

JCPS

National SAM Project

Operating Model Recommendations

Jefferson County
Public Schools

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
I. Overview of the Report and Process	3
II. Background and Current NSP Operating Model	4
III. Recommendations	7
A. Overview of the Legal Entity	9
B. Governance and Management Model	10
C. Roles of National and State Offices	14
IV. Conclusion	16
Appendix: List of Interviewees	18

Executive Summary

Overview of the Report and Process

To fund significant scale-up of the National School Administration Manager Project (NSP) in seven states, JCPS is currently applying for a U.S. Department of Education grant under the Investing in Innovation (i3) grant program. Given the potential grant size of \$30 million and growth of the program, JCPS sought guidance from FSG Social Impact Advisors on the appropriate operating model for the future entity of NSP. JCPS identified two primary questions for FSG to answer:

1. What is the appropriate **governance and management model** for NSP given the needs of stakeholders and any external constraints?
2. How should the **national office of NSP be structured** to work most effectively with the states that are working to implement the project?

To answer these questions, FSG interviewed representatives of JCPS, state and national NSP activities, and the Wallace Foundation and conducted secondary research on the fiscal sponsorship approaches and operating models of other organizations.

Recommendation for Future NSP Operating Model

A key imperative for NSP's next stage of growth is to maintain "non-negotiable" program elements and ensure fidelity and consistency across the country. As funding for NSP is secured from other sources, the Wallace Foundation's role and responsibilities for the program will become less prominent, necessitating a corresponding shift in the operating model for NSP that formalizes the mechanisms for input, guidance, and decision-making.

In the short- and medium-term, FSG recommends a model in which governance, management, and oversight structures are formalized and current support from JCPS is maintained, allowing NSP to compete successfully for the i3 grant. In this model, JCPS will continue to act as the fiscal sponsor and governing board, and a National Program Board (NPB) will be established to provide programmatic oversight and advice to NSP. The national office of NSP will focus on ensuring program consistency, evaluation and expansion, while the states will focus on implementing and expanding the SAM projects locally. To ensure transparency of roles and responsibilities, an MOU will define the relationship between JCPS and the NPB while sub-grant agreements will define the relationships between JCPS and the states.

In the longer-term (approximately five years), FSG recommends that NSP consider becoming an independent nonprofit to increase organizational flexibility, raise funds from national donors, and ensure ongoing alignment of strategy and decision-making.

The short- and long-term recommended operating model will facilitate NSP's next stage of growth. The growth will allow the NSP to more fully realize its vision of improved instructional leadership in schools across the United States. The more formalized operating model will ensure the sustainability of NSP, which has exciting prospects for increasing student outcomes.

I. Overview of the Report and Process

Overview of the Report

With funding from the Wallace Foundation, Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) has pioneered the National School Administration Manager Project (NSP) as an innovative approach to improving school leadership. By having the School Administration Manager (SAM) take on administrative and management duties typically undertaken by principals, principals are able to spend more time on improving instruction, improving relationships with teachers, and increasing student achievement. The early success of NSP has led to significant replication and uptake within Kentucky and throughout the country.

In order to fund significant scale-up in seven states, JCPS is currently applying for a U.S. Department of Education grant under the Investing in Innovation (i3) grant program, funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Given the potential grant size of \$30 million (along with a required funder match of \$6 million), as well as the significant amount of national re-granting that would be required with this grant, JCPS sought guidance from FSG Social Impact Advisors on the appropriate operating model for the future entity of NSP. The geographic growth and the potential for a significant increase in funding makes this an opportune time for JCPS to assess NSP's current operating model and determine operational and governance structures that will allow the project to continue its growth and ensure its sustainability. In addition, as the Wallace grant, which has supported NSP over the past five years, comes to an end, it is critical that NSP's structure positions it to successfully raise additional funding regardless of whether NSP receives the i3 grant. In light of this context, JCPS identified two key questions for FSG to answer:

1. What is the appropriate **governance and management model** for NSP given the needs of stakeholders and any external constraints?
2. How should the **national office of NSP be structured** to work most effectively with the states that are working to implement the project?

These questions were answered with the understanding that JCPS would remain the fiscal sponsor of NSP in the short- and medium-term (approximately five years) as this would increase the likelihood of securing an i3 grant from the U.S. Department of Education, which requires its grantees to have a strong track record of fiscal management.

Research Process

In order to answer these questions, FSG undertook a research process to help identify key needs for the new entity and determine an operating model that best fulfills those needs. In particular, FSG conducted the following primary and secondary research: (1) interviews with 18 representatives of JCPS, state and national NSP activities, and the Wallace Foundation (please see the Appendix for a list of interviewees); (2) follow-up interviews with NSP state coordinators to better understand their needs from the national organization and to gain additional data to supplement findings and; (3) secondary research on the fiscal sponsorship

approaches and operating models of other organizations to help inform the recommendation for NSP. Throughout the process, FSG worked closely with JCPS and the Wallace Foundation to develop and validate our research findings, culminating with a facilitated discussion on the recommendations laid out in this report.

