Partnerships in Context

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Research Questions

How does AMSP fit into the local conceptualization of partnerships? How does that conceptualization help explain where AMSP partnerships thrive and where they do not?

AMSP Research Strand 1:
What critical attributes allow partnerships to develop and flourish in a specific context?
What can be learned from comparing AMSP partnerships that appear to be successful with some that appear to be unsuccessful or only marginally successful?
What are the characteristics of successful models of partnering between IHEs and the school districts in providing successful professional development?

Literature Review

- Increase human capital by raising the level of education in math and science.

- Change requires understanding and working with the core values, human interests, and symbolism within organizations.

- Educational partnerships are often intended to effect change by building community within the partnering organizations or in a process where the partnering organizations are all stakeholders.

Competing conceptualizations of educational partnerships between K-12 schools and higher education.

1. A structural/organizational focus that typically provides a top-down orientation or contrasting interests analysis.

2. A place-based focus on individual communities and the ways they work .

Context of the research:

- Issues of rural education

- Appalachia as a region with a particular history of partnerships and power relations.

Further Research Questions

• From where do the partnerships originate and to where do they spread?

• Why do P-12 and IHE educators choose to participate in an AMSP partnership, formally or otherwise?

• Who is involved in AMSP activities and what is their organizational role?

• Are there discernable interaction patterns and if so, do the patterns differentiate high and low involvement participation? For example, is there a pattern to what organizations or individuals are not active in AMSP?

- How do the organizational structures and policies of a formal partnership enhance or impede the success of the partnership?

- How do the individuals and groups think about the nature of partnerships in general?

- How do place, culture and community influence perceptions of and experience with partnerships?

- What previous partnerships in the locale are identified as having been successful and what were the critical attributes of those partnerships?

Research Design

Stage One:

Identify "high partnership activity" district and "low partnership activity" district

- Use existing AMSP data
  - AMSP activity participation
  - PEP grants
  - Perceived value

AMSP Program Involvement by County
2005-06

District	Summer Academy	Summer Institutes	UDGR	SfS	Excel	Explorers	PEP I	PEP II	PEP III	Total
Bath	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	6
Carter	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	5
Clinton	1	1	1	0	?	?	0	0	Pending	3
Corbin, Ind	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Knott	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	5
Lewis	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	8
Martin	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	?	4
McCreary	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	?	4
Morgan	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Pike	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	4
Pikeville, Ind	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	7
Pulaski	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	7
Rockcastle	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	4
Rowan	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
Wayne	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	Pending	5
Whitley	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	4
Total	13	13	10	1	5	3	5	6	6	

AMSP Participation and Perceived Value by County

District	Contact fr. AMSP	AMSP Summer Inst in county	Nearest Higher Ed.	IHE in district	Value to date AMSP	Potential Value AMSP	Progress Math	Progress Science	Benefits to Administrators	Benefits to Teachers	Benefits to Students	Benefits to Prnts/Families
Campbell	0	Yes	UT Knoxville	UTK	4	5	4	5	3	5	4	2
Carter	0	No	Ky Christn, MSU	MSU, UK	5	4	2	3	4	4	4	1
Casey	1	No	EKU	UK	4	5	2.5	4	5	5	3	1
Clark	1		UK	UK, MSU	5	5	3.5	4	3	5	4	3
Clay	0	No	EKU	Union	5	5	2.5	3	2	3	3	1
Clinton	1	No	Tenn Tech	SomrstWKU	3	4	3	4	2	2	2	1
Corbin Ind	0	No	Union , EKU	Union	5	5	4	5	4	5	4	3
Estill	0	No	EKU	EKU	5	5	4	0	4	4	4	3
Frankfort Ind	1	No	KSU	EKU	4	5	1	2.5	4	0	0	0
Garrard	1	No	EKU, UK	UK	5	4.5	3	4.5	4	4	5	2
Harlan	0	No	UVA	UVA Wise	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	1
Jackson Ind	0	No	UK	UK	4	4	2	3	3	3	4	1
Jessamine	1	Yes	UK	UK	4	5	4	4	4	5	3	2
Johnson	1	No	MSU	MSU, UK	5	5	3.5	4	4	3	4	2
Knott	0	Yes	Alice Lloyd	Wise, MSU	4	5	3	3	4	4.5	2.5	2
Lee		No	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Letcher	0	Yes	UVA, Pikeville	UVA	5	5	4	4	4	5	3.5	3
Lewis	1	No	MSU	Uk	4	5	3	4	3	4	4	3
Lincoln	1	No	EKU	EKU, MSU	4	5	1.5	3	1	3.5	2	1
Madison	0	No	EKU, Berea	EKU	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	0
Martin	0	No	MSU	UVA	4	5	2	3	1	5	5	0
McCreary	1	No	U of Cumberland	UK/UT	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	1
Morgan	1	Yes	MSU, UK, EKU	UK	1	4	2	3	1	2	1	1
Pike	1	Yes	Pikeville Co.	Pikeville	4	5	3	3	4	5	5	0
Pikeville Ind	1	Yes	Pikeville Co.	UVA	3.5	5	5	4	4	4	3	3
Powell	1	No	UK, EKU	EKU	3.5	5	0	5	5	5	3	2
Pulaski	1	No	Somrst, EKU, UK	UK	4	4.5	2	0	4.5	4	0	0
Rockcastle	1	No	EKU	UK, EKU	2	2	4	3	2	3	4	1
Rowan	1	Yes	MSU	UK	3	5	0	0	5	5	3	1
Washington	1	No	UK, Center	UK	5	5	3.5	0	4	4	2	1
Whitley	0	Yes	Union College	EKU, UT	3	3	2	3	2	4	3	2
Woodford	1	No	UK	UK	4	5	3	4	3	4	4	0

