



# The National Evaluation and Technical Assistance Center

for the  
Education of Children and Youth  
Who Are Neglected, Delinquent  
or At-Risk (NDTAC)

## Building Learning Communities to Sustain Program Efforts

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# Agenda

- What are learning communities?
- How do they help sustain programs?
- What are some good examples?
  - NDCommunities (Community of State Title I, Part D, coordinators)

# What Is a Learning Community?

- **It is a group of teachers, administrators, and other staff that**
  - **meets regularly,**
  - **reviews practice,**
  - **asks questions and focuses on learning,**
  - **then uses this learning to implement program improvement.**

# What Is a Learning Community?

The make up of LCs reflect a spectrum of configurations.

Group of people in different locations

Group of people in same location

# What Is a Learning Community?

The make up of LCs reflect a spectrum of configurations.

Group of people in different positions

Group of people in same position

# What Is a Learning Community?

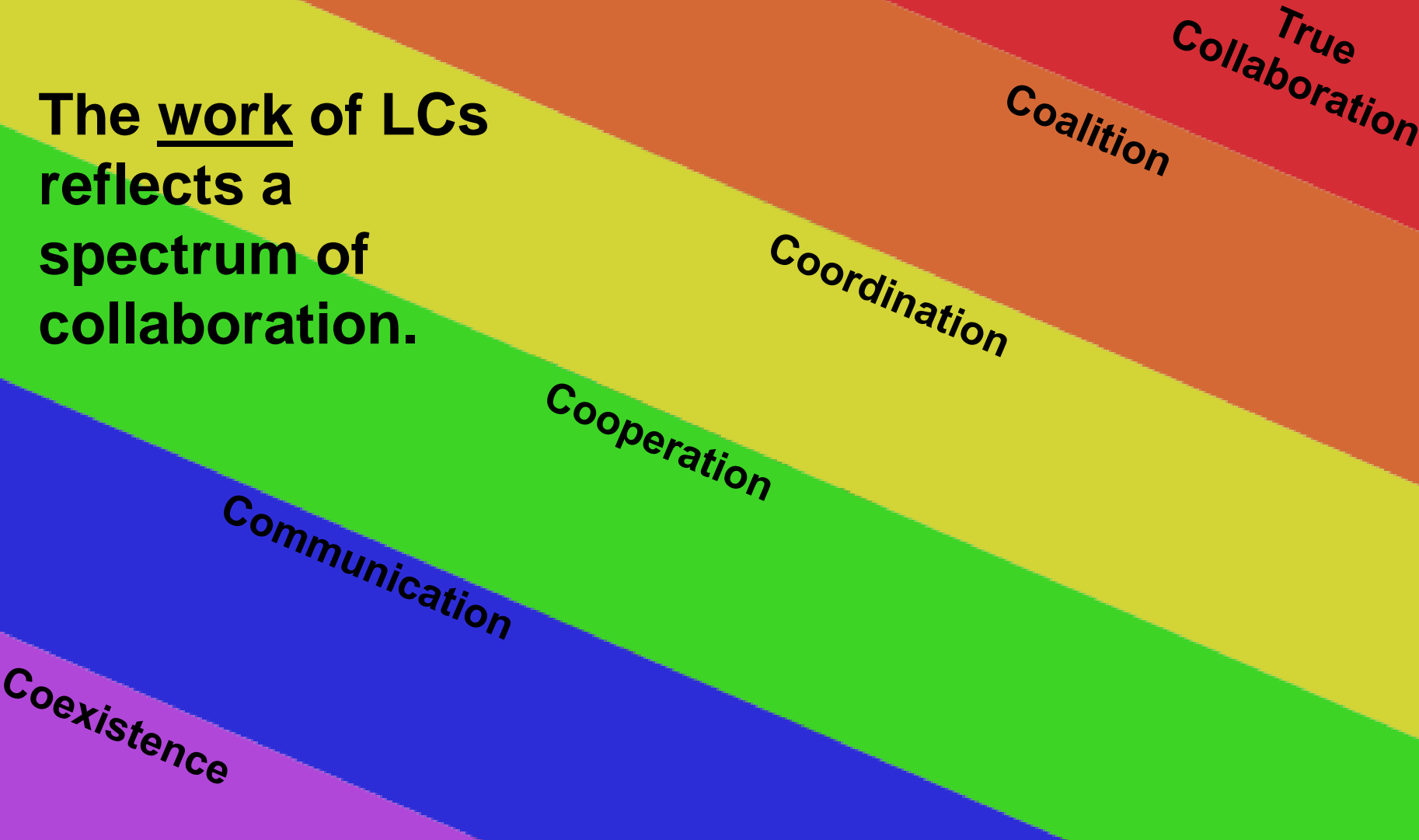
The content of LCs reflect a spectrum of focus.