II. Background and Current NSP Operating Model

Background

In 2002, the concept for SAM began within Jefferson County Public Schools as a study – The Alternative School Administration Study¹ – with the objective of understanding what prevents principals from prioritizing instructional leadership. As a result, staff at JCPS decided to develop a system to track principal use of time and they hired SAMs at three pilot schools to understand whether management duties could be separated from a principal’s job and what the impact of this separation of responsibilities would be on schools, teachers, and student achievement.

Results showed that principals at the pilot schools in Kentucky now spend over 70% of their time on instructional leadership and the student achievement rate of gain increased during the first year SAMs were implemented. The success of this project in Kentucky has attracted funding from the Wallace Foundation to replicate the use of SAMs in other states. Currently, SAMs are being implemented in 11 states with over 300 principal/SAM teams. While these states implement the program locally, they rely upon tools, practices, training and protocols from NSP to ensure program fidelity and support for their work.

Current NSP Operating Model

Because NSP originated as a project within JCPS, NSP’s current operating model exists within the structure of the school district. Each of the following entities plays a critical role in the legal, governance, management, and/or functional structures that comprise NSP’s current operating model and have ensured its success to date.

JCPS School Board: JCPS is the fiscal sponsor and therefore legal entity that supports the NSP national office. JCPS also provides back office support and services (e.g., human resource, management, financial, etc.) for the national office. Because JCPS is the legal entity responsible for the national office, its school board is the governing board for the project. In addition to legal and fiscal oversight, JCPS’ board is responsible for programmatic oversight; however, much of this monitoring is informally delegated to NSP management, Wallace, and an informal advisory group comprised of state coordinators.

Informal Advisory Group: The state coordinators serve in an informal advisory capacity providing guidance and input to the NSP Coordinator on programmatic decisions. Because these individuals are implementing SAMs in their states, their perspective is important to the programmatic decision-making for SAMs.

¹ Shellinger, Mark; ERIC # ED 490688.

NSP national office: JCPS employs the current NSP staff. Current staff includes a coordinator who directs the NSP work and two consultants, one who provides data support services and the other who provides administrative support. The coordinator reports to the Director of Human Resources Administrator Recruitment and Development at JCPS, who ultimately reports to the Superintendent. Generally, the NSP national office is responsible for ensuring the quality, fidelity, sustainability, and growth of the project. In particular, the national office:

- Establishes practices, protocols and core elements to which all state SAMs adhere
- Scales NSP both within current states and into new states
- Facilitates learning and sharing of best practices across the states
- Supports existing SAM programs (e.g., data warehouse and analysis, material development for training and university programs, communications, coaching and SAM professional development coordination, data collector training)
- Coordinates external evaluations
- Develops technology and tools to make the project more efficient
- Develops communications
- Advocates for states to require and fund SAMs positions for all schools

NSP state offices: While NSP state offices have no formal or legal connection to the NSP national office or JCPS (except for the Kentucky state office to which Wallace funding is sub-granted via JCPS), state offices have a strong informal connection to NSP through their existing Wallace grants. Each state has a work plan, scope, and budget tying the state work to the NSP. Generally, state coordinators are employees of state education organizations (e.g., DOEs, local universities) that serve as their fiscal sponsors and receive grants directly from funders. In fact, each state needs Wallace's approval to include SAMs in its scope and workplan for Wallace's LEAD, SAELP and/or CLS² grants before it can implement the project. Once Wallace approves the state for SAM work, state coordinators are responsible for employing the tools and protocols developed at the national level within their states, including:

- Hiring and training coaches for the SAMs teams at school sites
- Providing training, coaching, and professional development principal/SAM teams
- Collecting data to send to the national office for evaluation
- Fundraising to support the SAM position at individual schools (as necessary)
- Recruiting new schools in the state to participate
- Integrating SAMs with district and state professional development systems

