

Governance - Consulting Services

How does our board measure up?

SCHOOL BOARD SELF-EVALUATION

FOR

C S.B A <u>R</u>OFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE STANDARDS

WHY ADOPT AND UTILIZE CSBA's PROFESSIONAL GovERNANCE STANDARDS?

The overall purposes of CSBA's Professional Governance Standards are to:

Help increase the effectiveness of governing boards, and

Raise parent, public and media awareness about the critical role of governing boards.

Why should boards adopt and utilize the Professional Governance Standards? Because local governance teams are critical to positive, sustained public school reform, and because the Professional Governance Standards will:

Help keep governance teams focused on learning and achievement for all students.

Promote dialogue about governance, which leads to a greater understanding among members of the governance team about roles and expectations.

Help establish a common vocabulary about governance and serve as a framework for building or maintaining a district culture focused on effective governance.

Publicly affirm the board's commitment to effective governance.

Demonstrate the willingness of board members to be accountable to each other and to the public.

Provide a tool for governance teams to evaluate their effectiveness.

Help governance teams identify areas where continuing education would be useful.

Help formalize a positive governance culture for when new board members or superintendents join the governance team.

Promote a greater awareness and understanding among parents, the media and the public about what boards do and how they can operate most effectively.

Help build trust and foster greater participation by parents and the public in the schools.

Provide parents, the media and the public with a meaningful basis for assessing the effectiveness of their local governance teams.

Help promote the value of local governance in our democracy.

Provide a way for effective governance teams to receive recognition.

Help educate future candidates and voters about the critical jobs of boards.

USING THE CSBA PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE STANDARDS FOR School BOARD SELF-EVALUATION

Six STEPS •••

Step 1
Board members meet to agree on norms for the board's self-evaluation process.
Step 29
Individually complete The School Board Self-Evaluation Survey Section 1—The Board.
Step 313
Individually complete The School Board Self-Evaluation Survey Section 2 — The Board's Jobs.
Step 419
Board members meet to discuss the responses to Survey Sections 1 and 2, and to identify the Board's Governance Goals, Success Indicators and a timeline for attainment.
Step 5
Individually complete The School Board Self-Evaluation Survey Section 3 — The Individual Trustee.
Step 625
Individually, identify personal Governance, Goals, Success Indicators and a timeline for, attainment

STEP ONE

AGREE ON NORMS FOR THE 5ELF•EVALUATION PROCESS

To ensure the self-evaluation process is productive, it is important to agree on the guidelines or norms that will frame the conversation - for instance setting a respectful, collaborative tone. The standards, as levels of excellence we strive to achieve, are tools to help us become increasingly effective. Understanding this will reinforce the concept of taking personal and collective responsibility for continuous improvement. Taking time to discuss how we should act toward each other as we review our collective effectiveness is an important first step in a healthy process.

DEVELOPING NORMS

Excerpted from: Manager's Guide: Creating Group Expectations and Norms, Johns Hopkins Health System, The Johns Hopkins Hospital

Group expectations, also called group norms, are created to set the standards of appropriate team behavior. The norms help a group work together not only to address difficult issues in an objective and consistent way, but also to confirm what each member will do in the normal course of business to help the team succeed. The team gains in two ways. One way is that the exercise serves to confirm desired behaviors. The second way is that clear group norms provide guidance for orienting future new members to the team.

CREATING BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Key Point: "We all didn't share the same dinner table."

Team members each grow up with different experiences, have different interpretations of common words, have different work ethics and have different personal needs.

Creating behavioral expectations can bridge the gap of various interpretations of what defines desired behavior. The result is a common language of what group members expect from each other. Behavioral expectations, fully articulated, will spell out how team members will communicate and behave in order to effectively work together.

It is important that positive behavioral expectations are identified before entering into discussions that can have significant personal and/or emotional impact on team members, such as the evaluation of the workings of the team. To reach agreement on positive norms for the evaluation process, create a discussion with team members by asking these open-ended questions:

What agreements would help us interact effectively with each other throughout our self-evaluation process?

