TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MATTERS

The Impact of TA in Supporting Communities Engaged in Cross-Sector, Place-Based Work

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Introduction

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) has made a significant commitment to place-based approaches for improving outcomes for children and families in high-poverty, disadvantaged communities. Investment in Technical Assistance (TA) is particularly important for communities engaging in place-based work where strategies require a level of cross-sector collaboration that has not traditionally been expected of schools, local government agencies, and community-based organizations. ED contracted with JFF to provide TA to Promise Zone (PZ) communities, Performance Partnership Pilot (P3) grantees, and priority communities engaged in other Place-Based Initiatives (PBIs). The contract was designed to build program capacity, support leadership development, strengthen local partnerships, and improve services.[1] The impact of this TA is best summarized by the communities themselves, as demonstrated in their own words through out this brief.

This brief looks more closely at the feedback from communities to better understand the impact of this TA in expanding stakeholders' knowledge, shaping practice, and enhancing their networks. The brief also provides lessons to guide future TA investments.

"The TA calls helped us tremendously on improving our services and exploring a variety of strategies to reach more participants."

– Ysleta del Sur Pueblo P3

Background

In September 2015, ED awarded a task order to JFF.[2] JFF staff along with their partners, the Forum for Youth Investment and Performance Excellence Partners, and a large number of subject matter experts (SMEs) provided TA to federal staff and select communities involved in PBIs. For more information on PBIs, see the descriptions on the following page.

The map below shows the communities served; note that five communities had both PZ and P3 initiatives underway during the TA period.

To ensure these activities would be useful to the communities, JFF worked with ED's Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII) PBI team to shape

TA plans with the breadth to impact the network of PBI communities, while still meeting individual community needs. In order to be responsive to individual and network needs, JFF and the OII PBI team conducted a periodic needs assessment that included individual phone calls with the communities, and surveys to understand their education-related work and the challenges and barriers they faced to improving local outcomes. Feedback was also collected from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) federal liaisons through surveys and focus groups, as well as individual calls. This process allowed the team to gather feedback on TA offerings and helped to improve TA delivery overtime.

Map of Communities Served through the EDTASS PBI/P3 Task Order

Legend:
- ● Promise Zones
- ▲ P3 Grantees
- ■ Other

Puerto Rico
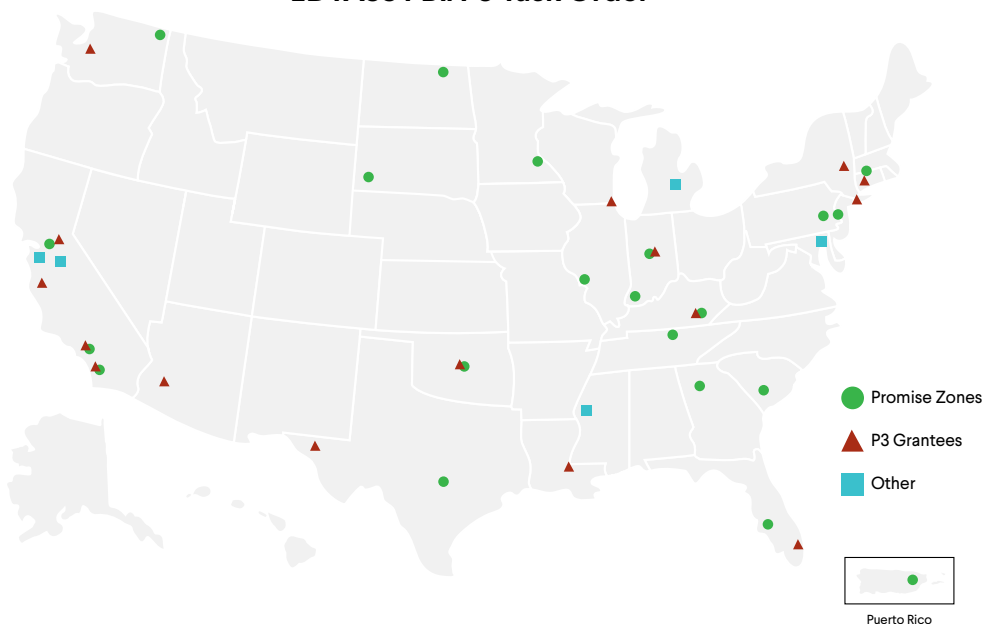
PZ designees, P3 grantees, and federal partners consistently identified a broad range of education-related priorities and challenges; the most common are shown below.

Promise Zone TA Needs

EDUCATION-RELATED PRIORITIES	CHALLENGES
- Opportunity youth - Postsecondary readiness, access, and success - High school graduation - Career readiness - STEM - Early childhood education and development - Physical and mental health / holistic school health	- Funding and resource alignment, including blending and braiding funds - Data (sharing, collection, privacy, research and evaluation applications) - Partnership development, sustainability, and accountability - School-community partnerships

Place-Based Initiatives (PBIs)

Programs that focus on a defined local area or region as the unit of change are known as PBIs. These initiatives are built on the belief that no single organization or system can fully address the multiple factors involved in individual, family, and community stability and success. The **Promise Neighborhoods** initiative is one of the most widely known ED PBI investments, along with other grant-funded programs such as **Full-Service Community Schools**.

