

Section J: Proposing Specific Solutions

Step 4: Make Decisions		
Activities	Recommended Tasks	Highly Recommended
Propose specific solutions	NAC meets, and based on summary of findings, develops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of possible solutions • Recommends use of topic experts, expert practitioners and experts in other areas • NAC explores implementation issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include researchers with relevant expertise in deliberations

Now that the Needs Assessment Committee (NAC) has identified the most critical needs of migrant students in a concrete and measurable way, the focus should shift to identifying solutions to meet those needs. The NAC can continue to work on this step of the process or you can establish Expert Work Groups, as described in [Section C: Developing a Management Plan for the Comprehensive Needs Assessment Process](#). Expert Work Groups need not be large and they can meet simultaneously (as breakout groups) in one meeting, or by conference call or virtual electronic means.

Expert Work Groups: Technical experts who provide input on research and evidence-based strategies that support solutions which contribute to closing the gaps identified during the needs assessment.

Considerations for Small States If you are the Migrant Education Program (MEP) director of a small state, we recommend that you share your prioritized list of needs with a small group and identify national or state content experts to meet with you in a series of meetings to identify solutions for the prioritized needs. You may conduct separate meetings or conference calls for each need or group of related needs. You may choose either to address a limited number of needs appropriate for the resources and capacity available, or to address a broader range of needs with a limited number of strategies for each. Ultimately, you will want to target resources toward a manageable number of needs to have the greatest impact.

J.1 Preparing for the NAC Meeting

The purpose of convening the NAC after the list of prioritized needs is developed is to determine what kinds of strategies will address the needs. To enlist the support of experts to provide input on research-based and effective strategies, you should explore contacts at national technical assistance centers and other national agencies, colleges and universities, state education agencies, and educational consultancies.

When establishing Expert Work Groups, consider the following composition:

- NAC members, including representation from a Parent Advisory Council, a migrant parent, and/or a parent involvement specialist. Need Statements focus on parent involvement.
- Faculty and/or researchers from colleges and universities
- Staff from national organizations or technical assistance centers
- Educational program administrators
- Educators of migrant students
- Service providers with experience and expertise in the needs identified by the NAC

It is important to contact potential experts who will join the NAC's Expert Work Groups as soon as possible so that they can confirm their attendance at the NAC meeting. Revisit [Section C: Developing a Management Plan for the Comprehensive Needs Assessment Process](#) for information on establishing work groups and [Section D: Creating a Needs Assessment Committee](#) for tools to provide them the information and support they need to participate. We recommend that you provide them with:

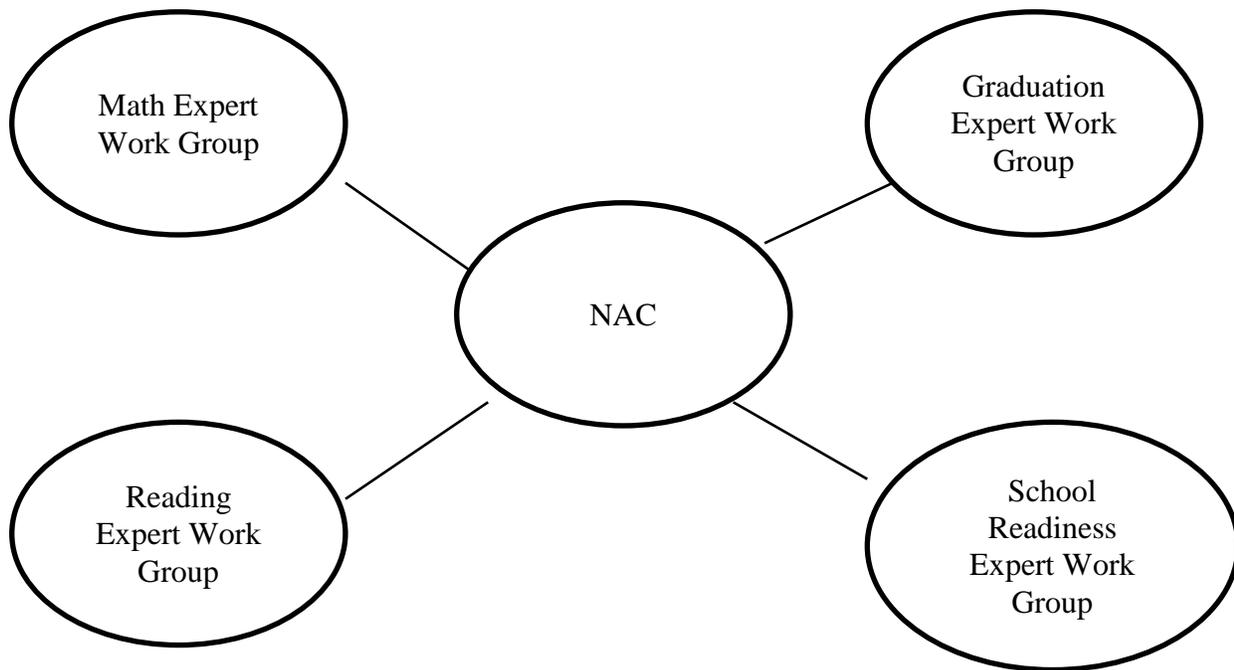
- An overview of the CNA process (See *Appendix C.1 Conceptualizing the Big Picture* for a one-page description of the process.)
- Summary of the data collected
- The list of prioritized needs, along with copies of the completed the worksheets for developing the Need Statements
- A statement of the purpose of their participation (See *Appendix J.1 Preparing for the NAC Meeting* for a sample statement of purpose for an Expert Work Group)
- A meeting agenda (See *Appendix J.2 Convening the NAC* for a sample agenda for the meeting.)

