Sustainability: The Key to the Future

Illinois Quality Afterschool Special Topic Workshop

Presented by Dr. Pat Edwards and SEDL’s Illinois Quality Afterschool Team

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Workshop Overview:

1. Getting Started on Sustainability
2. Searching for Funding
3. Responding to Request for Proposals (RFP)
4. Writing Organized Proposals
WARNING!!!!

• This is not easy – it is **hard work!!!**
• It is **time-consuming work!!!**
• It is **absolutely necessary work!!!**
• **Do not attempt any of this alone at any time!!!**
• Build a huge **team of supporters!!!**
• **Keep your eye on the prize!!!**
I. Getting Started on Sustainability

1. Create and communicate a vision
2. Provide high quality afterschool programming
3. Check progress on measurable objectives/outcomes
4. Build a broad base of community support
5. Develop a sustainability plan
Step 1: Visioning

Create and Communicate a Vision

- Short, catchy phrase with logo
- Display it on everything (stationary, notices, letters, media, grocery bags, t-shirts)
- Get everyone to know, understand, and use the vision as YOUR ONE MAIN STATEMENT – so everyone is delivering the same message
Step 1: Visioning

What is a 21\textsuperscript{st} CCLC Vision Statement?

• A brief statement that describes ideally what your 21\textsuperscript{st} CCLC program can be in the future, an inspiration to program stakeholders

• A guide for program decisions and planning
Step 1: Visioning

Why Do You Need a Vision Statement to Sustain Your Program?

• It helps maintain your program’s focus
• It informs everyone (including potential supporters and funders) about what your program will be
• It helps stimulate interest and excitement about your efforts and accomplishments
• It provides a way to measure your program’s progress
Step 1: Visioning

What is Your Program’s Vision?

• If you already have a vision statement, take 3 minutes to jot it down.

• If you do not already have a vision statement, take 3 minutes to jot down a brief description of what you would like for your program to look like in 3–5 years.

• At your table, take 5 minutes to share your visions and descriptions.
Step 1: Visioning

• Is the vision stated in the present tense?

• Does it describe a future condition?

• Is it short and does it lend itself to a “slogan”?  

• Does it call for changes from what exists now?

• Can it be used as a basis for direction, making decisions, and building long-range plans?
Step 1: Visioning

Communicating the 21st CCLC Program’s Vision

- Present your program’s vision to all your principals and school staff
- Share your program’s vision with the school board
- Share it with your partners
- Share it with the media
- Share it with students and their parents
Step 2: High-Quality Afterschool Programming

- Emphasizes academic improvement
- Recruits and retains students
- Provides a safe and healthy environment
- Meets individual student’s needs
- Provides a variety of activities, learning opportunities, and real world experiences
- Allows students to choose their activities
- Engages afterschool participants’ families
Step 2: High-Quality Afterschool Programming

Lightning Rounds—Part I

• Qualities from the previous slide will be listed one-by-one

• Jot down, for the listed quality, as many examples as come to mind

• Stop writing when time is called
Step 2: High-Quality Afterschool Programming

Lightning Rounds—Part II

- Stand up, look around, find a partner
- You and your partner will have 3 minutes to share your examples
- Find another partner
- You and your second partner will have 3 minutes to share your examples
Step 3: Measurable Objectives & Outcomes

• Do you have measurable objectives for your project?

• How are you monitoring/evaluating your progress toward your objectives?
Step 3: Measurable Objectives & Outcomes

• What data do you have to showcase your program’s accomplishments?

• What data challenges do you face in showcasing accomplishments?
Step 3: Measurable Objectives & Outcomes

Logic Models:

• provide a good communication tool for funders,

• summarize key program elements,

• link specific activities to short- and long-term outcomes, and

• hold the program accountable for measuring outcomes.
Step 3: Measurable Objectives & Outcomes

Sharing Results — Documenting Activities:

• Data collection is only the first step
• Have quality data to describe what you did
• Always link data to outcomes

Be able to show how well you did it!
Step 3: Measurable Objectives & Outcomes

Sharing Results — Keep it Contextual:

• Research- and evidence-base
• Influential factors
• Stakeholder needs
• Focus on elements the program can change

Data has no meaning on its own!
Step 3: Measurable Objectives & Outcomes

Sharing Results — Keep it User-Friendly:

• Describe in terms of size and scope
• Use charts, graphs, photos, and vignettes
• Focus the key messages your data supports
• Be concise and identify highlights
Step 3: Measurable Objectives & Outcomes

Sharing Results — Basics to Remember:

• Include data and information regarding:
  – Program delivery
  – Stakeholder satisfaction
  – Program outcomes

• Always tailor to your audience

• Use different perspectives to tell your story
Step 3: Measurable Objectives & Outcomes

How are you sharing your report results with parents, media, school boards, agencies, partners?
1. Sustainability is **not just** about funds/money.

