**Role Play Assignment**

**Directions:** Consider the situation described below. Then, using what you have learned about strategic planning, work through the situation using each of the four methods:

- brainstorming
- nominal group technique
- 100 votes
- multivoting

When the group has completed the assignment, elect one spokesperson to present a summary to the lead facilitator.

**Situation**

Your organization has received $1 million to use in addressing educational needs in the county. Decide how the organization should spend the money for education.
Once groups have generated a lot of ideas or a list of several possibilities, they must come to agreement about the relative priority or importance of the items on the list. In the 100 votes method, each participant has 100 votes to cast. A participant can cast all 100 votes for just one item or divide the votes among several items, giving the most votes to the items deemed most important. The total number of votes cast for each item indicates its degree of importance for the group. This information is used by the group in setting priorities. Use the 100 votes method when you have a list of options and need the group to set priorities.

**Guidelines for conducting the 100 votes activity:**

1. **Brainstorm a list of options.** The brainstorming activity is an excellent way of generating possible solutions to a problem or options to consider in a decision-making process.

2. **Review the list from a brainstorming activity.** Once you have a list, clarify the ideas, merge similar ideas, and make sure everyone understands the options.

3. **Ask participants to vote.** Participants may allocate their 100 votes in any manner they wish and for any number of items they wish. If they feel strongly that one or two items are the best, they might give them 25 votes each. Items they feel are worth considering but not the highest priority might receive 10 to 15 points each. Items they feel shouldn’t be considered would not receive any votes. Items are posted around the room on sheets of paper and participants vote by writing the number of votes they are casting beside each item.

4. **Total the votes for each item.** Add the votes cast for each item and the number of people who voted for that item. Write both on the paper by that item. (5/125 means five people cast a total of 125 votes.) Circle the total for easier identification.

5. **Review the voting and identify the items that are the highest priority.** Ask participants to reflect on the outcome of the voting and discuss how they feel about it. Do they feel it reflects the priorities of the group as a whole? What does the data tell you in terms of high priorities? How does the number of people voting for an item influence the priorities versus the total number of votes?

6. **Select priorities.** Decide as a group where the cut-off should be in the list of priorities. Then finalize the prioritized list.
Brainstorming generates a long list of ideas but many will not be realistic or feasible. The multivoting activity helps a group narrow a list of options to a manageable size by eliminating those not deemed worthy of further consideration. The remaining items can be discussed and explored. Multivoting allows all members of the group to be involved in the process and ultimately saves the group a lot of time by allowing them to focus energy on the ideas with the greatest potential. Multivoting is used when the group wants to narrow a long list of possibilities down to a few for analysis and discussion, or when a selection needs to be made after brainstorming.

**Guidelines for conducting the multivoting activity:**

1. **Brainstorm a list of options.** Conduct the brainstorming activity to generate a list of ideas or options.

2. **Review the list.** Once you have a list, clarify the ideas, merge similar ideas, and make sure everyone understands the options. Note: At this time the group is not to discuss the merits of any idea, just clarify and make sure everyone understands the meaning of each option.

3. **Participants vote for the ideas that are worthy of further discussion.** Each participant may vote for as many ideas as they wish. Voting may be by show of hands or by marking their choices on the list. A participant may vote for every item, some items, or no items.

4. **Identify items for the next round of voting.** Count the votes for each item. Any item receiving votes from half the people voting is put in a list for the next round of voting. For example, if there are 12 people voting, any item receiving at least six votes is included in the next round. Signify the items for the next vote by circling them or marking them with a symbol.

5. **Vote again.** Participants vote again, but this time they may cast votes for only half the items remaining on the list. If there are 20 items in the second round, a participant may vote only for ten items.

6. **Repeat steps 4 and 5.** Participants continuing voting and narrowing the options as outlined in steps 4 and 5 until there is an appropriate number of ideas for the group to analyze in the decision-making or problem-solving process. Generally, narrowing the list to three to five options is best.

7. **Discuss remaining ideas.** Ask the group to discuss the pros and cons of the remaining ideas, either in small groups or the group as a whole.

8. **Proceed with appropriate actions.** At this point the group should be ready to choose the best option or prioritize the remaining options.