

# Case Study: Lawrence

## Assessment of interim outcomes toward shared result

Outcome Areas	Indicators	Sub-Indicators	Lawrence
Progress toward shared result	Team has a shared knowledge of progress toward shared result, including changes in systems.	Team demonstrates <b>programmatic progress in service of shared result.</b>	
		Interviews surface that team has contributed to several <b>substantive changes in practice, policies, and resource flows.</b>	
		Multiple examples of <b>changing relationships, changing perspectives, or changing capacity</b> in service of the shared result.	
		WCC activities in the city have <b>already made a difference in the lives of many low-income people in the city.</b>	
	Cross-sector leaders, beyond the WCC team, are informed of team's progress toward shared result.	Team regularly communicates <b>progress toward the measurable shared result to a broad set of organizations/leaders.</b>	
		Stakeholders beyond the core leadership group <b>believe the initiative has achieved significant progress on its strategies.</b>	
	Team demonstrates how the progress to date relates to the pathway that will achieve its shared result.	Most stakeholders interviewed can <b>articulate how their progress to date can lead to greater scale toward their 10-year population-level result.</b>	
		Team articulates <b>objective progress measures</b> toward shared result, and can speak to team's <b>positive performance relative to those measures.</b>	

### Assessment Key

Strong Progress	
Moderate Progress	
Limited Progress	

## Assessment of interim outcomes related to civic infrastructure

Outcome Areas	Indicators	Sub-Indicators	Lawrence
Expanded and sustained collaborative leadership	WCC team organizations <b>demonstrate distributed leadership, sharing responsibility for achieving the shared result.</b>		
	WCC team demonstrates <b>preparation for sustaining collaborative, system-oriented work in service of shared result.</b>		
	Existing leadership connections strengthened and new leaders are identified and engaged.	<b>New or deeper relationships</b> among organizations in the city <b>and/or catalyzed changed perspectives among leaders.</b>	
		<b>New partners have been welcomed into the leadership</b> of the initiative.	
		<b>Partners place increased priority on working with leaders who represent the racial and ethnic diversity</b> of the city.	
		<b>Stakeholders cite rising, new, talented civic leaders who reflect the diversity of community.</b>	
Team pursues <b>ongoing collaboration with other networks, collaboratives, or other key organizations active in related systems</b> in the city formally or informally on issues that extend beyond the specific WCC result.			
Value and diffusion of core elements	WCC team sees substantial contribution of core elements in progress toward shared result.	Stakeholders note <b>collaborative leadership made a substantial impact on the outcomes</b> the team achieved.	
		Stakeholders note <b>community engagement made a substantial impact on the outcomes</b> the team achieved.	
		Stakeholders note <b>use of data made a substantial impact on the outcomes</b> the team achieved.	
		Stakeholders note <b>system change made a substantial impact on the outcomes</b> the team achieved.	
	Organizational leaders bring core elements back to home organization and diffuse into practices and policies.	Partner organizations have changed systems to support <b>stronger collaboration.</b>	
		Partner organizations have changed systems <b>to better engage residents.</b>	
		Partner organizations have changed systems <b>to better use data.</b>	
Engaged residents	WCC partners <b>regularly sought out resident voices and insights</b> when developing strategies		
	WCC team <b>strategies directly respond to resident insights.</b>		
	WCC team demonstrates that it is <b>accountable to residents by directly communicating progress toward shared result.</b>		
External recognition	WCC leaders <b>develop or improve relationships with entities outside the city, including attracting new outside resources</b> aligned with shared result.		

## Overview

The city of Lawrence, located approximately 30 miles north of Boston, is one of the poorest cities in Massachusetts and home to about 79,000 people. A majority of the residents in the city are minorities, largely Hispanic, a group that increased by 12.3 percent between 2010 and 2016 and now accounts for 77 percent of the population. In 2016, Lawrence's median household income of \$36,754 was roughly half the statewide median, and its poverty rate for families in 2016 was triple the Massachusetts average. Lawrence's residents also have relatively low levels of educational attainment with 32.5 percent of residents 25 years and over having less than a high school degree.

Historically, Lawrence faced challenges with a notably weak local public sector known for well-publicized and documented problems with previous city administrators and an underperforming school district. However, at the time the Boston Fed selected Lawrence for Working Cities Challenge (WCC), changes at both city hall and within the schools created a sense of optimism. Lawrence's current mayor, Daniel Rivera, took office in January 2014 after narrowly defeating the city's controversial former mayor who presided over an administration in which a grand jury indicted several of his top aides on public corruption charges. In addition, as a result of poor performance and management issues, the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education placed the Lawrence Public Schools in receivership in 2011, and the state-appointed receiver/superintendent was beginning to operationalize a transformation plan for the schools.

Within this context, the WCC effort provided Lawrence the funding to establish the Lawrence Working Families Initiative (LWFI). The jury found Lawrence's proposal to be the strongest of all applicants and awarded LWFI the largest implementation grant of the four Round 1 cities. The collaborative leading the work is Lawrence CommunityWorks, a community development corporation, with additional stakeholders from ValleyWorks Career Center, the city of Lawrence, several key nonprofit organizations, Northern Essex Community College, and, in the final stages of the initiative, from the business-led group, the Lawrence Partnership. LWFI's shared result is to increase the average household income of Lawrence Public School (LPS) families by 15 percent, with related student gains attributable to increased family stability. As the initiative unfolded, the specific shared result appeared to be less central to the work of the team. A more general vision of increasing employment and stability for public school families united the team.

Much of LWFI's efforts involved direct engagement with parents. LWFI worked with parents to develop a system of parent engagement, coaching, job search support, referral to services and training, and to provide ESOL classes. The locus of activity is the Family Resource Center (FRC), a hub within the central administrative offices of LPS. LWFI originally envisioned the FRC as a one-stop resource for parents to receive all of the support they might need to increase their income and family stability. While there has been some co-locating of resources, the increased collaboration of service providers has instead focused on effective referrals and warm handoffs.

As the initiative evolved, LWFI recognized that it needed more intentional strategies for engaging employers in order to progress toward its shared result. While LWFI had conducted outreach to employers from the outset by means of holding employer panels and cultivating individual relationships, in the latter part of the initiative LWFI capitalized on a competitive state grant to collaborate with the Lawrence Partnership and contributed support to local hiring efforts and the design and piloting of employer-driven workforce development efforts.

## Governance structure, backbone organization, and staffing

Lawrence CommunityWorks supports LWFI and provides the backbone function for the collaborative. The community holds the organization and its director in high regard. From the outset, Lawrence CommunityWorks assembled the broad coalition to support LWFI and was instrumental in building the relationships and connections so critical to the work of LWFI. Lawrence CommunityWorks brought experience with collaborative initiatives and widely recognized expertise in resident engagement to this effort. It played a central role in convening partners, managing the initiative's finances, and reporting. LWFI's initiative director worked closely with Lawrence CommunityWorks, but was actually an employee of LPS and reported to both organizations.

The governance structure at the beginning of implementation took the shape of large monthly gatherings for all of the stakeholders involved in the initiative, although the initiative director and the executive director of Lawrence CommunityWorks made most decisions. During the meetings, the two leaders would update the large group and gather feedback and other information. They had several one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders. This governance structure did not prove effective. The broad group did not feel ownership of the work and lacked deep understanding of the initiative goals and WCC approach. There was inconsistency in who attended the meetings, so the discussions lacked continuity. There were multiple opinions on the direction that LWFI should take. After bringing in a consultant to help create a clear communication strategy, LWFI formed a steering committee to discuss strategies and goals and to integrate communication with all the major players. The steering committee meets monthly and the team leads continue to communicate with other key stakeholders one-on-one.

In addition to staff from Lawrence CommunityWorks, the 11-member steering committee includes representatives from the city Office of Business and Economic Development, local workforce development service providers, the Career Center, LPS, and Northern Essex Community College. With an increasing relationship around employer engagement, the executive director of the Lawrence Partnership also joined the committee.

One weakness of LWFI's approach to collaborative leadership was the general absence of the private sector at the governance table. One stakeholder noted, "While the partners involved in the programming represented a number of institutions, I think the initiative was pretty heavily focused on the 'supply' side of the issue (i.e., parents) and could have benefitted from additional 'demand' side stakeholders from the employer sector. This is not a criticism of the initiative, so much as a recognition of the reality." By bringing on the director of the Lawrence Partnership, LWFI is starting to address this absence.

