National Network of State Teachers of the Year
2012-2014 Strategic Plan
November 2011
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Cover photos (l to r): Marguerite Izzo (2007 NY State Teacher of the Year) with her students, Justin Minkel (2007 AR STOY) working with a student, Rich Mayorga (2003 AZ STOY) teaching his class, Rebecca Snyder (2009 PA STOY)
Page 3 (center): Terry Kaldhusdal (2007 WI STOY) surrounded by his students
Page 5 (bottom left): Kelly Kovacic (2010 CA STOY) with her graduating seniors
Page 11 (center): Maddie Fennell (2007 NE STOY) surrounded by her students
Page 21 (left): Kelly Kovacic (2010 CA STOY) working with her students
Page 25: Art Peekel (1992 IL STOY) and Anna Shults (2007 IN STOY) at an NNSTOY event
Page 28: Chris Poulos (2007 CT STOY) with his student
Page 30: Katherine Bassett (2003 NJ STOY) with her students
Since 1952, states and some territories have annually selected state teachers of the year (STOYs), representatives of the profession who exemplify exceptional teaching. In the early 1980s, a group of STOYs came together to discuss how they could more effectively influence policy discussions around the teaching profession. From these efforts, the National State Teachers of the Year (NNSTOY), a teacher-led network of some of the nation’s most outstanding educators, was established. The organization, chartered in 1984, serves as a community of learning, bringing exemplary teachers together to share and discuss effective teaching practices and policies.

Over the years, NNSTOY has collaborated with national organizations such as the National Teacher Hall of Fame, the Dolly Parton Foundation and Kappa Delta Pi to spotlight excellence in teaching. Additionally, the organization has engaged in service learning projects to promote networking and professional growth, and has awarded scholarships for education majors to help recruit effective teachers. Though the organization has continued to exemplify exceptional teaching through these accomplishments, its direct impact on education policy has been limited.

One year ago, a group of STOYs began meeting regularly to consider how they could amplify and sustain their voice in policy and practice once their year of recognition as a STOY is complete. Many of these STOYs have been participating in state and federal policy conversations. Examples include:

- Invitation to serve as member of the U.S. Delegation and Planning Team for the 2011 and 2012 International Summit on the Teaching Profession
- Participation in a conference call with Secretary Duncan at the request of the U.S. Department of Education (USED) and meetings with USED officials to discuss teaching quality issues (2011)
- Chairing and participating in the National Education Association’s Commission on Effective Teachers and Teaching (2011)
- Invitation to and participation in the 2010 Singapore Education Conference (2010)
- Participation in the National Teacher of the Year virtual community run by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the Center for Teaching Quality (CTQ) (2009-2011)
- Participation in the drafting and launching of the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2011)
- Meetings with U.S. senators and representatives, which led to the introduction of the Teachers at the Table Act in the U.S. Congress (2008)
- The drafting of a statement of Ten Principles for the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (2007)

This active group of STOYs soon realized that a unified organization providing a collective voice for exemplary teachers could accomplish far more than individual STOYs alone. The group reached out to the NNSTOY executive board, which agreed to consider a new strategic plan for the organization. Several executive board members and engaged STOYs formed a Steering Committee of 21 teachers of the year (STOYs) to consider how they might collaborate and amplify their voice. These STOYs are united in their belief that a more unified approach can achieve greater collective impact. They have formed a new network, known as the National Council of State Teachers of the Year (NCSTOY), to bring together exemplary educators from across the country, supporting collaborative efforts to improve the teaching profession and its influence in policy discussions.
the year (see Appendix for a complete list of Steering Committee members). This Steering Committee, along with a subset of its members, an eight-person Planning Team, raised initial investments from the American Federation of Teachers and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support strategic planning and organizational capacity-building. The Committee, supported by an education policy consulting firm, has been meeting regularly since May 2011 to determine the organization’s theory of change, including goals, strategies, outputs, outcomes and the ultimate impact that NNSTOY hopes to accomplish.¹ The NNSTOY executive board passed a resolution agreeing to support the recommendations of the Steering Committee and honor the results of the strategic plan.

The Steering Committee has grounded its work in a new vision for America’s schools, one that rewards collaboration, innovation and effectiveness and is not hindered by traditional school structures. The strategic planning process included an analysis of existing organizations to determine their contributions toward achieving this vision and to the field in general, and to identify unmet needs. It also included an internal assessment of NNSTOY’s strengths and weaknesses to determine the organization’s unique value-add in making this vision a reality.

These analyses culminated in the Steering Committee’s adoption of NNSTOY’s new theory of change:

By promoting differentiated roles and responsibilities for teachers along a career continuum, talented teachers will be recruited and retained, effective teaching will increase, and students’ learning and development of 21st century skills will improve.

The plan includes NNSTOY’s steps toward implementing and fulfilling this theory of change, including goals, strategies and activities, as well as metrics to measure outputs and outcomes for accountability. A new governance structure, staffing plan and estimated three-year budget are also included. Risks that accompany any new organization are addressed with clear mitigation plans. The plan concludes with specific next steps for implementation.

NNSTOY is ready for the next chapter, and this strategic plan is a roadmap to reach the desired impact of the organization: to increase student success by attracting and retaining highly effective teachers.
NNSTOY’s Vision for America’s Schools
All students deserve schools where they can learn about the world around them, open their minds and explore the impossible. But today’s students are navigating a flatter world, one that requires education and/or training after high school for most living-wage or higher-paying jobs. This is a vastly different global landscape than the one for which America’s agrarian model of education was designed. Research suggests this outdated model is not consistent with the needs of today’s graduates.\(^2,3\) In their seminal work on school structures, John Chubb and Terry Moe argue that “the political institutions that govern America’s schools function naturally and routinely, despite everyone’s best intentions, to burden the schools with excessive bureaucracy, to inhibit effective organization, and to stifle student achievement.”\(^4\)

But it’s the quality of teaching that matters most to achieve the promise of equity of student outcomes in public education and to ensure the success of all students. Study after study shows that an effective teacher is the most important school-based factor in improving student achievement.\(^5\) (A quality principal is the second-most important factor.\(^6\)) In fact, four consecutive years in a classroom with a teacher from the top 25 percent of the teaching pool can erase the achievement gap.\(^7\) Effective teachers also cause a “spillover effect” on an entire school, increasing student achievement across the board.\(^8\)

As the Center for Teaching Quality explains, the impact of the teacher on student success does not mean that the significant influence poverty, parenting or English language attainment have on student achievement should be ignored.\(^9\) Or the fact that, just as in any other field, not all teachers are the same: Some teachers are able to continually improve their practice and increase student learning; others need more support to strengthen their skills.

