

Louisiana Association
of Public Charter Schools

The Role of the Board in Strategic Planning

Presented by
Frank Martinelli
The Center for Public Skills Training
www.createthefuture.com



Workshop Topics

1. The nature and role of strategic planning
2. Making sure that your strategic planning is really "strategic"
3. Developing, communicating and using clear, bold visions
4. Techniques for plan formulation, implementation, and assessment
5. Preparing for planning
6. When, where, why, and how your board and staff should be involved
7. Other resources for strategic planning



Strategic Planning Defined



Strategic Planning Definition

- **Strategic Planning** is the process by which the guiding members of an organization envision its future and develop the necessary plans, procedures and operations to achieve that future.

(Goodstein, Nolan and Pfeiffer, Applied Strategic Planning)

- **Other Definitions on Page 2**

Make Decisions About . . .

- The mission, vision and goals your charter school will pursue
- Whom you will serve
- Your charter school's role in the community
- The kinds of programming, services or products you will offer
- The resources needed to succeed
- How to best combine these resources, programming and relationships for mission impact

Distinguishing Features

- Attention to external environment, markets and stakeholders
- Focus on developing shared vision
- It's strategic!
 - Addressing critical emerging issues versus putting out brush fires
 - Innovation versus business as usual

Strategic Plans Are Not . . .

- **Business plans:** a plan typically focused on the actions and investment necessary to generate income from a specific program or service. A business plan includes information about an organization's products, competitive environment and revenue assumptions

Strategic Plans Are Not . . .

- **Fund development plans:** a fundraising document that details specific ways funds will be generated with target amounts and percentages of total goal on an annual or multi-year basis

Steps of the Planning Process

- Step 1 Information Gathering and Analysis
- Step 2 Identification of Critical Issues Facing the Organization
- Step 3 Development of Mission Statement
- Step 4 Development of a Strategic Vision Statement that Sets Future Direction

