

# Building Impact: A Closer Look at Local Cross-Sector Collaborations for Education

Carolyn J. Riehl, Jeffrey R. Henig,  
Michael A. Rebell, Jessica R. Wolff

**TEACHERS COLLEGE**  
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

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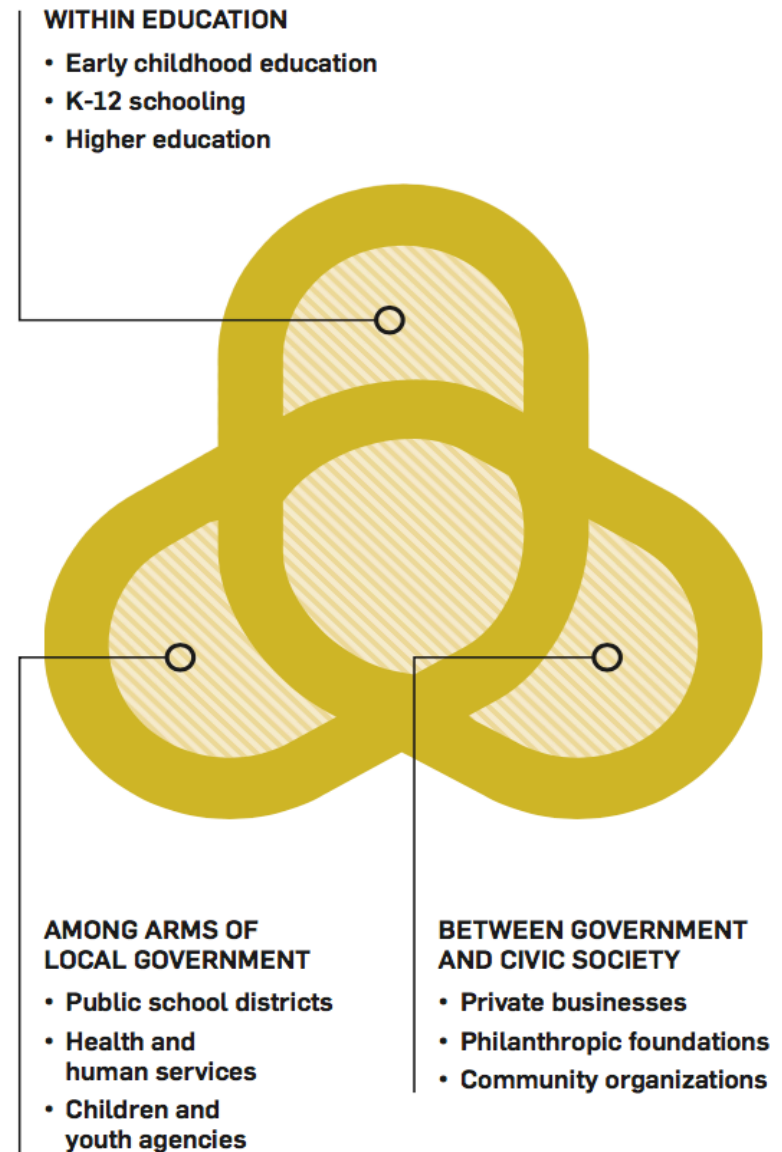


# Our Wallace-funded study

- Charge: to develop understandings of how and why cross-sector collaborations get started and the factors that influence their implementation and continuation
- National scan of 182 collaborations (website info)
- Case studies: 3 deep dives and 5 mini-cases

