

## Process for Creating a Shared Vision

The purpose of creating a shared vision is to involve all the school stakeholders to have a voice in what the future of school should look like and be like. It is a process that puts into words what the desired and preferred future should be for the school district or school building. The process draws upon the beliefs of the stakeholders and breaks the line of thinking to examine what an ideal school would be like. Stakeholders develop a shared understanding and common values. The process allows for establishing goals and indicators of success. ( the bone diagram is a good tool for creating a shared vision)

**Reminder: Do not confuse creating a shared vision with a vision statement or a mission statement. A shared vision process is long range planning for how we get to the desired state by also defining our current state and the gap between the two. A vision statement is a short statement that defines where we should be headed. A mission statement defines why we exist.**

- Select a facilitator who has the expertise to work with a large group of folks (40-80) and can remain neutral during the process. The facilitator should be able to listen intently and synthesize information. Select recorders to record conversations and are able to capture the exact wording.
- Invite a diverse group of school stakeholders (teachers, support staff, students, parents and key community members, family supports systems from public and non-profit institutions.)

### Step #1 (1-2 hrs.)

1. Welcome stakeholders and communicate purpose of meeting and benefit of the shared vision process. Use an icebreaker for participants to introduce themselves.
2. Divide the large group into smaller groups of 6-8 folks. Have a recorder for each of the small groups to record the conversation.
3. Facilitator should have developed conceptual questions that address the future needs of the school district/building. Examples might be:
  - What would the ideal school look like? What would it be like for students?
  - What does having a quality school mean to you?
  - What are the characteristics of an ideal school?

- How do you envision the school district/building in five years?
4. Participants in small group respond to question asked in a round robin process giving each member of the group an opportunity to express their ideas. Recorder records ideas on chart paper. Facilitator asks participants group ideas and to identify any common theme within ideas recorded. Record common themes. Repeat this process and move through all the questions in this manner.

## Step#2

1. A small group should compile all the themes presented and again clarify any statements. Regroup all the themes into common themes.

## Step#3

1. Small group presents common themes to larger group. Large group does multi-voting process on statements about the future that are most important to them. Select the 3 statements with the most votes.
2. Divide participants into different smaller groups of 6-8 folks. Begin to have the smaller groups identify the current state. Sample questions:
  1. What is the school district/building currently doing to achieve the prioritized vision statements?
  2. What are the actions we must do to reach these prioritized vision statements?
  3. What things are going really well? What things aren't going so well?
3. After defining the current state, discuss and record the positive forces that are leading the organization toward the desired state.
4. Next discuss that negative forces could impact reaching the desired state.
5. Use the negative and positive forces to create an action plan.

**Examples of questions for creating a shared vision:** Using the guarantee and viable curriculum McREL research of *What Works in Schools Translating Research into Action*, plan a visioning session.

- What would be the essential content all students must know upon graduation from high school to be a life long learner?
- How will the essential content be sequenced and organized for all students to have the opportunity to learn it?
- What will need to happen to ensure all teachers address the essential content?
- How will instructional time be protected?

Adapted from *What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action* by Robert J. Marzano 2003.