Promise Zones (PZ)

For the Education Technical Assistance and Support Services (EDTASS) project, the Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII) chose to provide TA support to a federal PBI project that was not grant-funded: the **PZs**. In the 10-year federal designation, the federal government committed to working with local leaders in these high-poverty communities to boost economic activity and job growth, improve educational opportunities, reduce crime, and leverage private investment to improve the quality of life in these vulnerable areas. Through the EDTASS contract, ED's investment in PZs is focused on building capacity and providing resources and peer learning opportunities in support of education-related priorities in PZ communities.

Performance Partnership Pilots (P3)

The **P3** program is a multi-agency federal initiative managed by ED's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE). Under the EDTASS contract, TA was focused program implementation support for the 15 P3 grantees in rounds 1, 2, and 3. The P3 program provides communities with flexibility in the use of targeted federal funds in order to test innovative ideas for improving outcomes for disconnected youth ages 14 through 24.

Mixed Methods TA for PZ and P3 Communities

To address the priorities and challenges detailed above, the JFF team designed a TA plan that included a broad mix of activities and topics in order to engage as many communities as possible.[3] TA included a mix of large-group, small-group, and individual activities, as well as the development of TA products and tools of interest shared with targeted communities and the broader field. In addition to connecting communities with TA coaches and SMEs, a core task under the contract was to connect communities with other existing TA providers and networks. This "mixed methods" approach to TA aligns well with the four key dimensions Mathematica researchers defined in a report for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services examining programmatic TA for local programs and communities. As shown in the graphic below, these dimensions represent a continuum of possible TA configurations. This mixed methods approach to TA is important for helping communities build the knowledge and skills needed for program improvement.[4]

Four Dimensions of Technical Assistance

Individualized vs. Group	On-site vs. Virtual
Active vs. Passive	Peer to Peer vs. Directed
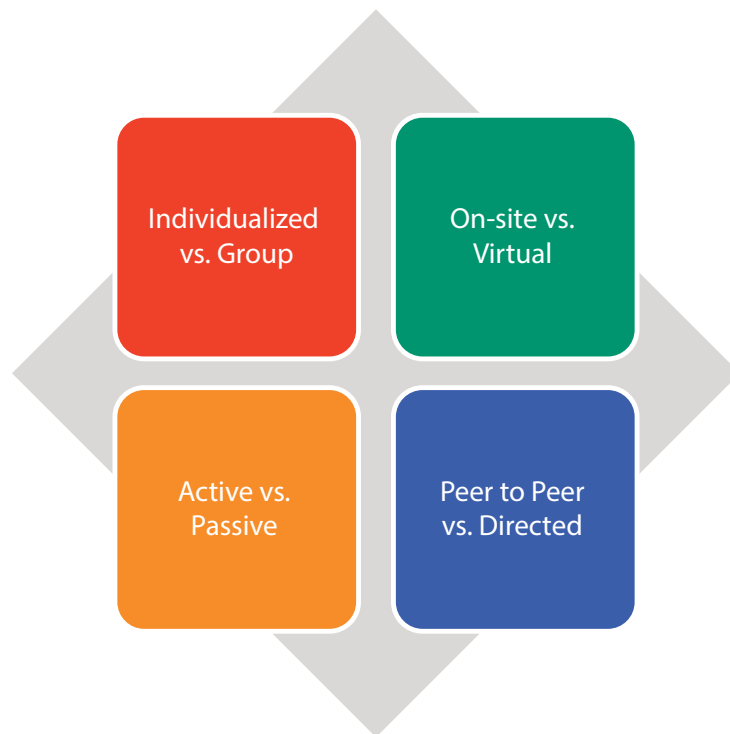
TA Has a Positive Impact on Place-Based Work

Across the contract period, all 22 PZs participated in at least one in-person meeting, conference, or site visit, and all engaged in other TA activities as well. The 15 P3 grantees all participated in individual coaching, with many participating in site visits, peer exchange network (PEN) events, and small cohort groups. In fall 2018 through winter 2019, communities served through the EDTASS Task Order were invited to participate in a survey about their TA experiences to determine the impact of the activities on their work. Twenty-two respondents representing 11 PZs and 7 P3 grantees provided feedback on their TA experiences. Looking across all of the available TA activities, community stakeholders identified the top three activities most impactful for their work:

1. In-person meetings (76 percent)
2. Individualized coaching (53 percent)
3. Small group cohort (53 percent)

Consistent with the Mathematica researchers' findings, participant responses about why these activities were impactful get directly at the role of TA in "knowledge and skill development." Learning new information and strategies, making connections with peers and SMEs, and accessing new tools were all valued for their impact and relevance to the respondents' work.

Why were these activities the most impactful?

