



NYSFAAA

BEST PRACTICES/ONGOING  
ACTIVITIES and  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
2018 - 2020

Created by NYSFAAA Governance Committee 2018

Approved by Executive Council 2018

## INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

The face of financial aid is changing faster than ever. During the creation of this document the committee was faced with the increased probability of our colleagues being asked to do more with less while HEA Reauthorization, years late, is still very uncertain in a political environment that has never been more contentious. Certainly our community has been and will continue to deal with legislative and regulatory concerns that constrain the programs themselves as well as budgetary issues.

The community has been overwhelmed with over regulation and programs that are, at minimum, difficult to manage. Cost of education continues to increase while resources, federal and state, remain the same and/or are threatened to be reduced.

At the same time, technology is changing all around us. Many schools have the ability to keep up. The committee is concerned about those that might not be able to adjust to these changes which would directly impact students.

The financial aid profession has never had a shortage of challenges. In order for NYSFAAA to assist its members in addressing these challenges, an updated strategic plan that is designed with those challenges in mind is needed. Further, NYSFAAA as an organization needs to follow the plan, regularly monitor it, and adjust it as the environment in Post-Secondary Education changes.

The committee has performed an environmental scan (appendix A – 15 Questions and Answers) to provide a better understanding of the issues surrounding our industry today. We encourage everyone to take the time to read, digest and discuss this document.

Another concern of the committee is the strength of our association in terms of the number of active members. We have included several goals that potentially require changes in the bi-laws. We recommend them to the Executive Council for their action.

Finally, we have changed the format of this document. Things that have been accomplished, will be found in this section. We recommend that it be reviewed by Executive Council each year to ensure compliance and continuity.

The second part of the document is the proposed strategic plan. The plan contains goals, strategic, tactics, responsible parties (recommended by the Task Force, to be modified and then approved by Executive Council), expected dates of completion and any budget impact.

The committee recommends that the Executive Council review, discuss and evaluate the Strategic Plan at least 3 times a year. Updates, to the plan should be made based on reports and input from the responsible parties as to progress completion or possible amendments.

The committee thought it appropriate to begin with NYSFAAA's mission statement:

“NYSFAAA is a charitable, volunteer association of financial aid professionals advocating for, and promoting equal access to post-secondary education for all students. NYSFAAA offers education,

professional development, and networking opportunities for its members and for colleagues in related education, business, and governmental professions.”

Our thanks go out to the NYSFAAA members who served on the Governance Committee. They worked long and hard in creating this plan. Without their contribution of time, effort, dedication and enthusiasm, this plan document would never have been developed.

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# BEST PRACTICES/ONGOING ACTIVITIES

(Note: these represent goals from previous long range plans that have served the Association well, and should be continued into the future.)

## **Communication & Technology**

NYSFAAA must continue to recognize that communication is the key to success of our organization. Evaluating and improving communication between all levels of the organization are of equal importance to the success of NYSFAAA. Communication & technology must be fully utilized to provide a constant dialogue between NYSFAAA and its internal and external audiences while providing an interactive access point.

1. It is critical that multiple forms of communication be utilized to provide current information and is constantly reviewed to make sure our message does not become stale. NYSFAAA must communicate in different ways, using both traditional and new technologies, so members receive information in ways comfortable to them.
2. The Technology & Innovation Committee should continue to review and evaluate differing forms of communication & technology, as they continue to evolve, and work with the membership to identify the most successful communication options for member communications, training, and outreach activities.
3. The Technology & Innovation Committee should implement a training program on new tools of communication for NYSFAAA members. These lessons would include how to use these tools for our offices & NYSFAAA.
4. NYSFAAA needs to continue recruiting members who are subject matter experts in the latest technology and communication for committees within the association.
5. The NYSFAAA President needs to communicate to the membership when and where the NYSFAAA Executive Council meeting is. When possible, local members should be invited to attend Executive Council meetings. The membership should be aware of the agenda for each Council meeting. The minutes of each meeting should be announced when posted. This provides them the opportunity to make their representative on Executive Council aware of their position on issues that will be discussed.
6. NYSFAAA needs a mechanism so the membership can be kept up to date on all activities of the Executive Council, committees, and the association's positions with regular updates and periodic reports to members using a variety of communications. (Empire Chat, Listserv)
7. The membership should have access to this document, and to the annual goals and objectives designed to support the plan.
8. NYSFAAA should continue our strong and admirable record of outreach to students, with programs such as College Goal New York, a web site with high-quality information, brochures, public service announcements, and other communications. We should communicate to families & the public about complex issues in a format that is in easy to understand terms.

