



Social Impact Consultants

Discovering better ways
to solve social problems

FSG Overview

Prepared for:

Nebraska State Board of Education

December 2015

FSG Is A Nonprofit Consulting Firm and Think Tank That Works Across Sectors to Drive Social Change

Hands On Consulting

We conduct about 100 consulting projects per year.

We are experts in strategic planning, learning and evaluation, implementation and organizational change.

Sample Consulting Clients



Idea Generation

Through papers, articles, blogs and webinars we influence more than 250,000 people per year. Recent groundbreaking ideas from FSG include Collective Impact and Shared Value.

Sample Content Partners



Communities of Practice

With the goal of advancing knowledge and practice we currently host communities for community foundations, as well as for practitioners of Shared Value and Collective Impact.

Current Communities



FSG Focuses on Solving the World's Toughest Social Problems

Impact Areas	Expertise	Representative Clients
 <p>Health</p>	<p><i>Health access, pharma / health CSR, non communicable diseases, neglected disease drug development, maternal and child health</i></p>	
 <p>Global Development</p>	<p><i>Private sector strategies, sustainable agriculture, microfinance, SME development, youth learning, BOP</i></p>	
 <p>Education and Youth</p>	<p><i>College access and success, P-16 reform and effectiveness, next gen models, teacher and school leader excellence</i></p>	
 <p>Environment</p>	<p><i>Climate change, energy, greenhouse gases, water use, pollution, marine systems, advocacy</i></p>	
 <p>Community Philanthropy</p>	<p><i>Strategic planning, activity-based costing, collective impact, membership platform for 100+ community foundations</i></p>	

About FSG's Education & Youth Impact Area

Our Mission

Improve the academic and personal outcomes of children and youth, particularly those who are most vulnerable

Our Guiding Principles

- ❖ Focus on children and youth as the center of our work
- ❖ All children and youth can succeed in school
- ❖ Youths' academic and personal success depends on:
 - Strong education system
 - Out-of-school development
 - Engaged parents and community

Our People

- ❖ Former strategy consultants at McKinsey, Bain, BCG and other premier firms
- ❖ Former educators who have worked as teachers, in school districts, at universities, and for education and youth-focused nonprofits and foundations

FSG's Education & Youth Practice Has Deep Expertise in the Field

Strategic Planning

- **Pittsburgh Public Schools** – Strategic planning to envision a 21st century educational delivery model for PPS
- **National Alliance for Public Charter Schools** – Economic analysis of charter support organization service delivery
- **Marin Community Foundation** – Strategic initiative to close the achievement gap in Marin county
- **Citi** – Corporate philanthropic strategy to improve college access for underserved youth



Learning and Evaluation

- **W.K. Kellogg Foundation** – Developed 47 indicators and themes for whole-child development from ages 0-8
- **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation** – Evaluation of investments in US district and high school reform
- **William and Flora Hewlett Foundation** – Evaluation of K-12 and community college grant making portfolios
- **NewSchools Venture Fund** – Evaluation of support to portfolio ventures to inform strategic direction



Collective Impact

- **Seattle Road Map Project** – Helped the Community Center for Education Results and the Gates Foundation design and launch a cradle-to-career initiative in Seattle
- **Rio Grande Valley** – Worked with Educate Texas and a coalition of funders to improve college readiness and success across one of the poorest regions of Texas
- **ALLIES** – Connecting higher education to the workforce for adult English Language Learners in Silicon Valley



Research and Intellectual Capital Development

- **Blended Learning** – Series of case studies for the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation on leading blended learning operators and lessons learned across the country
- **School Turnaround** – Field assessment on the national school turnaround landscape, culminating in a report on findings to the field and gathering of over 200 key education leaders funded by Wallace and Gates
- **Charter School Quality** – Case studies on CMO best practices and the California Charter School Association



Building Quality Education Systems Is a Critical and Particularly Relevant Component of Our Work

For children and youth to succeed academically, the public education system (from preschool through college) must be **effective, aligned, and focused on student success**. We work across several aspects of the education system to increase education quality:

