

Sustainability Action Planning Guide

Cohort VI



The 21st Century Community Learning Center grant program in your school, district and community is part of a larger effort across the nation to support students in their academic success. Supporting students in academic success is a complex call to action and requires the resources and authority of multiple entities to succeed.

This guide provides a process to mobilize you in identifying key partners and in finding your own solution to sustainability.

The Sustainability Action Planning Guide provides leaders in 21st CCLC programs with a tool to channel their sustainability planning process. This tool was created to support the Finance Project Workbooks through:

* Key questions for sustainability teams to consider and answer;
* Tools to assist in the collaborative process of sustainability planning;
* Resources including examples of sustained programs;
* Crucial considerations to assist in action planning; and
* A timeline to mark your progress for grant compliance.

Many of the tools listed throughout are tools provided through the Finance Project Workbook CD-ROM. Tools from the CD-ROM are labeled by module and worksheet throughout the guide.

Items marked with an asterisk (\*) should be completed as part of your plan.

The final sustainability plan should include the following components:

* Shared Vision and Logic Model
  + Description of collaborative efforts.
* Strategic Finance Plan
  + Evaluation and analysis of programming and cost effectiveness.
* Strategies for Capacity Building and Community Support
  + Environmental scan.
  + SWOT Analysis (a review of your programs Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats).
  + Stated priorities and strategies for meeting those priorities with benchmarks and measures for success.
* Tools and resources denoted with an asterisk (\*) throughout the guide are required components of the final sustainability plan submission.

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers team at the Colorado Department of Education has set the following progress checkpoints and roll-out of support to aid you in successfully completing a sustainability plan. The tasks and CDE support remain the same, however the timeline will vary based on where you are in your grant cycle. Remember your focus in this sustainability plan is years 4 and 5 of the grant cycle.

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| Timeline | Task | CDE Support |
| April 2012 – December 2014 | * Sustainability team is formed and a shared vision and logic model are close to being finalized. | * Resources and best practices in collaboration and leadership * 2014 Fall Conference. |
| February 2015 | * Finance plan near completion. | * Data-driven decision making * CDE webinars. |
| April 2015 | * Strategies with benchmarks and measures for success documents and action steps planned. * Begin writing sustainability plan. | * How to write a sustainability plan. * CDE follow-up webinars. |
| June 30, 2015 | * Finalized sustainability plans submitted with budget. | * CDE feedback. |
| June – July 2015 | * CDE review of plans. | * Approvals, revisions, or declinations determined for year 4 funding. |

Phase I: Shared Vision and Logic Model

September 2014 – December 2014

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| Key Questions | Tools | Resources | Guiding Considerations |
| What is your vision?  Is the vision shared? Between whom?  What are the key elements of sustainability?  What are your initiative’s strengths and weaknesses? | Clarifying Vision and Desired Results:  Module II, Worksheet 2\*  Sustainability Self-Assessment and Self-Assessment Summary:  Module I | Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)  Monitoring and Quality Improvement Tool (MQI) | The mentioned tools, resources, and key questions should first be considered by the program leaders or a small group of partners close to the work of the grant program. |

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Phase I: Shared Vision and Logic Model

September 2014 – December 2014

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| Key Questions | Tools | Resources | Guiding Considerations |
| What do you want to sustain?  What do you mean by sustainability?  How will you measure progress towards those results? | Logic Model: Module II\*  Module II, Worksheet 6\* | EZ Reports  SMART Goals and Objectives  Qualtrics Survey | The identified questions, tools, and resources can be answered and utilized with the noted components. This will be a reflective process after having the first years of programming completed or nearly completed. Include stakeholders/community in the process to asses needs. |

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Phase II: Strategic Finance Plan

December 2014 – February 2015

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| Key Questions | Tools | Resources | Guiding Considerations |
| * How much does your program cost? * How much will it cost to accomplish your sustainability goals? * What resources do you currently have? * What additional resources do you need? * How do you access those funding sources? | Strategy design worksheets: Module III, Worksheet 2\*  Module III, Worksheet 3\*  Module III, Worksheet 4\*  Module III, Worksheet 5\* | Quality Out-of-School-Time Cost Calculator: [wallacefoundation.org](http://www.wallacefoundation.org/cost-of-quality)  Financial Planning Workbook  Previous budgets and AFR’s | Compare your budget to actual expenditures with your fiscal team as well as your EZReports data to determine what worked and was cost effective in the first year of programming. Reflect on lessons learned and the type of budget you would need to sustain the programming that was most impactful on students and their families. In addition, consider any fees that are collected and how fee based programming plays a role currently and in the future. Have a program income policy in place if you are collecting fees. |

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Phase III: Strategies for Capacity Building and Community Support  
February 2015 – April 2015

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| Key Questions | Tools | Resources | Guiding Considerations |
| What resources related to community support, key champions and organizational capacity do you need to accomplish your sustainability goals? | Strategy design worksheets: Module IV, Worksheet 3\*  Module IV, Worksheet 5  Module IV, Worksheet 7  Module IV, Worksheet 9\* | Environmental Scan\*  SWOT Analysis\*  Financial Planning Workbook | Now is the time to consider when and where your sustainability team should be expanded to include people with greater power and influence. |

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Glossary

**Environmental Scan**

In terms of organizations and strategic planning, an environmental scan involves considering the factors that will influence the direction and goals of your organization. And, it includes consideration of both present and future factors that might affect the organization, since, of course, we're planning for the future, not just the present.

**Logic Model**

A tool used most often by managers and evaluators of programs to evaluate the effectiveness of a program. Logic models are usually a graphical depiction of the logical relationships between the resources, activities, outputs and outcomes of a program. While there are many ways in which logic models can be presented, the underlying purpose of constructing a logic model is to assess the "if-then" relationships between the elements of the program; if the resources are available for a program, then the activities can be implemented, if the activities are implemented successfully then certain outputs and outcomes can be expected. Logic models are most often used in the evaluation stage of a program, they can however be used during planning and implementation.

**SWOT Analysis**

A strategic planning method used to evaluate the **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses/Limitations, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats involved in a program or project. It involves specifying the objective of the program or project and identifying the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieve that objective. Identification of SWOTs is essential because subsequent steps in the process of planning for achievement of the selected objective may be derived from the SWOTs.