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STRATEGIC PLANNING

PROCESS GUIDE

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# Introduction

Strategic planning is a systematic process that states can use to define their direction and make decisions on allocating resources to pursue their goals. This process includes recognizing values, developing a vision, establishing a mission statement, and identifying available resources. These activities will lead to decisions on where and how to focus and prioritize strategic activities within an action plan.

The Core Planning Team should consist of Part C and Part B/619 Coordinators and State Lead Agency Staff, Faculty from Institutes of Higher Education, University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), Families, other early childhood staff as identified by the core planning team. (e.g., licensing department representative)

Sequence of Strategic Planning

1

Identify values

2

Develop a vision

3

Establish a mission statement

4

Identify resources

5

Develop an action plan

# What are Values?

Values are the guiding beliefs of an organization or group. The expectation is that the members will abide by these guiding beliefs. Clearly defined values assist in the development of the vision statement. To develop the values, the group can identify guiding beliefs as individuals working in small groups or by hosting a large group brainstorming session.

Values should:

* Influence the activities of the group
* Be based on assumptions of the group
* Be specific
* Assist in developing mission and vision statements

Examples of Values

Quality, Sustainability, Innovation, Integrity,

Transformation, Leadership, Family, Listening,

Learning, Educating, Stewardship, Accountability

# Identifying Values: Ideas for Facilitation

1. **Gather group and explain importance of values** (15 mins.)

* *Identify a facilitator and a recorder*
* *Break into small groups of 3-5 people from different sectors*
* *To introduce the activity, the facilitator states: “Throughout the strategic planning process, we are going to refer to our values or guiding beliefs. So, to begin, we will identify what our personal values are and use then to determine the values of the group.”*

2. **Identify personal values of each member of the group** (20 mins.)

* *Distribute 5 index cards and a writing instrument to each member*
* *Instruct each member to write values they cannot live without on the index cards provided – one value per card (5 mins.)*
* *Have the members reflect on their individual cards and select their top two values; discuss in small groups (10 mins.)*
* *Instruct each small group to select their top 3 values (5 mins.)*

3. **Identify values for each member of the group** (20 mins.)

* *Repeat step 2 using the following prompt: “What are the values that should guide the work of this group over the next twelve months? (20 mins.)*

4. **Reach consensus on 5-10 values of the group** (20 mins.)

* *The facilitator instructs members to tape their 3 most important values on chart paper and uses a round robin technique for each small group to share their top three values (5 mins.)*
* *The large group identifies similarities and/or redundancies across the values taped on the chart paper (5 mins.)*
* *All members place a check mark on the top 3 values they believe represent the work (5 mins.)*
* *The facilitator counts the check marks next to each value and identifies the top 5-10 values the members selected to guide the work of the group (5 mins.)*

VALUES

What is a Vision Statement?

A vision statement is a brief narrative to inform people outside of the group about the desired outcome. It is a statement about the future of the work and communicates the message. Vision statements describe the values, desired future state, challenges, and unique features of the group.

Vision statements should:

* Be inspirational
* Include desired outcomes and benefits
* Be reasonable
* Focus on long-term change

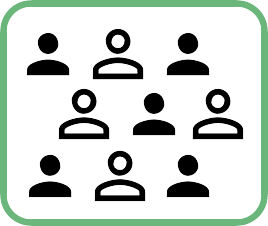
Examples of Vision Statements

Our early childhood system will result in positive outcomes for young children and families.

In three to five years, there will be a cross sector sustainable personnel and professional development system for all programs serving young children birth to five to sustain a high-quality workforce.

# Vision Statement: Ideas for Facilitation

1. **Gather group and explain importance of vision** (10 mins.)

* *Identify a facilitator and a recorder*
* *Break into small groups of 3-5 people from different sectors*
* *To introduce the activity, the facilitator states: “As a group we are going to develop a vision statement. This process is about deciding what we stand for and describing a picture of what we want our future to look like to bring the team together to do work that matters.”*

2. **Draft vision statements in small groups** (20 mins.)

* *Break into small groups of 3-5 people from different sectors*
* *As a group, review the sample vision statements (see p. 6)*
* *In small groups, each person responds to the following prompt: “In the next 3-5 years, our state will…”*
* *Each small group develops a draft vision statement based on the discussion from the prompt*

3. **Share the small group statements with the large group** (20 mins.)

* *Each small group shares their draft vision statement with the large group; facilitator writes statements on chart paper*
* *Large group identifies themes across the individual statements, and categorizes themes and ideas*
* *Large group discusses similarities and differences across the statements*

4. **Reach consensus for final vision statement** (15-60 mins.)

