

FAB Meeting #44 12/10/2021

Attendance:

- 7 UB Backbone Staff (David Harrington, Kassa Belay, Athenia Rodney Danielle Augustine, Danielle Herring, Aileen Gonzalez, Briona Clark)
- 15 FAB Members

Meeting Objectives:

1. Preview Backbone proposed UB projects and FAB engagement in 2022
2. Celebrate FAB collaboration with UB over this past year

Takeaways:

The group used the December meeting to celebrate what the FAB has done throughout the past year and preview plans, priorities, and proposals going into 2022.

Opener

What are you hoping to give or receive this holiday season?

- “I want to give lots of cool toys to the children in my life and I want to receive more joy, happiness and peace of mind”
- Kersha wants to take her kids on a cruise
- Audrey is hosting her family all together at her house and is hoping to give them a good time
- David is looking forward to more time at home with the kids and doing things with them, including two activity gifts to do together — swimming for his son and ballet for his daughter

- Evelyn hopes to grow more spiritually and see family
- Danny hopes to give experiences and unforgettable memories to her family.
It makes her happy to see joy and everyone having fun.

FAB Check-In

This meeting, the backbone introduced a FAB check-in portion dedicated to giving FAB members the chance to share what is new in their lives both good, bad, and difficult.

Everyone took a turn giving an update where they felt comfortable and Kassa shared some additional announcements.

FAB members are invited to sign up to become leader of this portion for the following meetings, as well as to volunteer to take on a facilitation role in future meetings. Any other members who wish to participate should reach out to a Backbone team member.

Project Proposals for 2022

To start the conversation about next year's priorities, Audrey read the mission statement as a reminder of our organizational purpose.

The Beginning

UB began with two criticisms of previous projects

1. Early childhood and educational projects leave out parents
2. Collaboratives meet for years deciding how to work without achieving anything for children

David reviewed how UB started with project planning resulting in past projects transformed over years of discussion from incorporating participatory planning and intentionally centering racial equity.

How It's Going

- UB's 2021 mission statement conversations resulted in many great new ideas but haven't been enacted
- At our last meeting, the co-directors proposed a realignment to allow more projects to be pursued concurrently by creating new categories. Some projects will be led by Backbone members and others led by FAB members with support from Backbone staff. Some projects will be systems-focused (EI) while others will be tangible (i.e. playground).

Where do the co-directors want to go next?

1. Do more towards achieving our mission statement
2. Provide more opportunities for FAB leadership, both on the backbone itself and working on projects
3. Return to "learning by doing" in 2022, building on the last few years of experience and training
4. Explicitly revisit recruitment*, accountability, and values.
*Athenia is planning a meeting around recruitment for early 2022

- The goal is to try as many ideas as we can while accepting that we must be flexible, that projects will change over time, many projects won't succeed, and that new priorities and opportunities will arise.

Consider:

1. What is the time-frame?
2. Are there partnerships that can help us with this work ?
3. Is funding available?
4. Is this a quick win or a heavy lift?

The Backbone Team

- Will begin immediately assessing the first wave of projects to determine the following
 - How it aligns with our mission and expertise
 - Whether we can start making inroads ASAP
 - Where key partners already exist
 - Where have current and prospective funders indicated interest in supporting similar work

- Will work with FAB members developing proposals for projects they would like to take lead on, identifying what supports are necessary

Next: A Few Notes

1. The Backbone priorities for 2022 listed may not cover all of each FAB member's own priorities, to remedy that the Backbone is suggesting
 - Expect opportunities to join working groups for these priority projects
 - Pursue personal priorities and propose ways in which UB can support
2. There are not yet timelines or other project management features but these will come in early 2022
3. To continue to improve the ways we work together, 2022 meetings will include
 - a. Systems of accountability and transparency
 - b. FAB recruitment plan and new FAB "rules of engagement"
 - c. Systems and agreements designed to repair harm between group members when it occurs

In Summary

Kassa reviewed the project chart from the last meeting which separates projects along the lines of short-term v. long term and systems focused v. brick and mortar, then explained in more detail the Learning Neighborhoods project in partnership with WNET.

Projects will be prioritized into first and second waves. That allows UB to prepare and lean on the current strong connections we currently have for first wave projects. The plan is to then apply connections and skills gained and the gathered learning from the first wave to be used in second wave projects.

First wave projects:

1. Parent corner
2. Inclusive playground
3. Child medical care
4. Learning Landscapes
5. Benefits access
6. Childcare and early education enrollment

Second wave:

1. Gymboree
2. Extracurricular activities
3. Mental health

What's next? Commitments and Questions

Commitments

1. Backbone team will begin working on the projects we highlighted immediately and begin reporting back to the FAB on them in January
2. We'll keep asking: Are there additional project ideas you have that you would like support from the backbone team with?

The Backbone requested FAB members to note projects they would like to either participate in or lead.

First wave

Parent corner : Julissy, Evelyn, Kersha, Naimah, Novlette, Jahvene, Monique

Inclusive playground: Novlette, Naimah

Child medical care:

Learning Landscapes : Novlette, Jahvene, Monique

Benefits access:

Childcare and early education enrollment

Second wave

Gymboree:

Extracurricular activities : Novlette, Monique

Mental health: Novlette, Naimah, Jahvene

Game: FAB Jeopardy !

Athenia led the group through a fun and UB-specific game of Jeopardy.

2021 Gratitude and Transitions

The meeting closed with a recognition of gratitude for the Backbone team members transitioning out of their roles in 2021.

- Dionne Grayman, a beloved and valued member of the Backbone team, says “see you later, not goodbye” to the FAB as she transitions out of her role.
- Aileen Gonzalez, our first Early Intervention Ambassador, is moving on to the next phase of her speech therapy degree at Emerson College and handing off the EI Ambassador duties to Danielle Herring.
- Danielle Augustine, UB’s first full-time hire, has received a promotion to Project Manager of Catalytic Projects and Community Race Equity at Community Solutions related to her leadership through Learning Landscapes and other successful UB projects.

Reality Check

FAB Reality Check Average Answers

