



mdsc

strategic plan

years 2008-2009

mdsc mission

to ensure individuals with Down syndrome in Massachusetts are valued, included, and given the opportunities to pursue fulfilling lives by providing information, networking opportunities, and advocacy for people with Down syndrome and their families, educators, health care professionals, and the community-at-large.

mdsc purposes

- To provide new parents in Massachusetts with information, resources, and support
- To promote the inclusion of people with Down syndrome into all aspects of the community, with particular consideration for schools and the workplace
- To promote networking and social opportunities for people with Down syndrome and their families
- To help people with Down syndrome become effective self-advocates
- To gather and disseminate accurate, up-to-date information about Down syndrome
- To better educate the public about Down syndrome
- To encourage participation in research related to Down syndrome and quality human services
- To address social policy issues relevant to people with Down syndrome
- To solicit and distribute funding for these stated purposes

mdsc vision

The MDSC wants to be recognized by people with Down syndrome and their families, educators, health care professionals, and the community-at-large as the preeminent organization in Massachusetts for information, networking, and advocacy for and about Down syndrome.

mdsc's core competencies.

Core competencies are usually defined as knowledge or intellectual based skills, not to be confused with core products or services or core assets. They are a unique set of skills or knowledge base, which sets it apart from other organizations.

1. **Information:**
Gathering and disseminating information.
2. **Networking:**
Providing opportunities for the MDSC community to come together.
3. **Advocacy:**
Advocating for people with Down syndrome and their families.

DIRECTIVE 1: To strengthen a Board of Directors that serves a governance and visionary role

VISION: The MDSC Board of Directors will transition from an assistive management Board to one that is visionary and serving a governance capacity. While doing so, the MDSC will be actively seeking to enhance the depth, diversity, and talents of our Board of Directors. We seek to engage the most influential and knowledgeable persons so that our organizational Vision can be realized.

DATE: Steps (a)-(b) completed by March, 2009; Steps (c)-(e) completed by December 31, 2009; Step (f) shortly thereafter

NECESSARY STEPS:

a. The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors will be composed of the following five “officers”: Chair of the Board, Vice Chair of the Board, Chair of the Finance Committee, Chair of the Nominating Committee, Chair of the Development Committee. In the event that one or more of these positions is unserved or served by the same person, the Chair of the Board may nominate other persons to the Executive Committee so that five persons total are serving. The officerships of Treasurer, Secretary, and Immediate Past President will be terminated. The “President” of the Board will now become the “Chair of the Board”; the “Vice President” of the Board will now become the “Vice Chair of the Board.” The position of Chair of the Nominating Committee will first be offered to the immediate past Chair of the Board, if still serving on the Board.

Directive 1 continues the transition of MDSC into an organization led by a visionary and governing Board and a dynamic staff.

Step a.

- changes the composition of the Executive Committee to maximize its input*
- changes title of “President” to “Chair” to avoid confusion with staff role*
- eliminates positions whose duties are being taken by staff, or are considered outdated*
- formalizes the tradition of offering the chairship of the Nominating Committee to the departing Board Chair.*

(more)

- b. The responsibilities of all Board members will include attending regular and special meetings, serving on at least one Committee, participating in general program activities, approving public policies that the MDSC addresses, assuring that the organization remains fiscally sound, contributing financially to the organization on an annual basis, providing oversight for the executive director, enhancing the public image of the organization, recruiting volunteer leaders to serve on MDSC Committees, and maintaining high ethical standards. The Board will actively solicit and retain training on how to successfully transition from a management Board to a governance Board.
- c. The Board of Directors will terminate the following Committees that exist in current MDSC bylaws: Research Committee, Communications Committee, First Call Committee, Membership Committee, Legislative Action Committee, and the Conference Committee. The Executive Director will decide if and how these “Committees” will continue and will report ultimately to the Executive Director. Henceforth, “Committees” shall refer to Board-led groupings; “Task Forces” or “Councils” shall refer to management-led groupings.
- d. The Board of Directors will retain the following Board Committees: Personnel Committee, Bylaws Committee, Finance Committee, Development Committee, and Nominating Committee.
- e. The Executive Director will be responsible for the implementation of any and all of the following MDSC programs and events that continue to operate: Parents’ First Call Program, Annual Conference, Educators’ Forum, Buddy Walk and family picnic, Library Books Distribution, Update Newsletter, web page, Hockey event, AIM program, and other such related activities.

Step b.

- *identifies several heretofore unstated expectations of the MDSC Board members*
- *requires an active training for transitioning from a management Board to a governance Board.*

Step c.

- *assumes that many current Board-level committees are more appropriately led by staff, which would have the option of not continuing any or all of them.*

Step e.

- *would continue the transfer from Board to staff of responsibility for day-to-day administration and management of MDSC programs and fundraising events.*

(more)

f. Once (a)-(e) have been accomplished, the Board of Directors shall meet bimonthly or less frequently, as determined by the Board Chair. Annually, there will be a retreat for the Board of Directors. The directors may hold office for a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms, renewable by agreement of the Nominating Committee, for a total term of six years, except that the term of any person holding an officership may extend beyond such term for the duration of such person's term as an officer. Assuming re-nomination, persons could return to the Board no sooner than 12 months after the completion of two consecutive three-year terms. The maximum size of the Board shall be changed from 22 to 18.

Step f.

