

DDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan Facilitation Guide

Land Acknowledgement

The Durham District School Board acknowledges that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships, both historic and modern, with the territories upon which our school board and schools are located. Today, this area is home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. We acknowledge that the Durham Region forms a part of the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, the Mississauga Peoples and the treaty territory of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation. It is on these ancestral and treaty lands that we teach, live and learn.

Purpose

The purpose of this Facilitation Guide is to be considered as a source for the facilitators to understand group consultation (engaged conversation) and follow general guidelines to ensure consistency across multiple consultation sessions.

Consultation Groups:

- Students
- Parents/Caregivers and Families
- Educators and Staff
- Community/Organizations

Overview

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Planning for Group Consultation

- Consultations are planned for all students, families, educators, staff, community members, and additional groups through connections with the Affinity networks
- Recruiting/inviting/reaching out to participants
- Use the consultation questions developed by the working groups
- A notetaker is recommended to work along with the facilitator
- Prepare scripts to keep the conversation on track and to ensure all topics/questions are addressed promptly

Developing Questions

- Use the four questions developed by the Working Groups
- Questions are open-ended, conversational and natural in order to generate as much discussion as possible.
- Keep questions simple and focused on the purpose.

Tips: *If possible, it is a good idea to send questions to participants before the session. This can provide participants some time to think about how they might respond to various issues.*

Starting the Session

The facilitator begins the session with a personal introduction, role of notetaker, and welcoming the participants, then:

- Introduce the purpose as a consultation to develop the new Multi-Year Strategic Plan.
 - Explain how the information provided will be used.
 - Address confidentiality to assure participants no names or identifying information will be attached to the comments. Also obtain verbal agreement from the participants that they will not share what is said outside of the group.
 - Develop understanding of the topic and vocabulary.
 - Ask participants to introduce themselves.
 - Direct participants to the posted or provided questions.
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- ❖ **Facilitator:** asks questions, prompts discussions, listens.
 - ❖ **Notetaker:** taking notes, observes interactions, and reactions.
 - ❖ **Participants:** small number, sharing feedback/experiences and reflections

During the Session

- Ensure all members have a chance to provide input. Use probing questions to encourage conversation if the group is quiet. For example, reword the question or provide a list of potential issues for participants to discuss.
- Keep the discussion on track so that all the questions are addressed.
- Probe and ask for clarification when needed
 - Would you explain further?
 - Would you give me an example of what you mean?
 - Is there anything else?
- Encourage all participants to share but do not pressure or single-out individuals and respect the right to pass

Tips: *The role of facilitator is to ask the questions, listen, and manage the conversation. The facilitator is **not** part of the discussion but other than asking the questions, probing, and reflecting a summary to ensure understanding.*

The Role of Facilitator

- Bring everyone into the discussion (ensure discussion is accessible)
- Check time and pace
- Ask relevant, probing questions
- Ensure participants are treated with dignity and respect
- Manage conflict
- Stay focused on the process
- Follow up on concerns
- Do not let a few people dominate the conversation

Online Considerations

Remote Participation:

- Participants do not have to have their cameras on
- Remind participants:
 - They can use the chat if they would rather not speak on the microphone
 - The microphone picks up background noises so don't forget the mute button
 - Find a quiet space for the duration of the discussion if possible

Principles for Practice

Although these are standard practices, you need to reflect on what additional modifications are needed to make the space safe, inviting to participants and optimize their engagement.

For example, honoring time and scheduling commitments, community contexts and expectations.

Multi-Year Strategic Plan Consultation

Introduction to the MYSP

Education Act

Part VI of the *Ontario Education Act* requires that every school board develop a Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) spanning a minimum of three years. The development of the plan must include communication and **consultation** with parents, students, employees, and supporters of the board.

The purpose of the MYSP:

- to help school boards articulate shared values,
- set long-term commitments, and
- establish strategic priorities.

