Mississippi SECAC Strategic Vision Guidance
This guidance is intended to assist the MS State Early Childhood Advisory Council and committee members with creating a strategic vision informed by the MS Early Childhood System Asset Map.

Purpose
- Identify key priorities based on data and family and provider voice, which will then be used to create a roadmap for the SECAC that includes recommendations (e.g. administrative change, legislative change, budgeting, etc.)
- Create a cohesive early childhood system, where agencies coordinate effectively, openly identify resources, and leverage them together to support young children and their families

Audience
- Governor, legislators, state agency leaders, families, program leaders, providers and professionals

Principles
Transparency→Trust, cohesion, equity, accountability, purposeful, honoring the voices of families served

Structure
- Up to 5-pages total, including Executive Summary
- 3-year timeframe with annual reviews
- Actionable recommendations drafted by committees, with public input

Process for Drafting Recommendations

Over the next three months, each SECAC Committee will draft approximately 5 recommendations to co-develop the SECAC Strategic Vision. These recommendations can be general or specific. They can address "low-hanging fruit" or a more complex issue that may take several years to address. Committees can use the asset map (program profiles and analysis report), their personal expertise, and the expertise from parents and providers gathered already through the surveys, focus groups, and interviews when drafting recommendations. Additional family and provider input and feedback on the strategic vision recommendations will be gathered through the SECAC website, SECAC meeting public comments, the October SECAC Town Hall, and a platform called Thought Exchange (more information below.) ***Committees should focus on making recommendations within their respective priority areas. At the August 16th SECAC meeting, members can clarify what areas are covered by each committee and ensure all potential areas are addressed. A template for recommendations is included on pg. 3.***

Timeline

9/1/22: Each committee brings 2 draft recommendations to discuss at the SECAC meeting

9/2/22 – 10/10/22: Committees continue to meet and work on draft recommendations

10/7/22: Each committee shares 4 draft recommendations to be posted on the SECAC website

10/13/22: SECAC members invite parents, providers and members of the public to the SECAC Town Hall to discuss draft recommendations

11/3/22: Each committee brings approximately 5 recommendations (full set—informed by feedback at SECAC Townhall, etc.) to the November SECAC meeting; SECAC finalizes recommendations

12/16/22: SECAC Strategic Vision goes through graphic design and is ready to share with key stakeholders

Strategic Vision Categories

To get started, committees should consider drafting recommendations in the same categories as the analysis report of the asset map:
1. Health, Mental Health & Nutrition
2. Quality Care & Education
3. Support for Young Children with Special Needs
4. Early Childhood Workforce
5. Funding & System Coordination

Guiding Questions
SECAC committees can consider the following guiding questions to draft recommendations and address inequities on the basis of race/ethnicity, language, geography/region, and disability:

Identifying Priority Issues
- When you look at the MS Early Childhood System Asset Map, including the program profiles and the analysis report, what issues seem like priorities to address?
- Are there disparities to address in the data we see?
- What groups are most impacted by these issues? Have they or how will we ensure their voice informs the priorities and recommendations?

Examining the Causes
- What does the data tell us about the issues? What is families' or providers' experience of the issue?
- Why is this issue occurring? What are the root causes and contributing factors?
- What is creating or contributing to disparities?

Considering Recommendations and Potential Impacts
- What changes are needed to address the priority issues? What are potential recommendations?
- What solutions have been tried? What has and has not worked for whom, under what conditions?
- What actions are already underway or planned to address this issue and advance this recommendation?
- Are we giving ourselves permission to consider ideas that may not feel possible?
- What are potential action steps to advance the recommendations within the next three years (consider "low hanging fruit"- feasible, short-term actions that would make a meaningful difference; consider longer-term more complex strategies; consider key first steps to gather more information or to investigate possible strategies where needed)
- Once potential recommendations and actions are identified, consider:
  - What does this recommendation seek to accomplish? Will it reduce disparities or discrimination?
  - What adverse impacts or unintended consequences could result from this recommendation?
  - Which families and children could be negatively affected?
  - How could adverse impacts be prevented or minimized?
  - What positive impacts on equity and inclusion could result from this recommendation? Which families and children could benefit?
  - Is there anything that could be changed or added to the recommendation to maximize equitable opportunities and impacts?
  - Is the recommendation realistic with planned actions to ensure successful implementation?
  - Can anything be added to the recommendation to ensure sustainability? e.g. ongoing data collection, public reporting, stakeholder participation and public accountability.

TEMPLATE: SECAC Strategic Vision Recommendations

Issue (*could be based on program profiles, analysis report, provider and family survey & interview data, etc.*):

_____

_____

Actions (*what are recommended steps, what is planned, what is already underway, what requires a legislative solution, what is complete*) *Note: you can include several recommendations and don't have to note what is planned, underway or complete if it doesn't apply or isn't known. These notes may be more relevant in future years.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Examples of Recommendations

Example #1
Issue: Inadequate compensation and benefits are a barrier to attracting and retaining professionals in the child care field.
Actions: 1. SECAC conducts further research into revenue options to support the early childhood workforce. 🔵
2. SECAC explores mechanisms that have worked in other states for increasing compensation e.g. stipends, salary scales. 🔵

Example #2
Issue: Parents and providers report barriers to applying for the Child Care Payment Program (CCPP), including meeting the work requirement prior to enrollment, difficulty completing paperwork, and the Child Support Enforcement Requirement.
Actions: 1. SECAC voted to recommend to the governor removing the Child Support Enforcement Requirement. 🔵
2. The Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Early Childhood Care and Development is currently in the process of writing a policy to add a job search period of 90 days for parents during the initial application process. 🟠
3. SECAC can utilize family and provider feedback from surveys, interviews, focus groups, SECAC Town Hall and other methods to make recommendations to the Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Early Childhood Care and Development for how to streamline the paperwork process. 🔵

Example #3
Issue: Families report challenges getting timely access to early intervention services for their children.
Actions: 1. SECAC investigates causes for and potential solutions to turnover in Mississippi State Department of Health case manager positions. 🔵
2. SECAC researches more accessible ways for families to provide feedback on their experiences in early intervention in addition to the paper-only Family Outcomes Survey. 🔵

🔵 Recommended/Planned
◇ Legislative Solution
🟠 Underway
✅ Complete

Getting Public Input Through ThoughtExchange

ThoughtExchange is a platform that gathers insights on critical questions from interested and impacted communities. Participants anonymously respond to a question in their own words and then rate others. As more responses are collected, priorities will arise and decisions can be made based on the highest-rated, most supported ideas.

The MS SECAC's ThoughtExchange question is: ***What are some important recommendations to include in the SECAC strategic vision?***

The MS SECAC ThoughtExchange can be accessed at **https://my.thoughtexchange.com/scroll/484203218**.

<u>**How to Use ThoughtExchange Throughout the Strategic Visioning Process:**</u>

1. Share the ThoughtExchange link in the chat during your SECAC committee meetings so the public can add their suggested recommendations in response to the committee's discussions.
2. Add your committee's suggested recommendations to the ThoughtExchange so that the public can rate them alongside all other suggested recommendations.
3. Tell members of the public who attend your committee meetings that if they think of suggested recommendations later, they can access the ThoughtExchange any time at the MS SECAC website (https://mssecac.org/).
4. Share the ThoughtExchange link through any other networks of families and providers that you think would like to provide input.