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## **Triangle Down Syndrome Network Strategic Plan**

## 2016-19

PO Box 37305

Raleigh, NC 27627

Phone: 919-803-0515

Fax: 919-788-3646

www.TriangleDownSyndrome.org

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**Overview**

This strategic plan is the result of a one-day strategic planning meeting and follow-up meeting with Triangle Down Syndrome Network Board and Interim Program Director. Triangle Down Syndrome Network determined the critical issues to be addressed and discussed strategies to ensure a solid infrastructure, quality programming and services, effective marketing and PR strategies. The goals, objectives, and strategies outlined in this 3-year plan are based the issues and strategies discussed during the one-day strategic planning session. The framework that guided the creation of this plan is summarized below:

**Vision statement** describes what you want the organization to look like in ideal terms in the future—the results you will be achieving and characteristics the organization will need to possess in order to achieve those results. The strategic vision provides direction and inspiration for organizational goal setting.

**Mission statement** is a broad statement of what an organization does, with/for who you do it, your distinctive competence for doing it, and WHY you do it (the ultimate end).

**Goals** are global and general in nature, providing an overall sense of direction. They often refer to the distant and ultimate “prize” such as the reductions in morbidity, mortality, or quality of life.

**Objectives** or “deliverables” are specific statements describing changes that will be the direct and immediate results of your efforts. They often refer to changes in knowledge, awareness, attitudes, skills, beliefs, behaviors, or organizational infrastructure. More than one objective may be needed to reach your goal. Objectives are specific, measurable, appropriate, realistic, and time-based.

**Strategies** are specific statements about what actions or steps will be taken to accomplish each outcome objective. Strategies are a means to an end. They are things that must be done by someone to accomplish an objective. They might be thought of as “to do lists.”

**Strategies to ensure successful implementation of the plan are as follows:**

* Monthly progress report on strategic planning activities.
* Use the strategic plan document as a point of reference when the board and staff are considering the merits of a particular course of action.
* Create action plans for each work groups, committees and staff consistent with their responsibilities associated with the plan.
* Have the Executive Director and committee/work group leaders provide verbal and written updates on their plan-related actions monthly reports.
* Celebrate accomplishments and successes as the plan is implemented. Successes can be celebrated through TDSN events, social media, e-mail blasts and can be recognized at regular board meetings.

## **Mission Statement**

To empower, connect and support parents of children with Down syndrome, their families and the community.

*TDSN achieves this mission through an open, supportive and collaborative network that connects individuals and families with needed resources and information.*

**Vision**

The vision of the Triangle Down Syndrome Network is to be an effective and comprehensive resource on Down syndrome in the Triangle region and throughout North Carolina. We envision a community where all people with Down syndrome can achieve their full potential, and where individuals with Down syndrome and their families are welcomed with fairness, enthusiasm and encouragement in the community.

## **Strategic Goal**

**Goal One:** To build a solid infrastructure to support and maintain a high functioning organization.

**Goal Two:** To build a solid infrastructure to support and maintain quality programs and services.

**Goal Three:** To implement an effective marketing and public awareness strategy to increase awareness and outreach.

**Goal Four:** To ensure adequate resources for long-term sustainability and future growth.

**Triangle Down Syndome Network Board**

**As of 4/20/16**

Nick Dozier

First Citizens Bank

Kevin Griffin

Self-Employed Realtor/Attorney

Jerry Higgins, President

State of North Carolina DMV

Barb Kocher

US Department of Justice

Beth LaPierre, Treasurer

Northwestern Mutual

Tara Moore, Secretary

Stanley Monk, Vice President

Logic Now

Marcia Van Riper

UNC School of Nursing

**Staff**

Program Director

(Vacant)

Kari Alberque

Interim Program Director

## **Triangle Downs Syndrome Network North Carolina Strategic Plan 2016-2019**

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| **GOAL ONE:** To build a solid infrastructure to support and maintain a high functioning organization. |

