Tool 1: Clarifying Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) Planning Parameters

Sustainability planning requires time and resources. MSAP grantees will need to identify the resources they can reasonably commit to this sustainability planning process. This process can be adapted based on the planning parameters they choose to adopt and how detailed a process they want to complete. This worksheet template can help sustainability planning teams set clear expectations by addressing a set of key questions, which can be modified and expanded to fit each grantee’s context.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Question | Response |
| Over what timeframe do you want to complete the planning process? *(E.g. three months, six months?)* |  |
| Who will manage the process? |  |
| How will the process be structured? *(E.g. By committee, task force, key MSAP school leaders)* |  |
| What school resources can you commit to this planning effort? *(E.g. meeting space, computer use, printing materials)* |  |
| What staff time can you devote to the process? |  |
| If needed, what financial resources can you commit?  |  |
| What key stakeholders need to be included and whose input is needed? *(E.g. Staff, School Principal, School District Superintendent, and Parents.)* |  |
| How much time are your key stakeholders willing to invest in this process? |  |
| Does this information need to be included in any reports required by the U.S. Department of Education? If so, at what level of detail? |  |

Tool 2: Sample Timeline for Sustainability Planning

This sample timeline provides illustrates an 8-month planning process. The timeline can be adapted to meet the specific needs of your project. Depending on the structure and maturity of your MSAP project, the sustainability planning process can take as little as 3 months and up to 1 year. Use this document to set a schedule and timeline that is best for your project.

| Task(s) | Timeline  |
| --- | --- |
| Create a committee or task force structure to guide the sustainability planning process. Committee members can include, but are not limited to, MSAP Project Director, school principal(s), district superintendent or other administrator, finance department rep, nonprofit partners, business partners, and parents. | Project Director gathers a group of leaders to create a committee and set timeline for sustainability planning, which includes meeting dates and goals. Finalize structure at **first** meeting and distribute self-assessment. |
| Complete *Tool 3: Sustainability Self-Assessment* with Project Director and other task force members. | Complete within **two to four weeks (month 1**)**.** |
| Map magnet school theme with a logic model to:* Clarify sustainability goals
* Identify measures to track progress
 | Committee develops draft sustainability goals and measures of progress that align to the magnet theme and objectives in **month 2.** Present the sustainability goals and measures of progress to the full task force at the **month 3** meeting. |
| Clarify financing for what?* What types of magnet school services?
* How many schools? How many students?
* What level of quality?
 | Draft statement of financing goals to present at **month 4** meeting.  |
| Estimate fiscal needs: How much does a successful MSAP project cost? | Draft cost estimate by **month 4** meeting.  |
| Map current spending: What resources do you currently have?  | Draft map of current spending by **month 4** meeting.  |
| Analyze gaps: Over your planning time period, what’s the gap between how much you have and how much you need? | Draft analysis to present at **month 4** meeting. |
| Develop financing strategies:* Present financing options
* Evaluate options
* Develop recommendations
 | Consider and discuss strategies at **month 5** meeting; present and finalize draft recommendations at **month 6** meeting. |
| Identify capacity building priorities such as these:* Community and school engagement
* Strategic communications
* Leadership development
* Governance and district relationship management
 | Present draft recommendations for priorities at **month 6** meeting; Committee finalizes priorities at **month 6** meeting. |
| Design targeted financing strategies to reach your MSAP financing goals.  | Present draft strategies at **month 7** meeting; Committee finalizes strategies. |
| Write the plan. | Present draft plan at **month 7** meeting. Complete final plan by **month 8**. |

Tool 3: Sustainability Self-Assessment

Sustaining magnet schools depends on developing a clear, sensible, and convincing plan for obtaining the key resources needed to continue (and often to expand) your work. Under the MSAP grant, you are required to apply special themes and curricula, hire quality teachers, implement professional development opportunities, and engage with parents and the community. These activities take time and resources. A documented sustainability plan can help support the planning, implementation, and coordination of these activities. To develop a sustainability plan that shows where you want to go, you must first take stock of where you are.

The Uses of the Self-Assessment Process

This tool provides a diagnostic process that can yield valuable information to guide the development of your sustainability plan. For example, it might point to ways you can capitalize on your school’s theme, engage with the community, or see areas that need strengthening. This tool can also help you make decisions about how to target scarce resources to move toward sustainability.

How the Tool Is Organized

Sustaining a magnet school program over time requires work within the program, between the program and the district, and within the broader community. Work within the program focuses on deciding what should be sustained, gathering data to demonstrate its value, taking steps to constantly improve over time, and seeking new avenues for sustainability. Work with the district and the outside community focuses on building a broad base of support and working with other people and organizations around common goals.

This tool examines eight key aspects of sustainability and lists individual tasks or steps within each:

1. Decide what the project wants to sustain.
2. Develop a results orientation.
3. Identify, develop, and pursue a variety of financing options.
4. Encourage and take advantage of changing opportunities.
5. Develop a broad base of community support.
6. Develop key champions.
7. Develop strong internal processes and controls.
8. Develop a sustainability plan.

Each aspect and task is listed in terms of a desired state; the sustainability planning team can rank the project on a 5-point scale to see how close you are to where you would like to be in each element.

