Title of workshop sessions: Funding Collective Impact and Collaboration

Facilitator: Lauren Maddox, The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

Lead Discussants:
- Frank Ridzi, Director, Research and Community Initiatives, Central New York Community Foundation, Syracuse & Madison County, NY
- Eric Wilson – President/CEO, Foundation for Tacoma Students, Tacoma, WA

Key outcomes sought by the session: This workshop will discuss the different roles funders can play and the assets they can deploy to support collective impact efforts and community coalitions. Participants will leave the workshop with a set of considerations about the important things they should pay attention to when supporting these efforts, an understanding of the critical success factors for collective impact efforts, and a framework of the different roles funders can play in supporting this work.

Headlines and Takeaways:
- Funding collective impact is a story of change: a big and different approach to typical/historical ways of funding - especially for community foundations.
- Intentionality is key: knowing what role to play and how it may shift and especially, how to taper and exit.
- Funders need to begin with a bold, achievable, measurable goal with a clear finish line and expected outcomes/metrics and an exit strategy.
- It is about building and flexing civic muscle, organizing for and around action, setting a neutral and collaborative table.
- Efforts need to be community-led since funders don’t run programs – but funders can build a literacy coalition.
- You need to be willing to go through the mud - to do the messy work in the beginning and the trust-making to get to the desired outcomes.
- "In order for collaboration to happen, we need to fund it."
- “Change happens at the speed of trust.”
- Additional themes:
  - Importance of being intentional, knowing what role to play and how it may shift
    - What is the best role for the funder in various education spaces
  - Setting the table - who can bring the right people together
    - Organizing for and around action - the power of networks
    - Setting neutral, collaborative table
- On-going questions:
  - How to demonstrate the value of something so amorphous - how to explain and get others to join in funding collective impact.
How to demonstrate the need with data without alienating communities with negative statistics.

Context, data points, quotes:
- Phases of a coalition’s life course:
  - Interactional → technical → cultural
  - Get to know each other, build structure & governance, determine how to diversify the funding - over time via matching grants
  - Funder can play a sustaining role - match funds raised by other investors
- Tacoma Graduates:
  - In Tacoma 64% of kids live in poverty
  - Went through messy work as a community to figure out what to do knowing where we are today
    - Brought together parents, educators, etc, -every sector of the community at the table and they were ready to take action
  - 150 community partners - set goal together - 50% increase in graduation rate and those who complete a college degree or tech certificate.
  - Secret sauce - how to not make it about the foundation - made sure to have collaboration with meaningful roles for community reps
  - Formed 3 collaborative action networks: early learning and reading, out-of-school and summer learning, going to college and held grassroots community conversations
  - Resulted in:
    - Early screening of all kids entering kindergarten
    - Increased summer learning opportunities
    - Coalition members now own the vision and keep the work moving forward
    - The “exit strategy” is the state taking interest

Additional Resources:
- Catalytic Philanthropy:
- Contact Frank Ridzi [fridzi@cnycf.org](mailto:fridzi@cnycf.org) if interested in being part of his developing book on community collaborations - best practices, evaluation, which initiatives are most aligned with progress, etc.