

ACA Stages of Unification

For Sections Rolling In to ACA

1) Questions and Answers/Education

- a) Section board forwards initial questions/concerns that need to be addressed to consider unification.
- b) ACA national responds by phone and in writing. *Conversation Starter* document can be used with boards and staff to consider a range of issues and opportunities.

2) Adoption and Intake

- a) Section board formally adopts unification by vote; meeting minutes serve as matter of record.
- b) Section Executive calls CEO.
- c) CEO assigns national staff person to address questions relative to the *Conversation Starter* and provides the current version of the *Transition FAQ*.
- d) National and section staff link and partner with local/national transition team volunteers.
- e) Phone calls and/or visits scheduled.
- f) Processes for managing intake are implemented.

3) Assessment, Alignment, Bridging

- a) Information gathered during intake process is evaluated in these basic areas:
 - Human resources including work flow
 - Financial
 - Service and program delivery systems
 - Operational support, including IT
 - Local board strategic plans, visioning documents, aspirations
- b) Accounting and HR issues are the first areas of alignment.
- c) IT, including communications tools are early support areas.
- d) Ongoing communication by phone, in person, and e-mail (primarily for support) is established with Staff Transition Team designees and staff in transition.
- e) Assessment Tools are employed as needed to facilitate the process.
- f) Work is guided by commitment to *avoid* any service, communications, and program delivery disruptions.

4) Unification

- a) Staff unification is formalized through integration and staff development.
- b) Volunteer leadership system is mobilized to forge stronger local connections, engage in implementing growth strategies and sustaining leadership in core

- programs.
- c) Standard Operating Procedures aligned (HR, Accounting, Communications, other).
 - d) Association-wide strengthened programs and services are being offered, reflecting growth strategies.

5) Review/Evaluation

- a) Dashboard created for monitoring key benchmarks at multiple levels throughout the Association [growth strategies, unification activities, core programs, core functions (board, volunteer, staff), affiliate relationship, other].
- b) Activities monitored, evaluated.
- c) Key outcomes analyzed and communicated.

6) Modification/Realignment

- a) Adjustments made as evaluation results inform changes needed
- b) Successes celebrated; changes and rationale communicated

7) Transformation

- a) Systems support operations.
- b) Staff members are fully integrated, planning and working to meet organizational priorities, goal setting.
- c) Volunteers are mobilized to support leadership activities (e.g., fundraising, outreach, partnership opportunities, generative thinking with national and local staff).
- d) Increasing numbers of youth being served in high quality settings; membership expanded; new partnerships formed; and diverse and inclusive relationships strengthened.