This list is partly sequential, because some items naturally come before others. For example, it is important to know what you want to sustain before deciding how to sustain it. Also, you must develop a good “product” internally before selling it to the outside world. However, other items will need to be pursued simultaneously. For example, as part of the MSAP project, you need to bring parents and community leaders into your school’s activities—not as a last step, but in conjunction with efforts to develop financing strategies.

*A brief word concerning language*. Just as the goals for sustaining magnet schools may vary, the terms to describe these efforts and their leaders also differ. This tool uses “project” to refer to what you are attempting to sustain. It also uses “magnet school leaders” to mean staff, superintendents, building administrators, board members, volunteers, or others who may act on behalf of the magnet school program.

Suggestions on How to Proceed

The first step is deciding what you want to sustain. Do the scope and scale of your magnet schools extend beyond the MSAP grant? For some, it may mean just the MSAP grant-related project. For others, it may include expanding to other schools within the district. Depending on the scope of your magnet school goals, you want to involve the right people in the planning process.

Next, decide who to have at the table. Having the appropriate decision makers participate is key to getting the most out of the assessment process. For example, if you are trying to sustain an innovative project within an established school, then the planning team may need to include mainly internal folks. When the goal is to sustain a magnet school within a district, you will need broader support and broader participation in sustainability planning. If the goal is to expand and broaden the number of magnet schools or innovative, curriculum-driven programs in a district, then you may need other participants, such as representatives from local community-based organizations and institutions of higher education.

*Busy magnet school leaders may not have time to address all of these items in detail.* You do not need to do all of these tasks to the highest level to succeed. Rather, use your best judgment about where to focus attention. This tool offers an array of options to help you think about where to target scarce resources as you move toward long-term sustainability.

Working through this assessment tool may raise questions and issues that you want to capture and pursue at another time. Jot these questions and issues in the comments section of the tool.

**Allow a minimum of one and a half to two hours to complete this assessment process.** If you are working with a large group, you may need additional time for discussion.

SUSTAINABILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR MAGNET SCHOOLS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM GRANTEES

The eight elements of sustainability, along with tasks specific to each element, are described below. Rank your progress on each of these tasks according to a five-point scale that assesses whether your MSAP program’s leaders:

1 = Have not started this task

2 = Have started initial conceptual and planning work

3 = Have begun to implement this task

4 = Have made solid progress in implementing this task

5 = Have made sufficient progress in completing this task

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| ELEMENT ONE: Vision |
| MSAP program leaders know what they want to sustain. |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Comments |
| A. Program leaders have developed a clear vision for their work. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B. Program leaders have developed a process to determine what is to be sustained, and by whom. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| C. Program leaders have decided what they want to sustain (for example, an innovation, “X” number of magnet schools in the district, a method of operation). |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| D. Program leaders have analyzed and can articulate how the magnet school program fits (or would like to fit) within the larger community. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| E. Program leaders have analyzed and can articulate how the initiative complements, yet is distinguishable from, other initiatives. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| ELEMENT TWO: Results Orientation |
| The MSAP program incorporates processes to establish and track performance and process measures. Program leaders use that information to improve their work over time. |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Comments |
| A. The program has an accepted “theory of change” and logic model that shows how its work fits into a range of efforts to improve outcomes for students.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B. Program leaders have identified and use indicators[[1]](#footnote-1) and performance measures to track the performance of their own work. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| C. Program staff use indicators and performance measures to plan work and budget resources. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| D. Program leaders examine data on these measures (including input from students, parents, or both) to find ideas for ways to improve service design and delivery. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| E. Program leaders implement these ideas, including changing or discontinuing initiatives as necessary. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| F. Program staff and board collaborate with other initiatives that are pursuing improvements in community-wide indicators that relate to the work. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| ELEMENT THREE: Strategic Financing Orientation |
| MSAP program leaders have identified a variety of financing strategies that could support the program. There is a plan to pursue those strategies and program leaders are following that plan. *You may consider how upper-level district administrators are, or should be, engaged in developing a strategic financing orientation.*  |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Comments |
| A. Program leaders know how much funding is needed to sustain their magnet schools. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B. Program leaders have identified the types of financial resources necessary to sustain their work, such as:* discrete sources of public funds (for example, one-time, ongoing);
* discrete sources of private funds;
* institutionalization within an ongoing system or process.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| C. Program leaders have identified and are pursuing ways to ensure the most efficient use of existing funds (e.g., gaining economies of scale). |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| D. Program leaders have identified and are pursuing ways to support the redirection or reallocation of funds (e.g., using funds freed up through improved outcomes to finance other activities). |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| E. Program leaders or district administrators have identified and are pursuing ways to increase the flexibility of existing funding streams (e.g., through pooling funds across district and program lines or improving coordination of existing funding streams). |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| ELEMENT THREE: Strategic Financing Orientation (continued) |
| MSAP program leaders have identified a variety of financing strategies that could support the magnet program. The program has a plan to pursue those strategies and is following that plan. |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Comments |
| F. Program leaders have identified relevant federal funding sources and are taking steps to access these sources (e.g., NSF, NEA, Investing in Innovation, federal entitlements, block grants, and other discretionary programs). |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| G. Program leaders have built public-private partnerships to leverage private-sector funding, create leadership, and garner technical expertise in support of their work. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| H. Program leaders have investigated ways to generate new revenue that the initiative can control (e.g., local fundraisers, grants from public- and private-sector sources). |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| I. Program leaders have identified and are pursuing ways to support the creation of new sources of public funds (e.g., state appropriation, earmarked fees). |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| ELEMENT FOUR: Broad-Based Community Support |
| MSAP program leaders take steps to involve the community in their work and gain community support based on the magnet schools’ positive impact on children and families. |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Comments |
| A. The program (and/or each school) has a plan to establish a desired identity and reputation within the community. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B. Program leaders involve students and parents in their work to improve service design and delivery and to build ownership and support. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| C. In addition to students and families, program leaders involve a diverse set of stakeholders in their work (such as community-based organizations, government agencies, and private businesses) to improve program design and delivery and to build ownership and support. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| D. Program leaders and community partners understand and communicate the schools’ value for children and families in its community. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| E. Program leaders collect quantitative and qualitative data to show the value of their work for families. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| F. Program leaders package data in user-friendly formats and communicate them regularly to the community, key stakeholders, media, potential funders, and others.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| G. Program leaders recognize and reward people who contribute to achieving sustainability for the work. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| ELEMENT FIVE: Key Champions |
| MSAP program leaders identify potential champions they need to approach on an individual level, and follow a plan to do so. These champions include senior decisionmakers, representatives of the local community and peer initiatives, and other individuals. Program leaders also pursue ways to communicate with stakeholders in a more general (less labor-intensive) fashion. |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Comments |
| A. Program leaders have identified key senior decisionmakers at the community and district levels. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B. Program leaders have designed and implemented a plan for tailored outreach to these key decisionmakers (including appropriate messengers and messages).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| C. Program leaders have developed other, less labor-intensive ways to contact and keep other potential champions informed (e.g., sending newsletters, inviting them to school events). |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| D. Program leaders use a variety of strategies to encourage parent champions, such as strongly involving parents in magnet school activities. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| E. Program leaders have and use a variety of strategies to encourage peer community champions, such as collaborating with other organizations (e.g., museums, colleges, libraries) in service planning, delivery, and financing.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| ELEMENT SIX: Adaptability to Changing Conditions  |
| MSAP program leaders seek new opportunities for resource development and support, and are able to respond to new opportunities (e.g., Race to the Top, common core, the business community’s interest in STEM) as they arise.  |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Comments |
| A. Program leaders monitor changes in the policy and program environment to see how their magnet schools could fit with new directives and agendas. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B. Program leaders consider how magnet work can be framed or positioned to interest different funders and to take advantage of new financing opportunities. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| C. Program leaders use this information to approach new funders. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| D. Program leaders have identified opportunities to participate in efforts to improve the overall policy and program environment (e.g., standing advisory groups, opportunities to develop or comment on district or state plans for expending funds).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| E. Program leaders actively participate in decision-making processes about changes in policy and practice. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| F. Program leaders have determined how they can improve their ability to participate in these efforts (e.g., by establishing their credibility as technical experts, community representatives, or controllers of resources), and have followed through to increase the likelihood of being able to participate. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| ELEMENT SEVEN: Strong Internal Systems  |
| The MSAP program has strong internal processes that ensure a vibrant, durable, and continuously improving initiative. |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Comments |
| A. The program has a well-defined team of staff, advisory or governance group members, volunteers, and others who work to accomplish its mission. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B. Program leaders and others understand and accept their roles and responsibilities. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| C. The program has strong fiscal processes that enable leaders to stay informed about current financial status and to be alerted to emerging financing concerns. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| D. Staff and board develop and review program plans for short- and long-term revenues and expenses. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| E. Staff and board develop financing strategies to meet those needs; staff and board review and change financial strategies as needed. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| F. The program has strong internal systems (for example, accounting, auditing, management information, procurement, personnel) to maintain quality control over its work.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| G. The program has strong communication processes to ensure that all partners are kept informed. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| ELEMENT EIGHT: Sustainability Plan |
| The MSAP program has a sustainability plan that enables magnet leaders to set priorities and take action.  |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Comments |
| A. Program leaders have a long-term plan for what they want to accomplish. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B. Program leaders have identified challenges or obstacles to sustaining the magnet schools, including potential conflicts with alternative initiatives or agendas. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| C. Program leaders have developed strategies to obtain needed resources and overcome identified barriers. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| D. Program leaders have a process to reassess and adjust their plan periodically. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| E. Program leaders have identified and communicated with other individuals who have a role in the sustainability plan. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Tool 4: Clarifying Which Magnet School Program Activities to Sustain

