Partnerships for Change: Are We Really Better Together than Alone?

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When Partnerships Make Sense

- When each *partner's needs are achieved* and aligned with their own mission and strategic goals

- When seeking *scalable solutions* at a national level to maximize impact for effective change

- When looking at models that are *sustainable on a national level* over time

- When solutions are dependent upon and thrive off of the *combined expertise of all partners* (gestalt)

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Bullet 1-Partner Needs/Goals: Must be something in it for each partner, else why work together. Must meet each organization's individual strategic goals and objectives, otherwise not relevant to each organizations core mission and purpose. Easy to get off track and consume resources, manpower in areas outside of where overall organization should be.

Bullet 2-Scalable Partnerships: Many nice areas to work together that may be easy to partner on:

shared promotion of co-hosted/sponsored event

in-kind exchange of services, e.g., booth space at reciprocating conferences

But when organizations strategically work together, given inertia necessary to forge and sustain viable partnership, organizations should look at providing solutions that make significant impact on a national level, otherwise could end up with much activity that does little to affect real and needed change or order of magnitude needed.

Example: NSTA great at designing f2f PD experiences: 25 teachers floating down river for 1-2 weeks over summer, great experience, but if there are 2.1 million teachers of science in US, need to "THINK BIG" on type of PD experiences that reach all teachers of science.

Example: US Dept. of Ed Math Science Partnerships: Funded 361 projects in year 1, spent $100 million dollars, half of the projects spent approximately $250K, half of the projects affected 48 or fewer teachers. 50,000 teachers impacted year 1. If funding levels don't change, can ill afford to take half century to reach nation's 2.1 million teachers of science in this partnership model.

Bullet 3- Sustainable Models: Challenging when we link program operating budgets solely on grant supported funds to sustain their delivery. The pie is small and there are many at the table wanting a piece of it, and there's not enough to go around. Doesn't make sense that we all compete for piece of same pie, going for one RFP and then the next year, give sliver of same pie to another. Each year we go through the drill again attempting to fit our programs into the latest grant requirements. This could be a recipe for disaster and one that detract an organization from reaching its core mission and strategic goals.

Example 1: Even within the NSDL community, several times over, we've all seen what can happen when a organization ties its fiscal support to a single major funding source. Lee Zia in his opening remarks at the NSDL annual conference several years ago themed his talk on Sustainability. Given the size and pace at which the Internet and its resources grow exponentially, existing NSDL collections may atrophy before they are even tagged and launched. If we cannot figure out ways to add value to the content with web 2.0 wrap-around support services and technologies to capture the eyeballs, the collections face long term sustainability issues. Of course Gov't funding can be a sustained source not to be overlooked or discredited, but challenges abound in light of current declining or flat-lined budgets.

Example 2: At NSTA we look at grant funds almost as venture capital and develop business models for programs that look at sustaining their viability after the grant is completed. While NSTA is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit. This is a tax status and not a business plan. We have successful models that are self sustaining, and in many cases, still make the content freely available to teachers.

SciLinks partners with publishers to extend the life of textbooks, or

SciPacks, that make smaller nuggets, science objects free to all, but charge a nominal cost recovery fee for added content, additional support services and the option for certification to demonstrate mastery of content once teacher passes a final assessment.

Various OER models abound and NSTA is exploring them in more detail in cooperation with the Hewlett Foundation, e.g., Print on Demand businesses, Ad revenue supported sites, license/subscription arrangements in B2B models with districts/states that make the content freely available to their constituencies, open source software models that made the software free, but charge for support consulting services around the software.

Bullet 4-Combined Expertise, Gestalt Principle: Obviously, there should be an added contribution on the part of each partner, such that the partnership together is greater then the sum of the individual parts. The challenge is in recognizing and establishing what each organization is bringing to the partnership.

Some Critical Components for Effective Partnerships

- Clearly articulated *roles and responsibilities* within each organization's workforce

- *Observable and measurable deliverables* for each partner within *boundaries of partnership*

- Mechanism to *track production milestones*, critical path analysis, so timelines/deliverables achieved

- *Open, frank dialog on regular basis*, periodic review of partnership

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NSTA's Mission and Strategic Goals

Mission: To promote excellence and innovation in Science Teaching and Learning for All

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Engage All Teachers of Science Continually to Improve Science Education.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Improve Student Learning by Supporting and Enhancing Science Teaching

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Advocate for the Importance of Science, Both Science Literacy and the Development of Scientific Expertise.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: Enhance Science Education Through Research-Based Policy and Practice

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STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Improve Student Learning by Supporting and Enhancing Science Teaching

- *Objective 2.1:* **Provide** and support **high-quality professional development opportunities** for educators.

- *Objective 2.2:* **Provide tools and resources** that support high-quality and effective science teaching.

- *Objective 2.3:* Implement strategies to **connect science educators with** the broader **science community**.

- *Objective 2.4:* Implement strategies to connect **informal science education** to the instructional needs of teachers of science.