Activity	Percent
Accessed new tools for supporting my work.	~63%
Helped me improve practices in my work.	~50%
Learned new information or new strategies that were directly applicable to my work.	~72%
Made new connections with peers and/or subject matter experts that are relevant to my work.	~72%
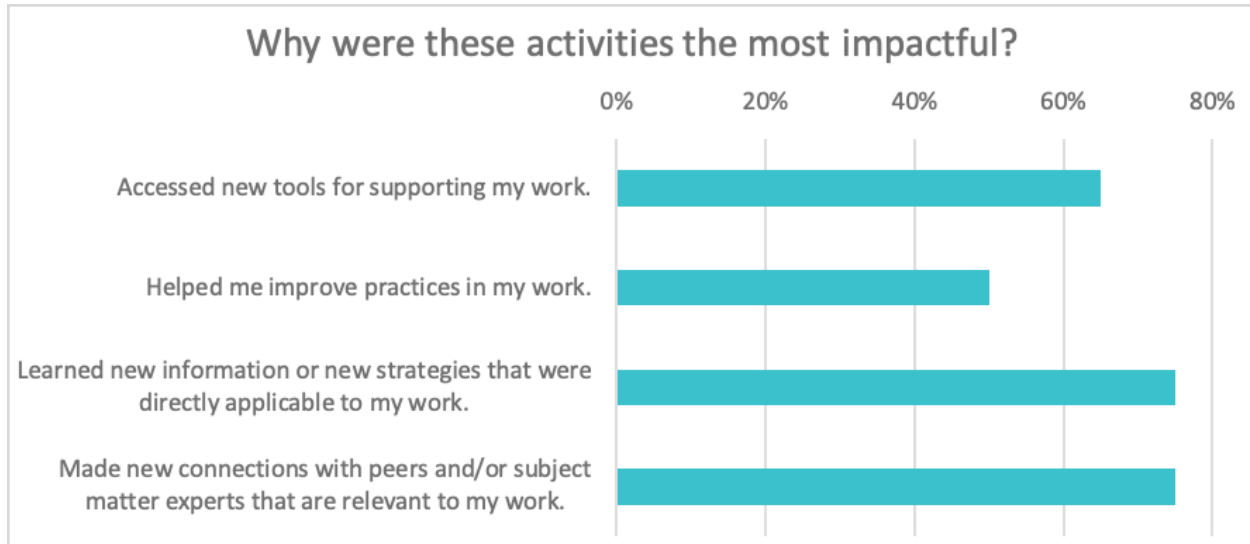
The communities also identified how these TA activities led to concrete change in their work. Communities reported:

- Implementing a new tool or obtaining a new resource (62 percent)

- Connecting with new networks or initiatives (59 percent)

- Using data to make informed decisions (57 percent)

- Developing, growing, or sustaining partnerships (50 percent)

- Expanding opportunities for participation (50 percent)

Respondents regularly shared with the TA team about how different TA activities impacted their work. One comment that illustrates that feedback is:

> *"The Promise Neighborhoods Conference was the first time I was able to meet my colleagues in other PZs. This allowed me to develop a network and brainstorm about resource opportunities with those who had been part of the round 1 PZs. Beyond this, seeing programming in action within other communities allows us to think outside of our own communities and strive to be more thoughtful and strategic about serving our communities."*
>
> - Indianapolis Promise Zone

Digging Deeper into the Top Three TA Activities Valued by Communities

Communities and federal partners alike consistently reported that the in-person meetings, small group cohorts, and individualized coaching were the most impactful TA activities. In order to provide more context about these activities, the following sections dig deeper into these activities. These examples illustrate TA offerings in practice and share community feedback about the impact of those activities.

1. In-Person Meetings Provide a Valuable Learning Format

One of the most unique and popular TA activities was the PEN. Between June 2016 and September 2018, the TA team facilitated 16 PEN events that collected meeting evaluations from participants.[5] This comment from a meeting participant illustrates typical feedback from one of these events:

> *"This meeting provided many ideas that will allow us to implement effective strategies at our starting stage of [the] Promise Zone."*
>
> - Rural Affinity Group PEN participant, November 2017

Meetings were held at locations around the country, as shown below. Because the communities did not have program or grant funds to support travel, the TA contract allocated funding to support community participation in the in-person meetings. Communities have been vocal in their appreciation of this support and many remarked that they would not otherwise have been able to attend. At these events, participants not only networked with each other and SMEs, but also participated in site visits in order to see the host community's work in action.

Peer Exchange Network Events, June 2016—September 2018

MEETING TOPIC	MEETING LOCATION	MEETING DATE
P3 grantee conference	Washington, DC	June 2016
Rural challenges/opportunities for place-based work	Indianola, MS	June 2016
Youth workforce development	Philadelphia, PA	September 2016
Family literacy	Camden, NJ	September 2016
Community schools model / PLANCS meeting	Baltimore, MD	March 2017
Ready by 21 strategies and approach	Austin, TX	March 2017
Fiscal mapping community of practice (CoP) meeting [6]	Broward County, FL	July 2017
California affinity group meeting—statewide alignment	Hayward, CA	July 2017
Trauma-informed care and systems-involved youth	Los Angeles, CA	August 2017
Two-generation approaches	Minneapolis, MN	September 2017
Tribal affinity group meeting	Orlando, FL	October 2017
Rural affinity group meeting	Berea, KY	November 2017
Fiscal mapping CoP meeting	Palm Beach County, FL	April 2018
Youth workforce development career pathways CoP meeting	New Orleans, LA	June 2018
School-community partnerships	Indianapolis, IN	September 2018
California affinity group meeting—youth homelessness	San Diego, CA	September 2018

