Association for Collaborative Leadership (ACL)

Checklist and Key Performance Indicators for Consortia

Board members of the Association for Collaborative Leadership are available for consultation and assistance with any formative or summative review process for a consortium or collaboration among institutions of higher education. We value the opportunity to share our knowledge and experience and information about where certain practices have been tried and optimized in other collaborative environments and for other consortia. We also find that in such consultative meetings we learn from each other. To ask for assistance or a consultation, please contact: adelev@national-acl.org

The ACL has developed the following Checklist and Key Performance Indicators as tools for a consortium's (or collaboration's) leaders to use to assess the alignment and effectiveness of their mission, goal and operation. These tools were designed to be flexible and adaptable, to allow for reflection on current activities and to prompt future action. They can serve as an aid to a consortium director and consortium staff members in reviewing their work, as a framework for the consortium board members and senior officers of the campuses to assess their consortium affiliations, and as a basis for managing a formal self-study and external review of a consortium for either internal planning efforts or for assurances to external funding agencies. As a planning tool, the Checklist and Key Performance Indicators can serve as templates for the creation of new collaborative endeavors and later as a way to evaluate success.   The Checklist may also be a useful guide to the thinking of those planning to start a new collaborative activity or new collaborative relationship among institutions, whether formal or informal.

The Checklist and Key Performance Indicators can be used in full or in part depending upon the issues at hand and the immediate needs of the consortium staff members, the board or the institutions involved in the collaboration. While each section of the Checklist can stand on its own, some sections may be more appropriate for particular constituencies, particular programs, or particular needs. The Checklist is intended as a guideline and should be adapted as needed for the situation.

Depending on the goals of any review of collaborative programs, the appropriate stakeholders should be included; these may include the director/CEO, board members, presidents/chancellors of the member institutions, appropriate vice presidents, committee and council members of both the consortium and the campuses, both staff members and members, and other consortium staff members. The review process and the insights it generates should be useful to leaders and to the consortium as a whole in planning for the future.

The Key Performance Indicators provide a sample list of possible measures of current activities that may be most helpful to building an effective and stable consortium.

Checklist

I. Mission and Goals.

A. Mission
1. Does the consortium have a clearly defined, adequately focused mission?
2. How and to whom is the mission communicated?
3. How is the mission incorporated into and reflected by the work of the organization?
4. How often and by whom is the mission reviewed?

B. Goals
1. Are there clearly stated long-term goals for the current work of the consortium?
2. Is there a strategic or long-range plan?
3. What is the process for setting annual goals and objectives?
4. How do you ensure that the goals and objectives remain consistent with the mission?
5. What is the process for assessing how effectively the annual and long-term goals and mission are being met?
6. How often are goals and objectives reviewed and revised and who is involved in that process?

II. Programs.
1. Identify and describe principal programs of the consortium.
2. How does each of these programs support the mission and goals discussed above?
3. What is the process for reviewing/assessing programs (most important for programs requiring relatively large annual expenditures or relatively large allocations of staff time)?
4. What are the criteria for extending or terminating programs?

III. Leadership.

A. Board
1. Who comprises the board of directors?
2. Are the roles and responsibilities of board members clearly defined and conveyed?
3. What is the orientation process for board members?
4. How is board development supported?
5. How are board members encouraged to engage early in the reviews of goals and objectives?
6. How do board members promote the consortium both within the campuses and beyond the campuses?
7. How do board members ensure that consortial priorities are integrated into institutional priorities and that institutional priorities are served by consortial priorities?
8. How does the Board meet its responsibilities for executive staff performance review, executive compensation, audit, conflict of interest, budget review and other fiduciary responsibilities.
9. Are there other Board level committees and, if so, are the committee charges and deliverables clearly articulated?

      B. CEO/Director

1. How and how often does the CEO/Director communicate with the Board?
2. How and how often does the CEO/Director communicate with internal and external constituencies?
3. How often does the CEO/Director report to the Board on expenditures, programs and personnel?
4. What role does the CEO/Director play in initiating collaborative activity among individuals across the campuses/institutions/organizations?
5. What is the process for review of the CEO/Director and how frequently is this person reviewed? What is the process for formal verbal and written assessment of CEO/Director performance on an annual basis?

