

Education Organizing 101

GFE Web Seminar | September 10, 2009

Including presentations by:

Candace Bell, William Penn Foundation
Cris Doby, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
Mike Kromrey, MOP Denver (PICO affiliate)

Web Seminar presented by Grantmakers for Education
Working Group on Education Organizing (WGEO) and co-sponsored
by Communities for Public Education Reform (CPER)



Candace Bell, Moderator

William Penn Foundation



Candace Bell is a program officer in *Children, Youth, and Families* at the William Penn Foundation, where she oversees the education related grantmaking. Previously, Candace worked as a researcher on a variety of projects at the University of Pennsylvania. She also was program coordinator for a National Science Foundation initiative linking the University of Pennsylvania with public schools in West Philadelphia. Candace holds a Ph.D. in Education from the University of Pennsylvania, and an M.A. in elementary education from Nazareth College

Goals for the Webinar



1. Civic engagement lens
2. Why fund education organizing?
3. Successes and challenges
4. On-line resources and tools

The Working Group on Education Organizing (WGEO)



- The **WGEO** is a national network – 30+ funders interested in communities organizing for school improvement and reform.
- **WGEO** plans activities and initiatives that advance the following goals:
 1. expand the field of donors who use organizing as a grant-making strategy;
 2. increase the understanding of education organizing on the part of funders in the Working Group, the larger funding community, and in the education community;
 3. increase the effectiveness of the fields of education organizing and philanthropy;
 4. document the involvement of philanthropy in supporting education organizing; &
 5. keep ourselves informed about the latest trends, ideas and research.

For more information, or to be included on our quarterly newsletter, email Peg at wgeo@edfunders.org.

The Grantmaker's Perspective: Cris Doby, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation



Cris is the Program Officer in Mott's "Pathways Out of Poverty" Program, with a specialty in community organizing. Her experience in this field includes past work as a community organizer and subsequent years serving as local director of the Campaign for Human Development, a major funder of community organizing efforts. Cris joined the Mott Foundation after serving as a Community Builder Fellow with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. She is a graduate of the University of Detroit-Mercy (B.A., Political Science and Business Administration), Loyola College of Maryland (Adult Education), and Loyola University of New Orleans (M.A., Theology).

Summary of Research Findings on Education Organizing



- Shaping new policy and interventions to improve low performing schools
- Improving the capacity of low performing schools to create successful learning environments
- Improving educational outcomes
- Generating new resources for high poverty schools

Education Organizing: The Rationale



- Engaged parents and community members are needed to implement and sustain reform
- Community organizing is a proven way to engage parents, students, and the wider community

The Practitioner's Perspective: Mike Kromrey, Executive Director, MOP Denver



Mike has a BA from University of Michigan and an MSW from University of Denver. Mike has been a professional organizer for 29 years, organizing and directing projects throughout Colorado. In addition to directing MOP, Mike serves on the PICO national network staff, consulting with PICO affiliates in Kansas City and San Francisco. He also serves as an adjunct professor, teaching organizing at the Iliff School of Theology.

Evidence of Results from MOP's Parent and Student Organizing in Denver Public Schools



- District adopts weighted student funding. Equity and Transparency
- Passage of School Innovations Act of 2008 – autonomous schools
- Passage of Denver Pre-School initiative – guaranteed quality preschool for every 4 year old in Denver.
- Legislation and State Board Ruling allowing students to extend high school to earn simultaneous Associates Degree and HS Degree.
- Doubled Public Library Hours of operation in low income neighborhoods.

Key Principles of Community Organizing



What it is and how we can support it?

- Power rests in relationships (leaders must have people they represent); there is no power in isolation.
- Power isn't given – we need a realignment of power giving voice to those who don't have a voice.
- Iron rule: Never do for others what they can do for themselves.

Community Organizing: Benchmarks and Characteristics



1. Volunteer parent and student leaders identify, prioritize, research and then take action on their own self identified issues.
2. A constant pattern of outreach and relationship building.
3. Large numbers and broad based representation matters.
4. Staff is not a doer but coach and trainer.
5. Leadership development.
6. Organizing requires organization.

MOP / PICO

Community Organizing Model



Community Organizer
Listening Campaign: 1 to 1 visits

Form: "Parent Organizing Committee" (POC)

Listening: 1 to 1 visits & House Meetings

Relationships, Reflection, & Local Leadership

Build Relationships & Surface Concerns

Choose Priority Issue(s)