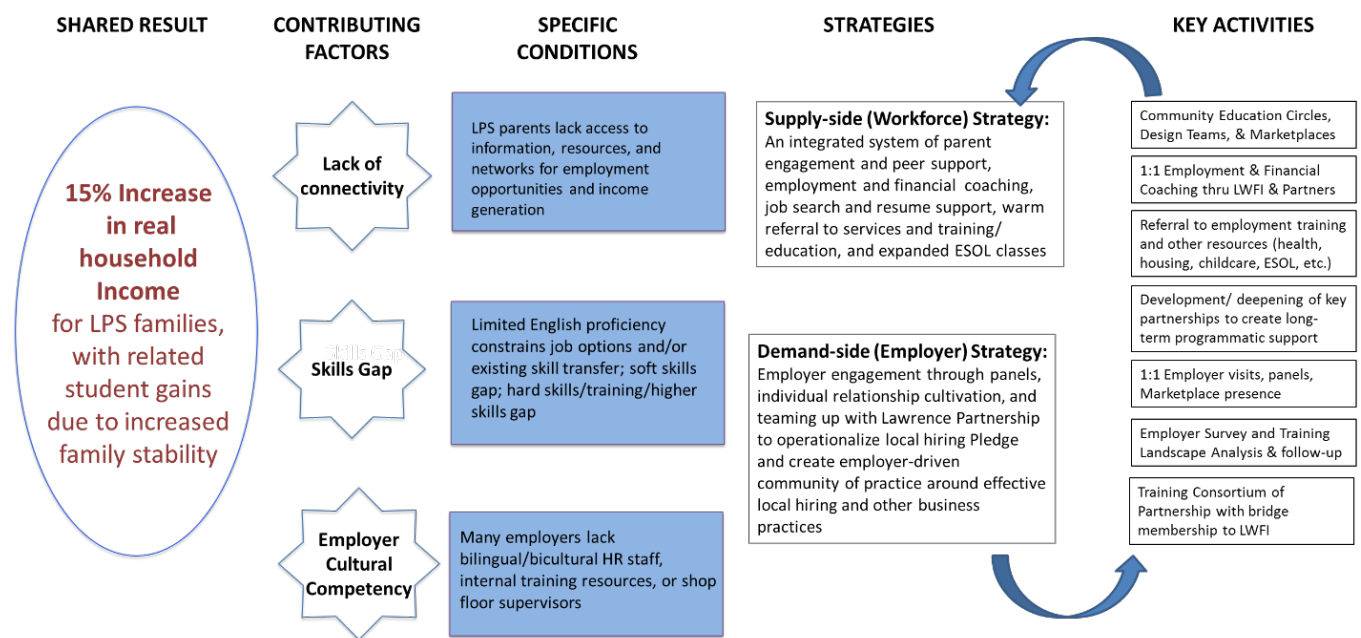
Since the formation of the steering committee, LWFI has not hosted any of the larger meetings of all stakeholders, although it does send monthly email updates to the larger constituency. Many describe the move to the steering committee as a pivotal point in LWFI's progress and believe the designation of the steering committee was critical in honing the focus of the work and narrowing the table to those with clear roles and responsibilities relevant to achieving the shared result. An important late addition to the steering committee was Derek Mitchell of the Lawrence Partnership, reflecting the closer alignment between the two organizations. A loss for the steering committee was Amy Weatherbee, a longtime champion of LWFI and director of the Career Center until June 2017 when the organizational operation of the career center switched from the city of Lawrence to Northern Essex Community College.

## Summary of initiative implementation

LWFI described its strategies for achieving its shared result as two-pronged: supply-side strategies focused on increasing the supply of parents prepared for employment opportunities, and demand-side strategies aimed at increasing local businesses' commitment to and capacity to employ local residents. Viewing LWFI's work in terms of the following three strategies makes it easier to understand: first, building parent involvement with the schools; second, connecting parents to training, services, and employment; and, third, engaging employers in local hiring, training development, and workplace changes all toward increasing employment of local residents.

### WORKING CITIES CHALLENGE: LWFI ROADMAP TO RESULTS

**PROBLEM STATEMENT:** *High levels of poverty and unemployment among families of LPS students, coupled with low levels of student graduation and achievement are major issues for city's economic resurgence.*



**Parent involvement:** One of the key LWFI strategies was to increase parent involvement in the schools. The intent of this work appeared to be twofold. First, increasing parent engagement was a critical part of the school system turnaround strategy, since prior to receivership many in the community regarded the schools as unwelcoming of parent engagement. Superintendent Riley sought to change this dynamic, and LWFI became a partner in experimentation in this area. A secondary goal of LWFI connected to increasing parent engagement was producing student academic gains and building school support of LWFI's goals around parent employment and income gains. The second reason for engaging parents in the schools was to reach parents who might benefit from employment-related services. This was part of capitalizing on the true innovation of LWFI's services, which was not in the specific services it provided, but in *how* it identified the target population and connected that population through the schools to those services.

LWFI's parent engagement strategies included:

- *The Community Education Circles (CECs)* model includes two separate dinners where parents and teachers can come together, have a conversation, get to know one another, and identify ways to support one another. While the CECs existed prior to LWFI, the Working Cities grant facilitated their rollout to more classrooms and schools.
- *Marketplace events* are monthly meetings where parents, school staff, and members of the community can come together to network and exchange ideas. The events provide a forum for a variety of conversations and encourage participants to share what they have to offer with one another and to ask for help where they need it. Marketplace events have allowed LWFI to integrate the coach and resource partners into the school/parent engagement work. LWFI plans to continue Marketplaces with more regularity.
- *Parent Ambassadors* are parents who are part-time LPS staff (maximum of eight hours per week). Their primary role is to connect other LPS parents to the resources that they need. Originally, Parent Ambassadors were in the school administration's central offices and connected with parents in the waiting room. Over time, the Parent Ambassadors located in the schools in order to reach a broader parent population.

In addition to the primary parent engagement activities described above, LWFI sponsored a training session at six schools focusing on family engagement, understanding trauma, bullying, special education law updates, and transitions and school readiness. Additionally, LWFI involved the new deputy superintendent for family engagement and guidance staff system-wide in conversations about training for family engagement as well as instituting a design team with parents on defining and creating standards for parent engagement. The intent of Lawrence CommunityWorks' design team model is community-based idea generation. Residents, who receive stipends, come together for four to eight structured dinner discussions to dig into a pressing local issue or challenge and craft an experimental solution.

**Workforce development:** The geographic hub for LWFI's effort to connect parents with employment is the LPS Family Resource Center, which provides a variety of school services such as school registration, student disciplinary and counseling services, and student attendance. In some cases, parents would enter the FRC for one service, but staff would refer them to LWFI staff if there seemed to be a job-related need or interest. The family coaches hired through LWFI and the initiative director are both bilingual and bicultural. They sometimes offer one-on-one interactions with parents and respond to any needs they identified while meeting with parents. The coach also follows up with parents for up to a year after they gain employment to make sure they are able to retain their job.

In pursuit of increasing employment and income levels of LPS parents, LWFI has also focused on training, including ESOL, interview skills, resume writing, as well as training for specific jobs and sectors. LWFI originally sponsored the ESOL classes, but through a connection made at a WCC convening, Lawrence CommunityWorks struck a partnership with Boston-based Jewish Vocational Services (JVS) to assume this responsibility. JVS was the recipient of a social impact bond for the delivery of ESOL services and was looking to expand outside of Boston as it recruited participants in the pay for success model. Lawrence became the first site outside of Boston. While there has been consistently high demand for ESOL classes, there is simultaneously difficulty in getting high enrollment and attendance due to other barriers to entry and the use of randomized control groups that have posed a disincentive for individuals to apply.

LWFI also worked with multiple training providers to place parents in job training, in some cases working with the provider to secure specific slots, and in other cases working with the provider to design new training. The training partnerships have leveraged existing capacity of other local providers and brought an intentional focus on LPS parents. The primary types of training were home childcare provider training and certified nurse's assistant/home health aide training.

**Employer engagement:** LWFI realized the importance of engaging employers from the outset; however, the approach evolved over the course of the initiative. The primary vehicle for engaging employers was one-on-one outreach. The city's director of the Office of Business and Economic Development, an active member of the LWFI steering committee, highlighted LWFI and connected interested businesses during his many visits to local businesses. He also conducted many joint visits with the LWFI initiative director. The purpose of the meetings was to foster relationships so that over time the employer might hire parents or participate in other LWFI activities. Another way that LWFI engaged employers was through industry-specific information events, hosting panel discussions focused on healthcare, manufacturing, banking, and entrepreneurship.

Midway through the initiative, LWFI recognized that it needed more and different employer engagement. Given that the Lawrence Partnership, a business-led economic development group, was already building substantial engagement within the business community, that network made a natural partner for the expansion of employer engagement. Many businesses connected to the Lawrence Partnership had signed a pledge linked to the strategic commitment "Lawrence Jobs for Lawrence People," and the partnership was seeking to operationalize that commitment. To that end, LWFI and the Lawrence Partnership jointly applied for a state Urban Agenda grant, and received \$250,000 in early 2016 to operationalize Lawrence employers' local hiring commitments; implement new job recruitment and internal promotion programs; and extend job coaching, skills training, job placement, and professional mentorship supports.

