

ACIP:

*Embedding
Strategy into
Every Step*

MEGA July 2026

Rachael Havey, Vice President Professional Learning

Session purpose

To align ACIP practices that enable stakeholders to confidently drive continuous improvement and introduce the updated Cognia Improvement Platform.

ALSDE and Cognia Support Page

alsde.onlinehelp.cognia.org

P Portal Sign in to Concur |... Cognia PheedLoop | Login Event Planning Das... Professional Learnin... Improvement Servic... Improvement Servic... Progr

Cognia Client Care 1 888.413.3669 Business Hours: Mon-Fri 7AM-3PM MT (9AM-5PM CT) clientcare@cognia.org

cognia

Alabama Program Help & Support

Resources	Compliance Monitoring	Recorded Webinars	Gifted Education	Teacher Observation Tool
Federal Programs	Cognia Learning Community	Teacher Mentor Program		
Career and Technical Education				

Alabama Padlet Resources
ALSDE ACIP Resources
Cognia Diagnostics: Starting a Diagnostic

Email:

ALclientcare@cognia.org

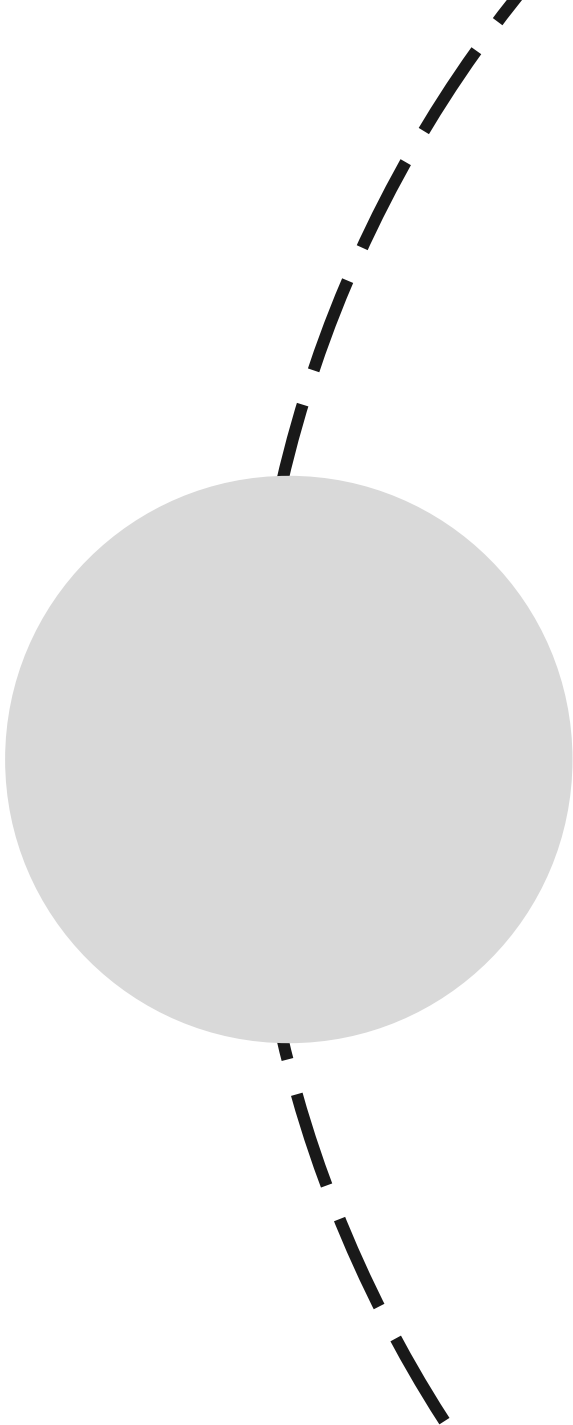
Phone:

866-615-2745

Hours:

7am – 4pm CST

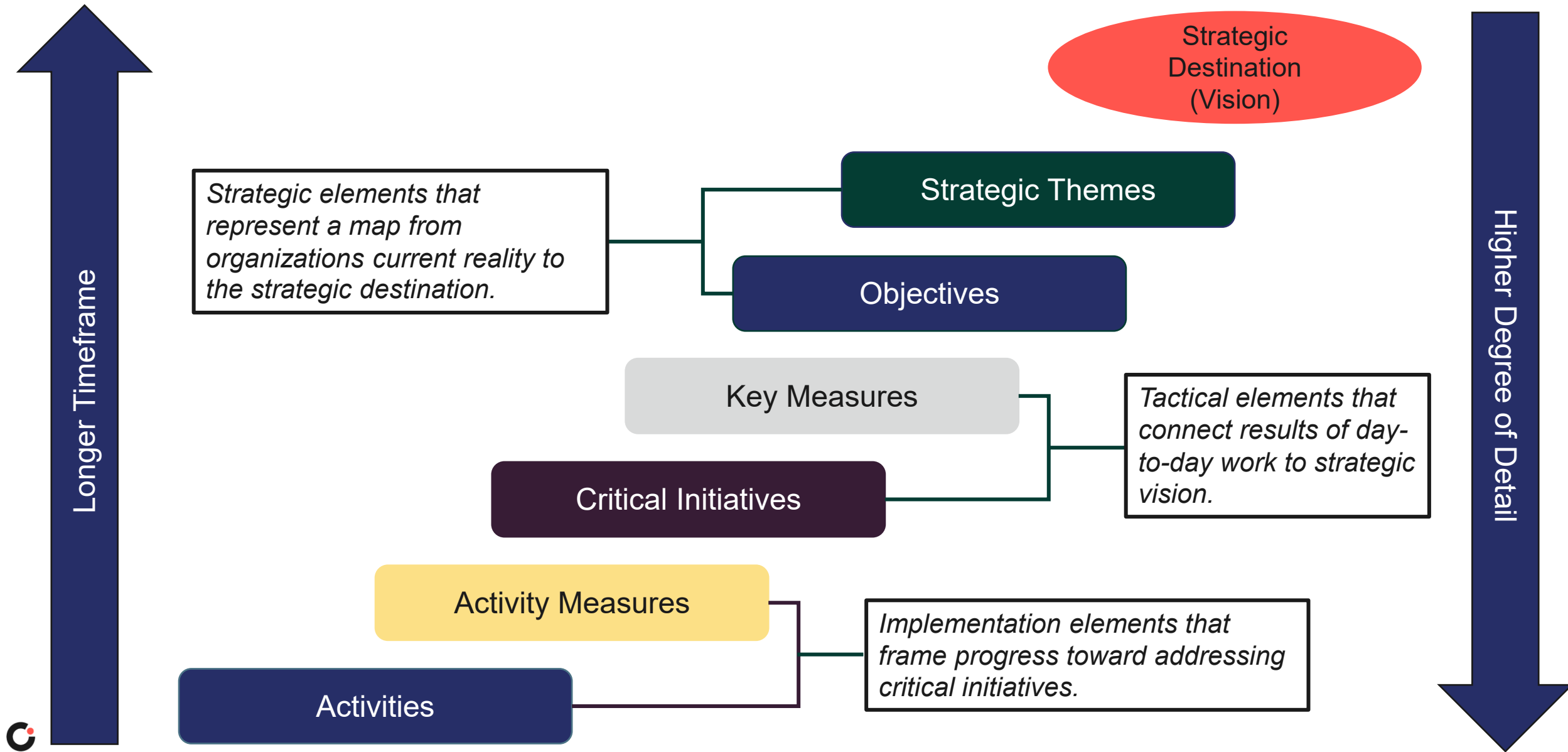


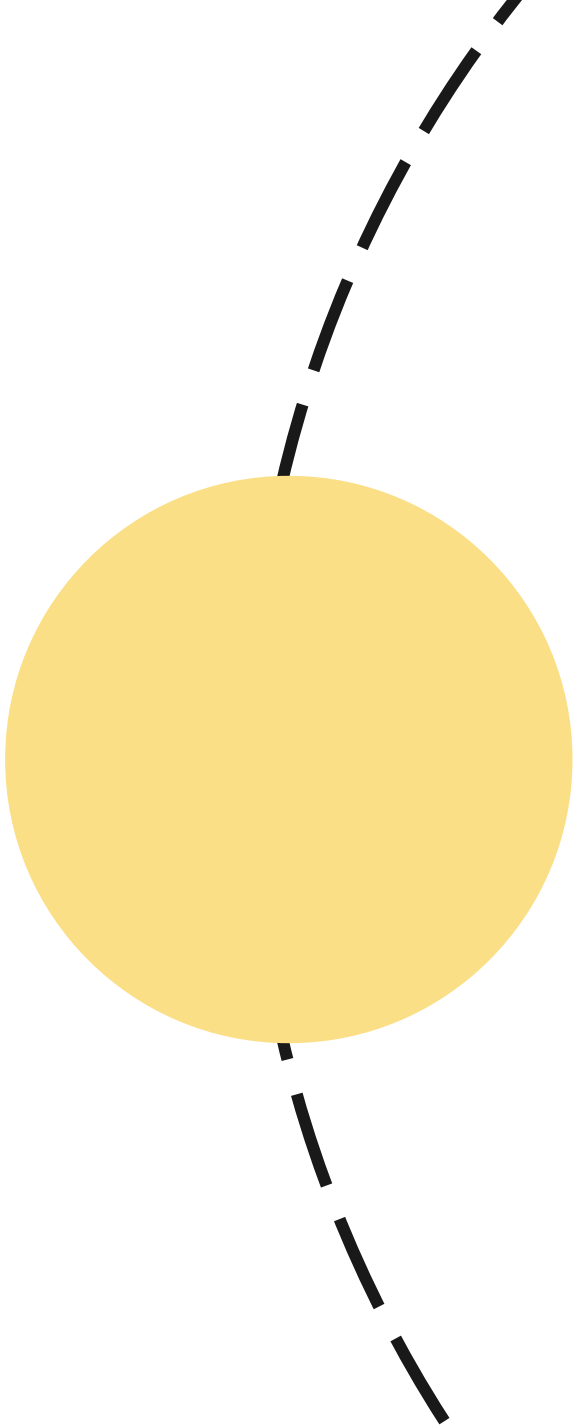


When you hear the phrase
strategic planning-
what immediately comes to
mind?