What agreements will help us maintain honest and open dialogue throughout the self-evaluation process?

What agreements will help us keep our focus on process and away from personalities as we complete our self-evaluation?

SAMPLE NORMS TO CONSIDER

The following list represents norms that various school boards and COEs have developed. Your team should identify six to eight norms (creating your own, or using norms from the list below) that will help each member of your team feel comfortable and able to honestly state his or her own perspective, issues and concerns throughout your board self-evaluation process.

WE AGREE TO •••

respect each other's opinions

listen "actively" to each member's ideas

acknowledge each member's point of view

be open to new ideas

exhibit positive body language

not interrupt, nor monopolize

encourage everyone to verbalize

disagree agreeably

recognize the posjtive

be willing to compromise

focus on process, not personalities

act by building on the thought of a fellow governance team member



WORKSHEET

NORMS FOR OUR BOARD 5ELFEVALUATION PROCESS

Listed below are the norms we agree to follow so that each member of our team feels comfortable and is able to honestly state his or her own perspective, issues and concerns throughout our board self-evaluation process.

<u>1.</u>		
2.		
2		
<u>4.</u>		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8		
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STEP TWO

COMPLETE THE SCHOOL BOARD SELF-EVALUATION SURVEY - SECTION $\mathbf{1}$ — THE BOARD

Standard: a basis for comparison in judging quality, a level of excellence

Success indicators: measures that quantify the achievement of a result and help identify whether goals have been accomplished.

The Professional Governance Standards for effective boards are listed on the following pages. When they were originally adopted, members of the CSBA Delegate Assembly and Board of Directors discussed what the standards would look like in action. They asked themselves, "What would we be doing if we were meeting this standard?" The results of those discussions amlisted as "success indicators" under each standard. As governance team members measure their own accomplishments, itmay be helpful to refer to these indicators.

Individuals should record their assessments on the "School Board Self-Evaluation Survey, Section 1 — The Board" on page 12.

THE BOARD:

School districts and county offices of education are governed by boards, not by individual trustees. While understanding their separate roles, the board and superintendent work together as a "governance team." This team assumes collective responsibility for building unity and creating a positive organizational culture in order to govern effectively.

TO OPERATE EFFECTIVELY, THE BOARD MUST HAVE A UNITY OF PURPOSE AND:

I. Keep the district focused on learning and achievement for <u>all</u> students.

Recognize that children come to school with diverse educational needs.

Base decisions on the district's vision, student needs, research, empirical data and a balance of community expectations, legal constraints and resources.

Ensure that the district has established academic standards and regularly measures growth in achievement for allstudents.

Ensure that the district provides opportunities for all students to succeed.

2. Communicate a common vision.

Develop and adopt a written statement of the district vision and other direction-setting documents using collaborative processes that involve the staff and community.

Ensure that procedures are in place to periodically review the district vision and other direction-setting documents.

Demonstrate commitment to the vision and goals by regularly communicating them to staff and the community.

Exhibit behaviors and make decisions that support achievement of the district vision.

Keep current on trends and emerging needs in education in order to proactively participate in renewing or revi'ewing the district's direction and policies.

Support board decisions.

Speak with a common voice.

3. Operate openly, with trust and integrity.

Conduct district business in a fair, respectful and responsible manner.

Consider the concerns and interests of the staff and community.

Encourage thorough debate, seek to engage in dialogue for clarification and withhold judgment until all perspectives are heard.

Ensure that all members of the board have the same information —no secrets or surprises among members of the governance team.

Clearly communicate decisions to all those who are affected by them.

Keep confidential information confidential.

THE BOARD (CONTINUED)

4. Govern in a dignified and professional manner, treating everyone with civility and respect.

Treat the superintendent, staff, students, parents and community with dignity and respect.

Listen openly and respectfully to each other, to staff, students, parents and members of the community.

Welcome open discussion of different points of view.

Demonstrate ability to disagree on issues and still maintain trust, respect and dignity.

Work together to build consensus for decisions.

