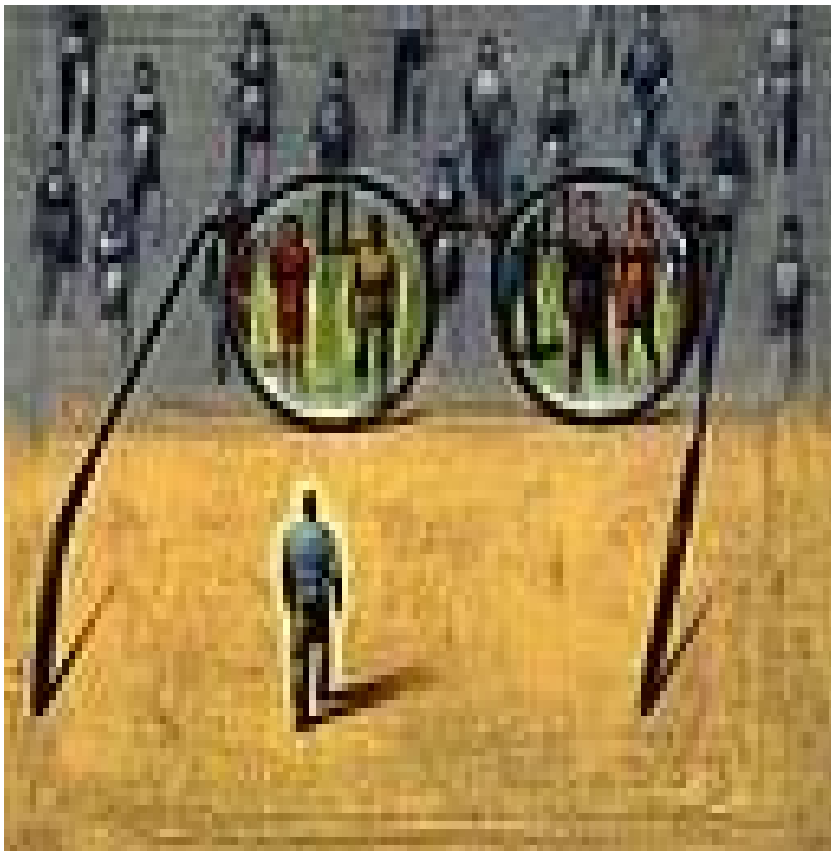


# Thinking Like a Partner:

*The Strategic Value of Engaging Stakeholders in Achieving Goals*



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# Our Time Together Today

- Ask
  - Can an SEA be a partner?
  - Can an SEA afford not to be a partner?
- Describe
  - The strategic advantage of partnerships with stakeholders
  - Kinds of partnerships
  - Leadership in partnering
  - Ways to build partner relationships

# Our Time Together Today

- Apply
  - Partnership approaches to some secondary education issues
- Examine
  - Some examples of SEA Partnerships with stakeholders in Communities of Practice
  - A Self Assessment Tool for forming and maintaining Partnerships

*“ In theory there  
is no difference  
between theory  
and practice; in  
practice there is.”*

*Yogi Berra*



# The Vocabulary: What Elements Matter?

## *Common Terms*

- Partnership
- Coalition
- Community of Practice

## *Critical Elements*

- Duration
- Role
- Depth
- Strategic Value
- ‘Push’ or ‘Pull’

# Knowledge Management (KM): The New Focus on Information *and* Experience



*“Knowledge is an  
asset to be managed  
like other assets”*

Etienne Wenger

## *Think, Pair, Share*

To what extent do you agree with this statement?

“In solving complex problems, state agency personnel cannot rely on traditional strategies of “rolling out” information to stakeholders.”

