

# Building Effective Quadruple Partnerships Across Families, Schools, Communities, and Universities

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## Abstract

The dual capacity-building framework created by Mapp and her colleagues (i.e., Mapp & Bergman, 2019; Mapp & Kuttner, 2013) lays a foundation for an extended partnership beyond families and schools. In this article, we explore how to extend the value of the dual capacity-building framework to a larger partnership that includes communities and universities. Our analyses are centered on the four essential components of the capacity-building framework—challenges, opportunity conditions, policies and program goals, and capacity outcomes—in the context of quadruple partnerships. Adding examples of successful university-community partnerships to the existing dual capacity-building framework will better support families' and schools' efforts to promote students' academic success. Because the capacity-building framework is grounded in rigorous research and thoughtful analyses, higher education outreach and engagement programs can adopt it to foster more effective partnerships with families, schools, and communities, and positively transform K-12 education.

*Keywords: dual capacity-building framework, quadruple partnership, family-school-community-university partnership, higher education engagement*



All stakeholders involved in K-12 student learning and success, such as parents, school staff, community partners, and university faculty, are interested in asking and answering questions about how to provide a better education for their students. Although different stakeholders vary a great deal in terms of the questions that interest them, they share a common concern for maximizing K-12 student learning and success through collaborating with each other. Building an effective partnership is key to this collaboration. Although approaches to building an effective partnership are largely influenced by stakeholders' disciplines and beliefs, stakeholders often choose suboptimal approaches (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013). Because the dual capacity-building framework created by Karen L. Mapp and her colleagues is well-known by educators, we believe that extending this framework would be useful to develop a more extensive partnership

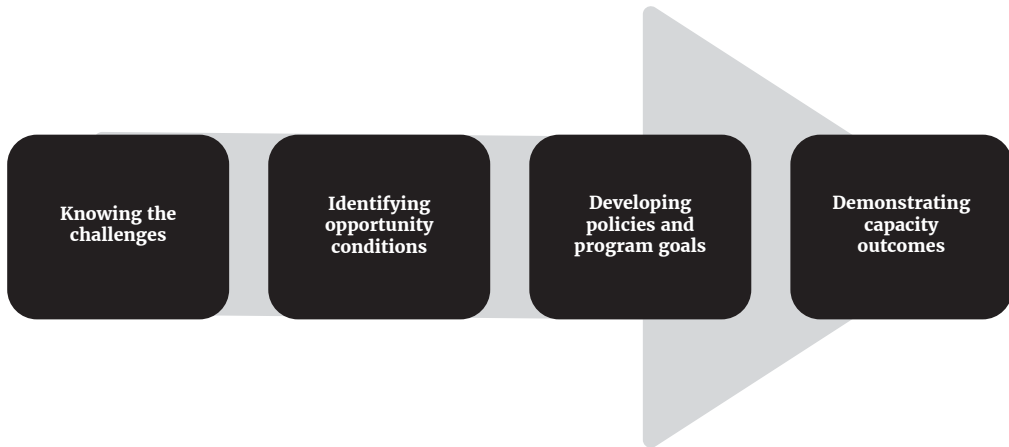
that includes not only schools and families but also communities and universities (i.e., the quadruple partnership). To explore how Mapp and her colleagues' work can be extended for a quadruple partnership, it is essential to first understand the original design of their framework.

## The Dual Capacity-Building Framework

Karen L. Mapp and Paul J. Kuttner at Harvard University, working in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education, created a dual capacity-building framework to guide the organizing of effective family-school partnerships. Mapp and Kuttner (2013) proposed a sequence of essential components to enhance the effectiveness of family-school partnerships (see Figure 1).

The first component is *knowing the challenges*. It is essential that stakeholders discover the barriers that hinder family-school partnerships. The second component is *identifying the opportunity conditions* needed

**Figure 1. The Essential Components of the Dual Capacity-Building Framework**



for the partnership to thrive. The third component is *developing policies and program goals* to enhance capacity across the “4 Cs”: capabilities (skills and knowledge), connections (networks), cognition (beliefs and values), and confidence (self-efficacy). The final component is *demonstrating capacity outcomes*. Educators value parents’ efforts, in which they aim to connect family engagement to student learning and parenting practices (Clark, 1993). Educators work to create a culturally responsive environment where parents know the different roles that they can play to maximize their children’s learning (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013).