- *assumes a governing Board will need to meet less often, and will need a smaller, more "nimble" and more frequently changed membership.*

DIRECTIVE 2: To strengthen the organizational capability and capacity of the MDSC professional staff.

VISION: The Executive Director and staff will grow their capability and capacity to execute the actions necessary to achieve the mission and purposes of the MDSC. They will enable the Board to transition from an assistive management Board to one that is visionary and serving a governance capacity. The Executive Director will be responsible for providing the daily administrative and operational support necessary to fully implement MDSC's programs and services, and will have the necessary staffing and capital infrastructure to support the programs and services of the MDSC. The MDSC Board and Executive Director will work together to ensure that the financial resources necessary to support this organizational structure are secured. Until all MDSC programs and identified committees are fully transitioned to the Executive Director, no new programs will be started and no existing programs will be expanded beyond current time and resources, unless Board approved.

Directive 2 defines and directs that several infrastructure "plans" and "profiles" intrinsic to the future running of MDSC be created before the end of 2008.

DATE: Initial versions of the plans required by Steps (a) -(c) will be completed in time for discussion at the August, 2008 Board meeting. Steps (d)-(e) will be completed in time for discussion for the December, 2008 Board meeting. Further deadlines will be determined by matrices/plans outlined below.

NECESSARY STEPS:

- a. The Executive Director, with the help from the strategy development team, will develop and distribute to the Board, a time based roles and responsibility matrix documenting which programs/committees the Executive Director will lead and which programs the Board will lead. The Board will approve the plan to shift responsibility for programs/committees from the Board to the Executive Director no later than December 31, 2009.
- b. The Executive Director, with the help from the strategy development team, will create a management staffing demand profile required to execute the responsibilities and activities for the programs and committees under the leadership of the Executive Director.
- c. The Executive Director, with the help from the strategy development team, will submit a staffing capacity plan to the Board to match the staffing demand profile. A hiring plan will be developed based on the staffing demand profile, and constrained by the projected funding available in the budget. The hiring plan will be submitted to the board for their approval.
- d. The Executive Director, with the help from the strategy development team, will create a time based capital capacity plan – including office space, computers, and other infrastructure – describing the infrastructure needed to effectively provide the services and programs to the membership of the MDSC. The capital capacity plan will be presented to the Board for approval.

Step a. directs the ED to design a schedule by which programs and committee responsibilities will shift from Board to staff.

Step b. directs the ED to forecast staffing needs.

Step c. directs the ED to develop a hiring plan to respond to Step b.

Step d. directs the ED to make plans to create an office for MDSC.

(more)

- e. The Executive Director, with help from the strategy development team, will create a time based technology capability plan – including software and applications needed to effectively provide the services and programs to the membership of the MDSC. The technology capability plan will be submitted to the board for its approval.

Step e. directs the ED to assess the technology needs and options of the organization.

DIRECTIVE 3: To strengthen and expand services and programs to fulfill the Purposes of MDSC

VISION: The MDSC strategic planning team (with review and approval of the Board of Directors) will evaluate its current and planned services and programs for effectiveness and alignment with its stated Purposes. For each Purpose, a current assessment, overlap with Purposes of other external organizations, gap analysis, and proposed service/program improvements will be identified as the basis for justifying the activities of the new strategic plan.

Directive 3 focuses on first, identifying Purposes for which MDSC exists, then second, ensuring that all programs and services align with those Purposes.

DATE: Initial version of steps (a)-(e) completed for December 4, 2008 Board meeting. Periodic and timely future BOD evaluation will be ongoing.

NECESSARY STEPS:

- a. Assign current and planned services/programs to relevant Purposes, as possible.
- b. Document how mapped services/programs serve each Purpose.
- c. Identify any overlap of Purposes with services/programs of other external organizations
- d. Evaluate or determine measures for evaluating how effectively MDSC is meeting each Purpose.
- e. Identify gaps and significant shortfalls in service.
- f. After full transition on January 1, 2010, the Executive Director will utilize the information gathered to assess current programs and

services and shall report on same to the Board in a timely manner.

- g. The Board of Directors shall continue to periodically execute Steps a.-e. and the Executive Director respond with Step f.

DIRECTIVE 4: To strengthen and diversify MDSC’s financial foundations

VISION: To deliver comprehensive and continuous services to our members, the MDSC actively seeks to strengthen and diversify its financial foundations. We will continue to be a responsible steward of donations and use the generosity of persons in the Commonwealth and beyond to ensure that individuals with Down syndrome are valued, included, and live fulfilling lives in our communities.

DATE: Step (a) will be completed for the December 2008 Board meeting; Steps (b)-(c) will be completed by December 31, 2009; Step (d) will be completed by March 2009; Step (e) will begin with calendar year 2009.

NECESSARY STEPS:

- a. The MDSC Development Committee and Executive Director will develop a 3-year fundraising plan that will guide the organization in achieving the financial goals required to fully implement the strategic plan goals.
- b. The MDSC Development Committee will become a leading force for the organization in strengthening and diversifying our financial foundations.
- c. The MDSC Executive Director will be responsible for implementing all fundraising events.
- d. The MDSC Board of Directors will have an annual Board campaign with 100% giving.
- e. The MDSC will increase its revenue by a positive growth each year.

Step a. calls for developing a three-year development plan for discussion at the December 2008 Board meeting

Steps b. and c. make it clear that the Board will have active involvement in development, even though staff will be responsible for fundraising events