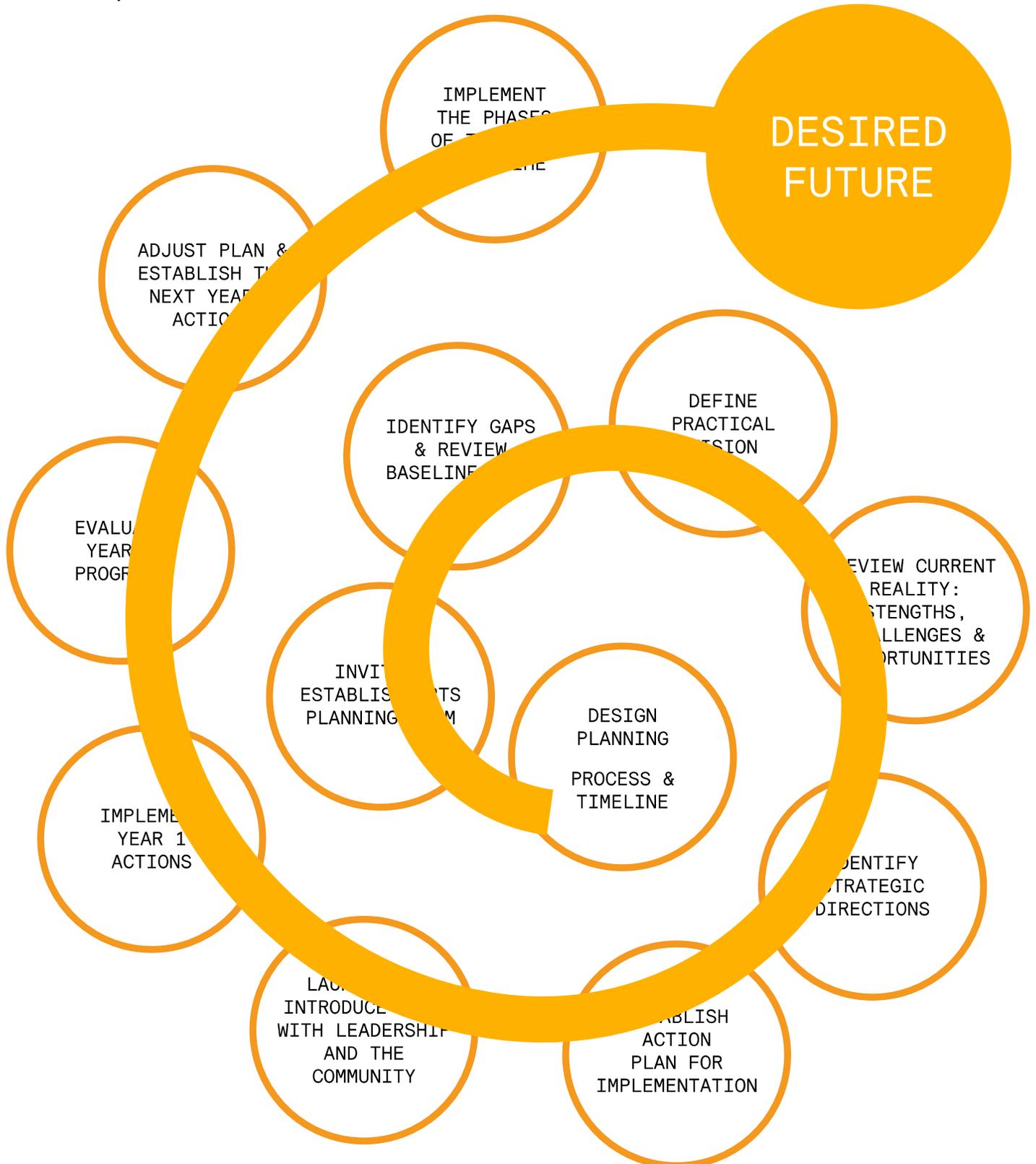# STAGE 4

GENERATING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The preceding stages have led to the point where the team can begin planning based on the information gleaned from the earlier steps. Understanding your community, understanding what is offered in the district, county or community, taking a look at current funding and developing a shared philosophy and policy are all critical stepping stones.

The strategic planning process takes courage, determination, and vision to uncover what is possible for the district or county. It also requires letting go of the "lack of" mentality. We've all been in situations where we accomplished great things in spite of challenges. Using the process we are suggesting allows a group to move forward with authentic consensus and powerful momentum.

As depicted in the diagram in the Introduction and on the next page, the strategic planning process is a spiral. You may find that you need to circle back to revisit priorities, strategies and opportunities. As you begin to build out the components of the plan, new ideas will emerge and become clear.

TIP: The workshops and conversations in this chapter have been developed utilizing the Group Facilitation Methods established by the Institute of Cultural Affairs. For more information or training in these methods, visit ica-usa.org.

The Strategic Planning Spiral is a visual representation of the entire process, depicting the steps of the planning process. It accurately reflects the ongoing cyclical nature of strategic planning and implementation.

IMPLEMENT THE PHASES OF THE TIMELINE

DESIRED FUTURE

ADJUST PLAN & ESTABLISH THE NEXT YEAR'S ACTION

IDENTIFY GAPS & REVIEW BASELINE

DEFINE PRACTICAL VISION

EVALUATE YEAR PROGRESS

REVIEW CURRENT REALITY: STENGTHS, CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

INVITE & ESTABLISH ARTS PLANNING TEAM

DESIGN PLANNING PROCESS & TIMELINE

IMPLEMENT YEAR 1 ACTIONS

IDENTIFY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

LAUNCH & INTRODUCE WITH LEADERSHIP AND THE COMMUNITY

ESTABLISH ACTION PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION

PREPARING TO FACILITATE AN IN-PERSON PLANNING SESSION

At this point, your team will have decided whether the planning will proceed with in-person meetings or virtual/online meetings. The following instructions for the planning process will include first, the traditional methods used for in-person, and then secondly, the process for virtual online meetings.

STEP 1 : Define a Practical Vision

The next step in strategic planning is to establish a shared practical vision. The focus question: **"In 5 years, what do we want to see in place for the arts as a result of our actions?"** creates a powerful position from which to plan.

We have explored the key components of an equitable arts education program, we may have developed an Arts Education Policy, and we have familiarized ourselves with the current status of arts education. Now we need to get practical and specific about what we can implement in the next 3-5 years.

Below, you will find a workshop script to guide your team through the process of identifying the key elements of your vision.

STEP 1 – WORKSHOP: DEFINE A PRACTICAL VISION

PREPARATION:

Put up the Sticky Wall with blue tape. Use repositionable spray adhesive to prepare the wall.

- Write out the focus question with a dark marker on a half chart sheet as illustrated below.

In 5 years, what do we want to see in place for the arts as a result of our actions?

IN PERSON

- Make dark markers available to each participant.
- Have full sheets available – preferably an inviting color such as gold – for brainstorming.
- Cut half sheets of all one color for the ideas (40-50).
- Have a group of 10-12 half sheets of a different color for the symbol tags.
- Have full sheets available in another color for Title cards (10-12).
- Have invisible tape handy to tape the sheets together for documentation after the workshop.

FOCUS QUESTION

Write the focus question out and post on the physical sticky wall. Make sure it is big and bold enough that all participants can view the question easily (see example above).

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

The group should first confirm the intended timeframe for the strategic planning process (e.g., 5 years). It is important that it is far enough into the future that people can imagine change happening over the course of that time. This workshop is the first step in the strategic planning process.

We will be identifying strengths that provide momentum towards our vision, the challenges or obstacles that stand in our way, and the strategies we can use to overcome our challenges and move us toward our shared vision as the process unfolds.

FOCUSED CONVERSATION VISUALIZATION

In order to have each person in the room open up to creative possibilities, it is exciting to take a little trip into the future. Here is a suggested guided visualization that the facilitator will read aloud while the team members silently answer these questions in their own minds. Facilitator starts speaking with the "opening."

STEP 1 – FOCUSED CONVERSATION: PRACTICAL VISION

Topic:	Visualization: Moving into the Future
Purpose:	To identify a shared vision – get everyone on the same page.
Context:	To feel a sense of shared identity and that we each bring something unique to this team/this planning and can create something bigger together.
Opening:	Visions, hopes and dreams are what we want to see become reality. They arise from experiences in our own lives yet are currently beyond our grasp. We need to step beyond what is, into a future we can imagine.
	Each of us carries with us some level of anticipation and hope for the future of a situation. We come to a planning session expecting to make a positive contribution. Each individual's insight is needed to create the shared vision of the group.
	I am now going to take you 5 years into the future. It is 2027-2028. We have a news reporter and camera crew who are coming to the schools in our district/community. They want to report on, and celebrate the

IN PERSON

progress we have made over the last 5 years, since we came together to create a new Strategic Plan. I want you to go along on a walking tour of some of our campuses where arts education is taking place.

Objective Level:
What do you see?
What is on the walls of our schools/classrooms?
What sounds do you hear?
What sort of music do you hear? What sort of dance do you see?
Are the students drawing, painting? Are they practicing, rehearsing, performing?

Reflective Level:
What draws you in as you witness the arts that are being offered?
What feelings are you experiencing?

Interpretive Level:
What are the district teachers saying about the arts instruction?
About the professional learning they have received?
What are the parents saying? What are the students saying?
What kind of changes have we seen in terms of arts integration? What changes have occurred with discrete arts instruction?
What is now in place that we could have only dreamed of a few years ago?
What opportunities now exist for our students? What new partnerships and collaborations have developed?
Who is helping us to fund our programs?
Who is helping us to teach and deliver our programs?

Decisional Level:
What are the first steps we can take to make this dream a reality?
Let's take a look at our focus question.

VARIATIONS ON THE FOCUS QUESTION:

Based on whether you are working with a County Department, County Office of Education, Government Agency or Nonprofit Organization, your question might be something like this:

What Services and Supports will the County Office of Education provide to the districts to provide access and equity in arts learning for all students?

In addition, you may consider customizing the question according to the needs of the planning team in pre-meetings with leadership.

BRAINSTORMING IDEAS

After the visualization, invite the team members to spend some time brainstorming, quietly by themselves. Instruct each person to take out the sheet of paper and list 10-12 things that they would like to see in place in the arts education program in 5 years. It is important that this process be done in silence with each person bringing forth their best thinking without discussion or conversation.

As a facilitator, it is important to give people enough time to complete the list without feeling rushed. Suggest to the group that the ideas should be quite specific. For example, *instead of all of the arts for all of the students, every elementary school has offerings in music PK-5. At the end of the brainstorming, ask participants to asterisk their top 4-5 ideas.*

IN PERSON

PAIR SHARING AND CLARIFYING IDEAS

Invite the team members to work in partners and discuss their ideas. Take the clearest ideas and write them out with a marker horizontally across half-sheets of paper. The aim is to generate 35-45 ideas among the group. Use the following guide to determine the number of ideas each pair should generate:

10 participants	5 pairs	6-8 ideas per pair	30-40 ideas
16 participants	8 pairs	4-5 ideas per pair	32-40 ideas
20 participants	10 pairs	4-5 ideas per pair	40-50 ideas

To ensure that the ideas are clearly visible to the group when posted, invite the participants to: WRITE BIG, write 5-7 WORDS PER CARD, and 1 IDEA PER CARD.

SYNTHESIZING THE IDEAS

Set Up the Wall in Advance

- If a sticky wall is not available, you may want to put several sheets of chart paper up on a blank wall and be sure to spray them with adhesive.
- Spread out 9 half sheets (vertically) as placeholders for tags across the top of your wall with symbols such as heart, star, sun, flower, spiral, etc.

Collect and Organize the First Round of Ideas

- The facilitator collects 2-3 half-sheets from each pair. Ask for the clearest and most compelling ideas.
- It is very important to read each idea aloud as you affix it to the wall or group discussion. It is suggested that you put them in a "smile" format to give room for the cards to be paired up.
- Ask the group: Are there two ideas that show a similar accomplishment or have a similar intention? Begin to make vertical columns with pairs of ideas below the tags with symbols.

Collect and Organize the Second Round of Ideas

- The facilitator collects another round from the team members, or the group moves their ideas to the discussion area. Continue to read the ideas as you affix them to the wall or workspace.
- After the second round, it is helpful to put a quick tag name at the top of the column on the symbol note. Once the tags have been identified, participants can tag their remaining cards before they pass them forward.
- Continue to categorize all the ideas into columns that describe a similar idea or outcome. It is important to collect all of the ideas, even if they are duplicative. This shows the group where there is particular energy around an idea. Before you move on, be sure to ask each team member to look at their brainstorming sheet to make sure that there isn't anything missing from the wall.

IN PERSON

Create a Title for Each Column

- The facilitator then guides the group in coming up with a richly descriptive title for the column, possibly using the convention of "adjective, adjective, noun." Once the title is determined, cover the symbol card at the top of each column with a full sheet of paper (horizontally) with the name that describes the contents of that column.
- The title should be 5–7 words and highly descriptive.
- Consider the following prompts to help the group name each column:
  - What words in this column stand out to you? (Underline the words.)
  - What's your gut reaction/emotional response to the words in this column?
  - What are some themes, ideas, insights that this column holds?
  - What name best describes what this column is about?
- Go to a deeper level of consensus rather than just labeling the column; continue until all of the columns are titled. Example: Engaged and Active Community Members as Partners in the Arts.

TIP: The Titles are considered to be Vision Elements (ultimate outcomes) that will guide the plan. Some teams may want to see the Title Cards as Goals. Others may choose to see them as Focus Areas of the plan. However your team decides to move through this consensus workshop, you are developing an overall framework to guide the plan. Don't become too concerned about the naming conventions, but rather focus on creating a sense of shared ownership around the team's Vision.

STEP 1 – FOCUSED CONVERSATION: REVIEWING THE PRACTICAL VISION

Topic: Reviewing the Practical Vision

Purpose: To understand what the group has created and to feel a sense of collaboration, consensus and community through the planning process

Context: You have all contributed to our Practical Vision. You have offered your brainstorming, worked together to refine your ideas, and develop meaningful titles for our Vision Elements. Let's take a moment to say those Titles/Vision Elements out loud. Why don't we begin with you… *Each person reads one of the Title cards at the top of the column aloud.*

As you hear those vision elements out loud, I want you to reflect back to the exercise we began with. I asked you to imagine yourself 5 years out in time, walking a person around the district. As you see our Vision, think about how we can bring this to reality. We call it a Vision because it's where we want to go. We call it "practical" so that we can ensure that our actions are realistic and doable.

Questions *Objective:*
As you look at the wall what are you seeing?
Where are the columns particularly long?

IN PERSON

Reflective:
Which of these ideas speaks personally to you?
Are there ideas on the wall that make you uneasy?
Are there ideas that are exciting, energizing?

Interpretive:
What new ideas are coming to you as you see what's up there?
Which do you think would be hardest to implement?
Which seems easiest?

Decisional:
If you were to choose, which area would you like to start on right away?
Which area would have the greatest impact right away?

Closing: This has been important work describing specifically and clearly what we want our arts education program to include. Creating a vision that is tangible and vivid will frame the next steps in our planning process, and will motivate our work during the next 5 years. Thanks for your insights and participation.

Below is an example of documentation of the Practical Vision Workshop. The facilitator documents the results of the visioning workshop in the form of a table by first taping the columns vertically and then typing the contents of the cards into a word table. The documentation of the Practical Vision will be used for the next steps of the planning process.

In 5 Years, What Will Be In Place In The Arts As A Result of our Actions?

CONTENT				INFRASTRUCTURE				SUSTAINABILITY		
ARTS CURRICULUM	ARTS INTEGRATION	COLLEGE & CAREER PATHWAYS	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	STAFFING & SCHEDULING	STUDENT ACCESS	AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMMING	STUDENT VOICE	COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS	SUSTAINABLE SUPPORT
Arts-Standards Based Vertical Articulation	Integration of STEM and culture into arts to give students a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them	Early preparation for CTE, College and Career Readiness	Intentional Professional Development & Recognition Opportunities for All	Staffing & Scheduling for all PK-12th grade scholars during the instructional day	Equitable access to all Art Forms Pre-K to 12th Grade	Increased after-school participation in arts programs due to elimination of barriers	Arts are Used to Empower Student Voices	Ongoing Community Partnerships and Engagement to Celebrate VAPA-Centered Initiatives	Reliable Data and Supportive Funding Cycle
Top down expectations per Arts Standards Vertical art lessons between elementary/ middle/ HS –go to each other's campuses Age appropriate elementary arts experiences Music in K-2 MS instructional day dance and theatre Levelled visual arts courses at HS level More dance and theatre Multi-cultural music and arts in all schools Varsity Art, Dance, Acting, Singing Groups (ex. Letter Jacket/Next Level Goal)	SEL & Arts Integrated Curriculum Integration of culture into arts curriculum Lots of STEAM Branding gaps between arts & STEM and between arts Integrated emphasis on Creativity Art history education=deeper knowledge of self VAPA as a leverage for language learning & expression	Practical application Artist Workshops (work in field) Defined Arts Career Pathways (connect to people in the field) Students creating music electronically like pop stars HS Students teaching elementary students CTE as a form of training	Sustainable Arts PD for all Teachers/Admin and Counselors Cognitive Development in each art form taught and understood Encourage/recognize teachers for creating new art projects	Arts (Visual and Performing) in the school day with use of itinerant arts teachers ES certificated instructors (vis arts, theatre, dance) Permanent (or itinerant) elementary visual arts teachers Equity and Access in HS via block schedules	Increased VAPA access for EL students (A-G) Access to arts classes district-wide Common access to Music, Dance, Art, Theatre at all sites. Equity – can look different Equitable access to VAPA for all students	Transportation for students who participate in after school arts programs Afterschool Club Opportunities (transport, outside school schedule) Improved District to Student Communication Transportation to events and more events Transportation for students who participate in VAPA afterschool events	Student Arts Council to Empower Youth Student podcast highlighting VVUSD experiences SEL Relations in communications between students and teachers Student Advisory Council with real power & input Frequent student voice opportunities Service based projects where VAPA students can help on campus (community service)	Celebration of Arts Festival Collaborative partnerships to showcase arts in the community Full parental and community understanding and support of the integral role of the arts in academics & student life Frequent family voice opportunities Parent involvement opportunities in and out of school Increased Community VAPA opportunities. Bridge across sites/community events Design platforms for students to showcase their talents A Performing Arts Facility – State of the Arts Theatre for district-wide performances.	Meaningful, relevant data systems Sustainable funding in place Performance art practice facilities and storage on site

IN PERSON

STEP 2: DESCRIBE THE CURRENT REALITY - STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

The next step in strategic planning is to identify the strengths – the momentum propelling us toward our vision – as well as the challenges or blocks that may stand in the way of reaching our shared vision. The script below will guide your team through this important next phase of conversation, consensus-building, and decision-making.

STEP 2- WORKSHOP | Identifying Strengths and Challenges

Topic: Identifying Strengths and Challenges

Purpose: To analyze our current reality and use it as a springboard for moving into action by articulating both our strengths and our perceived challenges. To stimulate breakthrough thinking that ignites action.

Context:

Strengths are assets that have the potential to work in your favor.

Example Strengths may include:

- Dedicated teachers
- All elementary school students receive music
- Administrators at sites are very supportive
- Parents see value in the arts
- VAPA Coordinator in place

Challenges are:

- Roadblocks between what exists and our vision of the future (e.g., the scheduling demands on schools that may lead to less time allotted to the arts);
- Patterns of behavior or belief systems that needs to change;
- Causes of a frustration, not just a symptom;
- Clues to what is not happening, not a lack of something.

Example Challenges may include:

- Fragmented coordination
- Unmotivated staff
- Conflicting access to multiple disciplines

Challenges are not "problems." Problems are things you fix, and you cannot fix an obstacle. You can respond to it, impact it, or go around it. It is part of your community and institutional environment. The group will determine, "What will need to change for us to reach our vision? Why is it still going on?"

STAGE 4

IN PERSON

LACK OF

Challenges are also not a "lack of" something, for example a lack of money, time, or space. They are real blocks.

Problem	Underlying Challenge
Lack of time	• Too many competing priorities • Focus unclear * Responsibilities unclear
Lack of money	• Don't know the real cost of things • Budgeting process unclear • Financial priorities elsewhere • Budget has not been addressed
Lack of people/staff	• Limited buy-in from staff for what is expected • Ineffective recruiting and retention process • Unrealistic job descriptions

Frequently these challenges and obstacles are not obvious. They are like cataracts. You do not see them directly, yet they cloud your vision and blind you to what is in front of you. Institutions that do not deal with their self-images, attitudes, procedures, policies and structures, can become entrenched in their convictions and may even fall short in delivering on their mission.

Using the "lack of" handout like the one below may help participants avoid "lack of" thinking and get to the real challenge.

IN PERSON

LACK OF

ORGANIZATION

disorganized

fragmented

inaccessible

incoherent

overlapping

unbalanced

uncoordinated

unsystematic

RELEVANCE

inappropriate

irrelevant

narrow

obsolete

outdated

outmoded

unsuitable

vague

PRODUCTIVITY

debilitating

misused

ineffective

inefficient

neglected

obstructed

unproductive

stalled

EXPECTATIONS

competing

conflicting

contradictory

illogical

impractical

inflexible

restricted

unrealistic

STABILITY

inadequate

insecure

insufficient

sporadic

unstable

unsustainable

volatile

weakened

MOTIVATION

apprehensive

confusing

devalued

discouraging

incompetent

unclear

uninspiring

unmotivated

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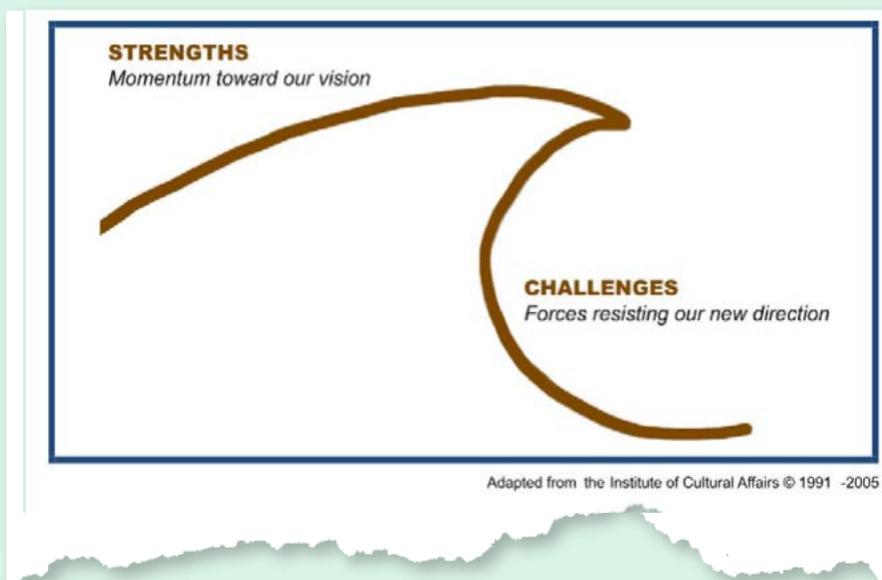
IN PERSON

Root Causes

As a facilitator you may need to guide your group to dig deeper to the real root causes of the challenge. Showing an image of the dandelion may help guide the conversation about underlying causes. The quality of the truth-telling in this section leads directly to innovative actions in the next section of the planning. Just like dandelions in your lawn; they will persist until you dig out the whole root.

THE STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES WAVE

Use 2-4 pieces of chart paper on the sticky wall. Draw a large wave similar to the example below. Use one color for strengths (such as green) and one color for challenges (such as red) for the wave.

STRENGTHS
Momentum toward our vision

CHALLENGES
Forces resisting our new direction

Adapted from the Institute of Cultural Affairs © 1991 -2005

REVIEW THE VISION

Ask members of the group to read the Vision Elements/Goals (Titles) from the previous workshop. Ask the group to silently consider each of the elements.

Questions

- Chart the ideas from the group in a single color on the left side of the wave.
- What are the strengths that will help us achieve our vision?
- What opportunities and assets exist in our community that can support/enhance our efforts to achieve our vision?

Identify Challenges

For this part of the exercise, the group may find it helpful to refer to the "No Lack Of" chart for ideas about how to articulate the challenges more clearly.

IN PERSON

- Chart the ideas from the group in a single color on the right side of the wave.
- What are the challenges or obstacles within our district that will get in our way?
- What challenges exist in our community that may hinder progress toward our vision?

Closing

- Read through all the strengths aloud. What stands out for you? (Highlight 5-7 items)
- Now, let's repeat this for the challenges. Which challenges are most pressing? (Star 5-7 items)
- As you look at the challenges, are there some that are similar and come together to indicate a bigger challenge? (Chart 5-7 key challenges on a separate sheet)
- What are possible actions we could take to impact these challenges and release our vision? Ask the group for a few ideas. These ideas do not need to be charted; they serve as the transition into the next planning step.
- Facilitators may choose to open the floor for ideas around new opportunities or possibilities as they are arising in the group.
- We will now move on to the process of creating actions to move forward.

STEP 3: IDENTIFY YOUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The next step in strategic planning is identifying the overall strategic directions that will guide your plan. In this method we develop key actions to impact our most pressing challenges. In this way, we can create actions that impact underlying causes and challenges, and inspire real, sustainable changes. These actions will also give us ways to measure change as we move into implementation.

The following workshop outlines the way the team can develop creative, innovative actions that will deal directly with the challenges and move the group toward the desired vision.
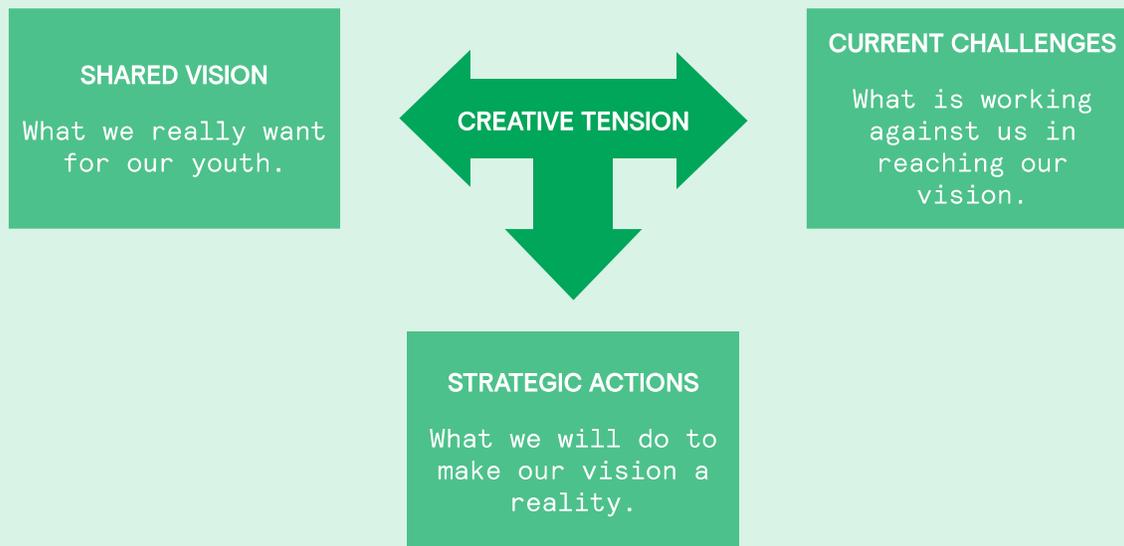
STEP 3 – WORKSHOP | Identifying Strategic Directions

The next step in strategic planning is identifying the overall strategic directions that will guide the plan and focus our actions. Instead of looking at our Practical Vision alone, we develop creative, innovative actions that will deal with the challenges directly.

Next, the group is guided to focus on creative action ideas that will address the challenges and support movement towards the vision. Once these ideas are generated, they will be organized around a similar intent or outcome.

Holding the Vision Alongside the Challenges. The image below demonstrates how we simultaneously hold both the vision and the challenges in mind in order to determine the most strategic, high leverage actions. You may want to share a diagram with the group such as the following:

IN PERSON

SHARED VISION

What we really want for our youth.

CREATIVE TENSION

CURRENT CHALLENGES

What is working against us in reaching our vision.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

What we will do to make our vision a reality.

Anchoring Strategic Thinking

Purpose: To support the group with creating concrete action ideas that will address the underlying challenges and activate the vision.

In person, to emphasize the innovative and creative thinking you want to foster, you may use an exercise like passing around a common object like a paper cup, pen or paper clip.

The facilitator may ask individuals to bring the object toward the zoom camera that will be endowed with a new meaning. One idea that works well on Zoom is to use a balled-up piece of paper. Ask each person to "take" a piece of paper and ball it up. Using crumpled paper as an imaginary ball, individuals toss the ball, one by one, to someone else by moving the crumpled paper towards the camera. The person selected, imagines catching the ball and then transforms their crumpled ball into something new. This continues as each person suggests an "uncommon" use for the object. The concept that is being demonstrated is the wealth of imagination that exists in a group with diverse perspectives.

To get people to think strategically, you can make reference or show an image such as one below to open up thinking around down board thinking that takes place in chess—anticipating the chain of potential results from a single move.

STAGE 4

IN PERSON

There is also the example of leveraged action, or how hitting the right pin in bowling, brings all the pins down for a strike. Where in our district/county/community might one small action cause several things to change?

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS WORKSHOP FOCUS QUESTION

Write the focus question on a large sheet of paper and affix to the wall. Make sure it is big and bold enough that all participants can view the question easily (see example below).

> What creative, innovative actions can we take to address our challenges and move toward our vision?

ADVANCE PREPARATION OF THE STICKY WALL

Facilitator puts up 9 boxes—each is half of a chart paper labeled A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I. Put a line across the top for the Box Title. The paper is sprayed with a repositionable spray adhesive so that as the half-sheets are mounted on them they stick like a sticky note. If spray isn't available, the facilitator can use bits of tape on the half-sheets. The boxes are lined up 3 across and 3 down (see example below).

A _____	B _____	C _____
D _____	E _____	F _____
G _____	H _____	I _____

IN PERSON

SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR BRAINSTORMING

Have members of the group read the main elements of the Practical Vision they created and then read the key Strengths and Challenges from the previous section.

> **TIP:** You may wish to pick specific challenges to focus on and also pick a few vision elements to focus on. After individually brainstorming, you will share these ideas with your partner or small group so that you have a breadth of ideas that address not only the challenges but also activate the vision.

PRIMING THE PUMP FOR IDEAS

Facilitator should point to one of the challenges and ask for one innovative or bold action that could be taken to deal with that block. Provide one or two ideas as examples, just to give people an idea of what they are being asked to do.

BRAINSTORMING IDEAS

Facilitator should instruct participants to Individually list 10-12 actions on a piece of paper, that we can take to overcome one or more of our challenges and activate the vision.

Each person needs to come up with at least 10-12 ideas or answers to the Focus Question example:

"What creative, innovative actions can we take
to address our challenges and move towards our vision?"

Make sure to provide participants with plenty of quiet time to think on their own. A total of 10-15 minutes may be needed.

Facilitator should give a set of instructions similar to this:

- Working in pairs (or threes or fours if the group is large), participants share all of their brainstorm ideas.
- Write the ideas on half-sheets of paper.
- Instructions for writing the ideas: WRITE BIG, 5-7 words, 1 IDEA per CARD.

PUTTING LIKE IDEAS TOGETHER

- The facilitator collects 2-3 half-sheets from each pair. Ask for the clearest and most compelling ideas.
- The Facilitator collects a first round of actions (aiming to get up 14-18 total) and reads each one as they place them first randomly in the boxes and the rest on the wall next to the boxes.
- The participants are asked to find two ideas that describe actions that are similar in intent or outcome. When two are identified, they go into one of the boxes.

IN PERSON

- Typically the facilitator will need to ask for three rounds of ideas. All ideas get mounted on the wall eventually. Place all of the action ideas together within the boxes as successive rounds of half sheets are shared.

NAMING THE BOXES

- Guide the group to give a meaningful title to each box that captures the intent held in that group of ideas. Take time to name these boxes, because they will serve as the key GOALS for the phased plan.

Prompt question: If we complete the actions outlined within this box, what are we DOING? What is the big idea that encompasses all of the actions in this box? Begin with an action verb – consider using the *-ing* convention to show forward movement.
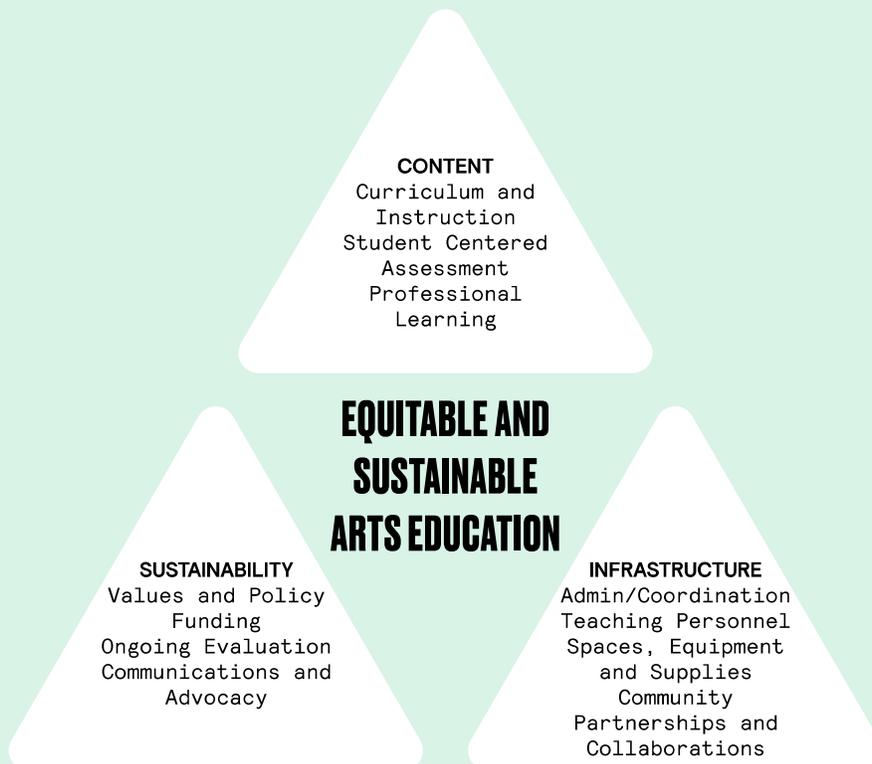
EXAMPLES OF BOX TITLES:

We are…

- Expanding professional learning opportunities
- Expanding access to facilities, supplies and equipment for all students
- Building sustainable funding for the arts

REVIEWING THE KEY COMPONENTS TRIANGLE

In developing an Arts Education Plan, we have identified three main sectors that will ensure a comprehensive plan: Content, Infrastructure, and Sustainability

CONTENT
Curriculum and
Instruction
Student Centered
Assessment
Professional
Learning

EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE ARTS EDUCATION

SUSTAINABILITY
Values and Policy
Funding
Ongoing Evaluation
Communications and
Advocacy

INFRASTRUCTURE
Admin/Coordination
Teaching Personnel
Spaces, Equipment
and Supplies
Community
Partnerships and
Collaborations

IN PERSON

As the boxes are filled with creative, innovative actions, they may fall naturally into one of these focus areas and as demonstrated in the triangle.

Content Includes:
Curriculum and Instruction, Student Centered Assessment, and Professional Learning.

Infrastructure Includes:
Administration/Coordination, Teaching Personnel, Spaces, Equipment and Supplies, and Community Partnerships and Collaborations.
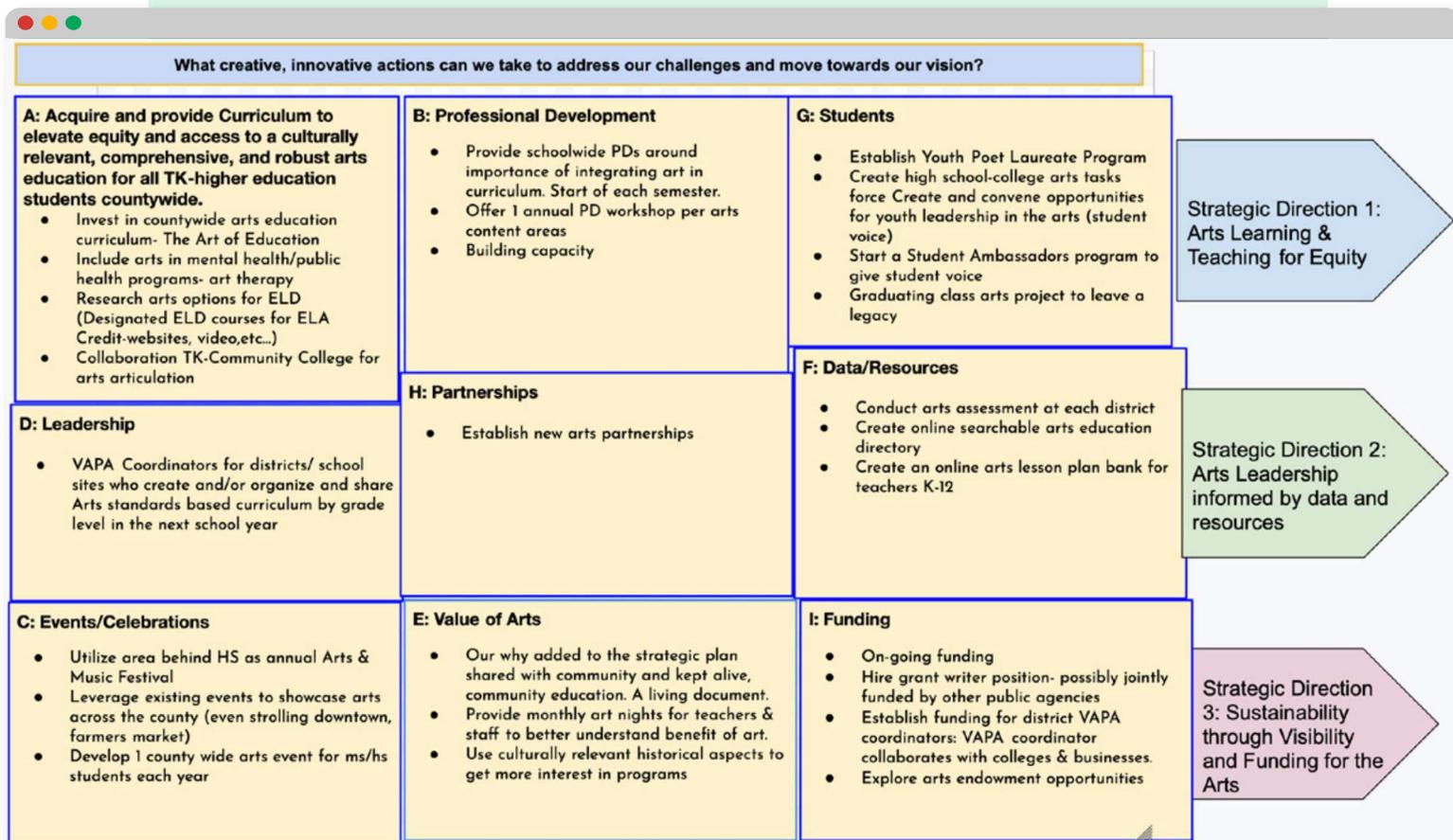
Sustainability Includes:
Values and Policy, Funding, Ongoing Evaluation, Communications and Advocacy

IDENTIFYING STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS OR BROAD AREAS OF FOCUS

After all of the boxes have a meaningful title, take the larger view of what is on the wall, and ask which 2 or 3 boxes are strongly related or have a similar intent. Connect these boxes by physically placing them beside one another. Continue this until you have the boxes arranged side by side in 3 horizontal lines. These form the basis for your strategic directions.

This is an example of Strategic Directions Workshop documentation.

What creative, innovative actions can we take to address our challenges and move towards our vision?

A: Acquire and provide Curriculum to elevate equity and access to a culturally relevant, comprehensive, and robust arts education for all TK-higher education students countywide.
- Invest in countywide arts education curriculum- The Art of Education
- Include arts in mental health/public health programs- art therapy
- Research arts options for ELD (Designated ELD courses for ELA Credit-websites, video,etc...)
- Collaboration TK-Community College for arts articulation

D: Leadership
- VAPA Coordinators for districts/ school sites who create and/or organize and share Arts standards based curriculum by grade level in the next school year

C: Events/Celebrations
- Utilize area behind HS as annual Arts & Music Festival
- Leverage existing events to showcase arts across the county (even strolling downtown, farmers market)
- Develop 1 county wide arts event for ms/hs students each year

B: Professional Development
- Provide schoolwide PDs around importance of integrating art in curriculum. Start of each semester.
- Offer 1 annual PD workshop per arts content areas
- Building capacity

H: Partnerships
- Establish new arts partnerships

E: Value of Arts
- Our why added to the strategic plan shared with community and kept alive, community education. A living document.
- Provide monthly art nights for teachers & staff to better understand benefit of art.
- Use culturally relevant historical aspects to get more interest in programs

G: Students
- Establish Youth Poet Laureate Program
- Create high school-college arts tasks force Create and convene opportunities for youth leadership in the arts (student voice)
- Start a Student Ambassadors program to give student voice
- Graduating class arts project to leave a legacy

F: Data/Resources
- Conduct arts assessment at each district
- Create online searchable arts education directory
- Create an online arts lesson plan bank for teachers K-12

I: Funding
- On-going funding
- Hire grant writer position- possibly jointly funded by other public agencies
- Establish funding for district VAPA coordinators: VAPA coordinator collaborates with colleges & businesses.
- Explore arts endowment opportunities

Strategic Direction 1: Arts Learning & Teaching for Equity

Strategic Direction 2: Arts Leadership informed by data and resources

Strategic Direction 3: Sustainability through Visibility and Funding for the Arts

STAGE 4

IN PERSON

Select 1 row of boxes. Ask the group to identify the direction that is shared by all of the boxes. Suggest strong words that end in "ing" such as: engaging, empowering, catalyzing, positioning, venturing, enhancing, supporting, expanding, developing, updating. Using gerunds such as these gives the strategic directions in an active, ongoing tone that drives your planning over the long term.
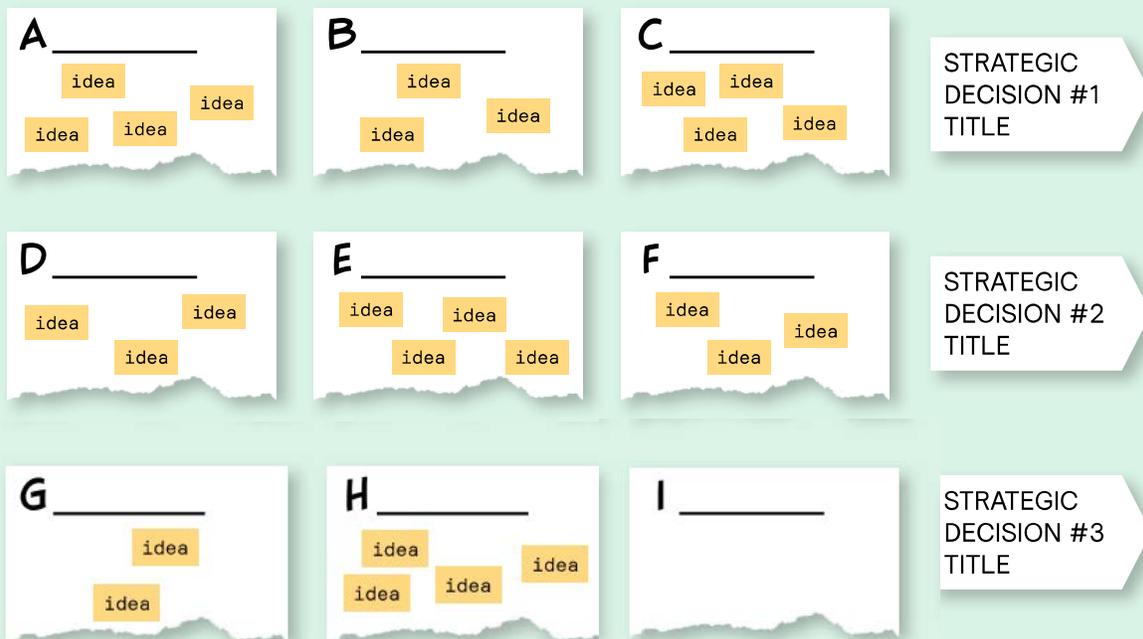
Examples:

- Strategic Direction 1: Strengthening Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Learning
- Strategic Direction 2: Expanding Partnerships and Collaborations
- Strategic Direction 3: Building Capacity through Expanded Staffing and Funding

By identifying key priorities in this way, the group feels empowered to take action on areas of challenge.These become the overall "goals" of the plan.

Modification: Some teams have found it helpful to simply label each of the Strategic Direction Arrows as **Content, Infrastructure, and Sustainability.**

Once the name for the overall strategic direction has been developed, it should be written in the arrow to the right of the line-up. There will generally be 3 strategic directions in all, with 1-4 boxes of ideas in each (see example below).

This is an example of a physical sticky wall for the Strategic Directions Workshop.

A_____	B_____	C_____	STRATEGIC DECISION #1 TITLE
idea idea idea idea idea	idea idea idea	idea idea idea idea	
D_____	E_____	F_____	STRATEGIC DECISION #2 TITLE
idea idea idea	idea idea idea idea	idea idea idea	
G_____	H_____	I_____	STRATEGIC DECISION #3 TITLE
idea idea	idea idea idea idea		

Please be aware that, although all the ideas offered have been documented, not all actions will be included in the plan. At this point, the group is committing to the titles in each box and the overall strategic directions.

IN PERSON

FINAL CHECK

Don't become too fixed on the number of boxes in each row. If there are a lot of actions needed in one of the sectors, that is absolutely fine. Each plan will have a slightly different focus, based on the culture of the district/county/community and the resources available.

Check back with the group and review the titles of Practical Vision and the key challenges. Will the Strategic Directions resolve the underlying challenges and move us toward our Vision? Do they capture all the elements and opportunities contained in the Vision? **Ask if there is anything missing to cover a comprehensive approach to arts education in the district. Refer to the Key Components Triangle. It is not too late to add a "box" or area of interest that may be fleshed out by a smaller group.**

We have been working within the context of 5 years. If ideas are not coming to the surface in some of the key focus areas, it is a good indication that those areas need to be reserved for a later point in time. Keeping the focus on first things first, and creating key priorities will ensure that the plan can be activated and gain momentum over time. It is wise to build in both highly visible successes and "behind the scenes" infrastructure capacity-building to ensure that the effort is robust.

When the team moves into Implementation:

1. The strategic directions are the overall priorities providing the broad sections of the plan.
2. The box titles become the strategy/goal within that strategic direction.
3. The ideas within the boxes become the beginning of the action steps that are sequenced and measured.

The Strategic Directions workshop should be documented in the form of a table.

When you write the plan, you will drop the "ing." Here's an example:

Strategic Direction 3: **Build Capacity through Expanded Staffing and Funding**	`box title =` `strategy/goal`

Goal 3.1: Build Sustainable Funding for the Arts

Actions: • Identify funding sources for continued Artist in Residence programming • Have a team review and make recommendations for an annual arts budget • Collaborate with Ed Foundation to research solicit funds from private donors and foundations	`actions/ideas from` `within the boxes`

STAGE 4

IN PERSON

CLOSING REFLECTION

Ending with these questions signals affirmation of the group's effort and allows them to take a minute to reflect on the importance of what they have done.

- Which direction is key in your mind?
- Which direction builds on our strength?
- Which ones venture into new territory?
- Where are the breakthroughs?
- *It is exciting to see our overall directions emerging. Thanks for your insights and participation.*

OPTIONAL EXERCISES: PRIORITY WEDGE AND PRICE TAGS

CREATING PRIORITIES | Priority Wedge Optional Exercise 1

The following activities can be used with the group at any point during the planning process to articulate the groups' desires and build awareness of possibilities they may wish to consider.

Priority Wedge: Prioritizing Events or Initiatives

- Create a priority wedge on chart paper in person or on a slide/frame virtually (see sample below).
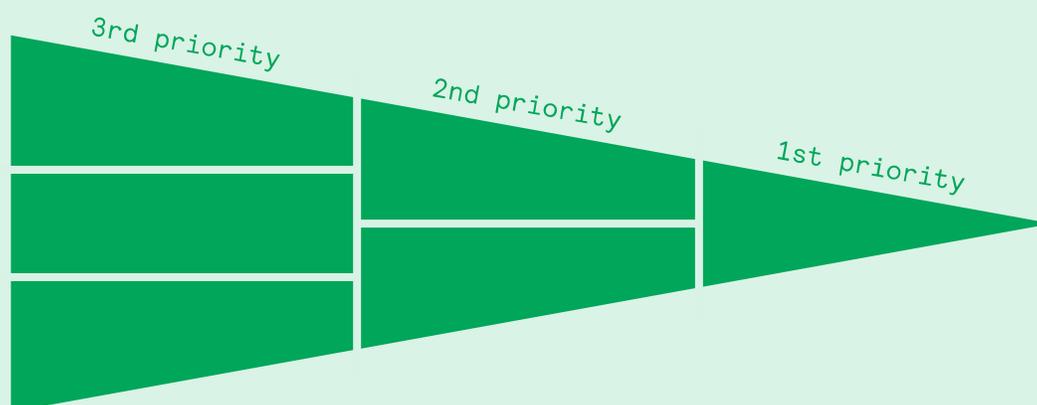
3rd priority

2nd priority

1st priority

- Look at the box titles or "goals."
- Have the group identify which one seems to be the key to unlocking everything else. How does it catalyze action for other events or projects? The action is like opening up an umbrella – the tip of the umbrella is forward, and there is space and opening behind the tip. It can also be likened to tipping the first domino, and watching all the others fall.

IN PERSON

- Next ask, which two actions are next in importance? These are the next two areas of action that have energy and momentum.
- Continue, filling in each of the boxes in terms of priority.
- This gives the team a sense of purpose, power, and direction, and reduces a sense of being overwhelmed. The key is to stick to the priority that will unleash energy for the other things to take place.
- You can physically write on the priority wedge, use half sheets in person, or use sticky notes in the virtual environment.

CREATING PRIORITIES | Price Tags Optional Exercise 2

There will be times in the planning process where team members realize that there will never be enough money to provide everything. There will be hard choices to make in establishing priorities. Compromises need to be made – additional funding partners may need to be cultivated.

Ultimately, the team needs to decide – first things first. But what are those first things? For one community, it may be restoring music where there are gaps, for another it may be providing professional learning that includes social emotional learning. For another, it may be offering more artist-in-residence programs.

Price Tags

A fun exercise to reflect on priorities is "Price Tags." Using real (or approximate costs), the exercise encourages the group to reflect on the initial implementation steps in an arts plan.

The price tags can be enlarged or written on half-sheets and affixed to walls, desks, or chairs positioned around the room. You can give the team members a "budget" to work within or simply allow them to pick their top priorities (See example Price Tags below).

Instructions to the Group

- Today we are going to have fun with an exercise that allows us to pick some top priorities for our arts program.
- You have $100,000. Go ahead and stand in front of the price tag/card that you consider to be your top priority to improve / strengthen our arts education programs. If you see something missing, go ahead and write up a price tag of your own.
- OK, I am going to give you another $100,000. Go to your second choice. Now go to your third choice.
- At this point you may see some patterns emerging with the team. There may be a lot of people clustered around one price tag – and no one around others.
- You may find it useful to have a focused conversation about the exercise. Engage the team members and invite them to share their process for determining top priorities.

IN PERSON

PRICE TAG EXAMPLE

Use half sheets for the following price tags and scatter around the room/ taped to desks.

Clay, Paper, Paint
(one class – average of 30 students)

$700

**Adapt Classroom for Use
as a Dance Studio**

$7650

Kiln for Visual Arts Program

$2500

Recorders for 1 Classroom
(average of 30 students)

$75

**Adapt Classroom
for Use as a Digital /Media Arts Studio**

$16,000

**Musical Instruments for
1 Elementary School:**

$10,000

Theater Lighting

$5,000-$10,000

3-D Supplies for Visual Arts Program
(sculpture / ceramics – one class)

$1500

**Maintenance of Musical Instruments
for 1 High School**

$10,000

VAPA Coordinator
(salary and benefits)

$70,000-$80,000

Credentialed Arts Teacher
(salary and benefits)

$90,000-$120.000

5-day professional learning Workshop
(80 teachers, no follow up)

$40,000

STAGE 4

IN PERSON

FOCUSED CONVERSATION | REFLECTING ON THE PRICE TAG EXERCISE

Topic:	Reflecting on the Price Tag Exercise
Purpose:	To understand the difficulty that arises in prioritizing decisions regarding funding for arts education To create a sense of ease around the task of budgeting for arts education
Context	At the end of the planning process, we will thoughtfully consider a funding strategy and the budget implications of various aspects of our plan. We may need to place dollar amounts on components of the plan and identify funding priorities. This exercise was intended to make that process come alive in a simplified manner. Think back over the Price Tag Exercise that we just completed. Think about what happened each step of the way, notice your reactions to it, and what conclusions we may draw from it. We will take just a few minutes to reflect back on it.
Questions	
Objective:	Which tag caught your attention first? Where did most people cluster? What items were not chosen? How would you describe the process of physically moving to a priority area?
Reflective:	What surprised you about this exercise? What was an easy choice? What was a difficult choice? Where are we disagreeing? Was there a point at which you felt confused or indecisive? Was there a moment where you felt exhilarated or elated?
Interpretive:	On what basis did you make your choices? Could you defend those choices to others? What questions did this raise for you? Where did you feel that you needed more information? What insights are beginning to emerge about budgeting and leveraging funding?
Decisional:	What appear to be our key priorities as a group? What is the overall cost to provide our priorities and how does this match with our budget? Are there priorities that will need to drop off the list at least this year?
Closing	This exercise has given us an interesting way to approach the difficult task of looking at budget implications and competing priorities in our district. A group consensus begins to emerge when people "vote with their feet." Thank you for expressing your priorities.

IN PERSON

STEP 4: ESTABLISH AN ACTION PLAN

The next step in the process is to develop prioritized actions that need to be taken in the coming year, resulting in an implementation timeline. In doing this you will need to consider:

- What can realistically be accomplished in one year?
- What needs to happen first in order for other things to be accomplished?
- What resources of people and money will be necessary?
- What shifts need to occur in the ways we work and what we communicate?
- What do we need to continue doing that is already established?

Strategic Direction or Focus Area: Strengthen Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Learning

Goal 1: Expand Artist-in-Residence program to support Professional Learning

Phase/Year	Strategies/Actions	Steps/Tasks	Budget Implications	Persons/group Responsible	Measurable Outcome (Evidence of Success)
	Through Artist Residencies, create partnerships with pairs of artists/teachers that support arts integration implementation in a meaningful way	Apply for grant Set up planning between teachers and teaching artists	$25,000	Arts Coordinator to convene: Arts Partners, partnering teachers	Six residencies occur. Pre and Post surveys administered and analyzed. Teacher evaluations indicate that goals were met.
	Include professional learning component in Artist Residencies to increase teacher skills in arts integration	Meet with teachers and arts partners to plan and make goals of professional Learning clear	Included	Arts Coordinator	Evaluations indicate that teachers understand and will begin to implement arts integration in the classroom.

IN PERSON

Your planning team can be divided into smaller groups, one for each strategic direction. Let people choose which one they will work on. Guide the group to take their boxes of action ideas and decide what major items can be accomplished in one year. *It is helpful to use a template either on paper or on the sticky wall to guide the process.*

Suggested for Timelines: The team may decide to use a timeline that includes: Year; Actual Dates; or Phases. Phases may be 1 year, 2 years or even 3 years. When you phase a plan, it sends a signal that you will move on to the next set of strategies, when the previous phase is complete. This creates some accountability, but without rigidity, honoring changing circumstances.

> **TIP:** Timely documentation shared with all members of the planning team is supportive and a way of honoring inclusivity.

SMALL GROUPS DEVELOP ACTION STEPS FOR THE FIRST YEAR

Ask each small group to look at the action ideas in their strategic direction boxes and decide what actions are most feasible to accomplish and will create the most leverage in the coming year.

Each team selects a group of distinct actions for the coming 12 months and writes those up on ½ sheets, on chart paper or on a template. If you are doing this as a sticky wall exercise, they can use the existing action idea sheets from the strategic directions boxes, add new action/ideas, and then sequence them in a logical order.

Encourage the groups to spread the work out over the year for maximum effectiveness.

Focus on being realistic. You may find that some actions, events, or programs need to be planned for the next year.

Below is an example of using chart paper as a map, where each group uses ½ sheets to outline the actions, tasks and measurable outcomes for each strategic direction goal area. The same process can be easily done in a virtual environment using Google Docs.

Strategy/Action	Steps/Tasks	Measurable Outcome
Offer arts integration PD for K-2 teachers	• Calendar PD time • Invite members • Provide a series of sessions	Arts integrated instruction in at least one art form is offered weekly in all K-2 classrooms

IN PERSON

SMALL GROUPS PROPOSE STRATEGY/ACTIONS FOR YEAR/PHASE 1

Have each group report out by placing their cards on the wall, by using chart paper or by speaking to the group from a written digital template.

After each Strategic Direction group reports out ask:

- Are there any clarifying questions?
- Will these strategies/actions move us forward?
- Is this doable in the Year 1 time frame?
- Is there anything missing?

The same process may be followed for Phase 2 and Phase 3 as time allows.

REFINING AND WRITING UP THE PLAN

After the group has developed the broad approach, a smaller team should be convened to refine the written plan – the coach, the team members and staff.

Identify the additional elements of the plan which may include:

- Person(s) responsible
- Budget Implications
- Measurable Outcomes

PREPARING TO FACILITATE A VIRTUAL PLANNING SESSION

This section applies, if you are planning to proceed with a virtual/online platform. Most educators across the state are familiar with virtual meetings and the tools used to conduct these meetings.

If you choose to facilitate strategic planning in a virtual environment, you may use Zoom, Webex or Microsoft Teams. In addition, select a platform such as the Google Workspace or a dedicated whiteboard platform like Miro or Mural.

The procedures defined below are designed for Virtual Planning Team Facilitation.

Possible online platforms

- **Miro** is a platform that can be used free or for a cost depending on the level of use. Up to 3 Editable Boards are included in the free account.
- **Mural** is a platform that can be purchased at a cost. It connects teams with a digital whiteboard and collaboration features designed to inspire innovation.
- **Google Slides, Google Docs, JamBoard and Google Drawing** are widely available and free of charge through the Google Workspace.

Suggested recommendations to follow when using Zoom:

- Find a quiet space where you can think, write, and engage in conversation.
- Consider using headphones to reduce background noises and distractions.
- Log-in to Zoom 5 minutes before the meeting so that everyone is ready to go on time.
- "Rename" your display name to include: First Name, Affiliation, Pronouns
- Please use the mute button when you are not speaking or in the conversation
- Please use the "Chat" feature to submit any questions or comments.
- Put your phone and other devices on silent.
- You're invited to share your recognition in the chat as part of the First Peoples Land Acknowledgement at the start of the meeting. Native-Land.ca .

TIP: You will be splitting your attention between two digital platforms. Maximize collaboration by guiding your planning team members to set up their screen to split between the Miro/Mural/Google and Zoom.

VIRTUAL
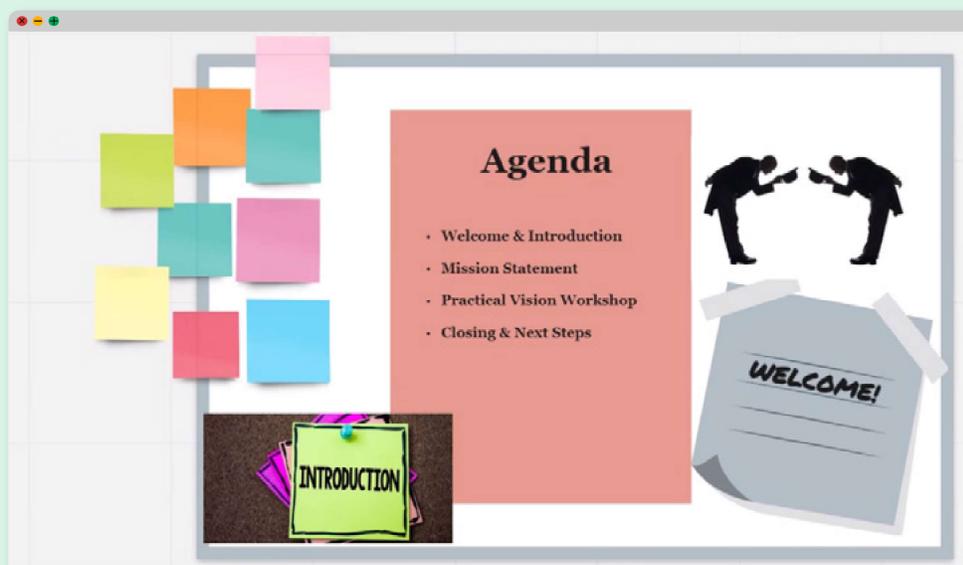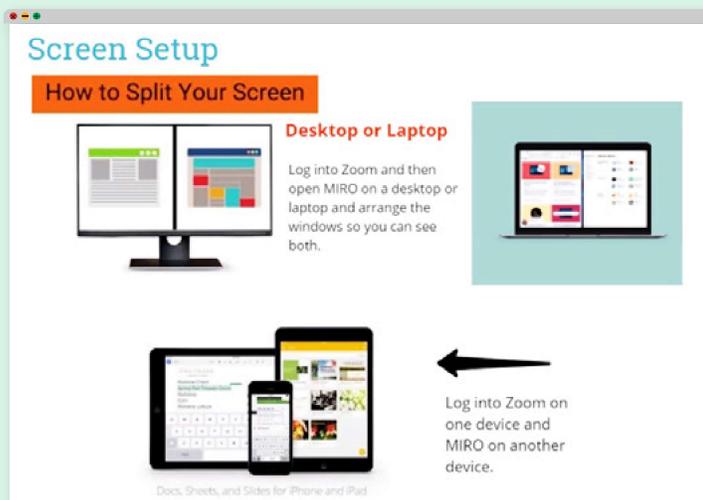
1. When creating a plan virtually, it is important to provide an orientation opportunity to allow your team members time to practice participating in Zoom while concurrently navigating the Google Slides or Miro Frames.
2. The example above shows an agenda with a virtual "check in" where members select a sticky note to sign in with their names. Another idea is to make sure all can access the Google Slide Deck in order to use a Google slide as a sign in sheet with name, title and affiliation.
3. Create a Title Slide to welcome the group and ground them with a community building activity.
4. It is important for team members to be visible on screen, with cameras on, if possible. The following team building examples can help to engage all members.

Team Building Examples for Virtual Planning Sessions

Listed below are some community building activities that work well in a virtual environment:

- "Alliteration Sketch" is an activity to energize the group to think creatively and give participants the opportunity to move from left brain to right brain thinking. Give participants 20 seconds to sketch based on an alliteration prompt. Once the 20 seconds are up, have everyone place their sketch up to their computer camera for all to see:
  - A bunny with a banana on a boat
  - A racoon with a radish under a rainbow
  - A cat with a carrot on a crane
  - Creepy Cats Crawling

- Another idea is to use images to represent objects. Have the participants "select" an object that speaks to their relationship with the arts and then build a shared collage of the objects. Participants can upload their own images onto a slide or Miro board as a themed treasure hunt.

- Use quotes for inspiration and send participants into small group breakouts to discuss the quote.

- Use question prompts to build common ground and connection
  - If you were a type of music what would you be?
  - If you were a landscape setting, what would you be? Desert/Ocean, etc.
  - What is something you came across recently that gave you hope or inspiration?
  - If you were the weather, what kind of emotional weather are you having today?
  - What are your superpowers? What do you bring to this team?
  - What book, movie or artwork would you like to live in?

- Find something around you that can serve as a drum to share what your emotional weather is today.
  - Sunny – bang the drum once
  - Windy – circle your hand around the drum making a swishing sound
  - Rainy – beat the drum with your fingertips like this..
  - Snowy – allow you hand to float to the drum gently
  - Stormy – pat the drum non-stop
  - Either share out visually or verbally

- Share an image or object that is around you that brings you joy.

- Build a word cloud in Slido or Mentimeter based on a guiding question or prompt. The words that the group share in common will appear larger in the shared word cloud.

Note: All of these prompts can be answered aloud or typed into the chat by the team members.

Establish Agenda for the Day

After going over the agenda on a slide or frame, you can move on to facilitating the core components of the strategic planning meeting.

County Arts Education Strategic Planning

Agenda:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Review Practical Vision Workshop and Vision Element Titles - *DRAFT*
- Look at Strengths and Challenges
- Begin Strategic Directions Workshop
- Closing and Next Steps

STEP 1: DEFINE A PRACTICAL VISION

The procedures defined below are designed for Virtual Planning Team Facilitation.

The first step in strategic planning is to establish a shared practical vision. The focus question: "In 5 years, what will be in place in the arts as a result of our actions?" creates a powerful position from which to plan.

We have explored the key components of an equitable arts education program, we may have developed an Arts Education Policy, and we have familiarized ourselves with the current status of arts education. Now we need to get practical and specific about what we can implement in the next 3-5 years.

Below, you will find a workshop script to guide your team through the process of identifying the key elements of your vision.

STEP 1 WORKSHOP | Define a Practical Vision

FOCUS QUESTION

Write the focus question out and post on the virtual wall by creating a **Google Slide or Frame on the Miro/Mural Board, to highlight the Focus Question for the vision process.**

In 5 years, what do we want to see in place for the arts as a result of our actions?

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

The group should first confirm the intended timeframe for the strategic planning process (e.g., 5 years). It is important that it is far enough into the future that people can imagine change happening over the course of that time. This workshop is the next step in the strategic planning process.

The facilitator should mention to the team that we will be identifying strengths that provide momentum towards our vision, the challenges or obstacles that stand in our way, and the strategies we can use to overcome our challenges and move us toward our shared vision as the process unfolds.

VISUALIZATION

In order to have each person in the room open up to creative possibilities, it is exciting to take a little trip into the future. Here is a suggested guided visualization – invite team members to silently answer these questions in their own minds. Facilitator may choose to invite team members to turn off their cameras, or close their eyes to focus on visualizing. Facilitator starts speaking with the "opening."

STEP 1: FOCUSED CONVERSATION: PRACTICAL VISION

Topic:	**Visualization: Moving into the Future**
Purpose:	To identify a shared vision – get everyone on the same page.
Context:	To feel a sense of shared identity and that we each bring something unique to this team/this planning and can create something bigger together.
Opening:	Visions, hopes and dreams are what we want to see become reality. They arise from experiences in our own lives yet are currently beyond our grasp. We need to step beyond what is, into a future we can imagine. Each of us carries with us some level of anticipation and hope for the future of a situation. We come to a planning session expecting to make a positive contribution. Each individual's insight is needed to create the shared vision of the group.

VIRTUAL

I am now going to take you 5 years into the future. It is 2027-2028.
We have a news reporter and camera crew who are coming to the schools
in our district/community. They want to report on, and celebrate the
progress we have made over the last 5 years, since we came together
to create a new Strategic Plan. I want you to go along on a walking tour of
some of our campuses where arts education is taking place.

Objective Level:
What do you see?
What is on the walls of our schools/classrooms?
What sounds do you hear?
What sort of music do you hear? What sort of dance do you see?
Are the students drawing, dancing, filming? Are they practicing,
rehearsing, performing?

Reflective Level:
What draws you in as you witness the arts that are being offered?
What feelings are you experiencing?

Interpretive Level:
What are the district teachers saying about the arts instruction?
About the professional learning they have received?
What are the parents saying? What are the students saying?
What kind of changes have we seen in terms of arts integration? What
changes have occurred with discrete arts instruction?
What changes have we seen with connections to creative careers?
What changes in student, teacher and community wellbeing?
How are the cultures of this community included?
What is now in place that we could have only dreamed of a few years ago?
What opportunities now exist for our students? How are all students,
including those who have been historically excluded participating in
the arts?
What new partnerships and collaborations have developed?
Who is helping us to fund our programs?
Who is helping us to teach and deliver our programs?

Decisional Level:
What are the first steps we can take to make this dream a reality?
Let's take a look at our focus question.

VARIATIONS ON THE FOCUS QUESTION:

Based on whether you are working with a County Department, County Office of Education,
Government Agency or Nonprofit Organization, your question might be something like this:

***What Services and Supports will the County Office of Education provide to the districts to
provide access and equity in arts learning for all students?***

In addition, you may consider customizing the question according to the needs of the planning
team in pre-meetings with leadership.

BRAINSTORMING IDEAS

After the visualization, invite the team members to spend some time brainstorming, quietly by
themselves. Instruct each person to take out the sheet of paper and list 10-12 things that

they would like to see in place in the arts education program in 5 years. It is important that this process be done in silence with each person bringing forth their best thinking without discussion or conversation.

As a facilitator, it is important to give people enough time to complete the list without feeling rushed. Suggest to the group that the ideas should be quite specific. For example, *instead of all of the arts for all of the students, every elementary school has offerings in music PK–5. At the end of the brainstorming, ask participants to asterisk their top 4–5 ideas.*

PAIR SHARING AND CLARIFYING IDEAS

Invite the team members to work in partners and discuss their ideas in breakout rooms. The aim is to generate 35–45 ideas among the group. Facilitator should use the following guide to determine the number of ideas each pair should generate:

10 participants	5 pairs	6–8 ideas per pair	30–40 ideas
16 participants	8 pairs	4–5 ideas per pair	32–40 ideas
20 participants	10 pairs	4–5 ideas per pair	40–50 ideas

Below you will find some visual examples of how you might set up your Google breakout room slides, or your Miro board workspace for breakout rooms. **The slide below shows instructions to guide the team.**

These slides represent the breakout room workspaces that can be created on a Google Slide or Miro Board.

STAGE 4

VIRTUAL

Collaborative Breakout Groups
- In a moment, you will be assigned to a breakout room.
- Your room number will be at the top of your screen in Zoom and then move to the corresponding Miro frame assigned to your room number.

Share and select your ideas
- Individually, share your top 3 ideas.
- As a group, agree on a total of 6-8 ideas.
- **THEN,** on your group's work space, write each idea on a separate sticky note. Summarizing each idea in 3-7 words.
- Decide which 2-3 ideas are easiest to understand and choose one person from your group to bring these 3 ideas to the space for group discussion.

6-8 ideas per pair

1 idea per note

3-7 words

15 minutes to work together

What do we want to see in place in 5 years as a result of our actions?

1 idea per sticky note

3-7 words

7-9 ideas per team

Sticky notes:

On Google slides, you can create small text boxes that team members can type into. On Miro/Mural there are specific ways to create notes. Facilitator should invite the participants to: Write no more than 5-7 WORDS per sticky note and 1 IDEA per sticky note..

STAGE 4

VIRTUAL

SYNTHESIZING THE IDEAS

Set Up the Slides/Frames in Advance

- Spread out tags as placeholders across the top of your wall with symbols such as heart, star, sun, flower, spiral, etc.

Collect and Organize the First Round of Ideas

- Participants will be guided to either drag or copy their ideas, which are on sticky notes, over to the group discussion area.
- The facilitator collects 2-3 sticky notes from each pair. Ask for the clearest and most compelling ideas.
- It is very important to read each idea aloud as you place it on the wall or group discussion area. It is suggested that you put them at the bottom or to the side of the virtual wall as you organize.
- Ask the group: Are there two ideas that show a similar accomplishment or have a similar intention? Begin to make vertical columns with pairs of ideas below the tags with symbols.

Collect and Organize the Second Round of Ideas

- The facilitator collects another round from the team members, or the group moves their ideas to the discussion area. Continue to read the ideas as you place them on the wall/ workspace.
- After the second round, it is helpful to put a quick tag name at the top of the column on the symbol note.
- Continue to categorize all the ideas into columns that describe a similar idea or outcome. It is important to collect all of the ideas, even if they are duplicative. This shows the group where there is particular energy around an idea. Before you move on, be sure to ask each team member to look at their brainstorming sheet to make sure that there isn't anything missing from the wall.

Create a Title for Each Column

- The facilitator then guides the group in coming up with a richly descriptive title for the column, possibly using the convention of "adjective, adjective, noun." Once the title is determined, cover the symbol card at the top of each column with a blank sticky note with the name that describes the contents of that column.
- The title should be 5-7 words and highly descriptive.
- Consider the following prompts to help the group name each column:
  - What words in this column stand out to you? (Underline the words.)
  - What's your gut reaction/emotional response to the words in this column?
  - What are some themes, ideas, insights that this column holds?
  - What name best describes what this column is about?
- Go to a deeper level of consensus rather than just labeling the column; continue until all of the columns are titled. Example: Engaged and Active Community Members as Partners in the Arts.

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TIP: The Titles are considered to be Vision Elements (ultimate outcomes) that will guide the plan. Some teams may want to see the Title Cards as Goals. Others may choose to see them as Focus Areas of the plan. However your team decides to move through this consensus workshop, you are developing an overall framework to guide the plan. Don't become too concerned about the naming conventions, but rather focus on creating a sense of shared ownership around the team's Vision.

This is an example of a completed Practical Vision Workshop frame with Tags on Google Drawing:

What will be in place in the next 5 years as the result of our actions?

☀️ PD and Collaboration	⭐ Leadership	🌧️ Curriculum	🌈 Staffing & Scheduling	🌹 Resources	🌻 Partnerships & Community	💜 Funding
Culturally relevant/responsive teacher training	VAPA Coordinators	Incorporate core standards into regular classroom instruction	Scheduling challenges and sufficient art personnel -at each level	Sharing of resources and knowledge amongst schools/districts	Parent education around arts ed	Dedicated/Sustained Funding for Arts Education
Identify tangible ways to utilize CA Framework (PD, modules …) Engaging EVERY educator with CA Framework =	VAPA position valued as a full time influential voice.	Arts instruction scope and sequence K-8	Staffing- PD/mentorships for teachers; specialists, Teaching artists	Resource Equity across districts	Directory of resources around arts education-providers	Consistent funding sources for arts admin, teachers, residencies
PD for admin & non-arts teaching staff	Hire leadership Admin positions to connect stakeholders	Integration of the Arts into the Curriculum	More time allowed or longer school day to allow time for arts instruction	Access to arts facilities.	Cross-district sharing/partnerships - virtual connection	Clarity about funding - collaborative approach
Professional development for access and equity	VAPA Coordinators	Opportunities for students to attend performances	Remedy scheduling by creating arts advocating counselors.	Internet access for all students.	PD for artists and arts orgs working in schools	
Building knowledge blocks around arts and standards	Policies and practices that create cultural equity through the arts	Language & Arts education specifically integrated	Qualified/certified teachers supported by PD.		Opportunity to see arts as an extended learning opp (SEL, creativity)	
	Leadership (Arts Lead point person) and Equity across all school sites	English Language integration with language and arts			Realize employment opportunities - Career paths in ARTs.they exist!.	

FOCUSED CONVERSATION: REVIEWING THE PRACTICAL VISION

Topic: Reviewing the Practical Vision

Purpose: To understand what the group has created and to feel a sense of collaboration, consensus and community through the planning process

Context: You have all contributed to our Practical Vision. You have offered your brainstorming, worked together to refine your ideas, and develop

VIRTUAL

meaningful titles for our Vision Elements. Let's take a moment to say those Titles/Vision Elements out loud. Why don't we begin with you…Each person reads one of the Title cards at the top of the column aloud.

As you hear those vision elements out loud, I want you to reflect back to the exercise we began with. I asked you to imagine yourself 5 years out in time, walking a person around the district. As you see our Vision, think about how we can bring this to reality. We call it a Vision because it's where we want to go. We call it "practical" so that we can ensure that our actions are realistic and doable.

Questions

Objective: As you look at the wall what are you seeing?
Where are the columns particularly long?

Reflective: Which of these ideas speaks personally to you?
Are there ideas on the wall that make you uneasy?
Are there ideas that are exciting, energizing?

Interpretive: What new ideas are coming to you as you see what's up there?
Which do you think would be hardest to implement?
Which seems easiest?

Decisional: If you were to choose, which area would you like to start on right away?
Which area would have the greatest impact right away?

Closing: This has been important work describing specifically and clearly what we want our arts education program to include. Creating a vision that is tangible and vivid will frame the next steps in our planning process, and will motivate our work during the next 5 years. Thanks for your insights and participation.

On the next page is an example of documentation of the Practical Vision Workshop with Completed Titles.

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In 5 Years, What Will Be In Place In The Arts As A Result of our Actions?

CONTENT				INFRASTRUCTURE			SUSTAINABILITY		
ARTS CURRICULUM	**ARTS INTEGRATION**	**COLLEGE & CAREER PATHWAYS**	**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**	**STAFFING & SCHEDULING**	**STUDENT ACCESS**	**AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMMING**	**STUDENT VOICE**	**COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**	**SUSTAINABLE SUPPORT**
Arts-Standards Based Vertical Articulation	Integration of STEM and culture into arts to give students a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them	Early preparation for CTE, College and Career Readiness	Intentional Professional Development & Recognition Opportunities for All	Staffing & Scheduling for all PK-12th grade scholars during the instructional day	Equitable access to all Art Forms Pre-K to 12th Grade	Increased after-school participation in arts programs due to elimination of barriers	Arts are Used to Empower Student Voices	Ongoing Community Partnerships and Engagement to Celebrate VAPA-Centered Initiatives	Reliable Data and Supportive Funding Cycle
Top down expectations per Arts Standards

Vertical art lessons between elementary/ middle/ HS –go to each other's campuses

Age appropriate elementary arts experiences

Music in K-2

MS instructional day dance and theatre

Levelled visual arts courses at HS level

More dance and theatre

Multi-cultural music and arts in all schools

Varsity Art, Dance, Acting, Singing Groups (ex. Letter Jacket/Next Level Goal) | SEL & Arts Integrated Curriculum

Integration of culture into arts curriculum

Lots of STEAM

Branding gaps between arts & STEM and between arts

Integrated emphasis on Creativity

Art history education=deeper knowledge of self

VAPA as a leverage for language learning & expression | Practical application Artist Workshops (work in field)

Defined Arts Career Pathways (connect to people in the field)

Students creating music electronically like pop stars

HS Students teaching elementary students CTE as a form of training | Sustainable Arts PD for all Teachers/Admin and Counselors

Cognitive Development in each art form taught and understood

Encourage/recog nize teachers for creating new art projects | Arts (Visual and Performing) in the school day with use of itinerant arts teachers

ES certificated instructors (vis arts, theatre, dance)

Permanent (or itinerant) elementary visual arts teachers

Equity and Access in HS via block schedules | Increased VAPA access for EL students (A-G)

Access to arts classes district-wide

Common access to Music, Dance, Art, Theatre at all sites. Equity – can look different

Equitable access to VAPA for all students | Transportation for students who participate in after school arts programs

Afterschool Club Opportunities (transport, outside school schedule)

Improved District to Student Communication

Transportation to events and more events

Transportation for students who participate in VAPA afterschool events | Student Arts Council to Empower Youth

Student podcast highlighting VVUSD experiences

SEL Relations in communications between students and teachers

Student Advisory Council with real power & input

Frequent student voice opportunities

Service based projects where VAPA students can help on campus (community service) | Celebration of Arts Festival

Collaborative partnerships to showcase arts in the community

Full parental and community understanding and support of the integral role of the arts in academics & student life

Frequent family voice opportunities

Parent involvement opportunities in and out of school

Increased Community VAPA opportunities. Bridge across sites/community events

Design platforms for students to showcase their talents

A Performing Arts Facility – State of the Arts Theatre for district-wide performances. | Meaningful, relevant data systems

Sustainable funding in place

Performance art practice facilities and storage on site |

STAGE 4

VIRTUAL

STEP 2: DESCRIBE THE CURRENT REALITY: STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

The next step in strategic planning is to identify the strengths – the momentum propelling us toward our vision – as well as the challenges or blocks that may stand in the way of reaching our shared vision. The script below will guide your team through this important next phase of conversation, consensus-building, and decision-making.

STEP 2 – WORKSHOP | Identifying Strengths and Challenges

Topic: Identifying Strengths and Challenges

Purpose: To analyze our current reality and use it as a springboard for moving into action by articulating both our strengths and our perceived challenges. To stimulate breakthrough thinking that ignites action.

Context

Strengths are assets that have the potential to work in your favor.

Example Strengths may include:

- Dedicated teachers
- All elementary school students receive music
- Administrators at sites are very supportive
- Parents see value in the arts
- VAPA Coordinator in place

Challenges are:

- Roadblocks between what exists and our vision of the future (e.g., the scheduling demands on schools that may lead to less time allotted to the arts);
- Patterns of behavior or belief systems that needs to change;
- Causes of a frustration, not just a symptom;
- Clues to what is not happening, not a lack of something.

Example Challenges may include:

- Fragmented coordination
- Unmotivated staff
- Conflicting access to multiple disciplines

Challenges are not "problems." Problems are things you fix, and you cannot fix an obstacle. You can respond to it, impact it, or go around it. It is part of your community and institutional environment. The group will determine, "What will need to change for us to reach our vision? Why is it still going on?"

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LACK OF

Challenges are also not a "lack of" something, for example a lack of money, time, or space. They are real blocks

Problem	Underlying Challenge
Lack of time	• Too many competing priorities • Focus unclear * Responsibilities unclear
Lack of money	• Don't know the real cost of things • Budgeting process unclear • Financial priorities elsewhere • Budget has not been addressed
Lack of people/staff	• Limited buy-in from staff for what is expected • Ineffective recruiting and retention process • Unrealistic job descriptions

Frequently these challenges and obstacles are not obvious. They are like cataracts. You do not see them directly, yet they cloud your vision and blind you to what is in front of you. Institutions that do not deal with their self-images, attitudes, procedures, policies and structures, can become entrenched in their convictions and may even fall short in delivering on their mission. Upload the handout onto your virtual workspace or make it available through the chat for users to download. This may help participants avoid "lack of" thinking and get to the real challenge.

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LACK OF

ORGANIZATION

disorganized

fragmented

inaccessible

incoherent

overlapping

unbalanced

uncoordinated

unsystematic

RELEVANCE

inappropriate

irrelevant

narrow

obsolete

outdated

outmoded

unsuitable

vague

PRODUCTIVITY

debilitating

misused

ineffective

inefficient

neglected

obstructed

unproductive

stalled

EXPECTATIONS

competing

conflicting

contradictory

illogical

impractical

inflexible

restricted

unrealistic

STABILITY

inadequate

insecure

insufficient

sporadic

unstable

unsustainable

volatile

weakened

MOTIVATION

apprehensive

confusing

devalued

discouraging

incompetent

unclear

uninspiring

unmotivated

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ROOT CAUSES

As a facilitator you may need to guide your group to dig deeper to the real root causes of the challenge. Showing an image of the dandelion on a slide may help guide the conversation about underlying causes. The quality of the truth-telling in this section leads directly to innovative actions in the next section of the planning. Just like dandelions in your lawn; they will persist until you dig out the whole root.

THE STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES WAVE

Draw a large wave similar to the example below. Draw the wave on a google slide or frame and have participants write the strengths and challenges on sticky notes. Use one color for strengths (such as green) and one color for challenges (such as rose/red) for sticky notes.
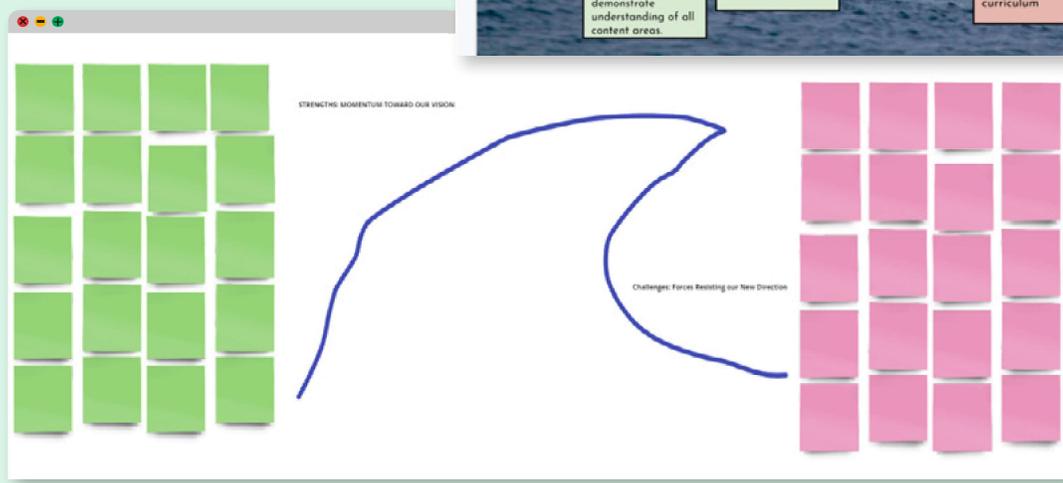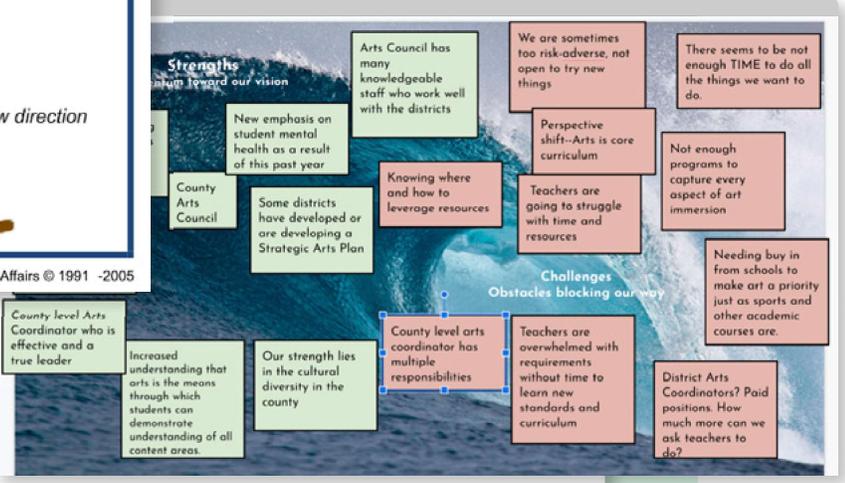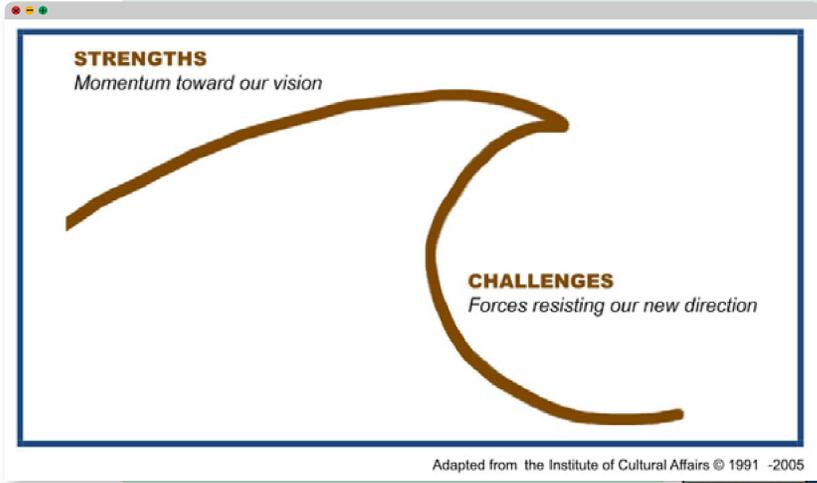
VIRTUAL

REVIEW THE VISION

Ask members of the group to read the Vision Elements/Goals (Titles) from the previous workshop. Ask the group to silently consider each of the elements.

Identify Strengths

- **Ask the participants:** What are the strengths that will help us achieve our vision?
- What opportunities and assets exist in our community that can support/enhance our efforts to achieve our vision?
- Have participants write the strengths onto the colored sticky notes on the left side of the wave.

Identify Challenges

For this part of the exercise, the group may find it helpful to refer to the "No Lack Of" chart for ideas about how to articulate the challenges more clearly.

- **Ask the participants:** What are the challenges or obstacles within our district that will get in our way?
- What challenges exist in our community that may hinder progress toward our vision?
- Have participants write the challenges onto the colored sticky notes on the right side of the wave.

Closing

- Read through all the strengths aloud. What stands out for you? (Highlight 5-7 items)
- Now, let's repeat this for the challenges. Which challenges are most pressing? (Star 5-7 items)
- As you look at the challenges, are there some that are similar and come together to indicate a bigger challenge?
- What are possible actions we could take to impact these challenges and release our vision? Ask the group for a few ideas. These ideas do not need to be charted; they serve as the transition into the next planning step.
- Facilitators may choose to open the floor for ideas around new opportunities or possibilities as they are arising in the group.
- *We will now move on to the process of creating actions to move forward.*

STEP 3: IDENTIFY YOUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The next step in strategic planning is identifying the overall strategic directions that will guide your plan. In this method we develop key actions to impact our most pressing challenges. In this way, we can create actions that impact underlying causes and challenges, and inspire real, sustainable changes. These actions will also give us ways to measure change as we move into implementation.
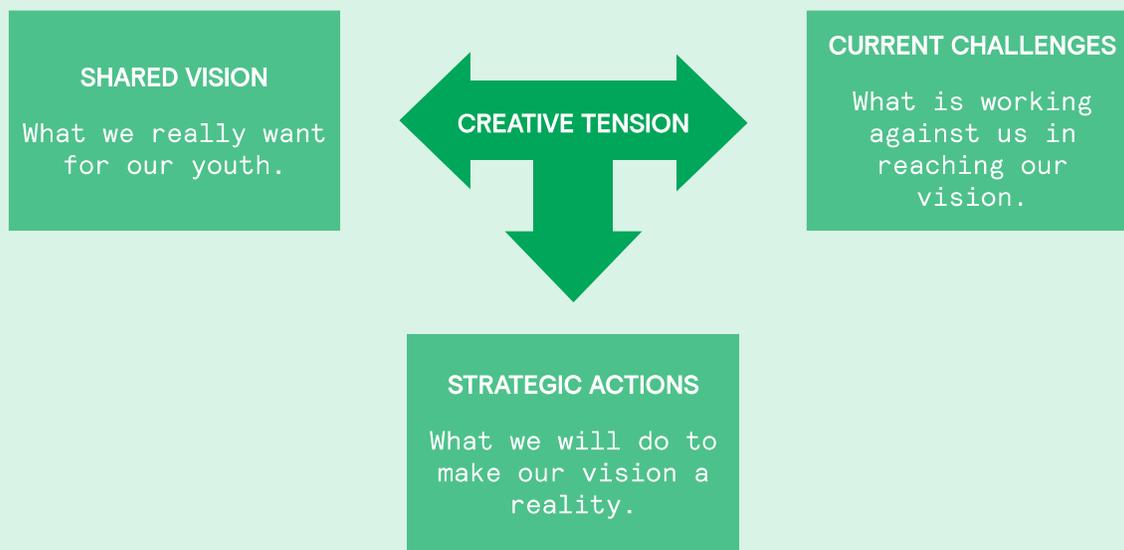
STAGE 4

VIRTUAL

The following workshop outlines the way the team can develop creative, innovative actions that will deal directly with the challenges and move the group toward the desired vision.

STEP 3 – WORKSHOP | Identifying Strategic Directions

The next step in strategic planning is identifying the overall strategic directions that will guide the plan and focus our actions. Instead of looking at our Practical Vision alone, we develop creative, innovative actions that will deal with the challenges directly.

Next, the group is guided to focus on creative action ideas that will address the challenges and support movement towards the vision. Once these ideas are generated, they will be organized around a similar intent or outcome.

Holding the Vision Alongside the Challenges. The image below demonstrates how we simultaneously hold both the vision and the challenges in mind in order to determine the most strategic, high leverage actions. You may want to share a diagram/slide with the group such as the following:

SHARED VISION		CURRENT CHALLENGES
What we really want for our youth.	CREATIVE TENSION	What is working against us in reaching our vision.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

What we will do to make our vision a reality.

Anchoring Strategic Thinking

Purpose: To support the group with creating concrete action ideas that will address the underlying challenges and activate the vision.

Facilitator may ask individuals to bring the object toward the zoom camera that will be endowed with a new meaning. One idea that works well on Zoom is to use a balled-up piece of paper. Ask each person to "take" a piece of paper and ball it up. Using crumpled paper as an imaginary ball, individuals toss the ball, one by one, to someone else by moving the crumpled paper towards the camera. The person selected, imagines catching the ball and then transforms their crumpled ball into something new. This continues as each person suggests an "uncommon" use for the object. The concept that is being demonstrated is the wealth of imagination that exists in a group with diverse perspectives.

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To get people to think strategically, you can make reference or show an image such as one below to open up thinking around down board thinking that takes place in chess—anticipating the chain of potential results from a single move.

There is also the example of leveraged action, or how hitting the right pin in bowling, brings all the pins down for a strike. Where in our district/county/community might one small action cause several things to change?

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS WORKSHOP FOCUS QUESTION

Create a Google Slide or Frame on the Miro Board to highlight the Focus Question for the Strategic Directions Workshop.

What creative, innovative actions can we take to address our challenges and move toward our vision?

ADVANCE PREPARATION OF THE VIRTUAL WORKSPACE FOR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Facilitator puts up 9 boxes—labeled A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I as a Google Drawing or frame on the Miro/Mural board. Put a line across the top for the Box Title. The boxes are lined up 3 across and 3 down (see example below).

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We intend to....?

A.
B.
C.

D.
E.
F.

G.
H.
I.

Add your team's 4 ideas to the right of this line

- engaging
- positioning
- enhancing
- supporting
- empowering
- redirecting

- initiating
- expanding
- catalyzing
- reformulating
- launching
- pursuing

- reviving
- analyzing
- modifying
- developing
- determining
- updating

SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR BRAINSTORMING

TIP: You may wish to pick specific challenges to focus on and also pick a few vision elements to focus on. After individually brainstorming, you will share these ideas with your partner or small group so that you have a breadth of ideas that address not only the challenges but also activate the vision.

Have members of the group read the main elements of the Practical Vision they created and then read the key Strengths and Challenges from the previous section.

PRIMING THE PUMP FOR IDEAS

Facilitator should point to one of the challenges and ask for one innovative or bold action that could be taken to deal with that block. Provide one or two ideas as examples, just to give people an idea of what they are being asked to do.

BRAINSTORMING IDEAS

Facilitator should instruct participants to Individually list 10-12 actions on a piece of paper that we can take to overcome one or more of our challenges and activate the vision.

Each person needs to come up with at least 10-12 ideas or answers to the Focus Question example:

*"What creative, innovative actions can we take
to address our challenges and move us toward our vision?"*

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Make sure to provide participants with plenty of quiet time to think on their own. A total of 10-15 minutes may be needed.

Facilitator should give a set of instructions similar to this:

- Working in pairs (or threes or fours if the group is large), participants share all of their brainstorm ideas in breakout rooms.
- Together they will decide on their top 4-6 ideas.
- The group will write their ideas on sticky notes on a Google slide or Miro frame.
- Instructions for writing the ideas: 5-7 words, 1 IDEA per CARD.

PUTTING LIKE IDEAS TOGETHER

- Participants will be guided to either drag or copy their ideas, which are on sticky notes, over to the group discussion area.
- The Facilitator collects a first round of actions (aiming to get up 14-18 total) and reads each one as they place them first randomly in the boxes and the rest on the wall next to the boxes.
- The participants are asked to find two ideas that describe actions that are similar in intent or outcome. When two are identified, they go into one of the boxes.
- Typically the facilitator will need to ask for three rounds of ideas. All ideas get posted in the virtual workspace eventually. Place all of the action ideas together within the boxes as successive rounds of sticky notes are shared.

NAMING THE BOXES

- Guide the group to give a meaningful title to each box that captures the intent held in that group of ideas. Take time to name these boxes, because they will serve as the key GOALS for the phased plan.

Prompt question: If we complete the actions outlined within this box, what are we DOING? What is the big idea that encompasses all of the actions in this box? Begin with an action verb – consider using the -ing convention to show forward movement.

EXAMPLES OF BOX TITLES:

We are...

- Expanding professional learning opportunities
- Expanding access to facilities, supplies and equipment for all students
- Building sustainable funding for the arts

REVIEWING THE KEY COMPONENTS TRIANGLE

In developing an Arts Education Plan, we have identified three main sectors that will ensure a comprehensive plan: Content, Infrastructure, and Sustainability

VIRTUAL

CONTENT
Curriculum and
Instruction
Student Centered
Assessment
Professional
Learning

EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE ARTS EDUCATION

SUSTAINABILITY
Values and Policy
Funding
Ongoing Evaluation
Communications and
Advocacy

INFRASTRUCTURE
Admin/Coordination
Teaching Personnel
Spaces, Equipment
and Supplies
Community
Partnerships and
Collaborations

As the boxes are filled with creative, innovative actions, they may fall naturally into one of these focus areas and as demonstrated in the triangle.

Content Includes:

Curriculum and Instruction, Student Centered Assessment, and Professional Learning.

Infrastructure Includes:

Administration/Coordination, Teaching Personnel, Spaces, Equipment and Supplies, and Community Partnerships and Collaborations.

Sustainability Includes:

Values and Policy, Funding, Ongoing Evaluation, Communications and Advocacy

IDENTIFYING STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS OR BROAD AREAS OF FOCUS

After all of the boxes have a meaningful title, take the larger view of what is on the wall, and ask which 2 or 3 boxes are strongly related or have a similar intent. Connect these boxes by physically placing them beside one another. Continue this until you have the boxes arranged side by side in 3 horizontal lines. These form the basis for your strategic directions.

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What creative, innovative actions can we take to address our challenges and move towards our vision?

A: Acquire and provide Curriculum to elevate equity and access to a culturally relevant, comprehensive, and robust arts education for all TK-higher education students countywide.
- Invest in countywide arts education curriculum- The Art of Education
- Include arts in mental health/public health programs- art therapy
- Research arts options for ELD (Designated ELD courses for ELA Credit-websites, video,etc...)
- Collaboration TK-Community College for arts articulation

D: Leadership
- VAPA Coordinators for districts/ school sites who create and/or organize and share Arts standards based curriculum by grade level in the next school year

C: Events/Celebrations
- Utilize area behind HS as annual Arts & Music Festival
- Leverage existing events to showcase arts across the county (even strolling downtown, farmers market)
- Develop 1 county wide arts event for ms/hs students each year

B: Professional Development
- Provide schoolwide PDs around importance of integrating art in curriculum. Start of each semester.
- Offer 1 annual PD workshop per arts content areas
- Building capacity

H: Partnerships
- Establish new arts partnerships

E: Value of Arts
- Our why added to the strategic plan shared with community and kept alive, community education. A living document.
- Provide monthly art nights for teachers & staff to better understand benefit of art.
- Use culturally relevant historical aspects to get more interest in programs

G: Students
- Establish Youth Poet Laureate Program
- Create high school-college arts tasks force Create and convene opportunities for youth leadership in the arts (student voice)
- Start a Student Ambassadors program to give student voice
- Graduating class arts project to leave a legacy

F: Data/Resources
- Conduct arts assessment at each district
- Create online searchable arts education directory
- Create an online arts lesson plan bank for teachers K-12

I: Funding
- On-going funding
- Hire grant writer position- possibly jointly funded by other public agencies
- Establish funding for district VAPA coordinators: VAPA coordinator collaborates with colleges & businesses.
- Explore arts endowment opportunities

Strategic Direction 1: Arts Learning & Teaching for Equity

Strategic Direction 2: Arts Leadership informed by data and resources

Strategic Direction 3: Sustainability through Visibility and Funding for the Arts

This is an example of a virtual sticky wall for the Strategic Directions Workshop using Google Drawing from the Google Workspace.

Select 1 row of boxes. Ask the group to identify the direction that is shared by all of the boxes. Suggest strong words that end in "ing" such as: engaging, empowering, catalyzing, positioning, venturing, enhancing, supporting, expanding, developing, updating. Using gerunds such as these gives the strategic directions in an active, ongoing tone that drives your planning over the long term.

Examples:

- Strategic Direction 1: Strengthening Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Learning
- Strategic Direction 2: Expanding Partnerships and Collaborations
- Strategic Direction 3: Building Capacity through Expanded Staffing and Funding

By identifying key priorities in this way, the group feels empowered to take action on areas of challenge.These become the overall "goals" of the plan.

Modification: Some teams have found it helpful to simply label each of the Strategic Direction Arrows as **Content, Infrastructure, and Sustainability.**

Once the name for the overall strategic direction has been developed, it should be written in the arrow to the right of the line-up. There will generally be 3 strategic directions in all, with 1-4 boxes of ideas in each.

Please be aware that, although all the ideas offered have been documented, not all actions will be included in the plan. At this point, the group is committing to the titles in each box and the overall strategic directions.

VIRTUAL

FINAL CHECK

Don't become too fixed on the number of boxes in each row. If there are a lot of actions needed in one of the sectors, that is absolutely fine. Each plan will have a slightly different focus, based on the culture of the district/county/community and the resources available.

Check back with the group and review the titles of Practical Vision and the key challenges. Will the Strategic Directions resolve the underlying challenges and move us toward our Vision? Do they capture all the elements and opportunities contained in the Vision? **Ask if there is anything missing to cover a comprehensive approach to arts education in the district. Refer to the Key Components Triangle. It is not too late to add a "box" or area of interest that may be fleshed out by a smaller group.**

We have been working within the context of 5 years. If ideas are not coming to the surface in some of the key focus areas, it is a good indication that those areas need to be reserved for a later point in time. Keeping the focus on first things first, and creating key priorities will ensure that the plan can be activated and gain momentum over time. It is wise to build in both highly visible successes and "behind the scenes" infrastructure capacity-building to ensure that the effort is robust.

When the team moves into Implementation:

1. The strategic directions are the overall priorities providing the broad sections of the plan.
2. The box titles become the strategy/goal within that strategic direction.
3. The ideas within the boxes become the beginning of the action steps that are sequenced and measured.

The Strategic Directions workshop should be documented in the form of a table.

When you write the plan, you will drop the "ing." Here's an example:

Strategic Direction 3: **Build Capacity through Expanded Staffing and Funding**	`box title =` `strategy/goal`

Goal 3.1: Build Sustainable Funding for the Arts

Actions: • Identify funding sources for continued Artist in Residence programming • Have a team review and make recommendations for an annual arts budget • Collaborate with Ed Foundation to research solicit funds from private donors and foundations	`actions/ideas from` `within the boxes`

VIRTUAL

CLOSING REFLECTION

Ending with these questions signals affirmation of the group's effort and allows them to take a minute to reflect on the importance of what they have done.

- Which direction is key in your mind?
- Which direction builds on our strength?
- Which ones venture into new territory?
- Where are the breakthroughs?
- *It is exciting to see our overall directions emerging. Thanks for your insights and participation.*

OPTIONAL EXERCISES: PRIORITY WEDGE AND PRICE TAGS

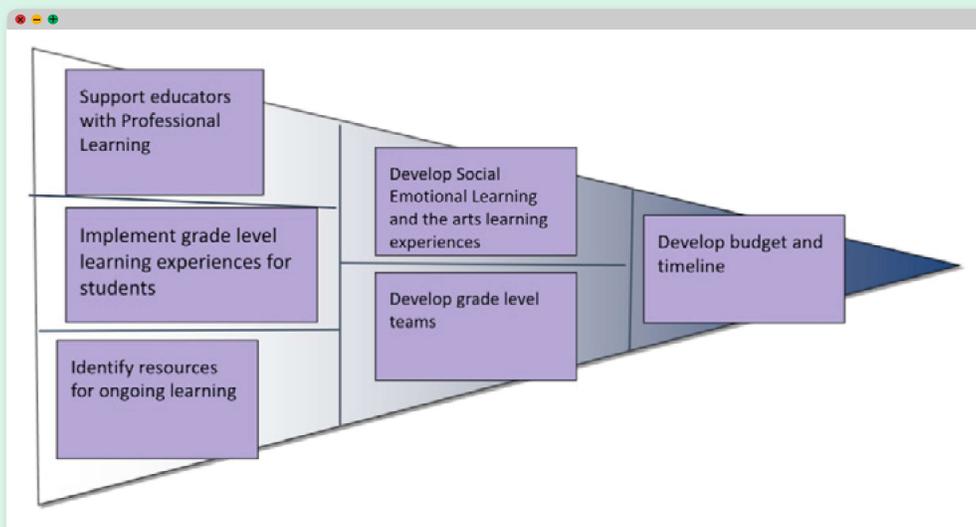## CREATING PRIORITIES | Priority Wedge Optional Exercise 1

The following activities can be used with the group at any point during the planning process to articulate the groups' desires and build awareness of possibilities they may wish to consider.

Priority Wedge: Prioritizing Events or Initiatives

- Create a priority wedge on a slide/frame virtually (see sample below).
- Look at the box titles or "goals."
- Have the group identify which one seems to be the key to unlocking everything else. How does it catalyze action for other events or projects? The action is like opening up an umbrella – the tip of the umbrella is forward, and there is space and opening behind the tip. It can also be likened to tipping the first domino, and watching all the others fall.
- Next ask, which two actions are next in importance? These are the next two areas of action that have energy and momentum.
- Continue, filling in each of the boxes in terms of priority.
- This gives the team a sense of purpose, power, and direction, and reduces a sense of being overwhelmed. The key is to stick to the priority that will unleash energy for the other things to take place.
- You can physically write on the priority wedge, use half sheets in person, or use sticky notes in the virtual environment.

VIRTUAL

This is an example of a Priority Wedge with a Google slide and sticky notes

CREATING PRIORITIES | Price Tags Optional Exercise 2

Note for Virtual Price Tags: If you want to do this exercise in a virtual environment, you might scatter sticky note price tags around on a slide or frame and let people name their priorities, or use a Google Jamboard with three frames for 1st, 2nd and 3rd priority price tag choices.

There will be times in the planning process where team members realize that there will never be enough money to provide *everything*. There will be hard choices to make in establishing priorities. Compromises need to be made – additional funding partners may need to be cultivated.

Ultimately, the team needs to decide – *first things first*. But what are those first things? For one community, it may be restoring music where there are gaps, for another it may be providing professional learning that includes social emotional learning. For another, it may be offering more artist-in-residence programs.

Price Tags

A fun exercise to reflect on priorities is "Price Tags." Using real (or approximate costs), the exercise encourages the group to reflect on the initial implementation steps in an arts plan.

The price tags can be enlarged or written on half-sheets and affixed to walls, desks, or chairs positioned around the room. You can give the team members a "budget" to work within or simply allow them to pick their top priorities (See example Price Tags below).

Instructions to the Group

- Today we are going to have fun with an exercise that allows us to pick some top priorities for our arts program.

VIRTUAL

- You have $100,000. Go ahead and stand in front of the price tag/card that you consider to be your top priority to improve / strengthen our arts education programs. If you see something missing, go ahead and write up a price tag of your own.
- OK, I am going to give you another $100,000. Go to your second choice. Now go to your third choice.
- At this point you may see some patterns emerging with the team. There may be a lot of people clustered around one price tag – and no one around others.
- You may find it useful to have a focused conversation about the exercise. Engage the team members and invite them to share their process for determining top priorities.

PRICE TAG EXAMPLE

Make virtual sticky notes or use half sheets for the following price tags:

Theater Lighting $5,000-$10,000	**3-D Supplies for Visual Arts Program** (sculpture / ceramics – one class) $1500	**Clay, Paper, Paint** (one class – average of 30 students) $700
Kiln for Visual Arts Program $2500	**Recorders for 1 Classroom** (average of 30 students) $75	**Musical Instruments for 1 Elementary School:** $10,000
Adapt Classroom for Use as a Digital /Media Arts Studio $16,000	**Credentialed Arts Teacher** (salary and benefits) $90,000-$120.000	**Adapt Classroom for Use as a Dance Studio** $7650
Maintenance of Musical Instruments for 1 High School $10,000	**VAPA Coordinator** (salary and benefits) $70,000-$80,000	**5-day professional learning Workshop** (80 teachers, no follow up) $40,000

STAGE 4

VIRTUAL

FOCUSED CONVERSATION | REFLECTING ON THE PRICE TAG EXERCISE

Topic: Reflecting on the Price Tag Exercise

Purpose: To understand the difficulty that arises in prioritizing decisions regarding funding for arts education
To create a sense of ease around the task of budgeting for arts education

Context At the end of the planning process, we will thoughtfully consider a funding strategy and the budget implications of various aspects of our plan. We may need to place dollar amounts on components of the plan and identify funding priorities. This exercise was intended to make that process come alive in a simplified manner.

Think back over the Price Tag Exercise that we just completed. Think about what happened each step of the way, notice your reactions to it, and what conclusions we may draw from it. We will take just a few minutes to reflect back on it.

Questions

Objective: Which tag caught your attention first?
Where did most people cluster?
What items were not chosen?
How would you describe the process of physically moving to a priority area?

Reflective: What surprised you about this exercise?
What was an easy choice?
What was a difficult choice?
Where are we disagreeing?
Was there a point at which you felt confused or indecisive?
Was there a moment where you felt exhilarated or elated?

Interpretive: On what basis did you make your choices?
Could you defend those choices to others?
What questions did this raise for you? Where did you feel that you needed more information?
What insights are beginning to emerge about budgeting and leveraging funding?

Decisional: What appear to be our key priorities as a group?
What is the overall cost to provide our priorities and how does this match with our budget?
Are there priorities that will need to drop off the list at least this year?

Closing This exercise has given us an interesting way to approach the difficult task of looking at budget implications and competing priorities in our district.
A group consensus begins to emerge when people "vote with their feet."
Thank you for expressing your priorities.

VIRTUAL

STEP 4: ESTABLISH AN ACTION PLAN

The next step in the process is to develop prioritized actions that need to be taken in the coming year, resulting in an implementation timeline. In doing this you will need to consider:

- What can realistically be accomplished in one year?
- What needs to happen first in order for other things to be accomplished?
- What resources of people and money will be necessary?
- What shifts need to occur in the ways we work and what we communicate?
- What do we need to continue doing that is already established?

Strategic Direction or Focus Area: Strengthen Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Learning

Goal 1: Expand Artist-in-Residence program to support Professional Learning

Phase/Year	Strategies/Actions	Steps/Tasks	Budget Implications	Persons/group Responsible	Measurable Outcome (Evidence of Success)
	Through Artist Residencies, create partnerships with pairs of artists/teachers that support arts integration implementation in a meaningful way	Apply for grant Set up planning between teachers and teaching artists	$25,000	Arts Coordinator to convene: Arts Partners, partnering teachers	Six residencies occur. Pre and Post surveys administered and analyzed. Teacher evaluations indicate that goals were met.
	Include professional learning component in Artist Residencies to increase teacher skills in arts integration	Meet with teachers and arts partners to plan and make goals of professional Learning clear	Included	Arts Coordinator	Evaluations indicate that teachers understand and will begin to implement arts integration in the classroom.

Your planning team can be divided into smaller groups, one for each strategic direction. Let people choose which one they will work on. Guide the group to take their boxes of action ideas and decide what major items can be accomplished in one year. *It is helpful to use a template either on paper or on the sticky wall to guide the process.*

VIRTUAL

Suggested for Timelines: The team may decide to use a timeline that includes: Year; Actual Dates; or Phases. Phases may be 1 year, 2 years or even 3 years. When you phase a plan, it sends a signal that you will move on to the next set of strategies, when the previous phase is complete. This creates some accountability, but without rigidity, honoring changing circumstances.

TIP: Timely documentation shared with all members of the planning team is supportive and a way of honoring inclusivity.

Small Groups Develop Action Steps for the First Year

Ask each small group to look at the action ideas in their strategic direction boxes and decide what actions are most feasible to accomplish and will create the most leverage in the coming year.

Each team selects a group of distinct actions for the coming 12 months and writes those up on ½ sheets, on chart paper or on a template. If you are doing this as a sticky wall exercise, they can use the existing action idea sheets from the strategic directions boxes, add new action/ideas, and then sequence them in a logical order.

Encourage the groups to spread the work out over the year for maximum effectiveness.

Focus on being realistic. You may find that some actions, events, or programs need to be planned for the next year.

Below is an example of using chart paper as a map, where each group uses ½ sheets to outline the actions, tasks and measurable outcomes for each strategic direction goal area. The same process can be easily done in a virtual environment using Google Docs.

Strategy/Action	Steps/Tasks	Measurable Outcome
Offer Arts Integration PD for K-2 Teachers	• Calendar PD time • Invite members • Provide a series of sessions	Arts integrated instruction in at least one art form is offered weekly in all K-2 classrooms

Small Groups Propose Strategy/Actions for Year/Phase 1

Have each group report out by placing their cards on the wall, by using chart paper or by speaking to the group from a written digital template.

STAGE 4

VIRTUAL

After each Strategic Direction group reports out ask:

- Are there any clarifying questions?
- Will these strategies/actions move us forward?
- Is this doable in the Year 1 time frame?
- Is there anything missing?

The same process may be followed for Phase 2 and Phase 3 as time allows.

Refining and Writing Up the Plan

After the group has developed the broad approach, a smaller team should be convened to refine the written plan – the coach, the team members and staff.

Identify the additional elements of the plan which may include:

- Person(s) responsible
- Budget Implications
- Measurable Outcomes