



**What is collaborative leadership?** Collaborative leadership requires individuals to work together to solve problems and run an organization, allowing everyone to use their individual strengths for collective purposes.<sup>1,2</sup> In school contexts, the goal is to create learning communities where collaborators on all levels of leadership are engaged in meeting collective objectives for the good of the entire school community.<sup>3</sup>

Research shows that a shift from hierarchical to collaborative leadership models, where there is a strong sense of shared responsibility among school staff, is necessary for meeting the complex needs of present-day schools.<sup>5</sup> These collaborative teams have expanded reach, enabling them to accomplish more together and have greater impact than a single individual could on his or her own.<sup>6</sup>

### Collaborative Leadership in CPC P-3

Ideally, each site implementing the Child Parent Center preschool to 3rd grade (CPC P-3) model has a Collaborative Leadership Team made up of the following roles.<sup>9</sup> Occasionally, a team is shared across sites.

**Principal:** Serves as the CPC P-3 champion and oversees facilitation of the entire model.

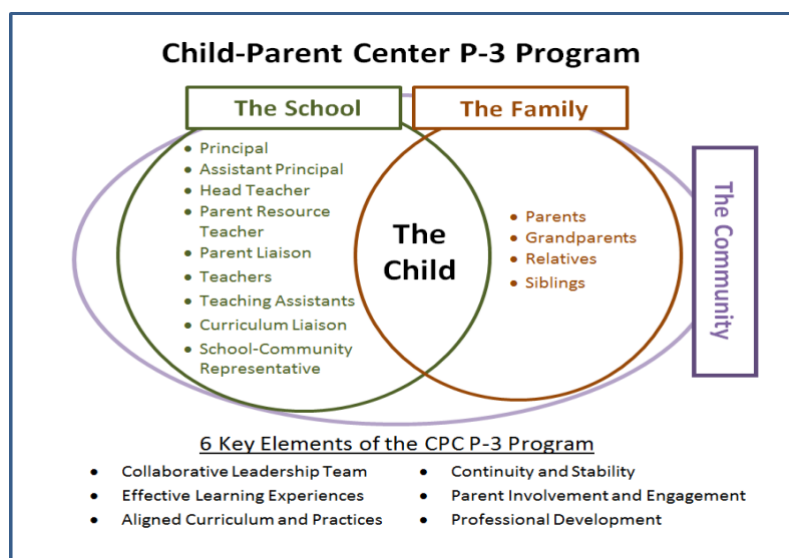
**Assistant Principal:** Works with principal to oversee facilitation and supports Head Teacher in implementation.

**Head Teacher:** In tandem with the principal and assistant principal, employs expertise in early childhood to direct the CPC P-3 program. Responsible for all aspects of planning, implementing, and supervising.

**Parent Resource Teacher:** Oversees the parent program and works with the School-Community Representative to assess family needs and find community resources.

**School-Community Representative:** With strong connections to the community and extensive knowledge of the resources available, this individual identifies and develops partnerships to strengthen delivery of services.

**Parent Involvement and Curriculum Alignment Liaison:** Partners with the Head Teacher and Parent Resource Teacher to ensure that classroom activities and parent involvement opportunities align from preschool through 3rd grade. Role is often filled by assistant principals, curriculum specialists, literacy coaches, parent coaches, or other school staff.



## Collaborative Leadership Findings

Like Anthony Bryk’s research on the five essential supports for school improvement, leadership is seen as a key driver of change in the CPC P-3 model. Bryk found that effective leadership is both instructional and inclusive. For leadership to drive change, it must be collaborative in nature and build relationships across the school and the community.<sup>4</sup>

*“We discuss new ideas and have developed new ways of meeting the needs of parents and students and are able to determine which programs are effective. This collaboration helps me plan more workshops that are needed by parents.”*

—  
Albena Story, Parent Involvement Liaison

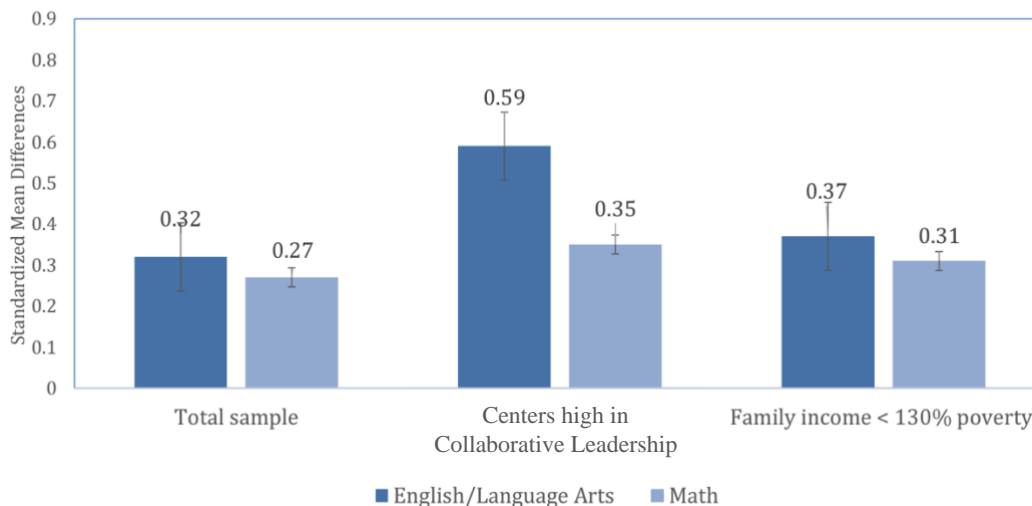
Collaborative leadership assists teachers in meeting student needs, fostering new ideas, and strengthening relationships between educators. It can be strengthened in school environments that provide compensation for professional development, paid planning and break time, involvement in decision making, and salaries that cover basic expenses.<sup>7</sup>

## Evidence from Midwest CPC

In the Midwest CPC Expansion project, an expansion of the CPC P-3 reform model through-out the Midwest, we found that sites with highly-rated Collaborative Leadership Teams also had highly-rated fidelity of implementation, meaning they followed the model closely. Effective Collaborative Leadership Teams are correlated with strong implementation, which we hypothesize will also be associated with the best outcomes for students and families.

A 2023 follow-up study on the effects of full-day (FDP) versus part-day preschool (PDP) on 3<sup>rd</sup> grade school performance found that FDP was associated with reduced grade retention and higher achievement in ELA and Math (see figure below). Notably, FDP was more strongly associated with improved ELA proficiency in high implementation quality centers, which was measured using ratings on Collaborative Leadership over the first two years of the program, driving home the value of strong collaborative leadership in ECE programs.<sup>8</sup>

Values of 0.2 and higher are practically significant.



**Figure.** Standardized Mean Differences for 3rd Grade English/Language Arts Proficiency and Math Proficiency by CPC Full-Day vs Part-Day Preschool Status. Values are from the probit transformation of marginal means (percentages) between groups on PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers), adjusted for 13 baseline characteristics and attrition via inverse propensity score weighting (Supplement; sample sizes = 786 to 874).

### References

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