5. Govern within board-adopted policies and procedures.

Have a policy development, approval and update process in place that is understood and followed.

Understand the distinctions between the role of the board and that of the superintendent and staff and do not become involved in the day-to-day operations of the district.

Have agreed-upon norms and protocols to carry out board responsibilities.

6. Take collective responsibility for the board'sperformance.

Assume collective responsibility for board conduct, behavior and conflict management.

Function as a governance team with the superintendent.

Demonstrate a commitment to continually improving governance efforts.

Take responsibility for the orientation of all new members.

7. Periodically evaluate its own effectiveness.

Have procedures in place for regular, on-going self-evaluation.

Ensure meeting agendas provide for a sound order of business and facilitate maximum focus on matters related to student achievement.

Have norms and protocols in place to ensure that individual board members do not get involved in the day-to-day management of the district.

8. Ensure opportunities for the diverse range of views in the community to inform board deliberations.

Ensure board policy enables parents, staff and the public to participate in district discussions, school programs and activities in meaningful ways.

Consider the concerns and interests of all segments of the community in deliberations.



SCHOOL BOARD SELF-EVALUATION SURVEY

SECTION $\mathbf{1}$ — THE BOARD

School districts and county offices of education are governed by boards, not by individual trustees. While understanding their separate roles, the board and superintendent work together as a "governance team." This team assumes collective responsibility for building unity and creating a positive organizational culture in order to govern effectively.

To operate effectively, the board must have a unity of purpose and meet these standards:

		Always	Often	Rarely	Never	Unsure
	Keep the district focused on learning and achievement for <u>all</u> students.					
2	Communicate a common vision.					
3	Operate openly, with trust and integrity					
4	Govern in a dignified and professional manner, treating everyone with civility and respect.	erene al Galeria				
S	Govern within board-adopted policies and procedures.					
6	Take collective responsibility for the board's performance.	, jan				
7	Periodically evaluate its own effectiveness.					
8	Ensure opportunities for the diverse range of views in the community to inform board deliberations.					
	TOTALS:				÷	

WE DO THIS:

STEP THREE

COMPLETE THE SCHOOL BOARD SELF-EVALUATION SURVEY - SECTION 2 — THE BOARD's Joes

Standard: a basis for comparison in judging quality, a level of excellence

Success indicators: measures that quantify the achievement of a result and help identify whether goals have been accomplished.

The Professional Governance Standards highlighting some of the board's most important jobs are listed on the following pages. When they were originally adopted, members of the CSBA Delegate Assembly and Board of Directors discussed what the standards would look like in action. They asked themselves, "What would we be doing if we were meeting this standard?" The results of those discussions are listed as "success indicators" under each standard. As governance team members measure their own accomplishments, it may be helpful to refer to these indicators.

Individuals should record their assessments on the separate "School Board Self-Evaluation Survey, Section 2 — The Board's Jobs" on page 18.

THE BoARD's Joas

The primary responsibilities of the board are to set a direction for the district, provide a structure by establishing policies, provide support, ensure accountability and provide community leadership on behalf of the district and public education. To fulfill these responsibilities, there are a number of specific jobs that effective boards must carry out. These standards highlight some of the most important ones.

EFFECTIVE BOARDS:

I. Involve the community, parents, students and staff in developing a common vision for the district focused on student learning and achievement and responsive to the needs of all students.

Develop and adopt the district vision and other direction-setting documents using collaborative processes that involve the staff and community.

Ensure that inclusive processes are in place to periodically review the district vision and other direction-setting documents.

See that the district vision and goals are clearly communicated to students, parents, staff and the community.

Base all decisions on the district's vision, student needs, research, empirical data and a balance of community expectations, legal constraints and resources.

Engage in annual planning and regularly review progress toward achievement of the vision and goals.

2. Adopt, evaluate and update policies consistent with the law and the district's vision and goals.

Have a working knowledge of district policies.

Establish a clear, understandable process for adopting, updating and communicating district policies.

Ensure policies reflect the needs, wishes and desires of the community.