Mapp and Bergman (2019) later developed a second version of the dual capacity-building framework for family-school partnerships. Although retaining the four essential components of the framework, the second version refines the language and extends the application of the framework to better support and develop family engagement strategies, policies, and programs. In addition, the sequence of some key ideas is adjusted to prioritize their importance, and explanations are added to clarify the ideas. For example, in the process conditions, the concept of “trust” was added, as it determines the quality of a partnership. Mapp and Kuttner (2013) stressed that their framework “should be seen as a compass, laying out the goals and conditions necessary to chart a path toward effective family engagement efforts that are linked to student achievement and school improvement” (p. 6). In other words, this framework should be viewed not as a cookie-cutter solution but as a tool that guides school

staff and families in supporting student learning. Table 1 shows a comparison between the first and the second versions of the dual capacity-building framework for family-school partnerships.

### Shifting From Dual to Quadruple Capacity-Building Framework

In this article we posit that there is value in expanding the dual capacity-building framework to a quadruple capacity-building framework that includes two additional partner groups: communities and universities. We consider at least two reasons the framework should include communities and universities. First, many nationwide, statewide, and local nonprofit community organizations offer K-12 students and their families support. In urban school districts with fewer resources than affluent school districts, the impact of community organizations is particularly crucial (Epstein et al., 2018; Gold et al., 2004). Second, universities cultivate future teachers and offer instructional and research resources to maximize students’ learning in the K-12 school setting. Using the four components of the Mapp & Kuttner framework (challenges, opportunity conditions, goals, and capacity outcomes), we explore how the extension of the dual capacity-building framework could be reframed into a quadruple capacity-building framework and put into practice.

#### Reframing Considerations for Component 1: Knowing the Challenges

Mapp and her colleagues have identified common challenges that families and

**Table 1. Summary of Program Characteristics**

Components	1st Version (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013)	2nd Version (Mapp & Bergman, 2019)
Knowing the Challenges	<u>Educators</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of opportunities for <b>school/ program staff</b> to build the capacity for partnerships</li> </ul>	<u>Educators</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have not been exposed to strong examples of family engagement</li> <li>Have received minimal training</li> <li>May not see partnerships as an essential practice</li> <li>May have developed deficit mindsets</li> </ul>
	<u>Families</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of opportunities for <b>families</b> to build the capacity for partnerships</li> </ul>	<u>Families</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have not been exposed to strong examples of family engagement</li> <li>Have had negative past experiences with schools and educators</li> <li>May not feel invited to contribute to their children’s education</li> <li>May feel disrespected, unheard, and unvalued</li> </ul>
Identifying Opportunity Conditions	<u>Process conditions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linked to learning</li> <li>Relational</li> <li>Development vs. service orientation</li> <li>Collaborative</li> <li>Interactive</li> </ul>	<u>Process conditions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relational: built on mutual trust</li> <li>Linked to learning and development</li> <li>Asset-based</li> <li>Culturally responsive and respectful</li> <li>Collaborative</li> <li>Interactive</li> </ul>
	<u>Organizational conditions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Systemic: across the organization</li> <li>Integrated: embedded in all programs</li> <li>Sustained: with resources and infrastructure</li> </ul>	<u>Organizational conditions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Systemic: embraced by leadership across the organization</li> <li>Integrated: embedded in all strategies</li> <li>Sustained: with resources and infrastructure</li> </ul>
Developing Policies and Program Goals	To build and enhance the capacity of staff/ families in the “4 C” areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capabilities (skills, knowledge)</li> <li>Connections (networks)</li> <li>Cognition (beliefs, values)</li> <li>Confidence (self-efficacy)</li> </ul>	To build and enhance the capacity of educators and families in the “4 C” areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capabilities (skills, knowledge)</li> <li>Connections (networks)</li> <li>Cognition (shifts in beliefs, values)</li> <li>Confidence (self-efficacy)</li> </ul>
Demonstrating Capacity Outcomes	<u>School and program staff who can:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Honor and recognize families’ funds of knowledge</li> <li>Connect family engagement to student learning</li> <li>Create welcoming inviting cultures</li> </ul>	<u>Educators are empowered to:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connect family engagement to learning and development</li> <li>Engage families as cocreators</li> <li>Honor family funds of knowledge</li> <li>Create welcoming cultures</li> </ul>
	<u>Families who can negotiate multiple roles:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporters</li> <li>Encouragers</li> <li>Monitors</li> <li>Advocates</li> <li>Decision makers</li> <li>Collaborators</li> </ul>	<u>Families engage in diverse roles:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cocreators</li> <li>Supporters</li> <li>Encouragers</li> <li>Monitors</li> <li>Advocates</li> <li>Models</li> </ul>

