



September 2022
Office of Planning and Coordination

Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership Evaluation

Partnership Effectiveness
Continuum



The Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth (OCCY) Office of Planning & Coordination (P&C) is working with the Educational Training, Evaluation, Assessment, and Measurement (E-TEAM) Department of the University of Oklahoma to evaluate partnership effectiveness within the Children of Incarcerated Parents (CIP) Partnership Program¹. The CIP partnership includes members from many community sectors, including youth-serving organizations, businesses, media, schools, healthcare, state/local government, civic or volunteer groups, law enforcement, faith-based organizations, parents, and youth.

The Office of Planning and Coordination was created to comply with OK State Statute, Title 10, Chapter 26, Section 601.3 Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth – Powers and Duties. This statute requires the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth (OCCY) to establish services for the children of incarcerated parents. Duties include coordinating research; collecting data; creating a resource clearinghouse; developing an educational toolkit describing services available to children of incarcerated parents; and coordinating an advisory committee to better meet the needs and improve the quality of life for children of incarcerated parents.

E-TEAM and CIP leadership determined that the Partnership Effectiveness Continuum (PEC) would be a valuable tool in assessing the effectiveness of the CIP partnership. The PEC is a research-based evaluation tool to assess the effectiveness of partnerships. The PEC is organized around six dimensions of effective partnership: Partnership Vision, Institutional Leadership, Communication and Collaboration, Joint Ownership and Accountability for Results, System Alignment, Integration and Sustainability, and Response to Local Context (King, 2014). Within each dimension are indicators. Each indicator aligns with one or more criteria. How many criteria are met or not met determines the rating each indicator receives. If **all** of the criteria are met, the indicator is rated as **highly effective**; if **most** are met, the indicator receives a rating of **effective**; if **some** of the criteria are met, a rating of **partially effective** is marked;

1 CIP refers to the CIP program, CIP partnership, and CIP Advisory Committee.

and if **few** of the criteria are met, the respondent should mark the indicator as **ineffective**. This report details the results of the PEC.

On September 9th, 2022, during the CIP Advisory Committee meeting, E-TEAM, the Office of P&C leadership, and the CIP chairperson facilitated a discussion around the PEC to help members better understand the PEC organization, dimensions, and indicators. The intention was to provide CIP members with the knowledge and confidence to score the assessment individually. During this discussion, the CIP group addressed each indicator and criterion, providing evidence or lack thereof for how the criteria are met. Following this meeting, the PEC was distributed; twenty-two individuals responded.

CIP Meeting Attendance

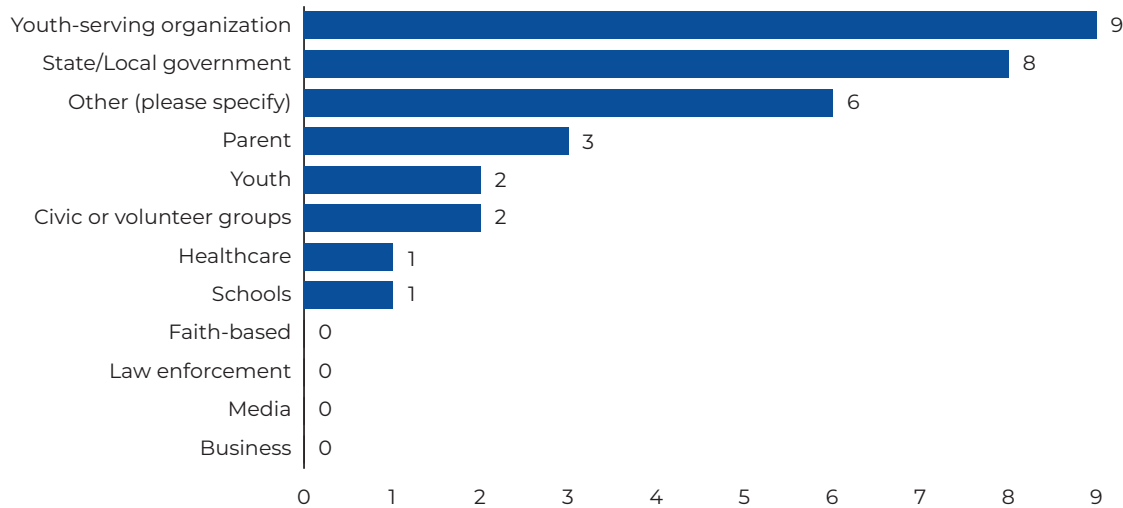
The CIP Advisory Committee meets most months to discuss new and ongoing partnership developments, plan for upcoming events, share community sector updates, and engage in learning experiences through guest speaker presentations. Survey respondents were asked how often they had attended the CIP Advisory Committee Meeting in the last 12 months. The average number of times attended was six, with two being the lowest and 12 being the highest.

