



CDE After School Division

Statement of Strategic Direction

Strategic Plan 2013 – 2015
Last Revised 04/25/13





Revision History

4/25/13

ASD Goals described by this document were revised based on suggested revisions from the Implementation Team (see pages 7-8). In early 2013, as the Implementation Team began working to develop objectives and indicators of success for each goal, a number of suggested revisions to goal statements emerged with strong support. The goal statements in this document reflect these revisions. In addition, this version includes a minor update to the final bullet point of the ASD Purpose statement.

1 Context for the California Department of Education (CDE) After School Division Strategic Plan

1.1 Background

Throughout our nation, there is growing recognition that high-quality Expanded Learning[1] programs have the potential to help children and youth succeed and develop to their full potential.[2] In California, the state has made a significant investment in the development of these programs and systems, utilizing both federal and voter-approved Proposition 49 funds as well as significant local public and private resources.[3] While California has made noteworthy progress, especially towards increasing access and participation for those most in need of services, important challenges remain, particularly in relation to supporting quality programming, building strong data-based decision-making and communications strategies, and the integration of Expanded Learning strategies with K-12 programming and reform initiatives.[4]

Immediately following his election in 2010, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson convened a Transition Advisory Team charged with making key strategic recommendations for a new mission and planning framework for the California Department of Education (CDE). The Team's final report, summarized by the *Blueprint for Great Schools,* included an important emphasis on Expanded Learning; it recommended the establishment of a new After School Division (ASD) within CDE to highlight the significance of this work, building upon the foundation established by the previous After School Program Office.[5]

In late 2011, CDE implemented this recommendation through the formation of the ASD and by appointing Michael Funk, an accomplished Expanded Learning practitioner with long-term leadership experience, to head the new division. ASD and its new leadership were charged with the development, and subsequent implementation of, a strategic plan that would build upon California's important investment in Expanded Learning to create the systems and programs that will maximize outcomes for children, youth, families, schools and communities.

The ASD immediately initiated a participatory strategic planning process, involving both ASD staff and the field in new and innovative ways. This included the formation of a core planning team and the 'Design Team', comprised of both staff and field representatives. The initial result of this work is this "Statement of Strategic Direction," which describes the ASD's 'north star,' the navigation point towards which all subsequent planning and implementation work will be

[1] The term Expanded Learning is utilized in this document to refer to before and after-school programs, summer learning, and extended-day, -week or -year programs, with a focus on developing the academic, social, emotional and physical needs and interests of students through hands-on, engaging learning experiences. Expanded Learning programs should be results-driven, flexible to student and community needs, include community partners, and complement but not replicate traditional classroom instruction.
[2] See for example: Bodilly, McCombs, Orr, Scherer, Constant, & Gershwin. (2010). *Hours of Opportunity.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
[3] California has led the nation in its investment in after school programs due to Proposition 49 which provides $550 million annually. This is more than all other states combined. California also administers approximately $130 million in federal after school funding.
[4] Huang & Wang. (2012). *Independent Statewide Evaluation of ASES and 21st CCLC After School Programs May 1, 2008-December 31, 2011.* Los Angeles: University of California Los Angeles.
[5] Torlakson. (2011). *A Blueprint for Great Schools: Transition Advisory Team Report.* http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/bp/bpcontents.asp

directed.[6] In the immediate next phase, an accountability framework and initial action plan will be developed which will complete the strategic plan.

1.2 Why This Statement of Strategic Direction?

This Statement of Strategic Direction provides overarching guidance for the work of the ASD and its collaborative partners in the Expanded Learning field over the next several years. Based on the best thinking from within CDE and Expanded Learning practitioners, this document identifies ASD's vision, purpose, values, key strategic initiatives, and goals. It will be used to create alignment both within CDE and with external stakeholders towards a common vision. Starting immediately, Implementation teams will use this Statement of Strategic Direction as the basis for creating an accountability framework for the ASD and a first-year action plan.

1.3 Summary of Strategic Planning Work and Process

An important design principle for the strategic planning process includes the modeling of the types of participatory planning and decision making methods that research has shown lead to the development of the strong collaborative relationships necessary for Expanded Learning program impact and sustainability. The process itself provides an important model for the California Department of Education in relation to collaborative staff-field planning work. An important outcome of the initial phase of planning work included the development of stronger bonds of trust and communication among ASD staff and field leaders. Continuing to nurture these important relationships will yield major returns in the months and years ahead as the strategic plan is further developed, implemented, and evaluated.