schools face when building a partnership (Mapp & Bergman, 2019; Mapp & Kuttner, 2013). These challenges can be grouped into four categories: (1) lack of exposure to examples of successful partnerships, (2) a closed mindset about partnerships, (3) distrust in partnerships, and (4) the hidden curriculum. Such challenges exist not only in family-school partnerships but also in the family-school-community-university partnership. Different stakeholders have different answers to questions like “What counts as a partnership?” “How is a partnership best developed and sustained?” and “How is the partnership best transmitted to different contexts?” Discussing challenges at the forefront is needed to promote cross-discipline understanding in partnerships. The four categories of challenges are discussed below in relation to a quadruple capacity-building framework.

#### *Lack of Exposure to Examples of Successful Partnerships*

To help students succeed in school and beyond, schools, families, communities, and universities possess a strong desire to work together. However, the conflicts and pre-existing dynamics in established structures can make such collaboration challenging. Consequently, families often struggle to grasp the complexities of their collaborators’ roles. According to Mapp and Kuttner (2013), parents often do not have the capacity to navigate the complexities of the U.S. educational system, to say nothing of the extended partnership outside the educational system. At the same time, it can be difficult for communities to build connections and jointly achieve mutual goals with different groups because they all possess different missions and scopes of services (Sandy & Holland, 2006). Research indicates that family and community engagement has not been effectively addressed in the higher education teacher preparation programs (Epstein, 2018; Epstein & Sanders, 2009). As a result of limited exposure to examples of successful quadruple partnerships, each stakeholder continues to embrace its own philosophy and disciplinary standards. They work on their individual entity and do not develop an effective partnership to support student learning, school improvement, and stakeholder development as a whole.

As stakeholders continue the important work in their respective fields, the existing successful examples of community-university partnerships serve an indispensable

role in facilitating the expansion of the dual capacity-building framework. For example, in supporting urban students, Warren (2005) argued that urban education reform requires community collaboration. Such collaboration should not be imposed from the top. Rather, authentic participation occurs when people involved in initiatives develop a sense of ownership and commit themselves to mutual goals. Warren also stressed the invaluable role that universities play in offering instruction, training, and examination of the strengths and weaknesses of the initiatives. Moreover, research shows that universities can revitalize their neighborhoods socially and economically through offering voluntary activities, developing community outreach programs, and attracting new people to the college town (Ehlenz, 2017). Universities can serve as key contributors to urban and community development, given their rich human and intellectual resources (Hodges & Dubb, 2012). But however excellent these actions may be, only intentional efforts will enable the sharing of success stories outside local communities, so they can help students in other urban schools.

#### *A Closed Mindset About Partnerships*

Stakeholders’ competency training in sustaining a partnership is important to children’s academic success and school engagement (Spath et al., 2008). Although guidelines for building effective partnerships are available, systematic training and sustainable efforts require funding and stakeholders’ dedication of time, energy, and action. Stakeholders often find themselves engaged in the activities they initiate, but they are not engaged in the unfamiliar roles they are asked to play (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013). With a closed mindset about partnerships, stakeholders are unlikely to make time for training and build competency for sustaining their partnership. They may just try to fit into the partnership rather than finding how the partnership is rewarding to them. Therefore, developing and sustaining partnerships is meaningful only if stakeholders consider the partnership an essential practice.

#### *Distrust in Partnerships*

The development of the quadruple partnership does not begin and end with training and resources. Partnerships are built upon trust. Joanna Geller et al. (2014), well-known scholars in family-school-com-

munity engagement, believe that trust is fundamental to their development of the Promise Neighborhoods (PN), an initiative in a low-income and disadvantaged community. They defined trust as “one party’s willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is a) benevolent, b) reliable, c) competent, d) honest, and e) open” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 556). In this sense, maintaining a trustful relationship depends on each stakeholder making efforts to win their partners’ trust. Without trust, stakeholders will not feel comfortable sharing their work with others. Listening to each other and finding solutions to address the identified issues are critical to building needed trust. Mutual respect, transparency, and codes of conduct are also essential components to building trustful relationships.