*ACTION OR
COMPLIANCE?*

Strategic Thinking & Planning: Key Terms Taxonomy

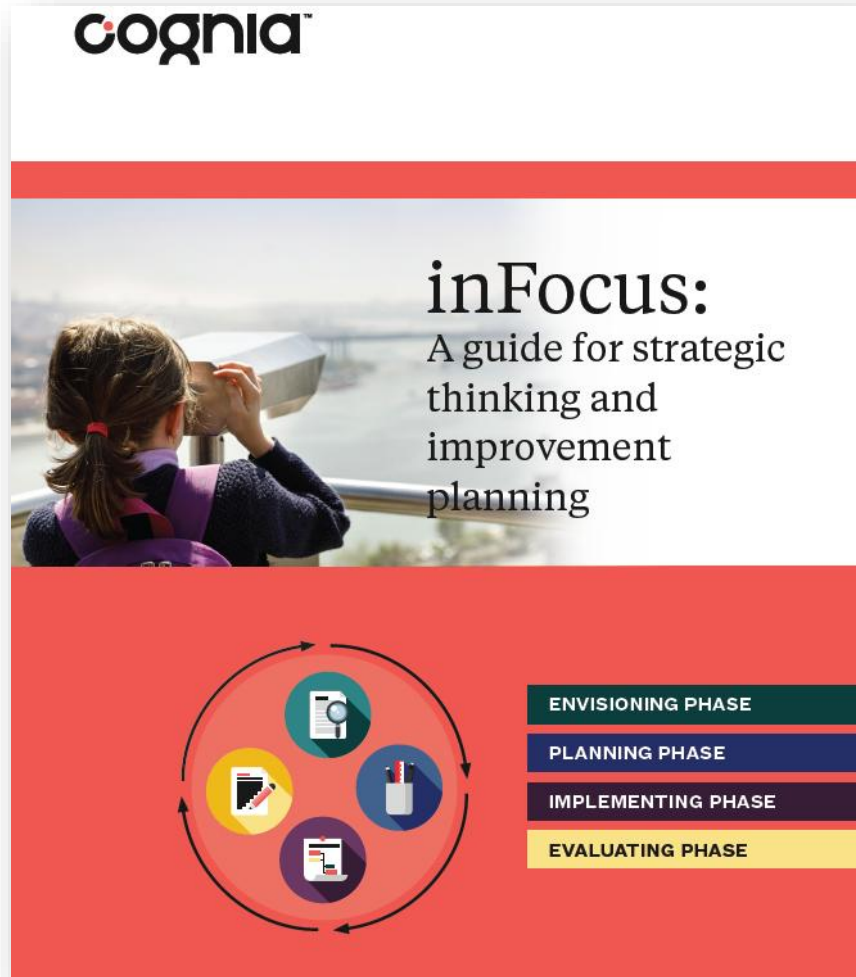




Evaluating Phase

*Start at the end
for SY27*

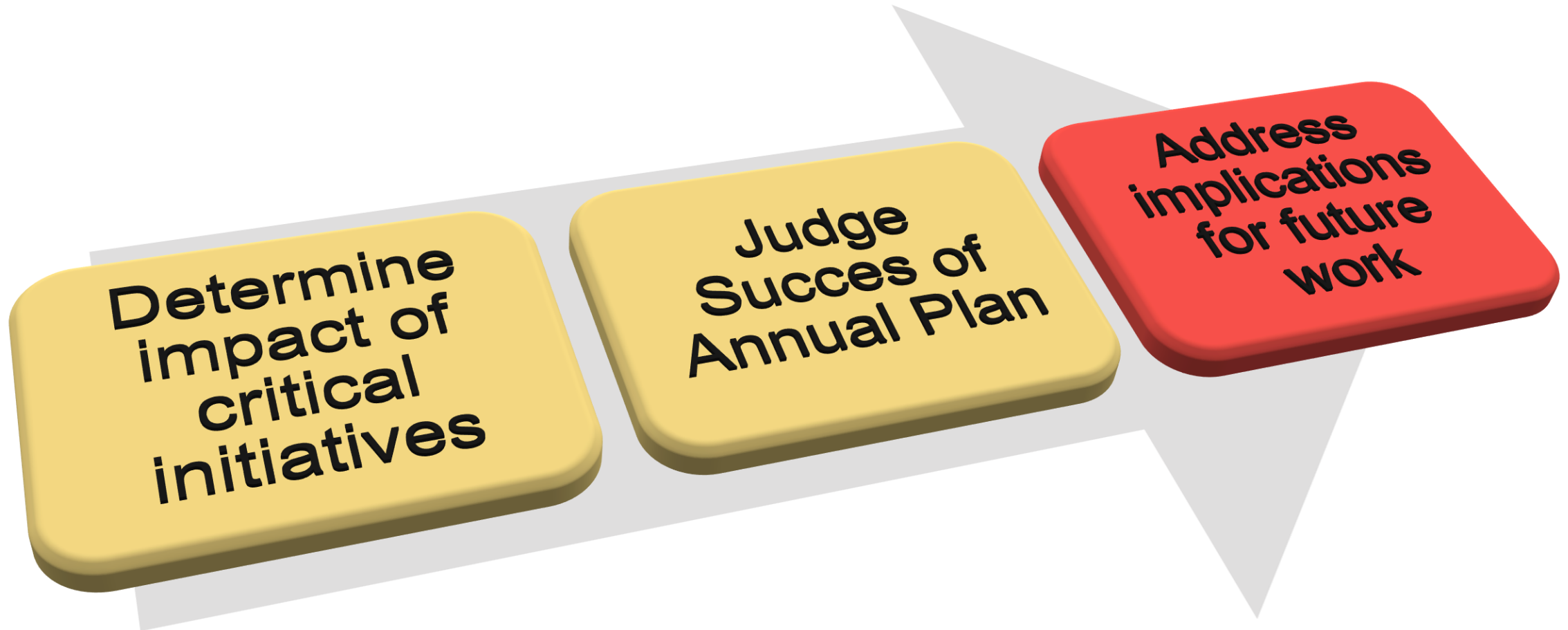
inFocus guide



What was expected to
happen?
What happened?

Evaluating Phase
pages 62-70

Evaluating subphases



Judge the success of the Annual Plan

Do the outcomes tied to the critical initiatives align with the overall plan?

Are these differences what we expected?

Did we make progress toward our objectives based on strategic themes?

Did your team faithfully execute the Annual Improvement Plan as written?

Do our findings from the evaluation of individual critical initiatives show improvement in our current reality?

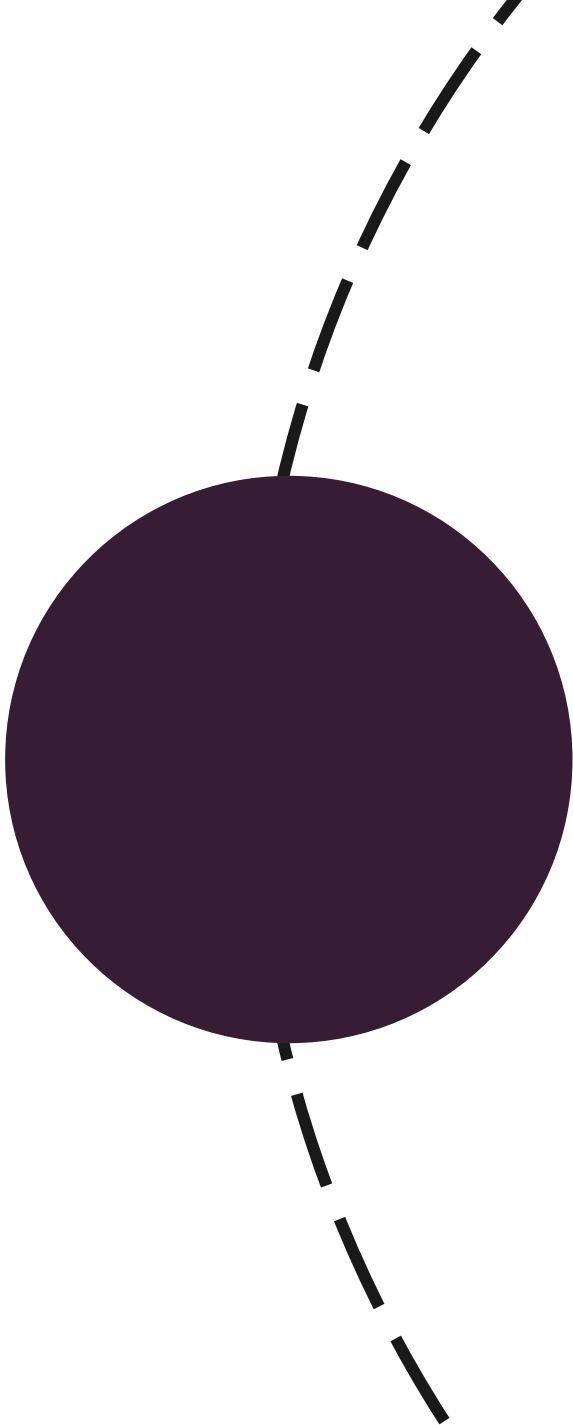
Are there alternative explanations for success or failure?



How should last year's findings influence this year's plans?

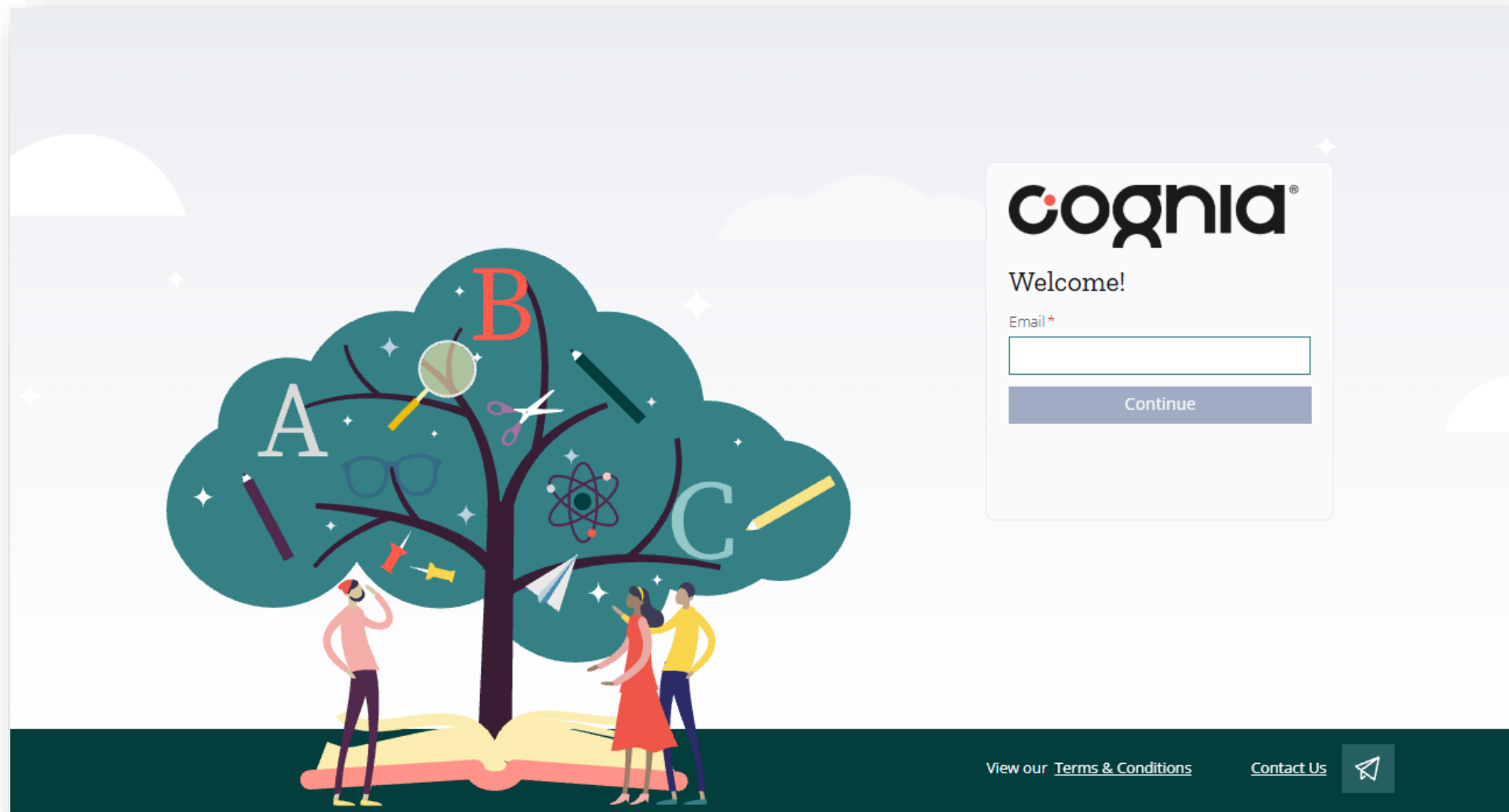
Group share





Strategies is now in
the Cognia
Improvement
Platform

New log-in screen





Sign in

Sign in to your account.