The Lawrence Partnership used the Urban Agenda grant to catalyze work on employer-driven workforce development efforts, starting with seven of the largest healthcare employers in the region. LWFI contributed to a "Skills Assessment Design Team," led by Lawrence CommunityWorks, which trained 14 LPS parents to interview over 200 other LPS parents as well as frontline staff of the seven relevant healthcare employers in order to better understand workers' current skill levels, aspirations, barriers to advancement, and training needs, knowledge, and pathways. They also used the Urban Agenda grant to implement a high school internship program. LWFI's initiative director facilitated and attended many of the site visits and will be transitioning into a new role within LPS at the end of the WCC grant to focus specifically on expanding the high school's internship program. The internship program represents LWFI's multigenerational approach to addressing poverty in Lawrence, and there is a possibility of extending the program for parents.

Recognizing that English language barriers among Lawrence residents can impede employers' abilities to scale their business, LWFI, with the Lawrence Partnership, offered local employers models of how they could work with the existing workforce, even those with limited English language skills. The Lawrence Partnership connected manufacturers seeking to grow with best practice employers who have successfully developed and implemented progressive hiring and promotional practices. It is also developing a "bilingual manufacturing" video that it will use as a promotional tool and a peer-to-peer discussion starter with local "English-only" manufacturers interested in learning how bilingual capacity can help them tap a broader pool of prospective employees.



## Progress on shared result

Lawrence lacks a method to measure actual progress toward its long-term shared result of increasing real household income of LPS parents by 15 percent. At the start of the initiative, LWFI believed that it would be able to use the number of public school families qualifying for free or reduced lunch as a means of tracking progress toward its shared result, but federal changes to the program enabled all LPS families to qualify without an application so LWFI's measurement tool disappeared.

In reality, a far broader definition of the result guided the group, generally described as "connecting parents to employment and services to improve family stability." That result appeared to be sufficient to both focus and motivate the group as well as attract the critical stakeholders to the table. Partners discuss progress partly in terms of the number of parents who have gained training, employment, or other resources, and in terms of the connections built among organizations in the city, changes in the schools, and so on. LWFI can document numerous positive programmatic outcomes that suggest tangible impact as well as several system changes that suggest LWFI has made durable progress toward its goal.

### Evidence of progress

Since LWFI selected a service-oriented approach to achieving its goal, the team can point to tangible outputs and outcomes directly related to its work.

#### ✓ **LWFI helped 201 LPS parents gain employment.**

Through coaching, referrals, direct training, and placement assistance, LWFI reports having connected with 650 parents and contributed to 201 parents gaining employment. The average hourly wage of parents placed was \$13.58, which represented an average wage increase of 25 percent. (The high average increase reflects the fact that some parents had no wages prior to placement.)

#### ✓ **LWFI helped parents gain skills, competencies, and certifications to make them more competitive in the workplace.**

Approximately 50 of the job placements followed the completion of Home Day Care Provider training (approximately 60 completed training). In addition, 14 parents had job placements after completion of Certified Nursing Assistant/Home Health Aid training. LWFI also supported parents in increasing their English language proficiency and helped others receive recognition for skills they already possess. LWFI reports that more than 90 parents participated in ESOL training through the initiative with all reportedly increasing fluency (increasing student performance level). Finally, LWFI also helped nine parents who had earned their degree outside of the U.S. receive degree validation with the assistance of the Center for Educational Documentation (CED).

### System changes related to the shared result

Most partners see the more significant progress in the system changes that have emerged through the concerted effort of the stakeholders working collaboratively since 2014.

#### ✓ **LWFI has influenced practice changes, new perspectives, and new relationships among workforce development organizations in the community.**

Organizations that have partnered with LWFI have sharpened their focus on the parent population and are implementing practice changes to reflect this priority. For example, staff at the Career Center have a



deeper understanding of the target population as a result of training front desk staff on LWFI, the parent population, and how to handle referrals from LWFI partners. The Career Center also designated a single member of the front desk staff to specialize in serving parents. She shadowed the Family Coaches and Parent Ambassadors to better understand the population. Both leaders sitting at the LWFI steering table and frontline staff viewed this cross-training as an important vehicle in terms of spreading the LWFI mission and understanding the parent population. One stakeholder stated, “There is a stronger familiarity at a staff level... and that’s what we always talk about. It *has* to get down to the staff service level.” Other organizations in the community also noted that as a result of LWFI, “Several of us are aligning differently and thinking about this critical population to focus on.” In particular, Lawrence CommunityWorks, Notre Dame Education Center, and The Community Group have increased efforts to recruit parents to their programs. One stakeholder noted, “It’s not that we weren’t welcoming parents, but we made a strategic shift in our focus to consciously recruit parents. We’re thinking about a two-generation strategy, and that is a shift.”

Perhaps even more important than the recruitment of parents to workforce services is the referral network that developed among the schools and the nonprofit service providers. LWFI has worked with LPS to encourage enrollment specialists at the schools to refer parents. In addition, members of the steering committee have trained frontline staff in their organizations to provide referrals. The initiative director echoes the value of the system changes stating, “We were able to create a referral process with different agencies. When we refer a parent, staff know what to do with those parents. Same with Notre Dame Education Center and other agencies we work with.” The former director the Career Center echoed the difference noting the progression over the years from an “informed referral” to a warm “handoff” to a “clear referral document, with the analysis from LWFI of the [individual’s] needs. So there was a clearer understanding of what services would be the best next step. And the front desk staff was trained on what to do when people walk in with the form.”

✓ **There is evidence of increased attention and capacity among providers related to skills development and job opportunity that will benefit parents as well as other job-seeking residents.**

With some contribution from LWFI, several local organizations have expanded workforce development offerings. For example:

- The city, aware of the waiting lists for many ESOL programs, realigned resources to support additional ESOL slots.
- Lawrence CommunityWorks struck a partnership with a new high-quality ESOL provider, JVS, to expand its offerings to Lawrence for the first time.
- Lawrence CommunityWorks expanded its own workforce offerings and is now providing bilingual bank teller training and is planning to offer paraprofessional training for positions in the school system.
- Northern Essex Community College developed a supervisory training program in response to a need identified in the employer survey conducted as part of Urban Agenda grant. The noncredit certificate program in supervisory/management skills will provide trainees with the knowledge and skills necessary to qualify for, compete for, and advance to management-level positions.

- ✓ **LWFI's work has resulted in the identification of employer champions, but it is the work of the Lawrence Partnership that appears to be driving broader employer system changes.**

LWFI's work has led to the creation of individual employer champions. Partners cite specific companies as being strongly supportive of the work, but it has not translated to a more systemic scale yet. As the initiative director stated, "I think it's a retail approach with every employer. I'm not sure we're there with employers changing their hiring process. It would require them to have a completely bilingual floor, and I'm not sure that they have that."

Over the past few years, with leadership from the Lawrence Partnership and contributions from LWFI, there has been a culture and practice shift in Lawrence, particularly among Lawrence employers, who have embraced the mantra "Lawrence Jobs for Lawrence People," and have taken action on that vision through the creation of employer-driven sector-specific training that is accessible to area residents.

- ✓ **New relationships forged with the city's director of business and economic development are having an impact on how the city perceives its role in connecting low-income residents to jobs.**

The inclusion of the LWFI director in employer outreach by the city's director of business and economic development represents a potential change in the city's approach to employer engagement and job opportunity for residents. The city director would regularly include the LWFI initiative director on business visits, enabling her to establish lines of communication with the human resource directors. The economic development director states, "So when I think of going to an employer, I call [initiative director], even if it's the day of the visit. It's important for our collective work to make it so that she and the group have access to what I have access to...That's been a change."

- ✓ **Partners' commitments to sustain LWFI and to reallocate resources to enable LWFI functions to continue are further evidence of system change in service of the shared result.**

LPS has incorporated the LWFI initiative director into the school system budget. While the schools will not financially support the Family Coach position, Lawrence CommunityWorks will sustain a coach position dedicated to serving the parent population. The Community Group also intends to continue family daycare training with intensive recruitment of parents as participants. This commitment represents the potential for further momentum toward achieving the shared result. As expressed by the assistant superintendent of LPS, "In three years, we are starting to see the benefits from that, but that has taken time to cement and expand. Now what we see are parents telling other parents about the programs, the permeation into schools finally who are understanding what LWFI really is, and how their families can benefit. I look at LWFI as a business entity... businesses need a five-year plan before they need a profit and that's where we are. We're starting to see the fruits and it's exciting."