Research shows that when stakeholders have unpleasant partnership experiences with a particular group of people, they may create stereotypes of that group or allow their experience to reinforce their negative stereotypes (Bryan, 2005; Coleman & Churchill, 1997; Epstein & Sanders, 2002). Consequently, they tend to trust and feel more comfortable working with those who share their social and cultural capital (Lareau & Horvat, 1999). When stakeholders are suspicious about their partners, they become reluctant to share their ideas and data, creating gaps in the quadruple relationship.

### *The Hidden Curriculum*

Partnerships exist in the context of countless unwritten rules from personal beliefs to professional commitments. For example, if the partnership involves funding from one particular group, one stakeholder may have a more dominant position or power over the other stakeholders. In addition, different disciplines have their own definitions regarding suitable practices, which may not be understood or accepted by stakeholders in other disciplines. Furthermore, leaders’ capabilities are crucial in building an effective partnership because their leadership carries out directives that influence the partnership structure and atmosphere. Funding allocations, disciplinary practices, and leadership are hidden curricula that make some stakeholders feel devalued or unwelcome in the partnership (Epstein, 2018). Feeling undervalued or powerless can lead to stakeholder apathy (Ajani, 2018). Therefore, stakeholders need to anticipate

and forestall conflicts stemming from the hidden curriculum. The alternative may be damage to communication, a decline in engagement, and contingency issues.

In summary, the four categories of challenges discussed in this section—lack of examples, mindset, distrust, and power—can hinder an effective partnership, and recognizing them is essential for stakeholders to identify meaningful opportunities and establish conditions necessary for creating effective partnerships across families, schools, communities, and universities.

### **Reframing Considerations for Component 2: Identifying Opportunity Conditions**

After knowing the challenges, the next step is to identify opportunity conditions that must be met for confronting the challenges. These conditions allow stakeholders to be more explicit in the opportunities they create to build a successful quadruple partnership. Identifying the challenges together encourages stakeholders to appreciate these opportunities as a whole rather than on each individual level. In other words, stakeholders become more intentional in their actions in the quadruple relationship. To maximize the success of the opportunities, Mapp and her colleagues argued that two types of conditions must be met.

The first set of conditions are called *process conditions*. Here the term *process* refers to the actions of individuals, such as educators and parents. Partnership initiatives must meet certain process conditions in order for stakeholders to be willing to create and participate in capacity-building opportunities. These opportunities have to be goal-linked, closely aligned with student learning and success. Mapp and Kuttner (2013) stressed that these opportunities cannot be generic or random acts. School personnel and families want to walk away with new knowledge that has practical applications in their respective roles. This concept is equally important in establishing an effective quadruple relationship in which the opportunities are tied to the development of mutual trust, student learning and development, asset-based approaches, culturally responsive practices, collaboration among all stakeholders, and interaction across all participants (Mapp & Bergman, 2019).

The second set of conditions are called *organizational conditions*. Just as processes for building capacity must meet certain criteria

to inspire stakeholders' participation, organizations themselves must maintain certain characteristics of capacity-building initiatives, with support not only at the frontline employee level but also from administrators. In the family-school partnership, collaborations are feasible and sustainable for teachers and parents only when their school districts back them up. Similarly, community partners and university faculty also need the support of their organizations. This support includes scheduling, training, resources, and funding allocations. According to Mapp and Kuttner (2013), organizations must support three characteristics in capacity-building initiatives: The initiatives must be systemic, integrated, and sustained.

The key concepts related to process conditions and organizational conditions that must be met to achieve effective quadruple partnerships are detailed in the next sections.

### *Meeting Process Conditions*

For initiatives to build capacity for quadruple partnerships, their processes must exhibit six traits: relational and built on mutual trust, linked to student learning and development, asset based, culturally responsive and respectful, collaborative, and interactive.

**Relational: Built on Mutual Trust.** A successful partnership starts from mutual trust. When stakeholders trust each other, they feel safe to share their honest expectations and visions with their partners (Ishimaru, 2014; Weiss et al., 2014). Trust has been proven a critical factor that contributes to stakeholders' participation and the success of their partnerships (Poynton et al., 2018). Mapp and Kuttner (2013) stated: "a focus on relationship building is especially important in circumstances where there has been a history of mistrust between families and school or district staff, or their negative past experiences or feelings of intimidation hamper the building of partnerships" (p. 9). They pointed out that communication often falls apart when there is no trust between stakeholders. In the quadruple partnerships among schools, families, communities, and universities where stakeholders are already swamped by their respective responsibilities, the key factor that makes them want to make time for their partnership is trust, knowing that they can hold each other accountable and

achieve desired results together.