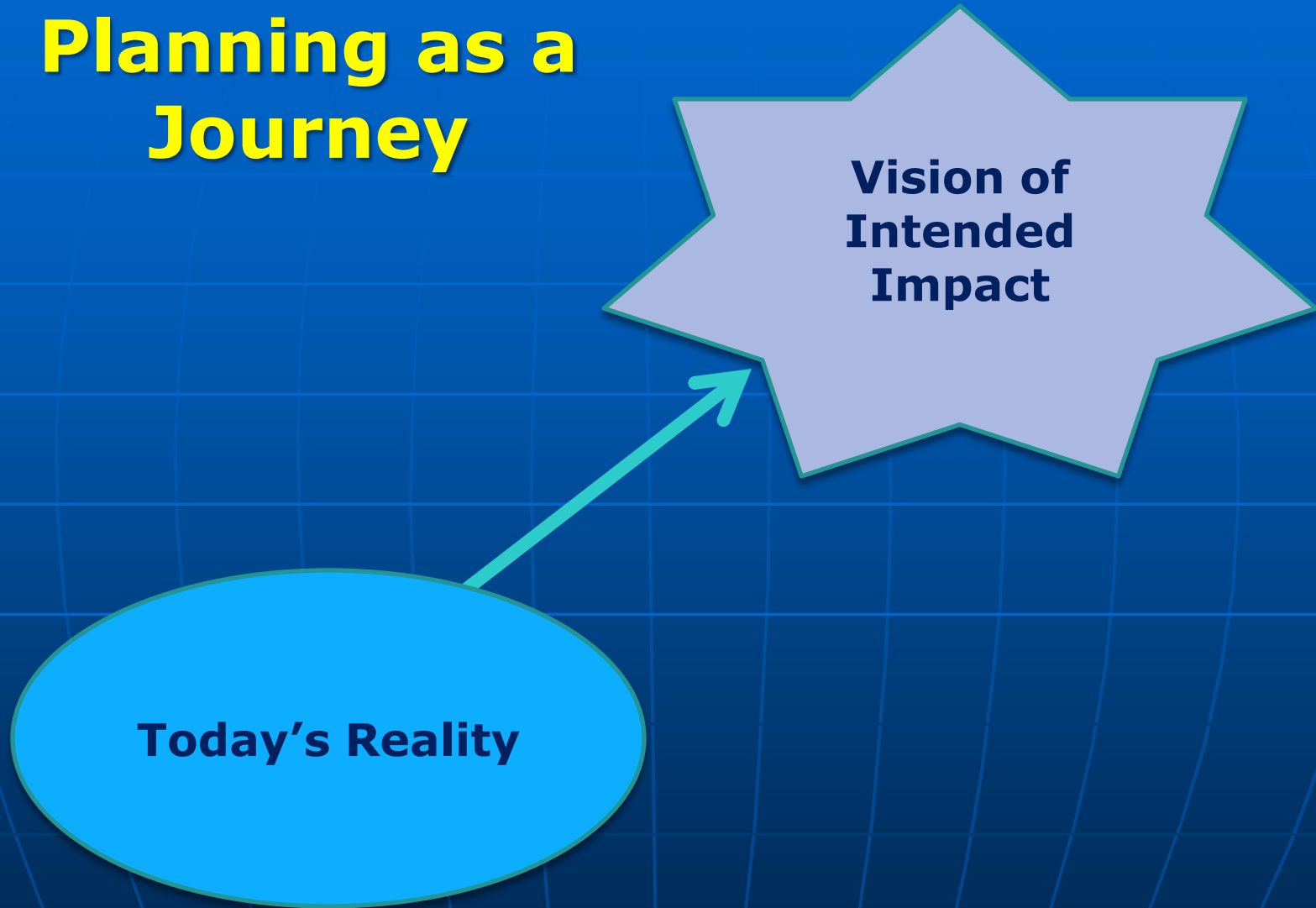
Steps of the Planning Process

- Step 5 Development of Strategic Goals
- Step 6 Formulation of Strategies for Each Goal
- Step 7 Preparation for Implementation
Planning Based on the
Strategic Plan (Annual Objectives)

Levels of the Planning Process



Planning as a Journey



Strategic Planning Benefits

- Clear direction and focus
- Increased educational program impact
- Improved service delivery
- Enhanced marketing and fundraising
- Board effectiveness
- Foundation for other types of planning
- Engage others leading to deeper commitments
- Be prepared for change

Elements of Effective Planning

- Shared understanding of strategic planning
- Real commitment to the process
- Agreed upon outcomes for process
- Leadership of the board
- Involvement of many
- Structured to encourage boldness, risk-taking and creativity

Preparing to Plan

- What do you expect to accomplish?
- How much commitment is there to the process?
- Is there organizational readiness for strategic planning?
- How will the board and key staff be oriented to the process?

Preparing to Plan

- How long will it take?
- Who else should be involved? How?
- How will we encourage boldness, risk-taking and creativity on the part of planning participants?
- Should a consultant be used for all or part of the process?

Roles of the Board

- Ultimate responsibility for setting mission and vision
- Play a primary role in strategic planning
- Help to determine hoped-for process outcomes
- Provide objectivity, experience and a sense of “what’s happening”
- Link to our diverse constituencies



Who Should be Involved?

- Organizational leadership
 - School administrator and board president
 - Other board and staff leadership
- Strategic planning committee
- Broad based constituent input
 - Internal stakeholders--all board and staff families/parents, students, volunteers
 - External stakeholders—donors, public and private funders, partners, others

Step 1: Information Gathering and Analysis

- External Assessment
- Internal Assessment
- Market Assessment



External Assessment

- What external changes and trends will have the greatest impact on the charter school over the next 5-10 years?
- What are the implications of these changes and trends for us -- what should the charter school do to respond to these changes and trends?

External Assessment

Trend:

Continued increase in use of instructional technology in the classroom.

Implication:

Upgrade program of teacher training for use of new instructional technologies.

Internal Assessment

- Review internal workings of the charter school: structure, governance, management, operations, funding, organizational culture
- Identify internal strengths and weaknesses of the charter school
- Isolate the “critical few”
- “Today’s strengths” may not matter tomorrow

Market/Constituent Assessment

- What are the charter school's key markets and constituents?
- What are the needs, perceptions, and service expectations of each key market/constituent group?
- What are the emerging market trends and changes?
- What are the implications? -- How should the charter school respond?

