

*California Association of Student
Financial Aid Administrators*

*2007-2011
Strategic Plan*

Adopted by the CASFAA Executive Council
on November 6, 2006

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
● Introduction.....	3
● Planning Process.....	4
● Mission & Vision Statements.....	5
● Situation Assessment.....	8
● Summary of Goals	16
● Goals, Strategies, & Measures.....	17
● Evaluation & Monitoring of the Plan.....	27
● Appendices.....	28

Introduction

Between 2003 and 2006, CASFAA worked to enhance its long-range planning efforts by gathering important input from the membership through a comprehensive membership services survey and by strengthening its annual goal-setting process. By late 2005, it was clear that the organization was prepared and motivated to launch a true long-range planning process by creating a five-year strategic plan.

In February 2006, a meeting of current Executive Council members and past CASFAA leadership was held to define the desired planning process and intended outcomes. A Strategic Planning Committee was established (Appendix B), chaired by then President-Elect Mindy Bergeron and WASFAA President and former CASFAA President Steve Herndon, who had just completed the development of a five-year strategic plan for WASFAA. A strategy and organizational development consultant, Gayle Northrop, was hired to facilitate the process.

The primary purpose of the plan was to ensure the consistency and quality of services provided to CASFAA members, and, in fact, to continually enhance the quality of those services over time. In order to do this, it was necessary to develop agreed upon priorities (goals) that would guide both the activities of the Association and the investment and expenditure of its fiscal resources.

The goals of the planning process were to:

- Involve past, current, and future CASFAA leadership in the planning process;
- Obtain relevant input from the membership and key stakeholders to develop the plan;
- Identify and build upon organizational strengths, while acknowledging and addressing opportunities for improvement;
- Establish agreed upon goals for the organization and strategies for achieving those goals; and
- Provide clear guidance to future Executive Councils regarding key priorities and constraints, while allowing future leadership flexibility and creativity in how they choose to achieve those goals.

Planning Process

The strategic planning process was organized into three phases:

PHASE 1: Data Collection and Analysis (Feb. '06 – May '06)

This phase of the project included the development, administration, and analysis of three online surveys of targeted segments of the Association's membership, including:

- Non-renewing members;
- New members (defined as those who had joined CASFAA within the last 3 years); and
- Financial aid directors and other individuals in leadership roles within the financial aid profession.

This phase also involved confidential interviews with individuals representing some of CASFAA's key constituent/stakeholder groups, including:

- California Association of Private Post-Secondary Schools (CAPPS)
- Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU)
- University of California Office of the President (UCOP)
- California State University Chancellor's Office
- California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO)
- California Lenders for Education (CLFE)
- California Student Aid Commission (CSAC)
- EdFund

PHASE 2: Strategic Thinking (March '06 – July '06)

This phase of the project included regular meetings of the Strategic Planning Committee, followed by presentation and facilitated discussion with the Executive Council regarding the outcomes of the strategic planning process. Discussions centered around CASFAA's mission and vision for the future, as well as the goals and strategies to achieve the Association's mission, and ways to measure progress and achievement.

PHASE 3: Strategic Implementation (July '06 – November '06)

This phase involved organizing and compiling ideas, outcomes, and materials from previous phases of the project and incorporating them into a written Strategic Plan and other supporting documents.

*MISSION
&
VISION*

CASFAA's Mission Statement

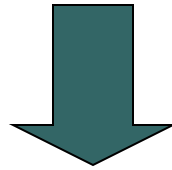
To provide training and professional development opportunities to the financial aid community and to advocate on behalf of the financial aid profession for student educational access and choice.

CASFAA's Vision Statement

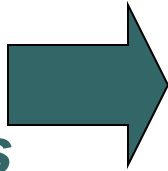
CASFAA will:

- Serve as a resource for all financial aid professionals in California;
- Provide members with opportunities to become actively involved in the activities of the Association;
- Prepare members to assume leadership roles in the student aid profession, the Association, and other financial aid associations;
- Serve as an authority in the State on student aid issues and be consulted regularly by Federal and State policy makers, the media, and other educational partners; and
- Be proactive with regard to positions on State and national financial aid policy issues, and in protecting the interests and rights of California students for educational access and choice.

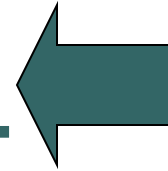
*Organizational
Strengths & Assets*



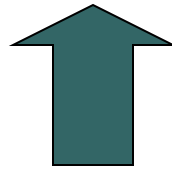
*Threats &
Opportunities*



**SITUATION
ASSESSMENT**



*Trends &
Issues in
Financial
Aid*



*Organizational
Challenges*

Introduction to Situation Assessment

The following Situation Assessment reflects information obtained during Phase 1, “Data Gathering & Analysis,” of CASFAA’s strategic planning process. The summary was developed by the consultant and reviewed and endorsed by members of the CASFAA Strategic Planning Committee and Executive Council in September 2006.