Recognize it is the board's role to adopt policies and the superintendent's role to implement them and report back to the board as necessary.

Follow a regular schedule for reviewing and updating policies as necessary due to new mandates by law, contract negotiations, emerging community issues or other circumstances.

3. Maintain accountability for student learning by adopting the district curriculum and monitoring student progress.

Engage the staff and community in order to set the direction for district curriculum.

Articulate the district's goals for student achievement.

Recognize the connection between the implementation of an effective curriculum and the acquisition and allocation of resources.

Provide time to staff for program development, implementation and professional growth.

THE BOARD'S JOES (CONTINUED)

Ensure that the district maintains reliable internal assessment data to use in making decisions.

Utilize reliable assessment data to adopt and update policies for curriculum, instruction and assessment in alignment with state requirements and local needs.

Establish regular reviews of student performance data and empower the superintendent and staff to monitor performance and develop newstrategies.

Regularly report to the community on student performance.

4. Hire and support the superintendent so that the vision, goals and policies of the district can be implemented.

Establish selection criteria for a new superintendent based on the district vision and goals.

Value a long-term relationship between the board and superintendent and conduct all contractual negotiations in a professional manner.

Understand that the superintendent is the board's administrative link to the district.

5. Conduct regular and timely evaluations of the superintendent based on the vision, goals and performance of the district, and ensure that the superintendent holds district personnel accountable.

Ensure that the district evaluation system holds all staff responsible for improving student achievement.

Collaborate in setting goals and priorities as the basis for the superintendent's annual evaluation.

Ensure that the evaluation process supports the professional growth of the superintendent and the continuous improvement of the district.

Ensure that the evaluation process provides opportunities to take timely corrective action to avoid major disagreements between the board and superintendent.

Utilize a clearly defined, ongoing and interactive evaluation process that results in written documentation and is consistent with legal and contractual requirements.

Have policies and procedures in place for personnel accountability that are consistent with legal requirements and provide for due process.

Perform a judicial role in personnel issues, not an investigative role.

Have policies and procedures in place for recognizing outstanding performance by employees.

THE BOARD'S JOES (CONTINUED)

6. Adopt a fiscally responsible budget based on the district's vision and goals, and regularly monitor the fiscal health of the district.

Adopt guidelines, policies and procedures for developing the budget that ensure sound financial processes.

Recognize that the superintendent and staff develop the budget, the board adopts the budget, and the superintendent and staff implement the budget.

Understand that budget assumptions may change throughout the year.

Weigh the financial impact of possible changes to the vision and goals against existing programs.

Ensure that state, federal and other fiscal issues that impact the budget are monitored and addressed.

Monitor the external auditing process and ensure that audit recommendations are addressed.

Require that the budget be presented in an understandable and useful format.

See that the budget is utilized as a policy document to enhance student achievement and implement the priorities of the district.

Establish a process to regularly inform the community about the financial health of the district.

7. Ensure that a safe and appropriate educational environment is provided to <u>all</u> students.

Adopt, update and monitor policies pertaining to safety and cleanliness of facilities.

Support a long-range facility management and funding plan that reflects the vision and goals of the district.

Advocate at the local, state and federal levels for appropriate funding for school facilities.

Seek and consider alternative funding sources for facilities (such as bond elections, public-private partnerships or other types of financial instruments and agreements).

8. Establish a framework for the district's collective bargaining process and adopt responsible agreements.

Set parameters for collective bargaining that are linked to the vision and priorities of the district.

Recognize that collective bargaining is an ongoing process, not an isolated activity.

Support the role of the superintendent to manage the negotiations process: analyzing contract proposals, recommending changes to the contract, keeping the board informed about the progress of negotiations and administering the contract.

Support the position of the district throughout the negotiation process.

Adhere to legal, ethical, confidential and contractual requirements of collective bargaining.

Consider the immediate and long-term fiscal, program and personnel impacts of negotiations before adopting the collective bargaining agreement.

