

## APPENDIX C: LEXICON OF PLANNING TERMS

### **Guiding Statements**

*The guiding statements are the "roadmap" that NBVM School uses to guide its strategic thinking. These statements tell us where we are going and help us to prioritize our strategy options. They also help by telling us what to bring along on the journey, and provide us with benchmarks for determining our progress.*

**a. Vision.** A description of the future that captures the attention and imagination of our stakeholders and potential supporters, the Vision Statement is our expression of the ideal future that gives us purpose and that we have to create to be successful and relevant in a changing environment. It creates a shared sense of purpose and direction for all of those associated with and affected by the organization. If planning is a journey, the vision is the picture that we have in our minds of what our destination looks like. The vision is what inspires us to get going.

**b. Mission.** The mission is a description of the school's role in achieving the broad vision, and its domain (what it does and does not do). The mission statement sets our organizational edges, telling our audiences about the business we are in and our boundaries of operation. It is a guide for all policy development and a touchstone for every decision, and should be revisited in decisions concerning long-term strategy and day-to-day operations. The mission is not aspirational or a strategy statement.

**c. Values.** These statements serve as the "rules" of doing business and guides to strategy development; the fundamental ethical standards and the basis of the culture of the school, or what should they be. This set of statements defines the beliefs we hold most dear, and guide all policies, strategies and actions that we undertake. Knowledge of beliefs and values must come before policies, processes and goals. They often reflect the "culture" that an organization has or is striving for. The organization should be using the principles and core values as a "litmus test" for decisions as well as a basis for making strategic issues.

**d. Strategic Intent.** The strategic intent is the visible focus point (theme) of our plan, driving our strategies and acting as a motivation for fast action. Simply put, the strategic intent is our internal vision -- the desired outcome that can allow all involved to understand our basis of operation and decision-making.

**e. Driving Strategy.** Driving strategies are the statements of how we will achieve our strategic intent. The driving strategies guide actions and priorities, and as such have resource allocation implications. The statement of driving strategies makes clear to everyone that we know what we have to be doing. The driving strategies are not time sensitive, but can change as circumstances require.

**f. Goal.** A goal is a broad statement of proposed achievement which, when accomplished, significantly contributes toward the achievement of our mission. Goals should be broad enough to be something toward which we are constantly moving. Generally a goal can be seen as an aim within a particular area of concern for the organization.

**g. Positioning Statement.** A positioning statement is a succinct description of how the organization wishes (its brand) to be known by its target audience(s).

### ***Imperative Work Plan Statements***

**a. Imperative.** A strategic imperative, is an issue, concern or problem that (a) confronts the organization now, or will soon; (b) cuts across and affects several major components of the organization; (c) will require strategic rather than administrative or short-term action to resolve; (d) will have serious consequences if not resolved; and (e) has not yet been resolved in the planning processes to-date. Imperatives are the main focus of strategic planning. Using “imperatives” narrows the focus of the Plan to the most important areas that we can be addressing and as such prioritize the use of resources and effort. We try to limit the number of imperatives so that the focus of the organization is clear.

**b. Objective.** An objective is a measurable step along the way toward achieving a goal or strategic initiative. An objective should include a time frame.

**c. Strategy.** A strategy is the statement of how we will achieve a strategic imperative in the time frame of the Plan. Strategies guide actions and have resource allocation implications. Strategies are fluid; they change as the environment or imperative changes. The choice and success of strategies are very much affected by the overall culture of the organization and the resources available to put toward the strategy.