It is important to consider that the Situation Assessment was completed between April and June, 2006. Therefore, the summary reflects the strengths and challenges as well as threats, opportunities, and trends perceived to be impacting CASFAA at this specific point in time. Some of the issues, opportunities, and trends might be vastly different if the assessment was completed just a year earlier or at some point in the future.

Materials in the Situation Assessment reflect comments and themes which arose from the following resources during the times indicated.

- Interviews with key CASFAA stakeholders conducted by the consultant – March and April, 2006
- Online surveys of (1) new CASFAA members, and (2) CASFAA members who were financial aid directors – April and May, 2006
- Online survey of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and trends by members of the 2006 Executive Council and Strategic Planning Committee – Late June and early July, 2006

It is also important to note that the information in the Situation Assessment reflects *facts* as well as CASFAA member and Executive Council *perceptions* of the internal and external environments in which CASFAA operates. While some points could be debated, they were included in the summary if they appeared multiple times in the various assessment instruments and were considered either valid facts or perceptions of CASFAA performance, its external environment, and/or trends in the financial aid field.

Organizational Strengths/Assets

Membership & Leadership

- Diversity of membership and on the Executive Council
- Broad representation of institutions and post-secondary education segments
- Credibility within the education community and with other agencies
- Connection with NASFAA, WASFAA, CCCSFAAA, and other state associations
- Strong and committed volunteer base
- Reaching out to new financial aid professionals
- Large membership base

Training & Networking

- Conferences, workshops, and other training
- Networking opportunities with colleagues from various sectors
- Training scholarships

General

- Holding other education-related agencies accountable for their actions
- Becoming a more vocal advocate at the State level
- Strong working relationship with lending community (e.g., CLFE, EdFund) and other services
- Involvement in community service and educational outreach activities (financial aid nights, Cash for College, advocacy)
- Setting Association policies and procedures
- Strong fiscal position; financial stability
- High quality newsletter publication

Organizational Challenges

Leadership & Administration

- Difficulty finding new members willing to serve on committees, run for office, and take on leadership positions (same people in same roles)
- Limited succession planning for key leadership positions
- Volunteer leadership structure limits commitment and effectiveness
- Organization has lost the leadership and voice it had in the past
- Time commitments for positions may be incompatible with real job workload
- Potential to stray from mission of serving membership to supporting worthy but external causes
- Limited internal financial controls; spending is not strategic or well-managed
- Inconsistency in the following areas:
 - New member orientation and mentoring of new members
 - Volunteer recruitment and placement process
 - Methods and processes for identifying and evaluating trainers
 - Identification, training, development of future Association leaders

Advocacy

- Consistency and visibility of advocacy efforts
- Tendency towards consensus positions on issues leads to inaction (or slow response)
- Segmental differences make advocacy challenging; need to clarify “no consensus” policy
- Not enough involvement with state and federal legislation/legislators
- Not enough collaboration with other institutions/organizations to further CASFAA’s advocacy goals

Challenges (cont'd)

Communication

- Connecting and communicating with a large, diverse group of aid administrators is difficult
- Inconsistent communication from EC to members, between committee members, with external stakeholders
- Website content is not up to date or as useful as could be
- Slow dissemination of information to members
- Timely communication/promotion of workshops, mini-conferences, scholarship; need to clarify conference and training deadlines (registration, application for scholarships, etc.)
- Too much time spent by the EC discussing how things were done in the past and on internal disagreements
- Joint decision-making processes and communication with CCCSFAAA regarding conference planning and other event collaboration needs to be improved

General

- Need a stronger voice and recognition by CSAC as an important stakeholder
- Large membership makes it difficult to make members feel a part of the organization
- Difficult to come to compromises across very different segments and institutions
- Challenging (sometimes slow) to get new projects or ideas off the ground
- Need to strengthen and equalize partnerships with all CASFAA segments and constituents

Threats & Opportunities

INTERNALLY-FOCUSED

- Members retiring, leaving the state and/or the profession
- Challenge of recruiting new members and developing new leaders
- Finding volunteers with time/energy to take CASFAA to the next level in advocacy
- Expenses continue to increase while revenue streams remain constant or decrease
- Staying relevant; members' needs are changing
 - CASFAA should be more than just a basic training organization
 - If CASFAA continues to do what it has done in the past, it may not meet changing member needs
 - Staying current with federal/state issues and communicating those issues to relevant stakeholders
- Staying balanced; concern that CASFAA is dominated by certain segments
- Partnering with NASFAA, WASFAA, and CCCSFAAA for training and legislative advocacy
- Potential shake up in state's financial aid programs – CASFAA will have an opportunity to help re-design a student aid system for the state if strength of membership is recognized