### **Pathway to the 10-year shared result**

Despite their many successes, LWFI partners struggle to articulate how the team's progress to date strategically positions the group to achieve greater scale toward their 10-year population-level result. Partners do not speak strategically about a pathway toward a measurable result nor does LWFI have a way to measure population-level progress toward that result. The team's orientation still focuses heavily on sustaining programmatic activity, and any interim measures of progress are generally related to the outcomes of their direct service as opposed to the broader ecosystem.

That said, this evaluation finds that there is a vibrant ecosystem of activity emerging in Lawrence to support skill building for Lawrence residents. LWFI may be more narrowly defining its role around service delivery for parents, but it is catalyzing and aligning activity with a broad set of partners that should achieve greater scale of outcomes for Lawrence parents even if it is not activity directly owned by the LWFI table. The energy and commitment based on the relationships and system changes in place as well as the success in securing ongoing funding to sustain the work should keep the group moving in the general direction of improved employment outcomes and financial stability for Lawrence families.

LWFI has pursued strategies to share its progress broadly in hopes of enlisting the support of a broad set of civic leaders. While LWFI has not garnered significant local media attention, it has used other means to spread the message about the initiative and its progress. LWFI created a mini-documentary video capturing LWFI's efforts, following two parents as they interacted with their children's schools, sought meaningful employment, and engaged to build a stronger working community. The video has more than 300 online views. In addition, LWFI sent out fairly regular email updates to a larger set of stakeholders with announcements on programs, partners, and, later in the initiative, including measurable updates on LWFI's progress. After narrowing its governance structure to the smaller steering committee, however, LWFI had not actually reconvened the larger set of stakeholders that had engaged in the collaborative at the outset. While initially LWFI leadership envisioned periodic meetings of the full partnership, it had been more than a year since LWFI had convened the broader group.

LWFI's mechanisms of communication appear to be fairly effective. Based on survey analysis, 63 percent survey respondents who are not part of the core leadership could articulate LWFI's result. All survey respondents were quite positive about the progress made by LWFI with regard to the specific strategies deployed.

## Interim outcomes related to the civic infrastructure

The WCC-related outcomes in Lawrence extend well beyond parent employment outcomes. The evaluation research, including survey, interviews, and document review, suggests that the WCC process contributed to notable civic infrastructure outcomes.

WCC's theory of change assumes that by building a cross-sector team to work toward Lawrence's shared result and applying WCC's core elements of collaborative leadership, community engagement, evidence-based learning, and system change in service of that shared result, that WCC can be a vehicle for improving Lawrence's civic infrastructure over a 10-year period. While just over a third of the way toward that 10-year vision, the evaluation looks at interim outcomes in Lawrence that suggest WCC is leading to improvements in the civic infrastructure. Since the cross-sector table is the foundation of each city's effort, this evaluation looks at how the work has led to expanded and sustained collaborative leadership. This evaluation also looks for interim outcomes related to the other core elements by initially looking at how the teams applied the core elements, what value they found in the use of those elements, and whether there is evidence that the use of the core elements is diffusing from being something that the WCC *team* does to something that is *embedded more deeply in the partner organizations*. Ultimately, the goal is that the use of the four core elements becomes the way that Lawrence and the other working cities do business. Finally, this evaluation looks at what success the Lawrence team has had in generating additional external connections and resources. While the Boston Fed did not expressly communicate this as a priority to the Round 1 cities, the WCC theory of change identifies the ability to attract outside support to further community priorities as an indicator of a robust civic infrastructure.

The assessment, summarized in the rubric at the start of the case study, is based on a combination of data sources, including interviews and document reviews, but at times uses survey responses to provide objective indicators. The 2017 Survey of WCC Lawrence Stakeholders captures how the team's use of the core elements in pursuit of its shared result contributed to changes in perceptions, practices, policies, and resource flows that suggest positive improvements in the city's civic infrastructure. (See Lawrence survey tables 8-12 at the end of the case study.)

### Expanded and sustained collaborative leadership

- ✓ **The LWFI team found tremendous value in building on its existing base of collaborative leadership in service of the shared result, but ultimately expanded and deepened collaboration in ways that will have broader benefit for the city.**

For LWFI, the locus of collaborative leadership development was the steering committee. While in the early years of WCC implementation the initiative director and the CEO of Lawrence CommunityWorks made most decisions, when the governance structure shifted to a smaller group with clearer responsibilities, the broader group started meeting regularly and owning the work in a more intentional way. As described by the assistant superintendent, "I look at the steering committee as the single largest factor in that success because we've learned how to use each other better." The strength of the steering committee no doubt contributed to the survey results, which found that 86 percent of core partners expressed that their organization shares responsibility for achieving the shared result.

While baseline levels of collaboration in Lawrence were fairly high, particularly among the well-developed nonprofit sector in the city, all stakeholders agree that LWFI's contribution to shifts in cross-sector collaboration in the city is the truly "game changing" aspect of this initiative. A key leader in the city refers to the increasingly connected and collaborative ecosystem among the schools, nonprofits, the community college, the city, employers, and other local leaders as the "speed dial test," noting that stakeholders have a high level of access to other leaders in Lawrence as demonstrated by having each other's cell phones on speed dial. That test demonstrates the value of LWFI's "intangible" outcomes, "the partnering and the trust" as one civic leader noted.

The increase in collaboration is truly cross-sector. Interviews cite multiple changes in relationships:

- The improved relationship with ValleyWorks carries beyond LWFI and now involves the Career Center's engagement in the high school's expanding internship programs.
- Northern Essex Community College has deepened its ties in Lawrence, which not only has more of a physical presence in the city but also has expanded training and non-credit classes.
- LWFI has cultivated closer ties with high-level staff in city government who actively collaborate with the schools, nonprofits, and business sector to advance employment outcomes.

The depth of effort by LWFI partners to build cross-sector collaboration varied somewhat. The collaboration among nonprofit organizations and with the schools appeared to be organizational, affecting multiple levels of staff within the entities. The collaboration with the city primarily involved individual relationships, and it is unclear if the current director of business and economic development left his position whether the partners could sustain that new level of collaboration.

Overall, there is now a core group of leaders in the city who are more knowledgeable about the roles of the other organizations, how to collaborate with them, and there is alignment around a two-generational strategy for improving the lives of Lawrence families.

- ✓ **LWFI has played a role in increasing the alignment among a wide array of stakeholders in service of improved workforce development outcomes for Lawrence residents. This evaluation found evidence of organic and multifaceted alliances and collaborations that demonstrate significant gains in alignment among the schools, workforce, and higher education.**

The WCC initiative led to improved coordination between LWFI and the Lawrence Partnership and information sharing with the mayor's Health Task Force. In addition, LWFI played a role in catalyzing broader cross-sector alignment around improved workforce outcomes. LWFI and the Lawrence Partnership used the Urban Agenda grant to pilot high school internships, an idea in discussion for a long time at the high school. The initiative director played an important part in recruiting employers to participate. The Urban Agenda catalyst has now evolved into a much larger effort called the Lawrence PathBuilders, a "community-wide investment in the long-term ecosystem of relationships, programs, and expectations that ensures all Lawrence students have access to the experiences and credentials necessary to compete for the next generation of skilled jobs and meaningful lives through increased career exposure and college access."<sup>1</sup> The high school and the Lawrence Partnership have each hired a dedicated staff member to connect students and employers with work-based experiences.

LWFI helped to connect the schools with Northern Essex Community College as well. That partnership has deepened as is demonstrated by the implementation of the state's College and Career Pathways (CCP) model that will allow LPS juniors and seniors to take courses at Northern Essex Community College and Merrimack College as part of the early college program.

- ✓ **LWFI contributed less to cultivating new leaders in the city than it did to building stronger collaboration among existing leaders; however, the city started from a high baseline of rising diverse leaders in the community.**

LWFI's charge was not to be a vehicle for identifying and cultivating new leaders per se, although some members of LWFI have seen their leadership capabilities expand during the implementation period. Stakeholders suggest that LWFI's work has contributed to Initiative Director Odanis Hernandez becoming a recognized voice in the city. Hernandez will assume a new role within LPS, taking on leadership responsibility for engaging employers to support the high school's growing internship program. Additionally, steering committee member Vilma Martinez-Dominguez, who formerly worked with the mayor's Health Task Force, a strong voice of equity and social justice and longtime supporter of LWFI, is now the director of community development for the city. No one would suggest that her new position was the result of her participation in LWFI; however, several LWFI partners were strong supporters of her candidacy. Finally, discussions during the planning stages of LWFI contributed to the formation of the Lawrence Partnership, not an individual leader, but an entirely new leadership body in the city and a critical platform for cultivating business leadership in the city.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://lawrencepartnership.wixsite.com/pathbuilders>

The dynamics of diversity and leadership are different in Lawrence than in some working cities. While some working cities are still cracking a predominantly white civic leadership circle to better reflect the diversity of the community, Lawrence is fortunate to already have the Latino community highly engaged in the city's civic life. The LWFI steering committee was already representative of the community with Latino stakeholders from the schools, the city, and the nonprofit sector. Not surprisingly, 78 percent of Lawrence survey respondents strongly agreed that the city has a group of rising, talented civic leaders poised to "make a difference in my community" over the next decade.