These 16 meetings served more than 400 attendees in all; meetings ranged from small gatherings of 6 to 8 people to large events for 70 to 80 people. Evaluations completed after each meeting demonstrate the high quality of these events. Across the meetings, more than 185 participants responded to a meeting evaluation survey either on paper or online. Overall, 75-100 percent of respondents at each PEN event reported that their expectations were "mostly" or "completely" met. No pa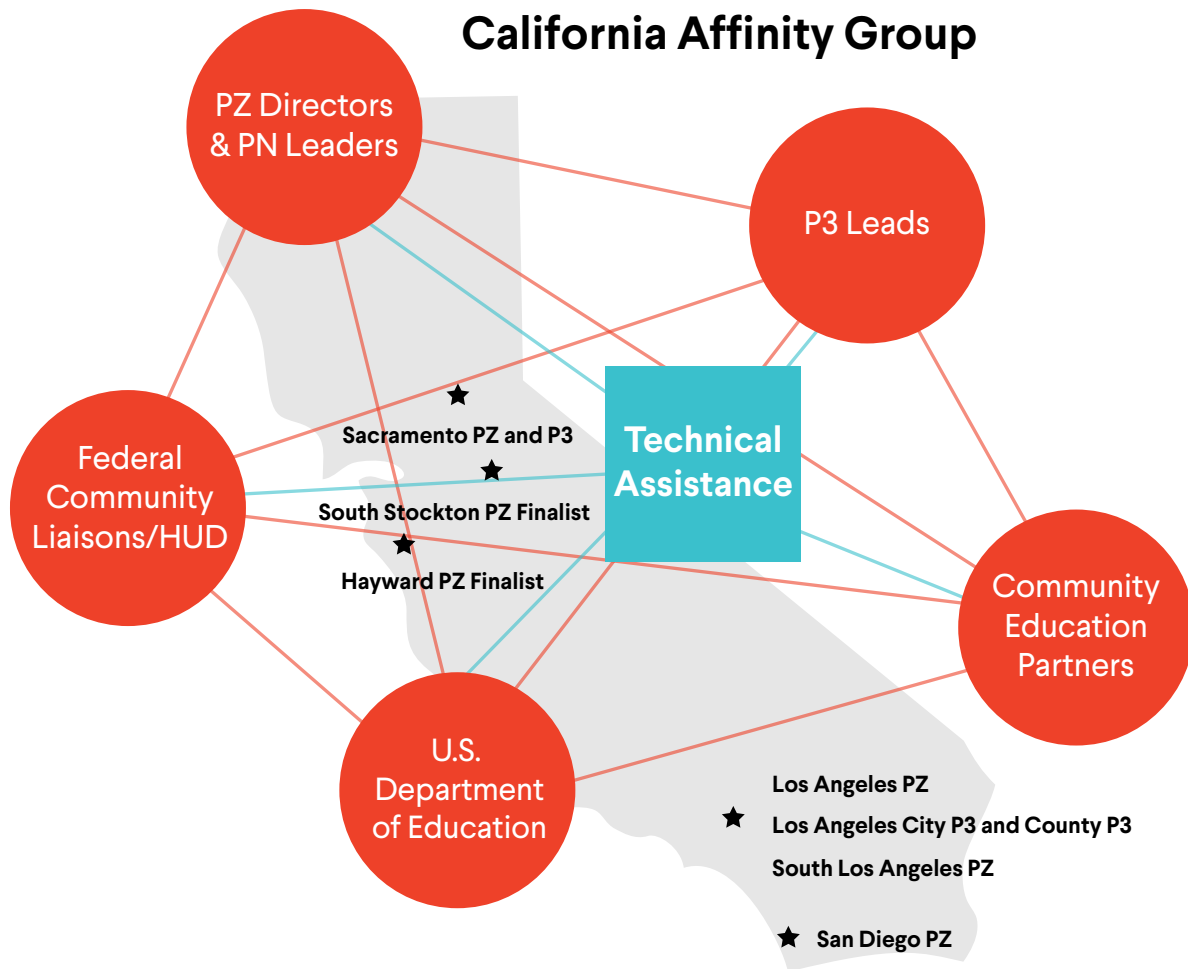rticipants reported that their expectations were not met for either the overall meeting or for particular meeting goals.

When asked about the components of the in-person meetings that were most valuable to their work, participants consistently identified: learning about new tools and strategies (72%); sharing experiences and lessons learned (50%); and networking and connecting with peers (20%).

2. The California Affinity Group Demonstrates the Power of TA Cohorts

The California Affinity Group (CAG) was developed to provide structured technical assistance (TA) to a cohort of nine place-based initiatives across the state (see map below). More than 40 interagency members are active in the group, including PZ Directors and PN Leaders, P3 Leads, HUD Federal Community Liaisons, and select community education partners from local school districts and community organizations. The TA cohort provided an opportunity for participants to develop knowledge and skills for improving their own communities while also elevating the place-based approach as a state-wide model for improving outcomes for children and families.

California Affinity Group

PZ Directors & PN Leaders

P3 Leads

Federal Community Liaisons/HUD

★ Sacramento PZ and P3

★ South Stockton PZ Finalist

Technical Assistance

★ Hayward PZ Finalist

Community Education Partners

U.S. Department of Education

Los Angeles PZ
★ Los Angeles City P3 and County P3
South Los Angeles PZ

★ San Diego PZ

Shared Priorities

The CAG allowed communities to share lessons learned, leverage resources, and identify and advance state-level goals.