EXTERNALLY-FOCUSED

- Public image of the financial aid profession
- Institutional funding cuts resulting in cuts to training and travel budgets
- Federal legislation lowering yields for vendors may result in lower levels of support; need to plan for potential decrease or loss of vendor funding and decrease dependency
- Competition among financial aid conferences and training opportunities
- Reductions in state and federal grant support
- Potential re-direction of sponsor support

Trends & Issues in Financial Aid

- Need to support more diverse ethnic/racial/socio-economic populations
- Availability of more automated student aid delivery programs
- National exposure brought about by Higher Education Reconciliation Act and Reauthorization of Higher Education Act
- Increasing cost of attendance due to tuition and cost of living increases
- Increasing private loan usage
- Direct marketing of loans to students and parents
- Academically under-prepared students
- Demand for more appropriate informational services to assist low income students
- Continuing consolidation of loan and other student aid providers
- Increased workloads for financial aid administrators due to increased regulations and new need analysis rules; head count reductions; budget cuts
- Increasingly competitive student loan business and increasing focus on ethics
- Movement in higher education toward enrollment management organizational paradigm
- Meeting and conference expenses increasing
- Demand to provide financial planning, budgeting, financial literacy, and consumer credit counseling to students
- Technology improvements/changes in institutional system
- Increased regulation at state and federal levels
- Federal and state budget priority shifts away from education funding

Trends & Issues (cont'd)

- Decentralization of Cal Grant program
- Re-organization of CSAC/EdFund
- Implementation/tracking of ACG grants and national SMART grants
- Increased emphasis on merit-based aid programs
- Rising interest rates making student/parent loans less attractive – may affect choice of institution
- Reduction in available jobs for students after graduating

Five-Year Goals

- 1. Provide consistently high quality training and professional development opportunities that meet the needs of our diverse membership base.**
- 2. Play a leadership role in public policy at the state and federal levels.**
- 3. Increase membership and encourage balanced representation and support for all segments by CASFAA.**
- 4. Maintain and strengthen the fiscal stability of the Association.**
- 5. Provide opportunities for all interested members to participate actively in CASFAA activities and to serve in a leadership capacity within the Association.**
- 6. Provide members and other constituents with relevant, timely information about Association activities and other financial aid issues.**
- 7. Enhance and institutionalize effective governance and planning systems.**

1. Training & Professional Development

GOAL:	
Provide consistently high quality training and professional development opportunities that meet the needs of our diverse membership base.	
Measures:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Percentage of members attending training and events 2. Number of training events 3. Number of new training sessions and professional development activities offered 4. Improved ratings on training and event evaluation forms and membership services survey 	
Strategies:	Primary Responsibility:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement new professional development approaches tailored to the unique interests of financial aid directors and those in similar positions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use creativity in developing new offerings 	Training Liaison
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Regularly survey and communicate with members to identify training needs, topics/issues, and interests <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consider how identification and communication of clearly defined <i>learning objectives</i> and <i>session outcomes</i> could increase participation b. Work with financial aid directors and high level administration to identify training needs and other attractive service offerings 	Training Liaison and Conference Chair
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Use surveys, evaluation forms, and other means to maintain the consistency and quality of training and professional development activities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop and utilize consistent evaluation forms for all trainings b. Regularly review evaluation results and make appropriate changes c. Provide electronic versions of training materials via the website d. Maintain evaluation data over time for analysis and archival purposes 	Training Liaison and Conference Chair
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Explore and test new web-based training and professional development activities/strategies 	Training Liaison and Electronic Initiatives

1. Training & Prof. Development (cont'd)

GOAL:

Provide consistently high quality training and professional development opportunities that meet the needs of our diverse membership base.

Strategies (cont'd):	Primary Responsibility:
5. Coordinate with other institutions and associations to minimize duplication and maximize value of CASFAA training (e.g., Dept of Ed, NASFAA, WASFAA, CCCSFAAA, State Associations, College Board, CSAC/EdFund, vendors)	Training Liaison and Conference Chair
6. Ensure members receive effective training in training, public speaking, presentation skills (“train to be trainers”)	Training Liaison
7. Strengthen the infrastructure of CASFAA’s training operations <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Ensure effective committee structureb. Consider creating a training manualc. Evaluate how trainers are identified, recruited, trained, evaluated	Training Liaison and Conference Chair

2. Advocacy & Public Policy

GOAL:

Play a leadership role in public policy at the state and federal levels.