Although the case is clear that effective teachers are essential, too often the systems and practices for attracting, training, assigning and compensating educators do not support teaching effectiveness:

- States, higher education institutions, districts and schools aren’t deliberate about who is recruited into teaching,\(^10\) or which assignments teachers are given.
- What teachers learn in many schools of education has historically had little practical application to their first years in the classroom.
- Most new teachers aren’t given quality mentoring or induction.\(^11\)
- Professional development too often is disconnected from what teachers need.\(^12\)
- Teachers have few, if any, opportunities beyond the classroom other than administration to share what they know and can do.\(^13\)
- Teaching remains an isolated profession, with little opportunity for teachers to collaborate, model lessons, observe one another’s practice, or engage in planning.
- Most principals aren’t given the training or support to become instructional leaders.\(^14\)
- Student learning isn’t usually a factor in teacher or principal evaluations.\(^15\)
When teachers need to be laid off, the criterion is almost always seniority—not effectiveness, skill or assignment.\textsuperscript{16}

The tenure decision is made many times before it is known whether teachers have honed their craft well enough to become effective teachers.\textsuperscript{17}

Teachers are paid virtually the same, regardless of skill or assignment, and are awarded salary step increases based on master’s degrees or coursework without regard to the teaching context.\textsuperscript{18}

In short: strategic systems to recruit and retain potential highly effective teachers are missing. Many education reforms of the 1990s through today have attempted to increase equity, strengthen curriculum, spread excellent teaching and raise performance to benefit all young people. Yet, many reforms attempt to force new round pegs into the same square holes, and leave teachers feeling like reforms are happening to them as opposed to with them.

In many schools and districts across the country, teachers are handed the keys to their classrooms on the first day of school and then spend the entire year in a room with a closed door by themselves, with little colleague interaction during teaching hours. If all students are to have access to highly effective teachers to equip them with the skills necessary to navigate a rapidly changing world, then America’s schools must do more than change. It’s time to transform schools and increase equity while elevating student learning and work to the levels of deep knowledge, creativity, collaboration and problem-solving required in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century.

To increase teacher effectiveness, provide equal access to effective teachers, and keep pace with the rest of the world, a new definition for what it means to be a teacher must be created. The National State Teachers of the Year propose a vision for America’s schools that is rooted in teacher collaboration, innovation and creativity—a model of the very same skills students must learn to be successful in today’s world.

The 21\textsuperscript{st} century teaching profession should:

\begin{itemize}
  \item Allow teachers to become leaders inside and outside of their own local districts while staying in the classroom.
  \item Have pathways that support increased teacher leadership based on effectiveness and skills (for example, some continuums have levels like Apprentice, Professional, Mentor, and Master Teacher that define teacher roles, responsibilities and expectations according to teachers’ attributes and skills, not their years of experience).
  \item Allow teachers to move through these pathways and increase their responsibility for and influence on school, district and/or state decisions regarding curriculum, professional development, and other teaching quality issues.
  \item Enable teachers to advance from one level to the next based on their talents, interests, effectiveness, and time experience, and also enable teachers to move back down the pathway based on performance or if they choose a new job assignment, for example.
  \item Provide teachers with discretion over curricular and assessment choices, given their expertise as professionals, provided their students continue to reach high levels of academic achievement.
  \item Blend evidence-based autonomy with responsibility and accountability: rigorous standards and expectations combined with the freedom to exercise professional judgment in how best to reach those standards.
\end{itemize}

Essential to this new vision is the way we recognize and reward teachers at each stage of their careers. High-demand fields in math, sciences and engineering pay graduates significantly more than teaching,
and exacerbate the difficulty to acquire and retain teachers in these subjects. Research around pay-for-performance programs is conflicting – for example, a study from the National Center on Performance Incentives found, on average, no correlation between more pay and student achievement gains, while other studies have found modest correlations.\(^\text{19}\) This lack of consistent evidence around performance pay suggests the need to continue research in this area, as well as explore alternative approaches to the pay structure of teachers.

NNSTOY’s approach to strategic compensation is based on skills and assignments as well as effectiveness. Compensation based on skills, assignments and effectiveness has been implemented in conjunction with other efforts to improve teaching quality in a handful of districts, and early results of this approach on student achievement are promising.\(^\text{20}\)

In order to increase the number of effective teachers, and increase access to those teachers, all educators must collaborate on a daily basis, sharing practices, discussing the needs of common students, planning together and building on each other’s successes. States, districts and schools should:

- Encourage the continuous and systematic sharing of best practice models, quality curriculum materials and resources, including experimenting with new staffing structures such as team teaching and co-teaching.
- Promote the purposeful creation of professional learning communities that involve local teachers and administrators, as well as members of the broader population such as higher education personnel preparing new teachers, education researchers, field and career experts, parents and caregivers.
- Encourage innovation through a focus on standards rather than standardization (e.g., “one mountain, many paths”).

Given the need to focus NNSTOY’s work in order to achieve impact, this plan includes a strategic assessment to determine NNSTOY’s value-add in achieving this vision for America’s schools.

**Looking Inward: Analyzing NNSTOY**

An internal assessment of NNSTOY’s strengths and weaknesses revealed that NNSTOY is in a position to offer specific things to the teaching profession that other organizations representing teachers and teaching cannot. NNSTOY is made up of a diverse network of talented and committed members representing every state and all education disciplines, specialties and grade levels. Its members have credibility as exemplary teachers in the field, and have the ability to serve as nonpartisan partners with policymakers by providing authentic classroom perspectives that are craft- and student-focused. In addition, STOYs are trained in education policymaking and media relations and are passionate about their field. Importantly, STOYs are inherently teacher leaders and are in a unique position to both identify issues with and influence teaching quality initiatives in their schools, districts and beyond.