Common Interests

CAG members identified common TA interests to drive the cohort agenda:

- Opportunity youth data in CA
- Performance measurement and evaluation
- Cross-sector collaboration
- Strategic systems building
- Full Service Community Schools
- Community sharing
- TA impact
- Homeless youth
- Fiscal mapping
- CA statewide alignment

CAG TA Activities, 2017-2018

3 IN-PERSON MEETINGS	10 WEBINARS/VIRTUAL COVENINGS	7 SITE VISITS
• CAG meeting hosted by Hayward PN (2017) • Trauma informed care and systems-involved youth PEN hosted by Los Angeles PZ and P3 partners (2017) • CAG meeting hosted by San Diego PZ (2018)	• California statewide alignment • Community peer sharing • Cross-sector collaboration • Fiscal mapping • Homeless youth • Performance measurement and evaluation • State and regional data on opportunity youth • Strategic systems building	• Chabot Community College Summer Youth Sports Program • Eden Area Regional Occupational Program Summer Opportunity for Middle School Students • Monarch School • Barrio Logan College Institute • Boyle Heights Technology YouthSource Center • Pico Union Community Center • VCN YouthSource Center

CAG Participation Has a Significant Impact on Place-Based Work in California

Through deeper dialogue with CA Affinity Group members, it is evident that the TA provided through the EDTASS Task Order has had significant impact on their communities. The box on the next page summarizes feedback from CAG members about how the TA met their shared priorities and the impact of TA participation. It is clear from their responses that CAG members valued the knowledge and skill development activities defined by Mathematica researchers as essential for program improvement. CAG members also identified the broad mix of TA offerings, including individual coaching, small group cohorts, and in-person meetings as important to their work.

"The CAG TA has been particularly helpful in exposing SLATE-Z to new resources and tools, such as fiscal mapping. The in-person meetings have had the most direct impact because it allowed SLATE-Z to learn from its peers and share best practices. Developing those relationships has been invaluable."

– Angela Huang,
HUD community liaison,
SLATE-Z

Addressing Shared Priorities – CAG TA Impact Summary

Most Helpful TA

- CAG webinars and virtual convenings

- CAG in-person meetings

- Fiscal mapping TA and community of practice

- Peer exchange network meetings

- P3 calls with assigned coach

Why TA Mattered

Provided an opportunity to:

- Share best practices and lessons learned

- Learn new information and strategies to improve practices

- Make new connections with peers and/or subject matter experts

- Access new tools to support place-based work

- Participate in a cohort of engaged peers

Outcomes from TA

- Developed, grew, or sustained partnerships with peers across the state

- Pursued new or different strategies, including state-level strategies for place-based work

- Implemented lessons from TA to leverage new resources

- Connected with new networks or initiatives

The examples below illustrate how the cohort of California communities was able to leverage the relationships developed in the CAG to support work in their individual communities. CAG members were also active participants in other TA cohorts, including the Fiscal Mapping CoP, the P3 Grantees cohort, and the Career Pathways CoPs, often sharing resources and recommendations from those groups with their CAG partners.

TA Impact - California Examples

Peer Sharing	Resource Alignment	Lessons Learned
SLATE-Z's participation at the LA PEN resulted in 1) a better understanding of the needs of trauma-informed care, 2) connection with their San Diego PZ peers who shared information on how their trauma-informed network operates, and 3) insight on the type of work and services of their practicing partners.	Los Angeles PZ and SLATE-Z have been more informed when applying for federal and state grants. They recently applied for the Gear Up grant together.	Los Angeles P3 shared their fiscal mapping challenges with Los Angeles PZ, which allowed the PZ to narrow its focus and better engage stakeholders in the process.

The CAG cohort and in-person meetings, as well as participation in other TA activities, have been essential to keeping place-based groups informed, focused and engaged. Peer sharing was a critical component of the cohort approach; within the CAG it led to multiple communities working together to develop a strategy for state-wide alignment of place-based work and to improved understanding of the role fiscal mapping can play in better aligning and leveraging resources to meet child and youth goals in place-based work.
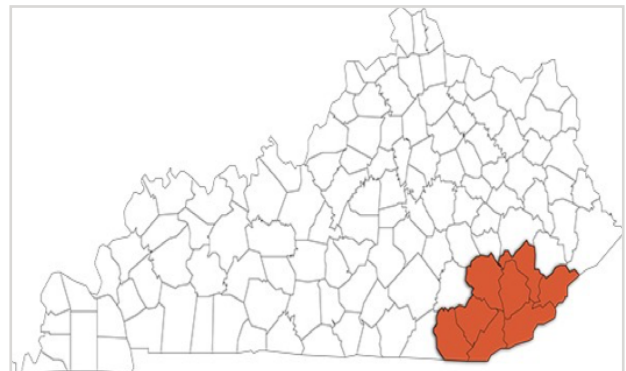
3. Kentucky Highlands Promise Zone and the Southeastern Kentucky P3 Grant Demonstrate the Importance of Individualized Coaching for Communities Bridging Multiple Initiatives

The Kentucky Highlands PZ includes eight rural counties in Southeastern Kentucky, covering 3,071 square miles: Bell, Clay, Harlan, Knox, Leslie, Letcher, Perry, and Whitely.[7] The lead organization for the PZ is the Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation, which works in close partnership with Berea College (the lead organization for the P3 grant), local school districts, and other community partners to address cradle-to-career priorities in the region. In addition to its 2014 PZ designation and P3 grant, the region is also the site of multiple federal place-based investments, including: PNs in Knox and Perry Counties, Full-Service Community Schools, Innovations in Community-Based Crime Reduction, and an Investing in Innovation Fund (i3) research grant. Collaboration across and among these initiatives has been important for the progress the region has made in reducing high school drop-out rates and improving kindergarten-readiness statistics.

EDUCATION-RELATED PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES

Beginning in 2016, the education partners in the Kentucky Highlands PZ and Southeastern Kentucky P3 projects responded to the TA team's request for information about implementation barriers and challenges, and education-related goals and priorities to help shape the TA agenda over time. The PZ Education Committee identified the following priorities, goals, and challenges, several of which overlapped with the region's P3 project.