2. Funds/Money come from come from 1,000s of sources.

3. Ask for Funds: **Locally first, then state, then national and federal**
Two Ways to Generate a Proposal:

• Respond to a Request for Proposals (RFP)

• Create a Proposal
II. SEARCHING FOR FUNDING

Four Steps:

1. **Know Your Organization/Program List**
2. **Do a Foundation/Funder Search**
3. **Request Funding Source’s Materials**
4. **Study the Materials and Follow the Guidelines & Directions EXACTLY**
II. SEARCHING FOR FUNDING

1. Know Your Organization/Program List
   - Put together a group of people
   - Chart pad always available
   - Thoroughly answer all 7 questions on page 3
   - May take several meetings to determine all information
II. SEARCHING FOR FUNDING

2. Do a Foundation/Funding Search

• Have team members familiarize themselves with all websites on pg. 4

• Do a team visit to a Cooperating Center searching The Foundation Directory

• Build your search around the 8 questions on pg. 5
II. SEARCHING FOR FUNDING

3. Request Funding Source’s Materials

• Easy — but absolutely necessary — step

• List of top 5–10 possible funders: check out their websites, request to be put on their mailing lists, have all their publications sent to you (your team)
II. SEARCHING FOR FUNDING

4. Study the Materials and Follow the Directions

• Wall charts of information (forms, page limitations, number of copies, specific phrases, words, concepts)

FOLLOW DIRECTIONS EXACTLY — THEY WILL KNOW YOU HAVE DONE YOUR HOMEWORK!!!!
RESPONDING TO A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

1. Read ENTIRE RFP Thoroughly
   - Is the RFP appropriate?
   - What agency is most appropriate?
   - Who needs to be on an RFP Committee? Story-teller!!
2. Form a RFP Committee
   • Consider agencies, personnel, clients, story teller
   • Use chart pad paper with common terms, etc.
   • Read RFP out loud noting ?s
   • Attend all conferences, webinars
   • Time-line chart front and center
RESPONDING TO A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

• Follow directions **exactly**

• Be sure **all involved** agencies have read RFP and final copy of RFP proposal/addendums, etc. and **SIGNED OFF** before submitting RFP!!
RESPONDING TO A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Parts of the RFP Information

1. Introduction/Scope of Proposal Section
2. Proposal Format and Content Section
3. General Instructions
4. Review Process
Step 4: Broad Base of Community Support

Build a Broad Base of Community Support

• Engage parents and the community in activities, committees, and events

• Inform and gain support of school administrators, city officials, business partners

• Develop cooperative, coordinated and collaborative meaningful partnerships
Collaboration

What is really meant by collaboration in the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program?
Step 4: Broad Base of Community Support

Collaboration allows us to accomplish together what we could not accomplish alone.
Collaboration: Definition & Intensity

Collaboration is a mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more groups working together to achieve results they are more likely to achieve together than alone.
Step 4: Broad Base of Community Support

Collaboration: Terms

- **Cooperation** — Being nice to each other
- **Coordination** — Checking with other people before you do an activity
- **Collaboration** — Sharing resources and power OR spending someone else’s money
Step 5: Sustainability Plan

Develop a Sustainability Plan (in year 1)

• State long and short term goals
• Identify challenges or obstacles to these goals
• Develop strategies to get resources
• Identify key agencies, resources, people to help
• Identify funding sources and how to approach them
1. Know Your Organization/Program List
2. Use a Common Grant Application Form
   • There are 12 CGAs on The Foundation Center Website
3. Proposal Writing Short Course from The Foundation Center
Components of a Proposal

• Executive Summary
• Statement of the Need
• Project Description
• Budget
• Organization Information
• Support Material/Information
WRITING AN ORGANIZED PROPOSAL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

• Overview of proposal, problem, solution, funding requirements, organization’s experience.

• 1-page long

• Write it after the proposal is completed
WRITING AN ORGANIZED PROPOSAL

STATEMENT OF NEED

- Describe the need through facts and conditions in your community with your target population — not national facts

- 2–3 pages long
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- List goals, objectives, activities/strategies, staffing, evaluation & sustainability.
- 3–5 pages long
BUDGET

• Budget with line item description & costs
• Support and revenue statement
• 1–3 column budget for multiple sources of income
• 1–2 pages long
ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

• Explain your organization’s mission/
organizational structure – include 
brochure in support materials

• Copy of IRS letter
SUPPORT MATERIAL

• (3) Letters of support from collaborating agencies
• Annual Report
• Awards/newspaper articles
• Limit this section
NOTES:

• Cover letter (on letterhead)
• Proposal tightly written, following guidelines (5–15 pages)
• Story teller is critical
• Describe “Need” with local facts
• No jargon, explain acronyms
• Explain your organization
NOTES:

- No “shopping lists”
- Evaluation — benchmarks
- Continued funding — sustainability
- Budgets — foot and add
- Attachments — limit the number
NOTES:

• Draft Letters for Collaborators

• Have final proposal read by 4–5 people, including the “Rita Test”

• Send to several different funders at the same time
• Letter of Intent or Interest (LOI): write entire proposal first, then follow format of Executive Summary for composing the Letter of Intent

• Several examples of LOIs on various websites
NOTES:

Follow-Up:

1. Weeks before you get a reply — do not call the funder
2. Denial Letter or postcard
3. Phone call asking for more information or a new budget
AFTER GRANT IS AWARDED

• Follow all directions of funder (i.e., reporting ON TIME)

• Perform the project to the best of your ability

• Meet all timelines and goals and evaluation criteria

• Call your program officer if you are confronting issues that may jeopardize future funding
Your table is the Grant Review Committee of the Anywhere Community Foundation.

Read, discuss and act on these 3 proposals.

Foundation’s fiscal year is 1/1 to 12/31.

This is the last grant meeting of the year so either you fund the $35,000 or it goes to the government.

What will your committee do?