Once you have clearly defined the scope and scale of the strategies and activities you plan to offer, you can fill out the details using this tool. List each strategy and/or activity that is part of your MSAP project (both current and future strategies) in the first column. In the following columns, list the scale at which you want to sustain each activity/strategy and the timeframe (e.g., 1 year, 5 years; perhaps the activity has a natural end, such as a specific one-time event). To support your planning, specify which year you are referencing and define the time period (e.g., fiscal year from July to June, calendar year, or school year). This information will help to clarify the scope and scale of the strategies and activities that you want to sustain.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Strategies and activities that you want to sustain within your MSAP project (e.g., STEM, International Baccalaureate, Arts) | What scale are we aiming to sustain? (e.g., number of magnet schools, number of students, range of theme-based activities, outreach/marketing to parents and partners) | Over what time do we want to sustain? |
| Year 1(Jan to Dec 2012) | Year 2(Jan to Dec 2013) | Year 3(Jan to Dec 2014) |
| ***Example:***Mobile Computer Lab for technology classes | 30 laptop computers, mobile cart, removable mouse, printer, and corresponding wire connectors | Ink for printer | Replacement computer parts such as missing connector pieces and mice | 7 years before replacement equipment is required  |
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Tool 5: Determining the Full Cost of a Magnet Schools Assistance Program Project

This tool can help MSAP grantees and school leaders look beyond the U.S. Department of Education budget template when estimating fiscal needs for their projects. Here, you will focus on estimating the total costs associated with the activities you identified on Worksheet 1: Clarifying Which Magnet School Program Activities to Sustain. When developing a cost estimate, include the start-up (one-time) costs, ramp-up costs (additional costs associated with program expansion), and ongoing costs required to run the project for each strategy or activity.

Cost Assumptions:

* Strategy or activity (e.g., academic program, recruitment activities):
* Number of clients served (students, families):
* Number of school sites:
* Required staff positions:
* Timeframe:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Program Element | Estimated CostYear 1 | Estimated CostYear 2 | Estimated CostYear 3 |
| Start-Up and Ramp-Up Costs |  |  |  |
| Planning and promotional activities (marketing, outreach, recruitment) |  |  |  |
| Community assessment |  |  |  |
| Initial staff recruitment and training |  |  |  |
| Equipment and supplies acquisition (e.g., computers, books, materials) |  |  |  |
| Facilities renovation/expansion |  |  |  |
| Ongoing Operating Costs |  |  |  |
| Staff (include all positions, %FTE for this particular strategy and fringe) |  |  |  |
| Equipment and supplies maintenance  |  |  |  |
| Training, professional development, and technical assistance |  |  |  |
| Transportation/travel |  |  |  |
| Facilities (rent, utilities, and maintenance) |  |  |  |
| Contractual  |  |  |  |
| Instructional activities  |  |  |  |
| Infrastructure |  |  |  |
| Planning and coordination |  |  |  |
| Training and technical assistance |  |  |  |
| Evaluation |  |  |  |
| Management, administration, and overhead  |  |  |  |
| Indirect costs (e.g., 3%, 5%, 10%) |  |  |  |
| **Total Costs** |  |  |  |

Tool 6: Determining the Resources Available to Magnet Schools Assistance Program Grantees

After estimating the total costs associated with the MSAP project (Tool 7), you need to determine what resources you have in place, or will likely have in place, and over what timeframe they will be available. This worksheet can help you take an inventory of current resources and future needs.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Activity/Strategy | School/Site | Source(funding or in-kind) | Level of Support | Funding Period (End Date) | Notes (e.g., restrictions on funding, other funding detail, confirmed or likely funding source) |
| **Example:**Instructional resources |  | School District, Title 1  | $50,000 | June 30, 2012 | Title 1 school. Funds can be allocated to instructional resources to support academic achievement. |
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Tool 7: Assess the Resource Gaps in a Magnet Schools Assistance Program Project

This worksheet can help you assess the resource gap between what you need and what you have. Do this by taking the inventory of current resources (from Tool 8) and subtracting the estimated fiscal needs (from Worksheet 2) to calculate the remaining resource gap (or, if you’re fortunate, surplus). MSAP grantees may want to structure this analysis by theme-based activity and by the school(s) you support. Also, in conducting the analysis, it is important to differentiate among specific years. First, costs may differ for each year of the plan. Second, different funding sources run out at different periods of time. Therefore, you will need to compare cost estimates and available resources across the same time period.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strategy/Activity  | Year 1 (insert dates) | Year 2 (insert dates) | Year 3 (insert dates) |
| Total Costs | Available Resources | Gaps or Surpluses | Total Costs | Available Resources | Gaps or Surpluses | Total Costs | Available Resources | Gaps or Surpluses |
| Visual and Performing Arts Magnet  | $2 million | $200 thousand |  ($1.8 million) | $1.02 million | $100thousand |  ($1.01 million) | $1.02 million | $0 |  ($1.02 million) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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Tool 8: Magnet Schools Assistance Program Financing Strategies

This document serves as guide to help MSAP leaders consider financing strategies most relevant to their projects. It is intended as a sample of financing strategies that can be adopted and modified depending on local partnerships and core outcomes. Depending on the project’s strategic financing results, not all strategies will be useful, or there may additional financing strategies not listed here.