Partnership Community Sector Representation

The CIP partnership includes individuals from many different community sectors. Respondents were asked to choose all community sectors they represented. The most commonly represented community sector was youth-serving organizations, with nine members from the CIP representing that sector. The least represented community sectors were faith-based, law enforcement, media, and business, with no representation (Chart 1). There were six respondents who chose other community sectors not listed (See Appendix A for a list of those organizations).

Chart 1. Community Sectors (n=22)

Respondents were able to choose more than one community sector, so response will not add up to 22.



Partnership Vision

Partnership Vision is the first dimension of effective partnership on the PEC. Within this dimension are five indicators: ***Mission And Beliefs, Shared Goals, Joint Reform Agenda, Strategic Action Plan, and Measures For And Assessing Progress***. As detailed earlier, all indicators for each dimension are rated as follows: highly effective, effective, partially effective, and ineffective based on how many criteria are met for each indicator. Most respondents (76%) rated indicators within this dimension as effective or highly effective. Twenty-one percent rated indicators as partially effective, and only three respondents rated any indicators in this dimension as ineffective. The highest-rated indicator was *Mission and Beliefs* with 91% effective or highly effective, and the lowest-rated indicators were *Strategic Action Plan* and *Measures for and Assessing Progress* (Table 1).²

² Percentages for tables may not equal 100% because of rounding.

Indicator	Criteria	Highly Effective	Effective	Partially Effective	Ineffective
MISSION AND BELIEFS	An articulated mission and shared beliefs exist and serve as guides for the work of the partnership	59%	32%	9%	--
SHARED GOALS	<p>Are clear, measurable, and feasible</p> <p>Address the common needs of the partnership</p> <p>Align with partner organization goals</p> <p>Mutually beneficial to partner organizations</p>	41%	41%	18%	--
JOINT REFORM AGENDA	<p>Is jointly created and supported by all partner organizations</p> <p>Addresses identified partnership needs and priorities with a strategic plan for accomplishing short and long-term partnership goals</p> <p>Is fully resourced (time, people, finances)</p>	23%	55%	23%	--
STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN	<p>Articulates concrete action steps for accomplishing partnership goals</p> <p>Includes timeline, roles, and responsibilities, and expected outcomes</p>	14%	50%	27%	9%
MEASURES FOR AND ASSESSING PROGRESS (n=21)	<p>Use evidence-based protocols that promote continuous improvement</p> <p>Tightly align to partnership goals and strategic plan</p> <p>Engage partnership members in assessing their own progress on a regular basis</p>	33%	33%	29%	5%

Table 1.
Partnership Vision
(n=22, unless otherwise noted)

Institutional Leadership

Within the Institutional Leadership dimension are four indicators: ***Shared Leadership, Leader Engagement, Resource Commitment, and Participant Incentives***. Eighty-one percent of respondents rated all indicators within the Institutional Leadership dimension as effective or highly effective. Only one indicator, *Partnership Incentives*, received an ineffective rating from one respondent. *Shared Leadership and Leader Engagement* received the highest ratings within this dimension, with both indicators rated as effective or highly effective by at least 89% of respondents. *Participant Incentives* received the most partially effective and ineffective ratings for this dimension (Table 2).

“The individuals and organizations involved in this partnership share a common goal and are willing to work together and improve processes when needed to better serve families.”