Despite these significant assets, NNSTOY’s organizational capacity has limitations. Specifically, as an organization led entirely by volunteers, it lacks important operations and infrastructure needs, including a lack of full-time staff and supports and limited funding. NNSTOY struggles with engaging and building membership necessary to maintain credibility both with policymakers and other teachers. Though NNSTOY has long advocated for a teacher voice in policy, these infrastructure barriers have prevented significant impact in this area.
Looking Outward: Analyzing the Field

Before organizations can determine their paths forward, they must evaluate the needs of the field and identify where those needs are fulfilled by existing organizations. This strategic planning process includes a landscape scan to review organizations working on teacher effectiveness, and more specifically organizations representing or gathering teacher voice in policy and practice, to learn from those organizations’ work and identify gaps. The analysis began with 12 organizations, listed in Figure 1, and identified the purpose of the organization, budget and funding sources, staffing, history and key initiatives and impact.

A subset of these organizations is primarily focused on ensuring that education policies are shaped by teachers. Figures 2 and 3 provide information about five organizations that specifically work to involve the teacher voice in policy conversations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization (year founded)</th>
<th>Target Teacher Demographic</th>
<th>Area of Focus</th>
<th>Online Platform for Engaging Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Center for Teaching Quality (CTQ) (1999)</td>
<td>Teacher leaders</td>
<td>Teacher leadership, practice and policy</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators 4 Excellence (E4E) (2010)</td>
<td>Primarily New York educators</td>
<td>Last in, first out; teacher evaluation, other policy issues of teaching quality</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope Street Group (2003)</td>
<td>Teachers and leaders</td>
<td>Teacher evaluation policy</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach Plus (2007)</td>
<td>Teachers in years 3-10</td>
<td>Urban education policy</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Viva Project (2010)</td>
<td>Classroom teachers</td>
<td>State and national policy</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Figure 3: Teacher Voice Organizations’ Purpose and Unique Niches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Unique niche</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Hope Street Group**               | • Bring practitioners together with policymakers to affect the design of teacher evaluations  
• Use online tools to capture and synthesize educator voice  
• Identify “Teacher Fellows” who support evaluation reform and can advocate at the national level | • Dedicated to helping states improve the teaching profession through evaluation policy reforms that incorporate teacher voice  
• Strong national connections |
| **The Center for Teaching Quality** | • Identify teacher leaders  
• Educate them on participating in policy discussions  
• Ensure that their voices are heard  
• Conduct research for policymakers on supporting the teaching profession and improving student achievement | • Earliest leader of teacher voice/teacher leadership field  
• Helps teachers advocate policy and practices that advance their profession  
• Operates 16 virtual communities for teacher leadership/advocacy |
| **Teach Plus**                      | • Address the urgent need for effective, experienced teachers in urban classrooms  
• Focus on effective teachers in the second stage of their careers (years 3 through 10) who want to continue classroom teaching while also expanding their impact as leaders in their schools and in policy | • Selective teaching policy fellows program  
• T+ network: national community of teachers who provide feedback to policymakers on education questions and issues (~3,500 teachers) |
| **The VIVA Project**                | • Collect teachers’ thoughts and ideas through an online forum  
• Moderate and summarize the conversations | • Part of New Voices Strategies, a nonprofit that designs websites to empower citizens’ voices in the public policy arena |
| **Educators 4 Excellence**          | • Provide a forum for current and former teachers to:  
• Learn about current education policy and practices  
• Attend networking events  
• Help encourage meaningful education reform | • Openly against some traditional teacher union policies  
• Focus on returning prestige to the profession  
• Mostly New York state-based initiatives |

The rise of these relatively young groups has provided an opportunity for teachers to be involved in policy debates in new ways. The organizations vary in their approaches to accessing and amplifying teacher voices in policy discussions:

- Engage a limited pool of teachers setting a high bar for admission/selection (CTQ, Teach Plus)
- Focus on going deep to influence policy and practice in select communities (Teach Plus, E4E)
- Promote teacher voice by taking advantage of online platforms and networks of teachers (CTQ, Hope Street Group, Teach Plus, The VIVA Project)
- Work on a myriad of teaching quality issues of relevance to/selected by member teachers (CTQ, E4E, Teach Plus, The VIVA Project)
Interviews were conducted with leaders of several of these organizations, as well as national experts on the role and future of teacher voice organizations.

Some of NNSTOY’s early observations of the current landscape include:

- The teacher voice field is still new and there is continuing interest in and opportunity to engage more teachers in policy and practice discussions
- The policy success stories from these organizations have been at a local or state level, not a regional or federal level (e.g., Teach Plus’ work in Indianapolis\(^2\))
- Most organizations seem to rely on selecting and coaching a small number of highly effective teachers to provide the teacher voice in policy debates
- Having an online network of effective teachers, regardless of the platform, does not necessarily amplify teacher voice in policy discussions; few of these organizations have hard evidence of its impact on policy
- Most of these organizations have made a conscious decision to focus on teachers in their first several years of the profession, rather than veteran teachers

NNSTOY is encouraged by the wave of teacher voice organizations, and views these other organizations as potential partners and collaborators.
NNSTOY’s Theory of Change

A Teacher-Led Movement to Transform America’s Schools
In developing its theory of change, the organization identified its unique niche in the field of teacher voice organizations: it is an organization made up of teacher leaders recognized for excellence in the classroom. NNSTOY members are specially situated to identify challenges to recruiting and retaining effective teachers, and to offer teacher-supported solutions. STOYs know firsthand why some of their colleagues have chosen to leave the profession and why others haven’t been attracted to it in the first place.

NNSTOY firmly believes that the lack of career opportunities for active teachers is at the root of teacher recruitment and retention problems. Teachers aren’t widgets; their instructional expertise varies and all students will benefit if teachers are given options beyond either staying in the classroom with identical responsibilities and roles, year after year, or moving into administration.¹

Because of NNSTOY’s unique value-add – a corps of highly qualified teacher leaders recognized by the field for their excellence in teaching – the organization has decided to focus on identifying and improving opportunities for teachers to advance, share special skills and be rewarded for demonstrated effectiveness and unique talents in order to recruit and retain highly effective teachers.

NNSTOY’s Vision
NNSTOY’s vision is for all students to learn from highly effective teachers.