THE BOARD'S JOAS (CONTINUED)

9. Provide community leadership on educational issues and advocate on behalf of students and public education at the local, state and federal levels.

Ensure that effective methods are used to gather information and encourage involvement from the entire community.

Adopt a communications plan, which includes a system to report student achievement.

Have a working knowledge of the district's programs and build support for them among the public, community organizations and local agencies.

Communicate with local, state and federal policymakers about matters pertaining to student achievement, district programs and public education.



SCHOOL BOARD SELF-EVALUATION SURVEY

SECTION 2 - THE BoARD's Joes

The primary responsibilities of the board are to set a direction for the district, provide a structure by establishing policies, provide support, ensure accountability and provide community leadership on behalf of the district and public education. To fulfill these responsibilities, there are a number of specific jobs that effective boards must carry out. These standards highlight some of the most important ones.

Effective boards meet these standards:

WE DO THIS:

	. Always	Often	Rarely	Never	Unsure
Involve the community, parents, students and staff in developing a common vision for the district focused on student learning and achievement and responsive to the needs of <u>all</u> students.			an a		
2 Adopt, evaluate and update policies consistent with the law and the district's vision and goals.					
3 Maintain accountability for student learning by adopting the district curriculum and monitoring student progress.					
4 Hire and support the superintendent so that the vision, goals and policies of the district can be implemented.					
5 Conduct regular and timely evaluations of the superintendent based on the vision, goals and performance of the district, and ensure that the superintendent holds district personnel accountable.	a Sterr				
6 Adopt a fiscally responsible budget based on the district's vision and goals, and regularly monitor the fiscal health of the district.					
7 Ensure that a safe and appropriate educational environment is provided to all students.					
8 Establish a framework for the district's collective bargaining process and adopt responsible agreements.					
9 Provide community leadership on educational issues and advocate on behalf of students and public education at the local, state and federal levels.					
TOTALS:					

STEP FOUR

DETERMINING THE BOARD'S GOVERNANCE GOALS

Standard: a basis for comparison in judging quality, a level of excellence

Success indicators: measures that quantify the achievement of a result and help identify whether goals have been accomplished.

Abiding by the agreed-upon Norms for Our Board Self-Evaluation Process, the board should have a discussion about individual responses to Sections 1 and 2 of the Board Self-Evaluation Survey. The .discussion should focus on areas where the board agrees a standard is not being met or where board members have significantly different opinions about whether a standard is being met (e.g., some members responding "we do this always," others saying the board "does this rarely" or "not at all.")

The purpose of the discussion is to identify why the board is not meeting the standard and/or why there is such a wide range of opinions about whether a standard is being met, and to develop ways to improve. Answering the following questions can help direct the conversation.

Can we come to agreement on what this standard means to us?

What would it look like if we were meeting this standard? What would we be doing?

How would others know we are meeting the standard?

Do we need to create any norms or protocols to help us attain the standard?

How and when will we measure improvement or successful attainment of the standard?

As a result of the discussion, the board should come to agreement on two to three Standards or Success Indicators from Sections 1and/or 2 of the Board Self-Evaluation Survey that will become the board's Governance Goals during the next year.



THE BOARD'S GOVERNANCE GOALS

Based on the board's discussion of team member responses to The Board and The Board's Jobs sections of the self-evaluation survey, choose two to three standards the board agrees to focus on for governance growth over the next year.

Goal I:
To us this means
What we will do
How and when we will measure improvement or success
Goal 2:
To us this means
What we will do
How and when we will measure improvement or success
Goal 3:
To us this means
What we will do

How and when we will measure improvement or success...

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STEP FIVE

COMPLETE THE SCHOOL BOARD SELF-EVALUATION SURVEY - SECTION $\mathbf{3}$ — THE INDIVIDUAL TRUSTEE

Standard: a basis for comparison in judging quality, a level of excellence

Success indicators: measures that quantify the achievement of a result and help identify whether goals have been accomplished.

