

Super App - Blueprint Guidance

Blueprint Overview

Question P5.9.2 asks that LEAs link to their community network's early childhood blueprint. LEAs associated with community networks who have developed blueprints need to link to their completed blueprint here. If your community network chooses not to develop an early childhood blueprint, put "N/A" for this question.

In addition to this guidance, there is also a suggested template and a workbook to support blueprint creation.

Early childhood blueprint should include:

- An updated **analysis of current state**, including new data points
- **Vision statement**
- **Mission statement**
- 3-5 **goals**, with accompanying **strategies, resources, and performance metrics**

Why do you need a blueprint?

Strategic planning is critical to a community network's success because it sets a vision for the organization's future, establishes agreed-upon goals, and lays out clear strategies to achieve those goals. This is an activity prioritized by Ready Start Networks, but every community can benefit from creating a blueprint and establishing a mission, vision, and set of goals. A blueprint provides key stakeholders, both internal and external, with an idea of early childhood priorities and strategies moving forward.

How will this blueprint be developed or updated? Who should be involved?

Whether you are developing your blueprint for the first time, or updating last year's version, community networks should thoroughly review this guidance, the provided [template](#), and the suggested [workbook](#). The development of your blueprint should be a group effort that includes multiple people's input and multiple drafts of the document. Lead agency leadership and key staff members should be leaders in drafting and revising your blueprints, and lead agencies should also engage community stakeholders for input and feedback.

Blueprint Guidebook

Analysis of Network's Current State

Your blueprint should begin with an **analysis of current state**, which gives an overview of your community network. The **analysis of current state** should introduce the community network and include its strengths and shortcomings. The LDOE will be providing data kits for each network that include data on quality of seats, enrollment numbers, and kindergarten readiness. Leaders should utilize this data, along with input provided by various stakeholders in your network, to paint a picture of the state of early childhood in your community. Community networks can consider using tables, charts, and other graphic organizers to display information as needed.

The analysis of your community network's current state will:

- Describe the current state of your community's early childhood education structure, including

- How many sites you have by type (child care, schools, and Head Starts)
- How many publicly-funded children you serve by type
- Your community's CLASS® scores
- Be data-driven
- Include critical background information needed to help external stakeholders better understand your community network
- Include your community network's strengths and shortcomings

Guiding Statements

Revisiting Current Vision & Mission Statements

If your community network has already completed a vision and mission statement in the past, you might want to consider revisiting those statements with stakeholders, especially if they were not involved in the initial drafting.

Vision

A vision statement is key to any organization and will serve a critical role in establishing a strategic direction for your network. A vision statement is the network's vision for its community's future situation that the network will help to create. In other words, if your network achieves all of its goals in a number of years, what will the state of early childhood education look like in your community? A vision statement should be aspirational, challenging, serving as an inspiring goal for the future. It should be used for internal motivation and decision-making, to not lose sight of the bigger picture, as well as external branding and communications to key stakeholders and potential funders. The vision statement should be able to communicate your network's end-goal in clear, simple language – this is your "Why?"

Some examples of vision statements from organizations outside of the education field are:

- Habitat for Humanity: "A world where everyone has a decent place to live."
- Alzheimer's Association: "A world without Alzheimer's disease."
- Feeding America: "A hunger-free America."

Networks can complete the "Headlines from the Future" activity in the Blueprint Workbook to help this process. Keep in mind that a vision statement should:

- Be present tense
- Describe an outcome
- Use plain, unambiguous language
- Inspire and evoke emotion
- Build a picture of the future

Mission

A mission statement's purpose is to describe the reason for your early childhood community network's existence. It should be used to clarify your network's purpose as well as external marketing and communications to key stakeholders and potential funders. The mission statement should define what the network is doing to achieve its vision statement – this is your "How?"

To allow you to compare vision and mission statements, below are the mission statements from the same organizations whose vision statements were shared earlier:

- Habitat for Humanity: “Seeking to put God’s love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.”
- Alzheimer’s Association: “To eliminate Alzheimer’s disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health.”
- Feeding America: “To feed America’s hungry through a nationwide network of member food banks and engage our country in the fight to end hunger.”

In addition to the results of the suggested Mission Statement Development exercise in the blueprint workbook, networks should keep in mind that a great mission statement:

- Is clear and focused, defining your purpose
- Focuses on substance over vagueness, avoiding unnecessary words
- Defines the target “audience” and “region” – who are you serving, and where?
- Avoids language and terms that people outside of the education field would not understand

Goal Development

Goals

Your network should aim to develop 3-5 goals that address the shortcomings identified in your analysis of current state. Your goals may be 3-5 year focused. There are many elements of improvement of early childhood care and education that can be addressed in these goals, including access, quality, family engagement, and more.

All goals developed in this section should be S.M.A.R.T.:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Realistic
- Time-Bound

Strategies

A strategy is the approach you take to achieve a goal. For each goal, your network should develop at least three varied and multi-pronged strategies to support it. Your strategies should be clearly stated, specific, and in direct support of your goals.

Resources

For each goal, you should identify **existing resources** (financial, human, etc.) that can be leveraged. Additionally, for each goal you should identify whether achieving the goal will require **needed resources**, including additional funding or staff capacity.

Performance Metrics

A **performance metric** is a measurable gauge of progress toward a goal. If you want to check the status of this goal in a year's time, how can you measure progress? Examples may include CLASS® scores, enrollment, child count data, number of teachers with ECACs, etc.

As you designate performance metrics for each goal, ensure that you have the infrastructure and capacity in place to gather and track necessary data, even if this means simply having a consistent method in place to synthesize and keep track of data that is reported to you by the LDOE.

Updating Your Blueprint

For networks revisiting blueprints already created, it is critical to make adjustments to the goal and/or strategies where necessary. Make informed decisions by considering new data and changes in the landscape, recognizing progress that was made, soliciting feedback from program partners, and recognizing new challenges.

The Analysis of Current State should be updated annually every year. Community networks can update goals as they see fit, taking into consideration where changes need to be made and/or new strategies need to be added.