1. Targeted segments of the cradle to college pipeline

- *Early Childhood Education*: Improving quality and universal access, increasing kindergarten readiness, strengthening alignment with K-12
- *K-12 Education*: Closing achievement and attainment gaps, increasing higher education access and readiness, improving student transitions
- *Higher Education*: Increasing student readiness, access and success; improving systemic effectiveness and alignment; supporting financial viability

2. Strategies and approaches that improve effectiveness

- Human capital development and talent management (teachers & school leaders)
- School and system performance management, including school turnaround
- School choice and the charter movement
- Blended learning and the use of technology

3. Increased collective alignment among actors and across systems within the educational pipeline to ensure students have adequate support and ability to transition at key points and make progress

FSG Has Worked on a Diverse Array of Education Issues At State, Regional and Local Levels



Strategic Plan Development: Supported a strategic planning process to enable PPS to achieve educational “Excellence for All” and become a district of first choice. Activities included organization surveys, peer benchmarking, financial and operational analysis, portfolio modeling, secondary research of academic best practices, and community member convenings.



Strategic Planning and Organizational Design: Helped develop Accelerated Plan for Closing the Gaps and statewide vision for higher education excellence (Funded by Gates, Meadows, Greater Texas Foundation, Houston Endowment via Texas High School Project)

Texas Higher Education
Action Research

Statewide and Regional Plan for Higher Ed Success: Conducted research on how to improve postsecondary success rates in five Texas regions working for Meadows Foundation, Greater Texas Foundation, Houston Endowment, and Texas High School Project

BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation

Landscape Assessment: Conducted a landscape analysis of the service provider market for community colleges, culminating in a report that highlights what colleges need most to improve student success rates, and explores the landscape of service providers who can meet those needs



Developmental Evaluation: Evaluating Lumina’s Latino Student Success initiative, a multi-year project to improve Latino degree attainment in 13 communities across the U.S., using collective impact (CI) as a model to build place-based, cross-sector collaborations

FSG Project Team

FSG Team



Jeff Cohen

Managing Director

- Leads FSG's Education practice
- Jeff will provide overall project leadership, attend all in-person and virtual meetings, co-facilitate meetings, be available for any other touchpoints as needed, and ultimately ensure that this project is successful.
- BA, Harvard; MA, Yale; MBA, Northwestern (Kellogg)



Cara Priestley

Senior Consultant

Case Team Leader



- Cara will manage the project on a day-to-day basis by being the main point of contact for NDE, structuring research, planning check-ins, co-facilitating meetings, and ensuring that the project meets deadlines and that deliverables are of the highest quality.
- BA, Seattle University; MPP, UCLA

FSG Project Team

FSG Team

- Francesca will conduct interviews, research, and analysis, as well as co-facilitate meetings.
- BA, Stanford; MA, Oxford