Range of topics

Narrow topic

# What Is a Learning Community?

The work of LCs reflects a spectrum of collaboration.



# What Is a Learning Community?

The content of LCs reflect a spectrum of focus.

Range of topics

Narrow topic



# Question for You!

By a show of hands...

**Have you participated in a learning community?**

# Benefits of Learning Communities

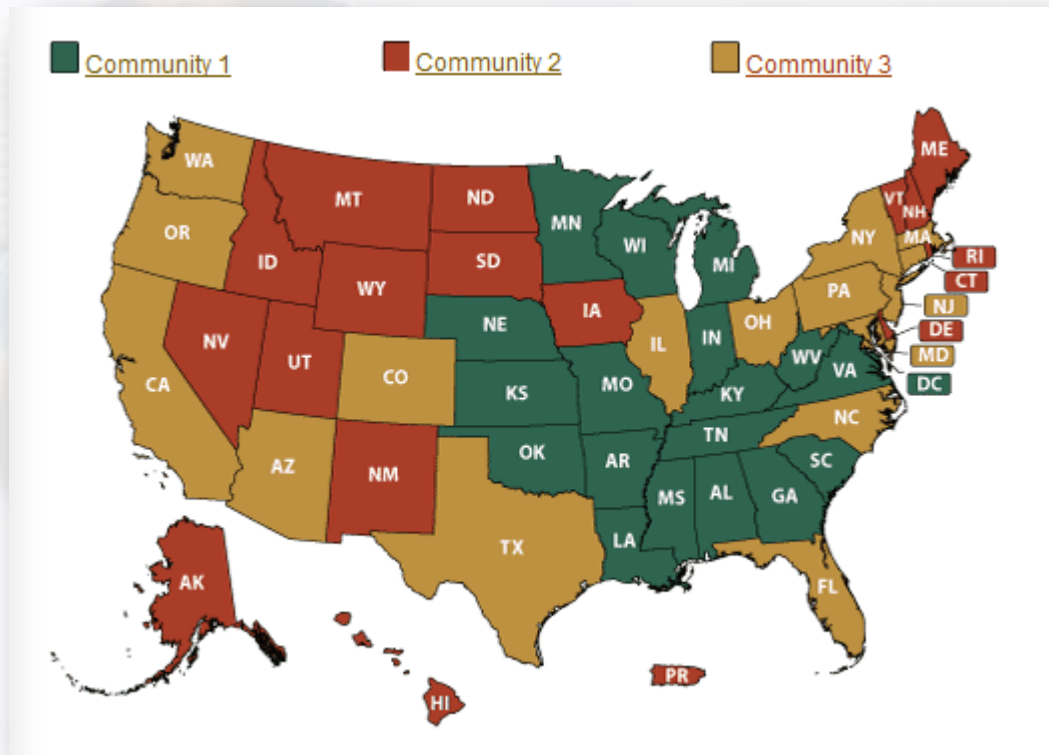
- Reduction of isolation
- Increased commitment and vigor
- Shared responsibility
- Creation of new knowledge
- Increased understanding of content
- Increased understanding of roles played
- Help to sustain efforts

# How Do Learning Communities Sustain Programs and Initiatives?

- Build relationships
- Maintain focus (knowledge, skills)
- Develop ownership for focus of the community
- Develop systems (communication, processes)
- Develop tools
- Continue focus independently

# What Is a Good Example of a Learning Community?

- NDTAC has learning communities for State Title I, Part D, coordinators: “ND Communities”.