9. NYSFAAA should provide written communications on financial aid issues to agencies that evaluate current regulations, and formally respond to Notices of Proposed Rulemaking. We should lead and support efforts to improve interagency cooperation and communications.
10. NYSFAAA should maintain the cooperation and communication between our sister organizations (NASFAA, EASFAA, SUNYFAP, etc.). We should continue to provide invitations to these groups to attend our annual conference and Executive Council meetings. Ongoing communication between these organizations is essential on current issues and common concerns.
11. NYSFAAA should continue to survey its membership to ensure alignment with the needs and desires of members with the activities of the association.

## **THE STRATEGIC PLAN SHOULD ALWAYS CONTAIN GOALS TO SUPPORT COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY**

### **Fiscal Stability**

To assure that NYSFAAA can continue its mission the Association needs to be fiscally solvent. NYSFAAA can no longer continue to thrive with just its current membership dues and potential annual conference as its primary source of revenue. NYSFAAA needs to look to other sources of revenue to support its outreach activities and increase its fund reserve.

1. The Budget Committee needs to continue providing an annual balanced budget for Executive Council consideration prior to the summer meeting
2. The Development Committee should explore new revenue sources for NYSFAAA by examining the current model of financial support and consider changes within or new models that may be appropriate.
3. The Professional Development Committee should offer training opportunities in grant identification and grant writing to interested NYSFAAA members.
4. The Development Committee should assist conference committees in finding vendors to exhibit at our annual conference.
5. The Development Committee should seek a list of foundations that share NYSFAAA goals and submit applications to these foundations to request sponsorship.
6. The Development Committee should seek gaining financial support from higher education vendor partners by sponsoring NYSFAAA member training activities.
7. NYSFAAA should continue working with have the Investment committee reporting to the Treasurer. The committee will monitors the Association's investments. The committee will make recommendations to the Executive Council as changes to the portfolio are deemed prudent.
8. It is recommended that the NYSFAAA's Investment Committee continues to work with an outside investment firm on the association's long-term investment strategy to ensure the financial stability
9. NYSFAAA should continue the excellent record of timely and clean audits.

10. The NYSFAAA Executive Council needs to continue to be diligent in the management of the Association's resources in the conducting of its business.

11. NYSFAAA should continue to be vigilant to assure that the practices we use to solicit vendor support are consistent with our mission and within all pertinent legal guidelines.

## **THE STRATEGIC PLAN SHOULD ALWAYS CONTAIN GOALS TO SUPPORT FISCAL STABILITY**

### **Advocacy and Public Policy**

NYSFAAA must continue to be dedicated to our stated mission. Advocacy efforts must always recognize the needs of all our members, at every level of higher education. We possess the greatest "hands on" knowledge resource for the development of student financial aid policy and delivery. We need to continue to market our knowledge base and willingness to share it. Our ultimate goal should be working together with those who establish, interpret, implement and evaluate policy, and to help create policies with the best potential outcomes for our students.

1. NYSFAAA, which is made up of members from large and small institutions of post-secondary education, depend on NYSFAAA to support their advocacy efforts. We need to continue to be aware of and support those who need us.

2. NYSFAAA needs to capitalize on the opportunity advocacy provides to enlist volunteers to plan and participate in advocacy activities, regionally and statewide.

3. Advocacy activities are critical for providing association credibility and exposure.

4. A leadership review held, at least annually, of important issues should guide the advocacy planning process.

5. As we approach the next re-authorization of the Higher Education Opportunity Act, NYSFAAA needs to remain aware of the work done by NASFAA regarding Re-authorization. Further, our community has been and will continue to deal with legislative and regulatory concerns that constrain the programs themselves as well as budgetary issues.

6. NYSFAAA should continue the tradition of having an advocacy Council Meeting in Albany, NY. The purpose of the meeting would be to spend one-half day reviewing the 'talking points' for NYSFAAA and the next day using those talking points in scheduled visits to the Assembly and Senate.

7. NYSFAAA has a wealth of experienced retired administrators who remain involved and available to serve. We must capitalize on this vast resource as we develop our advocacy agenda.

8. NYSFAAA needs to make sure we keep a well-balanced representation of experienced and developing members on our advocacy planning committee to maximize idea development and opportunities for mentoring future leaders.

## **THE STRATEGIC PLAN SHOULD ALWAYS CONSIDER THE NEED FOR ADVOCY GOALS AS THEY ARE HARD TO PREDICT YEARS OUT**

## **Training and Leadership Development**

Training and leadership development is an integral part of NYSFAAA. It is one of the key components to sustainability. NYSFAAA training is two-fold, novice training for the entry level professional, and ongoing professional development beyond the entry level. NYSFAAA training is inclusive of all levels of postsecondary higher education offerings at all the institutions of our members (undergraduate, graduate, professional, public, private and for profit). NYSFAAA training is inclusive of all members or potential members of our association regardless of race, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, or mental or physical disability. NYSFAAA training and leadership development is inclusive of all members of our association regardless of their membership level (active, associate, affiliate and retired).