You may want to ask the experts to do some preliminary thinking about strategies to meet the needs of migrant students and to bring any articles or research studies related to their areas of expertise and migrant students.

J.2 Convening the NAC

When the experts' participation is arranged, you should convene the NAC, face-to-face, if possible. We suggest that the format of the meeting be largely that of dividing the NAC into Expert Work Groups to analyze the needs more fully, determine if any root causes have been overlooked, and identify strategies that have proven effective in addressing the unique needs of migrant students in your state.

Figure J.1 depicts a model for how Expert Work Groups can work in conjunction with the NAC.



There will be discussions among the whole group and targeted activities for each Expert Work Group related to the Need Statements most relevant to its area of expertise. It may work well to organize into breakout sessions in a “mini-conference” format.

When you convene the NAC and experts, you should establish that the purpose of the meeting is to identify research-based and effective strategies to meet the priority needs. While some discussion of whether the strategies can be adapted to your state’s context is in order, you will want to clarify that planning the implementation of the strategies is the work of the Service Delivery Plan (SDP) team. The SDP team will take the work of the NAC and craft the strategies into an implementation plan.

Since there will be new members of the NAC team participating in Expert Work Groups, you should take time to introduce the NAC and members who have joined as part of the Expert Work Group. In addition, you should take time to review the work of the NAC so that the newcomers will understand the process and the progress the group has made.

The NAC as a whole group should initially revisit the prioritized list of Need Statements and discuss:

- Does the list of prioritized Need Statements represent a comprehensive picture of what we feel to be the challenges that the MEP program needs to address?
 - Is there anything missing?
 - Are special subgroups of migrant children and youth included, such as PFS students, preschool, and out-of-school youth?
- Will these needs, when addressed, have the greatest likelihood of increasing the progress of migrant students, especially PFS students, toward the MEP Goal Areas?

To debrief this activity, you should determine if there are missing pieces to the CNA so far, and identify ways to address these omissions. Keep in mind, that there is always more that can be done. While you certainly do not want to move forward without the data and information you need, you also do not want to get “stuck” in thinking of all the additional data that you could possibly obtain. Remind the group that there will be future opportunities to conduct further needs assessment activities.

J.3 Expert Work Groups – Getting on the Same Page

When the Expert Work Groups break out to address their particular areas of need, they should initially focus on the following tasks:

1. Reviewing the Need Statements relevant to its content or issue area. (We recommend providing copies of the worksheets developed by the NAC related to each Need Statement. Work Groups will likely have more than one Need Statement related to their area.)
2. Identifying common themes and issues that cut across the Need Statements. Are there strategies that would address several of the needs?
3. Discussing whether there are any root causes that have not been surfaced that might account for the need. (You may refresh the group on the Five Whys activity that was suggested for the NAC when identifying concerns in Section F: Identifying Concerns.)

It is important to be mindful of the target population involved when discussing research and best practices. For some needs, there may not be published research or specific programs and interventions that speak directly to the specific needs of migrant students. Many of the studies and programs that you will review will be aimed at English Language Learners, Hispanics, struggling students, etc.

The NAC or Expert Work Group should discuss:

How does intervention X show promise in helping MIGRANT students be successful in school?

Any new information generated in this discussion should inform the identification of solutions.

J.4 Expert Work Groups – Identifying Solutions

The next, and most essential task, of the Expert Work Group is to identify solutions for each of the prioritized needs that are grounded in research and effective practice, validated by implementation experience, and customized for the specific needs of migrant children and youth in your state.