Measures:

1. Number of communications from State Issues and Federal Issues Chairs to membership
2. Number of advocacy-related communications (e.g., correspondence, position papers) to external constituents
3. Attendance at meetings, hearings, events at the Capitol
4. Number of events/activities involving active collaboration with other agencies/organizations
5. Improved ratings on advocacy-related items on membership services survey

Strategies:

Primary Responsibility:

1.	Act quickly and decisively in advocating for issues that impact all segments <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Clarify and communicate regularly about CASFAA's "no consensus" policy (see Appendix D) 	President and State & Federal Issues Chairs
2.	Collaborate and communicate as appropriate with key organizations to achieve advocacy goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Segmental Groups: CAPPs, AICCU, CCCCCO, UCOP, CSU Chancellor's Office • Loan Industry Partners: CLFE, guarantee agencies, secondary markets, lenders • Other Aid Assoc.: NASFAA, WASFAA, CCCSFAAA, State Assoc., College Board • Student Associations: CSSA, CALPIRG, PIRG, other student associations • Public Agencies: CSAC, US & CA Dept of Ed, BPPVE, CPEC, HHS, CDSS, etc. 	State & Federal Issues Chairs
3.	Communicate regularly with membership regarding public policy issues and CASFAA's advocacy efforts <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Messages from State and Federal Issues Chairs b. Articles in CASFAA Newsletter c. Comprehensive year-end report that summarizes all advocacy efforts d. Use website to support advocacy efforts and communicate about advocacy with members 	President, State & Federal Issues Chairs, Admin. Coordinator

2. Advocacy & Public Policy (cont'd)

GOAL: Play a leadership role in public policy at the state and federal levels.	
Strategies (cont'd):	Primary Responsibility:
4. Regularly attend meetings and events at the state capitol (e.g., CSAC/EdFund meetings, legislative hearings, education agency meetings, etc.) a. Maintain CASFAA representation on GAC, LAC, A&E committees	President and State & Federal Issues Chairs
5. Provide tools and information to membership to assist them in advocating on behalf of their own segment and/or institution	State & Federal Issues Chairs and Electronic Initiatives
6. Use technology to enhance advocacy efforts a. Develop and maintain prominent space on website dedicated to advocacy activities b. Consider link on website to legislators and other constituents c. Consider developing and maintaining a bill matrix to track CASFAA's positions and actions taken on key legislation	State & Federal Issues Chairs and Electronic Initiatives
7. Ensure effective leadership and infrastructure are in place to support advocacy activities	President and EC

3. Serving All Segments

GOAL:

Increase membership and encourage balanced representation and support for all segments by CASFAA.

Measures:

1. Membership statistics and trends (total and by segment)
2. Voting participation by segment
3. Event participation by segment
4. Participation on committees and on Executive Council by segment

Strategies:

Primary Responsibility:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regularly analyze and use membership statistics, conference registration data, and training evaluation data to evaluate participation by segment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Evaluate Association activities to ensure there are relevant offerings for all segments b. Develop and test new strategies for increasing participation by segments lagging in participation 	Training Liaison, Association Services Liaison, Conference Chair, and Electronic Initiatives
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Continue to encourage all segments to participate in advocacy activities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Communicate and collaborate with central offices of all segments in planning advocacy activities (e.g., Day at the Capitol, attendance at hearings, etc.) 	State & Federal Issues Chairs and Segmental Reps
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Actively solicit nominations for officers from all segments 	Nominations & Elections
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Identify and appoint committee chairs and committee members from all segments 	President-Elect, Committee Chairs and Segmental Reps
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Evaluate various approaches to increasing membership (e.g., membership fee and fee structure) and take appropriate action 	Association Services Liaison and EC

4. Fiscal Strength

GOAL:	
Maintain and strengthen the fiscal stability of the Association.	
Measures:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CASFAA maintains a balanced budget 2. Asset reserve policy is in use 3. Investment policy is in use 4. Regular and timely financial audits, reports, and tax filings 	
Strategies:	Primary Responsibility:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain a balanced budget that reflects CASFAA's priorities as stated in its mission and vision <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conduct mid-year budget reviews and make adjustments to maintain balance 	Fiscal Planning and EC
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Implement an Asset Reserve Policy (see Appendix E) and maintain reserve accounts at appropriate levels 	Fiscal Planning
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Establish and implement an Investment Policy (see Appendix F) 	Fiscal Planning
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Determine and maintain an appropriate cap on Association overhead/ administrative costs 	Fiscal Planning and EC
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Maintain accurate and up-to-date financial records and reporting tools <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Inventory of assets b. Outstanding contract liabilities c. Revenue stream and expense analyses (e.g., pie charts) 	Treasurer
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Maximize current revenue from all sources and continue to diversify revenue streams (e.g., registration fees, membership fees, advertising, Jobslink, etc.) 	Fund Development and Fiscal Planning
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Analyze and propose appropriate membership fee structures, conference registration fees, and other training fees in order to fulfill CASFAA's mission/ vision and ensure ongoing fiscal stability 	Fiscal Planning, Strategic Planning, and Training Liaison

5. Volunteer & Leadership Development

GOAL:

Provide opportunities for all interested members to participate actively in CASFAA activities and to serve in a leadership capacity.