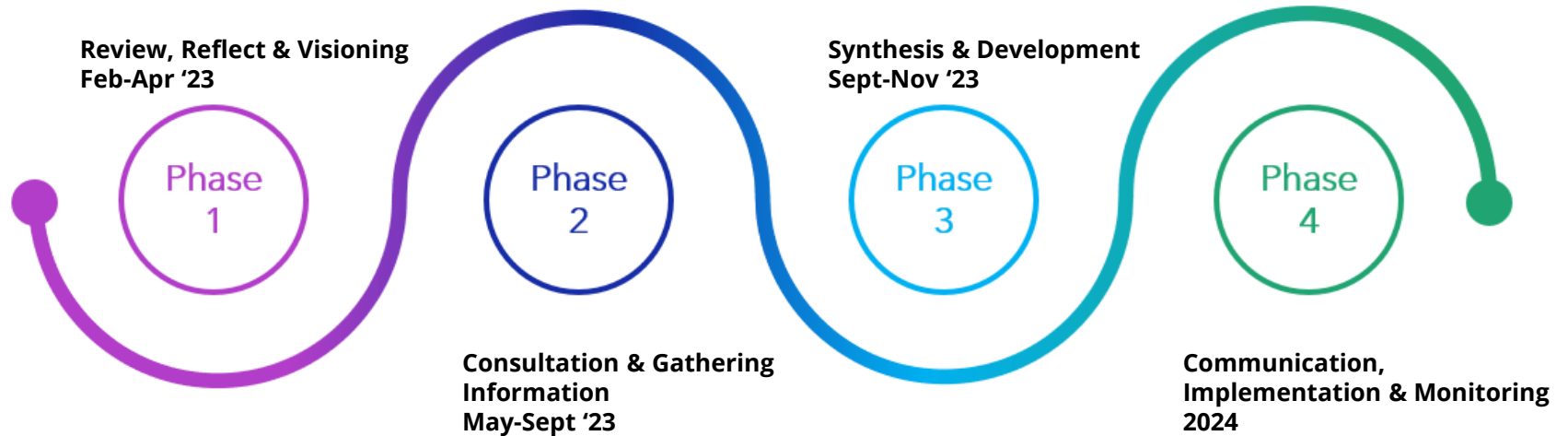
It is a compass that guides collective actions for ongoing improvement across the learning organization.

Purpose of MYSP Consultation

A strong Multi-Year Strategic Plan is informed by evidence from external and internal board scans, big picture aspirational thinking, and the lived experience of students, families, staff, and community members.

The goal of the consultation is to involve and collaborate with these groups for the purposes of creating a strengthened plan that reflects their authentic needs and goals.

MYSP Development Timeline



Current MYSP - Six Strategic Priorities



MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN | 2018-2023



Any Questions?

Let's move on

Before the Session

Ensure participants:

- voluntarily agree (informed consent).
- are aware of the purpose and goal(s) of the consultation.
- are informed that there may be discussion of sensitive topics (or send the questions prior to the session if possible).
- that anonymity is limited.

Ground Rules

- Only one speaker at a time
- No talking while someone else is speaking
- Everyone has a chance to participate
- Everyone has the right to pass
- No one dominates the conversation
- No “right” or “wrong” answers
- Willingness to “move on” to the next question
- Confidentiality (Keep the discussion confidential within the same group of participants)

Setting (Remote Participation)

- Ensure that the selected online platform (e.g., Zoom, Google Meet) is convenient to use and that participants are comfortable using it
- Make sure that a reliable internet connection is available
- Appropriate planning and adjustments may require to ensure that participants with less resources are not excluded from participating the focus group
- A person trained in information technology must be present to handle any technical issues before and throughout the focus groups
- Budget time for the technical issues
- Consider the platform's security measure and ability to ensure confidentiality of the groups

Multi-Year Strategic Plans: Questions for Students

Let's focus on you as a DDSB student Q. 1

Discussion Question #1: 10 minutes

What is most important to you about your school experience?

(Prompt: Think of what you hold important, your personal values, your identity.)

Let's focus on you as a DDSB student Q. 2

Discussion Question #2: 15 minutes

What is working well for you now as a student in the DDSB?

(Prompt: Think of when you feel like you are having a good experience.)