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NSTA Partnerships Examples

    – NSTA Learning Center & e-PD resources and opportunities
    – NSTA In Person Professional Development
    – NSTA Competitions
    – NSTA Professional Services (partner with states/districts)

Partnerships

Toshiba Exploravision	WestEd (PD Institutes)
Toyota Tapestry Grants	McRel (PD Institutes)
NASA (Symposia, Learning Ctr)	Harcourt, Pearson Scott Foresman (SciLinks)
NOAA (Symposia, Learning Ctr)	The Hewlett Foundation (Learning Ctr)
FDA (Symposia, Learning Ctr)	The GE Foundation (Learning Ctr)
NSF (Symposia, Learning Ctr)	The HI Department of Education
NSDL (Web Seminars)	The WV Department of Education

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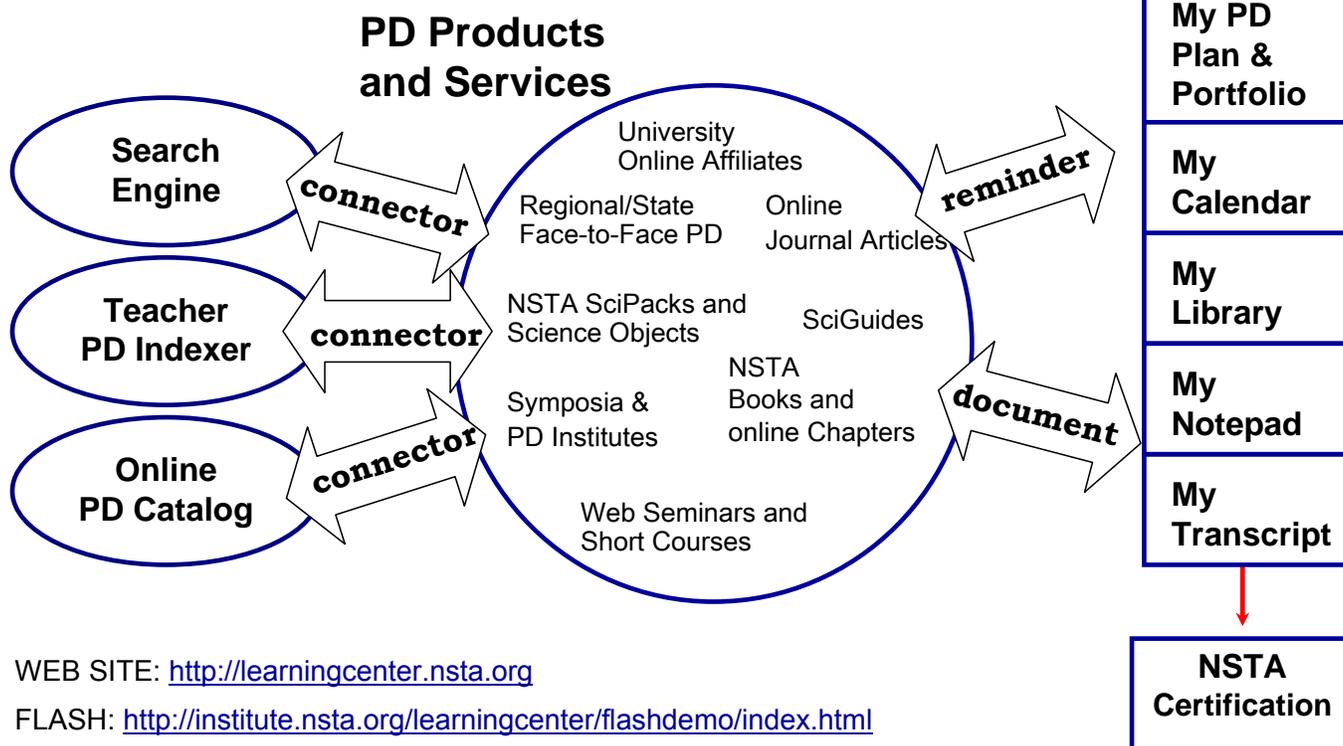NATIONAL SCIENCE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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Highlight: NSDL Partnership meet both our mission and strategic goals on a national scale: To provide high quality professional development experiences to science teachers, both via our NSF grant and via our co-delivered web seminars

NSDL brought a valuable ingredient, their content via NSDL partners, Exploratorium, etc. to share via our channel and in turn, we shared our expertise in how to create, market, and evaluate effective stand-alone web seminars. We distributed our software licensing cost, as well. Together, we both bring more visibility to each other's resources and organization on a national level.

With respect to NSDL grant, Kim Lightle and her team at OSU shared intellectual capital and experience about how to build a digital collection, best practices, and we brought our award winning collection of journal articles, and e-books, as well as mutual discussion on exploring different sustainability models. Kim got a larger collection of resources for her middle level pathway and we secured funding that allowed the creation of a system for tagging not only of our journals, and several book, but all NSTA's resources: web seminars, short courses f2f opportunities, online short courses and modules, in a systems-based approach we call the NSTA Learning Center.

NSTA's e-PD Solution:
The NSTA Learning Center

PD Products and Services

Search Engine

Teacher PD Indexer

Online PD Catalog

connector

connector

connector

University Online Affiliates

Regional/State Face-to-Face PD

Online Journal Articles

NSTA SciPacks and Science Objects

SciGuides

NSTA Books and online Chapters

Symposia & PD Institutes

Web Seminars and Short Courses

reminder

document

My PD Plan & Portfolio

My Calendar

My Library

My Notepad

My Transcript

NSTA Certification

WEB SITE: http://learningcenter.nsta.org

FLASH: http://institute.nsta.org/learningcenter/flashdemo/index.html

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Thank You

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