NNSTOY’s Mission
NNSTOY seeks to improve student learning across the nation by defining, sharing and advocating for effective teaching practices and policies.

NNSTOY’s Theory of Change
NNSTOY’s theory of change aims to significantly contribute to realizing its vision for America’s schools:

By promoting differentiated roles and responsibilities for career advancement, more talented teachers will be recruited and retained, effective teaching will increase, and students’ learning and development of 21st century skills will improve.

To accomplish this theory of change, NNSTOY is focused on two goals:

1. Transform active teachers’ roles, responsibilities and compensation to attract and retain highly effective teachers;
2. Become a trusted voice representing highly effective teachers to advance the new vision of the teaching profession.
Goal 1: Strategies and Activities
To accomplish its first goal to transform what it means to be a teacher, NNSTOY will spend the next three years focused on four strategies:

- Research and identify models and practices of teacher leadership and career advancement opportunities
- Share and promote these models and practices with policymakers
- Educate stakeholders about these models and practices
- Support states, districts and schools in implementing these models and practices

The first strategy begins with clearly articulating a new definition of teaching by researching existing models of teacher leadership and career advancement in action. By the end of 2012, NNSTOY will have identified 2-3 models of career advancement and examples of effective practices aligned to NNSTOY’s vision. NNSTOY will research national and international models and innovative solutions as part of this work. These models and examples will clearly illustrate:

- teacher leadership opportunities that allow teachers to stay in the classroom
- opportunities for collaboration among teachers
- increased and differentiated responsibilities for teachers
- strategic compensation based on roles, assignments and effectiveness

Essential to NNSTOY’s work is informing policymakers about these new models and effective practices. Beginning in 2013, NNSTOY will widely disseminate NNSTOY’s perspective on the selected models’ strengths and weaknesses, and ideas for moving these models and effective practices forward to implementation in schools and districts. This work will revolve around building relationships with policymakers at the federal and state levels, educating NNSTOY members about informing policymakers at the federal level of models and effective practices aligned to NNSTOY’s goals, drafting and disseminating position statements, and building partnerships with other organizations focused on teachers to create broader support for the selected models and practices.

Transforming active teachers’ roles, responsibilities and compensation will also require educating teachers and other stakeholders about the new definition of teaching. In 2012, NNSTOY will focus on a public engagement and media strategy to build awareness of and support for NNSTOY’s vision for America’s schools and the new definition of teaching. NNSTOY will also spread the word about NNSTOY’s plan to NNSTOY members and other STOYs through networks, events, existing online platforms and other communications efforts.

NNSTOY will focus on supporting implementation by building tools to help states, districts and schools put these models and practices into action. By the end of 2013, NNSTOY will create an action plan to help support state implementation, and in 2014, NNSTOY will create a similar plan for districts. These plans will include the identification of policy/contractual barriers to successful implementation (and innovative solutions to overcome these barriers), case studies, and toolkits to help states and districts implement these models and practices. Additionally, NNSTOY will provide input on the impact of these models and practices on individual classrooms. This teacher perspective provides policymakers with evidence of the value of these models and practices and helps to close the policy implementation gap.

Goal 2: Strategies and Activities
NNSTOY’s second goal is about becoming a trusted voice representing highly effective teachers and focuses on two strategies:

- Build NNSTOY’s organizational capacity
- Expand and engage NNSTOY’s membership

As an organization that lacks significant visibility and infrastructure, building NNSTOY’s capacity is essential to achieving its mission. In its first year, NNSTOY will affiliate with a fiscal partner to provide back-office support while retaining NNSTOY’s independence. During this time, NNSTOY will raise funds to implement the strategic plan using a realistic and sustainable fundraising strategy. NNSTOY will develop its new board of directors and hire staff during this time as well.

To truly represent effective teachers across the country, NNSTOY must expand and engage its membership. By the end of 2012, NNSTOY will increase its membership by communicating NNSTOY’s goals to new STOYS during their year of recognition, working with state STOY networks, using existing online platforms and building the organization’s reputation through a public engagement and media strategy. NNSTOY will focus on membership engagement through conferences and work teams designed to accomplish specific tasks, such as developing the criteria for identifying effective models and practices, drafting white papers and other materials, and searching for an executive director.

Following are several figures that outline various pieces of the theory of change:
- Figure 4 provides an illustration of the organization’s theory of change
- Figure 5 details NNSTOY’s strategies and activities by year
- Figures 6 and 7 focus on NNSTOY’s evaluation plan. Figure 6 aligns NNSTOY’s strategies to unmet needs in the field and Figure 7 shows the organization’s expected outputs and outcomes, as well as specific metrics designed to identify successful attainment of those outputs and outcomes
- Figure 8 lays out a short-term launch plan for the theory of change
THEORY OF CHANGE: By promoting a new vision of the teaching profession with differentiated roles and responsibilities along a career continuum, more talented teachers will be recruited and retained, effective teaching will increase, and students’ learning and development of 21st century skills will improve.
**Figure 5: NNSTOY’s Goals, Strategies and Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL 1: Transform active teachers’ roles, responsibilities and compensation to attract and retain highly effective teachers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NNSTOY will advance a new teacher definition based on fluid pathways for active teachers that support increased teacher leadership based on effectiveness and skills</td>
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<td><strong>Strategy 1</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Strategy 3</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Strategy 4</strong></th>
<th><strong>Support states, districts and schools with implementation of these models and practices by building and providing tools</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td>By the end of 2013, create an action plan to help support states with implementation of these models and practices</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Perform a gaps analysis to determine states’ capacity and readiness to implement models and practices aligned to the vision, and use the results to develop a subset of targeted states for NNSTOY’s state-level focus</td>
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<td>• Draft a guide to implementing models and practices aligned to the vision, targeting state policymakers, that identifies common state barriers, issues, etc.</td>
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<td>• Present the guide at targeted state events (leveraging state STOY networks)</td>
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<td>• Draft and disseminate case studies of lessons learned in implementing the models and effective practices</td>
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<td>• Develop a toolkit for state leaders on developing policies that support these models and effective practices</td>
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<td>By the end of 2014, create an action plan to help support districts with implementation of these models and practices</td>
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<td>• Perform a gaps analysis to determine districts’ capacity and readiness to implement models and practices aligned to the vision, and use the results to develop a subset of targeted districts for NNSTOY’s district-level focus (with a particular focus on districts with active NNSTOY members)</td>
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<td>• Draft a guide to implementing models and practices, targeting district policymakers, that identifies common contractual barriers, issues, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Draft and disseminate case studies of lessons learned in implementing the models and effective practices</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Develop a toolkit for district leaders on building policies that support these models and effective practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOAL 2: Become a trusted voice representing highly effective teachers to advance the new vision of the teaching profession</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNSTOY will build organizational capacity to enhance its reputation and increase the organization’s impact as well as build capacity of members to move the organization’s agenda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategy 1** | **Build organizational capacity to enhance NNSTOY reputation and increase the organization’s impact**
---|---
**Activities** (what NNSTOY will do) | By the end of 2011, affiliate with a fiscal partner
- Enter into a one- or two-year fiscal partnership for back-office support, (e.g., finance, accounting, human resources, insurance, taxes, etc.)
- Retain NNSTOY branding and build up NNSTOY’s organizational capacity (especially membership strength) while using fiscal partner’s services
By the middle of 2012, raise multi-year funding to implement the strategic plan
- Develop a realistic and sustainable three-year budget to implement the strategic plan
- Draft NNSTOY’s detailed fundraising strategy
- Develop list of targeted foundations and write grant proposals
- Raise dues and increase membership
By the middle of 2012, align the NNSTOY executive board and committee structure with the new strategic plan
- Recruit new board members
- Update the articles of incorporation and by-laws
- Organize committees to oversee the implementation of the strategic plan (e.g., research and policy; executive search; membership; development)
By the middle of 2012, hire professional staff
- Launch a search committee, hire search firm and recruit executive director with national reputation as an education advocate
- In the interim, contract out for needed staffing to launch the organization (such as a “program director” to design and staff the task force process and identify opportunities to engage in national policy discussions)

