Blue Ribbon Mentor-Advocate
Logic Model Development: Summary Report
May 2014

Background

In August 2013, OpenSource Leadership Strategies (OpenSource) was selected to help Blue Ribbon Mentor-Advocate (BRMA) develop a logic model. In addition, OpenSource agreed to meet BRMA's stated interest in recommendations on how to sustain and deepen the program's positive impact on students. To do this work OpenSource implemented a multi-faceted approach to gather and analyze data, which included:

- A review of existing documents and information on BRMA programs
- Multiple meetings with staff to gather data on programs and feedback on model drafts
- Interviews with a variety of stakeholders including staff members, mentors, mentees, and parents
- A community meeting designed to collect additional feedback from parents, mentees, and mentors
- Research on existing best practices in the field
- The sharing of the final report and logic model

These activities were implemented between August 2013 and May 2014. The logic model itself and recommendations for the programs are outlined below.

The Logic Model

A "logic model" is a visual depiction of how a program's activities combine to create particular outcomes. As a clear picture of what a program aims to achieve and how, the final product can help an organizational or program team communicate its efforts consistently to a myriad of stakeholders. This, in turn, can help align work, improve outcomes, and increase support for the program. Logic models are especially useful for efforts like BRMA that combine multiple strategies to achieve both individual outcomes and social change. And yet, the *process* can be equally, or even more, important than the final product that emerges. Program teams benefit from the exploration and discussion that a logic modeling process requires. Even with small teams, the work can get siloed; a logic model process can help all team members see the big picture and how their respective contributions add up to something greater than the sum of its parts. Further, logic modeling creates the opportunity to explore assumptions, negotiate different perspectives, and reach consensus.

After collecting and analyzing the data collected using the methodology outlined above, OpenSource designed a graphic presentation of the BRMA logic model that focused on the following major components of the program:

- Beliefs and Values
- Statement of Purpose

- Core Strategies
- Outcomes
- Long-term Impact

These core components were translated into a graphic showing a vibrant and sunny schoolhouse where students, parents, mentors, and teachers invest in each other's growth and open a door of opportunity for them all to walk a pathway of educational equity (See Appendix A). Following is an overview of the BRMA Logic Model:

Overview of the BRMA Logic Model

Beliefs and Values

An overarching belief system within BRMA is that individual and structural change is possible, and that the students, families, mentors, teachers, and staff involved in the organization have a critical role to play in that change.
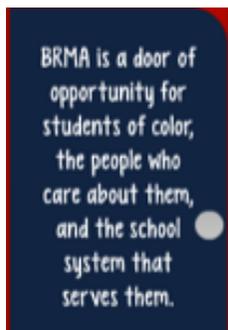
Statement of Purpose

Blue Ribbon Mentor Advocate was referred to as a "door of opportunity" for students of color. OpenSource would offer that, in fact, the program is a door of opportunity for their parents, mentors, and teachers as well.

Core Strategies

Beneath the heading, "We Invest in Each Other," is a series of windows that allow us to see what is happening inside the school system (represented by the schoolhouse). This is a mutual investment with everyone being enriched by their involvement in the program.

Outcomes

Emerging from the BRMA door of opportunity, students, parents, mentors, and teachers encounter a series of "stepping stones" representing core outcomes for participants. Over the long term, BRMA prepares students, parents, mentors, and staff to become advocates and change agents in their communities as they pursue their college and career aspirations.
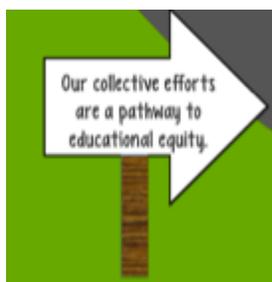
Long-term Impact

Collectively, these outcomes create "a pathway to educational equity" that supports students, families, mentors, teachers, and BRMA staff in challenging and overcoming historical educational inequities. This long-term impact is the sum result of the organization's personal, interpersonal, and structural intervention points within the Chapel Hill-Carrboro school system and communities.

