

Strategic Planning Documents

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01/03/2018



JUVENILE WELFARE BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2017-2020

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2015, Dr. Marcie Biddleman, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Juvenile Welfare Board (JWB) decided to undertake a strategic planning process that would not only update and revitalize its current strategic plan, but would also serve as a vehicle to engage internal and external stakeholders, build organizational capacity, and further the mission and vision of the organization.

The previous strategic plan, completed in 2013, replaced a plan that was developed in 2006 and had since not been updated. Several challenges influenced the creation of the 2013 plan: the 2006 plan was outdated; there was a need to reframe the JWB mission statement and create a vision statement; and several Board members were either not on the Board when the last plan was created or, if they were, found the process onerous. Additionally, JWB was in the midst of a leadership transition as the then executive director was about to retire. Therefore, given these challenges, the decision was made to utilize an exclusively internal, staff driven process.

By 2015, the mission and vision of the organization were much clearer. The Board was more engaged in strategic issues JWB had initiated or was involved in several collective impact initiatives; there was increased cross-functional work within JWB and the community and providers were more actively partnering with JWB. These improvements set a foundation for approaching the strategic plan differently. The environment was ready for a multidimensional approach.

THE PROCESS

In December 2015, Dr. Biddleman formed a Strategic Planning Committee that began meeting in January 2016 as the initial step in updating the Juvenile Welfare Board's Strategic Plan. As part of the multidimensional approach, the group numbered 13 members and included not only executive leadership, but also a Board member, mid-level managers, exempt and administrative staff, and a graduate level intern.

The charter for the group included:

- To review beliefs and current commitments in the focus areas of School Readiness, School Success, and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect
- To identify specific parameters and requirements for future JWB funding
- To align budget allocations with strategic priorities

It should be noted that establishing budget alignment as a specific outcome signaled a significant change in perspective. No longer were success or outcomes to be judged by the performance of individual programs and services, but by the collective benefit and impact JWB's portfolio of funded programs was delivering. This broader, more strategic view had a substantial effect on the process as it moved forward.

WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

Facilitated by Dr. Mary Grace Duffy of Cambridge Hill Partners, Inc., a consultant to JWB, the group met monthly from January through July 2016. During the course of its meetings, the Planning Committee addressed each of the following guiding questions as applied to the three JWB Focus areas that existed at that time: (1) School Readiness, (2) School Success, and (3) Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect and later to an additional, fourth focus area, Strengthening Community.

- What do we believe?
- What are the elements of the problem(s)?
- What does JWB do now?
- What would JWB like to do better?
- What additional data/information do we need to finalize our goals and strategies?
- To what are we willing to be held accountable?
- What are our goals?
- How will we meet our goals? What strategies/ approaches will we use?

As the group met, it became apparent that the problems and situations encompassed in the focus areas were persistent and interconnected and demanded a multidimensional approach if they were to be addressed.

Working from the premise that it is important to work with the end in mind and to underscore organizational values and beliefs, the group developed the following *We Believe* statements for the four focus areas it considered:

School Readiness

- Every child deserves to enter kindergarten ready to learn.
- Children are influenced by their environments.
- The early effects of child development start at prenatal care.
- The early years of a child's life are critical in healthy development and the ability to be ready for school.
- Children need to gain foundational social-emotional and academic skills to achieve developmental milestones prior to kindergarten to be successful in kindergarten and beyond.
- Every child needs and deserves an advocate and that may not always be the parent.
- Parent education and parent support are integral to getting children ready for school.

School Success

- Every child deserved the opportunity to learn and succeed by demonstrating progress in social emotional, cognitive, literacy, and physical development.
- Children thrive when they can be in situations challenging enough to develop resiliency, and safe enough to protect them from adverse and damaging behaviors.
- The transition from elementary to middle high school is critical for success.
- Out-of-school time activities and programs supplement learning and contribute to the appropriate social emotional learning that helps children succeed in school.
- Parent education and parent support is integral to keeping children successful in school.

Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

- Every child deserves to grow up and thrive in a safe environment.
- All children have the right to feel safe and to be protected and healthy.
- Parents may need supportive help from their community.

Strengthening Community

- JWB has a leadership role in identifying and addressing emerging and existing community issues and solutions relating to children and families with a primary focus on prevention.
- Collective efforts are necessary to reduce complex problems such as violence and poverty, which are often place-based.

In addition to belief statements, the Committee also formulated high-level strategic goals in each of the focus areas:

1. School Readiness: Children served by a JWB funded School Readiness program will be ready to learn.

2. School Success: Children served by any JWB funded School Success program will show improvement or maintain performance in grades, attendance, behavior, and promotion to the next grade.

3. Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect: Children served by any JWB funded Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect program will grow up and thrive in safe and healthy environments.

4. Strengthening Community: Children served by any JWB funded Strengthening Community program will benefit from collective neighborhood initiatives driven by empowered community leaders.

ENGAGING THE STAFF

The JWB staff meets monthly as an entire group. These meetings were used both to inform the staff of the work of the Committee as well as to receive feedback on work done to date. Additionally, individual staff were involved in best practices research and environmental scans that were used to inform the work of the Committee.