Market Assessment

Survey Finding:

Two-thirds of school volunteers surveyed said they would be willing to help raise funds for the charter school in some capacity

Implication:

Develop a plan for involving school volunteers in charter school fundraising activities

Types of Data – page 14

- 1.Changes and trends that impact the charter school and the students and families we serve
- 2.Market information about needs, perceptions and services expectations
- 3.Internal assessment data that indicates capacity to deliver the mission

Sources of Data – pages 14-15

1. Student achievement data
2. Existing statistics, studies, etc.
3. Secondary market research
4. Surveys
5. Focus groups
6. Key informant/expert interviews
7. Community forums
8. Internal reviews, assessments and evaluations

An Information Gathering Plan

- Board and staff survey
- Key informant survey
- Dialogue sessions (parents, students, alumni, educators, community partners, donors, volunteers)
- Financial trends data
- Data from regional and national networks
- School/organizational assessments
- Accreditation reports

Step 2: Critical Strategic Issues

- Fundamental policy or program concerns which define major choices a charter school faces now and in the future
- Long-standing problems anticipated to have a significant impact on the charter school and/or community served
- Major shifts in thinking that challenge business as usual
- Tension Points

Sample Critical Issues

1. How can we enrich our educational program in order to respond to the expectations and demands of our internal and external stakeholders?
2. How do we implement an effective governance and managerial model to advance the strategic plan?
3. How can we expand and diversify our revenue base to achieve short and long-term financial security?

Sample Critical Issues

4. How can we meet our facility and space needs re: expansion?
5. How do we fully engage parents in the life of the school and their children's education?
6. How can the school continue to distinguish itself among New Orleans's many educational options so that the school continues to attract dedicated parents, effective teachers and staff, and external support?

Other Critical Issues



- Alliances, partnerships and strategic restructuring
- Board and staff leadership succession plans
- Assuring financial sustainability
- Advocacy and public policy work

Step 3: Mission Timeframe -- "Forever"

Broad description of what we do, with/for whom we do it, our distinctive competence, and WHY we do it (our ultimate end)

Mission communicates "purpose"

Mission Statement

- The mission of Arthur Ashe Charter school is to prepare all students academically while developing their character so they will excel at a high school with rigorous academics and graduate from a four-year college. Ashe Scholars believe in Achievement, Community, Excellence and Self, and we think they're A.C.E.S.!

Mission Statement

- We are a community of diverse families and educators working together to offer quality Montessori education in a nurturing environment that enriches, empowers and inspires all children to reach their potential.
(Highland Community School)

Mission

Example:

We aim to transform society and culture by providing aspiring leaders with opportunities for self-renewal and development of leadership skills, values and behaviors. (Wisconsin Leadership Institute)

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Mission

Example:

Verona Area Core Knowledge Charter School is a public education option for parents, students and teachers in the Verona Area School District where students develop strong learning skills and a broad base of knowledge through the use of proven educational materials and programs in a safe and structured environment.

Mission

Example:

We educate Latino youth for Christian leadership and service. (Nativity Jesuit Middle School)



Mission

Example:

The Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee believes that every person has a right to adequate food obtained with dignity. Hunger Task Force works to prevent hunger and malnutrition by providing food to people in need today and by promoting change in social policy to achieve the permanent end of hunger.

Mission

Example:

To create a thriving community for all.
(Greater New Orleans Foundation)

Mission

Example:

The mission of the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools is to support, promote, and advocate for the Louisiana charter school movement, increasing student access to high quality public schools statewide.

Mission

Example:

LANO is a statewide member organization that advocates for the nonprofit community and strengthens the effectiveness of groups and individuals committed to improving the lives of all Louisianans. (Louisiana Association of Nonprofit Organizations)

Step 4: Strategic Vision

Timeframe -- 5-10 years

Describes the results/impact we will have achieved and characteristics the charter school will need to possess in order to achieve those results

Vision communicates "direction"

Vision Characteristics

- Reflects anticipated dramatic progress in carrying out mission; consistent with mission
- Achievable yet challenging
- Inspiring, motivating
- Concise but clear
- A ***shared*** vision

Strategic Vision

Example:

The Milwaukee Public Library is Every person's gateway to an expanding world of information.