The strategic planning process began in March 2012 with a "discovery" phase that included substantial internal and external engagement opportunities, including:

- One-on-one interviews with over 40 internal and external key informants representing diverse Expanded Learning sectors;
- An online survey for both internal and external stakeholders, providing the opportunity for input in response to both quantitative and open-ended questions. Responses were received from over 700 external stakeholders; and
- Following analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data for common themes, the results were presented for feedback in a statewide online forum,[7] at the annual 2012 BOOST conference on April 25, and at a statewide meeting of Regional Leads on May 10. All of these events provided additional opportunities for input to shape the primary directions of the Strategic Plan.

In order to guide the initial phase of the planning process, in April 2012, the 'ASD Strategic Planning Design Team' was created, consisting of both ASD staff and field representatives. The

[6] The Glen Price Group (www.glenpricegroup.com) provided logistical and facilitation support for the strategic planning process supported by funding from private foundations—especially the David and Lucille Packard Foundation.
[7] The online forum was facilitated by Michael Funk and the Glen Price Group and involved over 145 participants. At the conclusion of the forum, in response to an online poll, 98.23% of participants indicated that they would like to continue participating in online events of this nature.

team began by analyzing the results of the surveys, interviews, and other stakeholder input. This high-quality data provided the basis for framing the key elements of this Statement of Strategic Direction. Over a period of several months, during which time the collaboration between ASD staff and the field was significantly strengthened, the Design Team developed an ASD Vision Statement, a Purpose Statement, and identified four Strategic Initiatives. The Strategic Initiatives define the key areas of focus in which the Division's primary work will occur over the next three years:

- System of Support
- Grant Administration and Policy
- Communication/Information Systems
- Expanded Learning/K-12 Integration

For each Strategic Initiative, the Design Team further developed a set of goals that will be utilized as the basis for implementation planning. In the next phase of this planning work, these identified goals will be used to develop objectives, timelines, and outcome measures.

To date, the ASD Strategic Planning process has been successfully carried out with an unprecedented level of stakeholder input and collaboration. This has resulted in a Statement of Strategic Direction that has been greatly enriched by the knowledge and experience of staff, practitioners, leaders, and advocates for Expanded Learning, and the development of strategies that are strongly informed by the day-to-day realities of work in the field.

1.4 Overview of the ASD Strategic Plan

When complete, the CDE After School Division Strategic Plan will consist of three primary components:

1) A **Statement of Strategic Direction** (this document), including the ASD's Vision, Purpose, Core Values, Strategic Initiatives and Goals. The Statement of Strategic Direction answers the question: ***Where is it that we want to go?***;

2) An **Accountability Framework** will summarize the objectives, indicators, and targets to be realized by the ASD. It will answer the question: ***How will we know that we have arrived where we want to go?***; and

3) An **Annual Implementation Plan** will summarize the key activities, responsible parties, and timelines for the work necessary to realize all objectives. It will answer the questions: ***What do we need to do to get where we want to go? Who will do it? When will it be done?***

The Accountability Framework and Annual Implementation Plan will be developed by the 'implementation' teams described in section 6 below.

2 After School Division Vision

The Design Team formulated the following vision for Expanded Learning in California, representing the 'north star' for ASD and stakeholders throughout the state engaged in this work:

> *"California's Expanded Learning programs are an integral part of young people's education, engaging them in year-round learning opportunities that prepare them for college, career, and life."*[8]

3 After School Division Purpose

Building on the overarching vision, the Design Team articulated the following purpose statement for CDE's After School Division. The purpose statement represents what ASD will be doing, i.e., its role in moving California towards fulfillment of its vision for Expanded Learning. The ASD purpose involves:

> *"Working in collaboration with stakeholders, the After School Division supports the development and sustainability of high-quality Expanded Learning programs throughout California by:*
>
> - *Providing a comprehensive and coordinated system of support and accountability to maintain and improve program quality while encouraging creativity and innovation in the field;*
> - *Developing and maintaining clearly defined guidelines, regulations, program requirements and processes supporting efficient program administration;*
> - *Communicating with the field in a clear, timely, and transparent manner; and*
> - *Championing expanded learning as a vital and integrated part of the education system."*

[8] The Design Team noted that when communicating this vision it should be fully contextualized by language including the words "After School Division" to reflect the primary focus and name of the ASD.

4 Core Values

Simultaneous to the Design Team's work, ASD staff engaged in a collaborative and productive discussion around core values, the results of which were shared with the Design Team. The values are summarized by the acronym, "ASCIR:"

- **A**ccountability
- **S**ervice
- **C**ourage
- **I**ntegrity
- **R**espect

Each of these values represents an umbrella, which will be the focus for continued development, providing ASD staff the basis for deeper values work.