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| **Objective 1:** Restructure the board processes and procedures to ensure effective board governance practices.  **Resource:** Board Source www.boardsource.org | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverables/Status** |
| 1. Implement a policy to ensure staggered board terms to ensure proper succession of board members. | Executive Committee | April 2016 | May 2016 | Staggered board  terms |
| 1. Create board meeting agendas and allow board members to review, comment and provide agenda items. | Board Chair | April 2016 | June 2016 | Agenda format and process |
| 1. Revise structure of Board meeting minutes to include a standard format that outlines specific/clear action steps and deadlines for completion. | Board Chair | April 2016 | June 2016 | Monthly meeting minutes reflecting new format |
| 1. Review and revise board committee descriptions.  * Identify committee chairs. * Create work plans for each committee.   *Note:* Committees will serve as training ground for potential board members (non-board members). | Board Chair | April 2016 | July 2016 | Active committees |
| 1. Agree on accountability practices to ensure board participation.  * Amend by-laws, ensure check-in and reporting, create buddy system | Full Board | April 2016 | July 2016 | Written practice |
| 1. Create policies and procedures manual that includes both board and staff roles, i.e. procedures regarding financial transactions. | Executive Committee and Staff | April 2016 | August 2016 | Policies and procedures manual |
| 1. Conduct formal board training on roles and responsibilities and ensure that the incoming Board Chair understand his or her roles. | Full Board | Fall 2016 | Fall 2016 | Formal board training |

Goal One, Contd.

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| **Objective 2**: To establish a formal board member recruitment and orientation process by December 2016 to ensure board diversity and continuation. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverable/Status** |
| 1. Create board position descriptions (for each position) to ensure clarity of the roles and responsibilities of board members (individually and collectively). | Executive Committee | April 2016 | July 2016 | Board position descriptions |
| 1. Implement a formal interview process for board recruitment and begin the recruitment process. | Board Chair | April 2016 | May 2016  Ongoing | Interviews w/ board candidates |
| 1. Implement a board recognition process where board members are celebrated for accomplishments related to board recruitment, fundraising and participation.  * Quarterly MVP Award. | Board Development Committee | April 2016 | Ongoing | Documented process |
| 1. Conduct an annual assessment of the board of directors to identify gaps (using a matrix spreadsheet) in representation and recruit new members accordingly. (*Potential board member*: Nell Barnes a volunteer with experience in ECAC). | Board | April 2016 | August 2017 | Members meeting the categories listed |
| 1. Recruit non-board members to who have fundraising expertise (influence and affluence) and other expertise. | Board Development | September 2016 | January 2017 (Ongoing) | Recruit 3-5 individuals annually |

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| **Objective 3:** Create human resources practices to help retain staff. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverables/Status** |
| 1. Establish a human resource work group to review/revise personnel policies based on best practices in nonprofit management. | Executive Committee | May 2016 | September 2016 | Established Work Group |
| 1. Develop an emergency and long-term succession plan.  * Provide professional development and leadership opportunities for all staff to help ensure proper succession.   **Resource**: NC Center For Nonprofits – for toolkits, templates | Board and Staff | 2017 | Ongoing | Succession plan |

Goal One, Contd.

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| **Objective 4**: Hire appropriate staff to ensure organizational capacity by December 2019. This objective will help ensure that the proper responsiveness to community requests and efforts occurs. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverable** |
| 1. Create or revise job descriptions for current and new positions and evaluation and measurable objectives. | Executive Committee | May 2016 | June 2016 | Revised job descriptions |
| 1. Create a TDSN comprehensive Operation Manual. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Establish a budget for staffing and determine timeline for hiring and prepare for the proper transitioning to new employees (personnel policies, executive director evaluation process). NC Center for Nonprofits – Salary survey; s | Executive Committee | May 2016 | June 2016 | Personnel budget and timeline for hire |
| 1. Hire a full-time Executive Director. (*priority*) | Executive Committee | May 2016 | June 2016 | Executive Director hired |
| 1. Hire a part-time Program Director. (*priority*) | Executive Director | May 2016 | July 2017 | Program Director hired |
| 1. Hire a part-time Office Manager/Administrative Assistant. (*priority*) | Executive Director | January 2017 | June 2017 | Office Manager hired |
| 1. Secure non-paid internship positions, i.e., grant research/grant writing. | Executive Director | December 2018 | December 2019 | Non-paid internship |
| 1. Hire a Volunteer Coordinator. | Executive Director | December 2018 | December 2019 | Volunteer Coordinator hired |
| 1. Hire a Resource Development Officer Coordinator and/or grant writer. | Executive Director | December 2018 | December 2019 | Resource Development Coordinator hired |