A - Summer Academy
B - Summer Institutes for Teachers
C - Using Data, Getting Results

D - "Success for Seniors"
E - Excel Program
F - Explorers
G - PEP Grant

ZER0S IN RATING COLUMNS = NO ANSWER GIVEN

Telephone interviews of District AMSP official coordinators in each Kentucky AMSP school district (13)

- Triangulate extant AMSP data
- Identify key informants in districts

Follow up telephone interviews of identified key informants in AMSP Kentucky districts emerging as potential high and low activity sites.

- Exploration of types of partnerships within and beyond AMSP

Preliminary Phone Interview

1. How long has your district been active in AMSP? (clarify if necessary)

2. Who in your district is involved in AMSP activities? What positions are they in?
   Teachers: elementary _____   middle school _____   high school _____
   Students
   Parents
   Businesses
   Community agencies/organizations?
   Other?

3. What other schools or Institutions of Higher Education are involved in your current partnerships?

4. What particular AMSP activities have you chosen to participate it?
   Summer Academy   Summer Institutes for Teachers   Using Data, Getting Results   Success for Seniors   Excel Program   Explorers
   PEP Grants   year 1____   year 2_____   year 3____
   Note: if the District person doesn't know, make a note; if they give another name, please record it and position and contact info, and pursue.

5. Is you district involved in other partnerships that you're aware of? If so, can you tell me the name of the partnership, or its purposes?

Second Phone Interview

1. Do you know how your district decided to participate in AMSP?
2. How did you become involved?

3. **What types of interactions have you had with your in-district colleagues regarding AMSP?**
   Names _____
1. How often do these interactions occur?
2. Are they by telephone, in person, or at professional development meetings (academies or institutes)?
3. In what setting do these interactions occur? For example, are they formal meetings or informal conversations?
4. Are you allowed time and compensation to pursue these activities?

5. **What about out of district interactions?**
6. Names _____
7. How often do these interactions occur?
8. Are they by telephone, in person, or at professional development meetings (academies or institutes)?
9. In what setting do these interactions occur? For example, are they formal meetings or informal conversations?
10. Are you allowed time and compensation to pursue these activities?

11. **What types of interactions have you had with representatives from AMSP?**

   Names: _____

12. How often do these interactions occur?

13. Are they by telephone, in person, or at professional development meetings (academies or institutes)?

14. In what setting do these interactions occur? For example, are they formal meetings or informal conversations?

15. Are you allowed time and compensation to pursue these activities?

16. **Which interactions would you consider constitute a partnership?**

17. Which individuals do you feel you have a partnership with?

18. Who initiated the partnership?

19. What is the nature of your interactions?

20. Do you consider the partnerships successful? Can you tell me why and in what ways?

Stage Two:

Identified three counties as high and low activity locales.

Reached agreement with one high and one low activity district to participate in field-based interview component of the study.

Conducted 30-90 minute interviews with 43 participants in two districts. Sample derived through inclusion of all educators who had participated in an AMSP activity, related school administrators, and IHE, local community and agency individuals identified by the educators as significant to their range of educational partnerships.

Completed Field-based Interviews
(43 Participants)

	Administrators	High School Teachers	Middle School Teachers	Elem. School Teachers	Community	Higher Ed
High County	9 (5 school - based)	5	5 (2 support)	2	5	
Low County	4 (3 school - based)	1	3	6		
Higher Educ.						3
Total	13	6	8	8	5	3

Field Interview Protocol

1. What is it like to live in this community?
2. Did you grow up here?
3. What is teaching here like? Describe…

With Respect to partnerships in general

4. How would you describe a partnership?
5. Are there different kinds of partnerships? If yes, how are they different or distinct?
6. Have you been involved in any Educational, Professionals/Work Related or Community-Based Partnership(s) prior to AMSP?
    a. If so, describe the partnership and your involvement in it.
    b. If not, did you have opportunities to participate in partnerships that you have declined? If so, why?

In your school setting:

7. How important are partnerships in your work?
8. Are some work partnerships more important than others in achieving professional goals?
9. Do your co-workers consider partnerships a priority in their work?
10. If your school were no longer involved in any partnerships, how would it affect:
    - a. your professional life?
    - b. student opportunities?
    - c. the community?
11. In what ways do partnerships with those in the community affect your work life?
12. What motivates your school to pursue partnerships?
13. What motivates you, personally, to pursue or be involved in partnerships?
14. What factors affect your participating in partnerships within the educational community or the business community.
15. What do you feel motivates community members to partner with schools?
16. How do you decide what might be a good partnership opportunity?

Experience with educational partnership:

17. Can you describe the best partnership you've been involved in?

18. Based on your experience with that partnership, what are some benefits of a partnership?
19. In you experience, what are the more difficult aspects of partnership?
20. In what ways do you consider the partnership to have been successful for the school?
    a. For you, personally?
    b. For the intended purpose of the partnership?

18. In what ways was the partnership not successful:
    a. For the intended purpose of the partnership?
    b. Do you ever feel pressured to take part in certain partnerships?