Email address

cogniauser11@cognia.org

Password

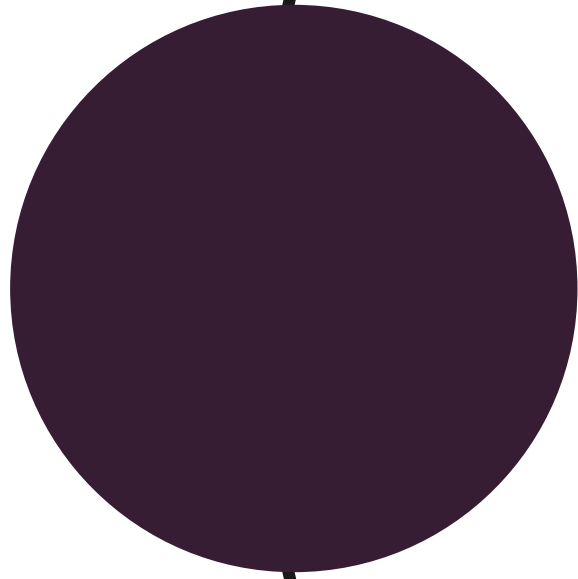
Enter password

☐

Show password

[Forgot your password?](#)

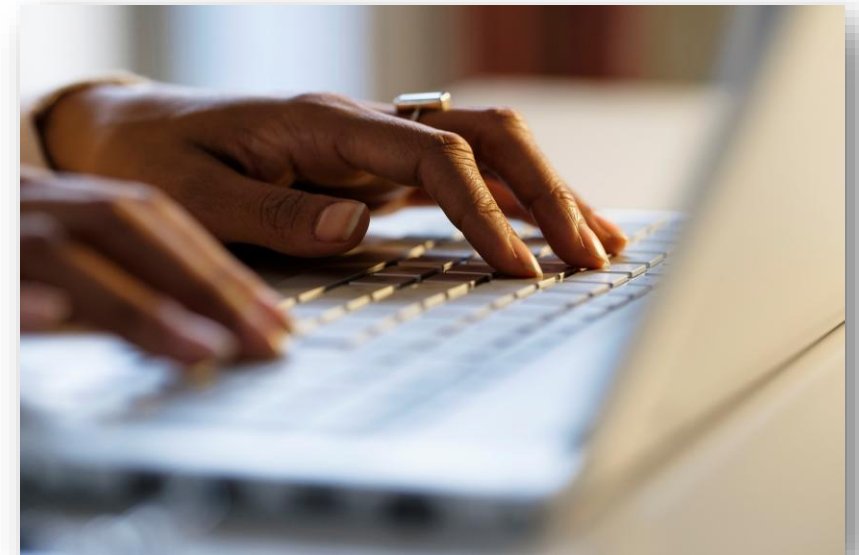
Sign in



User roles in the platform

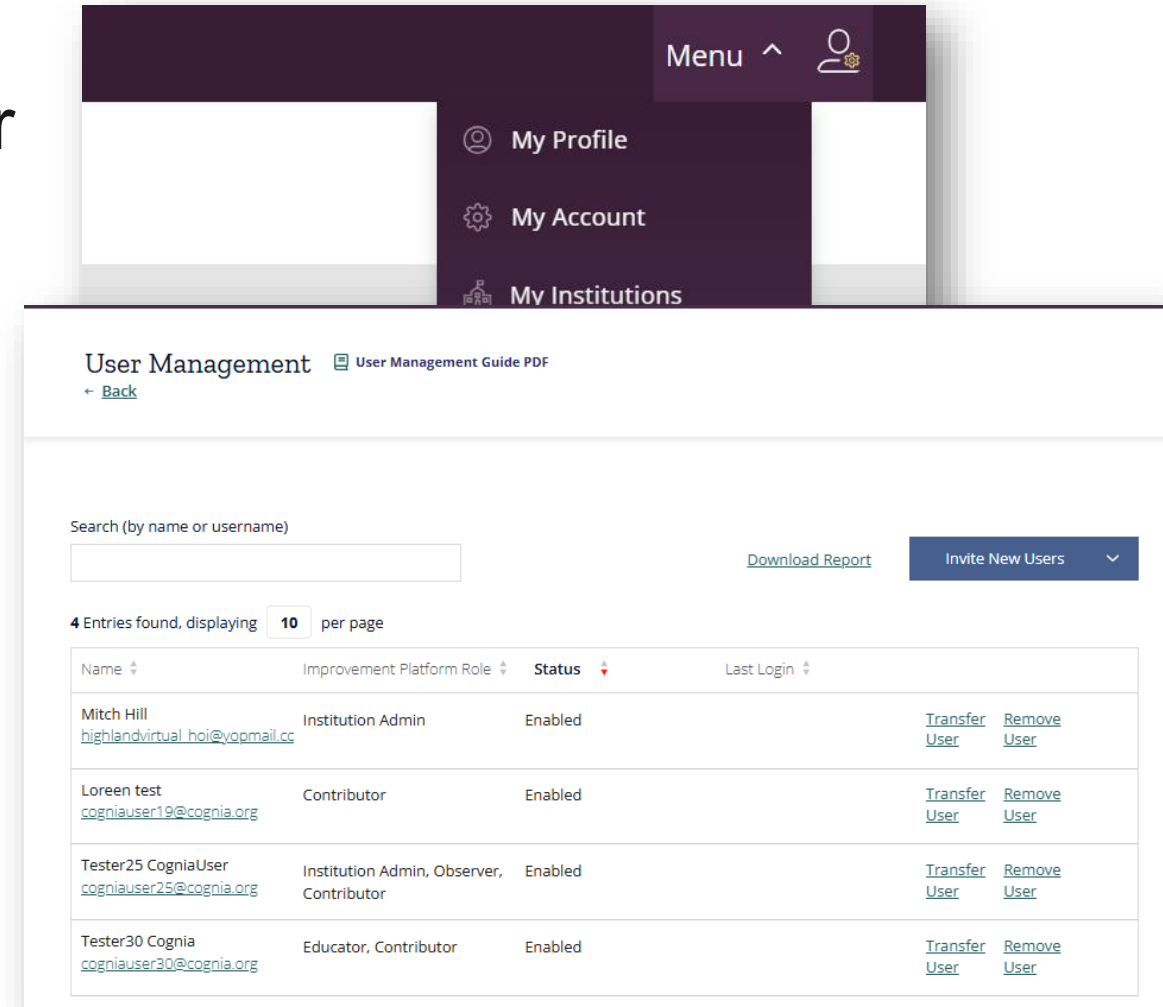
Account activation

1. Receive an account activation email from the system
2. Confirm who will manage users
3. Set up users in Cognia Home



User management

1. Find menu in the top right corner
2. Choose user management
3. Choose invite new users
4. Add users individually
 - Import a user list
 - First name, last name, email, role
5. Receive email from the system
6. Enable user account



The screenshot displays the 'User Management' interface. At the top right, a dark purple menu contains 'Menu', a user icon, and three options: 'My Profile', 'My Account', and 'My Institutions'. Below this, the 'User Management' page header includes a 'Back' link and a 'User Management Guide PDF' link. A search bar labeled 'Search (by name or username)' is present, along with a 'Download Report' link and an 'Invite New Users' button. The main content area shows '4 Entries found, displaying 10 per page'. A table lists the following users:

Name	Improvement Platform Role	Status	Last Login	
Mitch Hill highlandvirtual_hoi@vopmail.cc	Institution Admin	Enabled		Transfer User Remove User
Loreen test cogniauser19@cognia.org	Contributor	Enabled		Transfer User Remove User
Tester25 CogniaUser cogniauser25@cognia.org	Institution Admin, Observer, Contributor	Enabled		Transfer User Remove User
Tester30 Cognia cogniauser30@cognia.org	Educator, Contributor	Enabled		Transfer User Remove User

User roles

Admin

- **Surveys:** Can view surveys and create survey administrations. Can generate reports
- **Strategies:** Can view and create all plans
- **Observations:** Can create courses, create observations, download observation reports.
- **Engagement Reviews:** Can view, complete, and submit institution sections for a review.

Contributor

- **Strategies:** Can view and edit existing plans
- **Engagement Reviews:** Can view reviews and complete and submit institution sections

User roles

Viewer

- **Strategies:** Can only view existing plans.
- **Engagement Reviews:** Can view institution sections for a review

Observer

- **Observations:** Can conduct and view their own observations. Can download reports for their own observations

Educator

- No active platform use unless they have another role assigned

User guides and tutorials

User Management

[← Back](#)

[Resource Page](#)

Search by name or email

[Download](#)[Invite new users](#)

15 Results

☐ Include disabled institutional access users

Name 	Roles 	Last Login 	Action
Allison Britt allison.britt@elmoreco.com	Institution User	09/27/2023 09:17 PM	
Nic Cardwell nic.cardwell@elmoreco.com	Institution User	07/09/2026 09:59 AM	

User guides and tutorials

All Users

System Leaders

Guides to Share with Staff

Accessing the Improvement Platform

PDF

Quick start guide for staff on how to access and log in to the Cognia Improvement Platform for the first time

Creating your account

PDF

Step-by-step quick start guide for staff to create and set up their Cognia account

User Management: Creating Account in the Cognia Improvement Platform

Video

Video guide walking staff through the account creation process in the Cognia Improvement Platform

How to Navigate the Platform

Video

A walkthrough of the Cognia Improvement Platform interface, key features, and how to find what you need

User Management Guide

PDF

A complete guide for managing users within your institution on the Cognia Improvement Platform. Includes steps to view, edit, add, assign roles and remove users.

Changing your email

PDF

A quick-start guide for users wishing to change their email.

Changing your name

PDF

A quick-start guide for users wishing to change their name

Accessing User management

PDF

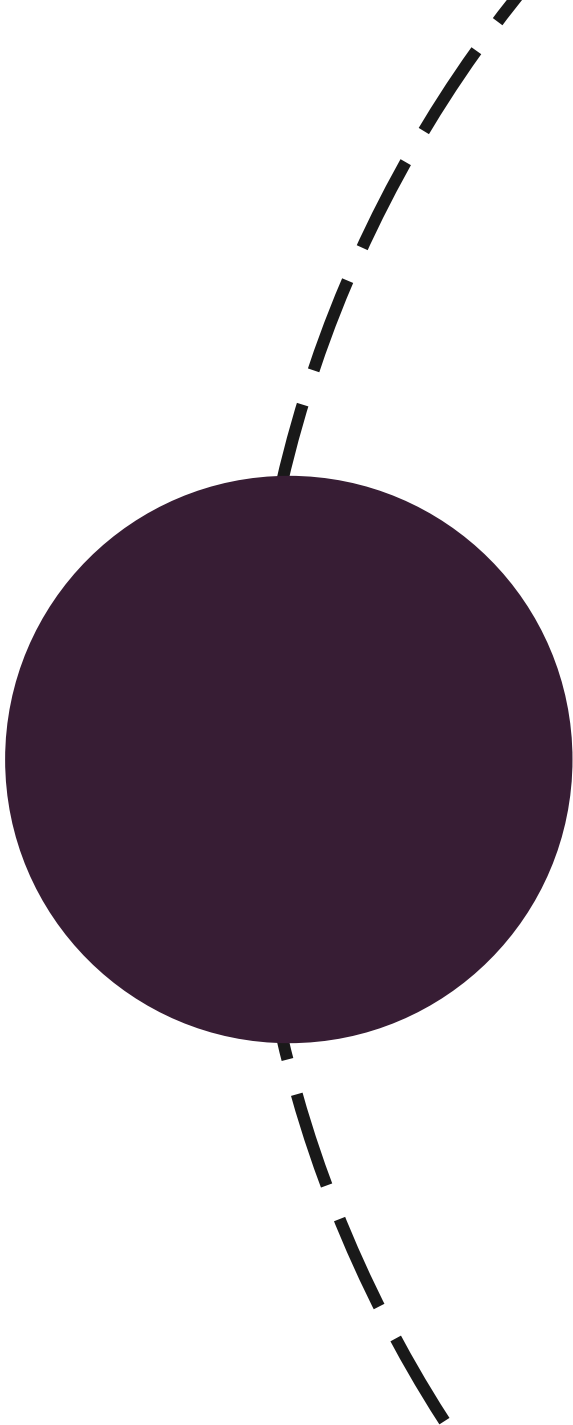
Step-by-step quick-start guide to accessing the User Management interface on the Improvement Platform.

