Overview: Development of the Federation’s New Core Value Statements, Mission, Vision, Name, and Strategic Priorities

# What will the Federation do over the next few months?

# The Federation Board and Staff will develop new **core** **value**, **mission, and vision** statements, and a **new name** for the organization. This work will be completed by the end of June 2024. Then the Staff and Board will identify their **strategic priorities**.

# Core values express ***why***the organization does what it does. Mission and vision statements express ***what*** the Federation does (and hopes to do). Strategic priorities express ***how***the Federation will do it, at a high level. In-person interviews and meetings, as well as online surveys and meetings, will be conducted.

# After the process of developing the core values, mission, vision, name, and strategic priorities is completed, Federation Staff will develop and implement ambitious but attainable strategic objectives, with specific deadlines, that align with the newly-identified strategic priorities.

What are core values?

Core values are essential and enduring tenets that express the soul of the organization. They are so fundamental that they do not change. For example:

***Respect*** *We value the dignity and unique gifts of* *each individual, honor their perspective, and treat each person with esteem and kindness.*

***Integrity*** *We value honesty, and we do what we say we will do.*

***Courage*** *We value speaking out for justice, even when it’s difficult.*

***Collaboration*** *We value listening, identifying common interests, disagreeing with civility, and achieving shared goals to the greatest extent possible.*

***Family Leadership*** *We value and support the wisdom and strength of families, in all their beautiful diversity.*

What is a mission statement?

A mission statement focuses on **today** and expresses what an organization does right now to promote its vision.

*The Federation is/does….*

What is a vision statement?

A vision statement focuses on **tomorrow** and expresses what an organization wants to ultimately become, or what the organization’s ultimate goal is.

*The Federation will become….*

*The Federation envisions a world where….*

# Why is it time for the Federation to define new core value, mission, and vision statements, and a new name?

* **To work together in synergy**, the Board and Staff need a shared understanding of what the Federation is and does. They need a shared understanding of what inspires and motivates them to work for and on behalf of the Federation.
* **To conduct the most effective outreach to families**, the Board and Staff must be able to clearly and succinctly articulate their shared understanding to all external stakeholders.
* **To improve the odds that the Federation will attract additional grant funds**, the Federation’s marketing materials need to clearly and succinctly express this shared understanding.
* **To improve ongoing communication with the Federation’s partners, including funders, state and federal government agencies and legislatures, and school, healthcare, and advocacy organizations,** the Board and Staff’s messaging and the Federation’s marketing materials must be consistent, clear, and succinct.

# Unfortunately, the Federation’s [current mission statement](https://fcsn.org/about-us/mission-vision-history/) as posted on the website:

* Is long and hard to remember. It doesn’t make a good “elevator pitch,” so it is difficult to use for either marketing or strategic planning.
* Is a mélange of mission, vision, principles, values, and goals.

The Federation’s current vision statement may or may not be a good fit for the Federation as it is today. The Federation’s current name may be modified to better express the Federation’s full identity. It’s time to study and reflect on this.

# Why now?

The Federation has changed a great deal since its mission was developed many years ago. For example, in the past there was no Massachusetts Statewide Family Engagement Center, School Finder Project, Transition from School to Adult Life Project, MassPAC, or Special Education Surrogate Parents Project. Even since 2018, when the Board commissioned materials to prepare for hiring a new Executive Director, the Federation has evolved. The national and state policy and funding context has changed, too. As the Federation turns 50 years old, it’s time to step back and contemplate the Federation’s identity and purpose today and in the future.

What is some essential context for this work?

1. **For almost 50 years, the Federation has been** **the** **pre-eminent source of information and support for families of children and youth with disabilities and special healthcare needs** **in Massachusetts.** This will not change.
2. **For almost 50 years, the Federation has known that child and youth outcomes improve if parents and professionals cultivate substantive, reciprocal partnerships.** In a major shift, state and national policies and practices are aligning with the Federation’s longtime perspective. Public and private sectors are now aware of decades of research on the positive impact of family engagement and are making funding available.

In Massachusetts, the inclusion of Family and Community Engagement in the Educator Evaluation System in 2011 led to the comprehensive Family Engagement Framework in 2020. Recent federal and state funding created the Federation’s Statewide Family Engagement Project.

Nationwide, family centers like the Federation are beginning to rethink their role in this new context. For example, New Jersey’s and Tennessee’s parent centers have revised their mission statements to emphasize parent-professional partnerships.

1. **For almost 50 years, the Federation has centered equity in its work by serving children and youth with disabilities and special healthcare needs and by promoting their rights.** The Federation’s work is grounded in civil rights laws such as Chapter 766, Section 504, IDEA, the ADA, and the Affordable Care Act.

While the Federation will continue to serve every family who comes to its front door, its outreach and services are evolving to prioritize the needs of underserved families. The Federation continuously deepens its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion by expanding its capacity to address the needs of families from diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

# What are strategic priorities and objectives? [to be undertaken after June 2024]

Strategic priorities are the major categories of work that the Federation will do in order to achieve its vision and mission, aligned with its core values. Objectives list the specific tasks that the Federation will undertake in each priority area. These can be visualized like this:

New Core Values, Mission, Vision, Name

Strategic Priority #1

Strategic Priority #2

Strategic Priority #3

Objectives

1. Task/Due Date
2. Task/Due Date
3. Task/Due Date

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**Federation Staff**

**Federation Board and Staff**

# How will the Federation identify its strategic priorities?

# Once the Federation has agreed-on its core values, mission, vision and name, these will inform the development of strategic priorities. In addition, data on the Federation’s strengths and areas for improvement will be collected from stakeholders, Board, and Staff, and additional discussions will be held.

# How will the Federation identify its strategic objectives?

# Once the strategic priorities are determined, the Executive Director will create a process so that Federation Staff can develop and implement ambitious but attainable strategic objectives, with specific deadlines, that align with the newly-identified strategic priorities.