

Partner Collaboration During Project MOMENTUM's Third Year

Partner Survey Summary Report

Introduction

In 2022, the Southeast Service Cooperative (SSC) Project MOMENTUM received a five-year National Professional Development Grant from the U.S. Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition. Project MOMENTUM works to increase the availability of professional learning opportunities and support for educators by developing and offering accessible and high quality microcredential courses to educators in Minnesota. By doing so, the project hopes to improve the academic outcomes of multilingual learners.

Staff from Project MOMENTUM partnered with education leaders and subject matter experts in Minnesota to design and implement the project. To gain understanding about the partnership successes and challenges in the third year of the project, Wilder Research conducted a survey of partners using the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory (CFI). The CFI is an instrument used to assess how a partnership is doing on a series of research-based factors important for the success of collaborative projects.

Wilder Research invited the partners to complete the survey in April 2025. In the letter, partners were informed that survey participation was voluntary. Of the 28 partners invited to participate in the survey, 19 (68%) completed it. The respondents included advisory board members, consultants, a partner school, and staff from Southeast Service Cooperative and Project MOMENTUM (excluding the project director).

The CFI, developed by Wilder Research, contains 44 items that make up 22 factors.¹ We modified the original CFI slightly to fit the work of Project MOMENTUM and used 18 of the 22 original factors. Partners rated each item on a scale of 1 to 5, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The factors and their corresponding items are shown in the chart below (pp. 3-7). In addition to the CFI, the survey asked partners two open-ended questions: 1) what successes or benefits they have experienced with Project MOMENTUM and 2) what recommendations they have for improving Project MOMENTUM.

¹ Mattessich, P., & Johnson, K. (2018). *Collaboration Factors Inventory, 3rd edition*. Wilder Research. <https://www.wilder.org/wilder-research/research-library/collaboration-factors-inventory-3rd-edition>

Findings

Positive aspects

In general, partners viewed the collaboration positively. Collaboration factors with the highest average ratings of agreement (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree) included:

- Shared vision (4.8 average rating)
- Skilled leadership (4.8 average rating)
- Mutual respect, understanding, and trust (4.7 average rating)
- Concrete, attainable goals and objectives (4.7 average rating)
- Members share a stake in both process and outcome (4.6 average rating)
- Members see collaboration as being in their self-interest (4.6 average rating)
- Flexibility (4.6 average rating)

Twelve partners shared successes or benefits they experienced with Project MOMENTUM. Their responses are grouped into one or more themes. Below are the themes and number of responses.

- Project offers great or free resources for educators (3 responses)
- Project creates pathways for educators to pursue a K-12 ESL license (3 responses)
- Project will have a great benefit towards students (3 responses)
- Partners like the networking, communication, and collaborative working relationship (3 responses)
- Project has made great progress in a short amount of time (3 responses)
- Partners gain knowledge by participating in Project MOMENTUM (e.g., about how to better support multilingual learners or needed resources to promote the work - 2 responses)
- Project fills an important training and resource gap for educators of multilingual learners in Minnesota (2 responses)
- Partners feel that the project is making a positive impact on educators' knowledge of multilingual learning (1 response)

Opportunity for improvement

Although all CFI factors had average ratings above 3 (between Neither agree nor disagree and Strongly agree), the areas with the lowest average ratings were:

- Appropriate cross-section of members (3.7 average rating)
- Sufficient funds, staff, materials, and time (3.8 average rating)
- Adaptability to changing conditions (3.8 average rating)

In addition, seven partners provided suggestions or recommendations for project improvement. Below are the themes from the open-ended item and the number of responses.

- Find alternative funding models or more funding to sustain the project (5 responses)
- Engage communities who represent multilingual students and their families, especially the newcomers (1 response)
- Pay attention to staff capacity, as there are concerns about the project taking on too much work (2 responses)

One partner commented that Project MOMENTUM is on the right trajectory and should continue to build capacity to support professional development and licensure paths.

Statements about Project MOMENTUM collaboration

The CFI items are listed under each collaboration success factor (N=16-19).