19. How are individuals within your school (system) selected to be part of a partnership activity?
20. Regarding existing partnerships, how would you change them so that they would work better?

High County Educational Partnership Network Map
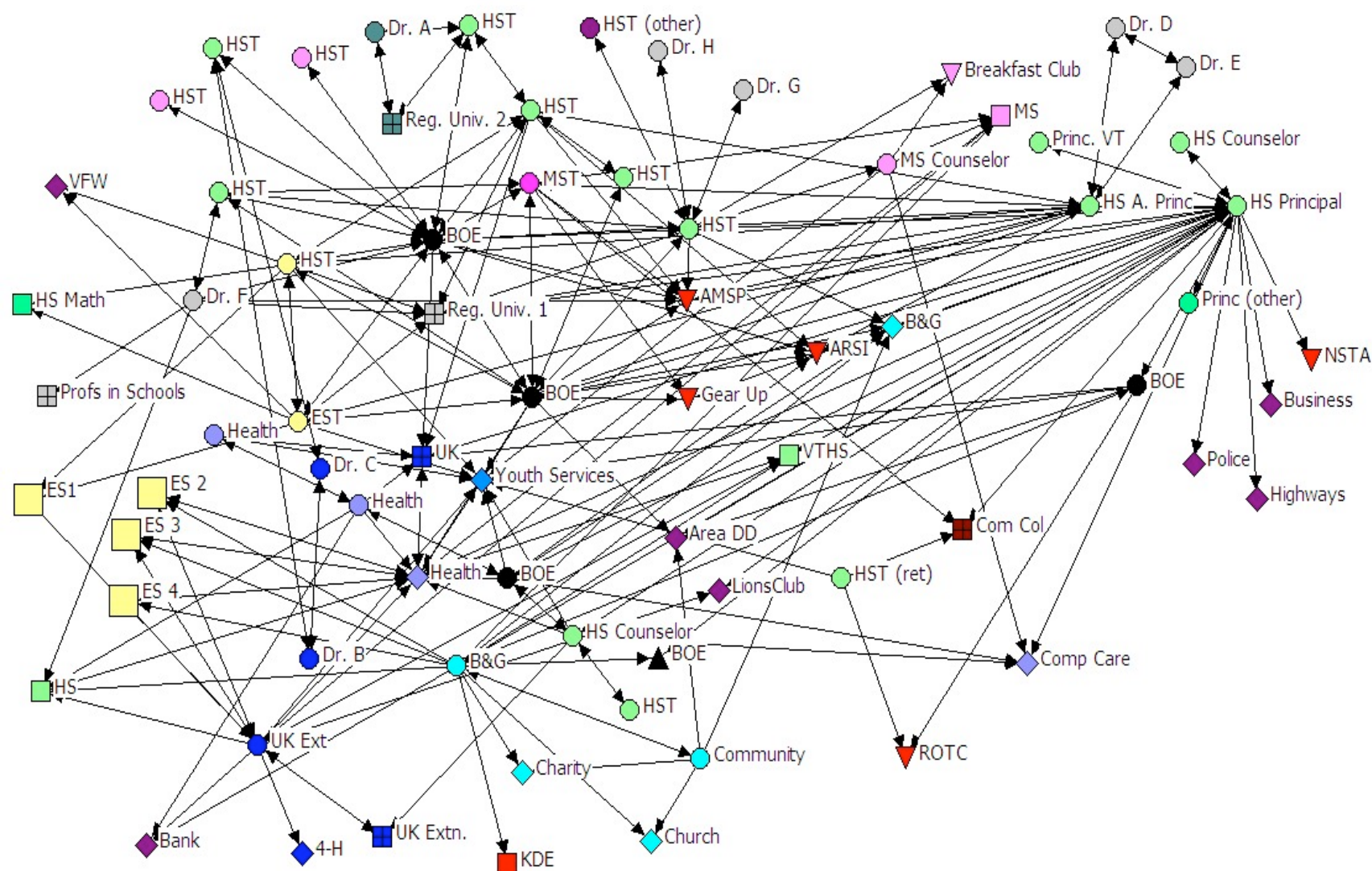
High County AMSP Network Map
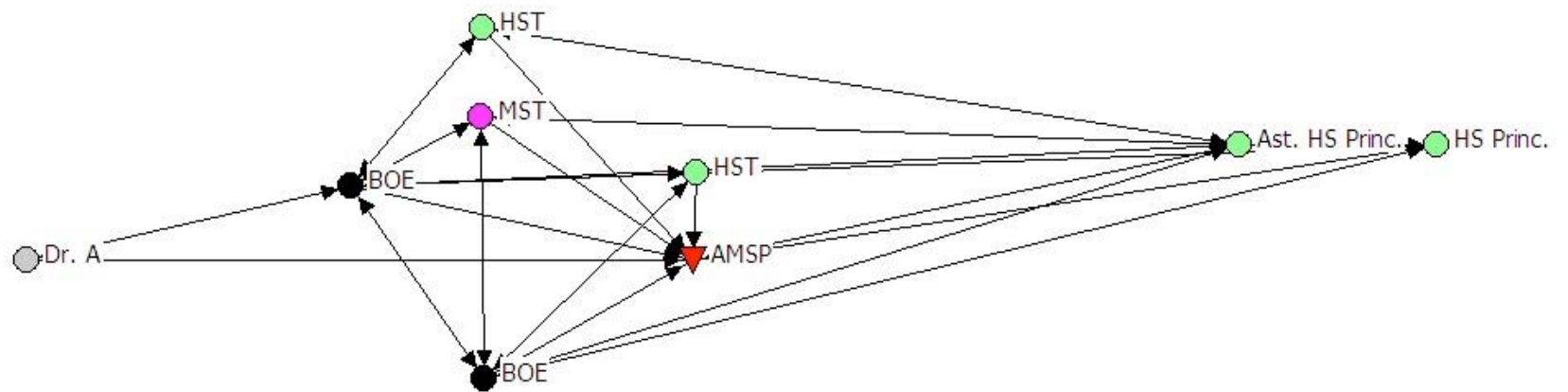
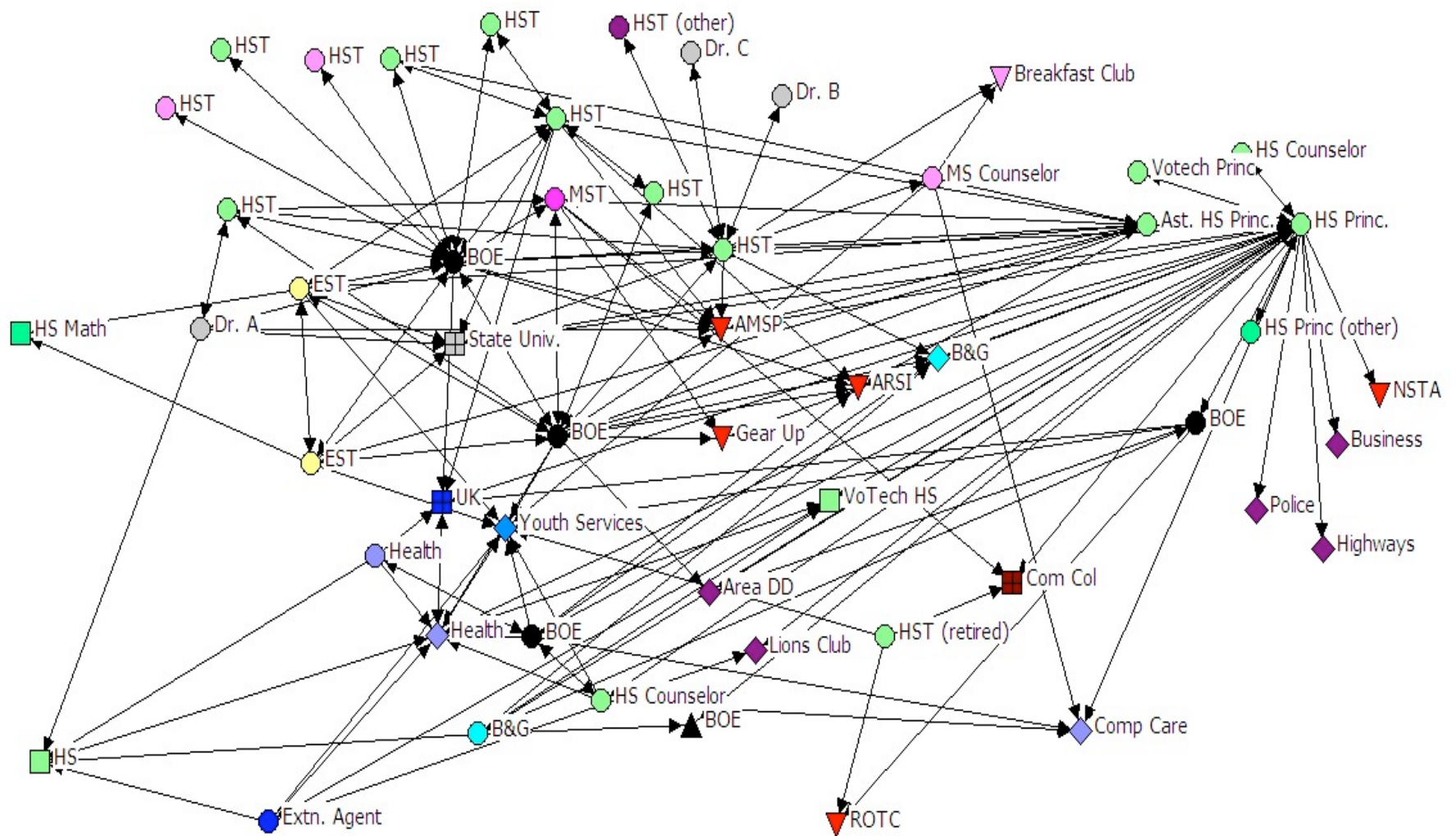High County AMSP Network Map with District Coordinator