Map of the Kentucky Highlands PZ

Kentucky Highlands PZ Priorities, Goals, and Challenges

EDUCATION-RELATED PRIORITIES	GOALS	CHALLENGES
• Kindergarten readiness • Proficiency in reading and math • High school graduation • Postsecondary degree attainment • In- and out-of-school support • Reengagement for disconnected youth (the focus of the P3 grant initiative)	• Establishing a backbone organization for kindergarten readiness • Increasing the number of opportunities for a year of service • Organizing a regional community foundation affiliate • Building youth-serving partnerships and networks to expand cradle-to-career efforts	• Securing private investment and engaging in public-private partnerships • Lack of resources and funding cuts • Partnering with school districts and local education agencies • Lack of economic opportunity • Substance abuse

TA PARTICIPATION

The TA team assigned an individual coach to support the P3 work in Southeastern Kentucky, worked with SMEs and others to shape additional TA offerings that were responsive to the challenges and priorities identified in the region, and advanced knowledge and skill development for local partners. The Kentucky Highlands PZ and the Southeastern Kentucky P3 initiatives were active participants in TA, including small group cohorts and PEN events as shown below.

Kentucky Highlands PZ/P3 TA Participation, 2016-2018

TA COHORTS	PEER EXCHANGE NETWORK EVENTS / IN-PERSON MEETINGS
• Community schools • Fiscal mapping • Rural • P3	• Rural PZ meeting in Indianola, Mississippi (June 2016) • P3 Grantee Conference (June 2016) • Opportunity Youth Network meeting (October 2016) • Promise Neighborhoods Network Conference (November 2016, December 2017, October 2018) • Ready by 21 PEN in Austin, Texas (March 2017) • Fiscal Mapping CoP meetings in Broward County and Palm Beach County, Florida (July 2017 and April 2018) • Rural Affinity Group meeting in Berea, Kentucky (November 2017) • School-Community Partnerships meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana (September 2018)

IMPACT OF PARTICIPATION IN TA ACTIVITIES

In fall 2018, seven partners from Southeastern Kentucky responded to a survey about the impact of TA participation for their community. These partners included representatives from the PZ lead organization, a local school district, and a local postsecondary institution. The respondents identified a number of TA activities as having a significant impact on their work, including peer learning meetings, individual coaching calls, webinars, and peer discussion. More than half of respondents also cited the following outcomes from TA participation: engaging with new or different service providers in their own community; building peer connections with other place-based initiatives around the country; implementing a new tool or obtaining new resources; taking concrete action; improving program effectiveness.

FISCAL-MAPPING TA SUPPORTS COLLECTIVE IMPACT

In subsequent conversations with Southeastern Kentucky partners about the impact of TA participation, more specific feedback was provided. Within the Fiscal Mapping CoP, the Southeastern Kentucky partners highlighted how applicable fiscal mapping is to collective impact work. The process provided the partners with

a framework for understanding existing resources available in a community as well as identifying resource gaps. Through the TA support, the partners developed fiscal maps of two counties that are being used to strengthen partnership strategies and maximize resources in the region. The partners cited the Fiscal Mapping CoP in-person meetings as an inspiration to their own work and an example of what can be accomplished through collaboration.

P3 TA CHANGES PRACTICES ON THE GROUND

With the P3 cohort, the Southeastern Kentucky partners highlighted the value of the individual coaching and opportunities for peer sharing. The coach, an SME on systems and programs for disadvantaged youth, became a trusted advisor and resource. The P3 Conference and Promise Neighborhoods Network conferences provided important opportunities for connecting with their counterparts around the country and understanding different perspectives. The Southeastern Kentucky partners specifically highlighted the value of just being in the same room to learn from others about the on-the-ground, day-to-day issues and practical ideas for collective impact work. The partners could then bring those ideas back to Southeastern Kentucky and work to model and replicate promising practices within the context of their region.

PROVIDING SUPPORT TO RURAL PZ PEERS

The Kentucky Highlands PZ hosted a peer learning meeting for the Rural Affinity Group in November 2017. The objectives of the meeting were to: promote peer sharing among the four rural PZs, increase understanding of rural-focused strategies for addressing shared challenges, and develop a TA strategy

for rural PZs. Through the two rural-focused PENs, TA Coaches were able to support Kentucky Highlands PZ partners as they became mentors for other rural PZs. Following the Rural Affinity Group meeting, representatives from other PZs in particular valued the resources and strategies shared by the Kentucky Highlands PZ postsecondary partner, Berea College. The connections the rural PZs built through the TA networking activities resulted in them partnering on a successful grant proposal to the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Kentucky Highlands PZ is the lead grantee working with the other three rural PZs to develop libraries as community anchors.

"Networking increased awareness of shared challenges and successful strategies to address common problems."

– Kentucky Highlands PZ

Conclusions and Recommendations for Future TA

In a 2018 report for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Mathematica researchers highlighted three key findings on technical assistance:[8]

1. Systems change and program improvement require significant commitment from both TA providers and recipients;

2. Flexibility is critical for providing responsive, relevant TA; and

3. Current ways of measuring TA do not adequately gauge its effectiveness.

It is significant that the communities themselves highlight tangible impacts on their work following participation in TA activities. As shown throughout this brief, the communities who participated in TA increased their knowledge about core topics and strategies related to their work, gained access to new tools and resources, changed and innovated practices at the local level, and made new networking connections to peers and SMEs engaged in similar efforts.