IV. Staffing.

1. What is the process for ensuring that personnel and other resources are available to fulfill the organization's goals or that the goals are adjusted to a set that can be achieved by the organization's staff members?
2. Is the consortium adequately staffed with qualified personnel? If not, what are the needs?
3. What additional staffing might be required or how might staffing be shifted to better address the goals of the consortium; or how might the goals be adjusted to be achieved by available staff and financial resources?
4. How effective is the consortium staff in providing a leadership role for new initiatives approved by the board?
5. How effective is the consortium staff in exploring and presenting to the board options for new initiatives?
6. What are the professional development opportunities available to staff members of the consortium? How are they informed about these opportunities and how are they encouraged to take advantage of them?

V. Financial Resources.

1. What is the process for preparing, managing, and reviewing the budget?
2. Does the consortium have adequate funding to meet its mission and goals?
3. How dependent are the consortium and its programs on external funding?
4. What additional funding and kinds of resources are needed to fulfill the goals; or how ought the goals to be adjusted to match available funding and resources?
5. What is the strategy or plan for obtaining the needed funding? '
6. How are new initiatives funded (both as pilots and for the long term)?
7. What is the provision or policy for an independent audit?

VI. Facilities, Technology, and Equipment.

1. Does the consortium have adequate, long-term, suitably located facilities and technology to support its mission and goals? If not, what are the needs and what is the plan for obtaining them?
2. How and by whom are the facilities, technology, and equipment reviewed regularly?

VII. Internal and External Relations.

1. How does the consortium maintain and promote effective relations with relevant campus constituencies and across the member institutions?
2. How do the individual and institutional members promote effective communications about the consortium's programs within their respective campuses and with what success?
3. How is the consortium communicating its mission, programs and services to external constituencies? Give examples.

VIII. Human Resources/Legal Responsibilities.
1. What provision is made for orientation and training of staff members?
2. How are staff members informed about laws and regulations relevant to their respective responsibilities? (individual and property rights, intellectual property rights, safety, privacy, for example.)
3. Is there a written job description for each staff position? How often are these job descriptions reviewed?
4. What is the process for annual review of the performance of staff members?
5. Does the consortium have a personnel handbook or written personnel policies? If so, how frequently and by whom is it reviewed?
6. Does the written policy statement or personnel handbook address ethical practice in areas such as sexual harassment, IT usage, etc.?

Key Performance Indicators for Consortia:

1 - Strongly Disagree 2 - Somewhat Disagree 3 – Neither Agree nor Disagree 4 - Somewhat Agree 5 - Strongly Agree

1. Mission:
   a. The consortium has a clear mission. 1 2 3 4 5
   b. The senior leaders of institutions understand the mission of the consortium. 1 2 3 4 5
   c. Board members can articulate the mission. 1 2 3 4 5

2. Leadership:
   a. New Board members receive adequate orientation and training. 1 2 3 4 5
   b. Board members are appropriately engaged in the work of the consortium. 1 2 3 4 5
   c. The CEO provides strong leadership for the consortium. 1 2 3 4 5

3. Financial:
   a. The institutions in the consortium have made and continue to make a financial commitment to the operational success of the consortium. 1 2 3 4 5
   b. The consortium is fiscally responsible. 1 2 3 4 5
   c. The consortium has sufficient fiscal resources to realize its mission and goals. 1 2 3 4 5
   d. The consortium maintains financial reserves that meet industry standards. 1 2 3 4 5

4. Budget Process:
   a. The consortium has a budgeting process that is tied to its goals. 1 2 3 4 5
   b. The consortium budget is adequately understood by the members of the Board. 1 2 3 4 5

5. Goal Setting:
   a. The Board of the consortium has a clear process for setting goals. 1 2 3 4 5
   b. The Board of the consortium sets both short term and long term goals. 1 2 3 4 5

6. Decision Making:
   a. The consortium has a structure and process for decision-making including a clear statement of decisions delegated to the CEO/Director. 1 2 3 4 5

7. Communication:
   a. The consortium has an effective overall plan for its communications. 1 2 3 4 5
   b. The consortium keeps campus constituencies sufficiently informed about programs and opportunities. 1 2 3 4 5

8. Assessment:
   a. The consortium has a plan for periodic review of its programs. 1 2 3 4 5
   b. The consortium implements the review plan. 1 2 3 4 5
   c. Program reviews include criteria for termination, if warranted. 1 2 3 4 5