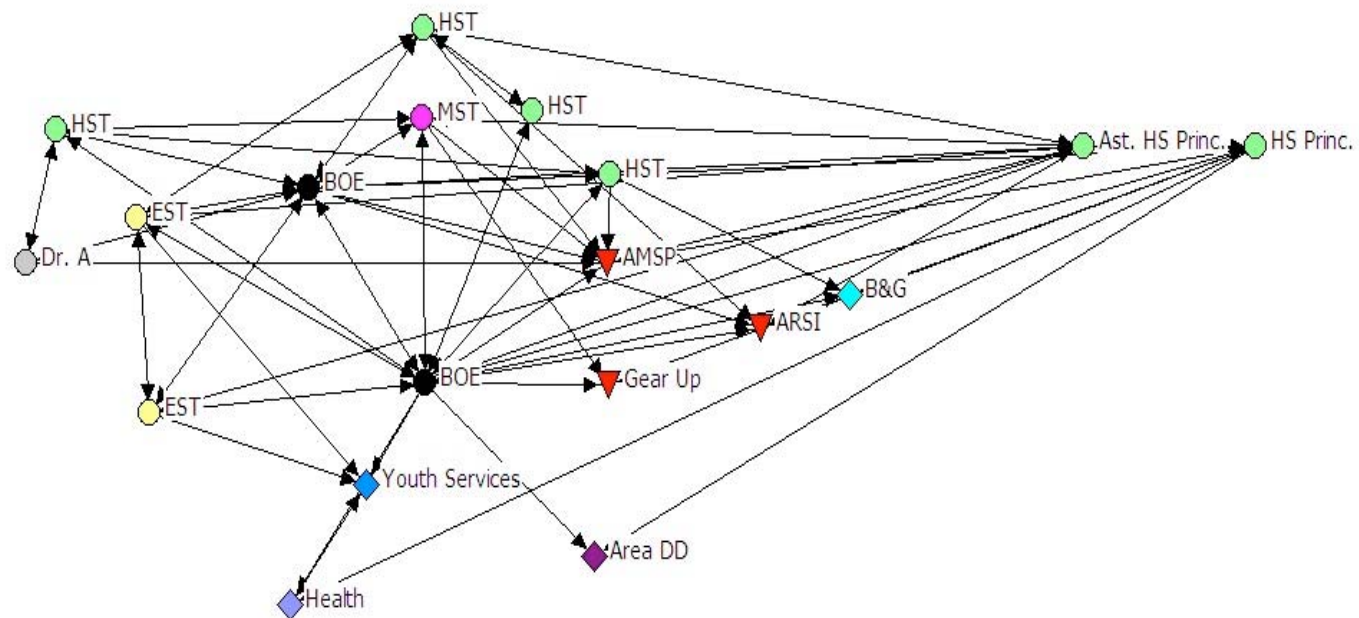
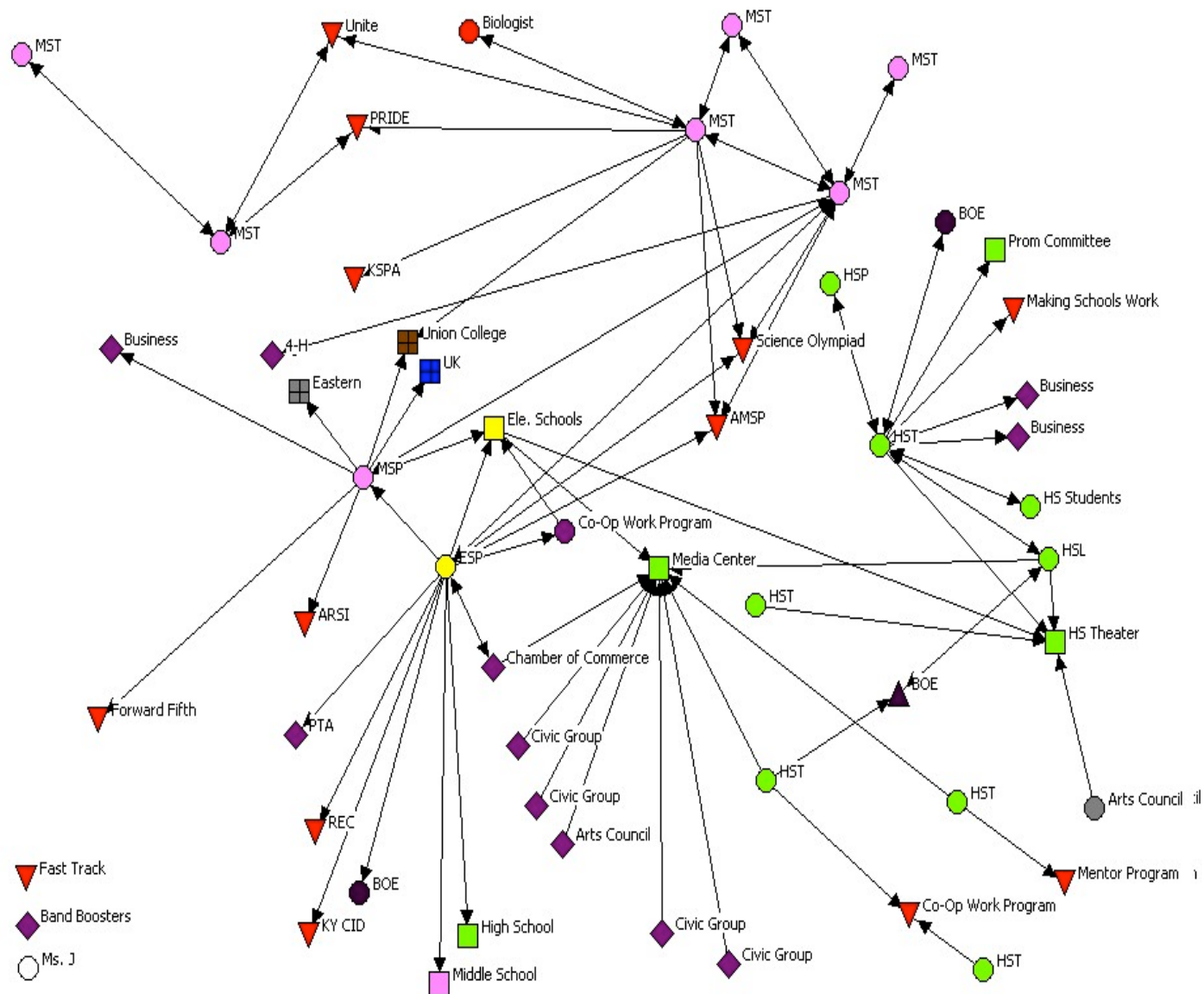# High County High School Teachers' Educational Partnerships
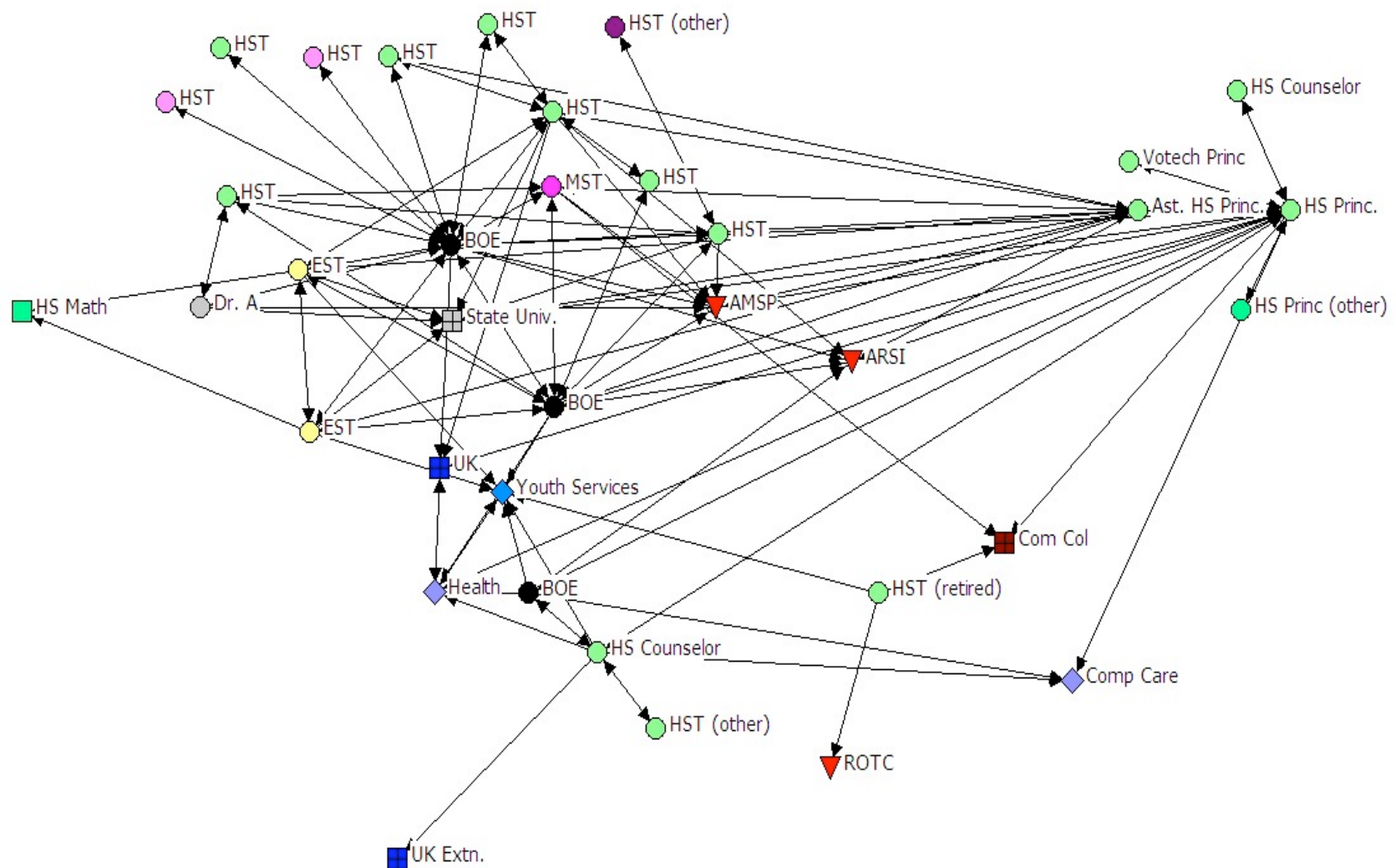
