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SUBJECT: Partnerships and Coalitions: Creating New Educational Structures
(Lesson Plan to supplement pages 25-29)

CONCEPT: Building coalitions; distinguishing between professional and community coalitions, coalitions for mutual education, as well as adversarial and consensus seeking coalitions.

LEARNER OBJECTIVES: At the completion of this lesson, learners will be able to:

1. Realize/recognize the types of coalitional educational structures that have been used in public issues education.
2. Understand the benefits and costs of using coalitions.
3. Understand the stages through which public issues education coalitions develop.

BEFORE PRESENTING MATERIAL:

1. Review pages 25-29 in *Increasing Competence in Resolving Public Issues*.
2. Prepare transparency “Overview of 5-Steps in Deciding To Develop A Coalition.” Review and duplicate handouts “Do We Need A Coalition” and “Types of Structures and Their Characteristics.” Review and duplicate worksheet “Developmental Stages of Partnerships/Coalitions.”

MEETING AGENDA FOR MATERIAL PRESENTATION:

1. Provide a brief overview of the steps in developing a coalition. The transparency focuses attention on purposes, benefits and costs, types of coalitions and phases (of the collaborative process) through which most coalitions proceed.
2. Break into subgroups, ask members to identify issues they wish to work on (or provide a number of issues from which to select), then request they undertake the following task. Using the 5-step decision process as a guide, decide whether you need a coalition to carry out your objectives. Distribute and discuss the handout “Do We Need A Coalition?” If so, what type of coalition? See handout “Types of Structures and Their Characteristics” (or page 28 in *Increasing Competence in Resolving Public Issues*). How would you proceed to develop the coalition? Who would assume the nurturing role?
3. Distribute worksheet “Developmental Stages of Partnership/Coalitions.” Have small groups complete worksheet and report back.
4. Summarize and apply learning principles. Ask participants to identify where they have previously experienced these stages. What current issues would benefit from coalition building?

OVERVIEW OF 5-STEPS IN DECIDING TO DEVELOP A COALITION

- 1. Determine the need for a coalition.**
- 2. Weigh advantages and disadvantages of a coalition.**
- 3. Assess your ability to work in a coalition.**
- 4. Consider the type of structure needed.**
- 5. Understand the phases of collaborative process.**

Source: Dale, D. D. & Hahn, A. J. (eds.). (1994). Public Issues Education: Increasing Competence in Resolving Public Issues. Public Issues Education Materials Task Force of the National Public Policy Education Committee and PLC and PODC subcommittees of the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy. Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin-Extension.

DO WE NEED A COALITION?

Ask yourself, “Should/Do we need to:

- Reach an expanded and more diverse audience?
- Experiment with a new educational format (e.g., roundtable discussions)?
- Work across disciplinary lines to develop project materials?
- Develop more balanced materials with respect to the policy alternatives presented?
- Incorporate both technical content and process assistance in project materials and events?
- Bring multiple, diverse players together in discussions of issues that required such involvement for issue resolution?
- Enhance the credibility of the project through joint sponsorship?
- Take greater risk?
- Act rather than remain satisfied with intellectual discussion?”

Adapted from: Dale, D. D. & Hahn, A. J. (eds.). (1994). Public Issues Education: Increasing Competence in Resolving Public Issues. Public Issues Education Materials Task Force of the National Public Policy Education Committee and PLC and PODC subcommittees of the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy. Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin-Extension.

TYPES OF STRUCTURES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Network | Primarily for information exchange Easy to join and leave Informal structure and procedures Members maintain organizational autonomy Resources shared: ideas, news, and reports |
| Cooperation | Simple but specific purpose is involved Staffed by low or middle level personnel Project-specific: does not affect mission or organization Often a one-time effort Few resources are committed |
| Coordinating partnership | Requires establishment of shared, common goals Goals usually are project specific and not long-term More stable membership: joining or leaving makes a difference Structure and procedures more formalized Participation by senior level staff More real resources committed (staff time, funds, and materials) High payback and risk |
| Collaboration | Complex and long-term purpose shared by all members Strong policy and program linkages among members Decision power (regarding resource allocations) shared Formalized structure and procedures (bylaws) Individual organizations' autonomy diminished Staff time and funds are shared Higher payback and risk |

Source: Gray, B. (1989). Collaborating: Finding Common Ground for Multiparty Problems. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF PARTNERSHIPS/COALITIONS

1. PROBLEM SETTING

Problems -

Goals -

Coalition Partners -

Initial Commitments -

2. DIRECTION SETTING

What will the coalition do? (Be specific)

How will the plan of action be carried out?

Ground Rules and Operating Procedures -

Task Forces Needed -

Information Needed -

How will agreements be reached?

3. IMPLEMENTATION

Mechanisms To Get Work Done -

Maintaining Internal and External Support -

Monitoring Progress -