5 Strategic Initiatives and Goals

Working on the basis of the vision, purpose, and values, as well as the rich body of data generated during the discovery process, the Design Team identified four strategic initiative areas that represent focal points for improving ASD's results and impact over the next three years:

1) System of Support
2) Grant Administration and Policy
3) Communication/Information Systems
4) Expanded Learning/K-12 Integration

For each of these strategic initiatives, a set of goals was also articulated representing the important accomplishments that ASD would like to make in each of these initiatives. In addition, the Design Team designated for each of the goal areas, the types of teams that should lead next steps of the planning effort. These teams are designated by the type of membership they should include: ASD only; ASD-led with structured field input; and ASD and field co-led (See Table 1 below).

Strategic Initiative	Goals	Team Configuration
1. System of Support *Provide a comprehensive and coordinated system of support and accountability to maintain and improve program quality while encouraging creativity and innovation in the field.*[9]	**1.1** Expanded learning programs are strengthened by a comprehensive and coordinated system of support.	Co-led
	1.2 Through the system of support, expanded learning programs at risk of losing funding receive targeted intervention.	Co-led
	1.3 The system of support informs ASD decisions on TA investments to best support high-quality programs.	Co-led
2. Grant Administration and Policy *Develop and maintain clearly defined guidelines, regulations, program requirements to maintain and improve program quality while encouraging creativity and innovation in the field.*[9]	**2.1** ASD develops, implements, and maintains clear policies that support high-quality programs.	Co-led
	2.2 ASD develops, implements, and maintains clear and consistent internal operational procedures.	ASD-only
	2.3 ASD ensures timely, efficient and equitable grant award processes that support high-quality programs.	ASD-led + Field Input
3. Communication/ Information Systems *Communicate with the field in a clear, timely, and transparent manner.*[9]	**3.1** ASD communicates information in a clear and timely manner using a variety of media.	ASD-led + Field Input
	3.2 ASD develops and provides a system for fielding questions from, and providing high-quality consistent responses to, the field.	ASD-led + Field Input
	3.3 ASD develops and implements an inclusive system for collecting stakeholder feedback and input to inform ASD decisions.	Co-led
4. Expanded Learning/ K-12 Integration *Champion expanded learning as a vital and integrated part of the education system.*[9]	**4.1** SBE adopts a definition of 'expanded learning.'	Co-led
	4.2 CDE divisions support expanded learning/K-12 integration	ASD-only
	4.3 K-12 stakeholders support expanded learning and expanded learning/K-12 integration.	Co-led
	4.4 The CDE and California expanded learning advocates champion expanded learning at the national level.	Co-led
	4.5 Student learning and growth is accelerated through K-12 instructional day and expanded learning integration.	Co-led

[9] From the ASD Purpose statement.

6 Implementation Teams

The Design Team analyzed each goal in relation to the kinds of teams that would be best suited to carry out the next phase of planning work: development of the accountability framework and annual implementation plan for the first year of the strategic plan. These implementation teams will be formed by:

- Creating one Implementation Team for each Strategic Initiative;
- Including both ASD and field representatives in each team;
- Co-chairing each team by one ASD representative and one field representative;
- Configuring the larger team in relation to the Strategic Initiative's Goals; and
- Using the classification provided by Table 1 to create configurations as designated (ASD-only, ASD-led with structured field input, or ASD and field co-led).

Figure 1 below illustrates the formation of a single Implementation Team for each ASD strategic initiative and its configuration as appropriate for strategic initiative goals.