High County High School Teachers' and Principal's Educational Partnerships
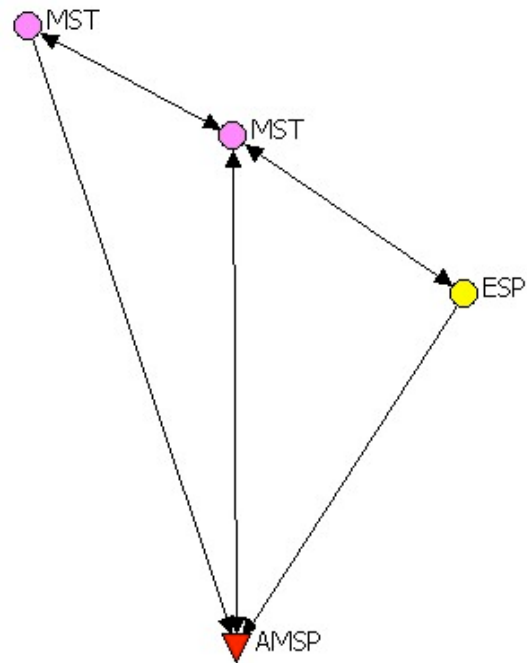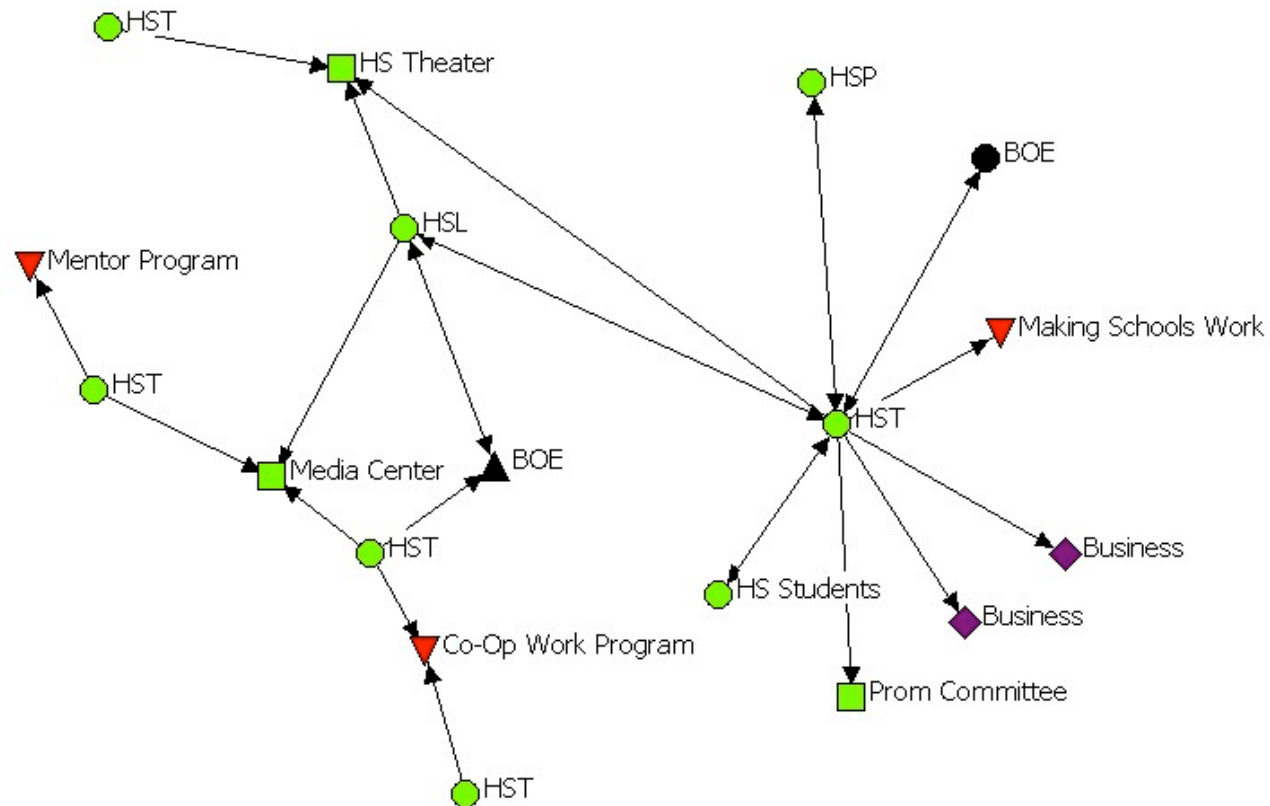
Low County Educational Partnership Network Map