Measures:

1. Number of volunteers participating in CASFAA activities
2. Number of new members on committees (new to CASFAA or new to the committee) – target 20%
3. 100% of members expressing interest in volunteering contacted within 3 months

Strategies:

Primary Responsibility:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow-up with all members expressing interest in volunteering for CASFAA <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop form letters to support consistent communication with volunteers b. Maintain accurate records of members expressing interest, members contacted, members placed on committees, etc. 	Volunteer Coordinator and Admin. Coordinator
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Increase number and percentage of new members on committees each year <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Encourage 20% new members on each committee b. Actively recruit Management Institute and Scholarship recipients to volunteer on committees c. Contact and work directly with financial aid directors to encourage their involvement and involvement of their staff 	President, Segmental Reps, and Committee Chairs
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Strengthen the infrastructure and processes that support volunteer development activities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. New members being added to committees b. Online volunteer form c. Newcomers' Reception d. Volunteer recruitment brochure e. Website f. Membership database used to track volunteer involvement 	Admin. Coordinator, Association Services Liaison, and Volunteer Coordinator
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Formalize and continue to enhance Leadership Boot Camp 	President-Elect

6. Communication

GOAL:	
Provide members and other constituents with relevant, timely information about Association activities and other financial aid issues.	
Measures:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regular (at least monthly) emails to membership with links to website updates 2. Number of newsletters published annually 3. Improved ratings on communication items on membership services survey 	
Strategies:	Primary Responsibility:
1. President to communicate regularly and directly with membership	President
2. Use Administrative Coordinator to ensure consistent and appropriate communication with the membership <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Regular emails with links to new and updated information on website b. Timely announcement of scholarship information (opportunities, deadlines, winners) and upcoming training events c. Signature at bottom of all CASFAA emails with links to key sites/information 	Admin. Coordinator, Training Liaison, and Association Services Liaison
3. Maintain quality of CASFAA Newsletter <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Timely distribution and posting on the website b. Hardcopy distribution to all CASFAA stakeholders at least annually c. Regular update and maintenance of Newsletter mailing list 	Newsletter and Electronic Initiatives
4. Use the CASFAA website for effective and timely communication <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Update and add new items to the website according to the Master Calendar b. Post all advocacy communications and training materials on website c. Send brief emails with links to additional information on the website d. Continue to educate membership and EC (e.g., at Leadership Boot Camp) on use and benefits of ATAC tools, listserv, and website 	Admin. Coordinator, Electronic Initiatives, Training Liaison, Assoc. Services Liaison, State & Federal Issues Chairs

6. Communication (cont'd)

GOAL:

Provide members and other constituents with relevant, timely information about Association activities and other financial aid issues.

Strategies (cont'd):	Primary Responsibility:
5. Discuss communication to the membership at the end of each EC meeting and ensure timely dissemination of information	President, Secretary, Admin. Coordinator
6. Convey information about financial strength/status to the membership on a regular basis	Treasurer
7. Provide regular updates on the status of CASFAA's Strategic Plan and its implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide membership with information about the results of the online survey of New Members and Financial Aid Directors and actions to be taken in response b. Post Strategic Plan on CASFAA website c. Include regular progress updates in the Newsletter and in President's communications 	President and Strategic Planning Chair

7. Governance & Planning

GOAL:

Enhance and institutionalize effective governance and planning systems.

Measures:

1. Job descriptions for elected positions, liaisons, and committees are up-to-date
2. Annual goals are developed and documented for officers, liaisons, and committees
3. Improved ratings on and responses to "CASFAA Year in Review" Survey

Strategies:

Primary Responsibility:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate Executive Council and committee structure and effectiveness <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ensure officers and committees are functioning effectively b. Develop and maintain role descriptions for all officers and committees c. Maintain up-to-date organization chart d. Assess EC meeting effectiveness, including agenda, timing, participants, etc. 	President and Admin. Coordinator
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Ensure annual goals for officers and committees are linked with and support the Strategic Plan <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Include annual goals in all budget proposals b. Include report on annual goals in year-end reports c. Suggest annual goals for the next year in year-end reports 	President, Strategic Planning Chair, and Admin. Coordinator
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Continue to align budget format with committee structure 	Fiscal Planning
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Ensure use of standardized forms for evaluation and reporting (e.g., training and event evaluations, committee reports, year-end reports, etc.) 	Strategic Planning Chair
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Provide training to Executive Council members and committee chairs in areas of governance, planning, budgeting, etc. 	President-Elect
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Use Membership Services Survey and other tools to obtain feedback from membership on perceptions of service, needs and expectations, opportunities for improvement, etc. 	Strategic Planning Chair

Monitoring & Evaluation

CASFAA's Strategic Plan is intended to be a "living document," and as such, actively used and referred to in the planning and implementation of Association activities. The Strategic Planning Committee is responsible for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Plan.

The Strategic Planning Committee will be comprised of CASFAA members elected or appointed to positions identified as having a key role (e.g., "Primary Responsibility" for a number of strategies) in the implementation of the Strategic Plan (see Appendix C). The Committee will be chaired by the immediate Past President of CASFAA. The Strategic Planning Committee will meet regularly (at least three times per year), in order to:

- Ensure annual officer and committee goals have been developed and are aligned with the Strategic Plan;
- Discuss and track progress toward implementation of strategies and achievement of goals; and
- Gather data to update the Measures Tracking Tool.

Meetings will likely be held prior to or in conjunction with Executive Council Meetings in May and July, with a more extensive planning meeting to be held in September. The Strategic Plan will be shared and discussed with new Executive Council members at Leadership Boot Camp in September or November. The Executive Council will be regularly informed of progress, challenges, and issues associated with the Strategic Plan. Significant changes to the Strategic Plan require approval of the standing Executive Council.

The membership will be provided regular updates on the implementation of the Strategic Plan. An up-to-date version of the Plan will be maintained on the CASFAA website.

In 2010, the Strategic Planning Committee will conduct a more extensive review of the Strategic Plan, including achievement of goals, use and benefits of the Plan, implementation challenges, etc., and will discuss development of a new five-year plan for the Association.

APPENDICES

List of Appendices

- A. Glossary of Acronyms
- B. 2006 Strategic Planning Committee Members
- C. Proposed Strategic Planning Committee Members
- D. Description of “No Consensus” Policy
- E. Asset Reserve Policy
- F. Investment Policy (to be developed)
- G. Stakeholder Interview Summary
- H. Measures Tracking Tool
- I. Online Survey Summary (available in separate document)
 - 1. Financial Aid Director Survey
 - 2. New Member Survey
 - 3. Non-renewing Member Survey

Appendix A: Glossary of Acronyms

- A&E** – Advisory & Enhancement Work Groups [of CSAC and EdFund]
AICCU – Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities
ATAC – Website hosting service and website technology support provider
BPPVE – Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education
CALPIRG – California Public Interest Research Group
CAPPS – California Association of Private Post-secondary Schools
CCCCO – California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office
CCCSFAAA – California Community Colleges Student Financial Aid Administrators Association
CDSS – California Department of Social Services
CLFE – California Lenders for Education
CPEC – California Postsecondary Education Commission
CSAC – California Student Aid Commission
CSU – California State University
CSSA – California State Student Association
DHHS – Department of Health & Human Services
EC – Executive Council of CASFAA
GAC – Grant Advisory Committee [of the California Student Aid Commission]
LAC – Loan Advisory Committee [of the California Student Aid Commission]
NASFAA – National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
PIRG – Public Interest Research Group
UC – University of California
UCOP – University of California Office of the President
WASFAA – Western Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

Appendix B: 2006 Strategic Planning Committee Members

- **John Anderson**, Treasurer (2000-02, 2006), VP (1998)
- **Connie Barton**, President (2001), CCCSFAAA President (1998)
- **Mindy Bergeron**, President (2007), Treasurer (2005), VP (2003), GP Segmental Rep (2000)
- **Tim Bonnel**, Treasurer (2007)
- **Joanne Brennan**, President (2005), Proprietary Segment Rep (2000)
- **Addalou Davis**, Administrative Coordinator (2006), President (1998)
- **Steve Herndon**, President (1996), VP (1994), CSU Segmental Rep (1984), WASFAA President ('05-'06), WASFAA Treasurer ('01-'03), WASFAA VP ('03-'04)
- **Louise Jones**, President (2006), UC Segmental Rep (2004)
- **Meredith Kelley**, President (2008), CSU Segmental Rep (2005)
- **David Levy**, Independent Segmental Rep (1984, 2004), Treasurer (1997, 1998, 1993), Secretary (1985, 1986)
- **Mary Lindsey**, GAC Chair 1999-2001, 2004-2006, GAC Member (2003-present), (1997-2001)
- **Tom Ma**, Treasurer (2008), Ethnic Diversity (2006), UC Segmental Rep (2003)
- **Wayne Mahoney**, President (2004)
- **Tami Sato**, WASFAA President ('06-'07), VP (2004), Secretary (1999, 2003), GP Segmental Rep (1997)

Appendix C: Proposed Strategic Planning Committee Members

It is recommended that individuals holding the following elected and appointed positions serve on the Strategic Planning Committee, due to the important role that each one plays in the implementation of the Strategic Plan:

1. Past President (Chair of Strategic Planning Committee)
2. President
3. President-Elect/State Issues Chair
4. Vice President/Federal Issues Chair
5. Treasurer
6. Treasurer-Elect/Fiscal Planning Chair
7. Secretary
8. Electronic Initiatives Chair
9. Association Services Liaison
10. Training Liaison
11. Conference Chair
12. Administrative Coordinator

Appendix D: Description of “No Consensus” Policy

NO CONSENSUS POLICY

CASFAA may take a No Consensus position when, by voting yes or no, the position taken by CASFAA would clearly impact one or more of the segments or a specific student population, and there is clear opposition to a yes or no vote because of this impact. The pros and cons of the position under consideration will be made public, along with the No Consensus vote.

Approved by the CASFAA Executive Council
November 18, 1992

Purpose of the Policy

To provide the Executive Council with direction regarding how to respond to public policy issues, legislation, legislative hearings, etc. that may affect the availability, accessibility, or delivery of financial aid to students.

Use of the Policy

When the Executive Council cannot reach consensus on legislation, a provision, action, or public policy issue, a position statement may still be developed. In the statement, it is noted that because of the diverse nature of the segments represented by CASFAA, a consensus opinion could not be reached regarding the matter. Whenever possible, both the pro and con positions regarding the impact of the legislation, provision, action, or public policy issue upon a particular segment are described. In this way, CASFAA is able to provide constructive feedback and input on key financial aid issues without taking a definitive or specific stand.

Appendix D: Description of “No Consensus” Policy

NO CONSENSUS POLICY

History

(cont'd)

In 1992, during a period of significant State budget shortfalls, the Executive Council was asked to take a position on a California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) proposal on whether or not the Cal Grant B program should be eliminated as a means to make more dollars available for the Cal Grant A program. If the Council sided with the CSAC, students from two segments of California higher education (community colleges and proprietary schools) would have been disproportionately harmed. The only option available to the Executive Council was to either support or not support particular proposals (be they proposed legislation or important policy issues). Due to the make-up of the Executive Council at the time, a decision was made to support CSAC. Many in CASFAA, particularly those in the community college segment, were dismayed that CASFAA would vote to disenfranchise such a large group of students.

This was not the first time when CASFAA needed to voice concerns over an issue, where there was no consensus within the Executive Council. There were also instances in which proposed legislation or provisions of legislation led one postsecondary education segment to feel harmed or not considered by a policy or regulation. For example, during the 1992 Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, the CASFAA Graduate and Professional Issues Committee as well as the Federal Issues Committee needed to respond quickly to NPRMs and Dear Colleague Letters. On several topics under discussion at the time, the Executive Council could not come to consensus regarding proposed legislation or important policy issues. At times, one CASFAA segment could be “out-voted” by the other segments when the Executive Council was considering an issue that required a single policy position from the Association. The Executive Council still felt that it was important to provide constructive input on behalf of the CASFAA membership to policy-makers. Consequently, CASFAA developed and began to utilize the No Consensus Policy when responding to public policy and legislative issues that might negatively impact one or more postsecondary segments and/or their students.

Appendix E: Asset Reserve Policy (Adopted 7/2007)

It is the fiduciary responsibility of the CASFAA Executive Council to ensure the prudent management of the association's financial assets. In keeping with this responsibility, the Executive Council is committed to maintaining an appropriate level of reserves to provide stability and to protect the financial integrity of the organization.

The targeted level of the asset reserves should be no less than one and a half year's average actual annual expenditures for the last two fiscal years for which complete books are available plus a sufficient amount to reasonably cover outstanding contractual liabilities of the association.

The association's financial assets shall be maintained in four categorical funds:

- Operating fund (the association's checking account), designed to cover the expenses of the organization for the next thirty to sixty days;**
- Operating reserve, designed to provide liquid low risk assets earning a reasonable return. The operating reserve shall consist of interest bearing savings accounts and/or short term certificates of deposit;**
- Emergency reserve designed to provide reasonably accessible funds for emergency cash flow, cash management needs and shall consist of reasonably liquid low risk investments providing moderate and sustainable returns. The Emergency Reserve shall be composed of investments such as certificates of deposit, treasury notes, and/or income producing money market funds or mutual funds; and**
- Long-term Investment reserves designed to protect principal with low to moderate risk and maximize returns on investment. The long term reserve shall be composed of investments such as bonds, mutual funds, and/or equities.**

Appendix E: Asset Reserve Policy (cont'd)

The “operating funds” of the association shall consist of the operating fund and the operating reserve.

The “asset reserves,” of the organization shall consist of the emergency and long-term investment portfolios.

Fund transfers between the operating fund and the operating reserve shall be at the discretion of the treasurer when it is determined that such transfers would be advantageous to the association. Transfers from the operating fund or operating reserve to and from the emergency reserve and/or long-term investment fund, requires the approval of the Executive Council.