Inviting new users - manual

PDF

Step-by-step quick-start guide to adding new users in your institution to the Improvement Platform.





Navigating the Platforms as an AL institution

My Home



 My Home

 Strategies

 Observations

 Surveys

 Candidacy Review

 Initial Accreditation Review

 Engagement Review

 Alabama Mandatory Training

 myJourney

 cognia.org



Welcome back!

Paula Bradshaw

Network Newsletter



Read the Latest Issue

Join us

July 27, 2026 ONLINE

Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool® (eleot®): Updates for Established Users*

This session is for Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool® (eleot®) users! Come and learn about the updated learning...

View Event Calendar

Spotlight Videos

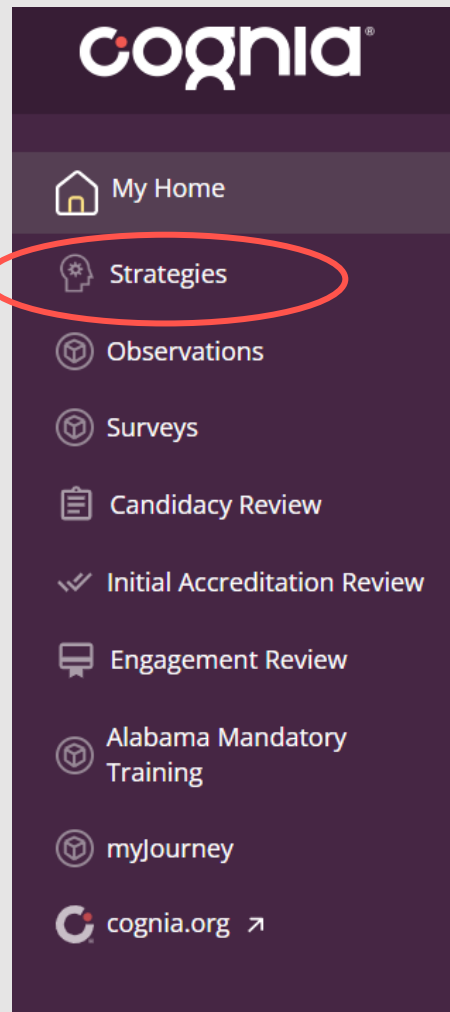


Build Capacity and Sustain Improvement
Cognia Professional Learning

Featured Member

[Read the case study.](#)

Observations



Welcome back!

Paula Bradshaw

Choose Observations the left navigation bar

Network Newsletter



Read the Latest Issue

Join us

July 27, 2026

ONLINE

Effective Learning Environments
Observation Tool® (eleot®):
Updates for Established Users*

This session is for Effective Learning
Environments Observation Tool®
(eleot®) users! Come and learn
about the updated learning...

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Spotlight Videos



Featured Member

[Read the case study.](#)



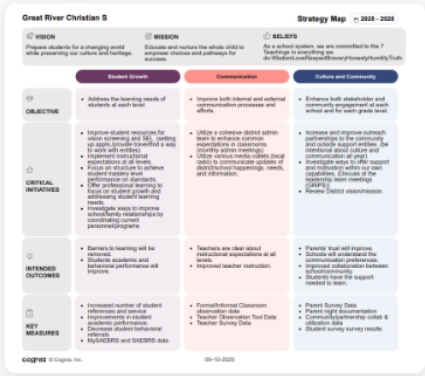
Strategies

From the main Strategies screen you can start a new plan, see current plans, and access resources.

- My Home
- Strategies
 - Overview
 - New Plan
 - Current Plans
 - Archived Plans
 - Manage Tags
- Candidacy Reviews
- Engagement Reviews
- Evidence Library
- Contact Us

STRATEGIES

Engage in Cognia's research-based Strategic Thinking and Planning process with this online tool for improvement planning that encompasses four distinct phases: envisioning, planning, implementation, and evaluation.



New Strategic Plan

Start a new improvement strategy plan

New Plan

View Current Plans

View plans in progress for your institution(s)

Current Plans

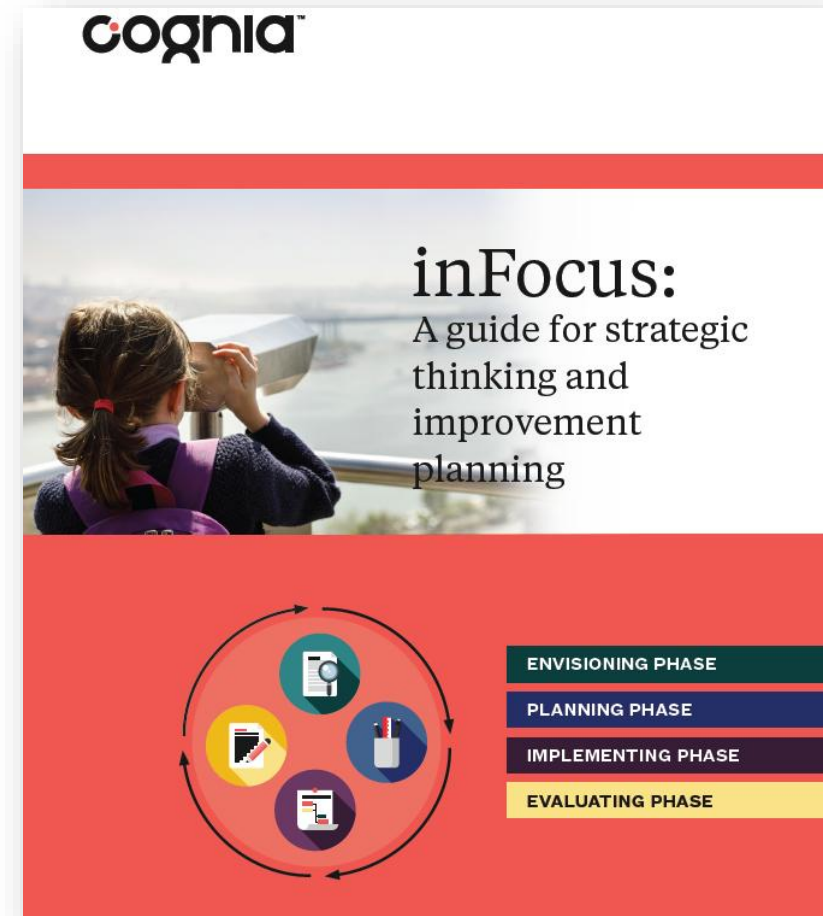
Document Title	Description	Action
Strategies User Guide	Technical user guide for creating a strategic improvement plan and generating outputs.	Download
InFocus Guide	Guide to Cognia's four-phase approach to strategic thinking and planning for continuous improvement, shifting from static plans to dynamic strategies that drive lasting growth.	Download
Performance Standards	The Cognia Performance Standards define the practices of a good education institution and provide the criteria for improvement efforts that will energetically and visibly grow learners, teachers, leaders, and organizations.	Download
Creating & Viewing a Strategic Plan	Guidance on how administrators can create and view strategic plans within the Cognia Improvement Platform.	View



Strategic Thinking & Planning

Use Cognia inFocus guide:

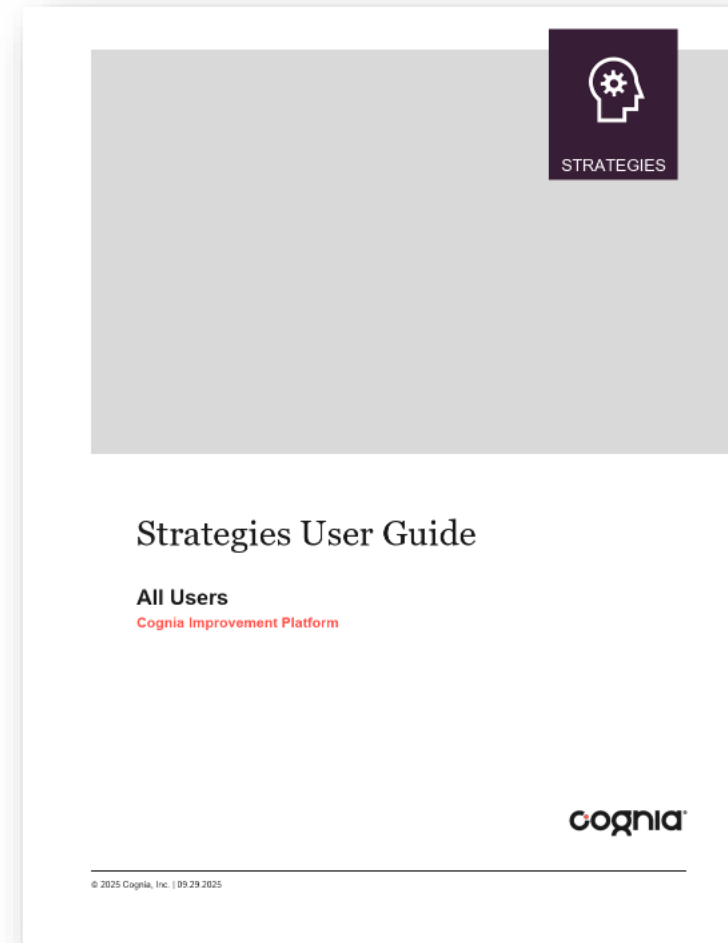
- Envisioning Phase
- Planning Phase
- Implementing phase
- Evaluating Phase

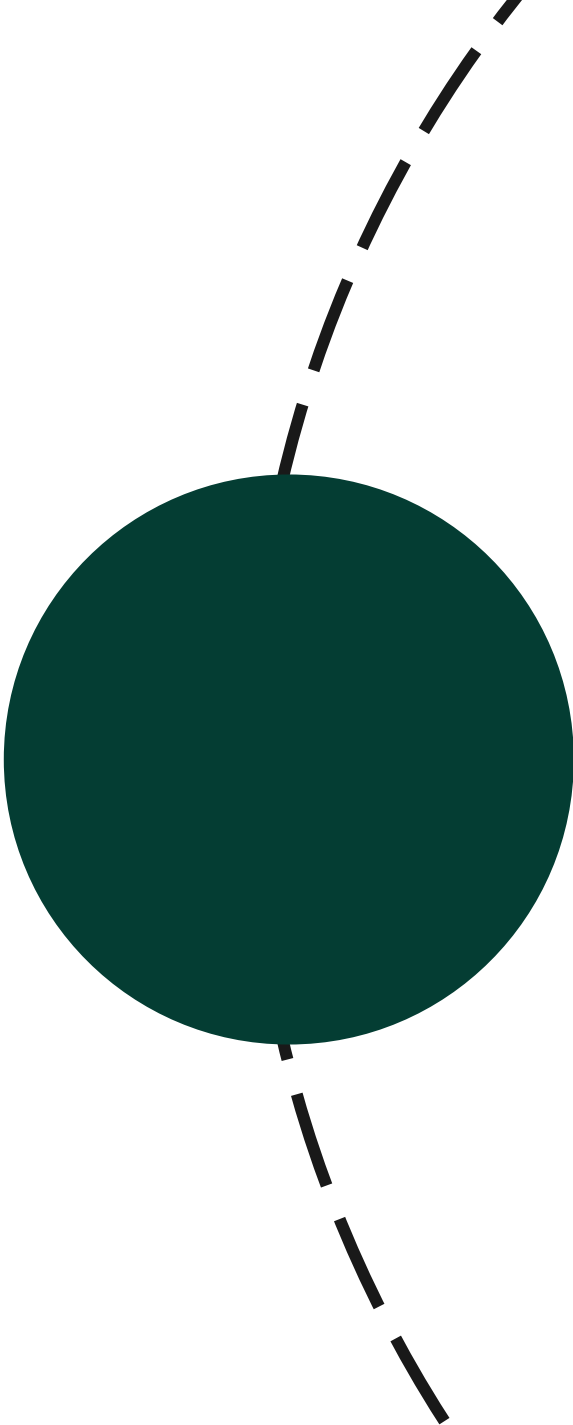


Strategic Thinking & Planning

Use Strategies User Guide:

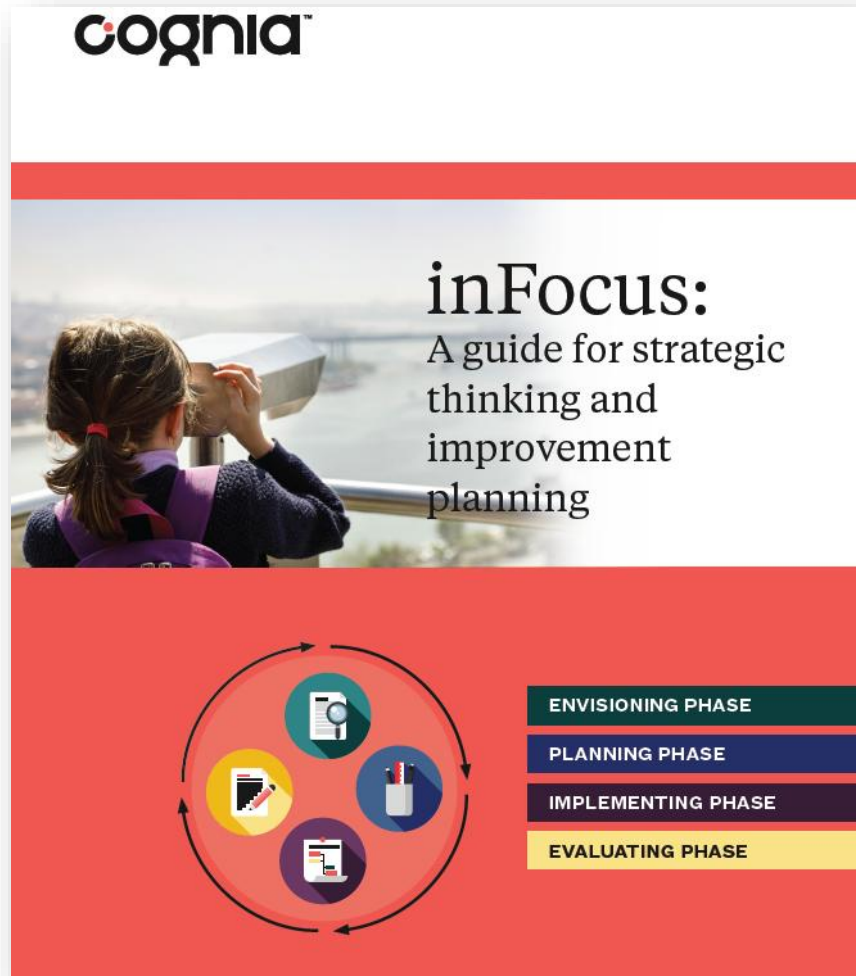
- Starting and Completing a Plan
- Finalizing a Plan
- Accessing Plans
- Tags
- Evidence Library





Envisioning Phase

inFocus guide



Envisioning Phase
pages 13-34

Envisioning: Three subphases

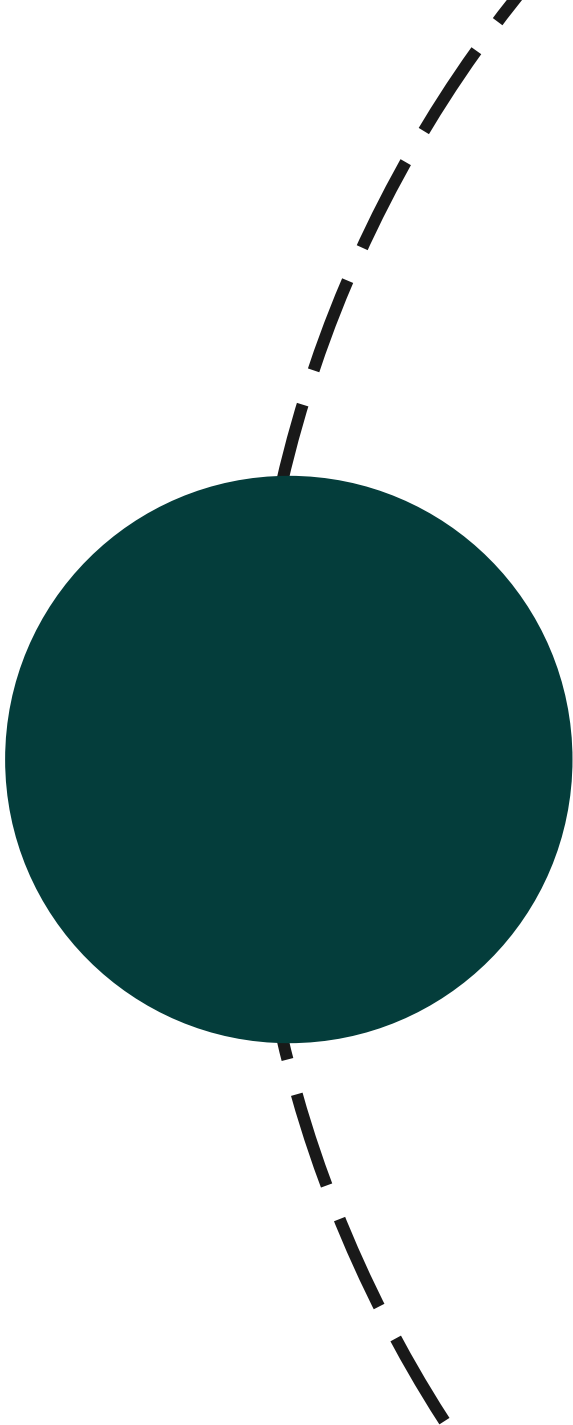
Determine
Current
Reality

Explore the
Future

Synthesize
Results

Important

- Successful completion of all three sub-phases in Envisioning = clear direction for improvement
- Responsive vs reactive
- Areas of improvement remain when other change is needed
- Representation of various stakeholder groups at this point is critical



What does it mean
to engage in *future
thinking?* *Why
should we do it?*

Strategies

Start a Plan

Current Plans

Cognia® Strategic Thinking and Planning empowers school and system leaders to build sustainable, impactful plans by fostering buy-in from all stakeholders. Using Cognia's proven framework and the platform allows institutions to facilitate:

- Moving beyond compliance activities to establish long-term improvement.
- Focusing on the holistic needs of students.
- Seeking meaningful stakeholder involvement and shared decision-making.

If you choose New Plan you will come to this page to Start a Strategic Plan.

To start your plan, click on the button below "Start a Strategic Plan". Once you have created a plan, you can go back to your plan by navigating to the "Current Plans" on the top of this page, or from the left hand menu navigation.

Start a Strategic Plan

Highland Demo Unified School District

< Back to Plan

Save

Be sure to name your plan and provide dates (3-5 years for a plan)

Plan Information

Plan Name

Start Year

Select Option

End Year

Select Option

< Back to Plan

Save



Strategies

You will complete every section and each phase. Be sure to Mark Complete when you are done.

Strategic Thinking and Planning

Plan Information & Instructions

Section	Action
Plan Information	<button>Resume</button>
Instructions	<button>Start</button>
Feedback & Comments	<button>Start</button>
Tags	<button>Start</button>

Envisioning

The envisioning phase expands on an institution's view of its current reality and potential future to establish a foundation for decision-making around goals and strategies.

Section	Action
Determine Current Reality	<button>Resume</button>
Explore The Future	<button>Start</button>
Synthesize Results	<button>Start</button>
Envisioning Summary	<button>Start</button>

Completing a Plan

- **Envisioning**
- **Planning**
- **Implementing**
- **Evaluating**

Save

Mark Section Complete

Important: A phase must be marked as complete before the next phase becomes available in the plan.

Output

Envisioning Summary Output



CURRENT REALITY

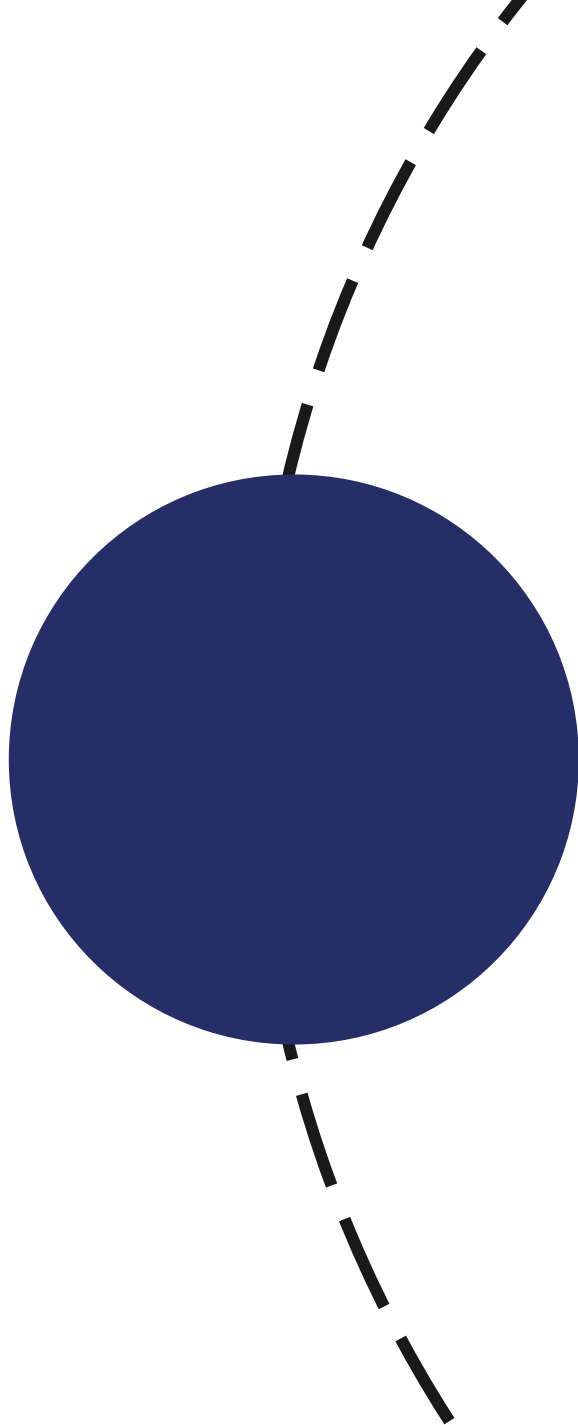
Learner	Institution	Community
A review of observed learner behaviors reveals patterns that impact engagement, instructional effectiveness, and overall learning outcomes. The analysis highlights strengths as well as areas requiring targeted support and strategic intervention.	A review of observed learner behaviors reveals patterns that impact engagement, instructional effectiveness, and overall learning outcomes. The analysis highlights strengths as well as areas requiring targeted support and strategic intervention.	A review of observed community engagement surveys reveals patterns that impact engagement, instructional effectiveness, and overall learning outcomes. The analysis highlights strengths as well as areas requiring targeted support and strategic intervention.