# About ND Communities

- A pilot group started in 2007.
- It was rolled out as 6 communities, but reduced to three communities in 2009.
- Communities meet on bimonthly basis via conference call.
- The agenda is developed by the community, based on TA requests received, and/or based on upcoming activities or deadlines.
- Members wear many hats and tend to have little time for Title I, Part D. The Focus of communities tend to be on program administration.
- Notes and materials are posted on a website designed specially for all the ND communities.

# Lessons Learned: Logistics

- Start a community that will be meeting remotely at a face-to-face meeting.
  - Introduce each other.
  - Identify issues to address.
  - Decide how community wants to operate.
- Set schedule so meeting is on everyone's calendars.
- Call in advance to remind community members and get input on the agenda.
- Send agenda/discussion questions a few days in advance.
- Start on time.
- Create special place to save information, resources & materials for future reference (website, shared work space).



COMMUNITIES HOME COMMUNITY 1 COMMUNITY 2 COMMUNITY 3

Tennessee  
Alabama  
Arkansas  
California  
Florida  
Georgia

Indiana  
Kansas  
Kentucky

Louisiana  
Michigan  
Minnesota

Missouri  
Mississippi  
Nebraska

Oklahoma  
South Carolina  
Tennessee

Virginia  
Wisconsin  
West Virginia

## Community 1



### COMMUNITY CALLS

#### Upcoming Calls

- Thursday, May 23, 2 p.m. ET (1 p.m. CT)
- Topic(s): TBD. If you have something you'd like to discuss around this or other topics, please contact Greta at [gcolombi@air.org](mailto:gcolombi@air.org).



## TA Topics & Resources

These pages present a compilation of materials and resources collected from all previous ND Community calls.

### Title I, Part D, Program Administration

- Planning and Funding
  - [Allocating Part D Funds](#)
  - [Annual Child Count](#)
  - [Institutionwide Projects](#)
  - [State Plans](#)
  - [Use of Funds](#)
- Monitoring and Compliance
  - [Federal Monitoring](#)
  - [Subgrantee Monitoring](#)
- Reporting and Evaluation
  - [Consolidated State Performance Report \(CSPR\)](#)

### Title I, Part D, Program Implementation

- Professional Development (Admin and Teacher Quality)
  - [Professional Development Conferences and Events](#)
  - [Training and Technical Assistance](#)
  - [Teacher Quality](#)
- Family and Community Engagement
  - [Family and Parental Involvement](#)
- Transition
  - [Transition, Re-entry & Aftercare](#)
- Curriculum and Instruction
  - [Alternative Curriculum](#)

# Lessons Learned: Content

- Align content with activities of group (agenda topic aligned with common deadline).
- Meet after webinar is presented to clarify the content and discuss how to apply it.
- If appropriate, invite knowledgeable guests or have members do short presentation.
- Walk through resources.
- Review related requirements.
- Allow flexibility to address a new burning issue– ask at the start of the call to ensure there is time to discuss it.



# Lessons Learned: Engagement

- Make it as interactive as possible!
  - Start discussion as soon as possible; save updates for the end.
  - Use open ended questions and practice active listening.
  - Integrate with different platforms (e.g., use webinar interface, poll participants).
- Connect with members who can speak well to a topic to consider discussion questions for a call and recruit as facilitator.
- Use polling questions on webinar platform and facilitate based on responses.
- If quiet, reach out to members you know have information/practices to share.

# What Do We Hear?

- “It is always good to listen and talk to my colleagues who are **dealing with the same sorts of issues** I am.”
- “I always get **good ideas** from these calls.”
- “I **gather support for my superiors**; it shows how other states are being affected and how the majority are dealing with their issue.”
- “**Quick, efficient way to learn** more while still being available to my division director and others when necessary.”



# For More Information

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