

Create the future you desire



As you transition to the next school year, you may be considering changes that will bring your school or district closer to achieving its vision. Perhaps the school board has adopted a new strategic plan. Perhaps you have schools embarking on new school improvement plans. Perhaps your district is recovering from news about schools that did not achieve Adequate Yearly Progress.

Whatever your situation, your school or district will operate best if there is a clear and shared vision of where the organization will be at a given point in time.

Getting to your desired future requires thoughtful planning. The tools provided here can assist you in working with staff in your school or district to get where you want to go.

MAKING OUR FUTURE CLOSER

Comments to the facilitator: This chart can be used to help the group make commitments to short-term actions.

Time: One hour.

Supplies: Chart paper, markers, tape.

Preparation: Facilitator should sketch out the chart depicted below and be prepared to post it on a wall. Ideally, this poster will remain on a wall near the vision poster.

DIRECTIONS

Describe our best "guess" of what we will be doing in 30-day increments to reach our vision.

Scenario elements	30 days	60 days	90 days
Our major focus			
What adults are doing			
What students are doing			
Skills being learned			
Tools and materials being used			
Challenges: benefits and frustrations			

DOCUMENT YOUR PROGRESS

Comments to facilitators: This fill-in-as-you-go chart should be used in a meeting at least once a month with the core team charged with achieving the vision. This tool can be used to document the progress that schools/districts are making toward achieving their vision. By posting this in the same room where the vision is posted, the poster is also a visual reminder to teachers and others that they should be alert for evidence of how their work measures up against the vision.

Time: One hour.

Supplies: Chart paper, colored marking pens, tape.

Preparation: Re-create the chart below on a large sheet of poster paper and post it in the meeting room.

DIRECTIONS

Assemble the core team charged with achieving the vision. Ensure that team members know in advance that they will be documenting the progress they have made in achieving the vision. The invitation for this meeting should advise participants to bring information and artifacts with them to document the work they have done. The facilitator can be the scribe for the chart, or various team members can be invited to add their own notations.

A tool to try

If your staff needs help understanding why a shared vision is useful, consider using the Clarifying the Vision tool from the fall 2005 issue of *JSD*. This tool is available online at www.nsd.org/library/toolbox.cfm.

DOCUMENTATION AREAS	1ST MONTH	2ND MONTH	3RD MONTH	4TH MONTH
Major events and activities				
Results				
Learning and best practices				
Artifacts				