—CIP member

Indicator	Criteria	Highly Effective	Effective	Partially Effective	Ineffective
SHARED LEADERSHIP	Institutional Leaders: Share accountability for achieving partnership goals Encourage stakeholder engagement Share partnership decision-making	68%	18%	14%	--
LEADER ENGAGEMENT	Institutional Leaders: Advocate on behalf of the partnership Attend and actively participate in partner meetings Integrate partnership norms and values into the fabric of their respective organizations	68%	23%	9%	--
RESOURCE COMMITMENT (n=20)	Institutional Leaders: Jointly identify resources needed to accomplish partnership goals Contribute time, financial, and human resources necessary to accomplish partnership goals	55%	30%	15%	--
PARTICIPANT INCENTIVES (n=21)	Institutional Leaders: Establish an institutional expectation for partnership involvement Publicly acknowledge and reward collaborative action Promote active participation in partnership activities Provide incentives for partnership participation	43%	24%	29%	5%

Table 2.
Institutional Leadership
 (n=22, unless otherwise noted)

Communication and Collaboration

There are five indicators of effective partnerships within the Communication and Collaboration dimension: ***Communication Tools and Protocols, Information Dissemination, Partnership and Advocacy, Collaborative Relationships, and Decision Making***. This dimension received high ratings overall, with 97% of respondents rating *Communication Tools and Protocols* and *Information Dissemination* as effective or highly effective. Most respondents (85%) rated *Partnership and Advocacy* and *Collaborative Relationships* as effective or highly effective. One respondent rated *Decision Making* as ineffective, making it the only indicator within this dimension with an ineffective rating (Table 3).

“I learn more from the CIP group about events and things happening in the area from this partnership. There’s information and networking that brings my program more into cross-sector partnerships.”

—CIP member

Indicator	Criteria	Highly Effective	Effective	Partially Effective	Ineffective
COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND PROTOCOLS	<p>Processes for documenting and disseminating partnership meeting minutes and following up on action steps are in place</p> <p>An agreed upon schedule of meeting, dates, times, and locations is established at the beginning of the year to support regular attendance</p>	91%	10%	--	--
INFORMATION DISSEMINATION (n=21)	Mechanisms for regularly disseminating partnership updates in a timely manner are in place	95%	--	5%	--
PARTNERSHIP AND ADVOCACY	Partners share responsibility for actively advocating on behalf of the partnership to gain visibility, support, and resources to support partnership goals	40%	45%	15%	--
COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS	<p>Strategies to promote collaboration are intentionally embedded in partnership activities</p> <p>Collaboration among partner organizations is characterized by deep trust, mutual respect, and regular and effective interaction</p> <p>Collaborative relationship extend beyond the boundaries of the partnership meetings and are sustained over time</p>	65%	20%	15%	--
DECISION MAKING	The process for partnership decision-making is clearly articulated and involves all partners	30%	55%	10%	5%

Table 3.
Communication and Collaboration
 (n=20, unless otherwise noted)

Joint Ownership and Accountability for Results

The Joint Ownership and Accountability for Results dimension includes the following indicators: ***Roles and Responsibilities, Boundary-spanning Roles and Structures, Performance-based Assessment, Benchmarks and Outcomes, Using Data, and Sharing Progress***. The highest-rated indicator for this dimension was *Sharing Progress*, with 90% of respondents rating this indicator as effective or highly effective and none rating it as ineffective. The following indicators for this dimension received at least one rating of ineffective: *Roles and Responsibilities, Boundary-spanning Roles and Structures, Benchmarks and Outcomes*, and *Using Data*, yet at least half of all responses for all indicators received effective or highly effective ratings (Table 4).