*Communities of Practice, p. 2.*

## Where Is the *Value Added* in Engaging the Stakeholders?

### First Thoughts

- Build relationships that undergird real change
- Develop connections to extensive and deep networks
- Create customized messages
- Share aligned messages
- Extend the capacity to the state staff efforts by drawing on the reach of *existing* networks

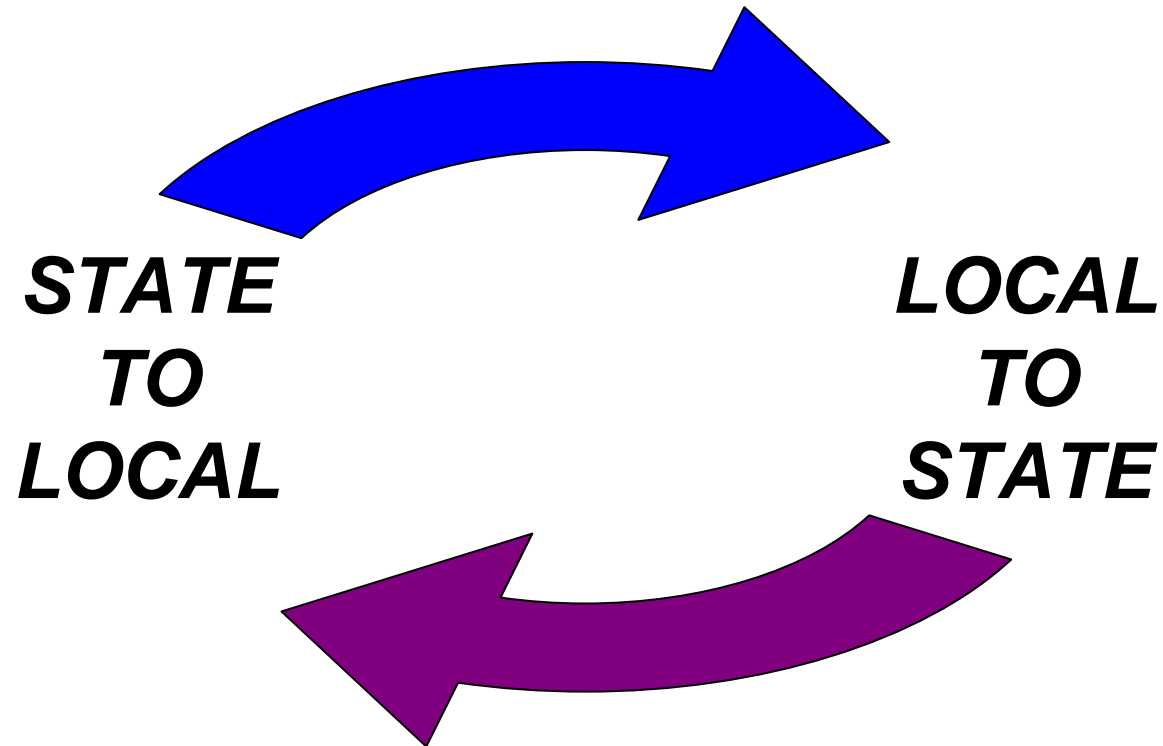
### Emerging

- Sense issues *before* critical points
- Specify the dimensions of an issue with those impacted
- Identify shared interests
- Move beyond organizational positions to shared interests
- Unite the state and the stakeholders around common goals
- Introduce *two-way* learning

# *Two-Way Learning*

*The SEA has a critical role in helping locals to improve practice.*

*Partnering to  
Learn What Works*



## *Think, Pair, Share*

To what extent do you agree with this statement?

“ There are never sufficient direct technical assistance resources to provide direct assistance to all who need it. For solutions to be of value, stakeholders must be engaged as critical stakeholders”

*Communities of Practice, p. 2.*

## Illusory constraints

**Substantial  
constraints**



**Flexible  
constraints**

**Absolute and rigid constraints**

*Source: CA Dept of ED*

# *Communities of Practice: The Evolution of Knowledge Management*

- **Untapped knowledge resides with those that are closest to the work**
- **To reveal opportunities and gaps, leaders need to engage those that have a role in resolving persistent problems**
- ***Real* change requires that leaders, implementers and consumers build a shared sense of purpose around the change**



## *Can This Leadership Style Be Learned?*

- Belief (*in 'Smart Power'*)
- Leading by convening
- Using '*authority position*' to legitimize and propel
- Convey that the SEA cannot abdicate responsibility and oversight while willing to use other, more collaborative, strategies.
- Intentionality
- Practice, practice, practice!
- Communicate, communicate, communicate!