**Linked to Student Learning and Development.** Mapp and Kuttner (2013) pointed out that partnership initiatives must be closely tied to student learning and success because both parents and teachers

are more interested in and motivated to participate in events and programs that are focused on enhancing their ability to work as partners to support children's cognitive, emotional, physical, and social development as well as the overall improvement of the school. (p. 9)

To build an effective quadruple partnership, community partners and university faculty need to keep parents' and teachers' interests in mind and provide services that are closely tied to student and district achievement goals. This might involve putting personal preferences aside and focusing on activities aligned with student learning and success. Consistent and systematic services centered on student learning and success are particularly important in lower achieving schools, given that these schools have scarce resources that often come from all directions with random support systems (Weiss et al., 2009). To have an effective partnership, stakeholders should communicate frequently and explicitly. In particular, schools need to inform family, community, and university partners about children's district achievement goals and collaboratively determine acceptable evidence to measure students' progress within and across the services.

**Asset Based.** When a partnership is built upon assets or strengths, it creates a positive workplace for stakeholders (Kraft & Rogers, 2015). For example, because school staff are acquainted with state standards, they can familiarize the other stakeholders with these standards by providing a list of the standards with descriptions and examples. They engage parents, community partners, and university faculty as cocreators of the partnership and honor their funds of knowledge. Because parents know their children the best, they can share with the other stakeholders their children's strengths and weaknesses. Community leaders, who are more knowledgeable about available resources inside and outside their area, can allocate resources to ensure every

student gets equitable support. For universities, faculty can support schools by strengthening teacher education programs, creating fieldwork opportunities for future teachers to practice partnership skills, and providing training to both in-service and preservice teachers. This training must be grounded in research and learning theories yet provide practical skills. In addition, university faculty can assist by using a rigorous research design to evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership. Research shows that evaluating a partnership with fidelity will enhance its overall quality (Epstein et al., 2018). The evaluation data will enable stakeholders to understand whether students are learning and whether the partnership adds value to student learning.

**Culturally Responsive and Respectful.** Cultural diversity (diversity in social and economic status, language, education, ethnicity, beliefs, gender, etc.) can create both positive and negative impacts on developing partnerships. Although research shows that families play various and critical roles in their children's education inside and outside school activities, many teachers do not know how to motivate diverse families to become involved in school and how to communicate with them about their expectations for the school and their children (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Weiss et al., 2014). Furthermore, families with different educational backgrounds and social statuses may have different degrees of comfort with the partnership. By first considering families' different contexts and allowing them to contribute to the partnership in different ways (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997), schools, communities, and universities can think more expansively and creatively. They can then design activities to engage culturally diverse parents and identify resources needed to support their engagement in the quadruple relationship. When activities are designed to be authentic to the specific social context, all stakeholders can contribute equally and meaningfully in a dynamic partnership.

**Collaborative.** Partnership initiatives can succeed only if leaders across groups collaboratively support their stakeholders to build a sense of belonging in the partnership. One way to collaborate is to invite all stakeholders to share their visions of the partnership and rewrite the rules of engagement. Henderson and Mapp (2002) stated: "When schools build partnerships

with families that respond to their concerns and honor their contributions, they are successful in sustaining connections that are aimed at improving student achievement" (p. 7). In the quadruple partnership, all stakeholders play irreplaceable roles in uniting each other. Although collaboration is never an easy task, a successful partnership across disciplines will improve quality, equality, and social justice in the public school system (Warren & Mapp, 2011).

**Interactive.** Engagement participants need the opportunity to practice and apply new skills. It is essential to disseminate information, but doing so does not guarantee that partners acquire knowledge and skills. Coaching is needed to help partners develop and master a new skill. For example, a list of resources and activities may help parents know where to start. However, parents need feedback and coaching from district staff, schoolteachers, and other specialists in the community to help them understand how to use these resources and activities appropriately to maximize their children's learning (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013).