Low County AMSP Network Map

Low County High School Teachers' and Principal's Educational Partnerships

Preliminary Observations

Definition of partnership:

Two or more people or groups working toward a common goal to accomplish something they could not do without the other, either due to lack of resources or expertise. A certain amount of **reciprocity** is assumed:

"I had an opportunity and it might have been through [the] Community College several years ago to do an exchange with like a business or an industry. I don't know why they call it an exchange because nobody from that group really came to visit our school. But they offered us the opportunity to come out for a day and I went to E Manufacturing, just, I think it was two days to see what they do that would line up with what I might do in the curriculum and things like that. ***That would have been a partnership to me had we continued to work and they come to visit my classroom and help me with some things.****" (Retired math teacher)*

Types of Partnerships

Partnerships exist between :

•individual teachers within a school
•individual teachers in different levels and schools within the district
•assistant principal and teachers
•teachers within departments of math, science, special ed
•schools and KDE
•schools or departments and other counties
•school and community organizations
•schools and local businesses
•Schools and community colleges, regional universities, UK

Types of Communication within Partners

- Face-to-face
- Email
- Phone
- Workshops, conferences
- Observations

Purpose of Communication

- Information distribution
- Brainstorming
- Requests
- Accountability
- Planning
- Encouragement

Types of Support Provided by Partnerships

- Access to materials and human resources
- Funding
- Expertise
- Program content and application methods
- Permission

Educational partnerships typically benefit "the kids" either directly or indirectly.