Each group should discuss:

- What solutions, in the form of strategies, programs, or interventions are recommended in the research and areas of effective practice?
 - Break broad solutions into strategies and characteristics so that they are concrete and specific (See Table J.1 Example of a Solution and Related Solution Strategies for an example of a solution and a subset of solution strategies.)
 - Include documentation for where the strategy, program, or intervention has been implemented.
- What are possible implementation challenges?
 - Consider cost, training needed, size of the Migrant Education Program (MEP), replicability of the program (many strategies and programs are so specific to their context that there is no assurance that they would have the same effectiveness if implemented in another state or locality).
- How can these strategies, programs, or interventions be customized for our state?
 - Consider whether the population in which each option has demonstrated success is similar enough to migrant students your state to suggest a reasonable chance of success within your programs and schools.

Table J.1 Example of a Solution and Related Solution Strategies

<p><u>Solution:</u> Out-of-School Youth (OSY) will have greater access to enrollment in GED programs.</p>
<p><u>Solution Strategies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct GED programs on-site at migrant camps in the evening.• Assign a mentor to help each OSY with enrollment in a GED program and ensuring he/she has books and supplies.• Provide laptops and arrange Internet access for OSY to participate in online GED programs.

When developing solution strategies, consider the following:

- How can the strategy be carried out in the existing organizational context, and given the existing resources?
- Who needs to be involved outside the SEA, such as educators, local education agencies, or community organizations?
- How can we leverage resources such as in combining two strategies to meet multiple needs?

Or conversely, if one solution or strategy seems too large and complex, could it be divided so it can be implemented more easily?

When a range of solutions and solution strategies has been proposed, the Expert Work Group should develop a summary sheet that the whole NAC can review and discuss. See *Appendix J.3 Summary Worksheet for Proposed Solutions and Solution Strategies* for a template of a summary sheet. You may also consider having each group develop a short PowerPoint presentation that it can use to summarize its proposed solutions. (See *Appendix J.4 Template for an Expert Work Group Summary PowerPoint Presentation* for a template for a Power Point presentation.) Or, you may wish to have the solutions posted on chart paper around the room for NAC members to “walk about” and discuss or write additional comments.

J.5 Reviewing Proposed Solutions

We suggest that the NAC meet as a whole group in order to determine the comprehensiveness and cohesiveness of the full range of the proposed solutions. Additionally, a whole group discussion will allow each Expert Work Group to benefit from the experience and expertise of the whole group. The additional input should be recorded on the summary sheets.

The NAC should discuss the following questions:

- Is the research and evidence of effectiveness sufficient to justify the solutions?
- What additional input is needed to improve the appropriateness or feasibility of any of the proposed solutions?
- What solutions could be grouped together to form a broader strategy or approach?

J.6 Summarizing the Proposed Solutions

We recommend that you or the Management Team compile the proposed solutions into a summary report that will be provided to the NAC for prioritization. The completed Expert Work Group worksheets provided in *Appendix J.3 Summary Worksheet for Proposed Solutions and Solution Strategies* will provide a good foundation for this report.

Considerations for Small States If you chose to develop proposed solutions through a venue other than Expert Work Groups, such as small meetings or phone interviews with individual experts, the summary sheets developed from the worksheets in *Appendix J.3 Summary Worksheet for Proposed Solutions and Solution Strategies* will still provide a good way to document the proposed solutions and ensure their connection to the Need Statements. All discussion questions suggested for the NAC and Expert Work Groups are relevant for your consideration of a range of solutions that are comprehensive, cohesive, and feasible for your MEP.

J.7 Archiving Information for the CNA

We recommend that you archive the following information for activities surrounding proposing solutions:

- Meeting Agendas
- Meeting notes or proceedings
- List of Expert Work Groups and their members
- Resumes of experts, including contact information
- Bibliography of research or articles referenced
- Summary of work of each Expert Work Group, including a list of proposed solutions categorized by Need Statements (completed worksheets found in *Appendix J.3 Summary Worksheet for Proposed Solutions and Solution Strategies*)
- Notes on additional input on each of the solutions and whole group NAC discussion
- Summary report of all proposed solutions

J.8 Manager’s Checklist and Reflection

Manager’s Checklist

Here are some key accomplishments for *Section J: Proposing Specific Solutions*. Take a moment to jot down your progress on the items below. Also, note any issues or challenges.

- Enlisted experts to assist with development of solutions for needs
- Identified specific solutions to address each Need Statement that are
 - Research or evidence-based
 - Adapted for migrant children and youth in our state
 - Comprehensive
 - Cohesive
- Broad solutions were broken down into specific strategies and characteristics
- Developed a summary report of all proposed solutions

Reflection

1. How effective were the Expert Work Groups in prioritizing the needs of migrant children in your state?
2. How effective were you in ensuring that all NAC members had input on the proposed solutions?
3. To what extent are the proposed solutions grounded in research and effective practice?
4. To what extent are the proposed solutions appropriate for your state MEP?
5. Will the proposed solutions provide a solid foundation for a comprehensive and cohesive Service Delivery Plan that will improve the academic performance of migrant students, especially PFS students and other migrant subgroups most at-risk of school failure?

