

# PAACE Strategic Plan 2004–2007

## Final Report

PAACE operates under bylaws, an operations manual, and a strategic plan. The board prepares a new strategic plan every three years. This year, 2007, marks the final year of the plan that was developed beginning in 2004. Through several revisions and updates, it's now time to review our accomplishments. Thanks to all of the PAACE board members who participated in activities related to strategic-plan goals.

### Goal 1 – To improve the board structure and board development

#### Objectives:

- **Revise operations manual (OM):** This turned out to be a much larger task than anticipated, as it is a basis for future work. A task force was formed. Membership changed when Tana Reiff resigned due to increased board responsibilities and Lori Keefer came on board, joining Barbara Van Horn, Mary Hohensee, Mary Anne Varacalli, and Mary Kay Peterson. The group met via conference call several times. Assignments were made; however, not all have been completed and added to the draft. The task force asked specific current and past board members to contribute ideas and perceptions about board operations. Although many replied, not enough with experience on the executive committee did, so several sections of the manual need additional input. To date, revisions to several sections are in draft and we have a "side by side" showing the original manual, suggested revisions, and corresponding bylaws (which will need to be revised based on some changes recommended to the OM). Tentative plans call for involving the new executive director in completing the OM revision, with input from the existing task force.
- **Develop an orientation packet:** In the absence of an executive director, the task was reassigned to the executive committee, which had its hands full with many other responsibilities during this time and did not complete this one. Development of board orientation in some form will be an early assignment for the new executive director.
- **Engage more members in committees:** As president, Debbie Hrach asked each committee chair to add one new committee member. While some chairs have garnered valuable assistance from PAACE members, no formal listing of new committee members has been presented. Meanwhile, however, more than 40 PAACE members are participating in the COABE 2007 Planning Committee.
- **Develop process for soliciting and placing volunteer committee members:** Debbie Hrach asked the board to identify areas in which they could use assistance and posted a solicitation for new committee members to the PAACE members e-mail list but, due to low response, no formal referral process was developed.
- **Explore various options for board meetings to increase accessibility and save money:** We explored videoconferencing, Web conferencing, and more economical use of conference calls. PAACE treasurer Mary Hohensee found a very low-cost conference-calling plan through PANO (Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations, of which PAACE is a member), which we have adopted, saving PAACE an estimated \$800-\$1,000 per year in phone bills and \$2,100 in board travel expenses. We plan to hold three or four board meetings each year via conference call. Also, Communications Committee chair Destiny Myers has been trained in facilitating Webinars, so we'll be further investigating Web conferencing. To be effective, all participants would need to have a microphone.

### Goal 2 – To expand the PAACE Board's advocacy function

#### Objectives:

- **Educate members on issues and activities to pursue:** The Legislative Committee made this its ongoing mission. Chair JoAnn Weinberger continues to post frequent "legislative alerts" to the PAACE e-mail list, informing us of urgent legislative issues; expanded and communicated with our point-of-contact network; and organized advocacy sessions at each year's PAACE Midwinter Conferences, as well as a policy panel for the COABE 2007 national conference. During the spring of 2006, the Legislative Committee and the three Regional Reps organized six advocacy training workshops throughout the state, facilitated by John Weidman, Karen Mundie, Joe Morales, and Ruth Love-Schooley, with materials developed by JoAnn Weinberger.
- **To expand the advocacy function of higher education:** Soliciting a Legislative Committee co-chair representing higher education was attempted but not permanently appointed. Mary Anne Varacalli brought the matter to CEA/PA several times, which did not produce interest in having a legislative co-chair. PAACE's Western Regional Rep may be able to work on legislative issues with CEA/PA members in the western part of the state (where most are concentrated).
- **To identify discrete stakeholders from business and industry:** Corporate sponsorship was solicited for the COABE conference PAACE is hosting in Philadelphia. Stakeholders from business and industry, in connection with PAACE in general, were not named. (This objective was a bit vague and should probably be reviewed for the new strategic plan.)
- **To provide elected officials with information on issues and positions:** PAACE conducted two postcard campaigns, with state and federal versions. We printed 40,000 of each postcard and distributed them to agencies for local distribution and mailing to legislators.
- **To solicit opinions from candidates relating to PAACE issues:** Questions on issues relating to adult education were sent to presidential candidates in 2004 and to senatorial and gubernatorial candidates in 2006. Responses were published on the PAACE website, with links from PAACE News.