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| **GOAL TWO:** To build a solid infrastructure to support and maintain quality, effective programs and services. TDSN’s primary program focus will be for the parents, families and young children 0-5 years. TDSN will also provide programs and support services for parents and families of children with Down syndrome and individuals with Down syndrome reaching milestones - i.e. transitioning to adolescence and to adulthood. |

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| **Objective 1:** Update and distribute the TDSN New Parent Book. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverable/Status** |
| 1. Make content updates. | Staff | September 2016 | January 2017 | Update book |
| 1. Translate content in Spanish. | Staff and Board Member | September 2016 | January 2017 | Sections of book in Spanish |
| 1. Establish a work plan for distribution (target audience) and delivery (methodology) of the publication. | Staff | September 2016 | January 2017 | Distribution and delivery |
| 1. Establish a structure for purchasing ads to be included in the New Parent Book.  * Down syndrome entities can become a “sponsor” the Parent Book ad by a quarter, half or full page ad. | Board and Staff | September 2016 | January 2017 | Purchased ads and partnerships with  3-5 Down Syndrome entities |

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| **Objective 2:** Implement a structured New Parents Meeting program to increase participation and ongoing connection and support. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverable/Status** |
| 1. Establish a work group to access the program. | Marcia Van Riper | October 2016 | November 2017 | Established Group |
| 1. Establish a health care committee with professionals from the health care industry. | Marcia Van Riper  Kari Alberque | October 2016 | November 2017 | Health care committee |
| 1. Establish a network of hospitals and medical practices to increase outreach efforts. | Board Committee | November 2016 | Ongoing | Established network |
| 1. Create a system for reporting back to TDSN.  * Keep track of the parent partnerships and outcomes of these partnerships. | Staff | August 2016 | Fall 2017 | Reporting mechanism |
| 1. Hold meetings monthly (rather than bi-annually) and offer childcare via volunteers. | Staff | Fall 2016 | Ongoing | Monthly meetings |
| 1. Provide best practices to ensure that participants are empowered and have structure to their meetings.   *Note:* TDSN will lead and moderate meetings. | Staff | Fall 2016 | Fall 2016 | Meeting structure |
| 1. Determine goals, structure, evaluation and tracking and informing methods. | Staff | Fall 2016 | Fall 2016 | Written implementation plan |

Goal Two, Contd.

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| **Objective 3:** Expand and enhance the opportunities for parent, families of individuals with children with Down syndrome to connect. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverable/Status** |
| 1. Increase geographic locations of opportunities such as Parent’s Night Out events.  * Expand Parent’s Night Out events one evening per month in multiple locations. | Marcia Van Riper | Fall 2016 | Spring 2017 | Evidence of expansion geographically |
| 1. Develop and implement a volunteer recruitment strategy to increase involvement in various events. | Staff | Fall 2016 | Spring 2017 | Volunteer outreach and increase in volunteers |
| 1. Evaluate current activities that serve parents and families and assess their needs and create opportunities that address those needs. | Staff | Fall 2016 | Spring 2017 | New opportunities for parents |

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| **Objective 4:** Create an evaluation methodology that includes data collection and program assessment plans. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverables/Status** |
| 1. Survey stakeholders to assess their needs.  * Distribute survey to stakeholders including individuals with Down syndrome, parents and families of children with Down syndrome, health and education community professionals and other. | Staff | August 2016 | Ongoing | Survey distributed w/analyzed results |
| 1. Identify a group of students to assist with the development of an evaluation methodology that includes a well-developed data collection/tracking mechanism.  * Partner with MBA and or MSW programs at local colleges and universities. | Executive Director  Tara Moore  Marcia Van Riper | August 2016 | December 2016 | Group of interns hired (pro bono) |

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| **GOAL THREE:** To implement an effective marketing and public awareness strategy to increase awareness and outreach. |

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| **Objective 1:** Develop a comprehensive communications and marketing plan to include strategies related to social media, website enhancement and collateral materials. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverable/Status** |
| 1. Produce annual report and continue newsletter. | Staff | December 2016 | Ongoing | Annual report and newsletter |
| 1. Produce bilingual brochures. | Marcia Van Riper | Fall 2016 | January 2017 | Bruchures |
| 1. Enhance website to include resources by category and a schedule of events.  * Ensure that the website aids in connecting with individuals/families in order to respond to their needs. * Ensure that the website will include registration for all events (produce a calendar at the beginning of the year and update) | Staff | October 2016  (post Buddy Walk) | February 2017 (ongoing) | Updated website |
| 1. Create talking points that include measurable impact and proper usage of terms “healthcare community” rather than medical community.  * Messaging should be tailored to the following audiences: health community, education community, professionals and the general population * TDSN should be promoted as the first response organization/point of entry | Staff | October 2016 | Ongoing | Talking points for tailored audiences |
| 1. Grow social media outreach to educate and inspire more to volunteer and be engaged in programs and services. | Staff | Ongoing | Ongoing | Social media content calendar  Social media metrics |

Goal Three, Contd.

