Leading in the Unknown

Strategic Leadership: “Where are we going?”

Learning Module #2

charterschoolcenter.ed.gov
About the NCSRC

The National Charter School Resource Center (NCSRC) provides technical assistance to federal grantees and resources supporting charter sector stakeholders. NCSRC is funded by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and managed by Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG) in partnership with WestEd.
Your Guide

Lisa Diaz, Founder
Leading in the Unknown

Creating a Culture of Care

Strategic Leadership

Sustaining Impact
What You’ll Learn in Strategic Leadership

- Explore how to move your team from crisis reaction mode to short- and long-term strategy development
- Learn how to support the development of mission-aligned strategy
- Discover how to engage key stakeholders in shaping your strategic direction
- Learn how to set and communicate your vision to ensure all stakeholders are focused on the same desired target of success
Walking into a Wall
Is Your Team Ready for a Road Trip?
Survival Strategy

1. Give some structure
2. Create some consistency
3. Provide direction past the immediate next step
4. Elevate focus
Classical Strategy

- Based on predictability
- Planning cycles every three to 10 years
- Plan sets goals and positions itself to attain goals over the course of the plan
- Changes from outside factors are absorbed through minor operational adjustments

“Only one in four executives surveyed was prepared to adapt to unforeseeable events.”

https://hbr.org/2012/09/your-strategy-needs-a-strategy
Adaptive Strategy

1. Engineered to be flexible
2. Planning cycles are shorter term
3. Plans written in pencil, not pen
4. More of a rough hypothesis than specific blueprint
5. Multiple scenarios/hypothesis outlines with converging intercepts being the key levers to develop
Do we believe our purpose of existing outlined in our mission is still true?

Do we believe the core values that define our behaviors still represent who we are today and who we want to continue to be in the future?
Are Your Efforts Mission-Aligned?

Mission: We prepare all students for college and life by providing a challenging curriculum that connects students’ lives and their future in a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment.

- Prepare students for college
  - AP classes
  - Math, reading, writing
  - Communications focus
  - College partnerships
  - SAT prep
  - College guidance counseling
  - Safe, supportive, nurturing environment
  - PBIS
  - Guidance counselors
  - Consistent classroom management
  - Student Senate
  - Internship program
  - Scholarship/college application events
  - College visits
  - Vocational tech program

- Prepare students for life
  - Challenging curriculum
  - Future focused
  - Culturally relevant
  - Diverse staff
  - Inclusive reading curriculum
  - Diverse speakers at events
  - Inclusive community program

- Unaligned Elements
  - Personal finance
  - Internship program
  - Vocational tech program
  - Business Professionals of America
  - AP classes
  - PBL
  - Honors level courses
  - Additional science year required
  - Unaligned
    - Field Day
    - Zero tolerance policy
    - Spirit Week
Current State

What are our strengths?

What are our challenges?

Where are we having impact?

Where is our impact less than what we expected?
Future State
Vision of Success
The vision is about the “why” things are going to happen, not the “how.” It should be inspiring and paint a positive picture of the future.

Be bold. The vision should be challenging. You should not know exactly how you will achieve it, but it also must be realistic.

Documenting the vision gives you something to reference back to which will help align teams and create an accountability tool.
Developing a Shared Vision

Most leaders do not include a significant number of people in shaping the vision, purpose, or direction of their organization.

Closing the Feedback Loop

Parents who have participated in a parent survey or research study conducted by their school

32%

Parents who have received communications informing them of survey results

46%

Reaching the Final Destination Together
Additional Resources

Is Your Nonprofit Organization in Survival Mode?
https://www.grfcpa.com/resource/is-your-nonprofit-organization-in-survival-mode/

Schools Fail at Engaging Parents
https://news.gallup.com/businessjournal/199193/schools-missing-big-opportunities-engage-parents.aspx

Eight Ways to Communicate Your Strategy More Effectively
https://hbr.org/2011/08/eight-ways-to-energize-your-te

Rules & Tips for Writing Powerful Visions
https://1drv.ms/w/s!AvT9StKUbHCoiyfCRPF2UaYQKD2L?e=f9aYyy
Strategic Direction in the Unknown in Practice

Bevon Thompson
Principal and CEO
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School
Office Hours

Wednesday, October 28, 2020
1 p.m. ET/10 a.m. PT

Register at: bit.ly/LITUOfficeHour2
Next in Leading in the Unknown

- Creating a Culture of Care
- Strategic Leadership
- Measuring Success and Setting Expectations