### Goal 3 – To identify membership benefits

#### Objective:

- **Identify membership expectations:** With board input, Membership Committee chair Suzanne Webster developed a member survey. From 70 completed surveys, the top four benefits were:
  1. Discounted fee for the Annual Adult Education Midwinter Conference
  2. Opportunity for involvement in the advocacy, professional development, and leadership activities of the organization
  3. Opportunity to network in a geographic regional group
  4. PAACE quarterly newsletter, *PAACE News*

For those who gave written responses (50 responses), 14 were interested in regional/face-to-face/program division networking. (The advocacy workshops, under Goal 2, addressed that.) 18 listed that they were happy with the benefits or didn't have any changes they would like. For discounts, three wanted a different form of PAACE conference discounts and three listed other possible discounts. Four members wanted more use of online resources. Attached is the list of survey results.

### Goal 4 – To have an integrated consistent data management system

#### Objectives:

- **Develop interactive Web database for membership management, tied to conference registration database:** Technology Committee chair Scot Mentzer developed a Web database of PAACE members, using a spreadsheet that Membership Committee chair Suzanne Webster developed from the existing one provided by Joan Leopold's husband. The online database is password-accessible by PAACE board members, and can produce reports and mailing lists. New and renewal memberships may be done through a Web form and we expect to have online payment in place in early 2007. We also hope to tie the membership database to future conference registration.
- **Develop consistent registration process for PAACE Midwinter Conference:** An online registration form using PayPal® was used for the past few Midwinter Conferences. We will revisit the form and payment method for the 2008 conference, learning and perhaps borrowing from the COABE conference registration form developed and managed by ProLiteracy.

### Goal 5 – To hire a new executive director

#### Objectives:

- **Hire a new executive director (ED):** This goal was added in 2006 after the death of Joan Leopold. A search committee consisting of the executive committee (Debbie Hrach, Chuck Klinger, Tana Reiff, Lori Keefer, Mary Hohensee) and two past presidents (Bob McNeill, Jeff Woodyard) developed a new position description and qualifications (with board input and approval), posted the position on several websites, reviewed résumés, developed questions for and interviewed two candidates, contacted references, recommended a candidate to the board, and negotiated a contract. Kayte Connelley was approved as the contracted executive director for a period of 18 months.
- **Comply with employment laws:** The ED search committee investigated various non-employee status options. The board approved the group's recommendation to hire an independent contractor.

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### Recommendations:

1. As has been done in the past, I recommend that the 2004–2007 Strategic Plan remain in effect until the 2007–2010 plan is completed. This gives us an opportunity to complete some tasks and use the current plan as a guide for the future.
2. Based on this Strategic Plan, ongoing board discussion, and my own observations, I recommend the following areas be considered for treatment in the new Strategic Plan as we think about where we'd like to be in 2010:
  - Web-based membership, data management, voting
  - PAACE Journal (publishing form, subscriptions, etc.)
  - Fundraising (new revenue sources, corporate sponsorship of conference activities, etc.)
  - New membership options (e.g. reduced fee for groups enrolling together)
  - Code of conduct (as part of or adjunct to Operations Manual)
  - Conference venue (based on projected attendance)
  - Health insurance (and/or other benefits to investigate for members employed part-time or otherwise uninsured)
  - Recommendations of new Executive Director

Respectfully submitted,  
Tana Reiff  
Second Vice-President, 2006–07  
February 13, 2007