Once specific goals were set and budget parameters were established, staff groups were further involved in developing the final plan. These activities are described more fully later in this document.

ENGAGING THE BOARD

Dr. Biddleman recognized the importance of engaging the full Board in the strategic planning process and not getting too far along in the process without their input and perspectives. Thus, the Committee prepared materials for a Board workshop held on March 30, 2016. The materials included information about the

- Three focus areas including beliefs and goals
- Five high-risk zones in Pinellas County
- JWB budget process

This was the first time the Board had met in a workshop/retreat format in ten years and signaled a new level of engagement by the Board.

The workshop proved to be an exceptionally important event in the process. Spurred by the discussion of the three existing focus areas and the question, *for what are we willing to be held accountable?* The Board created a fourth focus area, Strengthening Community. This decision solidified two years of work in expanding understanding of JWB as more than just a funder and adding strategic commitment to the tagline: *Investing in children. Strengthening our community.*

The Planning Committee applied the same process to the fourth focus area and incorporated suggestions from the Board workshop into the goals and strategies being developed for all four focus areas. (See above.)

BUDGET REVIEW

Since the Board workshop occurred during the period of initial preparation for the JWB 2016-2017 annual budget, the discussion at the Board workshop was also used to inform budget deliberations. Furthermore, the Planning Committee reviewed and analyzed the distribution of JWB funding through the four focus areas. Dr. Biddleman communicated to providers, the community and the Board that there would be no significant changes in budget allocations or priorities without at least a year's notice. This commitment allowed for more open discussion and analysis as the budget was being prepared.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In order to better assess the issues, needs, challenges and opportunities for Strengthening Community, JWB held a series of six community conversations that were one hour listening sessions held between September 7 and September 28, 2016 at JWB and three of the Neighborhood Family Centers: Sanderlin, Lealman, and the Hispanic Outreach Center. These conversations with a total of 77 participants represented diverse constituents including parents, teens, faith leaders, direct service providers, JWB staff and other

community representatives to voice their opinions about how best to strengthen their communities.

The meetings were facilitated by four JWB staff and the JWB intern. Two of the facilitators are bilingual and able to engage Spanish-speaking residents.

Participants were provided with a one-page handout that outlined the importance of neighborhood level input and described what JWB believes, what JWB's current understanding of persistent problems are, and what it is currently doing to address known issues and problems. The conversations were guided by three questions developed by Dr. Biddleman:

1. Do you agree that these are the persistent problems facing our community? If not, what do you see as the persistent problems in our community?
2. Are there any needed services or programs that are not currently available in the community? If so, what are they?
3. What can YOU do in your community to help strengthen it?

Participants identified the following problems: poverty, family instability, homelessness, chronic unemployment or underemployment, crime and violence, teen pregnancy, lack of transportation, lack of access to high quality child care, health, and mental health services. The full analysis of the rich and detailed answers to these questions are summarized in the report *Community Conversations: Community Input on Strengthening Community* (See Strategic Plan Attachment 4).

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Work product related to goals and initial strategies that were developed by the Planning Committee and based on input from staff, Board, and community members as well as best practices research formed the basis of materials that were used at a second Board workshop on October 31, 2016 facilitated by St. Petersburg College Collaborative Labs. This workshop involved the use of interactive technology to brainstorm possible solutions and prioritize results. By the end of the session, the Board had agreed upon desired approaches to achieving results in each of the focus areas. This material was made available to four outcome work groups organized by focus area and meeting biweekly from March through May 2017. They were charged with identifying:

- Desired outcomes at the programmatic level
- County level change indicators
- Strategies for achieving the outcomes

The groups were composed of an executive team member, content area experts and representatives of partner agencies. The work of these teams was reviewed at the mid-managers meetings held every two months.

PORTFOLIO REVIEW AND FUNDING PRIORITIES

Although JWB had conducted portfolio reviews in the past, these reviews were focused on individual programs and their achievement of contract goals. In the Portfolio Review that was conducted June through August 2017, the review teams focused on how well currently funded programs aligned with the newly developed strategic goals, strategies, and outcomes. The agencies were all asked to participate in the review by indicating if they would be impacted by anticipated cuts in funding at the local, state, and federal level, and to offer ideas for expansion of existing programs or new program initiatives.

The portfolio reviews were conducted by focus area and used the workgroup model.

On August 22, 2017, the Board came together for its third workshop. This workshop was focused on the upcoming 2017-2018 budget and priorities. Prior to the meeting, each Board member received a comprehensive briefing packet including:

- Detailed financial reports including the current year budget, comparisons to the prior year, a proposed budget and expenditures by focus area
- Portfolio Review analysis with recommendations
- Impact analysis of possible expanded or additional services and/or programs

All of these discussions were based on and directly linked to the goals, strategies, and priorities that the Board had reviewed in previous meetings.

As a result of the multidimensional and inclusive approach to strategic planning, the Board was able to be more directly involved in the budget, could make more informed decisions about the budget and allocation of resources, and more fully understood the work of JWB and the contribution it is making to the community.

Provided to the Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County by

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