**Strategy 2** | **Expand and engage NNSTOY’s membership to build broad understanding of and commitment to NNSTOY’s strategic plan**
---|---
**Activities** (what NNSTOY will do) | By the end of 2012, increase NNSTOY membership
- Upgrade the membership database by capturing email and contact information for all STOYS in last 20 years
- Use the 2012 annual conference (and beyond) to attract more members
- Determine relationship between NNSTOY and state STOY networks in order to use the networks to promote NNSTOY
- Promote NNSTOY membership through STOY year of recognition activities
By the end of 2012, improve engagement of NNSTOY members through the use of online platforms and strategic outreach
- Use online platforms to engage members in the organization’s overall work and gather input on the career advancement models and effective practices aligned to NNSTOY’s vision
- Call on a broader group of STOYS to lead certain areas of the organization’s strategic plan as work teams (e.g. to lead the executive director search committee)
- Communicate NNSTOY’s vision, models and effective practices to members regularly to increase support for NNSTOY
Measuring NNSTOY’s Impact

Even the most carefully-constructed plan can fail to influence change if it is not monitored for fidelity and refined over time to reflect implementation lessons and a changing external environment. NNSTOY aligned its strategies to unmet needs in the field and developed outputs for measuring those strategies (Figure 6), and then NNSTOY developed an evaluation plan based on specific metrics aligned to its outputs and outcomes to ensure the organization stays on track toward realizing its goals (Figure 7).

Figure 6: NNSTOY's Strategies and Outputs Aligned to the Needs of the Field

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem/Unmet Need in the Field</th>
<th>NNSTOY Strategy</th>
<th>Output</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too few examples of high quality models or practices that allow teachers to advance in their career while staying in the classroom</td>
<td>Research and identify examples of models and effective practices that provide career advancement opportunities while allowing teachers to stay in the classroom</td>
<td>NNSTOY endorses and advances for the field career advancement models that create new roles for teachers without leaving the classroom as measured by at least two specific NNSTOY-endorsed models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers do not have a collective voice around strategies to attract and retain highly effective teachers</td>
<td>Educate teachers about NNSTOY’s vision to attract and retain highly effective teachers by providing career advancement opportunities; build organizational capacity to enhance NNSTOY’s reputation and increase the organization’s impact</td>
<td>NNSTOY is a viable organization as measured by professional staff, funding sustainability, grants from at least two to three funders, and growth in membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policymakers do not regularly involve teachers in discussions around recruitment and retention</td>
<td>Inform national and state policymakers about these models and practices for teacher career advancement</td>
<td>NNSTOY provides trusted advice and offers perspective from teacher leaders to federal and state policymakers as measured by number of meetings NNSTOY members have with policymakers (both those requested by NNSTOY and those requested by policymakers) and media hits; NNSTOY is a visible organization in policy debates and deliberations as measured by media hits, blog posts, and at least three national education organization’s endorsing and referencing NNSTOY’s vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>States, districts and schools admit to recruitment and retention problems, but lack credible, teacher-supported solutions</td>
<td>Build tools to help states, districts and schools implement models and practices for teacher career advancement</td>
<td>NNSTOY provides states, districts and schools with materials and tools as measured by the publication of state-level and district-level “lessons learned” implementation guides</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2012 Outputs

• NSTOY endorses and advances the concept and implementation of teacher-led high-quality leadership ad career advancement models that create new roles for teachers without leaving the classroom
• NSTOY provides trusted advice and offers perspective from teacher leaders to federal and state policymakers
• NSTOY is a visible organization in policy debates and deliberations
• NSTOY is a viable organization
• NSTOY provides states and districts with materials and tools

2014 Outcomes

• Federal education policies reflect NSTOY’s vision for teacher leadership and career advancement
• States/districts adopt policies that reflect NSTOY’s vision teacher leadership and for career advancement