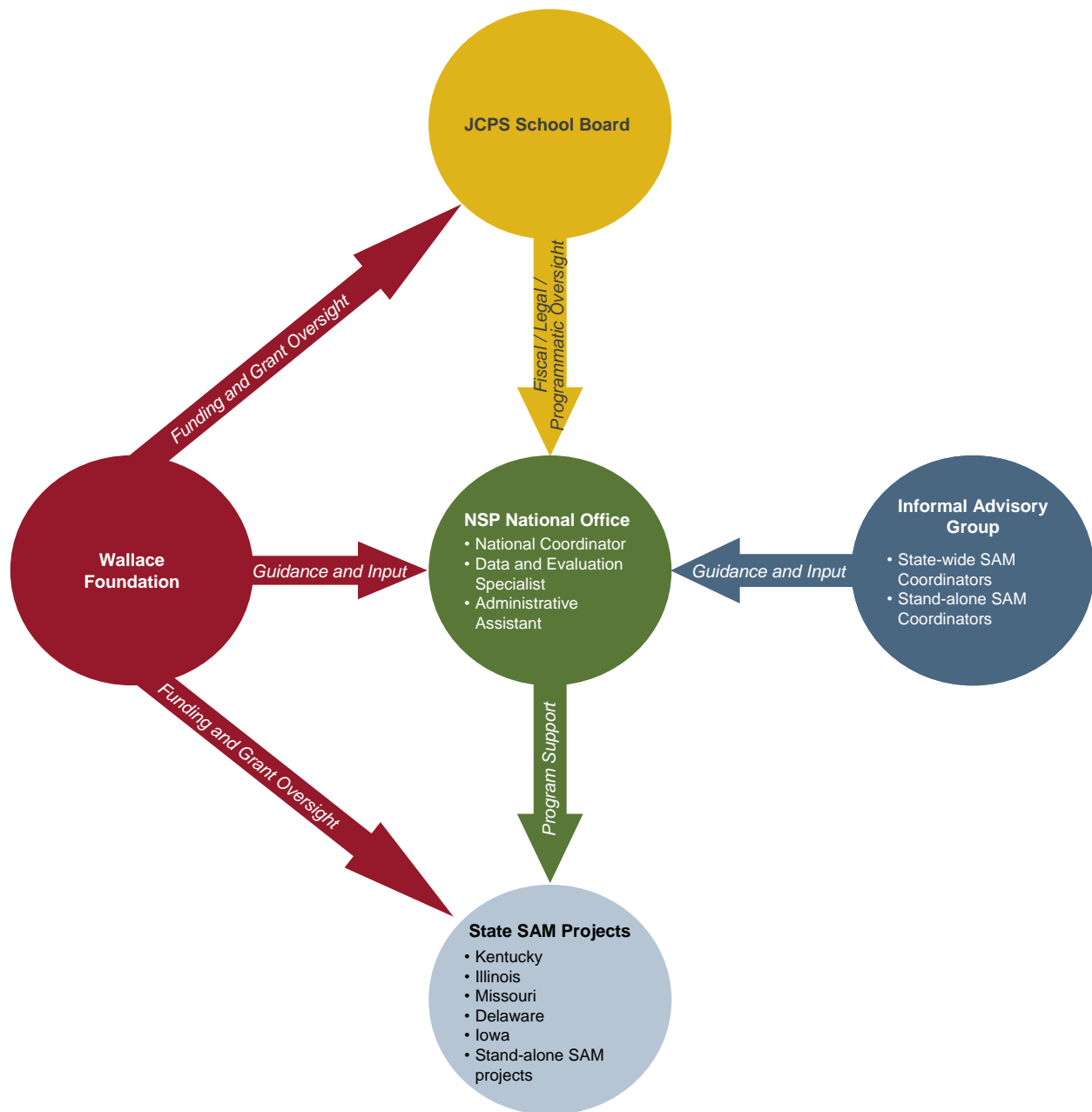
The Wallace Foundation: Because the Wallace Foundation has played a critical role in funding the development and expansion of SAMs, the foundation has also been a vital source of guidance and support for the project. Wallace supports both the NSP national office within JCPS as well as the local implementation of the project in states. Typically, Wallace makes grants directly to the states that are implementing SAMs. However, in Kentucky, the Wallace funding is granted to JCPS, which uses a portion of the funding to maintain the NSP national office, and then sub-grants part of this funding to the Kentucky Association of School Administrators and

² LEAD: Leading Educational Achievement in Districts; SAELP: State Action for Educational Leadership Project; CLS: Cohesive Leadership System

the Kentucky Department of Education for local implementation. Because of the nature of its funding, Wallace is responsible for grant oversight for both JCPS and the NSP state offices. And, given that it is the primary funder for NSP, Wallace also provides a significant amount of guidance and input into programmatic decision-making to the NSP national office. Additionally, Wallace is ultimately the decision-maker on expansion issues for the SAM project given Wallace approves implementation of SAM programs through their LEAD, SAELP, and CLS grants.

The current relationship between each of these entities is depicted below.