Concisely, to meet necessary process conditions, capacity-building initiatives must incorporate activities that build trust, link to student learning and success, gather asset-based support, develop cultural competency to better meet the needs of diverse students and their families, support collaboration among all stakeholders, and encourage interaction across all participants. Applying active and effective listening among the stakeholders will enhance communication and help stakeholders navigate complex issues (Poynton et al., 2018). Understanding cultural components can offer ways to highlight the dynamics of each stakeholder, creating a welcoming environment for people to work together. Examining the diversity in ethnic backgrounds, socioeconomic status, and other aspects of school systems' families and communities can lend stakeholders insight to tailor their initiatives to be more inclusive. Continuous feedback is necessary to improve partnerships over time based on the ever-changing needs and diversity of both consumers and stakeholders. Securing early feedback, ongoing feedback, and summative feedback will allow stakeholders to solve emerging problems in a timely manner.

### *Meeting Organizational Conditions*

Organizations must be able to establish and

maintain initiatives that encourage quadruple partnerships by supporting educational improvement throughout their area and over time. This aim can be achieved through initiatives that are systemic, integrated, and sustained.

**Systemic.** Leaders across disciplines should embrace initiatives that are “designed as core components of educational goals such as school readiness, student achievement, and school turnaround” (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013, p. 10). In a quadruple relationship, schools, communities, and universities need to have organizational strategies in place to ensure that they deliver effective services to students and their families. These strategies include what they will do before, during, and after the partnership. Before the partnership starts, it needs to have an outlined plan of how organizations will help their frontline employees get familiar with their partners, build rapport, and demonstrate an interest in their partnership. At times, planning this engagement would require building a bridge across the knowledge and ability gap. The interaction opportunities created by the organizations will allow stakeholders to identify issues that are particularly intriguing to their partners and give them opportunities to collect each other’s thoughts. During the partnership, organizations help their frontline employees recap what they have learned from the partners, explicitly communicate mutual goals, gauge each other’s prior knowledge, and provide needed support. The leadership teams continually monitor to ensure the improvement of student learning and success. Various activities are utilized to consider stakeholders’ cultural diversity, respond to the dynamic context, and situate their understanding of their partners’ services in different disciplines. With organizational support, the frontline employees will grow increased and prolonged engagement in the quadruple partnership. As the partnership ends, the leaders of the stakeholders need to think about how to sustain engagement across schools and school districts. Taking the time to host discussion meetings periodically for stakeholders to reflect on their activities and brainstorm ideas will extend the current efforts to help more students succeed.

**Integrated.** Mapp and Kuttner (2013) argued that capacity building for all stakeholders should be integrated into all aspects

of a district or school’s strategy to form productive partnerships, from hiring competent teachers and offering them ongoing training to school administrators and faculty working collaboratively to monitor the quality of curricula, teaching, and assessment. In the quadruple partnership, these strategies would be extended from the K-12 level to encompass college education programs as well. Including families, the community, and higher education in capacity-building work will lead all partners to center their efforts on nurturing the growth of youths.

**Sustained.** For partnership initiatives to be sustained, it is necessary that “programs operate with adequate resources and infrastructure support” (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013, p. 10). Because not all organizations in the proposed quadruple partnership are equipped with the same capability to support their frontline employees, leaders across organizations need to look at the different aspects of their partnership from the moments before the partnership starts. The key is each organization’s making sustainable efforts to encourage their frontline employees’ ongoing engagement. Developing sustainability requires leaders invested in family-school-community-university engagement strategies and empowered to coordinate disparate funding streams to support capacity-building initiatives. Stakeholders can further ensure sustainability by asking themselves questions concerning the nature of their initiative and what goal their initiative aims to achieve.

### **Reframing Considerations for Component 3: Developing Policies and Program Goals**

Because an unreceptive or unwelcome atmosphere will hinder the development of family-school partnerships, Mapp and her colleagues emphasized the importance of having policies and program goals to develop educators’ and parents’ willingness for their engagement in the partnership. They propose using the 4 Cs of *capabilities, connections, cognition, and confidence* to examine the effectiveness of the policies and program goals. The 4 Cs can be used as a guide to establishing a set of criteria to develop metrics for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of the organization’s policies and program goals. With the growing scope of partnerships beyond families and schools, the 4 Cs defined earlier for the dual capacity-building framework can serve as a tool for schools, communities, and universities to develop their policies and pro-



grams for fostering an effective quadruple partnership. According to Mapp and Kuttner (2013), developing capacities establishes the foundation of human capital, skills, and knowledge needed for an effective partnership. In the following section, we explain how the 4 Cs can be further applied in the quadruple partnership.

