

# HIGH QUALITY STRATEGIC PLANNING AND BUDGETING: The Cycle of Continuous School Improvement

## EVALUATE PROGRAM AND UNDERSTAND STUDENT AND PROGRAM NEEDS (Comprehensive Needs Assessment)

- ❑ Confirm/Refine School Vision & Goals
  - ☆ Ask “Where does our school need/want to be? How will we know when we get there?”
- ❑ Collect and Analyze Relevant and Credible Data and Other Evidence (Success Indicators)
  - ☆ Ask “Where are we currently? In what areas are we making progress? Where are we lagging?”
- ❑ Conduct Evidence-Based Program Evaluation and Root Cause Analysis
  - ☆ Ask “What parts of our program are working? What is not working? **How do we know?**”
  - ☆ Ask “Why? What are the underlying [actionable] causes? **How do we know?**”

## RESEARCH EFFECTIVE STRATEGY OPTIONS FOR MEETING IDENTIFIED NEEDS

- ☆ Ask “What strategies/actions could potentially help us to (1) strengthen or build/expand on our successes, and (2) improve our educational program in the identified areas of need?”
- ☆ Ask “What research or other evidence indicates that [a given strategy/action] is likely to work?”

## DEVELOP STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

- ❑ Conduct Comparative Analysis of Options (aka “Cost-Effectiveness Analysis” aka “Academic Return on Investment”)
  - ☆ Ask “Which option(s) will give us the greatest potential return (improvement) on our investment (time/\$/energy)?”
  - ☆ Ask “What factors do we need to consider in our decision-making?” (Effectiveness, Available Resources, Cost, Allowability, Capacity (current and potential), Ancillary Costs, etc.)
  - ☆ Ask “What are the trade-offs or opportunity costs of our proposed choices?”
- ❑ Draft a Cohesive and Effective Strategic Action Plan
  - ☆ Ask “How does the plan strategically and cohesively leverage our school’s resources (human, financial, facility/equipment, and time) to maximize their individual and collective positive impact on student academic outcomes?”
  - ☆ Ask “How will we ensure high quality implementation of the plan’s strategies/actions?”
  - ☆ Ask “How will we measure the actual effectiveness of each strategy/action as implemented?”

## SET “SMART” OBJECTIVES

SMART = Specific © Measurable © Ambitious Yet Attainable © Results-Oriented © Time-Bound

- ☆ Ask “Assuming that we fully implement our strategic action plan, what progress towards the fulfillment of our vision/goals do we expect ourselves to achieve this year? Which metrics will best measure our progress?”

## EXECUTE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN AND MONITOR EFFECTIVENESS

- ❑ Execute Fully All Components of Strategic Action Plan
- ❑ Continuously Monitor (1) Quality of Plan Implementation and (2) Effectiveness of Strategies/Actions
  - ☆ Ask “What barriers might be impeding high quality implementation? How do we address them?”
  - ☆ Ask “Are our strategies/actions working? Are we making progress as expected? Can/should we make mid-stream changes to increase their effectiveness or pursue a different strategy?”