Metrics for Measuring Success

• Publication of high-quality principles, components and criteria to evaluate teacher leadership and career advancement models around the country
• Recognition and endorsement of at least 2 high quality teacher leadership and career advancement models that are being implemented by schools, districts or states
• Number of quality, meaningful meetings and relationships NSTOY members have with policymakers (both those requested by NSTOY and those requested by policymakers)
• Media outreach to NSTOY
• Conference presentation requests
• At least three national education organizations referencing NSTOY
• Branding of NSTOY and NSTOY-endorsed “models,” concepts, etc.
• Professional staff
• Funding sustainability, including grants from at least two to three funders
• Attracting recognized speakers at the conference
• Doubling NSTOY conference participation
• Growth in membership
• Publication of state-level and district-level “lessons learned” implementation guides
• Teacher leadership is a priority in key federal programs (e.g., Teacher Incentive Funds)
• At least five states and/or districts adopt policies that reflect the vision
## Figure 8: NNSTOY’s Estimated Three-Year Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Fall 2011</th>
<th>Winter 2011-12</th>
<th>Spring 2012</th>
<th>Fall 2012</th>
<th>Spring 2013</th>
<th>Fall 2013</th>
<th>Spring 2014</th>
<th>June 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affiliate with a fiscal partner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Align the current NNSTOY governance structure with the new board and structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hire professional staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise funds to implement the strategic plan*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and identify models of career advancement and examples of effective practices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate vision and plan to stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase NNSTOY membership</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve engagement of NNSTOY members</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Engage public and media around vision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Build relationships with policymakers at the federal and state levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>Widely disseminate NNSTOY’s perspective on selected models’ strengths and weaknesses, and implementation recommendations for schools and districts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate NNSTOY members on informing policymakers at the federal level of models and effective practices</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create an action plan to help states implement models and practices aligned to the vision</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create an action plan to help districts implement models and practices aligned to the vision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create tools for states</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Create tools for districts</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note that NNSTOY will be engaged in many of these activities, such as fundraising, year-round. The timeline represents the concentrated periods of time that the organization will emphasize specific activities.*
Preparing for Implementation

NNSTOY has been an organization run entirely by volunteers, with no staff and few resources, for nearly three decades, and recognizes the significant limitations that come with a lack of staff and limited funds. To work toward making its vision for America’s schools a reality, NNSTOY must start by reinventing the organization and building its infrastructure. NNSTOY has developed a plan for building capacity that includes establishing a new board of directors, hiring highly qualified staff, developing a plan for governance, and implementing a strategic fundraising plan.

NNSTOY’s Board of Directors

NNSTOY’s board of directors will be charged with overseeing the strategies, fundraising and general operations of the organization and will have fiduciary responsibility for NNSTOY. The board will be at least seven and no more than 17 members, and will consist of at least 51 percent STOYs at any given time. A majority of the STOYs on the board will be active teachers. NNSTOY defines “active teacher” as a teacher who spends the majority of his/her time instructing students and/or coaching/supporting classroom teachers, exemplifying teacher leadership and varied roles and responsibilities. Additional members of the board of directors should have expertise in advocacy, fundraising, nonprofit operations and/or teaching and learning. The board will collectively represent a centrist and bipartisan point of view. Essential to board membership is a passion to improve education.

Board members will be responsible for:

- Hiring the executive director, providing at least an annual performance appraisal with regular/ongoing feedback
- Knowing and clearly communicating NNSTOY’s mission, goals, policies, programs and history
- Serving on committees to meet the needs of the organization
- Preparing for and participating in board and committee meetings
- Serving as ambassadors for NNSTOY
- Building relationships and networks to benefit NNSTOY
- Supporting NNSTOY through annual gifts
- Assisting the staff with fundraising
- Maintaining objectivity and respecting the opinions of other members

Board members will initially serve in staggered one-, two- and three-year terms, with board membership assuming three-year terms by the end of 2015. Directors can renew terms as approved by the board and in accordance with the revised by-laws.

The existing NNSTOY Steering Committee, charged with overseeing the strategic planning process, will be responsible for reviewing and selecting board members. Once the board has reached nine members, the Steering Committee (and the smaller subset that makes up the Planning Team) will be dissolved.
Additionally, the current NNSTOY Executive Board, which has already voted to honor the results of the strategic plan, will be dissolved.

NNSTOY plans to begin building its board in November 2011 and will work to have at least nine committed members on board by spring 2012.

**NNSTOY’s Staff**

NNSTOY is currently volunteer-run, and one of the first – and most important – decisions for the revitalized organization will be to hire an executive director. In November 2011, NNSTOY will begin its search for an executive director, and will develop a search committee that may wish to contract with a search firm to do this. NNSTOY will consider hiring an interim manager to move the work forward until the full-time executive director comes on board.

In addition to managing the budget and staff, the primary responsibilities for the executive director include:

- Building external relationships and networks
- Raising funds
- Building and engaging membership
- Providing advocacy expertise

Communicating NNSTOY’s vision, building its brand and engaging its membership are essential to the success of the organization in its early years. To that end, NNSTOY will hire a communications and membership manager in addition to the executive director in 2012. In 2013-2014, NNSTOY will consider hiring a policy director, a research and policy associate, a development manager and an executive assistant/office manager. NNSTOY will contract out for legal, government relations and grant-writing support as needed if not provided through its fiscal partner.

**NNSTOY’s Fiscal Partnership**

NNSTOY is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and will retain its independent tax-exempt status, including its own board of directors and staff, as described above. However, NNSTOY determined in the strategic planning process that, in order to attract substantial funding and national-caliber staff, NNSTOY would be better served by developing a fiscal partnership with an established organization with its own back-office infrastructure and other supports. NNSTOY is currently researching options for this fiscal partnership. The terms of the partnership will include:

- NNSTOY retains autonomy in setting its policies and viewpoints
- NNSTOY vets and approves all of its own projects, initiatives and decisions
- NNSTOY is viewed as a partner
- NNSTOY’s title and brand are separate from the partner organization
- The partner’s values and principles are aligned with NNSTOY
- The partner is committed to public education
- The partner is held in high esteem by the education community
- The partner has the capacity to take on NNSTOY needs in a timely manner
- The partner is able to provide support to NNSTOY in the form of:
  - Input in hiring an executive director and other identified staff
  - Staff support such as travel and conference planning, communications (email, website, membership database, etc.) and bookkeeping
  - Grant-writing and capital campaign assistance
The initial contract period of the partnership will likely be two years, with a formal examination and renewal option after the first year of the partnership and at the end of the second year. As NNSTOY builds its reputation and capacity, the need for the fiscal partnership hopefully will diminish. NNSTOY will work toward establishing its own fiscal independence over the next three years.