|  |
| --- |
| MSAP Financing Strategies |
| Strategy | Make better use of existing funding | Maximize federal, state, and private revenue | Build public-private partnerships | Develop new dedicated revenue streams |
| Goal | Operate more effectively and efficiently with existing resources | Obtain and reapply for funding | Form partnerships aligned with school theme | Find consistent revenue streams |
| Examples | Integrate into the school district budget | Coordinate multiple school sites to apply (or reapply) for federal, state, and/or private funding | Build public and private partnerships to enhance theme-specific programming | Charge a fee for services on specific, special MSAP events like an annual performing arts performance |
| Shift funding from one project cost category to another  |
| Reinvest savings from one high-cost category of spending to a low-cost category  | Establish MOUs to apply for funding with local nonprofit and community-based organizations CBOs)  | Maintain partnerships to offset costs through cash or in-kind donations | Establish education or family services levy at the city or county level |
| Cut duplicate costs across many MSAP sites and reallocate funding | Use current resources to draw down additional dollars by leveraging and/or demonstrating a match | Create partnerships with CBOs or other nonprofits to expand fiscal base of eligible funding sources | Organize community and school fundraising campaigns |
| Coordinate data collection or community engagement activities |

Tool 9: Workplan for Sustainability Planning

This worksheet aligns to the information presented in the Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) sustainability planning webinar series. Use it as a guide to completing the tasks involved in sustainability planning.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Toolkit Section** | **Task(s)** | **Who’s Responsible** | **Timeline** |
| **Section 1: Building the Framework** | Create a structure and planning team to guide the process. |  |  |
| Complete the Sustainability Self-Assessment. |  |  |
| **Section 2: Aligning Project Activities With Goals and Results** | Refine logic model:* Clarify sustainability goals.
* Identify measures to monitor progress.
 |  |  |
| Define the scale and scope of your MSAP project. |  |  |
| **Section 3: Creating a Strategic Financing Plan** | Clarify what we want to finance:* What types of services?
* How many students/families?
* What level of quality?
 |  |  |
| Estimate fiscal needs: How much will it cost? |  |  |
| Map current resources: What resources do we currently have?  |  |  |
| Analyze gaps: What’s the gap between how much we have and how much we need? |  |  |
| Develop fiscal and nonfiscal financing strategies:* Identify financing options.
* Consider strategic partnerships and community engagement.
* Evaluate options.
* Develop recommendations.
 |  |  |
| **Section 4: Putting it All Together** | Write and approve the plan. |  |  |
| Implement and monitor the plan. |  |  |

Tool 10: Sample Sustainability Plan Outline

Section I. Executive Summary (1-2 pages)

**Purpose**: To capture the reader’s attention and summarize the highlights of the plan. This is your first opportunity to make a compelling case for sustaining your magnet school program. This section typically includes briefdescriptions of the following:

* ***Background:*** Magnet school history, vision, and desired results, plus the unique role the school plays in the community.
* ***Current Status and Progress to Date:*** Magnet school program mission, goals, and key strategies; governance and staffing; current partnerships; and successes to date.
* ***Future Plans and Timeframe***: Outline of future plans and timelines for accomplishing your goals; summary of strengths and advantages of your magnet school(s).
* ***Financial Status and Financing Plan***: Resource plan showing investments to date; descriptions of additional resources you need; brief overview of plans for obtaining the resources.

*Writing tip: Gather the information to be included in this section from Sections II through V of the plan, described below. Come back to this section after you finish the others.*

Section II. History, Progress, and Future Plans (1-3 pages)

**Purpose:** To make a case for your program by providing general background and answering key questions about the magnet school(s). This section can include the following subsections:

* ***Background***: History and development of the magnet school program, including where, why, when, and by whom it was established, and the basic organizational structure.

Writing tip: Take information and data from existing documents such as the Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) grant proposal, the MSAP Annual Performance Report, or other formative evaluations and progress reports. Information that describes the implementation of the magnet theme may be particularly useful for persuading the community that it needs a magnet school program. This is an ideal place to describe the vision, mission statement, and outcomes outlined in your logic model.

* ***Current Status:*** Describe key partnerships in addition to the strategies and activities you implement, and highlight innovative approaches. Describe the progress you are making toward the outcomes you are trying to achieve, and be sure to include your major accomplishments.

Writing tip: Highlight the main elements of the magnet school program as well as any information on your progress to date. This is your opportunity to show why your magnet school program is unique and important to sustain. It is also an opportunity to describe the program’s effectiveness. Include a concise description of the major program elements included in your logic model. Progress to date would include data on your short- and long-term outcomes and performance measures, as well as descriptive information on your progress and the impact you are having at your school(s), in your district, and in your community.

* ***Future Plans:*** Discuss what you want to sustain over the next 3 to 5 years, including the scope and scale of your work. Describe how these goals build on past successes and are well formulated to contribute to desired outcomes, and how you will measure progress.

Writing tip: Include a description of your key plans for the next several years; include your scale decisions and any significant changes to your work (see Tool 6: Clarifying Which Magnet School Activities to Sustain). Also include information on how you will address needs in your magnet school(s).

Section III. Achieving Our Goals: Strategic Considerations (1-3 pages)

**Purpose:** To demonstrate how external conditions affect the magnet school program and how your program can work under these conditions to accomplish its goals.

* ***Environmental context***: This section typically discusses current political, economic, demographic, and social trends, barriers, and opportunities that may have an impact on your success. Also include how you plan to effectively respond to, and proactively influence, the context in which your magnet school program operates.

Writing tip: Highlight the developments or trends (e.g., political developments, policy changes, and demographic shifts) in your district or community, and note their implications for the work of the magnet school program.

* ***Strategic Directions.*** This section discusses your plans to build additional support and leadership geared toward supporting implementation of the magnet program’s financing strategies.