### **Value and diffusion of core elements**

While members of the LWFI team were not always in full alignment with WCC on the value of each of the core elements, overall the team made progress in the use of each of the elements, generally felt the elements contributed to their outcomes, and have taken steps to more deeply embed the elements in the practices of the partner organizations.

- ✓ **LWFI effectively integrated "community" engagement in its work, building on a strength of its lead organization. Because of that work, other partners have more fully embraced the value of community engagement.**

While LWFI employed community engagement practices in varied and productive ways throughout WCC implementation, this appears due to Lawrence CommunityWorks' pre-existing strength in this domain, not as the result of WCC suggestions or assistance. The survey and interview results appear somewhat in conflict on the importance of community engagement to achieving the progress related to the shared result. In interviews, few could make a strong connection between the community engagement practices and progress on the specific shared result. However, 58 percent of Lawrence respondents to the WCC final survey felt that the fact that LWFI was informed by residents whose lives will be impacted by the work had a substantial impact on the outcomes. Survey analysis supports system changes to better engage residents; 72 percent of core team members changed policies, practices, or resource allocations (human or financial) to better engage residents. Examples of those system changes, described in greater detail, follow.

- ✓ **LWFI's focus on community engagement contributed to substantial culture shifts within LPS.**

LPS has embraced a new culture related to its relationship with other community organizations and its engagement of the parent community. LWFI cannot claim credit for this transformation, but certainly contributed to it. The change was the actualization of the superintendent's strategy for the schools, which multiple community partners supported and enabled. While increased community engagement was a part of the plan of the receivership, LWFI was a leader in making it a reality. In terms of parent engagement, LWFI supported LPS' effort to better engage parents and is a partner in crafting a policy framework for the school system that will formalize a district-wide strategy for engaging parents and families.

- ✓ **LWFI also contributed to a shift at Northern Essex Community College with regard to community engagement.**

Northern Essex Community College notes that LWFI contributed to the institution's changing culture and practices with regard to engaging the community in Lawrence. The college president remarked that the college has shifted "entirely the way we manage and administratively structure our Lawrence campus," in part based on learning and discussions occurring at the LWFI table. The college hired a vice president



of the Lawrence campus and community relations. The administrator is bilingual and hosts a Spanish language radio show to better connect with the Lawrence community.

- ✓ **LWFI's engagement strategies appear to have empowered residents and given them clear onramps for participating in civic life, aligning well with WCC's long-term vision for a strong civic infrastructure.**

The evaluation focused on how the WCC team's work in service of the shared result enlisted and responded to resident insight with the assumption that if residents felt heard, engaged, and empowered in addressing this challenge that they might be more apt to engage and tackle other challenges in the community in the future. Through the survey efforts and design teams, LWFI regularly engaged parents in strategy development. There are some instances of LWFI adapting its strategies based on interactions with parents and feedback from surveys. LWFI's strategy to implement Community Education Circles in the schools created new mechanisms for parents to contribute to civic life, specifically to improving the quality of public education for their children.

- ✓ **While LWFI integrated data and evidence into its work, and even produced policy and practice changes among partners in support of greater data use, the heavy emphasis WCC articulated on the use of data never fully resonated with the team.**

As this case study noted earlier, LWFI had no way to actually measure progress toward its shared result because of a change in federal policy, but LWFI did make use of data in several ways. First, it used *data to inform strategy*. For example, it completed several surveys and assessments on parent needs, employer needs, and the training landscape. LWFI felt this data was useful in building relationships. Second, they did *track service delivery outputs and outcomes*. The initiative director used a database to track LWFI parent interaction, job placements, and results of the check-ins with employed parents. The Career Center also modified its databases to track parents in its systems. LWFI and the Career Center shared this progress at some steering committee meetings. At times, it was useful in highlighting additional barriers or needs the parent population faced. Finally, LWFI used data *to potentially validate the utility of the interventions*. The LWFI team participated in multiple studies with the Boston Fed research team to explore the value of the services offered. The controlled research studies have a long time horizon, so they were less useful during the implementation period as an input for understanding progress or in refining strategies. Despite these examples of data collection, there is limited evidence that the team used data as a regular learning tool in its work. Further, without a way to measure progress toward the shared result, LWFI was limited in its ability to really critically assess whether its strategies were achieving a reasonable scale of impact. Perhaps for these reasons, just 37 percent of respondents felt use of data had a substantial impact on the outcomes of the initiative. Despite the mixed feelings on the value of data in contributing to outcomes, partners did often make changes in their own organizations to make better use of data. In fact, 71 percent of survey respondents indicated system changes with respect to data use. The lead organization, Lawrence CommunityWorks, is perhaps the most notable organization to see gains in this area. As one senior manager indicated, "Our evaluation work, while it still needs improvement, is now more robust. [The] culture has shifted to accept and embrace the use of data and use it more effectively and purposefully."



- ✓ **LWFI partners eventually embraced system change, but generally saw it as a byproduct of the increased collaboration and deep commitment of the core partners to a shared vision of progress.**

Leaders of LWFI wrestled with the idea of system change, instead wanting to place a primary focus on delivering direct services that have a high level of impact on the people the services touched. Stakeholders point to shifts in attitude and strengthening of relationships as the major system changes on which they have focused. Through the changes in relationships, WCC has contributed to multiple system changes, but they were emergent and rarely the intentional strategy of the governance group. By the end of the implementation period, stakeholders could readily identify system changes and the power in those changes (47 percent of survey respondents noted that system change had made a substantial impact on LWFI outcomes), but saw the path to those changes as through collaboration rather than specific intent on policy and practice changes as a separate strategy.

### **New resources flowing into city**

Since receiving the Working Cities Challenge grant, LWFI has contributed to an increased confidence in Lawrence and its nonprofit organizations' capacity from funders. One LWFI leader illustrated this improvement by saying that funders no longer think of Lawrence as the "Wild West," stating that nonprofits now have an easier time advocating on their own behalf. Beyond the improved perceptions of the city, organizations within the city noted a far more collaborative approach to attracting outside funding. Joint proposals are now the norm and not the exception.

The initiative has proven very successful in attracting additional funds. LWFI has successfully raised approximately \$1.8 million in grant funding related to the shared result from the following sources: W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Herman and Frieda L. Miller Foundation, EOHEd - Urban Agenda grant, Cummings Foundation, Clowes Foundation, and LISC Economic Resilience Initiative. In addition to funds, the city received additional positive external attention. The city was the recipient of the Robert Wood Johnson Culture of Health Prize, which cited some of LWFI's activities as part of the rationale for recognition.

Beyond the funds directly raised to support LWFI, there is momentum in the city for generating additional external funding for aligned activity. For instance, the Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation announced in the summer of 2017 a \$2 million gift to Lawrence Public Schools to support the early college and career pathways pilot program.

## **Contextual factors contributing to progress**

- ✓ **The election of a new mayor, defeating a controversial incumbent, coincided with the start of Working Cities Challenge.**

In March 2012, *Boston Magazine* published a now famous article that referred to Lawrence as a "City of the Damned" in its headline, saying that Lawrence is "the most godforsaken place in Massachusetts." The city received the WCC grant at a moment in time when it elected a new mayor, Daniel Rivera, running on a reform platform. The election had ripples internally and externally that were accelerants for LWFI. The election contributed to a sense of optimism and "can-do" spirit among Lawrence stakeholders at the start of the initiative that energized the team. Perhaps even more importantly, the change in leadership signaled to outside stakeholders that Lawrence was prepared to function more effectively, which opened the channels for new external funds from both the state and philanthropy. Mayor Dan Rivera capitalized on this opportunity, cultivating new relationships outside of Lawrence that could benefit the city. That

cultivation included connections to the broader Massachusetts business leadership afforded through his relationship with Federal Reserve Bank of Boston President Dr. Eric Rosengren.

- ✓ **The vision, commitment, and leadership of the superintendent/receiver created a strategic “moment” in the schools and a ripe environment for LWFI.**

Lawrence Public Schools, in its sixth year of receivership by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, has experienced significant progress during the course of the initiative. Under the leadership of Superintendent/Receiver Jeff Riley, Lawrence has achieved “one of the most remarkable turnaround stories in the country.”<sup>2</sup> Much of the success of LPS’ turnaround is attributed to the collaborative practices put in place by Riley who has been lauded for the partnerships created among the schools and nonprofits, local charter schools, parents, and the business community, of which LWFI is one, albeit prominent, example. The city will now start a gradual process of returning control of the schools to the community. One critical early step will be a change in leadership. In late 2017, Riley announced that he would leave Lawrence when his contract expires in the summer of 2018. At least temporarily, a committee that includes community representatives will replace him.

