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### An Interview with Amy Bornemeier and Nici Johnson: Sixpence

Amy Bornemeier is the Sixpence Administrator & Associate VP Early Childhood Programs, Nebraska Children and Families Foundation

Nici Johnson works with the Panhandle Early Learning Connections and Sixpence Sprouting Success through the ESU #13

Amy and Nici began with a brief overview of [Sixpence](#) and the history of work and collaboration that Sixpence has been engaged in throughout the Nebraska early learning context.

- Your grantees have created a number of different partnership arrangements. What can you tell us about what it takes to develop partnerships (with a particular focus on school districts and community based early learning organizations)?
  - Grantees should find the people who have relationships; there are difficulties in finding programs that are willing to partner; some entities don't have those relationships
  - We think about who has the best connection with the child care programs and maximize those previous/current partnerships with providers/programs
  - Some programs are already ready, really invested and/or interested in having the support so they are viable candidates
  - Also important to look at other partners engaged in the system and tapping them
  - Important to examine the school districts, and how they want to be engaged
- What strategies can be used to engage new partners?
  - Making sure there are clear expectations and objectives as well as clear benefits
  - Maximize groups that have influence/pull to help plant the seeds with the possible partners
  - Did a mailing to all providers in the district to see if there was interest in joining the consortium; gave some background information about the partnership and an application

- With center based programs- asked them (their teachers) to write a statement of quality to help showcase the teacher buy-in at levels beyond the director
- What does it take to keep partners engaged and involved in the work?
  - Sharing information at advisory committee meetings
  - Maximizing professional development opportunities
  - Encourage the voice of the providers to be expressed in the planning phases- to help ensure they would even want to participate (e.g. have them create a “wish list” including items like attending a national conference for PD). Figure out what the providers want and try to make that happen- support them as they develop. Making it easier, and fill in the gap as they are reaching their goals
- What haven't we asked you that would be important for the participants on the webinar to know?
  - Try to align as many practices as possible so that there a number of ways for partners to be increasing quality across the state
  - Explore creative use of funding if possible
  - Create opportunities for programs/providers to connect
  - Reframe the work as a career not just a job