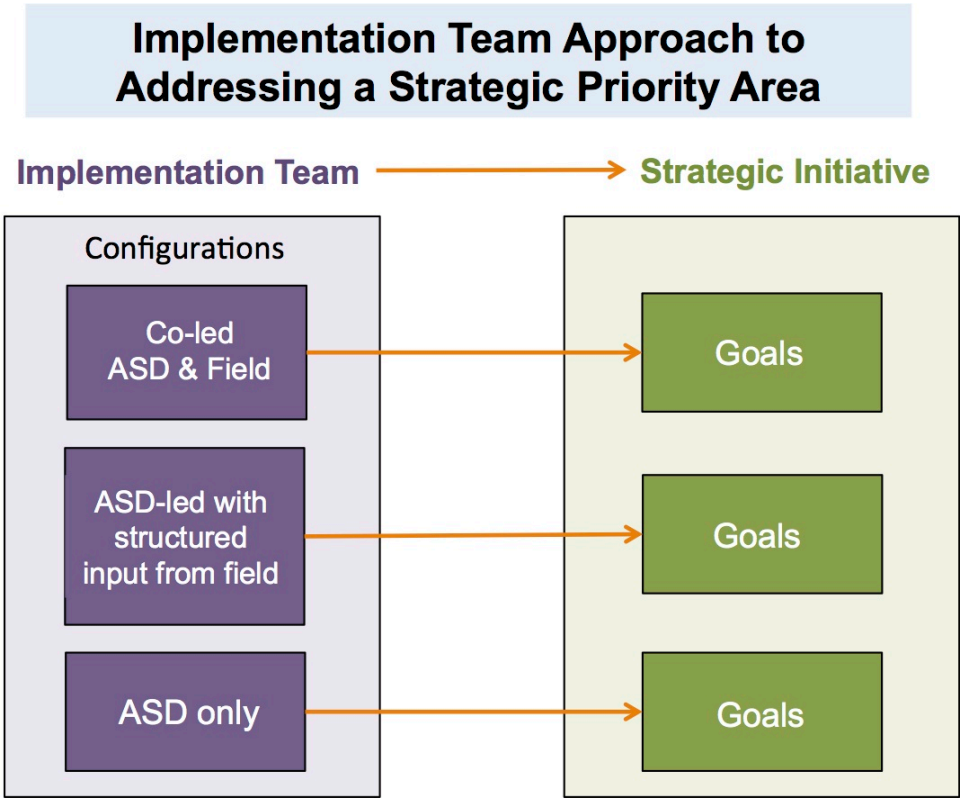
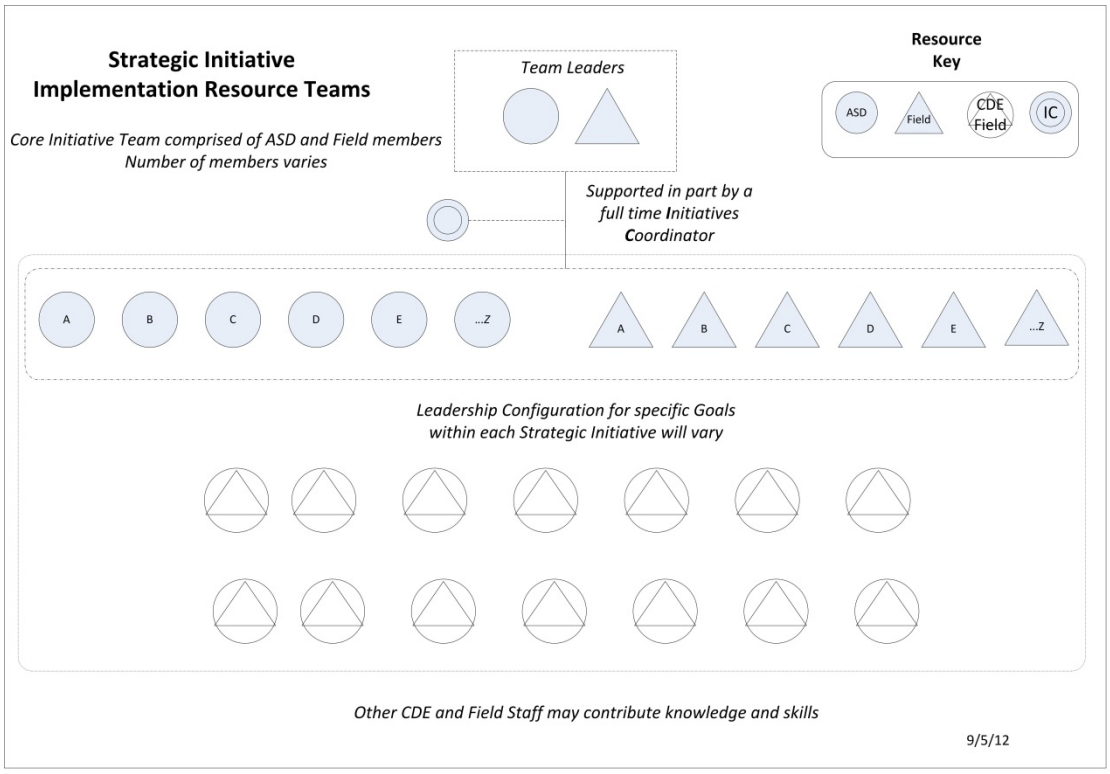