Strategic Vision

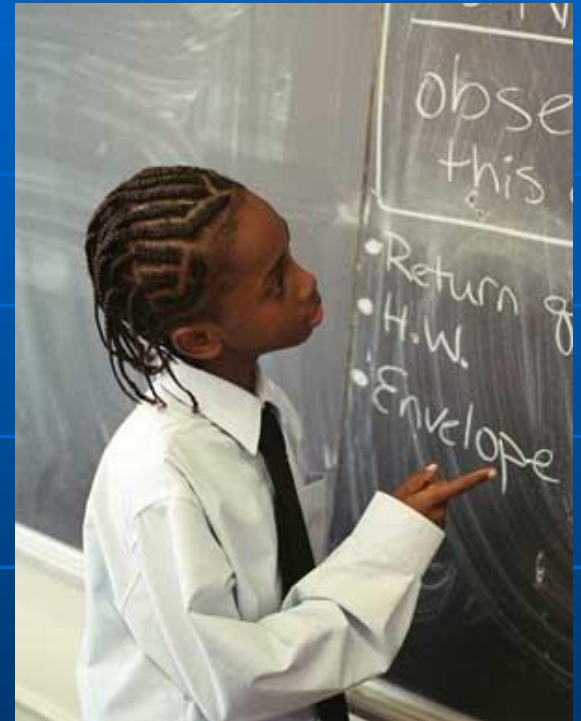
Example:

We are leaders in Montessori education providing an environment that values diversity, solid relationships and community involvement to empower our families to be responsible citizens and life-long learners. (Highland Community School)

Strategic Vision

Example:

Core Knowledge Charter School is a valued asset, community partner, and highly regarded choice that motivates, challenges and educates all students.



Mission/Vision

Example:

Located in the heart of New Orleans, students at KIPP Central City Academy will build the academic skills, personal values, and intellectual habits of mind to succeed in high school, college, and beyond. With integrity and pride, teachers and students will focus on results and develop personal and social responsibility to build a better New Orleans for themselves and us all.

Strategic Vision

Example:

We transform lives by creating a vibrant and diverse environment in which more women become independent, visible in leadership, and able to reach their full potential. Our mission and work are embraced by a community that has become intolerant of violence and oppression. (YWCA Sauk Valley)

Strategic Vision

Example:

The University of Kansas School of Medicine – Wichita will be the premier center for community-oriented medical education, scholarship, patient care, service, and research. Our leadership will revolutionize the delivery of health care in Kansas and beyond.

Strategic Vision



Example:

More people,
bowling more
often, having
more fun.
(Bowling, Inc.)

Strategic Vision

Example:

Every Nativity Jesuit Middle School student graduates from high school as a caring, compassionate and conscientious man poised for a life of Christian leadership and service.

Step 5: Goals Timeframe -- 3 years out

Broad statements of what the charter school hopes to achieve in the next 3 years. Goals focus on outcomes or results and are qualitative in nature

Example: Expand and diversify the revenue base to support anticipated program and service growth

Step 6: Strategies Timeframe -- 1-3 years out

Statements of major approach or method for attaining goals and resolving critical issues

Examples:

- Generate more revenue from programs
- Expand individual annual campaign giving
- Increase corporate support

Goal: Increase community awareness understanding, and support of CKCS

Strategies:

1. Organize and empower parents, students and educators to serve as CKCS advocates and ambassadors.
2. Increase collaborations with partner agencies and other organizations.
3. Develop community service programs for CKCS students and families.
4. Formalize targeted PR and marketing efforts.
5. Engage in lobbying and advocacy efforts.

The Transition From Goals and Strategies To Objectives

Constructing an Evaluation Framework

Key Questions

- How do you intend to measure success in implementing your strategic plan?
- What are the hoped-for outcomes?
- How will you measure progress in achieving these outcomes?

Developing an Evaluation Framework

- Generate a list of success indicators for each goal and its strategies
- Next refine the list of success indicators down to those that will measure progress in the most meaningful way
- Then begin to develop objectives that answer the following questions: who, will accomplish what, by when and what is the measure of success?