Francesca Mazzola

Senior Consultant

- Sandra will provide support for interviews, research, and analysis.
- BA, Yale



Sandra Medrano

Associate



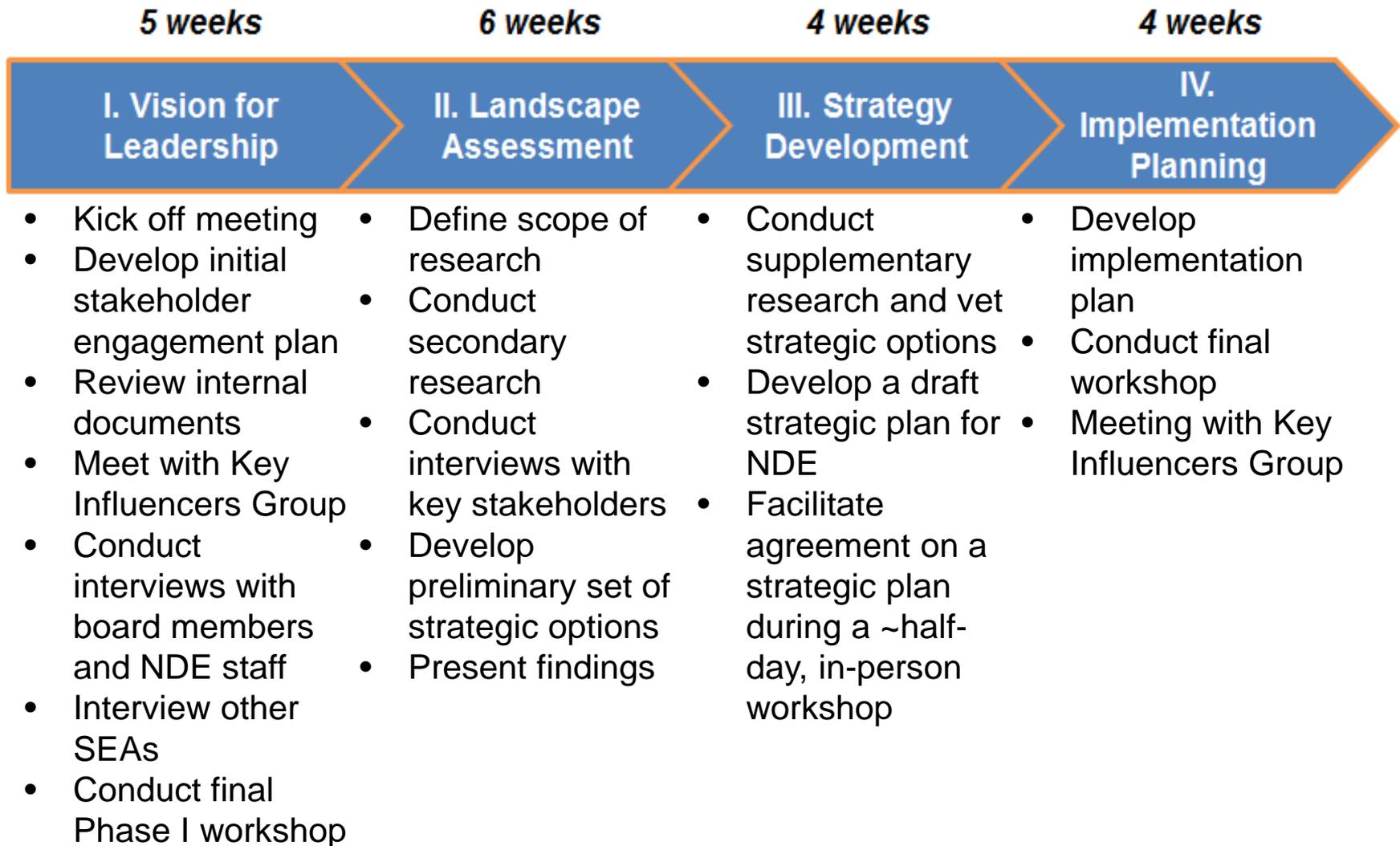
Key Project Objectives

- 1 Facilitate a process to develop a **shared vision** for the State Board, agency, and the state education system

- 2 Identify/recommend **key vision, goals, indicators, and measures** appropriate for the State Board, the NDE, and education system as a whole

- 3 Propose **key steps in implementation** over 18 to 24 months as well as longer term up to 10 years as supported by Nebraska specific findings

High Level Project Workplan



Detailed FSG Activities By Project Phase

	Phase I Vision for Leadership	Phase II Landscape Assessment	Phase III Strategy Development	Phase IV Implementation Planning
Timeline	5 weeks	6 weeks	4 weeks	4 weeks
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold kickoff meeting with Steering Committee Create an initial stakeholder engagement plan Hold virtual meeting with Key Influencers Group Review internal documents Conduct individual interviews with key NDE staff and each of the State Board members Interview 4-6 other state education agencies Synthesize internal perspectives in an in-person workshop with the Steering Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define the scope of the research Conduct secondary research to understand expert perspectives on opportunities and gaps in the K-12 field Conduct interviews with 30-35 key stakeholders Develop preliminary set of strategic options and criteria for assessment Present findings of the external assessment and engage the Steering Committee in prioritizing draft strategic options Potentially present findings to the Key Stakeholders Group and/or individual board members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct supplementary research and vet strategic options with key stakeholders Develop a draft strategic plan for NDE Facilitate agreement on a strategic plan for NDE during a ~half-day, in-person workshop with the Steering Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a plan that lays out the necessary steps for implementing the refined strategy Present the elements of the implementation plan to the Steering Committee during a final workshop Hold a virtual or in-person meeting with the Key Influencers Group to share the high-level strategic plan