Favorable political and social climate | Mean 4.5



Mutual respect, understanding, and trust | Mean 4.7



Appropriate cross-section of members | Mean 3.7

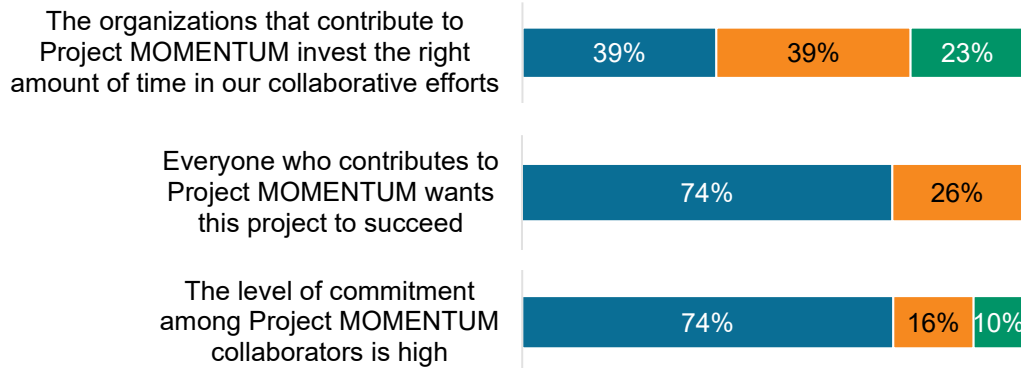


Members see collaboration as being in their self-interest | Mean 4.6

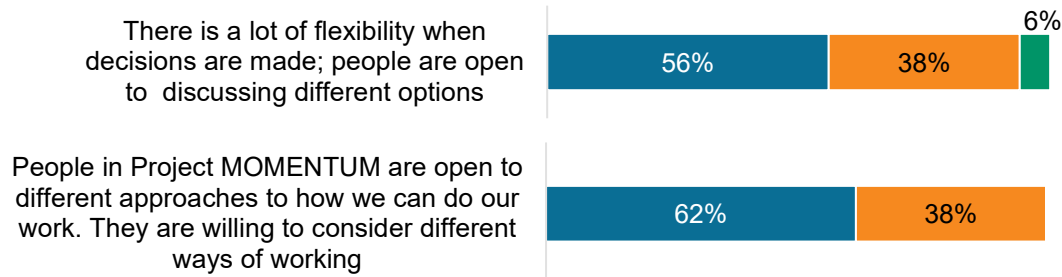


■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

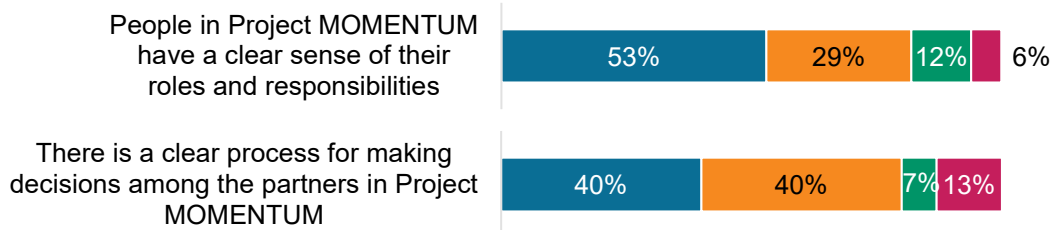
Members share a stake in both process and outcome | Mean 4.6