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| **Objective 2:** Hold an open house to engage/reengage board members, volunteers, and participants and increase awareness by September 30, 2016. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverable/Status** |
| 1. Confirm the date of an open house, venue and speakers and solicit board member and committee participation.   *Purpose:* To share the vision, mission and strategic goals and accomplishments of TDSN. Food and drinks will be served. | Marcia Van Riper  Kari Alberque | June 2016 | July 2016 | Date, venue, speaker confirmation |
| 1. Send a special invitation (email/regular mail) to with previous sponsors, stakeholders and volunteers and potential funders. | Staff | August/September  2016 | September 2016 | Sent invitation |
| 1. Create a plan for recognizing volunteers and the top 10 funders; provide volunteers t-shirts. | Board and Staff | August/September  2016 | September 2016 | Recognition strategy |

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| **Objective 3:** Participate in up to 5 events annually to increase awareness and organizational support. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverables/Status** |
| 1. Assess current annual events and determine return on investment (friend and fundraiser) and enhancements to increase profit if applicable; identify strategies for increased involvement in awareness events.  * Christmas Party and Picnic (use banners and media presentations to tell the TDSN story * St. Patrick’s Day Parade (March – NDSD) * March 21 (Down Syndrome World Day) | Board and Staff  *Names TBD*  Kevin Griffin | May 2016 | September 2016 | Established Work Group |
| 1. Identify strategies to increase board participation events and accountability among board members.  * Provide a sign up sheet during board members and make participation of events a standard board discussion. | Board  *Names TBD* | May 2016 | September 2016 | Action plan for engagement |
| 1. Determine what larger events that connect with the national Down Syndrome organization could help to draw/attract the health care/broader community. | Board | Fall 2016 | Fall 2016 | 1-2 potential larger event with which to participate/hold |

Goal Three, Contd.

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| **Objective 4**: To identify a minimum of 5 number of advocacy opportunities annually to ensure representation and foster collaboration. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverable/Status** |
| 1. Build relationships with NDSS National Down Syndrome Society and ECAC (provides professional advocates). | Staff | April 2016 | Ongoing | # of partnerships |
| 1. Refer individuals to advocate for IEP/pre-IEP and advocate for best practices. | Staff | July 2016 | January 2017 | # of Referrals |
| 1. Continue partnership with Special Ed. Advisory Council. | Staff | April 2016 | Ongoing | Partnership |
| 1. Hold ongoing meeting with GiGis and other organizations with like missions to share information and discussion strategy and collaboration. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. As a point of entry for individuals, families and professionals establish a calendar of events and use calendar as a community resource. The online event calendar will be a draw to other organizations. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Ensure presence at Angel’s Event, Hope Springs Village, Gigi’s Play House and others for networking opportunities for the exposure/identification of donors. | Staff | April 2016 | Ongoing | Participation/  contact names |

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| **GOAL FOUR:** To ensure adequate resources, long-term sustainability and future growth. This goal focuses on the importance of diversifying the TDSN funding base and creating a short and long-term plan for fundraising. |

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| **Objective 1**: Develop a minimum of 3 board engagement strategies with a focus on fundraising by December 2016. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverable** |
| 1. Determine the TDSN financial/fundraising goal and develop short and long-term fundraising strategies. | Resource Development  Committee | April 2016 | June 2016 | Specific fundraising goal and plan |
| 1. Ensure 100% Board giving (lead by the TDSN BOD Chair). (gifts within each board member’s means) | Board Chair | April 2016 | December 2016 (annually) | Annual request |
| 1. Recruit board candidates with fundraising background.  * Recruit board members with influence/affluence, strong finance background fundraising background, marketing/PR, special events, corporate. | Executive Committee Nominating Committee | May 2016 | December 2016  Annually | 2-3 board members with fundraising expertise |
| 1. Create strategy to ensure/increase accountability among board members.  * establish a “buddy” (mentor) system * establish a system of setting individual and collective goals (i.e. fundraising commitment form) * provide talking points for various audiences | Board Chair | Fall 2016 | Ongoing | Written accountability plan  Talking points |
| 1. Conduct formal board training on fundraising.  * “unpack” fears of making “an ask” * provide implementation strategies that align with strategic fund development plan. | Consultant/Trainer | February 2017 | Annually (every year or as needed) | Board training |