## *We Need A New Way of Working*

- **We have a ‘knowing’ and ‘doing’ gap.**
- **We need to move promising strategies ‘to scale’.**
- **Contemporary problems are complex and interrelated. There are no simple solutions.**
- **We have a need for security during change.**



## *What are Communities of Practice?*



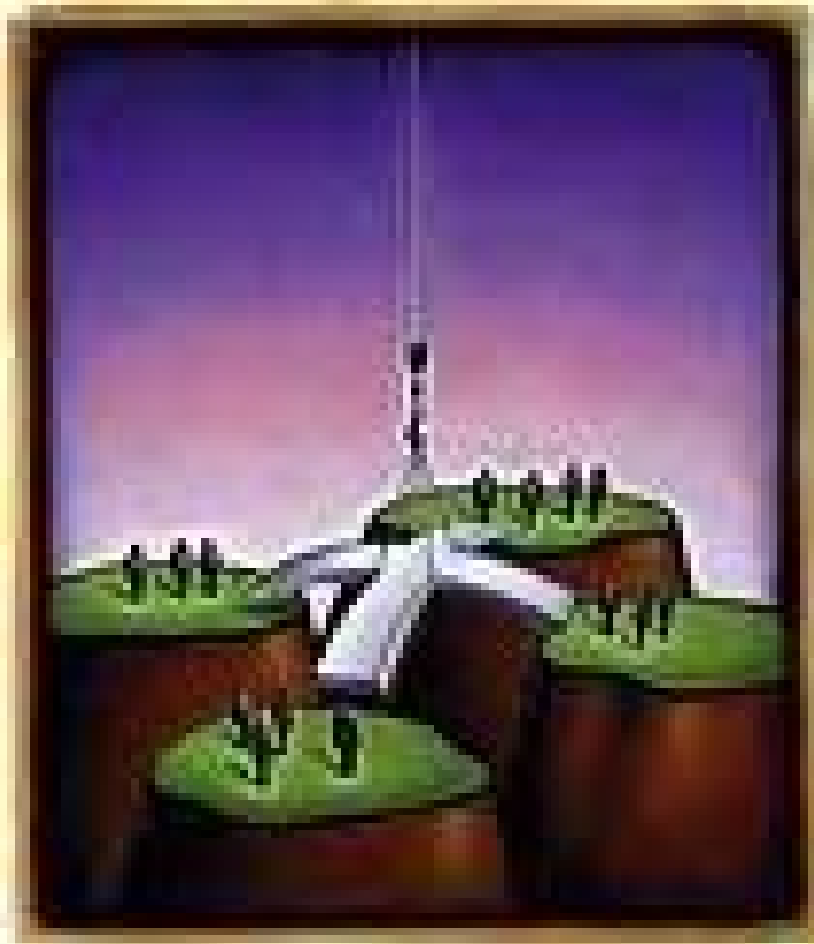
### *A way of working*

- **Involving those who do shared work**
- **Involving those that share issues**
- **Always asking “who isn’t here?”**

### *A way of learning*

- **To create new knowledge grounded in ‘doing the work’**
- **With those who can advocate for and make change**