- ✓ **The creation of the Lawrence Partnership provides a strong partner with important ties to the business community.**

A final critical piece of city context that LWFI both contributed to and also benefitted from was the creation and growth of the Lawrence Partnership, a group of leaders from business, education, healthcare, nonprofit, and government sectors dedicated to economic development that benefits Lawrence residents, repurposes the city’s infrastructure, and lifts the community to greater prosperity. During the planning stages of Working Cities Challenge, some had suggested that the nascent Lawrence Partnership be the focus of the city’s WCC proposal, but ultimately the planning team went in another direction. With passionate leadership from the president of Northern Essex Community College as well as key civic leaders from the private sector, the Lawrence Partnership was established at the same time LWFI was awarded the WCC funding. The Lawrence Partnership has flourished in its first three years of existence, moving past its initial vision of primarily focusing on downtown real estate development to an expanded vision that includes small business development as well as workforce development.

- ✓ **The improving economic conditions statewide, and specifically in Lawrence, created favorable conditions for the initiative.**

The Lawrence economy has improved significantly over the course of WCC. In January 2014, at the start of implementation, Lawrence’s unemployment rate stood at 13 percent as compared to the statewide average of 6.8 percent. By the close of the WCC grant, Lawrence’s unemployment rate had dropped to 6.2 percent as compared to 3.3 percent statewide. The tightening conditions generated opportunities to place Lawrence parents in new jobs and likely contributed to the business community’s interest in focusing on workforce development. The growing real estate market is a further sign of a strengthening local economy. There will be 1,000 new housing units in downtown by 2019.

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<sup>2</sup> “How did Lawrence, Mass., turn its schools around? Cooperation.” *Christian Science Monitor*, February 6, 2017.

## Interventions of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston

LWFI's leadership valued the support WCC provided, but, in general, availed itself less of the offerings compared to some of the other cities. A few stakeholders particularly appreciated the learning communities, but others found the commitments too time consuming and too distant to involve the range of local stakeholders who might benefit from the content. At least one individual interviewed took umbrage at the perceived implication of the learning communities that the working cities needed some sort of remedial assistance. The Lawrence leadership was most satisfied when the learning content was customized and delivered locally, preferably on a topic that the team identified as most critical. The team was less open in some ways to the WCC approach of emphasizing the core elements either because the team felt it already had expertise (e.g., community engagement) or saw the element as less of a priority for its work (e.g., evidence-based decision-making). Stakeholders appreciated the learning community specific to workforce development both in terms of content and in terms of the connections it yielded. Feedback from the WCC staff was sometimes helpful in team reflection, such as feedback that led to reorganization of the LWFI governance structure. Some found the conversations catalyzed by the interim evaluation report as useful as well.

## Conclusion

LWFI achieved both programmatic results and system changes in service of its shared vision of improving employment, the schools, and the workforce via a two-generational approach. The extent to which LWFI has moved the needle at any scale toward the articulated measurable result of increasing parent income by 15 percent is unclear. Regardless, leaders of the initiative point to a fundamental cultural shift toward collaboration and parent involvement that will add to the civic infrastructure of the city as well as serve continued progress toward LWFI's specific outcomes.

## Sustainability

The year of sustainability planning will be important to LWFI's shared result and a time to reflect upon whether its current strategies are sufficient to achieve its articulated goal. There is no doubt that the work will continue. LWFI has been able to embed most of its activities in local organizations. For example, Lawrence CommunityWorks will institutionalize the LWFI coach position at the completion of the WCC implementation grant. While there are clear indicators of progress and commitment to the vision, it is not clear that LWFI has articulated a broader vision of what sustainability means beyond sustaining the specific strategies employed over the last three years.

## Major learning

- ✓ **Seizing an opportunity can be as important as identifying a problem.**

The community conversations held during the planning phases for WCC revealed that the most pressing challenge in the community was employment, which LWFI then integrated into its shared result. Yet, Lawrence used the planning process not only to identify the most pressing problem, but also to identify the assets on which the initiative could build. Many saw the receivership of the public schools as the locus of positive change in the community. Lawrence made a choice to build on that momentum, using the initiative to support and accelerate the transformation effort in the schools and expand it to create a benefit not just for the students but for their parents as well.

✓ **Aligning with other tables can be important and may be a useful alternative to building all the capacity within a single table.**

LWFI never truly achieved the WCC vision of operating as a cross-sector table as it never really built substantial representation from the private sector. While LWFI developed strategies related to employers, the majority of the work focused on the workforce development needs of the parents. While some may view this as a deficit of the LWFI table, it is important to consider whether the collaboration and alignment built with the Lawrence Partnership, a group with strong private sector leadership, was, in fact, a better alternative. In aligning the networks, leaders eliminated any duplication of efforts and prevented overtaxing the same private sector leaders whom groups might have tapped to sit at both tables. Rather than the tables competing for attention and resources, the groups reinforced each other. Unlike LWFI, the Lawrence Partnership has established itself as an intermediary, not a programmatic operation, so the networks are complementary in approach.

✓ **Pre-existing capacity accelerates progress.**

The WCC initiative in Lawrence was like a seed planted in well-fertilized soil. With respect to the WCC core elements, Lawrence's baseline level of collaboration and community engagement were quite strong. In terms of equity, Lawrence civic leadership already more closely mirrored the population than that seen in most working cities. Despite the negative external perceptions of Lawrence, community leaders already felt tremendous optimism believing that the turnaround effort for the schools and the election of a new mayor signaled positive change in the city.

✓ **Recognizing the importance of a strong existing backbone organization is key.**

Lawrence CommunityWorks offered strong backbone support for the initiative, engaging a number of its staff in a variety of functions, including leadership, grant writing, coaching, training, and community engagement. In addition, multiple interviews point to Jessica Andors' involvement as critical to the success of the initiative. Andors brings 18 years of experience at what many consider one of the highest capacity CDCs in the state. Her network building style engaged many in the community, starting with the planning effort that resulted in Lawrence's winning proposal. Her stature and credibility in the community gave her a seat at key tables such as the Lawrence Partnership board and as a member of the planning team for the LPS system-wide parent engagement strategy currently in development. She has a gravitas in the community that allowed her to promote the LWFI agenda, helping to align multiple parties to the needs of low-income residents at the forefront. She did not seek credit for herself, for Lawrence CommunityWorks, or even particularly for LWFI, instead looking for opportunities to promote other organizations in the process.

✓ **Emergent system change based on relationships is very powerful.**

LWFI has contributed to numerous practice changes, some policy changes, and reallocation of resources, but most of those changes occurred because it got the right people around the table who had a commitment to a common vision and a sense of ownership of the work that involved looking at how their own organization could operate differently in service of the shared result. Engaging the schools in this effort represented a significant change in the boundaries of who would traditionally be included at the table of adult workforce development. The relationships built among the city, the schools, the career center, the community college, and community-based organizations led to multiple changes in how the organizations work internally and with respect to each other, few of which anyone could have planned or even predicted at the outset, but rather that emerged from their shared commitment to the goal.

# Lawrence survey results

## Overview

Survey Overview	
Invitations sent	46
Complete responses	25
Incomplete responses	7
Response rate	70%

## Profile of stakeholder engagement

Table 1. Involvement in LWFI (n=32)		
Involvement	Frequency	Percentage
I have played a leadership role, overseeing the direction and implementation of the work.	7	22%
I have served on a committee, workgroup, or advisory group to LWFI.	18	56%
I worked on a specific program or project.	11	34%
I have been directly involved in the work of LWFI in some other way.	7	22%
I have not been directly involved in the work of LWFI.	2	6%
Total	45	

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Question 1 (Check all that apply).

Table 1a. Other involvement in LWFI (n=32)
Central office leadership team who worked on supporting proposal, hiring, staffing, and implementation support.
Was involved in early meetings around scope of Lawrence WCC and am involved with many of the organizations and initiatives of the group.
I helped create the original vision and application for the project, and have provided institutional support over the past few years, mostly in the form of college staff who have participated directly in special LWFI projects, committees, etc.
Attended Manufacturing Workforce focus group meetings

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Question 1a.

Table 2. Length of involvement in LWFI (n=30)		
Length of time	Frequency	Percentage
Less than six months ago	1	3%
More than six months ago but less than a year	2	7%
Between one and two years ago	6	20%
More than two years ago	21	70%
Total	30	

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Question 2.

