Using Social Network Analysis to Understand and Improve Collaboration Among Centers, Projects and Initiatives

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Evaluation Context

- Michigan’s Integrated Improvement Initiatives and Center for Educational Networking
- Evaluation approach and goals
- Decision to use Social Network Analysis (SNA)
MI3 as a System

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires State Departments of Education to develop a Special Education State Performance Plan (SPP). States submit an Annual Performance Report (APR) to the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to report progress on the SPP.

Michigan’s Integrated Improvement Initiatives (MI3) is a system of IDEA mandated improvement initiatives, which support the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE-EIS). MI3 works to improve results, as reported in the APR, for students with disabilities.

“Improved Results for Students in all their Diversity”

Feedback Loops

Success as defined by:
State Board PBIS &
Universal Education Policies &
ESEA & IDEA
EVALUATION METHODOLOGY
A UTILIZATION-FOCUSED APPROACH

- Identify and engage primary evaluation users
- Review and analyze findings
- Interpret findings
- Make value judgments
- Develop recommendations
EVALUATION METHODOLOGY
A UTILIZATION-FOCUSED APPROACH

• Communicate Findings and recommendations to key audiences

• Facilitate learning and use of evaluation findings and recommendations

• Commit resources to the process

• Monitor your process and your progress
We hold ourselves accountable for what we do and how we do it by measuring inputs, activities, and outputs of our own work and that of our investments. Facilitate learning and use of evaluation findings and recommendations.

We contribute to accomplishing shared goals by measuring outcomes and impact, sharing our results, and collaborating with partners to understand what works and why in the population we serve.
The inflection curve

Inflection Point

New Heights

Decline
Researchers have found that network perspective gives formal definition to social structure and patterns of relationships

- Illustrative diagrams (sociograms)- betweenness, connectivity, centrality
- Useful for formative evaluation- useful for facilitating use of data and decision making
- Using multi-method approach which includes SNA provides powerful outcome measures for summative evaluation
### Hogue et. al. Adapted Measure of Collaboration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>MI3-CEN Example</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Networking</strong></td>
<td>Communicate for a common understanding</td>
<td>Non-hierarchical</td>
<td>Low key leadership</td>
<td>CEN working with the MAPs in the creation and updates of: MI3 Snapshots/Director and In-Brief Project Descriptions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Clearinghouse for information</td>
<td>Loose/flexible link</td>
<td>Minimal decision making</td>
<td>MI3-CEN providing updates for OSE-EIS to share with the MI Association of Administrators of Special Education (MAASE)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Create a base of support</td>
<td>Roles loosely defined</td>
<td>Little conflict</td>
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<td>Community action is primary link among members</td>
<td>Informal communication</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Alliance</strong></td>
<td>Match needs and provide information</td>
<td>Central body of people as communication hub</td>
<td>Facilitative leaders</td>
<td>MI3 Leadership Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Limit duplication of services</td>
<td>Semi-formal links</td>
<td>Complex decision making</td>
<td>MI3 Community Learning Forums</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure tasks are done</td>
<td>Roles somewhat defined</td>
<td>Some conflict</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Increase cooperation</td>
<td>Links are advisory</td>
<td>Formal communication within the central group</td>
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<td>Group leverages/raises money</td>
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<td><strong>Partnership</strong></td>
<td>Coordinate and share resources to address common issues</td>
<td>Central body of people consists of decision makers</td>
<td>Autonomous leadership but focus is on issues</td>
<td>MI Alliance, MSEM, MiBLSi worked together on the planning and delivery of the FEB CLF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Merge resource base to create something new</td>
<td>Formalized links</td>
<td>Group decision making in central and subgroup</td>
<td>LIO, MI Alliance, MSEM, and Project find helping with the planning and delivery of the RTSL April 11 event: parent involvement as a dropout prevention strategy</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Defined roles</td>
<td>Communication is frequent and clear</td>
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<td>Groups develops new resources and joint budget</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Coalition</strong></td>
<td>Share ideas and be willing to pull resources from existing systems</td>
<td>All members involved in decision making</td>
<td>Shared leadership</td>
<td>Reaching and Teaching Struggling Learners (RTSL) and The Michigan Transition Outcomes Project (MI-TOP) focusing on dropout prevention</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Develop commitment for a minimum of three years</td>
<td>Roles and time defined</td>
<td>Decisions making formal with all members</td>
<td>MIN and MiBLSi focusing on RTI and Implementation Science training to ISDs</td>
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<td>Links formal with written agreement</td>
<td>Communication is common and prioritized</td>
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<td>Group develops new resources and joint budget</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Collaboration</strong></td>
<td>Accomplish shared vision and impact benchmarks</td>
<td>Consensus used in shared decisions making</td>
<td>Leadership high, trust level high, productivity high</td>
<td>Braiding services and resources for START, MiBLSi and MITS</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Build interdependent system to address issues and opportunities</td>
<td>Roles, time and evaluation formalized</td>
<td>Ideas and decisions equally shared</td>
<td>Co-location of multiple projects within one building, sharing resources, alignment of duties and development of joint/shared office protocols</td>
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<td>Links are formal and written in work assignments</td>
<td>Highly developed communication</td>
<td>Merging of MI3 and CEN staff and work to essentially one infrastructure support initiative with multiple support functions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Collaborative Relationships

- A Balancing Act
The Power of Collaboration

Source: Aha! Jokes
http://www.AhaJokes.com
Inherent Tensions

- Divergent goals and values
- Priority setting (and scheduling)
- Contextual pressures
Advantages of SNA

- Participatory process gives a voice to all stakeholders
- SNA mentors guide the process and help frame results
- Network maps promote insight and discussion
- Visual representation of findings can validate participant experiences
Social network analysis

First used in 1934 by Joseph Moreno in New York City Schools. The New York Times called it, “Psychological Geography.”

Money flow between organizations, how people obtain employment, transmission of infectious diseases, decision-making.

The use of social network analysis (SNA) to measure strengths in community collaboration offers several advantages.
A comprehensive narrative description of a transport system requires a record of both time and spatial experiences. Here a complex network of routes is brought together with flight times and identification numbers in a brilliant map/schedule for the Czechoslovakia Air Transport Company in 1933. A playful and polished cover makes the brochure an exceptional union of graphic and information design.
Parent Involvement Example

Parent Involvement all links

Collaboration
1 2 3 4 5

Centrality
High
Low
Parent Involvement Example
Challenges with SNA

- Can be time consuming and resource intensive
- SNA is a complicated method – Need to balance time devoted to technical detail with resources
- Choosing a data collection tool and method
Lessons Learned

- Determine a feasible level of participatory work

- Investing time to reach consensus on measurement is a double edged sword

- Use mentors to add value to your process and products
THANK YOU

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