1. NYSFAAA needs to continue to annually evaluate the training needs of the membership, and be ready to be a flexible training resource.
2. Executive council should seek potential leaders from the regions to put on state wide committees.
3. NYSFAAA must be ready to support training needs that develop at the national, regional, and state levels. The TLD Committee should be actively working with NASFAA and EASFAA to develop training activities.
4. The TLD committee should use available technology to ascertain what training is needed and how to deliver said training. The TLD committee will need to evaluate and understand the effectiveness of training provided electronically versus in person, to make sure we provide the best potential for success.
5. NYSFAAA should always enlist members to serve as committee members, presenters, and site facilitators to maximize opportunities for professional involvement and development.
6. The annual conference will continue to be our largest annual training event. We must continue to provide a strong conference program and post the program to our membership as soon as possible.
7. Novice training should continue to be the main training vehicle for our new colleagues.
8. Novice graduates should be actively recruited to serve on a committee upon graduation.
9. Webinars should be continued as a vehicle for training, but the regions should offer regular in-person training for their members.
10. Leadership training should continue and help to prepare the next generation of NYSFAAA leaders.

**THE STRATEGIC PLAN SHOULD ALWAYS CONTAIN GOALS TO SUPPORT TRAINING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

## Membership Outreach

NYSFAAA's mission is to advocate for students and to promote equal access to post-secondary education. To be successful in our mission, we must encourage active membership among financial aid professionals, associate membership among colleagues in fields related to financial aid, and welcome members who were once directly involved in financial aid administration but who are now retired.

1. The Membership Committee should continue to send invitations to prospective members and send annual reminders to current members to encourage membership renewal.
2. Affiliate Membership can be promoted to graduate students who plan to pursue careers in Higher Education, to high school counselors, and to our colleagues in admissions, EOP/HEOP, bursar/business offices, student affairs, and career services.
3. The entire NYSFAAA membership, the Mentoring Committee, and NYSFAAA leadership (such as Executive Council) must mentor new members to make them feel welcomed and included.
4. NYSFAAA will continue to add value to membership by offering frequent training opportunities (both in-person and through various means of technology) and by holding regional and statewide meetings.
5. Executive Council and Regional leaders should invite all members to participate on committees and to serve in leadership roles (as defined by the NYSFAAA P & P Manual), both at the regional and statewide levels. No one should be excluded or feel discouraged to attend meetings, volunteer at events, or serve on committees.
6. The NYSFAAA membership can present financial aid information to students at targeted events and programs (such as financial aid nights, state or county fairs, College Goal New York events, and other Early Awareness events). If new grant funding is secured, the Early Awareness Committee can play an active role in getting the message out to young students and their families that college is an option for anyone who works hard and aims high, regardless of their financial background.
7. The Government Relations Committee (state and federal) should serve as liaisons between NYSFAAA and state and federal elected officials. This committee should support, initiate and lead advocacy efforts by scheduling EC approved trips to DC and Albany, participating in Higher Education Legislative Days, promote letter-writing and other comments on legislative proposals affecting financial aid, write white papers or articles about policy issues, and regularly update the NYSFAAA membership on financial aid issues, policies, and events which may need NYSFAAA members to serve as experts or spokespersons. We should nominate individuals to participate on Negotiated Rule making teams to ensure the memberships' voice is heard on the Federal aid issues.
8. The School Outreach Committee should continue to hold Counselor Workshops and participate in the HESC Guidance Programs. NYSFAAA members can help plan the workshops and serve as presenters.
9. College Goal New York events should continue to be held, particularly in targeted areas across the state where there is a history of high financial need and a disproportionately small number of FAFSA on the Web submissions. To be successful, these CGNY events must be staffed by NYSFAAA volunteers.



10. NYSFAAA leadership should create a list serve of financial aid directors and communicate with them regularly to build camaraderie and seek their assistance in recruiting new members.

**EACH YEAR - GOALS AND OBJECTIVES SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED TO SUPPORT THIS INITIATIVE**

**EVALUATION PROCESS FOR LRP**

In accordance with the NYSFAAA Policies and Procedures Manual, it is the responsibility of the Governance Committee to conduct an annual review of the NYSFAAA Long Range Plan and report to the Executive Council on progress made on plan recommendations.