The success of this TA effort can be linked, in part, to the efforts of the OII PBI team and the TA team to frequently connect with communities and federal liaisons around the changing needs and priorities of communities engaged in cross-sector, place-based work. Based on that direct input, TA offerings and activities were adapted and updated over time to maintain relevancy for the communities involved. The active role that federal staff played in shaping the TA and making sure that communities took advantage of opportunities was particularly important, reflecting Mathematica's findings that federal staff involvement can be important for bringing stakeholders together and making connections between experts and local teams.[9]

An important finding from the TA impact survey was that all respondents would recommend TA activities to others in their organization or other stakeholders in their community. Suggestions for future TA included the following:

> *"More PENs, it's always great to share best practices with others involved in similar initiatives."*
>
> - Los Angeles PZ

> *"The monthly [coaching] calls were by far the most helpful and I would recommend them for any future grantees."*
>
> - Chicago P3

Building on these suggestions, the TA team would also recommend that ED continue to invest in mixed TA methodologies that allow engagement with breadth and depth to meet community needs. Importantly, ED should continue to invest in in-person and face-to-face TA. While more cost intensive than virtual webinars and other online activities, PZ and P3 communities were clear that the in-person interactions had more lasting impact on their work. ED should also continue to prioritize network connections, helping communities build peer relationships and awareness of other similar initiatives to help grow knowledge in the field.

Throughout this brief, the TA team has highlighted the voices of the PZ and P3 communities in determining the value of the TA provided, because the communities themselves are in the best position to determine that impact. The TA team agrees with Mathematica's assessment, however, that output and qualitative measures leave us wanting more concrete and objective measures of success. Future TA initiatives should include formal evaluations to begin to develop an evidence base for those objective TA performance measures. Community stakeholders, TA providers, and federal partners all stand to benefit from that research.
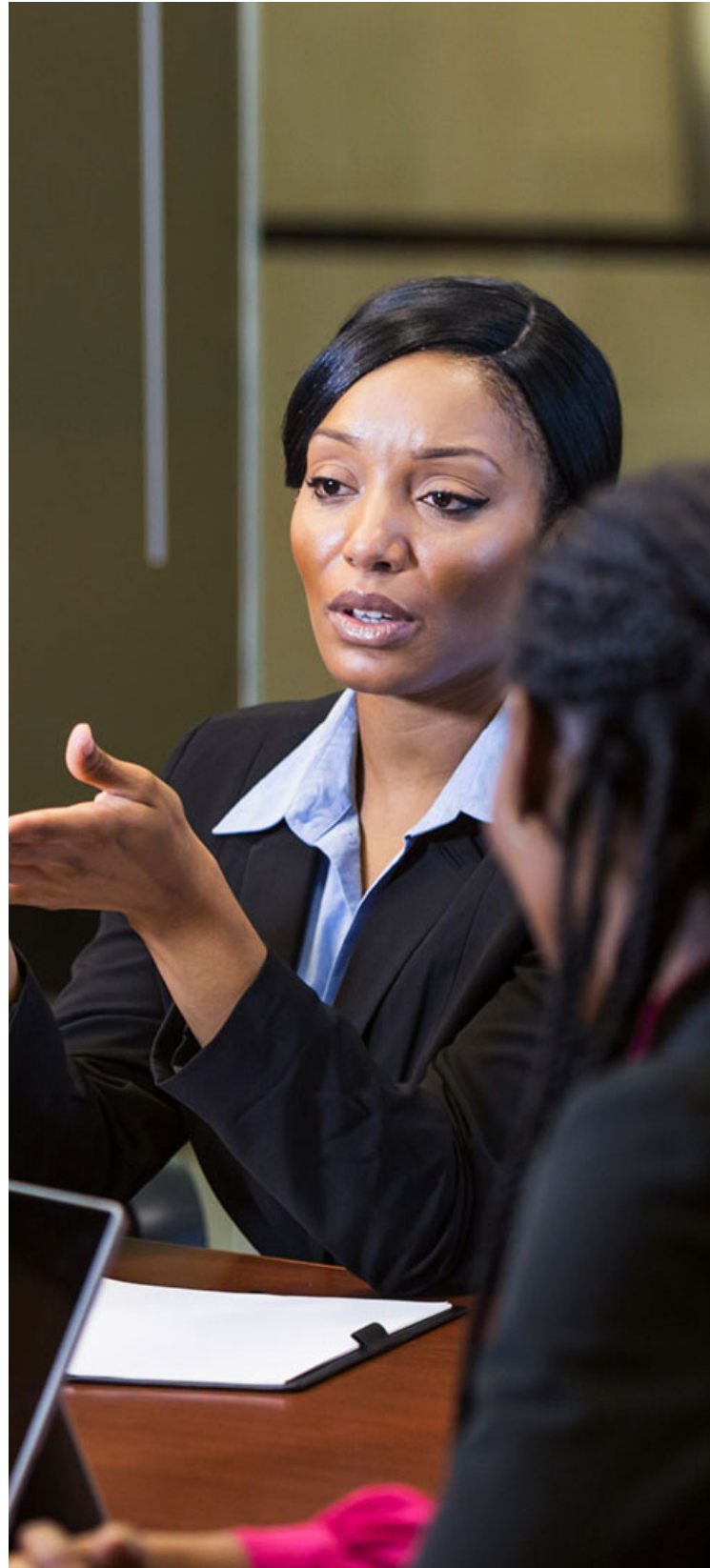
Appendix A: Technical Assistance Types and Activities, 2015-2108

LARGE GROUP ACTIVITIES FOCUSED ON CONNECTING COMMUNITIES WITH OTHER TA NETWORKS.