* *Large group identifies and reaches consensus on important components of the draft mission statements by circling phrases*
* *Large group reduces the draft vision statements to 2-3 options or combines an option*
* *Everyone votes for the best option for a vision statement and works to reach a consensus*

VISION STATEMENT

# What is a Mission Statement?

A mission statement is clear statement about the purpose and objectives. It describes the actions and impact of the group. The mission statement includes the essential purpose of the group and informs its existence. It defines what the group stands for and helps bring the team together to do work that matters.

Mission statements should:

* Be simply stated – avoid jargon
* Be specific – avoid generalities

Examples of Mission Statements

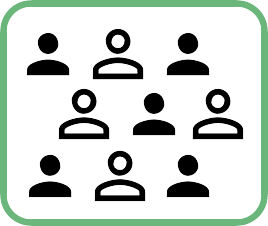
To advocate, create, and implement a statewide, comprehensive early childhood professional development system to improve quality and services for all children and families.

Our Early Childhood Intervention System will be a well-communicated system of integrated professional development supports for early childhood professionals across disciplines that directly impact infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with disabilities and their families.

We will create an integrated professional development system for all practitioners who provide services to young children with special needs ages birth to 5 that is linked to national and state standards and integrated within existing professional development systems in our state.

# Mission Statement: Ideas for Facilitation

1. **Gather group and explain importance of mission** (5 mins.)

* *Identify a facilitator and a recorder*
* *Break into small groups of 3-5 people from different sectors*
* *To introduce the activity, the facilitator states: “As a group, we will develop a mission statement for the group. This process builds on the vision statement we just completed. The mission statement will focus on the impact on personnel development in our state and the activities we undertake. It will guide the day-to-day work over the next year.”*

2. **Discuss intended impact and/or outcome of the work** (20 mins.)

* *In small groups (different than vision statement small groups), each group will discuss the following prompt “Over the next year, in order to meet our vision, the mission for (STATE)’s planning group is to…”*
* *After 10 minutes discussing in small groups, ideas will be shared with the large group and facilitator will record ideas on chart paper*

3. **Draft mission statement together** (15 mins.)

* *As a large group, identify themes of ideas written on chart paper*
* *Organize the themes around the following elements: Cause (Who? What? Where?), Actions (What we do), and Impact (changes for the better)*
* *Circle common big ideas within each element and consolidate them*
* *Return to the small groups and use this information to draft a mission statement for the next 12 months*

4. **Finalize mission statement and evaluate quality** (10 mins.)

* *Each small group shares their draft mission statement with the large group; facilitator records statements on chart paper*
* *Large group identifies and reaches consensus over important components of the draft mission statements*
* *Large group reduces the draft mission statements to 2-3 options and individuals for the best option and work to reach consensus*
* *Large group uses evaluation criteria on page 10 to determine the quality of the final mission statement*

# Criteria to Evaluate Your Mission Statement

**Use this checklist to evaluate the quality of your mission statement. Check the box if your mission statement meets each criterion.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | The mission statement is clear and understandable to all. | **🞏** |
|  | The mission statement guides the work of the group for the next 12 months. | **🞏** |
| **3**  **1**  **2.**  **4**  **5**  **6**  **7**  **8**  **9** | The mission statement clearly specifies the purpose of the group, including what, who, how and why. | **🞏** |
|  | The mission statement has a primary focus on creating and sustaining the plan. | **🞏** |
|  | The mission statement is broad enough to allow flexibility in implementation, but not so broad that it lacks focus. | **🞏** |
|  | The mission statement serves as a template for decision-making within the group. | **🞏** |
|  | The mission statement reflects not only the values, beliefs, and philosophy, but also the organizational culture. | **🞏** |
|  | The mission statement reflects achievable standards. | **🞏** |
|  | The mission statement is worded in such a way that it serves as an energy source and rallying point for the group. | **🞏** |

MISSION STATEMENT

What is a Resource Identification?

Resource identification is a process to identify valuable resources within a program, organization, or system to support the mission.

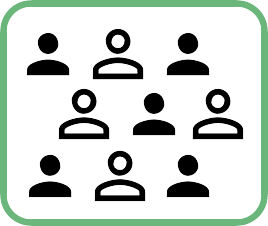
The resource identification process is intended to assist with planning goals and setting priorities. To complete this task, members of the strategic planning team identify what they believe is currently occurring in the state.

Examples of Resource Identification

* State Part C and Part B/619 Lead Agencies drive all in-service and TA with limited input from Institutes of Higher Education
* Limited funds may increase interest to initiate collaborative efforts for in-service and TA efforts
* Strong collaborations with Institutes of Higher Education
* Board of Education has established a work group to develop recommendations for a specific endorsement
* Professional development registry for early childhood
* Increase linking of professional development to standards

# Resource Identification: Ideas for Facilitation

1. **Gather group and explain the purpose of the activity** (5 mins.)