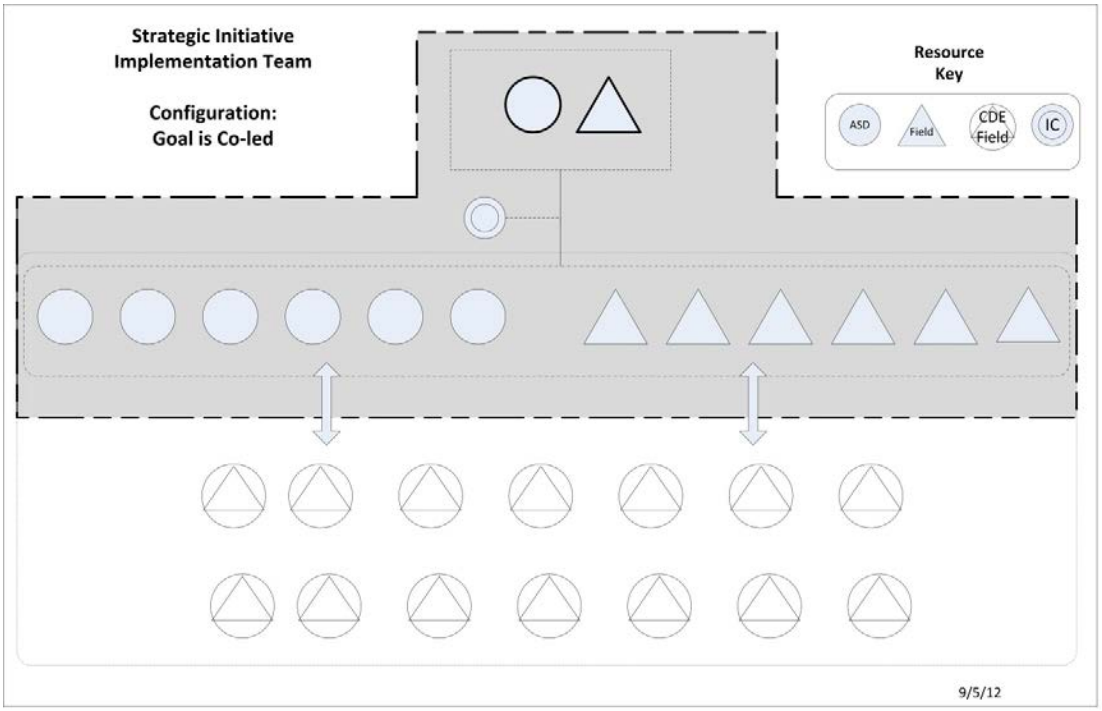
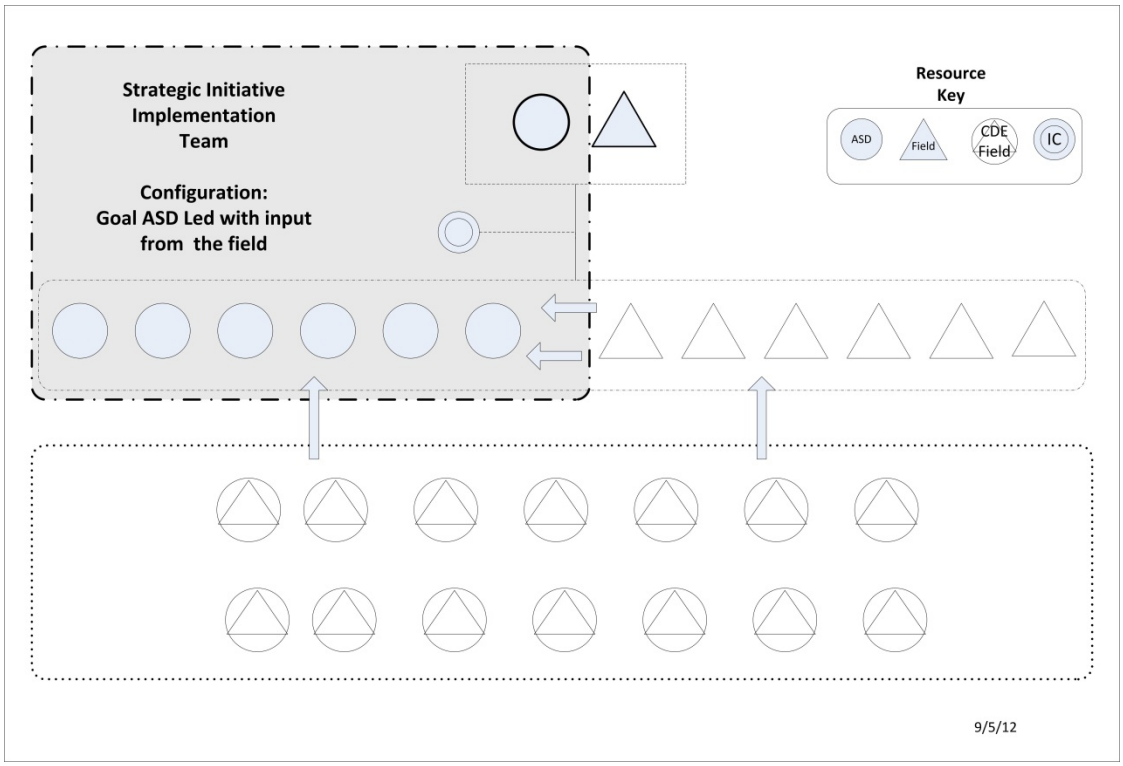