EXPLORING THE FUTURE

Social Trends	Recent social trends data indicate shifting patterns in demographics, technology use, communication preferences, and societal priorities. These trends highlight emerging behaviors, cultural shifts, and areas where organizations and communities may need to adapt.
Technological Trends	Recent technological trends reflect rapid innovation across industries, reshaping how people work, learn, communicate, and interact with their environment. These trends highlight opportunities for growth, efficiency, and competitive advantage, as well as challenges related to ethics, security, and workforce adaptation.
Economic Trends	Current economic trends reflect global shifts in growth, labor markets, consumer behavior, and financial stability. Monitoring these trends is essential for policymakers, businesses, and communities to make informed decisions and anticipate challenges or opportunities in a rapidly changing economic environment.
Political Trends	Current political trends highlight evolving governance styles, public policy priorities, civic engagement patterns, and global geopolitical shifts. Understanding these trends is critical for policymakers, organizations, and communities to anticipate changes, respond strategically, and engage effectively in political processes.

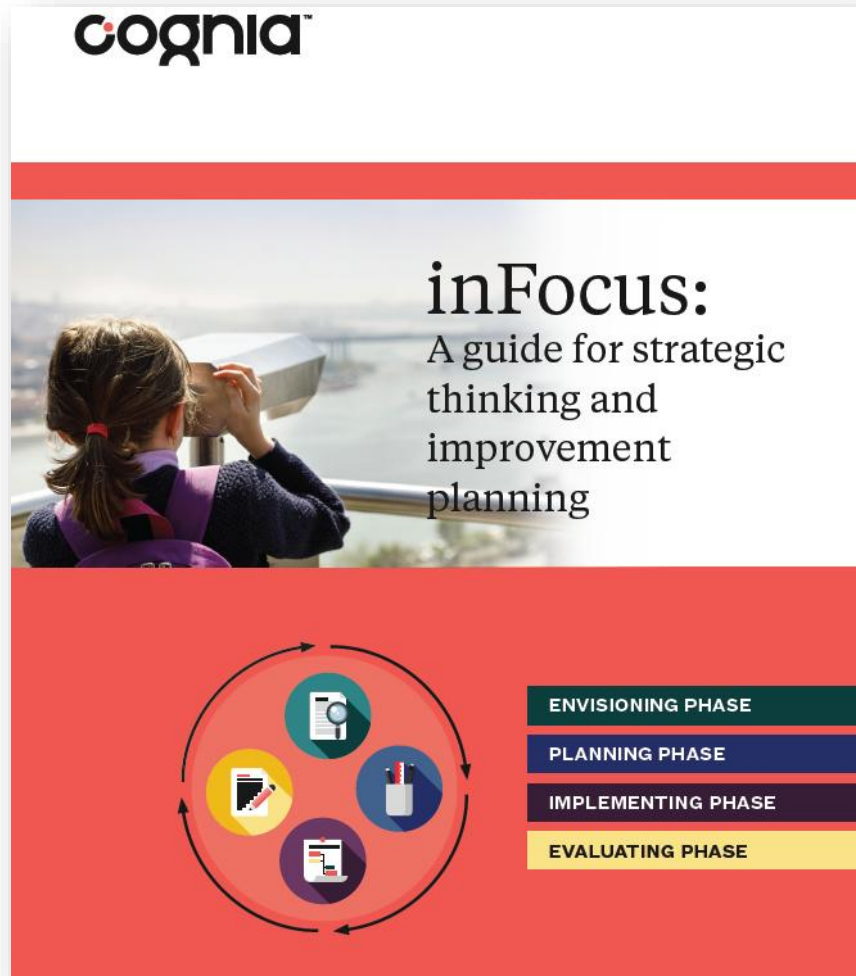
STRATEGIC THEMES

Priority Statement	Strategic Theme
Implementing personalized learning instruction can improve student readiness for our 5th graders.	Personalized Learning Experiences
Using a variety of virtual communications methods can improve stakeholder engagement.	Stakeholder Engagement
As we face educator shortages and utilize uncertificated staff to fill positions, we must provide choice programs for professional development towards advanced certification programs to stabilize teaching staff.	Staff Stability
If we provide students with a strong academic foundation, then all students will demonstrate high levels of academic growth.	Elevate Academic Excellence
Ensuring that students have learning activities to use technology can prepare them for their future jobs/careers.	Transition Readiness



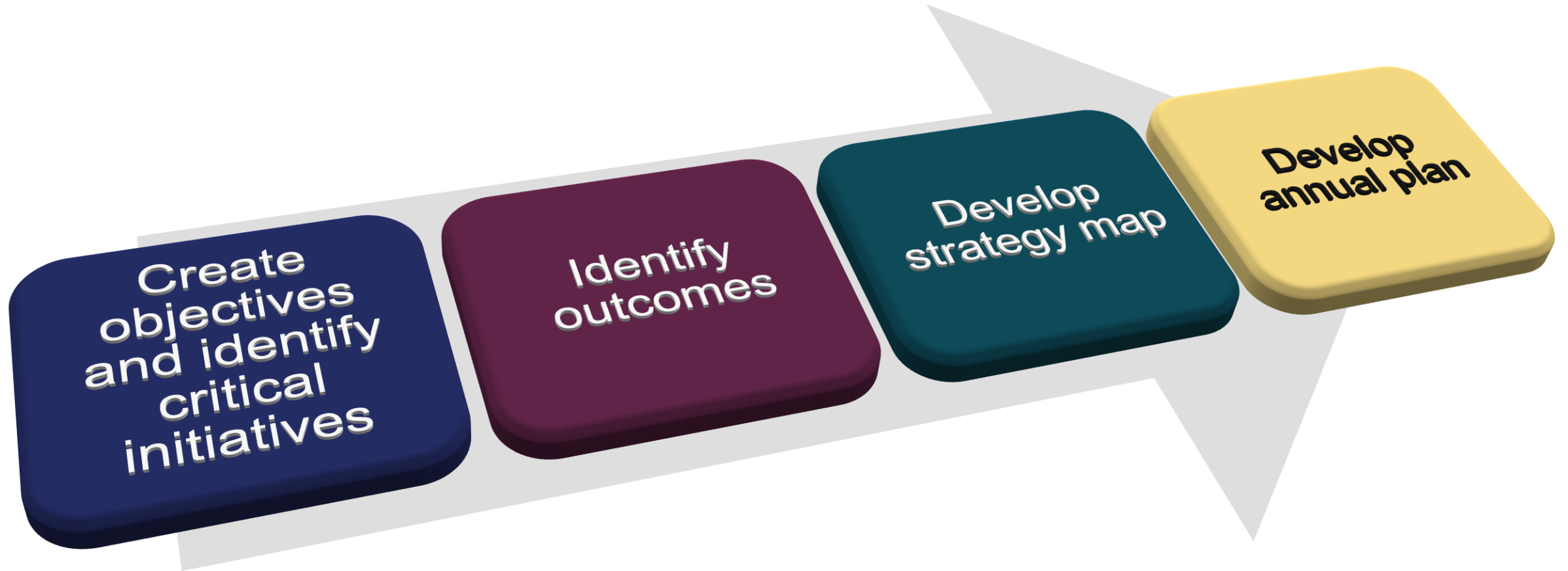
Planning Phase

inFocus guide



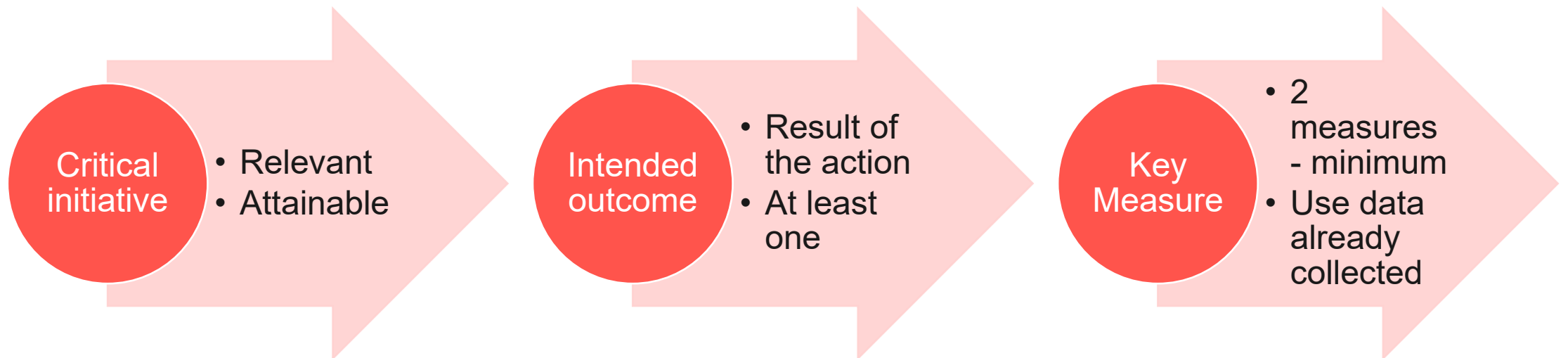
Planning Phase
pages 35-48

Planning subphases



Important

- Objectives should be high-level enough that they last over the course of 3-5 years.
- Critical initiatives (Cis) written to last for one year at a time.
- EACH CI should have an articulated outcome and THAT becomes the measurable component.



Strategies

Once you have plans started you will see them in Current Plans. You will now have the ability to Archive a plan after you have completed the year.

Strategies › Current Plans

SearchReset

Name	Status	Last Modified	Institution	Creator	Start Date	End Date	Created Date	
Test name 2	Strategic Plan In Progress	4/13/2026 3:27:41 PM	*TEST* Big River Equine Academy	Jetpack Admin			2/25/2026 10:49:14 AM	<button>Edit</button> <button>Archive</button>
	Envisioning Phase Complete	3/20/2026 10:16:13 AM	*TEST* Big River Equine Academy	Jetpack Admin	2026	2026	2/25/2026 11:01:51 AM	<button>Edit</button> <button>Archive</button>

Completing a Plan

- **Envisioning**
- **Planning**
- **Implementing**
- **Evaluating**

Save

Mark Section Complete

Important: A phase must be marked as complete before the next phase becomes available in the plan.