* *Identify a facilitator and a recorder*
* *The facilitator states: “Resource identification is one method of data collection used to assist in the development of the groups plan, which encompasses early intervention, early childhood special education, and early childhood education professional development. You will provide unique perspectives of the resources available within your state. With this information, you will begin to make an action plan that builds on your strengths.”*

2. **Identify resources and current activities** (20 mins.)

* *The facilitator provides these instructions, “Let’s identify who and what are available to help put a plan in place.”*
* *Using a round-robin method, each participant identifies additional resources they are aware of in a particular subcomponent (e.g. early childhood Higher Education consortium)*

3. **Use identified resources and activities to begin developing an action plan** (30 mins.)

* *Form groups and review the particular resources identified, what is missing?*
* *Instruct workgroups to use information from the Resource Identification to develop initial goals and objectives for their action plan*

What is an Action Plan

An action plan is a document that outlines specific steps that need to be completed in order for the group to accomplish its mission and vision (see page 17). Action plans include the following information:

* Goal(s), objective(s), and action steps
* Person responsible for each action step
* Target initiation date and deadlines for each action step
* Progress notes
* Evaluation

Example Action Plan Goal, Objective and Action Steps

GOAL: Establish high quality state personnel standards for all Part C/619 personnel that are aligned with national standards

OBJECTIVE: Align current state teacher certifications with NAEYC, CEC, and DEC standards

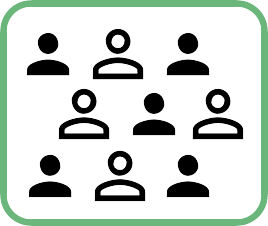
ACTION STEPS:

* Complete working draft of crosswalk of these standards with state teacher certifications
* Share with core team for input
* Share with the Board of Education workgroup
* Share with statewide groups
* Board of Education workgroup develops revised Endorsement 100 state standards for state IHE input
* Core team working with the ECSE Leadership team develops revised Endorsement 200 for state IHE input
* Conduct state review for input
* Revise state personnel standards to more closely align with national standards

Please note, due to space limitations, this sample does not include target initiation dates(s), deadline(s) or person(s) responsible.

# Action Plan: Ideas for Facilitation

1. **Gather group and explain the purpose of the activity** (5 mins.)

* *Identify a facilitator and a recorder*
* *The facilitator states: “To ensure progress is made, an action plan is developed.”*

2. **Develop an action plan for each.** (20 mins.)

* *Each group reviews the previously developed vision and mission statements, as well as the notes from the resource identification activity*
* *Each group develops a draft action plan that is achievable in one year*
* *To start, each group drafts one goal, one to three objectives per goal, and four to ten action steps per objective*
* *Each group assigns a target initiation date, deadline, and person responsible for each action step*

3. **Evaluate the action plan using the checklist and revise as necessary** (15 mins.)

* *Using the action plan checklist, evaluate the draft action plan and identify areas for revision*
* *Revise the action plan as necessary based on the evaluation*

4. **Share draft action plan with core planning team for input and revise as necessary** (20 mins.)

* *The core planning team circulates to group to provide input on the draft action plan*
* *Considering the input from the core planning team, the group members finalize the action*
* *Each group shares the action plan with the large group*

# Action planning checklist

**Use this checklist to evaluate the group action plan. Check the box if the action plan meets the criteria.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | The goal(s) in the action plan are achievable in one year. | **🞏** |
|  | Each goal has one or more objectives. | **🞏** |
| **3**  **1**  **2.**  **4**  **5**  **6**  **7** | Each objective has four or more action steps. | **🞏** |
|  | Responsibility is assigned to a specific individual for each action step outlined in the action plan. | **🞏** |
|  | A target initiation date is set for each action step in the action plan. | **🞏** |
|  | A deadline date is set for each action step in the action plan. | **🞏** |
|  | Each action step is measurable. | **🞏** |

**Action Plan**

Name: State: Period Covered:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Goals/Objectives Activities** | **Person(s) Responsible** | **Resources Needed** | **Timeline** | **Criteria for Success** |
| **GOAL 1.** |  |  |  |  |
| Objective 1.1 |  |  |  |  |
| Activity 1.1.1. |  |  |  |  |
| Objective 1.2 |  |  |  |  |
| **GOAL 2.** |  |  |  |  |
| Objective 2.1 |  |  |  |  |
| Objective 2.2 |  |  |  |  |
| Objective 2.3 |  |  |  |  |
| **GOAL 3.** |  |  |  |  |
| Objective 3.1 |  |  |  |  |
| Objective 3.2 |  |  |  |  |
| Objective 3.3 |  |  |  |  |

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