The first C is *capabilities*: knowledge, skills, and cultural competencies that all stakeholders need to succeed in the quadruple partnership (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013). Stakeholders in the quadruple partnership must receive systematic training to help them understand techniques they can incorporate into their respective positions. These techniques may include reflecting on their participation in the quadruple partnership and explaining why they are engaged and when and why they do not participate actively. Dialogue is a good way to encourage stakeholders' reflection on their engagement or detachment in the partnership and help them understand misconceptions and ambiguity to discover solutions together.

The second C is *connections*, cross-culture networks that involve different collaborations across families, schools, communities, and universities. The diverse networks within and beyond stakeholders' disciplines will build different types of social capital. Stakeholders need to incorporate skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and synthesis of ideas. Working collaboratively to create a concept map is one method through which stakeholders can identify common skills needed to help them engage in appropriate activities and build a desired partnership. It is necessary to distinguish the different levels of connections in the partnership: cooperation, coordination, and collaboration. According to Mattessich and Johnson (2018), cooperation refers to "informal relationships that exist without any commonly defined mission, structure, or planning efforts" (p. 42). Partners may have shared goals at this level of connection, but they do not have shared responsibility and accountability. Coordination is characterized as partners having more formal relationships, understanding their mutual goals, communication channels, and shared resources. The highest level of connection is collaboration:

Collaboration connotes a more durable and pervasive relationship. Collaborations bring previously

separated organizations into a new structure with full commitment to a common mission. Such relationships require comprehensive planning and well-defined communication channels operating on many levels. Authority is determined by the collaborative structure. Risk is much greater because each member of the collaboration contributes its own resources and reputation. Resources are pooled or jointly secured, and the products are shared. (Mattessich & Johnson, 2018, p. 42)

Achieving collaboration requires all stakeholders to commit to their shared mission from the beginning to the end. To improve children's learning experience, they hold each other accountable and are willing to share risks of failure.

The third C is *cognition*. In the dual capacity-building framework, cognition involves both the school and families viewing each other as a partner and knowing that they possess different capacities in helping students improve their learning (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013). For the quadruple partnership, similar awareness must exist among all four partners. Although stakeholders' assumptions, beliefs, and worldviews may affect how they engage in the partnership, they are aware of their responsibility. They actively participate in events that will impact K-12 students' lives. The quadruple partnership cannot be a didactic form. Instead, stakeholders constantly construct their own knowledge and put forth effective efforts to enhance student learning.

Finally, the fourth C is *confidence*, the idea of self-efficacy, so that stakeholders know how to advocate for themselves to be engaged in the quadruple partnership. Ohmer (2010) pointed out that people's self-efficacy is affected by how much they are involved in communities. She highlighted the importance of advancing from individual self-efficacy to collective self-efficacy to enhance the well-being of youths and communities. To increase involvement, each stakeholder needs to know what they can do to ensure student success. Their collective self-efficacy and successful experiences will help others see how people in different disciplines can work together toward a shared mission. In building a quadruple partnership, shared resources and common goals enable all stakeholders to develop

confidence in their self-efficacy. The matrix developed (see Figure 2) based on the 4 Cs may help stakeholders understand how their policies and program goals support the partnership. It also allows stakeholders to evaluate their own capacities in which they work collaboratively and increase engagement in the partnership.

When stakeholders take the four essential components of capacity-building partnerships into consideration, it will help them understand the challenges of their partnership and plan the next steps in their future endeavors. In this way, they are more likely to expand their scope of practice to maximize student learning and success. Stakeholders can also use the 4 Cs as a guide to conduct professional development.

#### Reframing Considerations for Component 4: Demonstrating Capacity Outcomes

Mapp and Kuttner (2013) believed that if the school and families follow the steps of addressing challenges, identifying opportunity conditions, and aligning policies and program goals with the 4 Cs, both school staff and parents will gradually develop the capacity for an effective partnership. In the quadruple partnership, school staff are aware of their crucial role in uniting all partners. Their engagement activities aim to connect families, communities, and universities to student learning and success. The activities should create an inviting culture and encourage stakeholders to take initiatives to strengthen the partnership. For example, families will recognize that they can contribute to their children's education through various roles, such as cocreators, supporters, encouragers, monitors, advocates, models, decision makers, and collaborators (Mapp & Bergman, 2019; Mapp & Kuttner, 2013). When parents find it challenging to work with service providers

outside the school system, the other stakeholders help families to get comfortable with different partners by being transparent and explicit. As another partnership outcome, university faculty should work closely with local schools and community partners to become more intentional in cultivating future educators and leaders for an effective quadruple partnership.