Output

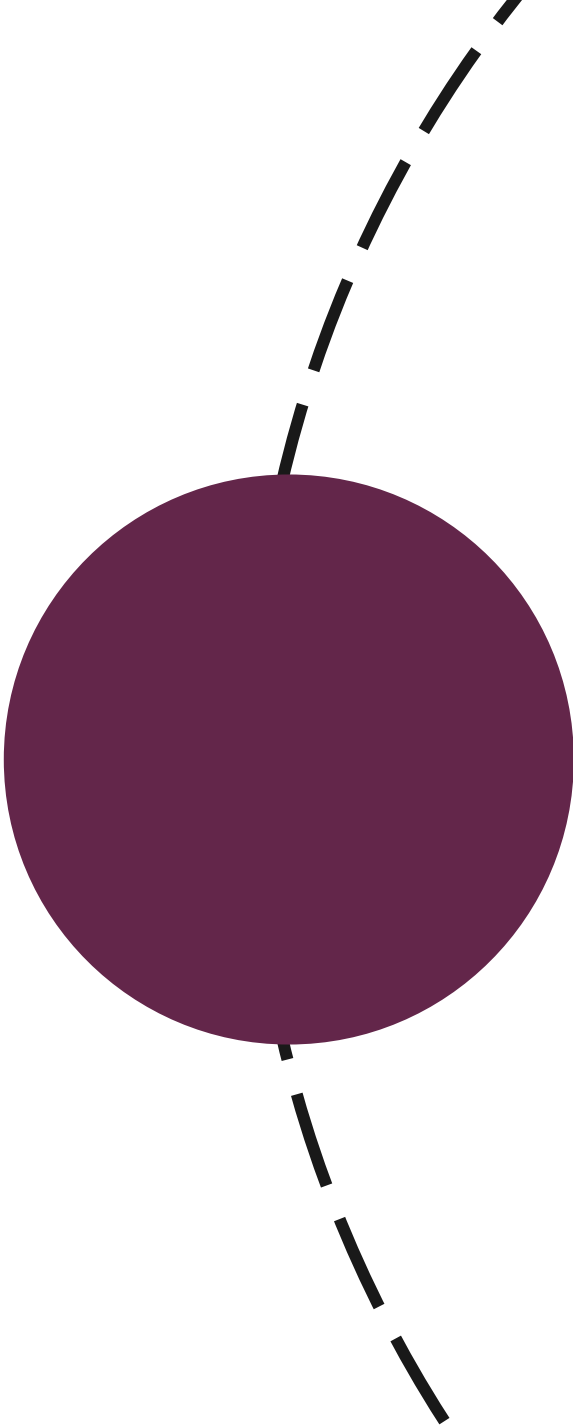
Strategy Map Output



Output

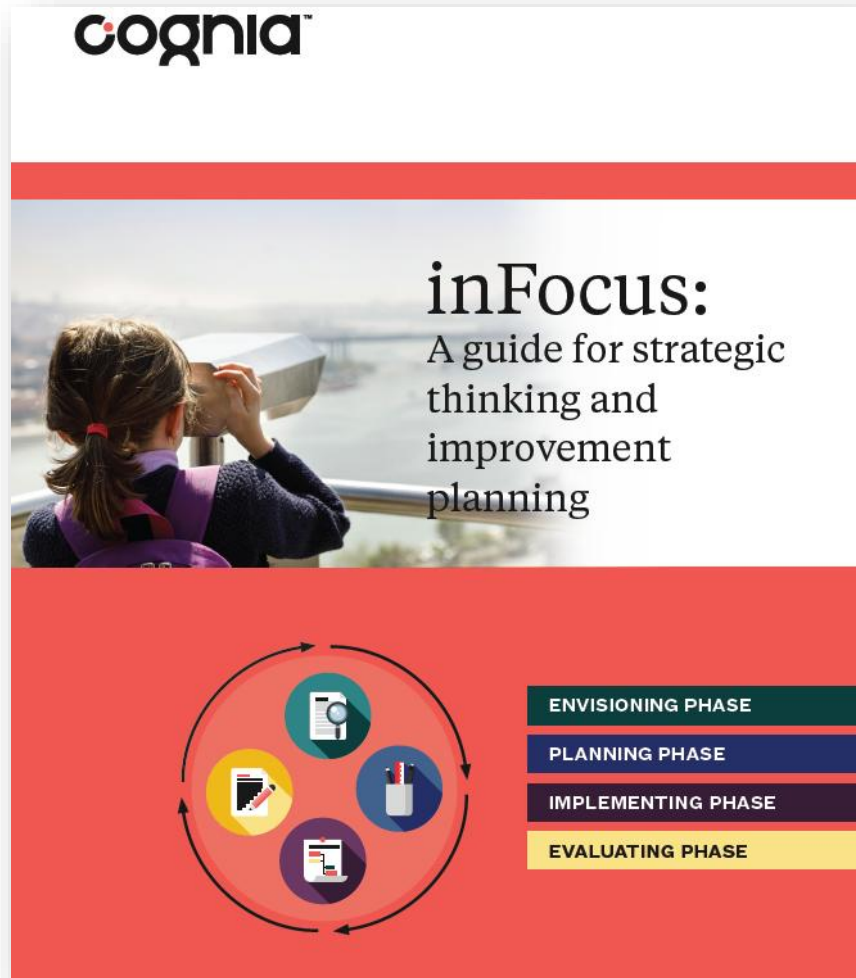
Personalized Learning Experiences		
🎓 OBJECTIVE Provide more active, personalized learning opportunities to support student readiness for middle school.		
Critical Initiative	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Invest in curriculum, materials aligned to/in support of instructional practices that promote personalized learning	Teachers will have resources necessary to implement active reading strategies with fidelity.	Materials inventories; curriculum distribution lists Teacher surveys
Staff Stability		
🎓 OBJECTIVE Provide choice programs for professional development toward advanced certification programs to stabilize teaching staff.		
Critical Initiative	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Conduct leadership study group to establish needs and identify potential programs.	Leaders will select a program that meets the needs of the teachers.	Teacher survey data
External Stakeholder Engagement		
🎓 OBJECTIVE Provide proactive communication and strategic involvement opportunities for parents and other community members.		
Critical Initiative	Intended Outcomes	Key Measures
Conduct audit of community engagement.	Clarity in gaps of community involvement.	Board feedback data
Develop and implement stakeholder engagement plan.	Improved collaboration between school and community.	Stakeholder perspective data
Develop and implement strategic partnership plan	Highly effective engagement strategies increase partnership engagements.	Growth in community engagement partnerships
		Stakeholder perspective data

Annual Improvement Plan



Implementing Phase

inFocus guide



Implementing
Phase
pages 50-61

Implementing subphases



Output

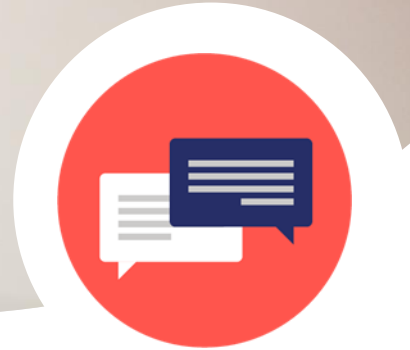
Annual Implementation Plan

This Output Serves as your ACIP

Staff Stability		Professional development toward advanced certification for teaching staff.			
☆ CRITICAL INITIATIVE	to establish needs and identify potential programs.				
Responsible	Required Resources	Activity Measures	Launch Date	Activity timeline	
Leadership	School level administrators	Leadership team description and roles added to faculty handbook/school procedures	9/9/25		

Implement and Monitor Progress

1. Communicate plans
2. Set expectations
3. Schedule NOW- 3x's minimum (quarterly recommended)
4. 2nd meeting date – prior to due dates of your ACIP's mid-year review
5. Save #4 for EOY Evaluation



Strategies

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Strategies › Current Plans

SearchReset

Name	Status	Last Modified	Institution	Creator	Start Date	End Date	Created Date	
Test name 2	Strategic Plan In Progress	4/13/2026 3:27:41 PM	*TEST* Big River Equine Academy	Jetpack Admin			2/25/2026 10:49:14 AM	Edit Archive
	Envisioning Phase Complete	3/20/2026 10:16:13 AM	*TEST* Big River Equine Academy	Jetpack Admin	2026	2026	2/25/2026 11:01:51 AM	Edit Archive

Completing a Plan

- **Envisioning**
- **Planning**
- **Implementing**
- **Evaluating**

Save

Mark Section Complete

Important: A phase must be marked as complete before the next phase becomes available in the plan.

Next Steps



Important reminders & timelines

- It's time to Explore the Future again – you've finished a 3-5 year cycle
- Due date is too late. Have plans ready by August and make revisions by due date.
- Timelines
 - Spring/Summer – Evaluate previous year's plan success
 - Late Summer – Envision new 3-5 year plan and Plan for ACIP
 - Fall – Implement ACIP Critical Initiatives and Activities for year 1
 - Fall, Winter (mid-year review), Spring – Monitor progress
 - Spring/Summer – Evaluate and begin planning for year 2

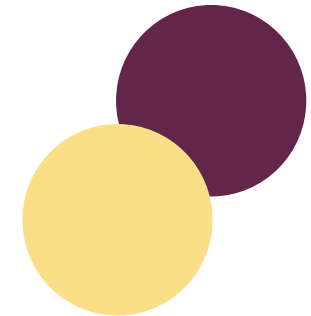
What do you and
your team need to
do to start work
for next school
year?

Share out.



What's New

- Archived Plans
- Tags
- Evidence Library
- Outputs



Archived Plans

cognia

Strategies > Archived Plans

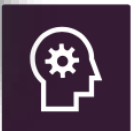
Plan Name

Search Reset

Name	Status	Last Modified	Institution	Creator	Start Date	End Date	Created Date	Download
------	--------	---------------	-------------	---------	------------	----------	--------------	----------

Items per page: 1... 0 of 0

Message: Joanna Krouskun



Tags

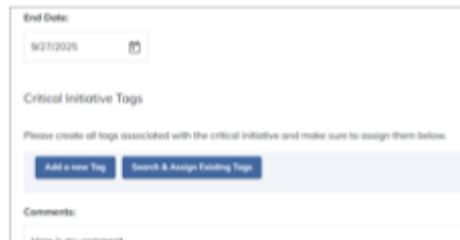
Tags

The Create Objective and Critical Initiatives section of the Planning phase asks for tags to be added. New tags can be created directly in the initiative or existing tags from the Tags list can be assigned. Tagging can be helpful when identifying groups of initiatives/evidence for specific purposes. For example, all initiatives with a tag of "Federal funds" would identify which initiatives are related to Federal funding.

Adding New Tags to an Initiative

Follow these steps to add a new tag to a critical initiative in a plan.

1. Within the critical initiative in the plan, click the **Add a new Tag** button.



End Date: 9/27/2025

Critical Initiative Tags

Please create all tags associated with the critical initiative and make sure to assign them below.

[Add a new Tag](#) [Search & Assign Existing Tags](#)

Comments:

[View & edit comment](#)

2. Enter a **Critical Initiative Tag(s)**.
3. Click the **Save** button. This adds the tag to the initiative and to the Tags list to be used in other areas of the platform.



[Save](#) [Back to Critical Initiative](#)

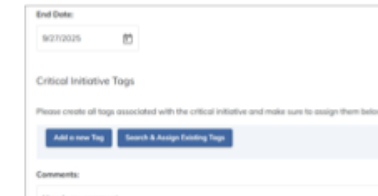
Critical Initiative Tag(s)

[Save](#) [Back to Critical Initiative](#)

Adding Existing Tags to an Initiative

Follow these steps to add an existing tag to a critical initiative in a plan.

1. Within the critical initiative in the plan, click the **Search & Assign Existing Tags** button.



End Date: 9/27/2025

Critical Initiative Tags

Please create all tags associated with the critical initiative and make sure to assign them below.

[Add a new Tag](#) [Search & Assign Existing Tags](#)

Comments:

[View & edit comment](#)

2. Find the tag you want to add. **Tip:** You can search the list, sort the list by clicking on a column header, and export the list to Excel by clicking the **Export** icon.
3. Click the **Assign Tag** button to the far right to add it to the initiative. (Click the **Un-Assign Tag** button to remove any tags assigned and no longer needed.)
4. When you are done, click the **X** button at the upper right of the list. This returns you to the initiative.