Indicator	Criteria	Highly Effective	Effective	Partially Effective	Ineffective
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	Partnership roles, responsibilities, and expectations are clearly defined				
	Partnership roles, responsibilities, and expectations are understood	20%	45%	30%	5%
	Share partnership roles, responsibilities, and expectations are operational				
BOUNDARY-SPANNING ROLES AND STRUCTURES	Partnership roles, responsibilities, and expectations cross organizational boundaries	30%	45%	20%	5%
PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT	Partnership goals are assessed using performance-based measures that demonstrate program improvement	40%	20%	40%	--

Table 4.
Joint Ownership & Accountability for Results
(n=20, unless otherwise noted)

Table continued on page 10

Indicator	Criteria	Highly Effective	Effective	Partially Effective	Ineffective
BENCHMARKS & OUTCOMES	<p>Partners agree on performance measures that will be used to assess progress</p> <p>Partners are held accountable for accomplishing partnership goals</p>	20%	30%	40%	10%
USING DATA	<p>Data is strategically used to guide decision making</p> <p>Data is used to assess partnership effectiveness</p> <p>Data is collected and analyzed using both formal and informal processes to guide continuous improvement</p>	20%	35%	40%	5%
SHARING PROGRESS	<p>Partners share data and information with stakeholders</p> <p>Regularly communicate partnership progress toward collective goals</p>	60%	30%	10%	--

Table 4. (cont)
Joint Ownership & Accountability for Results

“There are so many people in CIP with the goal of serving communities across the state. Being able to share ideas, programs, and success with CIP is what I enjoy.”
 —CIP member

System Alignment, Integration, and Sustainability

There are three indicators within the System Alignment, Integration, and Sustainability dimension: **Alignment, Integration, and Sustainability**. *Alignment* and *Integration* were rated highly, with 81% of respondents rating both indicators as effective or highly effective and none rating these indicators as ineffective. Over half (55%) rated *Sustainability* as effective or highly effective, 35% rated it as partially effective, and 10% rated this indicator as ineffective (Table 5).

Indicator	Criteria	Highly Effective	Effective	Partially Effective	Ineffective
ALIGNMENT	Partnership roles and responsibilities are aligned across organization boundaries to accomplish collective goals	50%	25%	25%	--
	Organization systems for partnership communication, resource allocation, and progress monitoring are aligned				
INTEGRATION (n=21)	Partner organizations select skilled and committed staff with complementary skill sets and decision-making authority to serve as partnership members Partnership activities are integrated into the work of the organization and not considered to be "extra-curricular"	48%	38%	14%	--

Table 5.
System Alignment, Integration, and Sustainability
(n=20, unless otherwise noted)

Table continued on page 12

Indicator	Criteria	Highly Effective	Effective	Partially Effective	Ineffective
SUSTAINABILITY	<p>Memorandums of understanding exist between partner organizations that ensure the sustainability of the partnership</p> <p>Processes for filling partnership vacancies are agreed upon and in place</p> <p>Strategies for building organizational capacity through leadership development, succession planning, and an intentional induction protocol are in place</p> <p>Funding strategies are ongoing to ensure the partnership continues to be a viable option for partner organization</p>	20%	35%	35%	10%

Table 5. (cont)
System Alignment, Integration, and Sustainability
(n=20, unless otherwise noted)

Response to Local Context

Community, Partner Recruitment and Selection, and Policy Environment are the three indicators that comprise the Response to Local Context dimension. All but one respondent rated the *Community* indicator as effective or highly effective, with all other respondents rating this indicator as effective or highly effective. Eighty-six percent of respondents rated *Partner Recruitment and Selection* as effective or highly effective, 65% rated *Policy Environment* as effective or highly effective, and one respondent rated it as ineffective (Table 6).

Indicator	Criteria	Highly Effective	Effective	Partially Effective	Ineffective
COMMUNITY	Partnerships are inclusive	71%	24%	5%	--
PARTNER RECRUITMENT & SELECTION	Partnerships continually explore new opportunities to expand the partnership to ensure its effectiveness and sustainability	52%	33%	14%	--
	Partnership has a well developed process for recruiting and inducting new partners				
POLICY ENVIRONMENT (n=20)	Partnership understands its role in influencing the policy environment	35%	30%	30%	5%
	Partnership strategic plan includes political action steps that are aimed at broadening the impact of its work				

Table 6.
Response to Local Context
(n=21, unless otherwise noted)

“Over the past year, this partnership has evolved into a coalition that could exert some amount of power in decision-making and policy work across the state. As each agency works on different facets of the same problem, we can build a compelling case for change.”