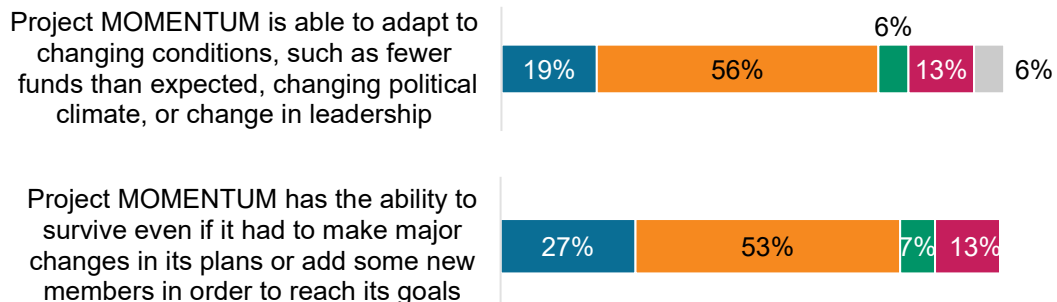
Flexibility | Mean 4.6



Development of clear roles and policy guidelines | Mean 4.2

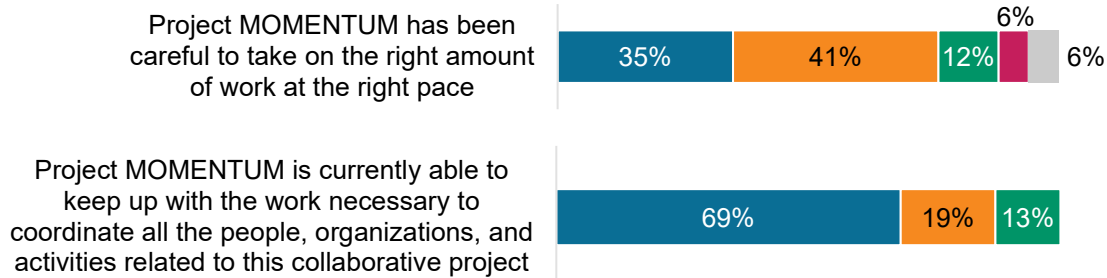


Adaptability to changing conditions | Mean 3.8

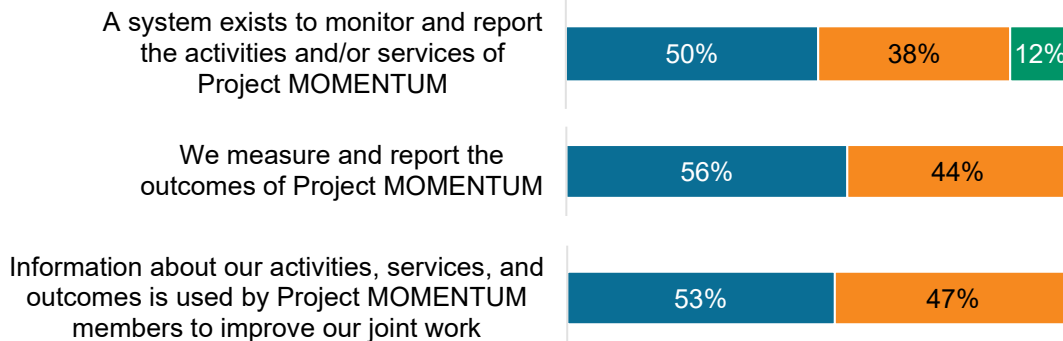


■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

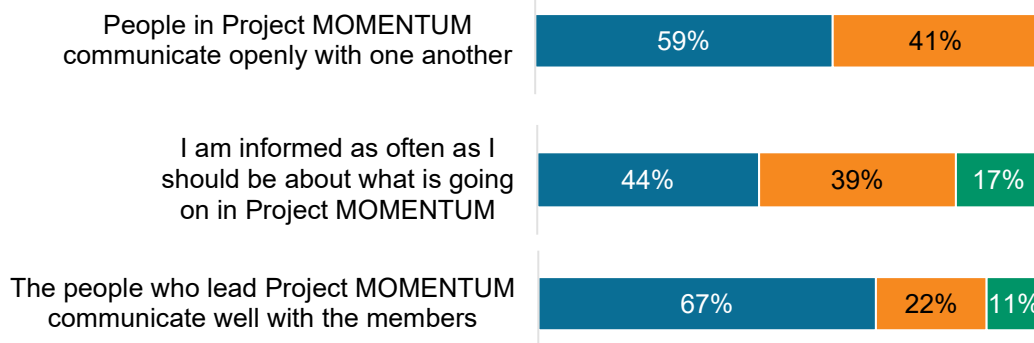
Appropriate pace of development | Mean 4.2