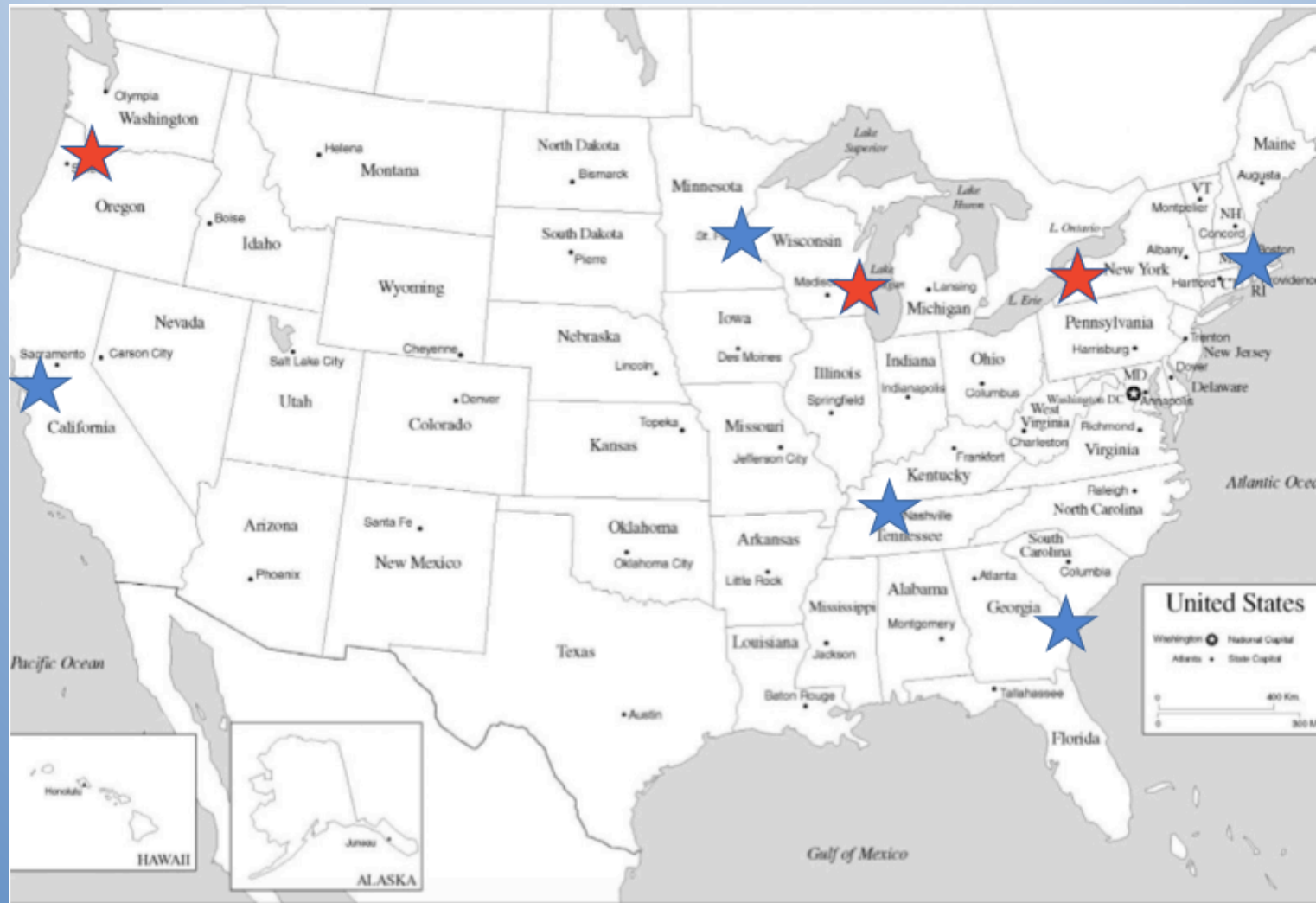
# National sample

- Place-based
- Focus on education
- Cross-sector involvement



# Major cases: Portland, Milwaukee, Buffalo

## Mini cases: Oakland, Minneapolis, Nashville, Savannah, Providence




Q: Why the interest in cross-sector collaboration as a “new” strategy?

# An idea with a past, enduring appeal...



Complex social  
problems need  
multidimensional  
solutions



Comprehensive,  
coordinated  
approaches can avoid  
gaps and overlaps

## ... and new contextual conditions

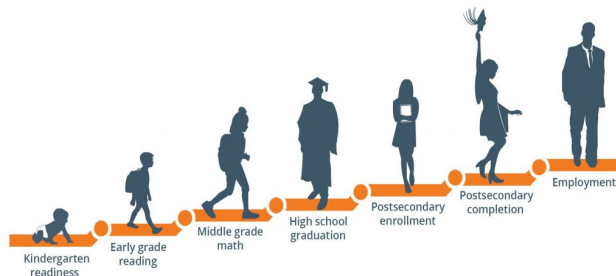
- Post-recession fiscal constraints
- Post-NCLB declining confidence in federal and top-down reforms
- Frustration with vulnerabilities from leadership turnover
- Increased acceptance that both school and non-school factors influence student success
- New ideas about backbone structures, use of data, and national network support

Q: What resources and services have collaborations provided in early childhood education, K-12 schooling, and post-secondary education and employment?