Sample Goal: Build long term financial health to support the School.

Strategies:

1. Expand and diversify revenue sources and amounts
2. Increase board involvement in fund development
3. Build life-long donors
4. Strengthen fiscal management

Sample Success Indicators

- Good mix of funding sources
- Debt free
- Increased fee-for-service revenue
- Significant level of funds raised by the board
- Many donors who give frequently and consistently over a number of years

Goal: Increase the learning and achievement of our students

Critical Success Factors:	Corresponding Performance Indicators:	Data Needed to Track Indicator	Who Responsible
<i>High school graduation</i>	<i>Students who graduate from Catholic HS</i>	<i>School records for 5 previous years. Grad from NJMS in year; grad date from high school; evidence of pursuit of higher ed</i>	<i>Director of Graduates</i>
<i>Achievement levels go up from 6th to 8th grade</i>	<i>Achievement as measured by standardized tests</i>	<i>Standardized tests with current students tracked annually; data from Terra Nova tests administered in May of each year</i>	<i>Principal</i>

Step 7: Objectives

Timeframe -- 1 year out

Specific, concrete, measurable statements of what will be done to achieve a goal generally within a one year time-frame

Example:

Expand by adding an upper elementary program beginning with 4th grade in 2010/2011 and adding grades 5 and 6 in succeeding years.

Goal-Strategy-Objective Progression

- **Goal:** Expand and diversify the revenue base in order to support anticipated growth.
 - **Strategy:** Increase revenue from special events.
 - **Objective:** The Fund Development Committee will generate at least \$150,000 from no more than 3 special events by July 2013.

Goal-Strategy-Objective Progression

- **Goal:** Enrich our Montessori program in order to respond to the expectations and demands of our internal and external stakeholders.
 - **Strategy:** Explore and determine expansion options.
 - **Objective:** Expand by adding an upper elementary program beginning with 4th grade in 2010/2011 and adding grades 5 and 6 in succeeding years.

Levels of the Planning Process



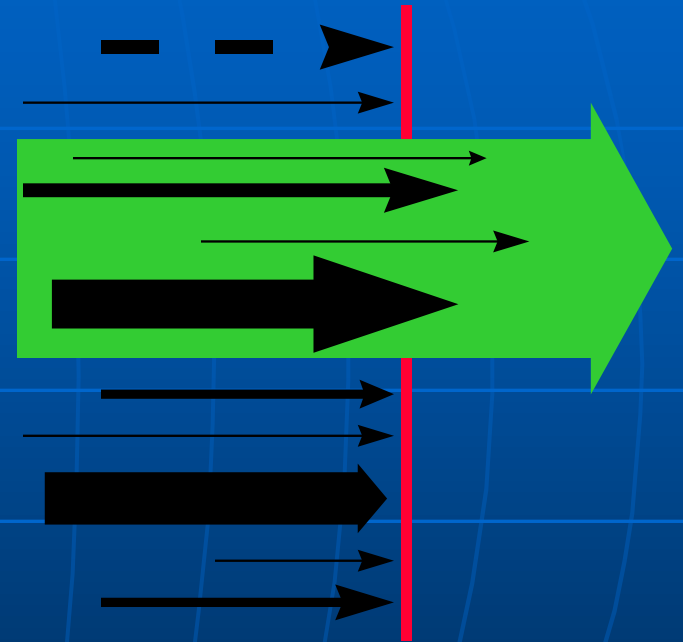
Fostering Innovation, Boldness, And Risk Taking



- Include “outsiders”
- Use analogies from other fields
- Involve people at the edges
- Meet in unfamiliar settings
- Let yourselves go

Accelerated Strategic Planning

- Responding to new opportunities faster
- New models
- Not a substitute for mission/vision work
- “Faster is slower”
- Collaborative strategic planning
- Create opportunities for continuous strategic thinking



Summary

- Leadership commitment
- Clear planning outcomes
- Shared vision
- Involvement of many; decisions by few
- Process produces tangible products

Strategically Speaking Blog

- Check it out at <http://www.strategicthinkingandplanning.blogspot.com/>

For More Information

Frank Martinelli
The Center for
Public Skills Training
414-961-2536



frank@createthefuture.com