Webinars and in-person meetings at conferences were typically open to all PZ and/or P3 communities because the topic was of such broad and applicable interest. Connections were made with the following organizations and networks to date:

- World Education
- National Center for Families Learning
- Center for Law and Social Policy
- Urban Institute
- Measure of America
- Opportunity360
- National League of Cities Reengagement Network
- Ready by 21
- Opportunity Youth Network
- Promise Neighborhoods Network
- Privacy Technical Assistance Center, ED
- National Indian Education Association
- Coalition for Community Schools
- Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative
- JFF

SMALL GROUP TA FOCUSED ON COHORTS OF COMMUNITIES WITH COMMON INTERESTS OR GEOGRAPHY.

TA activities included a mix of coaching, peer sharing calls, webinars, and in-person peer learning meetings. During the course of the contract, the following small groups were supported through targeted TA:

- Peer Learning and Assistance Network for Community Schools (PLANCS)—14 communities
- P3 Grantees, by round and collectively—15 communities
- CAG—9 communities
- Rural Affinity Group—4 communities
- Tribal Affinity Group—6 communities
- Fiscal Mapping CoP—11 communities
- Career Pathways CoP—15 communities
  - » Youth Workforce Development Pathways
  - » Postsecondary Readiness and Success Pathways

INDIVIDUAL COACHING FOCUSED ON HIGH-PRIORITY COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNITIES ENGAGED IN SPECIFIC WORK AS PART OF A SMALL PEER LEARNING COHORT.

Communities involved in individualized TA were assigned a TA coach who led monthly or periodic TA calls, conducted site visits, and provided other resources and connections as appropriate. Coaches were selected based on subject matter expertise and familiarity with local contexts. Communities receiving individual TA included:

» 15 P3 grantees in rounds 1 through 3
» 11 communities in the Fiscal Mapping CoP
» 4 communities in the Rural Affinity Group
» 6 communities in the Tribal Affinity Group

PRODUCTS AND PUBLICATIONS DISSEMINATED TO COMMUNITIES AND THE LARGER FIELD.

These were developed by the TA team to address information and resource needs identified by the communities, and to support TA activities. All of the products and publications developed under the EDTASS Task Order are available on the JFF website. Many are also available on the youth.gov and Forum for Youth Investment websites. These include:

- Tools and resource guides on common topics of interest:
  » Two-Generation Approaches
  » Youth Workforce Development
  » FAFSA Completion
  » Early Learning
  » Opportunity Youth
  » Family-School Partnerships
- The Fiscal Mapping Resource Hub, which includes a toolkit, case studies, and federal program tracker to help communities engaged in collaborative fiscal mapping and resource alignment.
- Reports on strategic convenings and the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative, which are of particular interest to federal staff and community leaders involved in place-based work.
- A toolkit for community reflection on identifying and addressing barriers to program implementation, released in conjunction with the P3 round 4 announcement.

Endnotes

1. Technical assistance for education and human services programs is "nonfinancial assistance designed to help programs build their knowledge and capacity and enhance partnerships and services. It typically involves the transfer of knowledge, expertise, and skills to individuals, organizations, or groups of organizations to identify service gaps and needs, to plan for change, and to develop innovations and solutions to address longstanding and emerging challenges;" Scott Baumgartner, Adam Cohen, and Alicia Meckstroth, *Providing TA to Local Programs and Communities: Lessons from a Scan of Initiatives Offering TA to Human Services Programs* (Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, 2018), 2, https://aspe.hhs.gov/system/files/pdf/258776ProvidingTALocalPrograms Communities.pdf.

2. *Education Technical Assistance and Support Services (EDTASS) for Place-Based Initiatives and Performance Partnership Pilots Programs* (ED-ESE-15-A-0011/0002). The contract was jointly funded through the Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII) and the Office of Career Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE). The PBI team in OII, especially the Contracting Officer's Representatives Jane Hodgdon and Sarah Zevin, provided leadership on the EDTASS work, including coordinating with OCTAE's P3 team on technical assistance priorities. To date, the contract has been funded for the base year and three option years.

3. See Appendix A for a table of TA activities under this EDTASS Task Order.

4. Baumgartner, Cohen, and Meckstroth, *Providing TA to Local Programs and Communities*, 4-6.

5. Five additional in-person meetings were offered as sessions at larger national conferences. Evaluations were not collected separate from the overall event. These were:

    »   Coalition of Community Schools National Conference, Albuquerque, NM, April 2016

    »   Opportunity Youth Network Meeting, Washington, DC, October 2016

    »   Promise Neighborhoods Network Conference, Arlington, VA, November 2016

    »   Promise Neighborhoods Network Conference, Arlington, VA, December 2017

    »   Promise Neighborhoods Network Conference, Arlington, VA, October 2018

6. The fiscal mapping community of practice helps communities examine how they pay for supports and initiatives to improve core educational, career, and health-related outcomes. Resources developed through the CoP are available here: https://www.jff.org/what-we-do/impact-stories/place-based-initiatives-and-performance-partnerships-pilots/#fiscal-mapping-resource-hub.

7. The Southeastern Kentucky P3 grant, 2014-2018, included all of these counties except Whitely.

8. Baumgartner, Cohen, and Meckstroth, *Providing TA to Local Programs and Communities*, 13-14.

9. Baumgartner, Cohen, and Meckstroth, *Providing TA to Local Programs and Communities*, 9-10.

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