print.

[23] **http://www.crpe.org/news/paul-hill-portfolio-schools-%E2%80%93-new-answer-old-question**.

[24] We heard from stakeholders in Hartford on the district side that their district-charter collaboration efforts were influenced by Hill's "portfolio" theory of change.

[25] Lake, Robin, and Paul Hill. "Performance Management in Portfolio School Districts." Center on Reinventing Public Education, 1 Aug. 2009. Web. **http://www.crpe.org/publications/performance-management-portfolio-school-districts**.

[26] Dreilinger, Danielle. "Recovery School District Will Be Country's First All-charter District in September 2014." The Times-Picayune, 9 Dec. 2013. Web. **http://www.nola.com/education/index.ssf/2013/12/recovery_school_district_will_3.html**. Note: Tennessee Achievement School District: charter schools serve 14.6% of all students in TASD or Shelby County, with a 45% increase in the number of TASD charter schools in the upcoming 2014-15 year (Source: **http://tn.chalkbeat.org/2014/04/04/charter-schools-continue-to-grow-in-memphis-and-shelby-county/#. U2k0OF42IpE**); New York City: charter schools serve 6% of students in 2013-14, with record numbers of charter school applications submitted in 2014, including ~50,000 students on charter waiting lists (Source: New York City Charter School Center); Recovery School District in New Orleans will be the first district in the nation served entirely by charter schools. (Source: Alan Greenblatt "New Orleans District Moves To An All Charter System" nprEd, May 30, 2014); Denver: charter schools served 14.1% of public school students in 2012-13, an increase of nearly 4% of the total student population in Denver in the last five years (Source: National Alliance for Public Charter School's "Dashboard" accessed May, 2014).

[27] "Accelerating Academic Gains in New Orleans: 2012 Update." New Schools for New Orleans. Web. **http://www. newschoolsforneworleans.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/NSNO-Annual-Update-2012.pdf**.

[28] Feinberg, Mike. Phone Interview. April 21, 2014.

[29] Kurtz, Bill and Vaughn, Jeanette. Phone Interview.

[30] Feinberg, Mike. Phone Interview. April 21, 2014.

[31] Yatsko, Sarah, Elizabeth Cooley Nelson, and Robin Lake. "District-Charter Collaboration Compact: Interim Report." (2013). Center on Reinventing Public Education. Web. **http://www.crpe.org/publications/district-charter-collaboration-compact-interim-report**.

[32] Note: based on Safal interviews.

[33] There are notable exceptions to charter staff not joining unions, such as Green Dot.

[34] Yatsko, Sarah, Elizabeth Cooley Nelson, and Robin Lake. "District-Charter Collaboration Compact: Interim Report." (2013). Center on Reinventing Public Education. Web. **http://www.crpe.org/publications/district-charter-collaboration-compact-interim-report**.

[35] Urban School Superintendents: Characteristics, Tenure, and Salary." Urban Indicator. Council of the Great City Schools, 1 Jan. 2010. Web. **http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/4/Supt_Survey2010.pdf**.

[36] Yatsko, Sarah, Elizabeth Cooley Nelson, and Robin Lake. "District-Charter Collaboration Compact: Interim Report." (2013). Center on Reinventing Public Education. Web. **http://www.crpe.org/publications/district-charter-collaboration-compact-interim-report**.

[37] Note: Safal interviews and analysis, February – May, 2014; Website posting by: Mary Adams, Green Party of Monroe County and Rochester City School District Commissioner. June 20, 2013.

[38] The basis for what follows stems from all the interviews cited throughout this paper.

[39] Source: **http://www.crpe.org/sites/default/files/la_city_summary.pdf**.

[40] Kurtz, Bill. Phone Interview. March 21, 2014.

National **Charter School** Resource Center