



WELCOME TO THE PARTNERSHIP SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL/SURVEY

This easy-to-use, reliable, web-based tool gives partnerships an exciting new way to assess how well their collaborative process is working and to identify specific areas they can focus on to make the process work well. The tool is being provided to partnerships as a tool for Hickman Mills C-1 School District partnerships. Below, we describe: Why this tool/survey is needed, how the tool/survey was developed, who should use the tool/survey, how the tool/survey works, how partnerships can use the tool/survey to assess their partnerships with the District at the end of every year of its existence.

Why the Partnership Tool/Survey is needed? Partnerships are very valuable because the collaborative process brings different kinds of people and organizations together, making it possible for them to accomplish much more than they can on their own. Running a successful collaborative process is more easily said than done, however, particularly when a partnership involves participants from very different backgrounds, like professionals, service providers, and community residents directly affected by problems. Because of the tremendous difficulties involved, many partnerships are struggling to make the most of their collaborative potential.

Moreover, other than assessing whether or not they achieve their ultimate goals, most partnerships lack a reliable way to determine how well their collaborative process is working or what they can do to make it work better. The Partnership Self-Assessment Tool/Survey was designed to meet these needs. It helps partnerships: Understand how collaboration works and what it means to create a successful collaborative process, assess how well the collaborative process is working, identifies specific areas they can focus on to make the collaborative process work better.

How the Partnership Self-Assessment Tool/Survey was developed? A successful collaborative process enables a group of primarily Hickman Mills C-1 Stakeholders came together to combine their complementary knowledge, skills, and resources so they can accomplish more together than they can on their own. We call this unique combining power “partnership synergy.” The synergy that a partnership achieves through a successful collaborative process is not just an exchange of resources among participants. Together, the participants create something new and valuable — a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. When a collaborative process achieves a high level of synergy, the partnership is able to think in new and better ways about how it can achieve its goals; carry out more comprehensive, integrated interventions; and strengthen its relationship with the broader community.

By enabling a partnership to think and act in ways that go beyond the capacities of its individual participants, synergy makes all of the time and effort involved in collaboration worth worthwhile. Any working partnership within the District can use this tool/survey as a measure of success. A partnership should use the tool/survey if it wants to:

See how well its collaborative process is working;

Learn how it can make its collaborative process work better — when it still has time to take corrective action;

Document the “hidden” strengths of its collaborative process to partners, funders, and the community;

Make the partnership more responsive to its partners and the broader community;

Get partners more involved in the leadership and management of the partnership

The checklist

Rate your level of agreement with each of the statements below, with 0 indicating strong disagreement and 4 indicating a strong agreement.

	0 Strongly disagree	1 Disagree	2 Not sure	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree	
1. Determining the need for the partnership						
There is a perceived need for the partnership in terms of areas of common interest and complementary capacity.						
There is a clear goal for the partnership.						
There is a shared understanding of, and commitment to, this goal among all potential partners.						
The partners are willing to share some of their ideas, resources, influence and power to fulfil the goal.						
The perceived benefits of the partnership outweigh the perceived costs.						TOTAL
TOTAL						

2. Choosing partners						
The partners share common ideologies, interests and approaches.						
The partners see their core business as partially interdependent.						
There is a history of good relations between the partners.						
The coalition brings added prestige to the partners individually as well as collectively.						
There is enough variety among members to have a comprehensive understanding of the issues being addressed.						TOTAL
TOTAL						

3. Making sure partnerships work						
The managers in each organization support the partnership.						
Partners have the necessary skills for collaborative action.						
There are strategies to enhance the skills of the partnership through increasing the membership or workforce development.						
The roles, responsibilities and expectations of partners are clearly defined and understood by all other partners.						
The administrative, communication and decision-making structure of the partnership is as simple as possible.						TOTAL
TOTAL						

4. Planning collaborative action						
All partners are involved in planning and setting priorities for collaborative action.						
Partners have the task of communicating and promoting the coalition in their own organizations.						
Some staff have roles that cross the traditional boundaries that exist between agencies in the partnership.						
The lines of communication, roles and expectations of partners are clear.						
There is a participatory decision-making system that is accountable, responsive and inclusive.						TOTAL
TOTAL						

Rating	0 Strongly disagree	1 Disagree	2 Not sure	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree	
5. Implementing collaborative action						
Processes that are common across agencies such as referral protocols, service standards, data collection and reporting mechanisms have been standardised.						
There is an investment in the partnership of time, personnel, materials or facilities.						
Collaborative action by staff and reciprocity between agencies is rewarded by management.						
The action is adding value (rather than duplicating services) for the community, clients or the agencies involved in the partnership.						
There are regular opportunities for informal and voluntary contact between staff from the different agencies and other members of the partnership.						TOTAL
TOTAL						

6. Minimising the barriers to partnerships						
Differences in organisational priorities, goals and tasks have been addressed.						
There is a core group of skilled and committed (in terms of the partnership) staff that has continued over the life of the partnership.						
There are formal structures for sharing information and resolving demarcation disputes.						
There are informal ways of achieving this.						
There are strategies to ensure alternative views are expressed within the partnership.						TOTAL
TOTAL						

7. Reflecting on and continuing the partnership						
There are processes for recognising and celebrating collective achievements and/or individual contributions.						
The partnership can demonstrate or document the outcomes of its collective work.						
There is a clear need and commitment to continuing the collaboration in the medium term.						
There are resources available from either internal or external sources to continue the partnership.						
There is a way of reviewing the range of partners and bringing in new members or removing some.						TOTAL
TOTAL						

Aggregate score	TOTAL
Determining the need for a partnership	
Choosing partners	
Making sure partnerships work	
Planning collaborative action	
Implementing collaborative action	
Minimising the barriers to partnerships	
Reflecting on and continuing the partnership	
TOTAL	

Checklist score

0–49 The whole idea of a partnership should be rigorously questioned.

50–91 The partnership is moving in the right direction but it will need more attention if it is going to be really successful.

92–140 A partnership based on genuine collaboration has been established. The challenge is to maintain its impetus and build on the current success.