National SAM Project Current Operating Model

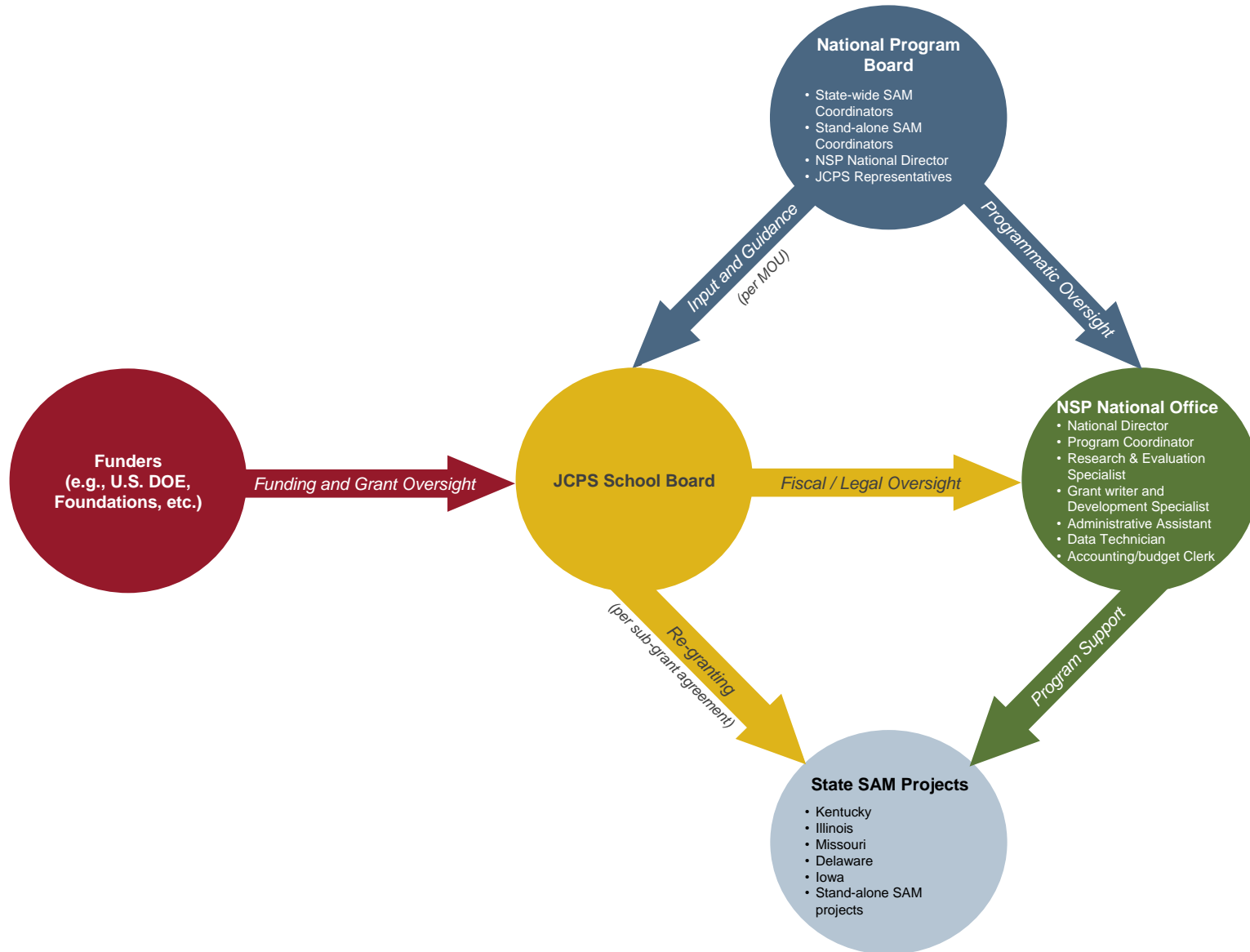


III. Recommendations

As NSP prepares for its next stage of growth, it will be important to create an operating model that is more formalized than the current model, in order to maintain “non-negotiable” program elements and ensure fidelity and consistency across the country. In addition, as evidenced by the illustration above, Wallace has played a significant funding and grant oversight role as well as provided programmatic guidance and input for NSP. Wallace’s role and responsibilities in these areas will shift as additional funding is secured from other sources. Though Wallace will still have a role in influencing the organization, its input will not necessarily be the most prominent voice driving NSP’s decision-making in the future. This change necessitates a corresponding shift in the operating model for NSP as well. More specifically, NSP needs to develop formal mechanisms for funding oversight and for programmatic guidance and input.

In the short- and medium-term, FSG recommends a model in which oversight, management and governance structures are formalized and current support from JCPS is maintained, allowing NSP to compete successfully for the i3 grant. In this model, JCPS will continue to act as the fiscal sponsor and a National Program Board (NPB) will be established to provide programmatic oversight and advice to NSP. Lastly, the national office of NSP will focus on ensuring program consistency, evaluation and expansion, while the states will focus on implementing and expanding the SAM projects locally. The following illustration depicts FSG’s recommendation.

National SAM Project Recommended Future Operating Model



A. Overview of the Legal Entity

JCPS as the Fiscal Sponsor

JCPS would remain the fiscal sponsor in the recommended operating model for NSP. In effect, the JCPS School Board/Superintendent as designee would remain the legal governing entity for NSP. However, NSP would shift from what was a project of JCPS to a more formalized center within JCPS' Department of Human Resources Administrator Recruitment and Development. There are several reasons JCPS should continue to act as the fiscal sponsor:

- **i3 Viability:** The i3 grant requires an Local Education Agency (LEA) or a nonprofit associated with an LEA to apply for the grant. In general, federal grants are typically given to organizations with a strong fiscal track record. Starting a new nonprofit and using a different nonprofit as a fiscal sponsor are less attractive options given neither provide a successful track record of serving as a fiscal sponsor for the NSP activities. JCPS has had a strong fiscal track record with NSP since its establishment and choosing JCPS as the fiscal sponsor in the short-term likely strengthens NSP's i3 grant application.
- **Interest and History:** JCPS pioneered and incubated NSP and has a strong interest and desire to see it succeed and expand nationally. As a project of the district for the past eight years, JCPS has demonstrated the dedication and willingness to ensure this program's survival and growth.
- **Strategic Alignment with JCPS:** NSP not only will help to fulfill the goals of JCPS (to enhance effective teaching and leadership), but it will also allow the district to be involved in sharing best practices that have been tested on the ground in a school district. Additionally, NSP's connection to JCPS will make it credible to other districts interested in adopting the program.
- **Fiscal Knowledge and Capabilities:** JCPS has the internal knowledge and capabilities to provide strong fiscal support to NSP. JCPS maintains a total budget of over \$1B and it manages grants totaling \$150M annually. The district has strong checks and balances in place to ensure that funding is spent appropriately. In addition, throughout the life of the Wallace grant, JCPS has re-granted funding to the Kentucky Department of Education and the Kentucky Association of School Administrators. This capability will be critical if NSP wins the \$30M i3 grant and as it receives other grants from national funders in the future.

Legal Responsibilities of JCPS as the Fiscal Sponsor

As the fiscal sponsor, JCPS is subject to several legal responsibilities. First, JCPS has complete control of NSP's funding and must accept full financial and legal liability for NSP. Additionally, NSP must spend any funding it receives from JCPS in service of a purpose consistent with JCPS' own mission³. As Gregory Colvin outlines in *Fiscal Sponsorship: 6 Ways To Do It Right*, "the IRS

³ JCPS' Mission: *The Jefferson County Public School District is committed to education and the well being of students. This commitment is evidenced by our focus upon student success, family/guardian and community*

requires that [the sponsor] have complete discretion and control over the funds and holds [the sponsor] legally responsible to see that its payments to [the project] are made to further the sponsor's tax-exempt status."⁴ Lastly, JCPS is required to monitor NSP to ensure that funds are spent only for the purpose for which they were given.

Though these legal requirements exist, FSG's recommendation assumes that JCPS will not serve as the fiscal sponsor for NSP in perpetuity. FSG recommends that in the long-term (potentially within five years), similar to many fiscal sponsorship relationships, NSP obtain its own 501(c)(3) status. Given this eventual transition to a more independent organization, it will be important for JCPS to help build the capacity of NSP's financial, human resource and management capabilities. JCPS will need to work closely with NSP to identify policies and processes that enhance the fiscal flexibility of NSP's operations. Specifically, the potential areas of enhanced flexibility include developing a viable fee-for-service structure, streamlining professional services contracts, and incorporating flexible work calendars.

In their article, *More Than the Money: Fiscal Sponsorship's Unrealized Potential*, Jill Blair and Tina Cheplick describe that "a great fiscal sponsor walks a fine and difficult line between providing appropriate oversight and enabling projects to develop independent identities with dedicated stakeholder involvement."⁵ Walking this line will be critical for JCPS in order to help build the capacity of NSP and ultimately prepare the organization to become a successful independent 501(c)(3).

B. Governance and Management Model

Needs of Stakeholders

FSG conducted interviews with JCPS, NSP, state coordinators, and Wallace that revealed several needs related to the future governance and management model for NSP.

- **i3 Viability:** Virtually all interviewees agreed that the future governance and management model for NSP should make it as competitive as possible for the i3 grant. More specifically, these interviewees noted that the organization needs to be credible and have a proven track record. As one stakeholder noted, "I do not think the Department of Education will fund a grant just to create another organization with no track record."
- **Strong and Transparent Fiscal Sponsorship:** Additionally, interviewees identified the need for strong fiscal sponsorship to not only increase their chances of receiving an i3 grant, but to ensure that funding is distributed and spent appropriately and in a timely manner. One interviewee stated that "If I could cook this thing up, it would have strong fiscal oversight...all stakeholders will know where the money is going,

collaboration, and employee efficacy, and by the infusion of each into every aspect of the District's programs and activities.

⁴ *Presentation on Fiscal Sponsorship*, Western Conference on Tax Exempt Organizations, November 2006, Gregory L. Colvin Esq., Silk, Adler and Colvin

⁵ *More Than the Money: Fiscal Sponsorship's Unrealized Potential*, BTW Informing Change, Jill Blair and Tina Cheplick, may 2007

what the states are doing and what the outcomes are...it would be a very transparent process for everyone.”

- **Knowledgeable Decision-makers:** Interviewees also noted that decision-making for NSP should be made by individuals with the knowledge of, an interest in, and alignment to NSP.
- **Strong National Identity:** Interviews revealed that the governance and management model should portray a national identity as much as possible.
- **Balance between National Authority and State Level Autonomy:** takeholders identified the need for a structure that ensures the balance between the financial and programmatic authority of the national office with appropriate autonomy at the state level. As an interviewee identified “It is so important that the states can maintain flexibility and balance that with the national coordination.”