Let's focus on you as a DDSB student Q. 3

Discussion Question #3: 15 minutes

As a student, what would make school better for you?

(Prompt: Think of what could be improved, and how the DDSB could make that happen in the future.)

Let's focus on you as a DDSB student Q. 4

Discussion Question #4: 10 minutes

What advice would you give a new DDSB student?

(Prompt: What has it been like in the past, and what insights do you have to share?)

Multi-Year Strategic Plans: Questions for Educators and Staff

Let's focus on you as an educator/staff Q. 1

Discussion Question #1: 10 minutes

What is most important to you about your work experience?

(Prompt: Think of what you hold important, your personal values, your identity.)

Let's focus on you as an educator/staff Q. 2

Discussion Question #2: 15 minutes

What is working well for you now as a staff member in the DDSB?

(Prompt: Think of when you feel like you are having a good experience.)

Let's focus on you as an educator/staff Q. 3

Discussion Question #3: 15 minutes

As a staff member, what would make work better for you?

(Prompt: Think of what could be improved, and how the DDSB could make that happen in the future.)

Let's focus on you as an educator/staff Q. 4

Discussion Question #4: 10 minutes

What advice would you give a new DDSB staff member?

(Prompt: What has it been like in the past, and what insights do you have to share?)

Multi-Year Strategic Plans: Questions for Parents/Caregivers & Families

Parents/Caregivers & Families Q. 1

Discussion Question #1: 10 minutes

What is most important to you about your child(ren)'s school experience?

(Prompt: Think of what you hold important, your personal values, your identity.)

Parents/Caregivers & Families Q. 2

Discussion Question #2: 15 minutes

What is working well for you now as a parent/caregiver or family member in the DDSB?

(Prompt: Think of when you feel like you are having a good experience.)

Parents/Caregivers & Families Q. 3

Discussion Question #3: 15 minutes

As a parent/caregiver or family member, what would make your experience with the DDSB better for you?

(Prompt: Think of what could be improved, and how the DDSB could make that happen in the future.)

Parents/Caregivers & Families Q. 4

Discussion Question #4: 10 minutes

What advice would you give to a new DDSB parent/caregiver or family member?

(Prompt: What has it been like in the past, and what insights do you have to share?)

Multi-Year Strategic Plans: Questions for Community/Organizations

Community/Organizations Q. 1

Discussion Question #1: 10 minutes

What is most important to you about students, staff members, parents/caregivers school experience?

(Prompt: Think of what you hold important, your personal values, your identity.)

Community/Organizations Q. 2

Discussion Question #2: 15 minutes

What is working well for students, staff members, parents/caregivers now?

(Prompt: Think of when you feel like you are having a good experience.)

Community/Organizations Q. 3

Discussion Question #3: 15 minutes

What would make school better for students, staff members, parents/caregivers?

(Prompt: Think of what could be improved, and how the DDSB could make that happen in the future.)

Community/Organizations Q. 4

Discussion Question #4: 10 minutes

What advice would you give a new DDSB student, staff member, or parent/caregiver?

(Prompt: What has it been like in the past, and what insights do you have to share?)

At the End of the Session

1. Review purpose and ask if anything has been missed and final thoughts, invite members to comment on anything that may not have been discussed already.
2. Invite participants to reach out (phone, email etc.) with additional thoughts they may have as they reflect on what they heard shared (things they wish they had said, or things they would have liked to expand on).
3. Thank everyone for coming.
4. After the session, the facilitator will send all notes and feedback gathered to the email address: MYSP@ddsb.ca

MYSP Contact Information

Visit our webpage: <https://www.dds.ca/en/about-ddsb/strategic-plan.aspx>

Email us: MYSP@dds.ca

Leave us a voicemail: 905-666-6975

Thank you for your support

Questions

Next Steps

For the facilitators:

- If applicable, please send all the data collected (e.g., placemats, sticky notes, easel pad sheets, etc.) during the session to:

Accountability and Assessment Department, 1st Floor, Education Centre

If you have any questions, please email MYSP@ddsb.ca