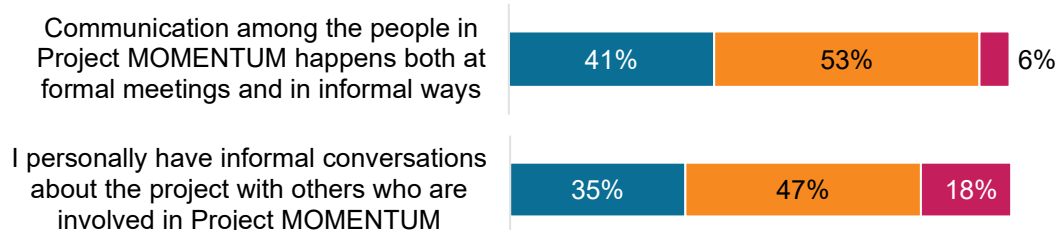
Evaluation and continuous learning | Mean 4.5



Open and frequent communication | Mean 4.5

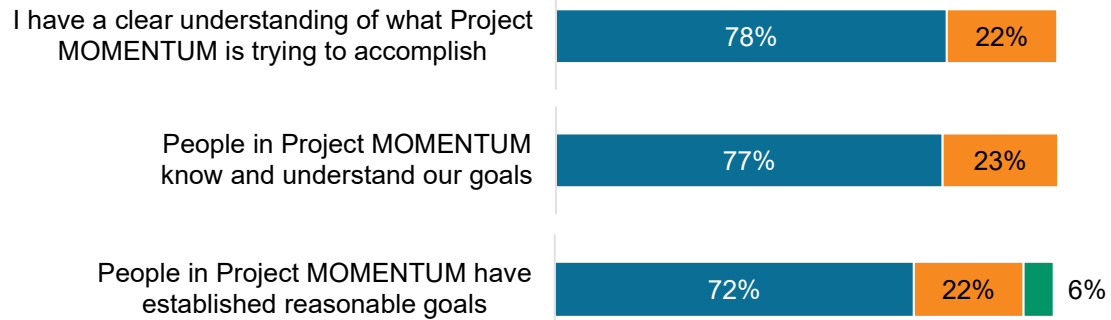


Established informal relationships and communication links | Mean 4.1

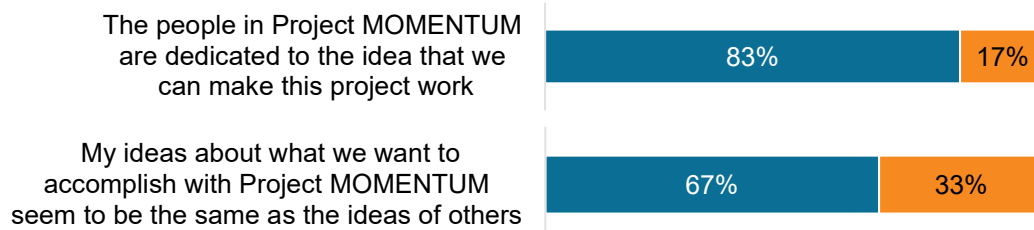


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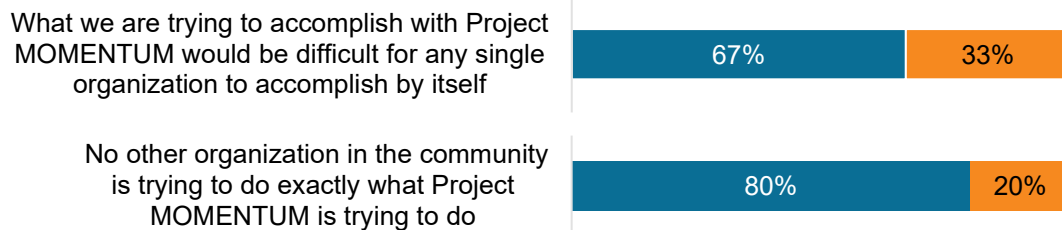
Concrete, attainable goals and objectives | Mean 4.7



Shared vision | Mean 4.8



Unique purpose | Mean 4.4



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

Sufficient funds, staff, materials, and time | Mean 3.8

Project MOMENTUM has adequate funds to do what it wants to accomplish



Project MOMENTUM has adequate “people power” to do what it wants to accomplish



Skilled leadership | Mean 4.8

The people in leadership positions for Project MOMENTUM have good skills for working with other people and organizations



Engaged stakeholders | Mean 4.1

Project MOMENTUM engages other stakeholders, outside of the group, as much as we should



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree