

Connecticut Association of Professional Financial Aid Administrators Strategic Plan 2013 - 2015

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PREFACE: Responsibility for adhering to this Strategic Plan (herein referred to as the Plan) lies with the Executive Council of the Connecticut Association of Professional Financial Aid Administrators (CAPFAA). Any changes to, or deviations from the Strategic Plan must be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Council.

I. Mission Statement

The mission of the Connecticut Association of Professional Financial Aid Administrators (CAPFAA) is to promote professional growth and development of its members in an atmosphere of collegial support and respect, actively pursue the mentoring of its members and those young professionals who may wish to make Financial Aid their career goal, support an industry-wide spirit of cooperation and communication, and serve as a steward of the profession so as to ensure the ethical administration of student financial aid programs for students, families and the institutions we represent.

II. Execution of Strategic Plan

The Executive Council of CAPFAA is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the following provisions of the CAPFAA Strategic Plan are enacted and adhered to by the Council, Committee Chairs and all members of CAPFAA.

III. Organizational Structure

A. By-Laws

1. **Goal:** Ensure that the Constitution and By-Laws reflect the mission of the Association and support the viability of the organization.
 - a. **Objective:** Review the Constitution and By-Laws at least annually to confirm that they facilitate the development of policies and procedures necessary to meet the Association's mission and administrative responsibilities.

B. Policies and Procedures

1. **Goal:** Ensure that the Association's Policies and Procedures facilitate accomplishing the administrative responsibilities contained in the By-Laws and

the business of the organization in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

- a. Objective: Review the Policies and Procedures at least annually to confirm that they address all of the current responsibilities of the Association, that they reflect current best practices, and that they provide direction for remaining as fiscally responsible as possible.
- b. Objective: A review of all proposed policy and/or procedural adjustments should occur within two months of the proposed adjustments.
- c. Objective: All updates to the Association Policies and Procedures Manual should occur within two months of the approved change.
- d. Objective: A review of the Association's Policies and Procedures, which incorporates a comparison to those of other state and regional financial aid associations, must be performed as part of the strategic planning process.

C. Executive Council

1. **Goal:** Ensure that the Executive Council is structured appropriately to accomplish the goals of the Association: to provide leadership, to facilitate further leadership development, to be fiscally responsible, and to efficiently and effectively administer the Association.
 - a. Objective: Review the composition of the Executive Council at the end of each Strategic Plan period.
2. **Goal:** Ensure that the terms of office of elected officers are of sufficient length to maintain continuity and to complete official business while providing opportunities for new leadership.
 - a. Objective: Review the terms of office of the Executive Council positions at the end of each Strategic Plan period.
3. **Goal:** Redefine all Executive Council positions and the duties of those positions in-order to represent the new structure and purpose of CAPFAA.
 - a. Review Executive Council position job descriptions to ensure that they reflect committee reporting structure, duties as defined by this Plan and term limits at the end of each strategic plan period.
4. **Goal:** Ensure that the annual transition of leadership for the Executive Council as well as Committee Chairpersons is responsibly facilitated.
 - a. Objective: Review the policies and procedures associated with the annual transition at the end of each Strategic Plan period.
 - b. Objective: Review the need and justification for all committees at the Executive Council Annual Retreat and provide monetary support to those committees which serve the mission and purpose of the Association.

D. Committees

1. **Goal:** Ensure that each committee has appropriate Executive Council oversight and accountability.
 - a. Objective: Assess the purpose and need for each committee when making committee chair/liason appointments each year.
 - b. Objective: Ensure each Executive Council member has a number of committees to oversee during the course of their incumbency.
 - c. Objective: Charge each committee (chairperson) to provide a written annual report, to be presented at the Annual Business Meeting, which details accomplishments over the prior year.

2. **Goal:** Ensure that committees have a sufficient number of members and meet a sufficient number of times in order to accomplish their purpose. Also, ensure that all committees remain fiscally responsible in meeting their goals.
 - a. **Objective:** Each chairperson should annually establish a committee budget sufficient to carry out the duties of the committee.
 - b. **Objective:** Each chairperson should establish a schedule of meetings sufficient to ensure successful completion of the duties assigned their committee.
 - c. **Objective:** Encourage the use of alternatives to on-site committee meetings, such as conference calls, e-mail communications, holding meetings in conjunction with other Association events where committee members already plan to be.

E. Membership

1. **Goal:** Ensure that the membership structure accurately reflects the Association's mission and goals and those member constituencies are appropriately designated.
 - a. **Objective:** Review membership categories and sectors for appropriateness at the end of each Strategic Plan period.
 - b. **Objective:** Review the membership structure at the end of each Strategic Plan period to determine if individual membership, rather than institutional or some other basis, is best for the Association.
 - c. **Objective:** Review membership opportunities at the end of each Strategic Plan period to consider whether additional constituencies (students, high school guidance personnel and/or others) should be considered.
 2. **Goal:** Ensure membership opportunities are extended to all members and potential members of the Connecticut aid community.
 - a. **Objective:** Seek to increase membership annually, particularly in under-represented categories and sectors.
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IV. Communication and Collaboration

A. Communication

1. **Goal:** Ensure that Association communications are done in a manner consistent with policies and procedures determined by the Executive Council so as to reach all categories and sectors of the membership in a timely and cost efficient manner.
 - a. **Objective:** Maintain a centralized and readily available master calendar that includes all of the planned Association activities, Executive Council and Committee meetings and regional and national events of interest to the Association.
 - b. **Objective:** Maintain a centralized database of member contact information and ensure that any such database or directory is updated on an annual basis.

B. Collaboration

1. **Goal:** Ensure that all Association publications and other methods of information dissemination enhance and/or encourage Association communication and information sharing among the members.

- a. Objective: Review the Association's Newsletter format annually to determine opportunities which will best encourage contributions and information sharing among the membership.
 - b. Objective: At the end of each Strategic Plan period, review opportunities for providing individualized professional support and/or mentoring among the membership.
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V. Professional Development

A. Opportunities

1. **Goal:** Ensure that the Association provides for the professional growth and competency development of its members by offering workshops, seminars, and other training and development opportunities that meet the needs of the membership.
 - a. Objective: Address the perceived and assessed developmental needs of the members, recognizing categorical distinctions among members such as, experience level, institutional type, and level of administrative responsibility.
 - The Association will hold the Comprehensive Training program every other year.
 - Provide a diversity of topics that include but are not limited to regulatory and technical knowledge as well as the need for skills in leadership, management, and human relations.
 - Provide open forum opportunities to accommodate timely topics not considered when program agendas are planned.
 - Provide experienced aid administrators opportunities for sharing and growing in areas such as leadership and management responsibilities of the financial aid office.
 - Give attention to emerging technologies both as a subject of training and as vehicles for presentation, communications, and administrative advancement.
 - b. Objective: Ensure that the mentoring of CAPFAA members and young professionals wishing to join the profession is accomplished.
 - Recognize and encourage the development of informal "networking" opportunities for sharing professional and personal information.
 - Encourage participation in professional development activities by experienced Association members who are capable of motivating and facilitating learning in others and who represent the diversity of the membership.
 2. **Goal:** Ensure the maximum membership involvement in all CAPFAA and non-CAPFAA sponsored opportunities for professional development.
 - a. Objective: Actively encourage membership participation in all professional development activities.
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VI. Finance

A. Integrity

1. **Goal:** Ensure fiscal integrity in the operations of the Association.
 - a. Objective: Develop fiscal policies and procedures for CAPFAA.
 - b. Objective: Establish a balanced budget at the beginning of each year.
 - c. Objective: Require adherence to the fiscal policies and procedures of the Association by all who oversee activities that may have fiscal implications for the organization. An appropriate review of this

information should be provided as part of the annual transition of the Association leadership.

B. Stability

1. **Goal:** Ensure the future financial stability of the Association through careful and regular planning and evaluation.
 - a. **Objective:** Annually assess the appropriate level of charges to the membership for dues, workshops, conferences, and ancillary services.
 - b. **Objective:** Use no more than 10% of the existing reserve funds annually to offset any budgetary shortfall when establishing a balanced budget.
 - c. **Objective:** Ensure that the Association has an audited annual report done by a third-party professional and act on any suggestions as a result of the report.

2. **Goal:** Ensure the Association accurately determines the source(s) of income and areas of expense.
 - a. **Objective:** Identify all non-discretionary Association expenses and the annual amount of such expenses.
 - b. **Objective:** Cover the cost all non-discretionary Association expenses with membership dues.
 - Determine annual membership dues amount and number of members required to cover non-discretionary expenses.
 - Each year, at the March Executive Council meeting, determine how the Association did financially based on a Year-to-Date (YTD) income and expense report provided by the Treasurer.
 - Each year, at the April Executive Council meeting, decide if membership dues amount must need to change for the coming year.
 - c. **Objective:** Identify all discretionary Association expenses and the annual amount of such expenses.
 - Any discretionary expenses not covered by collected dues, after non-discretionary expenses have been covered, must be self funding.
 - d. **Objective:** The Treasurer must submit to Executive Council a final year end accounting of the previous year's income and expenses no later than September 30th.
 - The final year end report must include an accurate accounting of the actual amount of reserve funds the Association spent vs. the original reserve funds budgeted for.
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VII. Association Records Maintenance

A. Archival

1. **Goal:** Ensure that the official records of the Association are maintained.
 - a. **Objective:** Annually review the processes by which the records of the Association are archived to ensure that continuity and order are maintained and that the site at which they are located guaranties responsible maintenance and accessibility as needed.