Research & Analysis

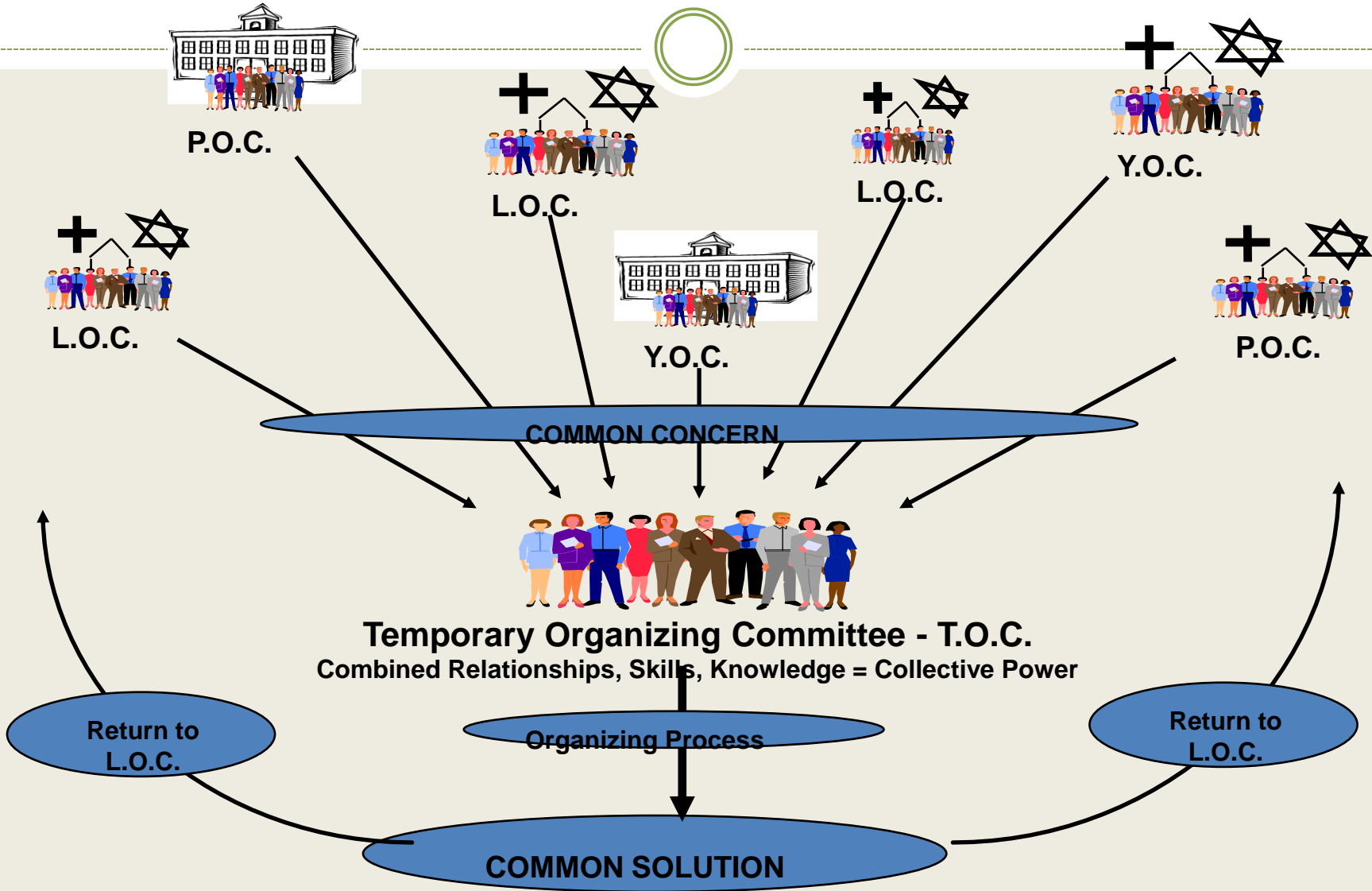
Follow-up & Evaluation

Take Action



MOP/PICO Model : Clustered or Federated Efforts

Education, Education for a Strong Economy, Health Care, Immigration



On-line Resources and Tools for Education Organizing



- **GrantCraft Publication:** *Funding Community Organizing: Social Change Through Civic Participation*
This guide offers a grounding in the basics of community organizing, as well as examples of what the work can accomplish in different fields and communities. <http://www.grantcraft.org>
- **Alliance for Justice:** *Resources for Evaluating Community Organizing (RECO)*. A “living library” of case studies, tools and methodologies, and theoretical approaches to evaluation available at: <http://www.afj.org/for-nonprofits-foundations/reco/>
- **Alliance for Justice:** *The Time is Right for Leadership in Advocacy Funding*
A collection of interviews from a 2009 COF conference. <http://www.afj.org/for-nonprofits-foundations/>
- **Alliance for Justice:** *Tips for Evaluating Advocacy*
- <http://www.afj.org/assets/resources/nap/evaluation-tips-for-both.pdf>

More On-line Resources and Tools for Education Organizing



- **NFG – Organizer’s Toolbox** - Learn more about the vital contributions that community organizing has made to broader community development and renewal efforts, and learn how to undertake this grantmaking. The Toolbox is one of several publications and resources produced by NFG with innovative information for grantmakers who care deeply about making a difference for low-income and other historically disenfranchised constituencies. <http://www.nfg.org/cotb/>
- **NCRP Study** - In May 2009, NCRP released the second *Strengthening Democracy, Increasing Opportunities* report, which documents the impacts of advocacy, organizing and civic engagement in North Carolina, at a funder-nonprofit gathering in Greensboro. Ranghelli and Craig share the research results and highlights from the event. <http://www.ncrp.org/news-room/press-releases/568-responsive-philanthropy-summer09>
- **The Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University**
<http://www.annenberginstitute.org/WeDo/coe.php>

Next Steps: Education Organizing



- Education Organizing 201: *Education Organizing in Action: How to Build Political Will and Create Change Now*

The WGEO is sponsoring a Special Convening on Education Organizing at the Grantmakers For Education (GFE) Conference in Chicago on October 8, just after the closing plenary. Come with us out into the field and meet with expert Chicago community organizers and education funders for a provocative dialogue on how best to improve education outcomes for all students via community organizing. For more information, go to www.edfunders.org.

- Follow-up Webinar: What else would you like to explore? What other information/tools might help you expand your portfolio to include more education organizing?

Thank You!!