Appendix F: Investment Policy

(To be included)

Appendix G: Stakeholder Interview Summary

Confidential, one-on-one interviews with key CASFAA stakeholders were conducted by the consultant between March '06 and May '06. Interviewees included the following organizations/individuals:

- **Assembly Higher Education Committee** – Mary Gill, Consultant
- **Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU)** – Veronica Villalobos, VP Public Affairs
- **California Association of Private Post-Secondary Schools (CAPPS)** – Robert W. Johnson
- **California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO)** – Linda Michalowski, Interim Vice Chancellor
- **California Lenders for Education (CLFE)** – Donna Huber
- **California Student Aid Association (CSAC)** – Diana Fuentes-Michel, Executive Director
- **EdFund** – Sam Kipp, President
- **University of California Office of the President (UCOP)** – Kate Jeffery, Director of Student Financial Support

Appendix G: Interview Summary (cont'd)

More detailed responses from the interviews were shared with the Strategic Planning Committee members. Key themes, challenges, and opportunities discussed by interviewees included the following:

Key Themes

- CASFAA does a good job in terms of training and professional development
- Conference is very strong; provides valuable networking opportunities
- “Together We Achieve More” has worked well; keep it up
- Advocacy at the State level can and should be enhanced
- CASFAA needs to clarify its purpose and desired advocacy role; improve visibility
- Continue to communicate with stakeholders and formalize connections with them

Challenges & Opportunities

- Continuing to provide relevant, quality training
- Increasing visibility and public understanding of CASFAA’s desired role in terms of advocacy
- Contradictory messages about what CASFAA should do in terms of advocacy
- Working effectively with CSAC
- Increased interest in financial aid and higher education issues at the State level
- Succession planning
- Addressing needs of changing student population

Appendix H: Measures Tracking Tool (Included 9/07)

	01/01/07	01/01/08	01/01/09	01/01/10	01/01/11	01/01/12
GOAL #1: Provide consistently high quality training and professional development opportunities that meet the needs of our diverse membership base.						
1. Percentage of members attending training and events	% of members					
2. Number of training events	# of events held in 2006					
3. Number of new training sessions and professional development activities offered	# of training sessions # of prof. development activities					
4. Improved ratings on training and event evaluation forms and membership services survey	Refer to 2003 Membership Services Survey					

Appendix H: Measures Tracking Tool (cont'd)

	01/01/07	01/01/08	01/01/09	01/01/10	01/01/11	01/01/12
GOAL #2: Play a leadership role in public policy at the state and federal levels.						
1.Number of communications from State Issues and Federal Issues Chairs to membership	# per year					
2.Number of advocacy-related communications (e.g., correspondence, position papers) to external constituents	# per year					
3.Attendance at meetings, hearings, events at the Capitol	# of events # of members					
4.Number of events/activities involving active collaboration with other agencies/organizations	# of events/ activities					
5. Improved ratings on advocacy-related items on membership services survey	Refer to 2003 Membership Services Survey					

Appendix H: Measures Tracking Tool (cont'd)

	01/01/07	01/01/08	01/01/09	01/01/10	01/01/11	01/01/12
GOAL #3: Increase membership and encourage balanced representation and support for all segments by CASFAA.						
1.Membership statistics and trends (total active and associate members and by segment)	# of members # of members from each segment					
2.Voting participation by segment	% of total voters from each segment % of segment voting					
3.Event participation by segment	# and % of members from segment attending conference % of conference attendees by segment # and % of members from segment attending other trainings					
4.Participation on committees and on Executive Council by segment	Committee composition by segment (# and %) EC composition by segment (# and %)					

Appendix H: Measures Tracking Tool (cont'd)

	01/01/07	01/01/08	01/01/09	01/01/10	01/01/11	01/01/12
GOAL #4: Maintain and strengthen the fiscal stability of the Association.						
1. CASFAA maintains a balanced budget	Yes/No					
2. Asset reserve policy is in use	Yes/No					
3. Investment policy is in use	Yes/No					
4. Regular and timely financial audits, reports, and tax filings	Audit: Y/N Reports: Y/N Filings: Y/N					
GOAL #5: Provide opportunities for all interested members to participate actively in CASFAA activities and to serve in a leadership capacity.						
1. Number of volunteers participating in CASFAA activities (track unduplicated numbers – e.g., count each person only once)	# per year					
2. Number of new members on committees (new to CASFAA or new to the committee) – target 20%	# new on committees					
3. 100% of members expressing interest in volunteering contacted within 3 months	% contacted within 3 mos.					

Appendix H: Measures Tracking Tool (cont'd)

	01/01/07	01/01/08	01/01/09	01/01/10	01/01/11	01/01/12
GOAL # 6: Provide members and other constituents with relevant, timely information about Association activities and other financial aid issues.						
1.Regular (at least monthly) emails to membership with links to website updates	Frequency of emails to membership					
2.Number of newsletters published annually	# published each year					
3.Improved ratings on communication items on membership services survey	Refer to 2003 Membership Services Survey					
GOAL #7: Enhance and institutionalize effective governance and planning systems.						
1.Job descriptions for elected positions, liaisons, committees are up-to-date	Yes/No					
2.Annual goals are developed and documented for officers, liaisons, and committees	Yes/No or %					
3.Improved ratings on and responses to "CASFAA Year in Review" Survey	Refer to Survey Results					

Appendix I: Online Survey Summary

The results of the three online surveys are quite extensive and available as a separate document for those interested in reviewing the material.