**Environmental Scan**

Understanding the environment in which your program operates is a key element of successful planning. In a world of limited resources, it is crucial to be strategic about how those resources are directed. Comprehending both the current external reality and possible future trends that may impact your program will allow you to expand your thinking about your potential options, position your organization effectively in the external environment, and make better informed decisions about action to take today.

The questions below are designed to guide you through a journey of information gathering that will inform the development of your network. As you consider each question, identify action items and record them on the worksheet provided.

*Before you begin, it is important to review the data elements gathered during the initial data collection phase of the planning process (Milestone and Momentum Points) and consider how data can support your engagement with potential external partners. Consider also how the data informs the ways in which engaging external partners during the implementation phase of your project will be most valuable.*

Electronic versions of all network planning tools are available at: [www.cacollegepathways.org/network-campus-resources](http://www.cacollegepathways.org/network-campus-resources).

**ASSESSMENT OF EXTERNAL PARTNERS**

1. **Child Welfare/Probation**
   1. How has AB12 been implemented in your region? Do local policies support foster youth participation in education?

* 1. What housing options are available to students in extended foster care and/or emancipated foster youth?

*Tip: This may be an opportunity for you to create a resource document that lists all of the available housing options for foster youth.*

* 1. Does the child welfare agency have programs or staff specifically related to supporting foster youth educational outcomes?
  2. What is known about the foster youth population in your community? Is there existing data that can be obtained from the local child welfare agency to help inform program planning?

*Tip: You can find generate customized reports with basic data regarding foster youth by county at* [*http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb%5Fchildwelfare/*](http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb%5Fchildwelfare/)

* 1. Who are the key individuals from child welfare and probation who would be beneficial to have participating in the network?
  2. What is the current nature of the relationship between network campuses and child welfare/probation and where are there opportunities to expand or enhance this relationship?

1. **Independent Living Program (ILP)**
   1. Who is the ILP provider(s) in your area?
   2. What types of educational support do they offer?
   3. What linkages can you make to leverage resources for your network?

*Tip: Consider whether co-locating an ILP coordinator on your campus one or two days per week is feasible or whether the ILP coordinator can be a speaker at workshops.*

* 1. Who are the key individuals from ILP who would be beneficial to have participating in the network?
  2. What is the current nature of the relationship between network campuses and ILP and where are there opportunities to expand or enhance this relationship?

1. **Secondary education systems**
   1. What high schools have the largest foster youth populations in your region?
   2. What role does the County Office of Education (COE) play with foster youth?

*Tip: Find out there is a standing meeting regarding foster youth and education with the COE that you can plug your network into.*

* 1. Are there local efforts related to implementation of the Local Control Funding Formula that may be a forum for the network partners.
  2. Who are the key individuals from K-12 systems who would be beneficial to have participating in the network?
  3. What is the current nature of the relationship between network campuses and K-12 systems and where are there opportunities to expand or enhance this relationship?

1. **Community based organizations (CBOs) and other relevant entities**
   1. Who are the leading CBOs in your area that work with foster youth?

*Tip: You can find a list of THP+ and THP+ FC providers at* [*www.thp-plus.org*](http://www.thp-plus.org)*. Local CASA programs can be found at* [*californiacasa.org/find-local-program*](http://californiacasa.org/find-local-program/)*.*

* 1. Are there other governmental agencies, departments or initiatives that could be approached to partner with the network?
  2. What types of educational support do these various organizations and entities offer?
  3. How can services provided by CBOs or other partners be leveraged to support the network?
  4. Who are the key individuals from CBOs who would be beneficial to have participating in the network?
  5. What is the current nature of the relationship between network campuses and CBOs and where are there opportunities to expand or enhance this relationship?
  6. Are there any pending changes that will impact your work such as new legislation, shifts in local funding priorities or changes to provider agencies?

**CAPTURING STUDENT VOICES**

1. What tools will you use to assess the needs of foster youth? How will these be administered and how will the qualitative information be evaluated?
   * + - Youth surveys
       - Youth focus groups
       - Professional surveys
       - Professional focus groups
       - Other
2. Are there local foster youth peer organizations such as California Youth Connection or Foster Club that could be a partner in the network?
3. Is there literature and/or research regarding the needs of foster youth or other considerations that could inform your planning process?

*Tip: Visit the California College Pathways research page to get you started on current literature.*

**Environmental Scan Action Items**

| **Action item** | **Responsible Party** | **Target Date** | **Outcome** |
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