The Process: Developing Staff, Stakeholders, and BRMA

Staff Development

As mentioned above, this work was designed to be both a product and a process. One of the intentions of the process was to develop staff professionally. Data gathered during the process reveal the effects on staff development. Two themes emerged from the data. First, staff often mentioned how the process is helping to develop role clarity. One staff member stated the process "helped me understand my role and work." One AmeriCorp staff member pointed out that it could have lasting impacts in terms of role clarity: "It will help the future AmeriCorps members that come in and see the pieces of the puzzle instead of having to do it themselves." Finally, one staff member pointed out that the logic model helped to identify "key components" and answer question around "who will be responsible for this component."

The second theme that emerged in the area of staff development is that the process helped them learn more about each other and work collaboratively. As one staff member stated, it "helped to see how we can work together and better connect programming." One staff member summed up this benefit of the process in two brief statements: "We have been so compartmentalized in what we do" and this process "helped us to be able to collaborate more efficiently and effectively…[where] roles and responsibilities cross."

Stakeholder Development

Mentors, parents, students, and district staff were also engaged in the process, although not with the same intensity as BRMA staff. While there are few quotes from

these stakeholders around the impact of the process on them, anecdotal data reveal that the process affected these stakeholders in two major ways. First, the process helped to provide them with clarity about the work of BRMA. A discussion with stakeholders as part of a model feedback session left several stakeholders commenting that the model itself and the process of providing feedback gave them a clearer picture of all the work that BRMA does. Also, the process affected these stakeholders by making them feel valued and connected as an important part of the BRMA team. At each step of the process, stakeholders commented on how thankful they were that they were given an opportunity to participate and that this increased their connection to the organization and its programs.

Organization Development

In addition to effects on staff members and other stakeholders, the process was designed to move BRMA forward by creating a clearer understanding of its programs and how those programs align to intended impact. Some of this is outlined in the logic model. However, BRMA staff also utilized their time and effort outside of this process to help the organization develop in this way. Appendix B contains a matrix of developmental goals/intended impact. This matrix was developed by BRMA staff during their staff meeting time. The matrix provides much greater detail and looks at the academic, physical, social and emotional development of BRMA constituents. It puts the outcomes in each of these domains on a timeline of elementary, middle, high, and post-secondary schools. To use the words of one staff member, the logic model (product and process), when combined with this matrix provides "a concrete overview of who we are and what we are as an organization."

Recommendations

The research conducted for this logic model process supports the findings of previous findings from formal evaluation. In particular, it is clear that "BRMA is a well-designed mentoring program. It meets and exceeds the 'best practices' established by research on youth mentoring programs" (Noblit, et. al., 2012, p. 1). That study also offered a number of programmatic "considerations" for both BRMA staff and Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools' staff. OpenSource agrees with these considerations and will not reiterate them in this report. However, OpenSource would offer a few additional insights.

In particular, this process revealed that BRMA has an opportunity to utilize this logic model in its marketing and communications to its stakeholders. OpenSource found that stakeholders tend to understand some of the basic elements of BRMA, particularly those with which their children are directly involved. However, they lack a deeper knowledge of the diversity of programming offered by BRMA and the core beliefs of the organization. While BRMA has been able to create positive outcomes for individual participants, the opportunity for long-term impact depends on those participants seeing themselves as part of something larger. This process of developing a logic model created an opportunity for some stakeholders to see the "big picture," and sharing it with