FSG Deliverables By Project Phase

	Phase I Vision for Leadership	Phase II Landscape Assessment	Phase III Strategy Development	Phase IV Implementation Planning
Timeline	5 weeks	6 weeks	4 weeks	4 weeks
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder engagement plan (in PowerPoint) Facilitated staff and board discussion of the board and NDE's vision for leadership Synthesis of internal interviews, survey, and external interviews, including a baseline understanding of current strategic planning efforts by NDE (in PowerPoint) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Findings of the external assessment (in PowerPoint) Preliminary strategic options and screening criteria developed through Phase I and Phase II (in PowerPoint) Facilitated staff and board discussions on the external findings and emerging strategic options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic plan for NDE that includes: vision, goals, indicators, and measures appropriate for the State Board, the NDE, and education system as a whole (PowerPoint) Facilitated discussion with Steering Committee to refine and finalize the strategic plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A synthesized "full version," which includes summaries of FSG's research to date and the agreed-upon strategic plan An "executive summary" that NDE staff and the State Board can use to explain the strategic plan to others Implementation plan that includes sequenced timeline of activities and organizational implications (in PowerPoint) Facilitated final workshops to discuss the implementation plan (and, in the case of the Key Influencers Group, the overall strategy)

Board and NDE Staff Involvement

Individual/Group	Role	Frequency of Interaction
Project Leader	<p>A Project Leader is a critical role, and would serve as the primary liaison with the FSG team. Ideally, the Project Leader would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be responsible for day-to-day questions and problem-solving discussions with the FSG team, data gathering, as well as support on administrative issues • Help FSG navigate the political spheres and influences that need to be understood throughout this initiative • Involve other stakeholders (e.g., other NDE staff) in check-ins with FSG, as necessary 	<p>The frequency of interaction may change over time, but we suggest weekly 60-minute phone calls to start.</p>
Steering Committee	<p>The Steering Committee's primary role is to be a thought partner with the Project Leader and FSG by responding to FSG's research and recommendations. The Committee would ideally include individuals who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are committed to attending periodic workshops (see "frequency of interaction" column) • Have deep knowledge of the K-12 system in Nebraska, and NDE's current and historical strategies, and strengths and weaknesses • Represent the most important stakeholders who have a stake in NDE's 10-year strategic plan <p>We recommend a Steering Committee of 6-12 individuals, including the Project Leader. We would be happy to brainstorm with you specific individuals who would be best suited to serve on the Steering Committee. We initially recommend the Steering Committee be composed of NDE staff and State Board members.</p>	<p>In-person meetings at the conclusions of phased I, II, and III. We suggest a meeting at the end of Phase IV, either in-person or virtually.</p>
Key Influencer Group	<p>In keeping with our emphasis on change management, there may be a broader group of stakeholders whose buy-in is essential for the strategy's success. This Key Influencer Group would likely include some interviewees, and may also include non-interviewees whose buy-in is important. The composition of this group would be determined with the Project Leader (and perhaps Steering Committee) input, and the group's membership could change slightly from meeting to meeting. We envision this group's role as reacting to project updates, and providing feedback on initial recommendations. We would likely do this via 60 to 90-minute teleconferences.</p> <p>It is possible that, after discussing the Key Influencer Group with the Project Leader, it makes more sense to have 1-1 discussions with key influencers. In that case, we would replace the Key Influencer meetings with 1-1 discussions. However, this option would reach fewer individuals than would group meetings.</p>	<p>2-3 times over the course of the project: during the first phase, after the second Steering Committee meeting, and at the project's completion.</p>

Thank You!

Jeff Cohen
Managing Director
FSG

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