Writing tip: Include stakeholder engagement strategies focused specifically on the sustainability of the magnet school program. Describe the strategies you and your sustainability planning team have developed in this subsection. Focus the description on how specific strategies will contribute to program sustainability.

* ***Internal capacity:*** This section addresses school and district leadership, staffing, communications, information/evaluation systems, and the overall infrastructure of the magnet school program.

Writing tip: Use existing documentation to briefly outline the school board and district staffing structure and highlight the roles of your key partners. For example, you might provide an overview of the school board membership and its support for the magnet school program. You could also highlight the wide range of stakeholders who support the magnet program. Also highlight any significant changes you plan to make to staffing, communication, or administrative infrastructure.

Section IV. Financing Plan (2-4 pages)

**Purpose:** To show potential contributors or partners that investments will be used responsibly and wisely to support the success of your magnet school program. This section presents your assumptions about future funding needs and your plan for meeting those needs. The financing plan will align with your identified sustainability goals. This section should include the following subsections:

* ***Fiscal needs****.* Describe what you want to sustain and what it will cost.

Writing tip: Use the cost estimates developed with Tool 7, and describe what you want to sustain. For example, you may want to continue your current work while phasing in an expansion of efforts in some key areas such as curriculum. This section will demonstrate that the magnet school program is a likely candidate for future dedicated federal, state, and private funding.

* ***Current resources and gaps to be filled***. Describe the resources you have available to meet your fiscal needs—how much, when the funding ends, and what the projected gaps are. Be certain to include both fiscal and nonfiscal (i.e., in-kind) resources.

Writing tip: In this section you should simply describe the future of your funding. This includes when current grant funds end and any other resources you have available to support the work in the future.

* ***Strategies for securing needed resources***. Highlight the options you have or are planning to pursue to secure needed resources.

Writing tip: This comes from the financing strategies developed with Tool 10 and over the course of your sustainability planning. In this section, it is important to highlight the fact that you have a well-developed and well-conceived financing plan that identifies a range of strategies and funding sources. These may include strategies to make better use of existing resources; to access and maximize state and federal revenue; to pursue public-private partnerships; and to generate new state, local, or fee-based revenue.

**Section V. Action Plan and Timetable** (1-3 pages)

**Purpose:** To present a clear and convincing plan of action to sustain your magnet school program. The section should describe how you plan to implement your financing and related strategies over time. Indicate what the benchmarks are for each strategy, and who is accountable for implementation**.**

Writing tip: Develop a detailed workplan for each strategy outlined in the Strategic Directions, Internal Capacity, and Financing Strategies sections above.

Section VI. Conclusion (1 page)

**Purpose:** To demonstrate the anticipated outcomes of your magnet school program.

Writing tip: Write a short summary that describes the anticipated program outcomes as they relate to meeting your sustainability planning goals.

Section VII. Appendixes and Supporting Documentation (length will vary)

**Purpose:** To provide additional information about your magnet school program and the activities you want to sustain. This section can include your logic model, budget information, and general fiscal and personnel information.The following is a suggested list of items to include in your appendix:

* Logic model
* Evaluation data
* Detailed budget data
* Statement of your school or district capacity (if not included in section III above)
* Membership information for your school board and other pieces of your district structure
* Members of the sustainability planning team
* Copies of formal subcontract agreements or Memoranda of Understanding or Agreement (MOU/MOA) with partners, if applicable

Tool 11: Sample Sustainability Plan

Planning for the Future of MetroCity Arts Magnet School

FY 2013-15

Section I. Executive Summary

***Background:*** Established in 2010, MetroCity Arts Magnet School (MAMS) is a middle school serving grades 6 through 8. It provides high-quality arts instruction to approximately 1,300 students across the MetroCity area. The vision of MAMS is to create a school culture that infuses the arts into traditional content instruction to enhance student achievement. Through arts education, MAMS students will develop 21st century skills in the academic, social-emotional, and career development arenas.

MAMS accomplishes these results by offering (1) key components of visual and performing arts to students, (2) extended learning time, and (3) enhanced professional development for all teaching staff. The school’s leadership structure provides for solid planning and implementation of the school’s future direction.

This document describes how MAMS intends to sustain its existing programs while building reliable funding and partnership bases over time.

***Future Plans and Financing Plan****:* Over the next 3 years, MAMS school leaders plan to maintain the theme-based activities, magnet staffing, and outreach capacity initially afforded through the Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) grant, and aim to expand to include high school grades. MAMS is looking to diversify the current funding base beyond federal public education dollars and the limited in-kind contributions and parent fundraising on which it currently relies. MAMS is monitoring a number of potential short- and long-term strategies, both public and private, to determine the best match for funding priorities. In addition, MAMS will work with district leaders to ensure that the magnet school is embedded within the overall district funding plan.

Short-term strategies include applying for miscellaneous corporate grants and contributions. This includes securing additional support from the MetroCity Community Foundation, which provided a 1-year capacity building grant. This enabled MAMS to undertake a 6-month sustainability planning process, during which it will develop strategies and activities to support MAMS as part of a 3-year sustainability plan.

Long-term strategies include the following:

* Increase engagement in local agency partnerships;
* Expand partnerships within the expanded learning/after-school community; and
* Engage local/regional foundations, the United Way, and the regional Network of Grantmakers, including MetroCity Arts Foundation and its entities/extensions.