The recommended governance and management model addresses each of the needs of stakeholders. The figure on page eight depicts a model that will ensure that NSP is competitive for the i3 grant with strong fiscal sponsorship, decisions are made by the most knowledgeable individuals through a national lens, and flexibility is maintained with appropriate checks and balances in place. The following section describes the roles and responsibilities of each group.

Roles and Responsibilities

JCPS: The JCPS School Board/Superintendent as designee will remain the governing board for the national office of NSP and will be the final decision-maker for the national office of NSP on board-level decisions involving fiduciary, human resource, and legal issues. In particular, JCPS’ board will approve state grants, hire and fire national NSP staff, and ensure that NSP adheres to its legal responsibilities. Though many of these decisions can be delegated, it is important for JCPS to maintain its final decision-making authority on these issues given its legal responsibilities for the national office. However, the NPB will provide significant guidance and input into JCPS’ decision-making around these issues. In the case of programmatic decision-making, the JCPS school board/ Superintendent as designee will delegate its decision-making to the NPB and national office staff.

Outside of JCPS’ legal and fiscal responsibilities, JCPS will ensure that re-granting to states takes place in a timely and efficient manner while also monitoring use of grantmaking funds. In particular, JCPS and NSP will develop sub-grant agreements with each state to clarify when states will receive their funding, how they will receive funding, how much funding they will receive, and how they will spend the funding. These sub-grant agreements will also identify the information JCPS requires from each state demonstrating how the money was spent and the results of the work.

National Program Board: The key responsibility of the NPB will be to ensure that the voices of those implementing the work will make program decisions to guide the organization. As Jonathan Spack, the Executive Director of Third Sector New England notes, “although sponsored programs are not completely independent – they are legally part of the sponsor organization – they nevertheless retain programmatic autonomy and often have separate

advisory boards making their strategic decisions.”⁶ Similarly, JCPS’ board will defer to the NPB on programmatic decisions for NSP, such as strategy development and program refinements. And, in an advisory capacity, the NPB will provide input and guidance to JCPS’ board on financial, human resource, and legal decision-making. For example, the NPB would provide significant input into JCPS employment decisions for NSP staff, including evaluations, hiring, and firing. Details of the decision-making responsibilities for JCPS and NPB will be formalized in an MOU between JCPS and the NPB. The MOU will ensure that the responsibilities of each entity are clear and transparent to all parties. Additionally, in order to successfully execute against the MOU, JCPS board representatives and the NPB will need to engage in regular, substantive, two-way communications regarding governance and management of NSP.

This structure is similar to a model employed by the Institute for Learning (IFL) which is located at the Learning Research and Development Center of the University of Pittsburgh. The University of Pittsburgh serves as IFL’s governing board and as its fiscal sponsor provides fiscal, management, and human resource support. IFL also has an advisory board which provides guidance to the organization.⁷

Short- and Medium-Term Composition: Initially, the NPB will be made up of individuals with a major stake in NSP including: state-wide SAM coordinators, state-alone SAM coordinators, the NSP Director, and JCPS representatives (including the JCPS Director of Human Resources Administrator Recruitment and Development and a JCPS finance/accounting representative). In the near-term, this composition will help the NPB to monitor the implementation of the i3 grant and provide guidance and decision-making that is grounded in experience. However, within two to three years, FSG recommends adding outside representatives (e.g., national unions, national associations, school leadership experts, etc.) to the NPB. These external voices will be critical for several reasons: bringing a fresh perspective to NSP’s programmatic and strategic decision-making; helping facilitate an eventual transition to an independent organization where the NPB would become the governing board; and helping increase the national visibility of NSP.

Long-term Composition: In the long-term (approximately five years), FSG recommends that the NPB evolve into a more traditional governing board, particularly if NSP transitions to an independent nonprofit. The board’s responsibilities would include what BoardSource defines as the “3 W’s”: “Besides participating in securing finances (wealth), board members are expected to participate in activities (work), and contribute their knowledge and expertise (wisdom)”.⁸

In parallel, FSG also recommends NSP create a State Coordinators Council (SCC) that will be comprised of all of the state coordinators and would be a source of guidance and input for NSP. One member of this council would be elected to serve on the NPB to ensure that the voice of the states and the SCC was part of the decision-making process. This model and structure is used to govern many state charter school associations. For example, the California Charter

⁶ *How Fiscal Sponsorship Nurtures Nonprofits*, Jonathan Spack, Third Sector New England, Fall 2005

⁷ FSG research; IFL website: www.ifl.lrdc.pitt.edu

⁸ www.BoardSource.org; Knowledge Center

School Association has a very diverse governing board that includes funders and business executives, and also has a member's council made up of charter school leaders, one of whom also serves on the board.⁹

Additionally, as the NSP considers a long-term transition to an independent nonprofit organization, JCPS, NSP staff, and relevant funders will need to engage legal counsel to understand the options and parameters for maintaining and/or transferring any intellectual property rights for SAM and NSP elements.