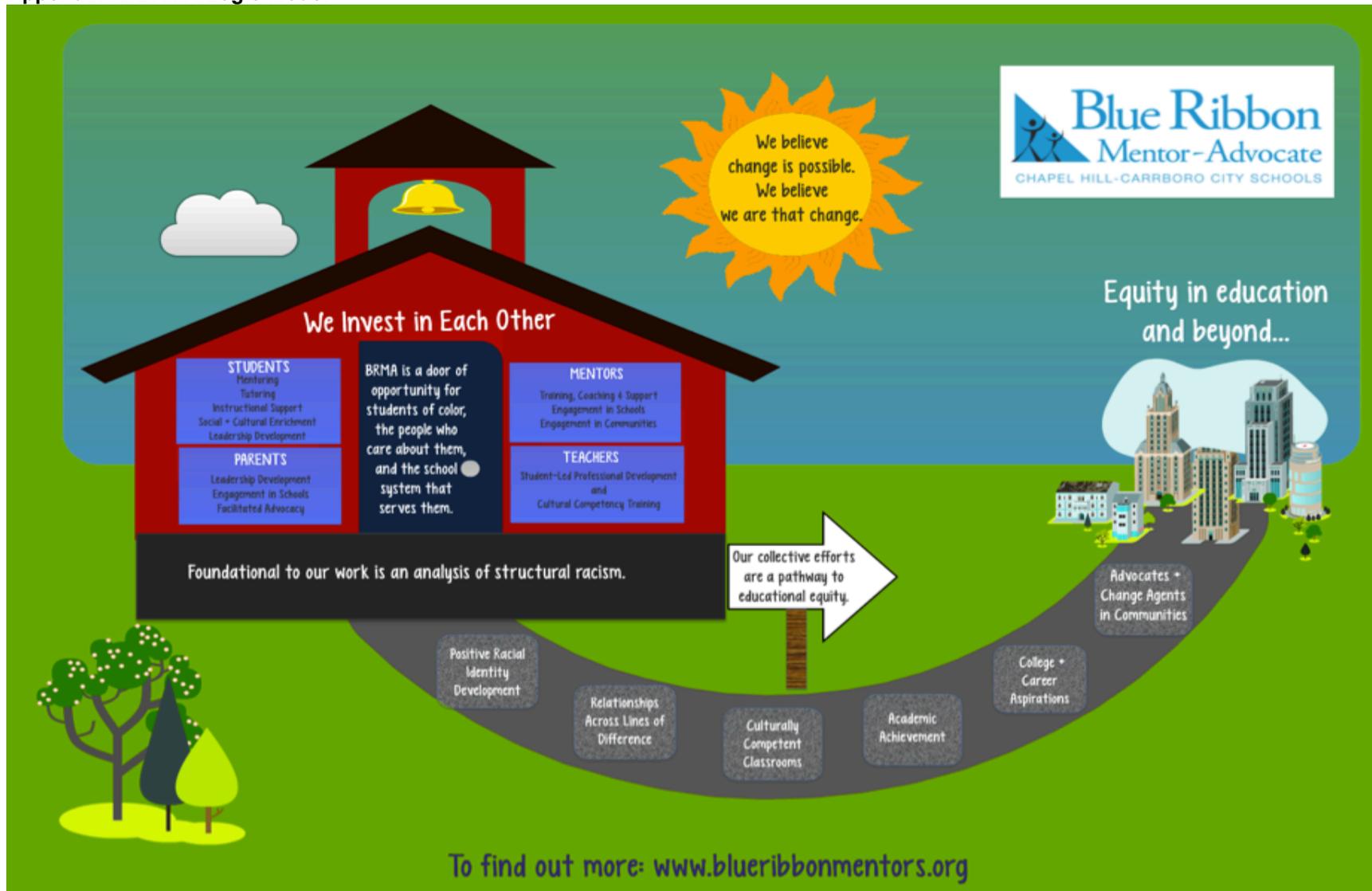others can help further expand and deepen understanding and engagement.

It is recommended that BRMA staff develop specific messaging about both the outcomes and impact it creates and include this messaging in all of its external communications materials. Likewise, both volunteer recruitment and fundraising efforts could include the logic model itself and the messaging around outcomes and impact. In this way, stakeholders will be able to share the understanding that BRMA is designed to create both individual and systemic change. Stakeholders then can share in the responsibility of creating these changes at both the individual and systemic levels.