Section II. History, Progress, and Future Plans

***Background:*** MAMS was established in 2010 with MSAP grant dollars. MAMS was carefully designed to meet community needs. The MAMS structure and theme are based on a broad series of community and parent surveys and focus groups that assisted in shaping the theme, and on research that demonstrates how arts education can cultivate essential qualities students need to succeed in the 21st century. These qualities include cooperation, communication, creativity, cultural understanding, and problem solving. Our goal is for students to achieve academic excellence and obtain arts-related skills that support the development of other vital 21st century skills and careers.

The district staff members have deep experience and the perfect skill sets to lead MAMS. For example, the MAMS Project Director, currently supported by MSAP dollars, is a dance and performing arts specialist with deep ties to the arts community across the state. Also, the current School Board President is a former magnet middle school principal.

These are the vision and desired results for MAMS:

Vision: Create a school culture that infuses the arts into traditional content instruction to enhance student academic achievement and career aptitude.

Desired Results: Through arts education, students will develop 21st century skills and a deep appreciation of the arts.

Current Status:

The primary objectives of MAMS are to achieve the following results:

* Reduction of minority group isolation at the magnet school;
* Development of a school climate that embraces and fosters diversity and multiculturalism and contributes to the development and growth of all students;
* Increased district capacity for systematized arts-related reform, including professional development, equipment and supplies, shared integrated curriculum, and strong parent and community engagement;
* Infusion of successful academic content with visual and performing arts; and
* Choice for all district parents.

Many of these objectives were initially developed for and aligned with the MSAP grant priorities and will be maintained once that funding ends in October 2013. MAMS has identified the following strategies and activities as key to its success in achieving its goals:

Strategies and Activities

Strategy 1: Offer key components of visual and performing arts.

* Activity: Emphasize the arts through an integrated thematic curriculum and program of activities that includes drama, instrumental and voice music, dance, and visual and graphic arts.

Strategy 2: Extend learning time.

* Activity: Work with resident artists in the performing and visual arts to offer out-of-school time enrichment 5 days per week.
* Activity: Take cultural field trips to concerts, plays, productions, and museums.

Strategy 3: Enhance professional development.

* Activity: Create a professional learning network within the school.

MAMS will measure its success in achieving these strategies and activities through the continuous monitoring of the following outputs and outcomes:

Outputs:

* Number/percentage of grade levels in which the arts curriculum has been fully implemented.
* Number of students involved in visual and performing arts activities during and beyond the school day.
* Number of teachers who have completed magnet-specific professional development opportunities.

Outcomes:

* Students will develop 21st century skills, as measured by pre- and posttests/performances.
* Students will demonstrate mastery of arts-related skill sets through performance-based assessments.
* Students will improve academic skills, as measured on the state assessments.
* Teachers will feel confident in delivering and infusing high-quality arts education, as measured by pre- and posttests/performances.

Future Plans:

Since 2010. MAMS has demonstrated success in the community and has a created a strong reputation on which to build. MAMS has also demonstrated success in academics and arts-related education, and is becoming recognized in the local, state, and national arts communities. In the next 3 years, the MAMS school sustainability plan will continue the theme-based activities and maintain the staffing at MSAP-supported levels. Working in concert with the district, school leaders hope to eventually expand the school to include the high school grades.

Section III: Achieving Our Goals: Strategic Considerations

***Environmental context***: MAMS was created, in part, as a response to demographic variations within MetroCity and its surrounding areas. Rapid growth and new housing developments spurred the district staff to look for ways to provide low-income and English learner populations with equitable access to integrated schools, despite the growing trend of geographic, racial, and economic isolation.

Today, the need for MAMS and its integration of academic and arts instruction remains strong. MAMS has strong support from the parents, community members, and district leaders. The blending of arts-related education and academic achievement at MAMS has been recognized through the 95 percent improvement on the state assessments.

This achievement gain has caught the attention of district superintendents and other school leaders nationally. In particular, Howard Chatham, Assistant District Superintendent for Facilities Planning and Governmental Relations, served on the MAMS sustainability planning committee—a significant show of support on his part. Superintendent Mamie Gallagher offered valuable support in reviewing and approving key portions of this sustainability plan.

***Strategic Directions:*** While MAMS has benefited from significant administrator and school leader support, efforts continue to assemble the best possible team of highly qualified teachers and staff. In addition, efforts continue toward assembling the key community partners that can ensure the success of the school’s theme-based activities. Community partners will increase the extended learning time and mentoring/job shadowing programs already available at MAMS.

***Internal capacity:*** MAMS has succeeded since becoming an arts magnet, due in large part to its exceptional financial and governance practices and its good working relationship with district central office staff. A key consideration for the expansion to the high school level is to ensure that these solid practices are maintained.

Section IV: Financing Plan

**Fiscal Needs:** TheMAMS sustainability planning team has completed a thorough cost analysis of its operations and has developed a 3-year financing plan for fiscal years (FY) 2013 to 2015. This plan takes into account the specific needs of the magnet program.

