

STRATEGY CHART CASE STUDY

Instructions:

Students will be provided instruction on the use of a strategy chart (initially developed by the Midwest Academy and modified by Northeast Action) within advocacy-based campaigns. Together, with their instructor, students will generate a mobilization strategy based on a case given in class. Each student is expected to contribute to the class discussion. Students will be graded on their participation drafting the strategy chart and completing the written chart.

The Organization:

Success By 6 (SB6), a community coalition supported by the local United Way, started more than twelve years ago. In that time, the initiative has been successful in securing support from the Department of Social Services to fund programming offering professional development trainings for child care workers working with young children as well as support for capacity building within child care settings. The initiative provides very limited phone line support to parents and child care workers who are facing challenges working with young children. The group also launched a fairly successful marketing campaign a few years back to demonstrate the value of high quality childcare for the community.

SB6 has one staff person dedicated to it and she provides about half of her time to the coalition. Coalition staff has access to a computer, photocopying equipment, scanner, fax, and meeting rooms. Staff also has access to United Way's database which includes information on more than 400 non-profit organizations and 2,100 local businesses and corporations. There are currently 12 active members of SB6, and there were 40 people at their last meeting. The coalition's steering committee is made up of 6 core leaders; all of whom have been involved since the beginning. One of the steering committee members is very active with parent groups. She has a mailing list of over 1,000 parents that have signed petitions or written a letter to their legislator in the past year.

Over the past several months, funding for core SB6 activities has come into question and the group has decided that it is imperative that they begin to move in some new directions to address pressing community needs – including advocacy. At a recent meeting, SB6 decided that it also wanted to expand its active membership to 75, and to involve at least 300 people in its advocacy efforts to demonstrate some real organizational strength. This would include parents, early childhood experts, childcare workers, interested community groups/leaders, and businesses, ideally.

A Community Problem:

Parents and professionals from the childcare and health and human service fields report increased problem behaviors among young children in general including physical behaviors (e.g., hitting/punching, kicking, biting); difficulties with self-regulation (e.g., inability to pay attention or follow directions); issues with communication (e.g., screaming to get attention, acting out, engaging in attention-seeking); and peer-related problems (e.g., not getting along with other students, increased isolation from peers). These behaviors may indicate socio-emotional, intellectual, or other developmental challenges as well as the possible need for early intervention services.

Left unaddressed, behavioral, socio-emotional, intellectual, and developmental challenges can pose major barriers to early educational activities (including pre-kindergarten and kindergarten). A recent report on school suspensions in the Buffalo Public Schools noted 35 suspensions at the pre-kindergarten and 200 suspensions at the kindergarten level during a recent school year. Furthermore, educators indicate that it is difficult to address the learning needs of all students when as many as 10-15% of students in a given class are challenged. Unfortunately, individuals who most commonly come in contact with young children are often not specifically trained to assess child behavior and development or to screen for underlying issues.

Communities across the nation have implemented universal screening programs in an effort to detect developmental challenges in young children. Unfortunately, New York State does not currently support such efforts financially or otherwise. There are concerns about the expense of such an undertaking. In addition, early intervention providers are not allowed to advertise their services to the public under current regulations. As a result, parents and child care workers who identify possible problems may not know where to turn for assistance or may face real difficulties navigating the system.

SB6 has decided to focus its energies on addressing this problem with an overarching goal of making screening for developmental challenges universally available. The coalition also wants to ensure that people are aware of available early intervention services and can access them as needed by changing current regulations about marketing programs.

Using the information provided in this case and in class, develop a strategy chart for SB6 with at least one short-, intermediate-, and long-term goal.

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Midwest Academy Strategy Chart

Goals	Organizational Considerations	Constituents, Allies, and Opponents	Targets	Tactics	Research	Message
<p>1. List the long-term objectives of your campaign.</p> <p>2. State the intermediate goals for this issue campaign. What constitutes victory?</p> <p><i>How will the campaign:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Win concrete improvements in people's lives? • Give people a sense of their own power? • Alter the relations of power? <p>3. What short-term or partial victories can you win as steps toward your long-term goal?</p>	<p>1. List the resources that your organization brings to the campaign. Include: money, number of staff, facilities, reputation, canvass, etc.</p> <p>What is the budget, including in-kind contributions, for this campaign?</p> <p>2. List the specific ways in which you want your organization to be strengthened by this campaign. Fill in numbers for each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand leadership group. • Increase experience of existing leadership. • Build membership base • Expand into new constituencies. • Raise more money. <p>3. List internal problems that have to be considered if the campaign is to succeed.</p>	<p>1. Who cares about this issue enough to join in or help the organization?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whose problem is it? • What do they gain if they win? • What risks are they taking? • What power do they have over the target? • Into what groups are they organized? <p>2. Who are your opponents?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will you victory cost them? • What will they do/spend to oppose you? • How strong are they? 	<p>1. Primary Targets</p> <p>A target is always a person. It is never an institution or elected body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has the power to give you what you want? • What power do you have over them? <p>2. Secondary Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has power over the people with the power to give you what you want? • What power do you have over them? 	<p>1. For each target, list the tactics that each constituent group can best use to make its power felt.</p> <p>Tactics must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In context • Flexible and creative • Directed at a specific target • Make sense to the membership • Be backed up by a specific form of power. <p>Tactics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media events • Actions for information and demands • Public hearings • Strikes • Voter registration and voter education • Law suits • Accountability sessions • Elections • Negotiations 	<p>1. What do you need to know about your issue, that you don't know now? How will you find out the information? Who can help you find it?</p> <p>2. What kind of research/information would help to bolster your case to the media and general public, to call attention to the severity of the problem or to undermine the credibility of your target, or other opponents?</p>	<p>1. How will you describe the problem you are seeking to address, in the media and to the general public? What phrases will you use?</p> <p>2. How will you talk about your solution in the media and to the general public? What phrases will you use?</p>

STRATEGY CHART EXERCISE

Goals	Organizational Considerations	Constituents, Allies and Opponents	Targets	Tactics	Information Needs	Message
Long Term:		Constituents:	Primary:			
Intermediate:		Allies:	Secondary:			
Short Term:		Opponents:				