Q. *Of all the partnerships that you are involved in, is there one that stands out to be your favorite?*

A: *Youth Service Center because we can do so much with so many different programs because of them. And then vice versa I think. They just make our lives so much easier… Because… they are the group that is at the school all the time. And they aren't teaching. Their only concern is the students.* (school nurse)

You know, there's a whole lot of things involved in educating a child and you need more than just asking the school – it takes the community.

Personal, respectful relationships are paramount.

For most teachers, the individual is the partner, and becomes the face of the organization. **Building trust** is an important part of establishing a partnership. Teachers want to be respected and taken seriously ("even though we're from x county"); they do not want to be looked down on because of their county's test scores or poverty level.

"… the people were so… that they were smart and they didn't take their smart and make themselves snooty or nothing. They were just so friendly and energetic and ready and it was all just laid on the table, ready for us when we got there." (science teacher)

Proximity and local imbeddedness matter.

Partnerships that are an immediate, part of teachers' everyday experience, occur in school or community are more often mentioned than those that require only sporadic or intermittent involvement. Intensity of participation diminished with physical distance from home.

Constraints to partnership effectiveness

- Time
- Energy
- Lack of shared commitment
- Distance
- Lack of personal relationship
- Ideology
- Information sharing

Some partnerships have their own purpose in mind and it might be for [something] we don't necessarily agree with or doesn't meet our goals here so, yea, some are more important than others. You have to look at what you have to do, core content and so on. And some of these things just take too much time out of the classroom teacher's time…Sometimes I am not sure [teachers] are really aware of…opportunities and then we have some that don't see it as important.

Participation in partnership is partly decided on whether the time and effort are deemed worth the benefits.

•Felt need for the benefit, i.e., I am teaching this next week and am not sure how best to present it

•Students will learn better (and perform better on standardized tests)

•Students will like the pedagogic approach

•Students will be healthier

•Teachers will garner new resources/materials for classroom use

•Teachers will learn new content and new approaches that provide personal, intellectual stimulation and stimulate students

•Superiors or peers will be pleased by teacher's participation

•Parents will value education

The intensity of participation in the partnerships ranges widely

1. aware of the relationship, "yes I've heard of you, but that's about it"
2. engaged actively in the partnership
3. recognized by others as an important part of the partnership, as in the case of teacher mentors or instructional leaders

    "Dee, because she was a regional teacher partner, because she's involved at pretty near the source, you know with a tie to UK, so she gets that information and she makes sure she gets out that information and then she'll talk to us and then say do you want to do this. Most of the time the science folks say yes."

This district recognizes a need to improve education within its community and perceives partnerships as one route toward this.

The district seems receptive to working with organizations and is aware of the need to use every possible resource to improve the conditions of schools, increase respect for the school district, and bolster opportunities for its students (e.g. health, formal academics, enrichment).

Those most strongly involved in the organizational commitment to partnership tend to be at higher levels within the school district.

Partnerships with Institutions of Higher Education

Colleges and universities are recognized as legitimate, authoritative sources of information. However, they were not usually mentioned by teachers as partners without direct prompting.

The IHE's most often mentioned were geographically close.

> *I really haven't been in contact with any professors at any institution for quite a while outside of uh, State U and that's just because … we actually went down and did an AMSP workshop at State U and then one of the professors helped with that, but that's.. I mean, that's as close to a contact as I've had in the past two years…*

When individuals do refer to IHE's as resources, they refer to a particular individual who might be helpful in solving a problem, personal or academic, or in providing information.

- The named professors were people with whom the teachers had an established, face-to-face relationship.
- Of the professors named as potential or actually active resources, only about half were through AMSP.

I call Prof. M about reading. We needed to do something. Our kids weren't reading very well. We needed to develop some sort of program that would help them read a little better.. I call Prof. M; she knows reading.

….

She was my instructor. I was a graduate assistant at State University. I was an adjunct instructor there for a year and she's my friend. So I guess I just, I have that connection with a lot of folks in education at State University. And if they need something from me all they have to do is call and all I have to do is go to State University and ask. I don't mind to ask.

AMSP as a district partner: administrators' view

- District and school curriculum administrators see AMSP/High County as a strong partnership.

  "We use data better because of what ARSI and AMSP have said and the district is really better that way (as a result) …" Administrator

- One district Board of Education administrator is the key figure identified by teachers as connecting AMSP and the county.

AMSP as a district partner: teachers' view

Teachers regard AMSP more as a resource for professional development and a source of good teaching materials than as a partnership. They were most appreciative of the resources they could bring home with them, which often were in the form of kits to teach a particular math or science concept.

Teachers who attend institutes or participate in PEP grants highly value the experience. They found them
  "*very helpful, exciting, well-prepared, more hands-on than most, useful, beneficial to the kids, stimulating.*"

The experience of traveling to other districts to observe teachers was a useful one-time experience, although few remember the name of the teacher they observed or remain in contact.

Despite weekly emails with AMSP-related information from their district Board of Education office, many teachers were not aware of AMSP. Some teachers said they only went to a summer institute because a friend in another district told them it was good.

When AMSP was mentioned as a partnership, it was not often at the top of anyone's list, unless in response to a specific prompt.

What's next?

- Continue to analyze the date from "Low District:"
  - Update Social Network Analysis mapping
  - Thematic Content analysis of interviews
- Conduct additional Low District interviews

- Follow up survey based on interview data analysis

- Comparisons of High District and Low District data