



Our Alliance

RCCA Annual Conference
Oklahoma City 2017

Preparing for the Journey

A photograph of a kayak and paddle resting on a grassy shore. The kayak is a dark color, possibly black or dark blue, and is positioned diagonally across the frame. A white paddle is propped up against the kayak's bow. The background is a bright, overexposed sky, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. In the foreground, there are green bushes and grass, partially obscuring the kayak. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and suggests the start of an adventure.



Dr. Joe Sertich
President & CEO

NHED

Northeast Higher Education District

Member of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities





Designing An Alliance

One of the most important parts of working with a team, individual or being in a community is creating the relationship or relationships that will produce results. The alliance discussion has each person take responsibility for creating an intentional culture in which the work will occur. It is helpful to have an initial discussion among all staff. It can be helpful to have a similar conversation when there's a major initiative, AND in either case continue to touch back over time to update the document based on changing conditions or lessons learned. REMEMBER: it is not the job of the leader to "fix" others or the team; it is a co-created process in which there is shared responsibility.

Possible Questions to Ask:

- What should we adopt as “rules of engagement” for how we interact?
- What will make us flourish?
- What is the best use of each of us?
- How can we bring out the best in each other?
- How do we want to treat each other when we’re under stress?
- What do we count on from each other, or want from each other?
- What’s the right atmosphere for our culture?
- What would be the best-case scenario? Worst case?
- How will we know the relationships are working?
- What would it take for us to be honest or authentic?
- How will decisions be made?
- What will we do when we mess up with each other?
- How do we support one another?
- How can we demonstrate transparency?



Our Alliance

As a *Leadership Team of ANY Community, Tribal, or Technical College* we agree to observe these guiding principles and norms for our work together and how we interact.

1. Freedom of Expression

- a Critique ideas not people.
- b Limit discussion monologues to two (2) minutes.
- c All voices will have the opportunity to be heard and respected.
- d This is a safe place to tell the truth and say the “hard stuff.”

2. Relationships

- a Promote a culture of trust among group members.
- b Recognize the critical role that interdependence plays in our success.
- c Be transparent (no hidden agendas).
- d Agree to disagree.
- e Observe confidentiality.
- f Recognize impacts within the State System, among business and industries and with our K-12 partnerships.

3. How We Approach Our Work

- a Commit to serving students first.
- b Stay focused and intentional on mission, vision and purpose(s).
- c Address misunderstandings & disagreements before proceeding.
- d Be present, open, and flexible.
- e Use reflection and assessment as we focus on the future.
- f Honesty and ethics will be practiced.
- g An intentional effort will be made to use each member's strengths.
- h Have fun.
- i Expect full engagement in an atmosphere of deep democracy.
- j Support one another and hold ourselves accountable.

4. Decision Making

- a Work toward consensus defined as 100% of members in agreement at or above a 3 level on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = “I can live with it,” 2 = Disagree, 1 = Totally Unacceptable) visualized by raising a corresponding number of fingers on one hand. (Individuals needing more time to process information or need additional information should vote 2 and explain why. Final vote rejections require the future offering of a reasonable alternative solution.)
- b Project a united front by owning a final decision.

5. Expectations for Meetings

- a Each meeting will begin with an opportunity for each member to “check-in” and announcements of celebrations.
- b Meetings will begin and end on time with members arriving prepared for predetermined topics.
- c A rotating meeting Facilitator will use reasonable judgment in accelerating discussion to adhere to timelines.
- d Most regular meeting time will be devoted toward strategic planning.

Our Alliance

As EDAM Board Members we agree to observe these guiding principles and norms for our work together and how we interact:

1. Freedom of Expression

- a. Critique ideas not people.
- b. Limit discussion monologues to a reasonable amount of time.
- c. All voices will be heard.
- d. This is a safe place to tell the truth and say the "hard stuff."
- e.

2. Relationships

- a. Invest in building trust among Board members.
- b. Recognize big picture interdependence because "everything connects to everything."
- c. Fulfill your representative role through transparent interaction.
- d. Observe confidentiality.
- e.

3. How We'll Approach Our Work

- a. Stay mission-focused.
- b. Clean up misunderstandings or disagreements before proceeding.
- c. Be as present, engaged, open, and flexible as possible.
- d. Focus on looking to the future.
- e. Honesty and ethics will be practiced.
- f. An intentional effort will be made to use each member's strengths.
- g. Encourage divergent views on topics and ideas.
- h.

4. Decision Making

- a. Work toward consensus.
- b. Consensus is defined as nearly 100% (Quorum minus 1) of members in agreement at or above a 3 level on a scale of 1 to 5 visualized by raising a corresponding number of fingers on one hand.
- c. Intermediary decisions are visualized on a "thumbs up" or "thumbs down" indication.
- d. Individuals needing more time to process information or need additional information should vote 2 and explain why.
- e. Final vote rejections require the future offering of a reasonable alternative solution.
- f. After voting, all Board members leave the decision with a united voice.
- g.

5. Expectations for Meetings

- a. Each meeting will begin with an opportunity for each member to "check-in" with announcements of celebrations and updates.
- b. Meetings will begin and end on time with members arriving prepared for predetermined topics.
- c. The Meeting Leader will use reasonable judgment in accelerating discussion to adhere to timelines.
- d.

Thank
you!