J.9 Resources and Tools in Appendix J

Appendix J.1 Sample Statement of Purpose for Expert Work Groups

Appendix J.2 Sample Agenda for NAC Meeting and Expert Work Groups

Appendix J.3 Summary Worksheet for Proposed Solutions

Appendix J.4 Template for an Expert Work Group Summary PowerPoint Presentation

Appendix J.1 Sample Statement of Purpose for Expert Work Groups

<p>MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT Expert Work Groups</p>
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As part of its statutory requirement under ESEA, [state] is conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) of its Migrant Education Program. The CNA will identify the special educational needs of migratory children and youth to inform state planning to ensure that these students can succeed academically and meet Federal and state performance goals.

The work of the CNA is guided by a Need Assessment Committee (NAC) whose first tasks were to review data, identify concern areas, collect data to validate concerns, and then identify research-based solutions and strategies to propose for a migrant Service Delivery Plan (SDP). Expert Work Groups play a critical role in informing the work of the NAC.

Expert Work Groups include technical experts who provide input on research and evidence-based strategies that support solutions which contribute to closing the achievement gap between migrant students and other students. The experts are those who have particular knowledge and experience in a Migrant Education Program Goal Area or Area of Concern in which needs of migrant children and youth have been identified.

The purpose of Expert Work Groups is to examine the data surrounding a particular need and propose solutions and discuss implementation challenges and recommendations that will guide the development of the SDP.

**COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT
NEEDS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 3
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

MAY XX, 2012

Meeting Purpose: To identify research-based and effective solutions and strategies to propose for addressing identified needs.

- 9:00 Introduction of Needs Assessment Committee and Experts Joining for Expert Work Groups
- 9:30 Overview of the Purpose of the Meeting
- 9:20 Overview of the Progress of the NAC and Description of the CNA Process (for New Members of the NAC)
- PowerPoint Presentation by NAC member
- 9:35 Revisiting the Prioritized List of Need Statements
- Whole Group Discussion:
- Does the list of prioritized Need Statements represent a comprehensive picture of what we feel to be needs of migrant children and youth in our state?
 - What common themes and issues stand out?
- 10:00 Break
- 11:00 Expert Work Groups
- Divide the NAC into Expert Work Groups and provide them with instructions
 - Review Need Statements related to the issue or content area the group is addressing
 - Identify common themes that cut across some of the Need Statements that might require similar solutions and strategies
 - Discuss whether any root causes need to be further explored (Provide instructions on the “Five Why’s Root Cause Analysis” or “Fishbone Activity” in *Appendix F.2 Instructions for Conducting Group Activities.*)
 - Discuss possible solutions
 - Select solutions and develop strategies to make them concrete
 - Identify implementation challenges
 - Discuss how solution strategies should be customized for your state

- Develop a report to summarize proposed solutions and strategies (Complete Expert Group Worksheets provided in *Appendix J.3 Summary Worksheet for Proposed Solutions and Solution Strategies*; worksheets may be provided electronically or developed into a PowerPoint presentation template.)

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Continue with Expert Group Activities

3:00 Break

3:15 Review of Proposed Solutions

- Each Expert Work Group presents proposed solutions either in a PowerPoint presentation or on chart paper.
- Whole group discusses:
 - Do the proposed solutions comprise a comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of migrant children and youth?
 - What additional input is needed as to the appropriateness or feasibility of any of the proposed solutions?
 - Is the research and evidence of effectiveness sufficient to justify the solutions?
 - What solutions could be grouped together to form a broader strategy or approach?
 - In what ways could some of the solutions be improved?

4:30 Expert Work Groups Reconvene

- Use input from the whole group to make any revisions to their solutions and strategies.

5:00 Next Steps and Adjourn

Appendix J.3 Summary Worksheet for Proposed Solutions

Expert Work Group Goal or Content Area:

Members of Expert Work Group:

Need Statements Addressed:

Solutions	Research or Evidence of Effectiveness	Solution Strategies	Implementation Challenges and Recommendations

[State] MEP Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Expert Work Group on [Goal or Content Area]
Work Group Members:

Need Statements Addressed

Solutions

Solution 1

Strategies

Research Base or Evidence of Effectiveness

Solution 1 Implementation Challenges

Solution 1 Implementation Recommendations