

Establishing a Vision

What does success look like and how will you get there?

The goal

A shared, inclusive vision for your school or system that represents the aspirations of students, teachers, leaders and the community today with the flexibility for ongoing revisions to address continual change.

Why change?

The digital era is radically changing the way we create new ideas and manage knowledge. So much so that schools themselves need to change to foster the creativity that humans will need to create value in today's world.¹ And even though some young people are emerging as successful collaborative creatives, youth unemployment is more than double the total adult unemployment in many countries.² This statistic calls for a rethink of the scholastic experiences and competencies required to help students participate in a global digital economy.

How do we build a vision?

A vision is essential. Research shows that schools and systems that successfully transform education start with a clear vision of what they want success to mean.³

Creating your shared vision can be complex because it touches on the perceptions, attitudes and everyday work of many stakeholders; involves the reallocation of fiscal and cultural resources; and disturbs the status quo.⁴

- Don't simply apply someone else's vision. Ground it in your school or system's culture and context
- Organizations that have only one core goal often have the most powerful visions⁵, especially if they can unite and energize people around it
- Simply defining your vision is not enough. It is part of a change cycle, which includes defining a vision, strategic planning, implementation, and reflections on progress.⁶

Education Transformation Framework



Guiding questions

- How will learning outcomes improve with this new vision?
- How can technology improve literacy or numeracy?
- How will the role of a teacher change?
- Is there a strategic framework guiding the transformation?
- What communication strategies are planned to gain broad support of the vision?
- What will success look like when the vision is realized?
- What resources are available (funding and other) to reach the vision?
- What are the learning priorities and why?

Technology should support your vision, not define it

After decades of using IT in schools, technology by itself is not an effective solution to the systemic challenges facing education today. Instead, organizations that define their visions with clear goals for learning, and then use technology as an enabler and accelerator of progress, find the most success.⁶

Microsoft technologies can support vision for anytime, anywhere learning for all in many ways;

- Connecting students to each other and a world of learning through Skype In the Classroom and Office 365 Education
- Providing students with personalized online learning spaces for e-portfolios, project assignments and group collaboration – SharePoint
- Measuring success through Analytics – Microsoft Azure, Cortana Analytics Suite and O365 PowerBi
- Supporting 1-to-1 Learning – Surface and Windows 10 are designed to support flexible learning using apps and software that works with voice, touch, keyboard, scientific readers and more.

Resources

Whitepaper: Vision for Anytime, Anywhere Learning for All

Authored by Maria Langworthy, Senior Officer, Strategic Data at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, this whitepaper provides evidence and examples of successful vision setting along with case studies of countries that have excelled and how they went about it. It also shows how technology can enable progress.

The complete version is available at microsoft.com/education/leaders

Workshop: Why Transform?

This workshop uses the latest research, global best practices and blueprints to guide senior decision makers and change leaders in identifying and demonstrating the critical components required in a systemic change initiative to reach education goals.

To organize a workshop, contact your Microsoft Education Specialist.

References

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3. Edwards, M.A. (2013). Every Child, Every Day: A Digital Conversion Model for Student Achievement. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson.
4. Laloux, F. and Wilber, K. (2014). Reinventing Organizations: A Guide to Creating Organizations Inspired by the Next Stage of Human Consciousness. Millis, MA: Nelson Parker.
5. Sinek, S. (2011). Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action. New York: Penguin.
6. Fullan, M. (2011). Choosing the Wrong Drivers for Whole System Reform. Centre for Strategic Education, Seminar Series 204.

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