Search

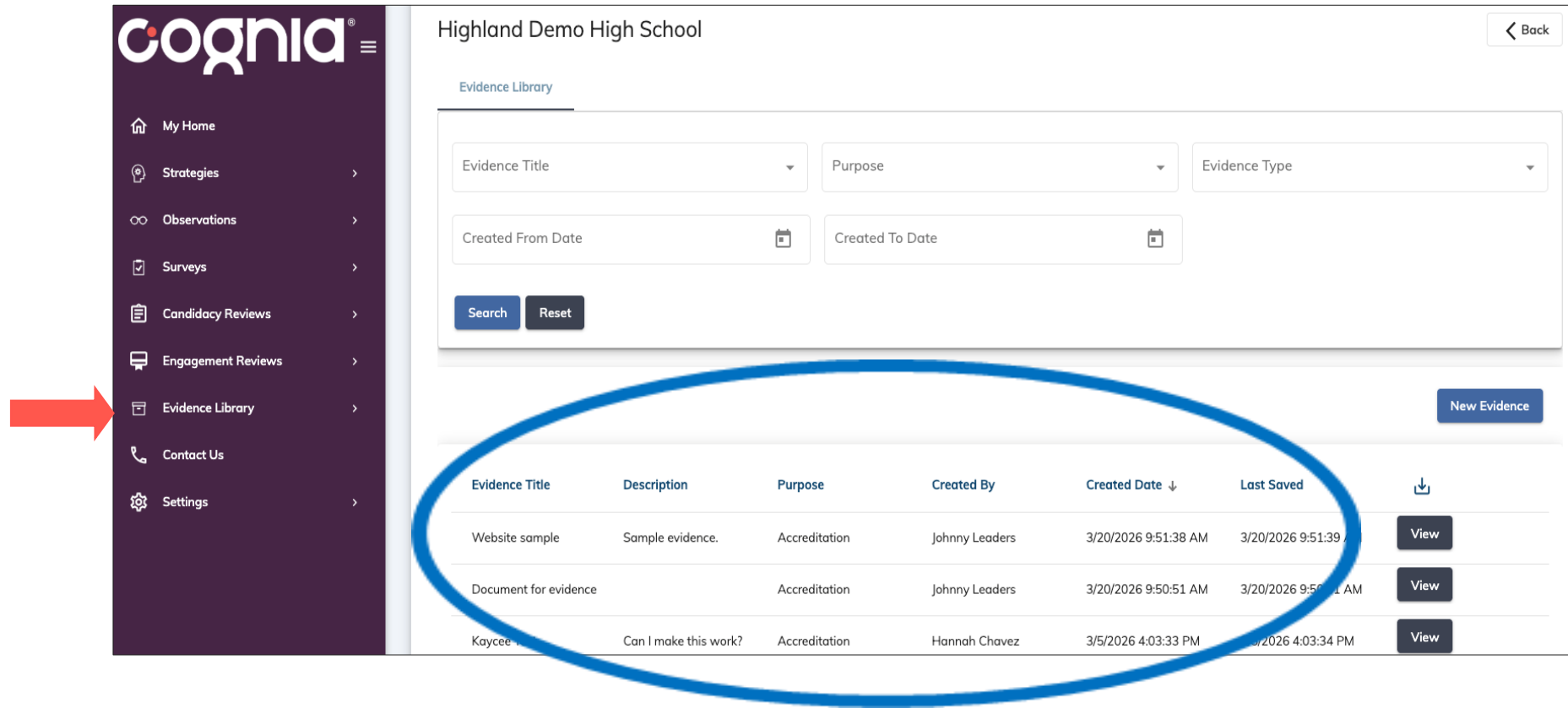
Critical Initiative Tag(s)

Tag demo 1	Assign Tag
Tag demo 1.1	Un-Assign Tag

[X](#)

STRATEGIES USER GUIDE

Accessing the Evidence Library



The screenshot shows the Cognia Evidence Library interface for Highland Demo High School. The left sidebar contains a menu with the following items: My Home, Strategies, Observations, Surveys, Candidacy Reviews, Engagement Reviews, Evidence Library (highlighted with a red arrow), Contact Us, and Settings. The main content area is titled 'Evidence Library' and features a search filter section with dropdowns for Evidence Title, Purpose, and Evidence Type, and date pickers for Created From Date and Created To Date. Below the filters are Search and Reset buttons. A 'New Evidence' button is located in the top right corner of the table area. The table below contains the following data:

Evidence Title	Description	Purpose	Created By	Created Date ↓	Last Saved	
Website sample	Sample evidence.	Accreditation	Johnny Leaders	3/20/2026 9:51:38 AM	3/20/2026 9:51:39 AM	View
Document for evidence		Accreditation	Johnny Leaders	3/20/2026 9:50:51 AM	3/20/2026 9:50:51 AM	View
Kaycee	Can I make this work?	Accreditation	Hannah Chavez	3/5/2026 4:03:33 PM	3/5/2026 4:03:34 PM	View

Creating new evidence in the library

The screenshot shows the Cognia Evidence Library interface. The left sidebar contains navigation links: My Home, Strategies, Observations, Surveys, Candidacy Reviews, Engagement Reviews, Evidence Library, Contact Us, and Settings. The main content area is titled 'Evidence Library > My Evidence' and shows the 'Highland Demo Middle School' page. The 'Evidence Library' section includes filters for Evidence Title, Purpose, Evidence Type, Created From Date, and Created To Date, along with Search and Reset buttons. A 'New Evidence' button is located at the bottom right of the filter section. A detailed form on the right side of the image shows the fields for creating new evidence: Description, Evidence File (with a Choose Files button), Evidence URL, and Evidence Purpose. The form also includes a Back button and a Save button at the bottom.

Evidence Library > My Evidence

Highland Demo Middle School

[Evidence Library](#)

Evidence Title Purpose Evidence Type

Created From Date Created To Date

Search Reset

New Evidence

Description

Evidence File

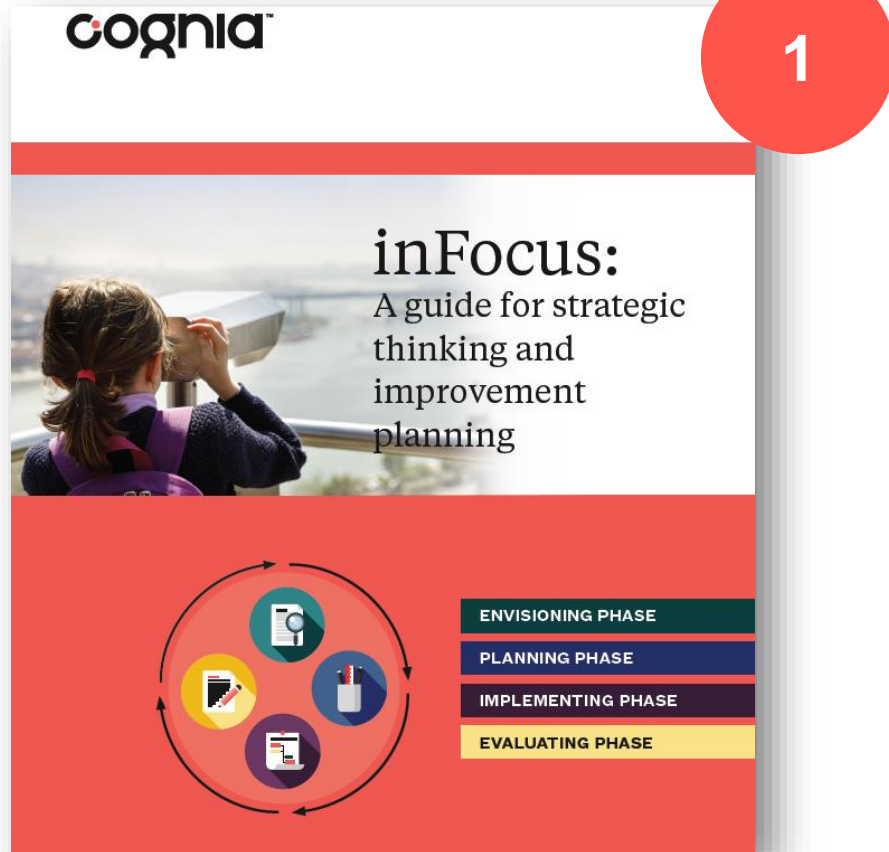
Choose Files No File Selected

Evidence URL

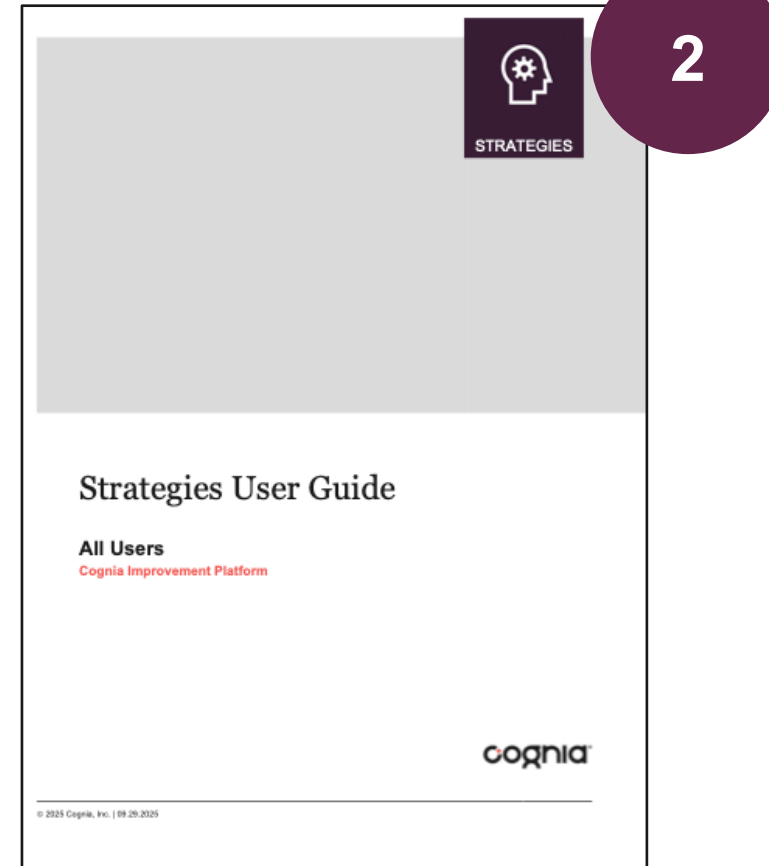
Evidence Purpose

Back Save

Resources



ST&P guidance



Strategies system

“ Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning.

Benjamin Franklin

Questions?

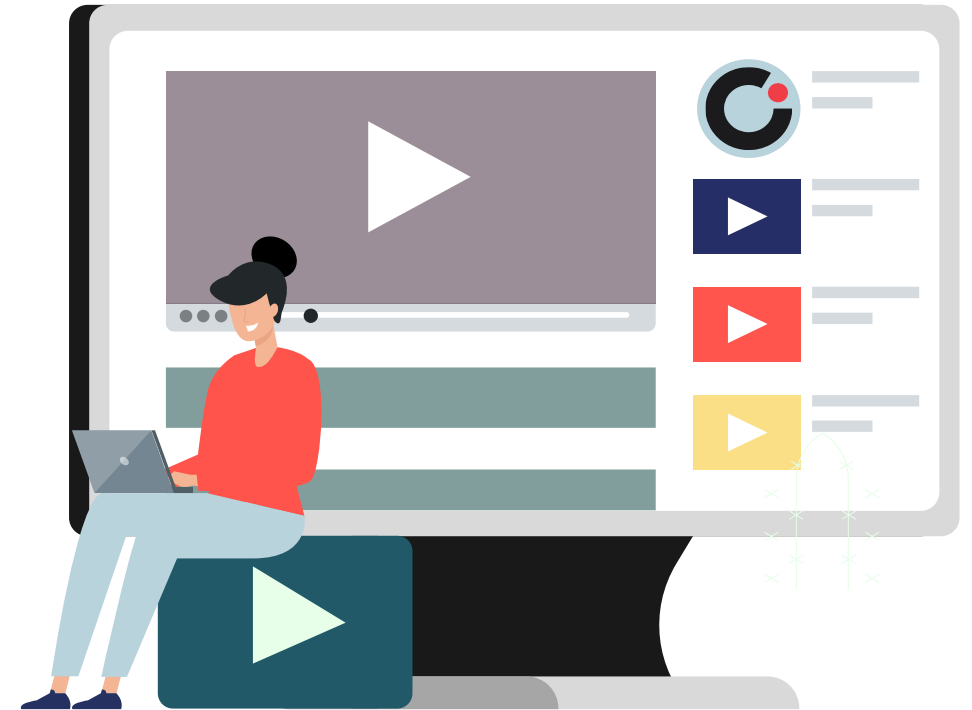


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