When stakeholders understand each other's roles, they find value in the quadruple partnership and share effective strategies in their local contexts. Each stakeholder holds the responsibility to improve their partnership through extending communication across disciplines. As a result, they will achieve the ultimate goal of their initiative together. Extending the dual capacity-building framework for a quadruple partnership encourages active involvement in K-12 school settings by all stakeholders to increase student learning outcomes and school improvement from their respective roles.

#### Implications for Practice

An effective partnership is built by effective stakeholders who think about why they partner with others, not only about the initiatives they want to accomplish but also about student learning and school improvement. Stakeholders are aware of the value for students in learning, and they know that there are things that students cannot learn anywhere else. In other words, every stakeholder has something to contribute to student learning and success. An effective partnership involves a series of developmental processes, from discovering challenges that hinder the development of their partnership, establishing conditions for success, and having supportive policies and programs, to speaking about identities and capacities. The dual capacity-building

**Figure 2. An Example of the 4 Cs Matrix**

Stakeholders	Capabilities of achieving common goals	Connections to resources and knowledge	Cognition about unique yet united efforts	Confidence in self-efficacy for the partnership
Family	X		✓	
School		✓	X	
Community				✓
University	✓			

Note. The symbols of "✓" and "X" are used for "good" (✓) and "weak" (X).

framework created by Mapp and her colleagues lays a foundation for an extended partnership beyond families and schools to include communities and universities.

We draw three implications from our rationale for extending the dual capacity-building framework to a quadruple model that includes additional partnerships with universities and communities. First, stakeholders need to build rapport with each other. Improved learning and increased success for K-12 students happens when families, schools, communities, and universities work collaboratively and trust is built. Without a trust-based relationship, some stakeholders may not feel comfortable sharing their struggles, leaving other team members unaware of challenges they might solve at an early stage. Second, all stakeholders need to align their initiatives with student learning and success. Keeping the ultimate goal of student success at the forefront will center all stakeholders' efforts and ensure that policies and programs are established to support the partnership. Third, the capacities encompassed by the 4 Cs (i.e., capabilities, connections, cognition, and confidence) can be used to create a matrix for examining the effectiveness of the partnership. Developing stakeholders' capacities helps them make new connections between efforts with previously unappreciated potential.

### Implications for Research

Stakeholders' self-efficacy in quadruple partnerships is neither uniform nor obvious. Different families speak in very different ways about the extent to which they value partnerships. Even service providers across schools, communities, and universities may differ greatly in terms of what they deem to be effective partnerships. Thus, the implications for research cover multiple facets. First, future studies may examine how stakeholders collaborate to develop a better understanding. Without a

clear understanding of what partners expect of them, some stakeholders who want to do the right work may feel frustrated or discouraged. Second, researchers can identify the connection between the partnership and students' learning outcomes and explore factors associated with the impacts. Third, researchers can investigate the retention of stakeholders' efforts to learn how to generate long-lasting support or find alternative methods of support. Fourth, future studies may explore factors that cause stakeholders to leave the partnership prematurely. In other words, besides the four essential components of the capacity-building framework, what other components might be needed? Finally, many schools hesitate to collaborate with universities because they have experienced partnership disappearance when a partnering faculty member left a key position or the grant ran out. Thus, synthesizing successful examples will give practitioners confidence and concrete ideas for developing effective partnerships.

In summary, we explored how to extend the value of Mapp and her colleagues' framework as a tool for building a partnership beyond families and schools. Adding examples of successful university-community partnerships to the existing dual capacity-building framework will better support families' and schools' efforts to promote students' academic success.

It is important to note that an effective partnership does not flow automatically from an existing framework. It comes from stakeholders' thoughtful interpretation of the framework and their growth mindset that embraces challenges and development. Because it is grounded in rigorous research and thoughtful analyses, higher education outreach and engagement programs can adopt the capacity-building framework and foster more effective partnerships with families, schools, and communities to transform K-12 education positively.



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