—CIP member

Open-Ended Comments

Respondents were asked what the best aspects of the CIP partnership were, and responses reflected the survey ratings. They said the partnership's communication, collaboration, dedication, and diversity were the best aspects of the CIP partnership. They also stressed that the CIP members' commitment, dedication, and knowledge base made it successful.

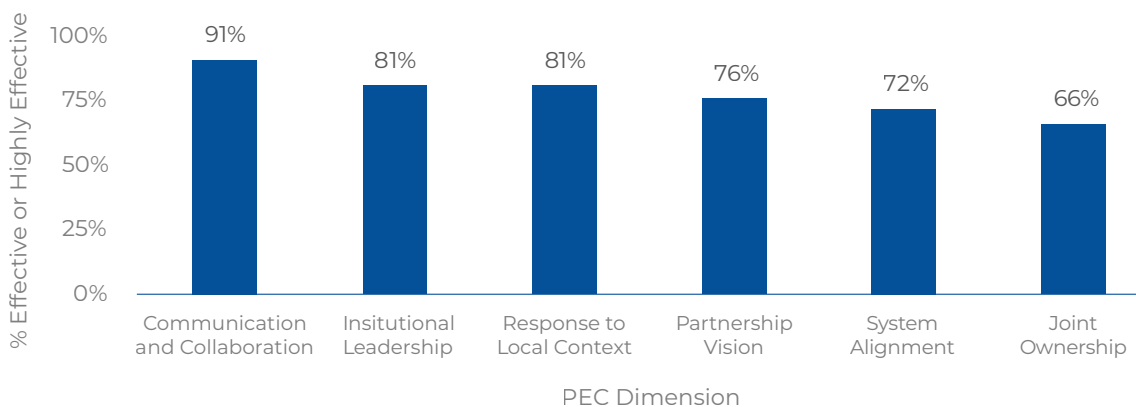
When asked what could make the partnership more effective, several respondents gave examples of clear goals and benchmarks and developing a strategic plan (See Appendix B for all open-ended comments).



Conclusion

Overall, the survey responses received from the CIP program members were positive, with most (78%) responses falling within the effective or highly effective rating, and only 2% of responses rated as ineffective (see chart 2 for % of effective/highly effective ratings by PEC dimension). The Communication and Collaboration dimension was among the highest rated, especially the *Communication Tools and Protocols* and *Information Dissemination* indicators, which at least 95% of respondents rated as effective or highly effective. *Sharing Progress*, an indicator within the Joint Ownership and Accountability for Results dimension, was another highly rated indicator, with 90% of respondents rating this indicator as effective or highly effective. The following indicators received at least one ineffective rating but no more than two: *Strategic Action Plan*, *Measures for and Assessing Progress*, *Participant Incentives*, *Decision Making*, *Roles and Responsibilities*, *Boundary Spanning Roles and Structures*, *Benchmarks and Outcomes*, *Using Data*, *Sustainability*, and *Policy Environment*. These slightly lower-rated indicators and respective dimensions provide an opportunity for targeted efforts for improvement. Following are recommendations based on the results of the PEC.

Chart 2. PEC Dimensions



Recommendations

Continue Disseminating Information, Being Inclusive, and Collaborating

Indicators involving communication, collaboration, disseminating information, shared ownership, and creating community-inclusive partnerships were among the highest-rated indicators. We recommend continuing to capitalize on partnership relationships, providing timely dissemination of information that can promote and strengthen the CIP partnership, and including individuals from various community sectors to represent a diverse and insightful partnership.

Develop a Collaboratively Written Strategic Plan with CIP Members

Ratings for indicators around strategic planning showed that there is room for improvement in this area. Open-ended comments also support a focus on strategic planning. One respondent stated that the CIP partnership would be more effective with “clear strategic goals, set timelines, and action steps [developed for] partners that can be tailored to fit their respective [organization’s] missions.” We recommend the CIP work collaboratively to develop a strategic action plan. The development of this plan will also help improve CIP’s articulation of goals and objectives and promote sustainability and growth.