Cost and Resources

MAMS’ current budget is approximately $2 million and is projected to increase slightly over the next 3 years. Many of these increases relate to cost of living adjustments and increases in the level of services. MAMS now has three funding sources and a number of contributing partners. However, one current funding source, MSAP, ends October 2013. Continued funding from district Title I dollars and MetroCity Gas is expected. The graph below demonstrates the total projected costs and resources starting in FY 2013. As the graph demonstrates, MAMS has 50 percent of its projected costs covered by resources already in place, and needs to find resources that will cover the remaining 50 percent of costs.



Fiscal Gap

The following chart demonstrates the fiscal needs anticipated for MAMS from FY 2013 to FY 2015.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Fiscal Year 1****(2013)** | **Fiscal Year 2****(2014)** | **Fiscal Year 3****(2015)** | **Totals** |
| **\*GAP ONLY\*** |
| Personnel and benefits | $255,384 | $263,045 | $270,936 | $789,365 |
| Conferences and travel | $28,000 | $28,840 | $29,705 | $86,545 |
| Supplies | $138,596 | $142,753 | $147,035 | $428,384 |
| Other | $53,302 | $54,901 | $56,548 | $164,751 |
| Subtotal | $475,282 | $489,539 | $504,224 | $1,469,045 |
| Indirect (7%) | $33,270 | $34,268 | $35,295 | $102,833 |
| **Total** | **$983,834** | **$1,013,346** | **$1,043,743** | **$3,040,923** |

Strategies for Securing Needed Resources:

As with many schools today, MAMS faces uncertainty with respect to future funds, in particular public education and transportation dollars, which are in high demand yet are often reduced or eliminated from public budgets. MAMS aims to diversify the current funding base beyond public education dollars and the limited in-kind contributions and parent fundraising on which it currently relies. MAMS is monitoring a number of potential sources, both public and private, to determine the best match for funding priorities.

Short-term strategies include

* Obtain miscellaneous corporate grants and contributions; and
* Secure in-kind contributions from current partners to be used in future years.

Long-term strategies include

* Increase engagement in local agency partnerships;
* Expand partnerships within the extended learning/after-school community; and
* Engage local/regional foundations, the United Way, the regional Network of Grantmakers, and the MetroCity Arts Foundation.

Section V. Action Plan and Timetable

Strategy: Expand and deepen support of current local agency partnerships.

*Recognition*. MAMS will plan ways to recognize current local agency partners at public performances and other events. Formal recognition can demonstrate the value of their support and may encourage them to extend the partnership over time.

*Expansion of partnerships within the museum and library system in MetroCity*. MAMS will deepen its relationships with local museums and arts-related venues through outreach to stakeholders ranging from docents, archivists, community outreach coordinators, volunteer coordinators, and other education liaisons. Leaders within these partnerships are in a position to provide limited funding for school-based and after-school programs in the arts. It is critical that MAMS work to educate these partners about the benefits of investing in its programming.

Strategy: Expanding partnerships within the expanded learning/after-school community.

The MetroCity after-school community can play a key role in current MAMS programming. To determine areas for prospective partnerships and cost sharing, school leaders will reach out to youth development programs at community-based organizations such as YMCA and YWCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, and other venues that offer arts-related educational opportunities.

Strategy: Engaging local/regional foundations, the United Way, and the regional Network of Grantmakers.

MAMS will use roundtable events and/or briefings on the school’s success to educate the MetroCity United Way and local community foundations, especially arts-related foundations, around the benefits of arts curricula and the critical role the arts play in achieving student success and supporting students in the community.

MAMS can also frame efforts around responding to the Grantmakers Education Report released in 2009. The report calls for quality standards, systems change, and a unified voice to advocate for arts education in schools. MAMS will work to educate members about current initiatives and to demonstrate the impact of school efforts.

Section VI. Conclusion

***Anticipated Outcomes:*** The resource analysis gives MAMS, district, and community leaders a definitive picture of where funding is likely to be needed over the next 3 years. By following the strategies indicated in this plan, MAMS can expect to accomplish its sustainability goals. These include increasing and maintaining the number of relevant partnerships and obtaining additional public and private dollars. The increased number of partners and additional fiscal resources will support the fidelity of the MAMS program and help to ensure that the magnet program has resources to accomplish its projected goals.

Section VII. Supporting Documentation

**Summary:** A list of MAMS sustainability planning team members are included in the following pages as appendixes. Detailed budget and evaluation data are available upon request.

MetroCity Arts Magnet School (MAMS)

Sustainability Planning Team Members

Roxana Ballou, Resident Artist, MetroCity Theatre

Howard Chatham, Assistant District Superintendent, Facilities Planning and Governmental Relations

Jose Davis, MAMS Lead Teacher

Mamie Gallagher, District Superintendent

Art Hodgekiss, MetroCity District Director of Transportation

Mary Newburg, MAMS Principal

Lena Putnam, MetroCity Chamber of Commerce, Education Committee Chair

Richard Roosevelt, District Fiscal Services Director and Director of Magnet/Choice Programs

1. In this tool, indicators are defined as measures of change in child and family well-being across an entire community. Performance measures track changes in child and family well-being among specific target populations served by an initiative, program, or individual, or the level of activity or quality of a specific service. Most initiatives would use performance measures to track their own work; they would use indicators to see how they contribute to communitywide efforts. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)