## *What Do Communities Do?*



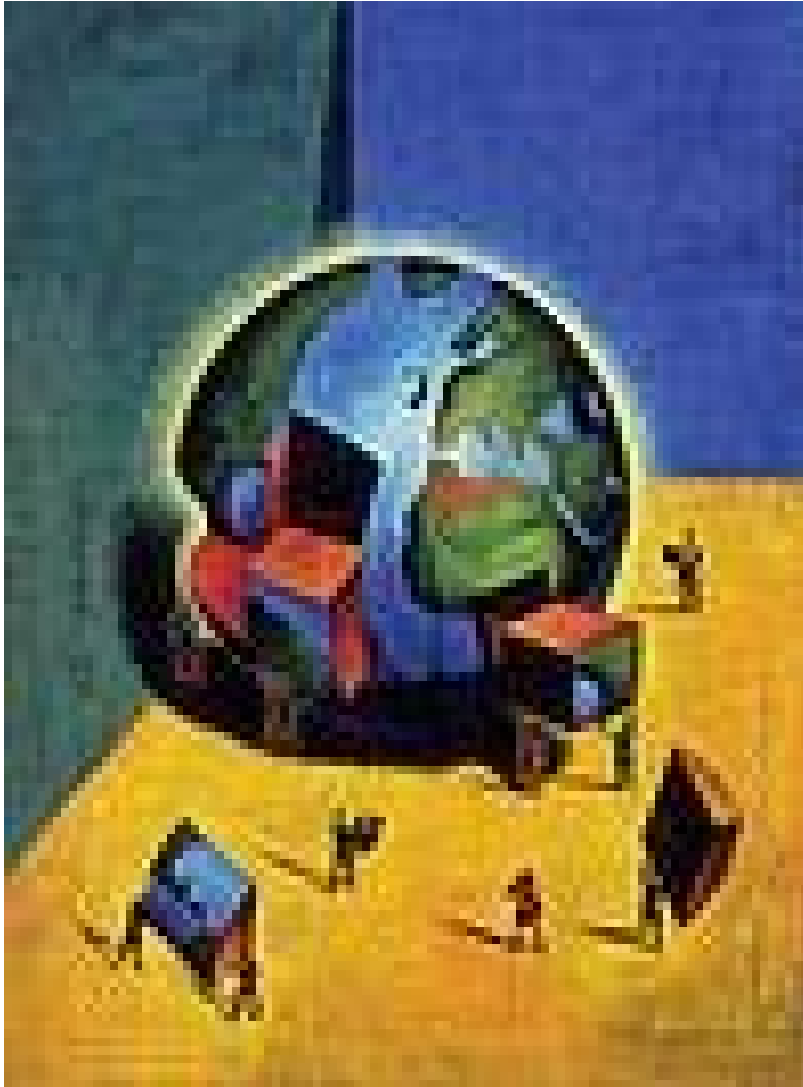
- **Seek and invite others doing shared work**
- **Share learnings within organizations, agencies and roles**
- **Share learnings across organizations, agencies and roles**
- **Decide to go things together that will address a shared concern**
- **Create new knowledge grounded in ‘doing’ the work**

## *Why Are Communities of Value?*

- **Provide the support that individuals need**
- **Respect the ‘expertise’ that individuals bring**
- **Recognize the differences in the settings where people do their work**
- **Seek commonality within differing viewpoints**
- **Unite individuals in action**
- **Focus on ‘learning’**
- **Use ‘learning’ to transform practice**



## *How Do Communities Make a Difference?*



- **Use the natural bonds between people that do common work**
- **Maintain communication that strengthen natural bonds**
- **Keep community members focused on outcomes**
- **Use the ‘community status’ to bring attention to issues**
- **Use the ‘community status’ to engage the people that can help move the issues**
- **Move change to the ‘*Tipping Point*’**

## *We Need to be Able to Operate at the Intersection of Research, Policy and Practice*

- States as leverage points
- Stakeholders as partners
- Federal agencies as collaborators
- Federal investments as resources
- Learning within states with the stakeholders
- Learning across states with peers

*NASDSE, 2002*

# *Communities as a State TA Strategy: The SEA Role in Supporting Practice Change*

## *Shaping and spreading effective practice*

- Sharing promising strategies
- Learning how and why they work
- Helping locals learn from each other
- Creating new knowledge across organizational boundaries
- Using durable networks to support and spread practice change

## *Reframing policy, research and practice*

- Learning how to move from 'knowing' to 'doing'
- Translating learning to policy
- Encouraging investments that will move the work
- Recognizing the value of all contributions to a more complete & effective approach
- Creating new relationships among policymakers, researchers, & implementers

*NASDSE, 2002*

## *Understanding Shared Work*

- Who is interested in this issue and why?
- What efforts are underway separately to address the work?
- What will make the shared work need fulfilling for others?
- How can we build new connections? What venues and communication vehicles will deepen connections?
- What 'real work' goal could unite us?
- Reach out and invite!