NSP national office: As NSP will become a center within JCPS and NSP staff will still be employees of JCPS, NSP must abide by JCPS policies and procedures from a human resource, financial, and management perspective. In addition, NSP will receive input and advice from the NPB, especially around program management decisions. The primary role of NSP is to ensure that the program maintains fidelity and consistency across states, facilitates sharing of best practices, expands to additional states, and provides centralized services, where appropriate (e.g., communications, tool development, etc.). Section C below includes a complete description of the activities and functions of the NSP national office.

NSP state offices: The NSP state offices (or their designated fiscal sponsors) will receive funding via sub-grants from JCPS. The primary responsibility of the states is to use this funding to implement the SAM program locally. Additionally, the states will receive programmatic support from the NSP national office. Section C provides a complete description of the functions and activities of the NSP state offices.

Funders: Given there will be multiple funders in the future, funders will play a different role than Wallace does in the current model. In particular, they will play a more traditional philanthropic role by providing funding and grant oversight. Though there will be opportunity for funders to provide input and advice informally, the NPB will largely take over Wallace's current role of more formally providing programmatic and strategic guidance to NSP.

This new model will address stakeholder needs in several ways. First, having JCPS remain the fiscal sponsor will increase NSP's chances for winning an i3 grant. It will also ensure there is strong fiscal sponsorship. Developing sub-grant agreements between JCPS and the states will create transparency around the re-grant process. The formalization of the NPB will not only ensure that programmatic decision-making is handled by the state coordinators who are closest to the SAMs work, but it also gives the project more of a national identity. Having an MOU that distinguishes between the responsibilities of JCPS' School Board/Superintendent as designee and the NPB will also create transparency around decision-making.

⁹ FSG Research; The California Charter Schools Association website: www.myschool.org

C. Roles of National and State Offices

Needs of Stakeholders

In order to effectively scale NSP while maintaining the success the project has achieved to date, parallel support is needed at the state and national level that would involve both sustaining and expanding the current roles of the national and state offices. Stakeholder interviews revealed several needs related to the functions at the national and state levels required to scale NSP.

- **Formalized Delineation of National versus State Functions:** Interviewees agreed that the roles and responsibilities of the national and state offices should be clearly defined. As one interviewee stated, “We will need to have more structured decision-making as the program grows.” Formalized delineation of the national versus state functions will ensure time and resources are efficiently managed, and that the national office is providing the appropriate level of support to each state SAM project.
- **Coordination between National and State Offices:** Stakeholders noted the importance of maintaining strong coordination between the national office and state SAM projects. Moreover, interviewees explained that greater coordination could be achieved by mirroring the functions of the national office at the state level. For example, this could include adding staff focused on data collection at both the state and national levels that would work together directly to gather and analyze data.
- **Consistency across State Offices:** All interviewees highlighted the need for consistent structures and processes across state SAM projects. In the words of one interviewee, “We can’t be doing different things and call it a national project.”
- **Flexibility at the State Level:** However, the majority of interviewees also described the importance of maintaining flexibility at the state level. One stakeholder explained, “There are a variety of different models across states. While we have to have the core elements of the program the same everywhere, we also need to leave this room for innovation and creativity within each program.”

Recommended National Functions

Based on these findings, FSG recommends NSP continue to ensure the quality, fidelity, and sustainability of the program, while also building infrastructure to support SAM expansion in new and existing states. In particular, we recommend NSP perform the following functions at the national level:

- ***Administrative and Management Support***
 - Facilitating re-granting to states
 - Conducting strategic planning for NSP and helping state coordinators align statewide goals and action plans with NSP
 - Raising funding to scale and sustain NSP
 - Engaging in advocacy to create conditions for SAM expansion
 - Designing and implementing a communications strategy (e.g., newsletters, website, etc.)

- **Programmatic Support**
 - Conducting professional development across states, including expanding orientation and training to new states
 - Developing training materials, training coaches, and providing on-site observation and feedback on the coaching process
 - Developing programmatic tools, such as Making Time Module curriculum and lessons
 - Setting standards to ensure quality control within and across state SAM projects
 - Developing curriculum for higher education programs
- **Data Collection and Evaluation**
 - Developing tools and techniques for consistent data collection at the state level
 - Providing significant consultation and guidance to states on selecting, training, and certifying data collectors
 - Synthesizing state-level data to provide nationwide analysis of the progress and success of state SAM projects
 - Evaluating NSP to gather information needed to report results to current and potential funders

To meet these national oversight needs, FSG recommends that JCPS augment staff capacity, both within JCPS' Human Resources department as well as in the national office. Specifically, the national functions will require the following short- and medium-term staffing changes, all of which would be included in and funded by the i3 grant budget:

- Position changes:
 - The NSP coordinator position would be reclassified as a director-level position to reflect the broader level of responsibility with the expanded project
 - The Director of Human Resources Administrator Recruitment & Development position would be reclassified as a senior director position to ensure an appropriate level to supervise the NSP Director
- New positions within the NSP national office to support expanded programmatic responsibilities (approximately 6 FTEs):
 - Program Coordinator
 - Research and Evaluation Specialist
 - Grant Writer and Development Specialist
 - Administrative Assistant
 - Data Technician
 - Clerk for Accounting and Budget
- New positions within JCPS to support additional financial and personnel oversight responsibilities (approximately 2 FTEs):
 - Administrative Assistant for Accounting and Budget

- Data Technician (for Human Resources)

Recommended State Functions

In coordination with the NSP national office, FSG recommends each state office focus on scaling its program within the state with quality, fidelity, and sustainability. In particular, we recommend each State SAM Project work with the national office of NSP to perform the following functions:

- **Administrative and Management Support**
 - Expanding to new schools within the state or district
- **Programmatic Support**
 - Conducting professional development within states
 - Providing training/coaching for new in-state sites
 - Selecting, training, and certifying data collectors
 - Developing relationships with local higher education programs
- **Data Collection and Evaluation**
 - Collecting and analyzing local data

This delineation of functions will ensure there is program fidelity and consistency from the activities of the national office while also allowing for innovation and adaptation at the state level to increase impact.

This model is similar to that of YouthBuild USA, a national nonprofit, which is affiliated with 273 local YouthBuild programs that are typically sponsored by local nonprofits. YouthBuild USA is focused on supporting the local affiliates through technical assistance, training, research, sharing of best practices, and program fidelity; the local YouthBuild affiliates are responsible for implementing the YouthBuild program. John Bell, in a vision statement for YouthBuild, wrote that in ten years he hoped YouthBuild would be comprised of affiliates that “are recognizable by the practice of some overarching principles, but each has its own flavor.”¹⁰ His sentiments echo NSP stakeholder’s desire for consistency across states that allows for flexibility in local implementation.

IV. Conclusion

NSP is well-poised to build upon its early success and scale the program throughout the country. To do so, it is critical that NSP ensure program fidelity and consistency across states through a new operating model that is more formalized than its current model, while still allowing for high degree of flexibility at the state level. This is an important and opportune time to modify NSP’s operating model given the application for an i3 grant and the upcoming end of the Wallace grant.

FSG recommends an operating model that will ensure NSP maintains its current support from JCPS, allowing it to compete successfully for the i3 grant. In this model, JCPS will continue to act as the fiscal sponsor and the NPB will be established to provide program management,

¹⁰ *YouthBuild in 10 Years, A Vision Statement*, John Bell, 1996

oversight, and advice to NSP. In addition, the national office of NSP will focus on ensuring quality, fidelity, and sustainability of the program, while the states will focus on implementing the SAM project locally.

Additionally, as NSP grows and establishes a track record, it would benefit from having its own independent organizational structure that does not require fiscal sponsorship. This structure would allow the program the flexibility and focus needed to increase its impact and to attract additional national funders to support the work. Therefore, in the longer-term (approximately five years), FSG recommends that NSP consider becoming an independent nonprofit to streamline the organization, increase efficiencies, and ensure full alignment of the strategy and decision-making.

The short- and long-term recommended operating model will facilitate NSP's next stage of growth. The growth will allow the NSP to more fully realize its vision of improved instructional leadership in schools across the United States. The more formalized operating model will ensure the sustainability of NSP, which has exciting prospects for increasing student outcomes.

Appendix – List of Interviewees

- **Sheldon Berman**, Superintendent, JCPS
- **Debbie Daniels**, State Coordinator, KDE, Kentucky Association of School Administrators
- **Bill Eckels**, Executive Director, Human Resources, JCPS
- **Troyce Fisher**, Iowa CLS Director, School Administrators of Iowa
- **Alicia Haller**, i3 Grantwriter
- **Cordelia Hardin**, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer, JCPS
- **Carolyn Hart**, Coordinator, Atlanta Public Schools
- **Roberta Hendee**, State Coordinator, Large Urban District Association
- **Erika Hunt**, Illinois CLS Director, Illinois State University
- **Paul Katnik**, State Coordinator, Missouri Department of Education
- **Jay Lalley**, Executive Leadership Coach, Chicago Public Schools
- **Carol Lensing**, State Coordinator, School Administrators of Iowa
- **Hilary Mead**, State Coordinator, University of Delaware
- **Robert Rodosky**, Executive Director, Accounting, Research, and Planning, JCPS
- **Mark Shellinger**, Coordinator, JCPS (directs NSP activities)
- **Jody Spiro**, Senior Program Officer, The Wallace Foundation
- **Lynne Wheat**, Director, Human Resources Administrator Recruitment & Development/Wallace Leadership Grant, JCPS
- **Janet Young**, Coordinator, Victor Elementary School District