NNSTOY’s Budget

NNSTOY’s 2012 estimated budget is $560,750. The strategic plan calls for increasing staff and programs over the next three years. Figure 9 represents early estimates for the 3-year budget.

Figure 9: Early Estimates for NNSTOY’s Budget, 2012-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>3-year total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>$122,500</td>
<td>$385,000</td>
<td>$464,250</td>
<td>$971,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Director (anticipated date of hire: July 2012)</td>
<td>$87,500 (6 months)</td>
<td>$175,000</td>
<td>$183,750</td>
<td>$446,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications and Membership Manager (anticipated date of hire: July 2012)</td>
<td>$35,000 (6 months)</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>$73,500</td>
<td>$178,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Director (anticipated date of hire: January 2013)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>$95,000</td>
<td>$99,750</td>
<td>$194,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research &amp; Policy Associate (anticipated date of hire: January 2013)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
<td>$47,250</td>
<td>$92,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Manager (anticipated date of hire: January 2014)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Assistant/Office Manager (anticipated date of hire: January 2014)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Taxes &amp; Benefits (assumes 20%)</strong></td>
<td>$24,500</td>
<td>$77,000</td>
<td>$92,850</td>
<td>$145,763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Fees/Contracts</strong></td>
<td>$121,250</td>
<td>$22,500</td>
<td>$12,500</td>
<td>$156,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim executive director</td>
<td>$56,000 (6 months)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>$56,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional search firm</td>
<td>$57,750</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>$57,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government relations support</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$22,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant writer</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$175,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$215,000</td>
<td>$590,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public relations support</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research (task forces, toolkits, stipends)</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy and relationship-building</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications and advocacy materials</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online platform</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNSTOY Annual Conference</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications and membership database</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
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<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$84,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>$124,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>$138,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$347,000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer and office supplies</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$27,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phones and internet</td>
<td>$4,500</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>$18,000</td>
<td>$34,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$80,000</td>
<td>$80,000</td>
<td>$220,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Agency Fees (assumes 6%)</td>
<td><strong>$33,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$48,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$54,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$135,000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$560,750</strong></td>
<td><strong>$857,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$976,600</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,345,763</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NNSTOY’s Funding Plan**

To date, NNSTOY has contributions in hand from the American Federation of Teachers of $25,000, NEA Foundation of $10,000, and $8,022 from the Community Foundation Endowment Fund. NNSTOY also has $21,695 in secured funding for NNSTOY student scholarships. NNSTOY’s current on-hand funds total $72,250.

NNSTOY reviewed possible revenue sources, including foundation grants, business sponsorships (for events or products), fee-for-service initiatives, membership dues, and interest. The organization recognizes that there is no single mix of funding sources for all nonprofits, and that any organization’s funding plan will depend on its mission, history, culture and programmatic focus.

In NNSTOY’s initial years, the organization plans to focus on raising most of its seed money from foundations. NNSTOY will also focus on growing membership dues and number of new members. Looking forward, the organization anticipates that foundations will probably always make up at least 50 percent of its revenue, given its mission and vision. In later years, NNSTOY may consider fee-for-service models, but recognizes that this will require careful assessment of the marketplace, a track record of success and brand awareness, and organizational capacity. NNSTOY does plan to explore sponsorships for conferences and events as needs arise and will focus on diversification of revenue sources over time.

Over the next year, NNSTOY will connect with national funders to begin building support for the budget. NNSTOY will work to continuously seek grants and funding opportunities from a broad spectrum of philanthropic foundations, and anticipates that 95 percent of its revenues will come from foundations in its first three years.
Identifying and Mitigating Risks to Success

The revitalization of any organization poses some risks. NNSTOY must distinguish itself from other teacher voice organizations and convince policymakers that teacher leadership and career advancement opportunities are essential for attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers. The active involvement of recognized, highly effective teachers in policy discussions around teacher leadership and career advancement opportunities is what NNSTOY can offer that others cannot. The organization recognizes risks in this work and has developed mitigation plans to address each one.

Figure 10: Risks and Mitigation Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Mitigation Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policymakers are not truly interested in having teachers involved in policy discussions</td>
<td>There is always a risk that policymakers are interested in token involvement only. NNSTOY will focus on serving as a policy partner to ensure teachers’ perspectives are part of the debate. NNSTOY will expand on its existing relationships with key policymakers at the state and federal levels who have a history of meaningful partnerships with teachers. NNSTOY will also spend time training STOYs on policymaking to increase credibility with policymakers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other organizations, including unions, already serve as representatives of the teacher voice</td>
<td>NNSTOY serves as the voice for all teachers, those who have chosen to join a union and those who have not. NNSTOY welcomes partners of all kind, including unions, and is aware that some organizations representing teachers may not be in full agreement with NNSTOY’s agenda. NNSTOY will work to transform the field by building partnerships along the spectrum of political ideology and keeping the focus of the conversation on what’s best for students. NNSTOY will work to promote its unique niche – bringing teachers who have been nationally recognized for excellence in the classroom to policy discussions around teacher leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical opposition to differentiated roles, responsibilities and pay discourages some teachers’ involvement</td>
<td>Some teachers and organizations will not agree with NNSTOY’s vision. However, NNSTOY will be strategic about partnering with a wide range of organizations that run the gamut on policy positions to emphasize the focus on increasing the number of highly qualified teachers so that more students have access to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The diversity of STOYs – one of the great strengths of NNSTOY – makes it challenging to coalesce around agendas and action plans, and may make it challenging to maintain an engaged membership</td>
<td>Discussions around career advancement opportunities, including significantly altering the pay structure for teachers, will inevitably lead to varying points of view by STOYs and all teachers. However, NNSTOY will consistently work to harness appropriate feedback to strengthen the organization and refine its vision. Participation by NNSTOY members in the work is a primary goal for the organization, and NNSTOY will work to creatively engage members by using an online platform with trained facilitators to hone NNSTOY’s vision, receive feedback on specific models and practices aligned to the vision, and spread the word about the vision.</td>
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<tr>
<td>NNSTOY’s veteran members may feel disconnected from the revitalized organization</td>
<td>NNSTOY is an organization for all teachers of the years – those currently in the classroom and those who have gone on to other opportunities and/or retired. The organization is also intently focused on attracting new STOYs. To ensure that all STOYs feel connected to the organization, NNSTOY will engage its members through a variety of strategies that seek to further the organization’s mission and goals while honoring the work of the past.</td>
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<td>TOYs are excellent teachers but are not well-versed in policy making</td>
<td>NNSTOY members focus first and foremost on their students. Although interest in policy is widespread, knowledge about the policymaking arena among STOYs is not. To mitigate this risk, NNSTOY will implement ongoing series of trainings for STOYs that educate teachers about policymaking, including how to effectively advocate for positions with policymakers at the state and federal levels and how to translate what is happening in the classroom for policymakers. NNSTOY will also position itself as a policy partner to emphasize the necessity of the classroom perspective on policymaking, as well as the policy perspective on the classroom.</td>
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<tr>
<td>States are compelled to implement federal policies and will not be interested in career advancement programs</td>
<td>Competing agendas at the federal and state levels will always be a risk for NNSTOY and any organization working to advance education. NNSTOY is prepared to use best practices steeped in research to provide evidence for the need for career advancement opportunities. NNSTOY will provide cost benefit analyses for districts and states to further justify the importance of career advancement to recruitment and retention of highly effective teachers.</td>
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<td>NNSTOY may be seen as a partisan group with a specific agenda it is trying to push.</td>
<td>NNSTOY does have an agenda: to transform teaching and learning. But the organization will not engage in partisan politics. It will deliberately seek partnerships and collaborations with a wide range of policymakers and organizations. The organization is</td>
</tr>
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first and foremost concerned with what’s best for students, not with promoting a particular political philosophy.