Table 3. Functioning of the team leading LWFI							
		Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
Organizations involved LWFI trust each other to share information and to provide honest feedback	Frequency	0	0	4	16	2	23
	Percentage	0%	0%	17%	70%	13%	
Organizations involved in LWFI have open discussions about difficult issues	Frequency	0	0	2	18	3	23
	Percentage	0%	0%	9%	78%	13%	
Participation in LWFI is not dominated by any one stakeholder group or sector	Frequency	0	4	11	7	1	23
	Percentage	0%	17%	48%	30%	4%	
Organizations involved in LWFI share responsibility for the work and hold themselves accountable for achieving the desired results	Frequency	0	0	10	10	3	23
	Percentage	0%	0%	43%	43%	13%	
Over the course of the initiative, new partners have been welcomed and invited to participate in the leadership of LWFI	Frequency	0	1	4	13	5	23
	Percentage	0%	4%	17%	57%	22%	

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Question 18.

## Assessment of shared result

Table 4. Expression of key result (10-year goal) of LWFI		
Advance the economic stability of families to therefore increase the economic stability of our community.	To help Lawrence Public School families build social capital through gained access, advocacy, and training opportunities. These efforts will hopefully lead to increased wages and more stable homes.	Helping parents to achieve next steps for their families.
Using relationships through the Lawrence Public Schools, a diverse community-based team will assist families to achieve a higher success rate of acquiring English, employment, necessary services, and engagement with the school system toward an improved standard of living.	Connect working families/parents to job opportunities in the city of Lawrence by connecting them with opportunities (through job fairs, seminars with employers) with a focus on improving the employment rate of Lawrencians.	Lawrence families are more economically mobile, have greater financial security, and have access to opportunities to improve their financial situation.
Parent empowerment.	Increased wage gain and economically increased and sustained households.	Improve the employment outcomes for LPS parents, which, in turn, will stabilize families and improve educational outcomes for youth.
Making Lawrence families more economically successful.	A diverse and vibrant community that provides opportunities for socio-economic for all by supporting initiatives that foster educational and economic growth.	Increase in household income, primarily through new/better employment.
Connecting LPS parents to resources to help them advance economically.	Increasing household income of Lawrence families, decreasing poverty levels.	Improve the economic stability of low-income parents/families of students in the Lawrence Public School and ultimately reduced poverty rates for this population.
Empowering the city's citizens to have an active role in shaping the economic, educational, and civic future of their city.	An increased improvement in the financial position of the Lawrence working families.	To improve the socio-economic lives of the residents of Lawrence by providing resources and support.
Increased economic and physical stability of families via a two-generational approach.	Improving the economic stability of families in Lawrence, largely through ensuring education and employment of parents.	Ecosystem building to support students by way of supporting their families.
Job creation and financial inclusion.	Increase quality of life for Lawrence families.	Increased employment of the city's workforce.
Increase the income of low-income LPS parents by 15 percent by helping them gain employment or better employment.	Increased financial stability of LPS parents and create the systems level changes needed to sustain best practices and relationships/collaboration needed beyond receivership.	Providing training opportunities to enable better work opportunities to people within the community.

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Question 5.

		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>Total</b>
The selected result helped focus the team's effort	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	5	15	2	22
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	23%	68%	9%	
The selected result helped the team to gather the "right" people at the table	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	2	19	2	23
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	9%	83%	9%	
The selected result addresses a critical challenge for our city	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	1	20	1	22
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	5%	91%	5%	
The selected result enabled the team to readily measure and communicate progress	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	7	14	2	23
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	30%	61%	9%	

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Question 19.

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly Disagree	2	7%
Somewhat Disagree	1	4%
Somewhat Agree	5	19%
Strongly Agree	19	70%
Don't Know	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Question 6.

		<b>No Progress</b>	<b>Limited Progress</b>	<b>Substantial Progress</b>	<b>Do Not Know</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Total</b>
Parent Coaching and Workforce	<i>Frequency</i>	0	5	31	2	0	38
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	13%	82%	5%	0%	
Collaboration	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	8	0	0	8
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	
Parent Engagement	<i>Frequency</i>	0	2	7	0	0	9
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	22%	78%	0%	0%	
Employer Engagement	<i>Frequency</i>	0	2	9	2	0	13
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	15%	69%	15%	0%	
Other	<i>Frequency</i>	0	1	6	1	0	8
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	13%	75%	13%	0%	

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Question 7a.



Table 8. Approaches to the work and perceived contribution to outcomes of LWFI																
		Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total			Large Negative Impact	Modest Negative Impact	No Impact	Modest Positive Impact	Large Positive Impact	Don't Know	Total
LWFI established a diverse, cross-sector collaborative of leaders	Frequency	5	0	2	17	0	24	What difference did this make (positively or negatively) in the outcomes of the work?	Frequency	0	0	0	2	21	1	24
	Percentage	21%	0%	8%	71%	0%			Percentage	0%	0%	0%	8%	88%	4%	
The approach taken by LWFI was informed by residents whose lives will be impacted by the work	Frequency	2	0	6	12	4	24	What difference did this make (positively or negatively) in the outcomes of the work?	Frequency	0	0	0	6	14	4	24
	Percentage	8%	0%	35%	50%	17%			Percentage	0%	0%	0%	25%	58%	17%	
LWFI has increased resident engagement and leadership on key issues impacting the city	Frequency	1	0	13	7	3	24	What difference did this make (positively or negatively) in the outcomes of the work?	Frequency	0	0	0	9	10	5	24
	Percentage	4%	0%	54%	29%	13%			Percentage	0%	0%	0%	38%	42%	21%	
LWFI regularly uses data to refine strategies	Frequency	0	0	10	8	6	24	What difference did this make (positively or negatively) in the outcomes of the work?	Frequency	0	0	0	7	9	8	24
	Percentage	0%	0%	42%	33%	25%			Percentage	0%	0%	0%	29%	38%	33%	
LWFI has pursued system-oriented strategies such as changing policies, practices, or funding flows	Frequency	1	0	6	11	5	23	What difference did this make (positively or negatively) in the outcomes of the work?	Frequency	0	0	0	7	11	5	23
	Percentage	4%	0%	26%	48%	22%			Percentage	0%	0%	0%	30%	48%	22%	
LWFI has facilitated new or deeper relationships among organizations in the city and/or catalyzed changed perspectives among local leaders.	Frequency	1	0	2	20	0	23	What difference did this make (positively or negatively) in the outcomes of the work?	Frequency	0	0	0	4	19	0	23
	Percentage	4%	0%	9%	87%	0%			Percentage	0%	0%	0%	17%	83%	0%	

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Questions 12-17a.

## Outcomes

		Yes	No	Don't Know	Total
Changed policies, practices, or resource allocations (human or financial) to develop stronger collaborations with other leaders or leading organizations in the city	Frequency	18	3	3	24
	Percentage	75%	13%	13%	
Changed policies, practices, or resource allocations (human or financial) to better engage residents	Frequency	14	8	2	24
	Percentage	58%	33%	8%	
Changed policies, practices, or resource allocations (human or financial) to better use data	Frequency	13	6	5	24
	Percentage	54%	25%	21%	
Changed policies, practices, or resource allocations (human or financial) in support of the goals pursued by LWFI	Frequency	18	4	2	24
	Percentage	75%	17%	8%	

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Question 11.

The changes reflect more consciousness of the value of LWFI vs policy changes. I now think about LWFI as I perform my regular work duties.	Created opportunities for internships for candidates with little to no experience.
My participation in the Lawrence Partnership provides a platform to assist in workforce placement opportunities, and I refer my tenants to the FRC when there are job opportunities. I use the data collected to inform our marketing and business attraction. I articulate our leasing goals in terms of small business and job creation, educational attainment and workforce development.	Actively prioritizing and pursuing collaborative grant opportunities (with our staff time); using data to design and evaluate programs; institutionalizing coach position dedicated to LPS parents; dedicating staff time to implementing collaborative efforts. We only say no on the resident engagement as that is already a central priority for the organization.
Meetings convened by LWFI have helped us work more collaboratively; trainings served as guides in using data.	This is self-evident. More collaboration with nonprofits, schools, parent groups
New steps in our employee training program, structure processes for better including employee voice in our HR decisions, investing in diversity at all levels of the company.	Increased collaborations with other community organizations as a common strategy. Increased effort into referring resident to other community resources with the goal of achieving family stability.
LPS institutionalized the role of the LWFI manager, a role previously supported by grant dollars only. Embedding this position, and that of an LWFI coach among the Family Resource Center team has aided in the incorporation of the initiative and its goals into the broader FRC/district goals for family engagement. Additionally, although not completely attributable to LWFI, the district has made family engagement a high priority over the past three years, and the stronger collaboration with other agencies, organizations, and city departments has aided in this work by fostering deeper relationships and understanding of offerings and resources.	Collaborative efforts are more commonplace and systems and protocols for administering these relationships more effectively have been developed. Formal collaborative relationships have increased beyond LWFI. New strategies developed to better engage residents are now core program strategies, i.e., Marketplace and Community Education Circles, Parent Ambassadors. Our evaluation work, while it still needs improvement, is now more robust. Culture has shifted to accept and embrace the use of data and use it more effectively and purposefully. Program focus and flow charts have evolved to focus on LPS parents as a target population.
I helped create the Lawrence Partnership, which unites business and community leaders in the city around economic development; appointed a bilingual/bicultural college Vice President of Lawrence Campus and Community Relations with responsibilities for deeper community engagement; and shifted considerable resources into expanding the physical facilities and programs the college operates in Lawrence.	Stronger collaborations: The Lawrence Public School staff continues to make progress towards building stronger partnerships and collaboration as part of the Lawrence Working Families Initiative and also beyond the scope of the initiative. FRC staff is part of the LWFI Steering Committee but also has been able to leverage some of the relationships with other LWFI partners to support other efforts of the turnaround process like the High School and College Dual Enrollment Program and the internship program for high school students through collaborations with Northern Essex Community College and Valley Works Career Center; Engage Residents: LWFI backbone agency, Lawrence CommunityWorks is part of our Family Engagement Advisory Committee and different efforts across the district designed to improve family engagement at the school level; LWFI Goals: 1) LPS has formally committed, and is now hiring, a full time LWFI Coordinator, 2) LPS continues to brainstorm and implement ways to bake into its enrollment process and other important processes, effective ways to refer families to services and opportunities offered through LWFI.
Prioritization of workforce alignment as an organization, increased capacity building toward that end internally.	
Work is embedded in school district including creation of a family resource center and establishment of a project manager for this initiative.	
Our organization has taken a much more active and intentional role in the Lawrence Public Schools as a result of the LWFI.	
We have worked to better connect residents to noncredit offerings. We have aligned with the Family Resource Center to reach more parents. We redirected financial resources to directly serve parents under the LWFI.	
We already had a lot of these in place.	Working with the Lawrence Partnership.