# Three Scenarios that 'Beg' for Community Approaches: *What Would You Do?*

- The SEA is focused on building a P\_16 system that develops the academic and interaction skills to enable students to command their futures. The individual futures and future of the community depend on their success. Yet, the school divisions (*elementary, secondary, career-tech, special ed*) are still very separate and often engage in finger pointing when confronting persistent problems.
- Response-to-Intervention (RTI) has been well implemented across elementary settings, but the students who are continuing to benefit from RTI approaches are now entering the secondary schools. Secondary staff cannot conceptualize how the model fits into the secondary setting. The SEA wants to build support for RTI at the secondary level and support implementation.
- The SEA has invested in a large scale behavioral support program that is very effective for most students. Increasingly, more students are requiring interventions that are beyond the current scope of school resources. The SEA wants to refine current relationships and build new strategies with human service agencies

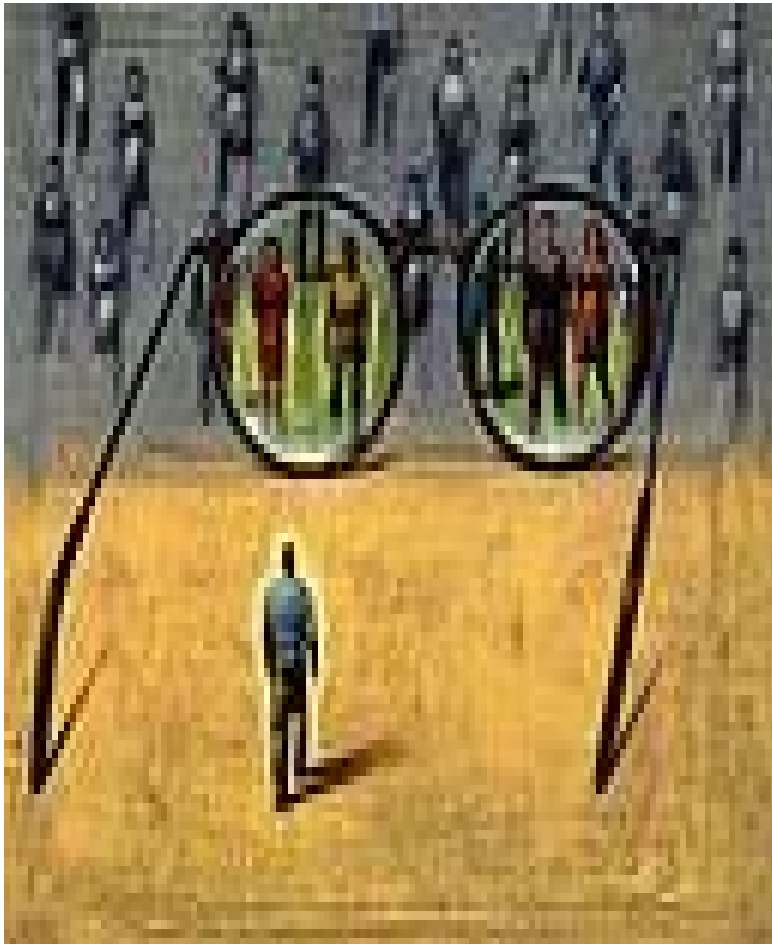
## *How Can Separate Work Become Shared Work?*

- Cross-walk initiatives
- Map current efforts
- Examine your networks
- Commit to building a *'Community'*
- Demonstrate the strategic advantage *to* the community to maintain their engagement
- Demonstrate the strategic advantage *of* the community to help build the culture for collaboration in the SEA

## *How Can the SEA Build the Connections That Create Community ?*

- Be intentional about collaboration
- Invest in collaborative strategies
- Plan together
- Create levels of community that reach the multiple levels
- Share training
- Make it '*the way we work*'. Community is not an '*add on*'
- Invent new ways to connect
  - List serves
  - Collaboration Site
  - Forums
  - Routine Learning Calls
  - Create issue focused *Practice Groups*
  - Involve *Practice Groups* in advising and decision making
  - Undertake shared work

## *New Eyes on Challenges through Communities of Practice*



*For you, is there value in  
building a community for  
strategic advantage?*