| Districts’ limited funding prevents them from implementing new initiatives | NNSTOY will detail out how districts can integrate career advancement opportunities and practices into their existing agendas, and will provide clear options for overcoming contractual and policy barriers to implementation. NNSTOY will outline a costs/benefits strategy for districts. NNSTOY will also seek work with districts with active NNSTOY members to build on existing relationships. |
NNSTOY’s Transition Plan

NNSTOY has developed a transition plan to formally launch and revitalize the organization over the next six to nine months (see Figure 11):

1. Finalize fiscal partnership, including developing and approving the contract with an identified partner, transferring accounts and current funds, and opening an office space
2. Consider contracting with an interim director based on a clearly defined job description until the permanent executive director comes on board
3. Form a new board of directors and update the 501(c)(3) status and related requirements, including the identification and recruitment of board candidates, the revision and filing of the organization’s 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, and the revision and approval of the organization’s by-laws
4. Conduct search for and hire executive director, including potentially hiring a search firm, forming an executive search committee to oversee the process and interview candidates, developing a profile for the executive director, sourcing candidates, recommending finalists to the board of directors, and selecting, making an offer and onboarding the executive director
5. Manage implementation of the strategic plan, including updating branding and website, publishing materials related to the vision, and hiring a communications and membership manager
6. Raise year one (and possibly year two) funds, including submitting grant proposals to several foundations, finalizing the fundraising plan, and cultivating additional potential funders
7. Communicate new NNSTOY vision to STOYs, including presenting at the January 2012 STOY conference in Dallas welcoming the newest cohort, developing a membership strategy and workplan, and supporting the 2012 NNSTOY summer conference planning
8. Begin developing principles and criteria for career advancement models and practices, including organizing a task force, conducting research, analyzing models, and developing criteria

Figure 11: NNSTOY’s Estimated Transition Timeline
Conclusion

In the majority of schools across the country, effective teachers have limited opportunities for professional growth beyond moving into administration. The system doesn’t currently support or build the capacity for effective teachers to spread their knowledge and expertise to novice and developing teachers while keeping them in the classroom.

NNSTOY wants to re-imagine current education systems, shifting the paradigm so that the most effective teachers are provided opportunities to continue in the classroom while at the same time become leaders through differentiated roles and responsibilities that help to develop and sustain vibrant cultures of learning. NNSTOY wants to ensure students will develop 21st century skills and all teachers continue to experience career-long growth. This is no small feat, but STOYs did not go into teaching because it was easy. NNSTOY is ready to take on this challenge to build a future where every student in every classroom in every school learns from highly effective teachers. This strategic plan is a starting point toward fulfilling that vision. Now the hard work can begin.
Steering Committee Members

Peggy Allan, 1989 Illinois Teacher of the Year (Past President, NNSTOY Executive Board)
Betty Amos, 1984 Kansas Teacher of the Year
*Katherine Bassett, 2000 New Jersey Teacher of the Year (chair, Strategic Planning Planning Team)
Joan Brummond, 1995 Wyoming Teacher of the Year (President, NNSTOY Executive Board)
Stacey Donaldson, 2010 Mississippi Teacher of the Year
Madaline Fennell, 2007 Nebraska Teacher of the Year
Sherri Gould, 2005 Maine Teacher of the Year (Secretary, NNSTOY Executive Board)
*Marguerite Izzo, 2007 New York Teacher of the Year
Patricia Jordan, 1993 New York Teacher of the Year
Terry Kaldhusdal, 2007 Wisconsin Teacher of the Year
*Kelly Kovacic, 2010 California Teacher of the Year
Kristi Luetjen, 2010 Connecticut Teacher of the Year
*Rich Mayorga, 2003 Arizona Teacher of the Year
Justin Minkel, 2007 Arkansas Teacher of the Year
*Art Peekel, 1992 Illinois Teacher of the Year (Director of Communications, NNSTOY Executive Board)
*Chris Poulos, 2007 Connecticut Teacher of the Year
Pat Rowe, 1983 Nevada Teacher of the Year (Executive Director, NNSTOY Executive Board)
Anna Shults, 2007 Indiana Teacher of the Year (Second Vice President, NNSTOY Executive Board)
Rebecca Snyder, 2009 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year (chair, Strategic Planning Steering Committee)
*Carol Strickland, 1999 Kansas Teacher of the Year (Director of Membership and Finance, NNSTOY Executive Board)
*Bob Williams, 2009 Alaska Teacher of the Year

*denotes Planning Team members
Endnotes

1 Education First, an education policy consulting group, worked with NNSTOY members from April-November 2011 on the development of this strategic plan.