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Question 11a.

		<b>Significantly Less Engaged</b>	<b>Somewhat Less Engaged</b>	<b>No Change</b>	<b>Somewhat More Engaged</b>	<b>Significantly More Engaged</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Cities Agencies	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	7	9	10	0
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	27%	35%	38%	0%
State or regional agencies	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	8	12	9	1
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	27%	40%	30%	3%
Financial Institutions (e.g. banks, CDFIs)	<i>Frequency</i>	0	1	12	8	8	0
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	3%	41%	28%	28%	0%
City nonprofit organizations	<i>Frequency</i>	0	1	6	8	15	0
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	3%	20%	27%	50%	0%
Business/employers in your city	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	2	12	14	2
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	7%	40%	47%	7%
Grassroots organizations/ resident groups	<i>Frequency</i>	1	1	13	8	6	0
	<i>Percentage</i>	3%	3%	45%	28%	21%	0%
Educational Institutions	<i>Frequency</i>	0	1	9	5	13	1
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	3%	31%	17%	45%	3%
Foundations (local, regional, national)	<i>Frequency</i>	1	0	8	13	5	2
	<i>Percentage</i>	3%	0%	28%	45%	17%	7%

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Question 3.

		<b>Significantly Less Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Less Important</b>	<b>No Change</b>	<b>Somewhat More Important</b>	<b>Significantly More Important</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Sharing decision-making and responsibility with other organizations	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	5	13	11	0
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	17%	45%	38%	0%
Seeking out leaders who represent the racial and ethnic diversity of the city	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	5	12	12	0
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	17%	41%	41%	0%
Seeking the perspective of a racially, ethnically, economically diverse body of residents to inform approaches to improve the city	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	8	7	14	0
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	28%	24%	48%	0%
Pursuing strategies to support resident empowerment/leadership	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	5	11	13	0
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	17%	38%	45%	0%
Using "data" to develop strategies, assess progress, inform learning, catalyze adaptation and innovation	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	3	11	15	0
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	10%	38%	52%	0%
Building new relationships with individuals and/or organizations or bringing different types of organizations into problem-solving discussions	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	6	7	16	0
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	21%	24%	55%	0%
Pursuing strategies to change policies, practices, funding flows	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	3	10	16	0
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	10%	34%	55%	0%

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Question 4.

Table 12. Influence of LWFI on the city of Lawrence (n=25)				
		Yes	No	No Opinion
Lawrence is better off because of LWFI.	<i>Frequency</i>	25	0	0
	<i>Percentage</i>	100%	0%	0%
Low-income people in Lawrence are better off today because of LWFI.	<i>Frequency</i>	23	0	1
	<i>Percentage</i>	96%	0%	4%
LWFI has started making longer-term changes that will benefit low-income people in the region in the next 5-10 years.	<i>Frequency</i>	22	0	3
	<i>Percentage</i>	88%	0%	12%

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Questions 8-10a.

Table 12a. How Lawrence is or is not better off because of LWFI		
Any opportunities that our families have to explore important fields in our community that need more representation of those who actually live in the community is an advantage.	The most significant thing LWFI has helped in was in their ability to change the way residents interacted with the public schools. This effort has helped residents feel more at home when engaging with the schools, creating a more collaborative effort between parents and schools to better support students.	Lawrence is better off because community leaders, businesses, and organizations are better collaborating on important matters that impact residents' stability and advancement. Additionally, Lawrence parents are accessing information, networks, resources, education, and training that is helping them to be more employable, either at entry level or to move up their career ladder.
Almost 200 parents have been placed in jobs and engaged with the school system reinforcing student success. I think the multiplier effect of this impact is significant in spending power, workforce potential, and educational attainment.	200 parents placed in new/better jobs, new collaborative targeted training programs developed, stronger culture of collaboration between key nonprofits and public agencies, more employer engagement with local workforce, complementary collaborations evolving, more robust parent engagement in local schools, internal school policy/practice changes to support parent engagement and student and family workforce development.	The LWFI was the beginning of a new era of amazing collaboration in the city of Lawrence. The grant writing process brought together a range of business and community leaders who committed themselves to improving the city's schools by improving family financial stability, and then went further to create the Lawrence Partnership, a private-public economic development organization that now assists small businesses, provides workforce training, and seeks to attract new business into the city. The community is a newly revitalized environment for positive collaboration that leads to results.
Lawrence could be better off because of LWFI if everyone makes the same effort. Deeply embedded in the FRC, LWFI staff can have direct access to newcomers, something that was not happening before.	They offer services and support that would not be offered otherwise.	Increase awareness of city resources to achieve stability and improve quality of life.
The LWFI provided a reason and motivation to bring employers, nonprofits, government, community leaders, etc. and utilize the schools as the door/access point to parents and families in the city. The LWFI provided the motivation necessary to encourage the schools to open their doors and become the foundation for this initiative.	Lawrencians, both parents and their working-age children, are better aware of opportunities in the city. They are getting training in a variety of ways: ESL, interviews, soft skills, etc.	Over 200 families have increased their income by finding employment. Lawrence Public Schools has fostered a culture of inclusive community engagement that treats parents as important and relevant stakeholders. Systems change: A foundation has been established for a coordinated system through a key institution, Lawrence Public Schools, that helps and supports parents to achieve employment and access needed resources.
This initiative has helped hundreds of families either attain employment or get necessary vocational training.	Increased partnerships between nonprofits and between the nonprofit, private, and public sectors.	We now have an intentional, coordinated, and cross-sector Initiative focused on improving the financial stability of Lawrence families. This alone is the fuel and will needed to co-create and implement effective programs and practices.
Individuals, groups, private and public organizations are working together for common goals.	For one it has built strong partnerships and access to resources for the community.	LWFI is easy to access by parents, and provides many of the connections and resources needed to achieve economic prosperity, and healthy families.
It generated a lot of positive energy, networking and next steps.	Greater collaboration among organizations that have a direct impact on the lives of city residents.	Parent engagement in the schools is high, and workforce training opportunities have increased; new affordable housing has been built.
Families have the support and outreach needed to help their students and themselves.	Increased level of collaboration...and expectation to collaborate.	It is providing opportunities (training/jobs) to local residents.

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Question 8a.

**Table 13. Future work of LWFI**

		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>Total</b>
I believe that the group of organizations collaborating on LWFI will still be working together toward the desired result three years from now	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	2	21	0	23
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	9%	91%	0%	
If a new mayor is elected in my city next year, the work of LWFI will continue to move forward	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	5	13	5	23
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	22%	57%	22%	
My city has a group of rising, talented civic leaders poised to make a difference in my community over the next decade	<i>Frequency</i>	0	1	3	18	1	23
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	4%	13%	78%	4%	
If my city faced an unexpected economic, physical, or social shock (e.g., loss of major employer, sudden rise in high school dropout rates, etc.), the civic leadership in my city could respond quickly and capably to the challenge	<i>Frequency</i>	0	0	6	16	1	23
	<i>Percentage</i>	0%	0%	26%	70%	4%	

Source: Analysis of the Working Cities Challenge Final Survey: Lawrence. See Question 20.