Provide Evaluation Results at CIP Advisory Group

A little over half of the survey respondents (55%) rated *Using Data*, an indicator within the Joint Ownership and Accountability for Results dimension, as effective or highly effective. Forty percent rated it as partially effective, and one respondent rated this indicator as ineffective, suggesting there is room for improvement. We recommend continuing to collect survey data on learning experiences funded by the Office of P&C geared toward the CIP program. We further suggest that P&C leadership and the E-TEAM share the results of the data with the CIP members, allowing them to see where capacity has been built and where there is room for improved capacity-building. Additionally, we recommend continuing to distribute the PEC annually and share results to help highlight successes of the effectiveness of the partnership and guide continual growth and improvement of the partnership.

Appendix A

Respondents listed the following community sectors under other.

- Head Start Collaboration Office
- CIP
- Non-profit technical assistance (hunger)
- Prison employment
- Mental health/substance agency



Appendix B

Open-ended comments

What are the best aspects of the CIP Partnership?

- Creating partnerships that increase collaboration, education, and services to the children of Oklahoma.
- The individuals and organizations involved in this partnership share a common goal and are willing to work together and improve processes when needed to better serve families.
- Diversity of partners who attend, group needs more of lived experience: CIP and those parents who were incarcerated. Momentum has been picking up based on partner activities/needs/vision.
- The engagement from so many partnering programs/agencies/families as well as important information sharing.
- Large group of dedicated individuals across multiple-disciplines.
- Partnerships, collaborative efforts to improve awareness, support and services for CIP families. Having an opportunity to speak into and influence policy discussions and efforts for CIP families.
- Alignment of beliefs and collaborative nature of CIP.
- Commitment of partners to improving the lives of children of incarcerated parents; Information sharing and networking among partners; Teamwork and sincere collaboration among partners.
- The resource sharing and community collaboration between partners.
- There are so many people in CIP with the goal of serving communities across the state. Being able to share ideas, programs, and success with CIP is what I enjoy.
- The amount of knowledge and resources between Tulsa and Oklahoma City helps us to further our missions.
- Opportunities to connect with partners, learning

opportunities, connecting and aligning the community generally.

- Connecting with community partners to increase our impact.
- The commitment of its partners.
- Strong leadership, great for information sharing.
- Over the past year this partnership has evolved into a coalition that could exert some amount of power in decision-making and policy work across the state. As each agency works on different facets of the same problem, we can build a compelling case for change.
- That we can work together on behalf of children of incarcerated parents in Oklahoma.

What would make the CIP partnership more effective?

- Clear goals, understanding of what the outcomes are intended.
- Even though our partnership is a bit more informal in its structure, and for the overall culture of the group, that works, but I do believe certain processes need a bit more formalization, such as this evaluation, which is a step in the right direction.
- More lived experience individuals to attend: CIP and formerly incarcerated parents.
- Even more involvement from law enforcement and the early childhood sector.
- More guidance on an overall goal or goals to be achieved within a timeframe.
- Not sure.
- Strategic plan.
- More guidance on an overall goal or goals to be achieved within a timeframe.
- I believe it is impressive already!
- An engagement dashboard for partners to get information, collaborate, share and communicate.

- More clear strategic goals, set timelines, and action steps given to partners (that can be tailored to fit their respective org missions).
- Setting group goals.
- A strategic plan.
- Shared goals for the year include action steps for engaging legislative members to increase advocacy and promote the issues of biggest importance to CIP work.
- Set goals and benchmarks.
- Coffee and lunch times together that isn't just a meeting so partners can get to know each other, which is not possible during CIP meetings.

References

King, C. L. (2014). Quality Measures Partnership Effectiveness
Continuum, Waltham, MA: Education Development Center, Inc.

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E-TEAM, at the University of Oklahoma, designs research and evaluations to help organizations understand and use information and data to solve real-world problems with progress and outcomes monitoring, technology solutions, study findings, and recommendations.

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