Blue Ribbon Mentor-Advocate offers a powerful approach to supporting students and families in breeching some of the structural gaps that exist in the education system. OpenSource offers this logic model as a tool for communicating the real breadth and scope of this comprehensive program to the many students, families, mentors, teachers, and staff whose lives are so deeply and positively changed by this work.

REFERENCES

DuBois, D.L, et. al. (2011). How effective are mentoring programs for youth? A systemic assessment of the evidence. *Psychological Sciences in the Public Interest, 12, 2*, 57-91.

Noblit, G.W., et. al. (2012). *An Evaluation of Blue Ribbon Mentor Advocate*. University of North Carolina Chapel Hill School of Education

APPENDIX B. BRMA Developmental Goals/Intended Impacts 3/6/14

	Elementary	Middle	High	Post
Academic	Avoid feeling defeated Focus on going to college Setting goals Growth mindset = you are in control Understand my learning process Identify strengths, interests, passions Aspirations for future self	Confident writers Use personal strategies for learning Ask for & seek help & support Good grades / know how to improve Early effort impacts later success Begin critical thinking Exploring career interests related to strengths/interests/passions??	Strong writers Good grades – all A's & B's Involved in creating my own learning plan Advocate for self Choose academic help over social Understand how early grades impact long-term choices Choose post-secondary path	GPA for post-secondary Lifelong learner Growth mindset Identify & seek academic support Challenge self for rigor & excellence Initial career path
Physical	Exposure to outdoor activities Enjoy physical activity Exposure to healthy food choices Recognize stress / anxiety What goes into my body affects my body	Knowledge of healthy sexual choices Know dangers of substance abuse Accept & be comfortable w/body changes & appearance Proper personal hygiene Appropriate personal dress Choose regular physical activity Identify strategies for reducing stress / anxiety Time management	Prioritize & set boundaries about time Choices about healthy/unhealthy foods Connection to local food systems Appreciate own body & beauty Modest attire - let your inner beauty show Appropriate dress for situations Regular physical activity Uses strategies for reducing stress / anxiety	Work-life balance Active physical fitness Conscious food choices Positive body image Understand impact of racism on health Using physical choices to reduce stress & anxiety Smoke-free & drug-free

Social (External – how you relate to the world)	Build first adult friendship Begin building peer network Building knowledge appreciation of culture (own/others) Basic social skills (pleasantries) It's ok to ask questions Important to serve others and help community Respond to communication from adults	Engaged in school activities Build & maintain friendships across race Identify horizontal allies Explore/maintain ties to own race/culture Initiating contact w/mentor Exploring social/community issues Developing your voice Communication about sexual relationships	Regular participant in extracurriculars Knowledge of and commitment to servant leadership Collaborate w/horizontal allies Choosing to impact communities Using your voice for change Communication etiquette Maintain time for important relationships Healthy choices about sexual relationships	Healthy approach to sexual relationships Tolerant/bias aware Servant leaders Relationships across difference – horizontal/vertical allies Advocacy Cross age relationships Connection to own culture & acceptance of others Civically engaged
Emotional (Internal –how you relate to yourself)	Moving beyond comfort zone Racial identity in ES? Who am I? What's important to me? I can/will grow & change You are responsible for your own behavior	Being away from family Become cognizant of discomfort from difference Reflective & descriptive about racial identity How do I fit in w/the world around me? I will grow/change and know how I want to Advocate for own choices/desires Take responsibility for consequences of decisions	Operating independently in the world w/confidence Comfort w/discomfort How do I construct/impact my world? I work towards changing myself Ownership of decision-making for life choices (classes, friends, etc)	Positive self-concept Positive racial identity Positive sexual orientation identity Growth mindset toward self Emotional/mental health Personal responsibility for choices