

Sample Agenda: Identify Priorities and Develop an Action Plan

When to use this agenda:

Use this agenda *after* analyzing data from all five asset areas of the PSAM.

Goals:

- To look across all five asset areas of PSAM to identify and prioritize next steps
- To develop an Action Plan for College and Career Readiness

Suggested Time Frame: 60 minutes

Materials needed:

- A completed [Strengths and Opportunities Worksheet](#) for each of the five assets
- [PSAM Action Plan Worksheet](#)
- One or more copies of the school improvement plan
- Markers and chart paper

I. Distribute and/or display the five *PSAM Strengths and Opportunities Worksheets*. These worksheets will have been filled out over the course of the several sessions of analyzing the assets and be documented in an electronic document that can be displayed.

II. Discuss the *PSAM Strengths and Opportunities Worksheets*.

Consider asking the following questions:

- What criteria should guide our decision making?
 - (a). What will give us **the most improvement for the greatest number of students**? *How do we know?*
 - (b). What can we **realistically accomplish and be successful with**? *How do we know?*
- From the areas that need improvement, which ones can we realistically tackle now?
- For each area of strength, should it be a priority to build off it and/or strengthen it more?
- Look at the school improvement plan. Are there some PSAM items that clearly align with what we are already doing or planning? Are there some ways to leverage existing resources or other initiatives that are already under way?



Choose one of the following two activities to help the teams come to consensus around the priorities.

III. Option A. Importance and Feasibility Activity

- Write the items that you are trying to prioritize for the action plan on large pieces of chart paper.
- Post the chart paper and place markers around the room.
- Using a scale of 1-5 (1 is lowest and 5 is highest) ask participants to go up to the chart paper and rate each item on two criteria:
Importance (I) and Feasibility (F)
- Allow time for everyone to think and rate each item on BOTH criteria.
- After everyone has rated the items, add up the totals. Each item will have one total for importance and another total for feasibility.
- Decide if you want to combine the feasibility and importance scores for a grand total, or make a decision based on a separate total for each criteria.
- Circle the priorities that receive the highest score(s).

OR

III. Option B. Chalk Talk Activity

- Post blank pieces of chart paper and markers around the room.
- Ask participants to go up to the chart paper and write their top three priorities for the action plan. This is a silent activity.
- Allow time for everyone to think and write on the chart paper until everyone has taken a seat.
- When no one is still writing, ask everyone to take a few moments to look at what was written.
- Is there consensus? What do people notice about where the priorities are? Is there great disagreement? If there are more than 3 or 4 items for the action plan, are there some that can be taken on and addressed quickly? Are there some that are long-term strategies?

IV. For each priority actions, determine clear steps. For example, a priority action may be to start college and career awareness activities in the 9th grade. The steps for this need to be specific, such as:

- 1) Develop a 9th grade orientation class that includes lessons and activities on getting ready for college and career; and
- 2) Plan a 9th grade college trip. Think about how the priorities can be turned into actionable steps with clear timelines and lines of responsibility.

V. Complete the [PSAM Action Plan Worksheet](#). For each priority:

- Who is the lead person or committee?
- What are the essential first steps?
- Who might the partners be?



- What, if any, is the district role?
- How will this be communicated to stakeholders and the community?
- What resources are needed (time, consultants, etc.)?
- What is a possible timeframe for this work?

Suggested Next Steps

- Communicate the plan to the staff and relevant stakeholders.
- Follow up and monitor how the items on the plan are moving along. Do some adjustments need to be made? Are there changes in the budget that have an impact on certain aspects of the plan? Are there unforeseen events that have either derailed the plan or opened up new opportunities?
- Celebrate and communicate successes with the school and local community. Publish your successes in a local paper or blog. Share it with the school in a town meeting. Let the PTA know. Brag to the district.
- After doing PSAM the first time, you will be in a better position to determine how often the school will conduct the PSAM. Every year? Every two years? What seems right for your school?
- Will you keep the same team to implement the PSAM? Will you rotate some team members but keep a core group? Will you keep the same group through each cycle? Decide what roles the team will play in the ongoing school improvement work.