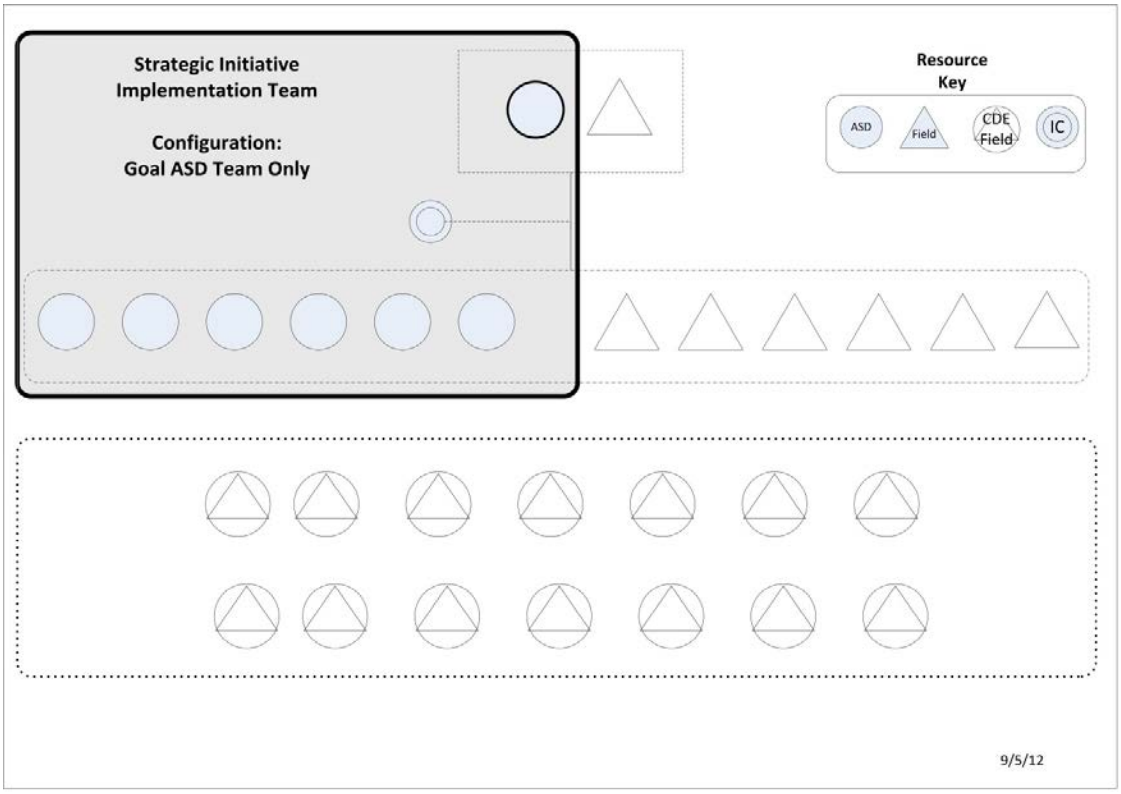
Figure 1

The figures below conceptually illustrate the implementation teams' different configurations (ASD-Field co-led, ASD led with structured field input, and ASD only).






Strategic Initiative Implementation Team
Configuration:
Goal ASD Led with input from the field
Resource Key
ASD
Field
CDE Field
IC
9/5/12


Strategic Initiative Implementation Team
Configuration:
Goal ASD Team Only
Resource Key
ASD
Field
CDE Field
IC
9/5/12