## Theories of action:

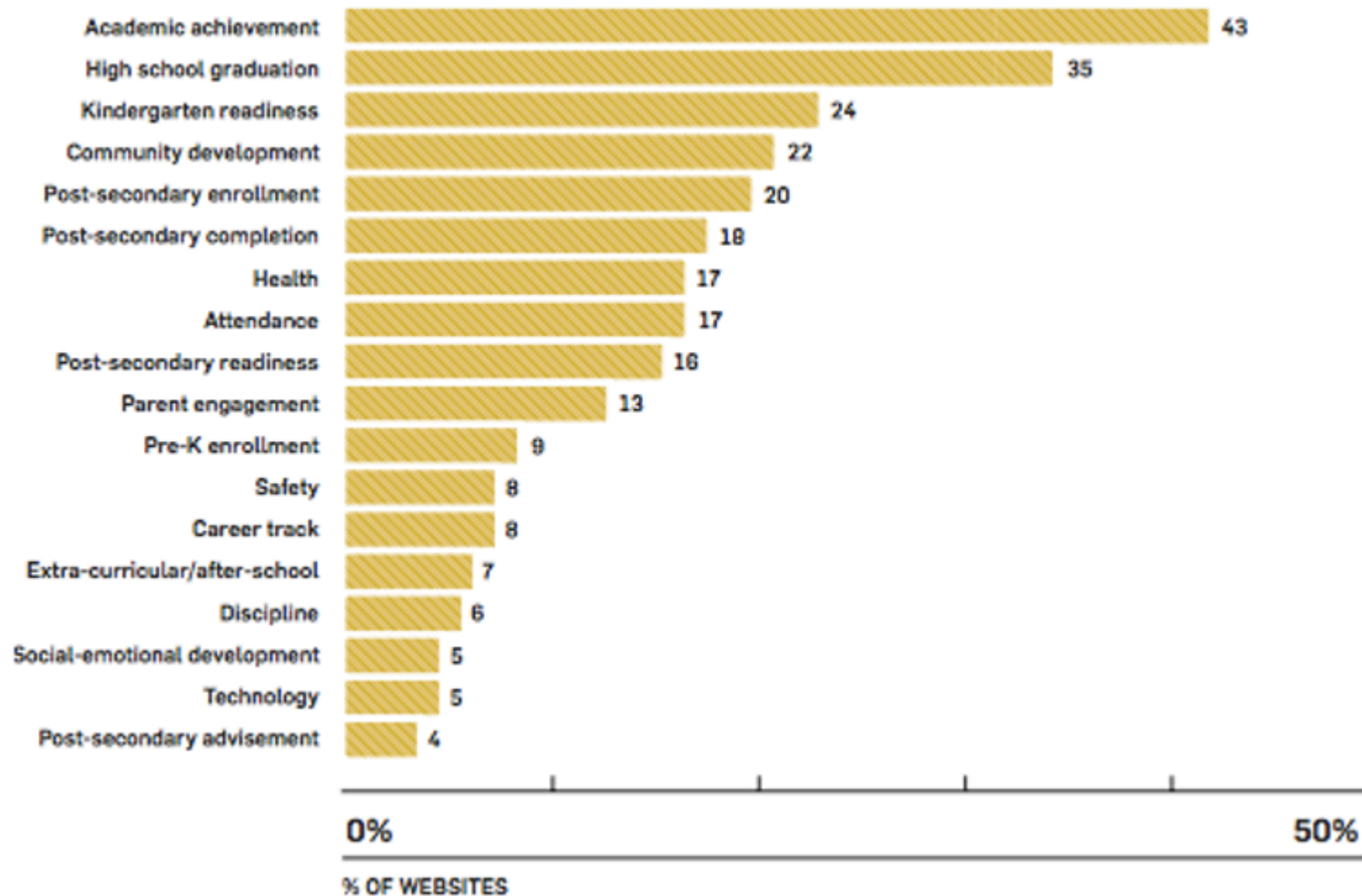
- Cradle-to-career orientation
- Comprehensive, wrap-around supports
- Root-cause analysis
- Accountability for outcomes
- Sustainability strategy



## What we observed:

- Difficult to address everything at once
- Services across the span:
  - Improved ECE centers
  - School-based interventions
  - College access supports
  - Health, social service, legal supports
- Scaled-back outcome expectations

# National Scan – Indicators Tracked



Q: How do cross-sector collaborations work with local school systems?

- Working together without undercutting school districts' needs for autonomy and success (Milwaukee, Nashville)
- Providing safe venues to examine persistent problems and develop new approaches (Portland)
- Emphasizing support services (Minneapolis, Buffalo, Oakland)
- Calming down toxic climate for education (Buffalo, Milwaukee) Re-positioning when relationships aren't productive (Savannah, Providence)

Q: How do cross-sector collaborations address issues of equity in their locales?

- Symbolic and substantive responses
- From colorblind approaches to targeted solutions
- Grassroots, community involvement (including youth)
- Messaging about root causes of poverty and racism
- Heightened attention during vigorous social protests?

Q: What implications and suggestions can be drawn for next steps?

- Moving beyond supporting school systems to strengthening them
- Broadening outreach and inclusion of diverse stakeholders
- Reducing the reliance on philanthropic support
- Policy advocacy
- Adjusting to the national political environment



# For more information:

<https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/cross-sector-collaboration/pages/default.aspx>