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| **Objective 2:** Increase participation in and funding raised through the annual Buddy Walk event (October) by 30 percent. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverable/Status** |
| 1. Establish a Buddy Walk event committee and determine/agree upon the 2016 fundraising goal and strategy. | Marcia Van Riper  Kari Alberque | June 2016 | June 2016 | Event committee |
| 1. Hold a formal meeting with volunteers before the Buddy Walk begins to ensure the roles for the day of the walk.  * Make available a map of the walk/venue. | Event Committee | October 2016 | October 2016 | Completion of meeting held before event begins |

Goal Four, Contd.

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| **Objective 3:** Apply and submit 3-5 grants from local and national private and corporate foundations by December 2018. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverable/Status** |
| 1. Conduct initial grant research to identify potential local and national sources. | Resource Development Committee | December 2016 | January 2017 | List of potential funders |
| 1. Identify potential partnerships with local universities who may have access to grant opportunities. | Resource Development Committee/Staff | December 2016 | Ongoing | 1-2 university/college partnerships |
| 1. Meet with potential funders if appropriate. | Board Members | January 2016 | December 2018 | 2-3 meetings with funders |
| 1. Submit 5 grant proposals. | Staff | December 2016 | December 2018 | 4 proposal submissions |

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| **Objective 4:** Add a minimum of three enhancements related to fundraising to the TDSN website. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverable** |
| 1. Post giving levels on website. | Staff | Spring 2017 | Spring 2017 | Giving levels on website |
| 1. Include testimonies from parents, youth, community stakeholders, volunteers, board members that will encourage additional support and online giving. | Staff | Spring 2017 | Spring 2017 | Collection of testimonials for website and collateral materials |
| 1. Feature all direct mail campaign details, special events and fundraising partnerships on website. | Staff | Spring 2017 | Spring 2017 | Resource Development Page on website featuring activities |
| 1. Feature a pie chart of sources of funding and percentage of administrative funding versus program funding on website. | Staff | Spring 2017 | Spring 2017 | Pie chart |
| 1. Identify strategies to drive potential donors to the website.  * Create a compelling video of children asking for support. | Staff | Spring 2017 | Spring 2017 | Written strategies to drive website visitors |

Goal Four, Contd.

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| **Objective 5:** Assess individual giving and build a donor prospect list increase donations. | | | | |
| **Strategies** | **Responsible Person(s)** | **Beginning Date** | **Completion Date** | **Deliverable/Status** |
| 1. Establish an individual donor list.  * Assess current list of donors and begin building prospect list via events, programming and other. | Staff | May 2016 | December 2016 | Donor list |
| 1. Acknowledge donors showing impact.  * Ask participants of programs to thank donors * Produce videos and draft follow up letters after donations are made. | Staff | May 2016 | Ongoing | Acknowledgment letters  Videos  Follow-up letters |

**EVALUATION and MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Evaluation and management must go hand-in-hand with implementation of the Triangle Down Syndrome Network Strategic Plan. Ongoing assessment is vital for several basic reasons: accountability, quality improvement, and predicting future needs and resources. Evaluation and management of the strategic plan will help to provide a clear understanding of the strengths and effectiveness of the organization’s management and programmatic strategies and will help identify areas that need addressing.

Triangle Down Syndrome Network will take the following steps to ensure implementation and evaluation of the Triangle Down Syndrome Network Strategic Plan:

* Request that each person(s) responsible for carrying out specific goals and objectives provide brief written reports on a monthly basis via email/mail. Reports will be distributed in advance of board meetings to all board members.
* Assign a lead person (Program/Director Executive Director) to share summary of written reports with the full board and use the strategic plan document as a guide for discussion and next steps.
* Modify the evaluation and management plan as needed.
* Hold an annual board and staff retreat (half-day) to thoroughly review, assess and update the strategic plan.