The Professional Governance Standards for individual trustees are listed on the following pages. When they were originally adopted, members of the CSBA Delegate Assembly and Board of Directors discussed what the standards would look like in action. They asked themselves, "What would I be doing if I were meeting this standard?" The results of those discussions are listed as "success indicators" under each standard. As governance team members measure their own accomplishments, it may be helpful to refer to these indicators.

It's vital to understand that this portion of the self-evaluation is a personal self-reflection, not a judgment of others.

Individuals should record their assessments on the separate "School Board Self-Evaluation Survey, Section 3 — The Individual Trustee" on page 24.

THE INDIVIDUAL TRUSTEE:

In California's education system, a trustee is a person elected or appointed to serve on a school district or county board of education. Individual trustees bring unique skills, values and beliefs to their board. In order to govern effectively, individual trustees must work with each other and the superintendent to ensure that a high quality education is provided to each student.

TO BE EFFECTIVE, AN INDIVIDUAL TRUSTEE:

I. Keeps learning and achievement for <u>all students as the primary focus.</u>

Recognizes that children come to school with diverse educational needs.

Seeks to build consensus for decisions based on the district's vision, student needs, research, empirical data and a balance of community expectations, legal constraints and resources.

2. Values, supports and advocates for public education.

Actively supports the district's educational programs.

Helps create a supportive climate of excellence for the staff.

Seeks to build community support for the district's programs.

Actively supports public education.

3. Recognizes and respects differences of perspective and style on the board and among staff, students, parents and the community.

Honors each individual's right to express an opinion.

Is able to disagree on issues and still maintain respect and trust.

Listens respectfully to other members of the team, and to staff, students, parents and the community.

Seeks to engage in dialogue for clarification and withholds judgment until all perspectives are considered.

4. Acts with dignity, and understands the implications of demeanor and behavior.

Performs responsibilities in a manner that reflects service to the community on behalf of students.

Listens to other members of the team and strives to maintain trust.

Demonstrates.a commitment to continually improving teamwork and problem-solving skills.

Shares important information with other members of the team.

5. Keeps confidential matters confidential.

Does not discuss or distribute information about confidential matters outside of closed session. Understands the legal requirements for confidentiality.

THE INDIVIDUAL TRUSTEE (CONTINUED)

6. Participates in professional development and commits the time and energy necessary to be an informed and effective leader.

Regularly attends meetings, having read the agenda and background materials in advance, and comes prepared to discuss agenda items.

Visits schools and attends school functions in accordance with board protocol.

Has a working knowledge of the district's programs, goals and policies.

Is familiar with general education trends and issues as well as the overall state and federal educational system.

Participates in continuing education and professional development activities and sharesknowledge gained with board members, staff, parents and the community as appropriate.

7. Understands the distinctions between board and staff roles, and refrains from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the superintendent and staff.

Clearly understand the roles and responsibilities of board members, the superintendent and the governance team.

Uses performance of governance responsibilities to impact district efforts.

Understands that the superintendent is the board's primary link with the district staff.

Does not become involved with day-to-day management or operations of the district.

8. Understands that authority rests with the board as a whole and not with individuals.

Strives to build consensus for decisions.

Recognizes that the board, not individuals, takes action and gives direction, and only at properly called board meetings.

Promotes district priorities, not a personal agenda.

Supports decisions of the board.

SCHOOL BOARD SELF-EVALUATION SURVEY

SECTION $3 \cdot$ THE INDIVIDUAL TRUSTEE

In California's education system, a trustee is a person elected or appointed to serve on a school district or county board of education. Individual trustees bring unique skills, values and beliefs to their board. In order to govern effectively, individual trustees must work with each other and the superintendent to ensure that a high quality education is provided to each student.

To be effective, an individual trustee meets these standards:

		Always	Often	Rarely	Never	Unsure
•	Keeps learning and achievement for <u>all</u> students as the primary focus.					
2	Values, supports and advocates for public education.					
3	Recognizes and respects differences of perspective and style on the board and among staff, students, parents and the community.	2013 (1997) See (1997) And (1997)				
4	Acts with dignity, and understands the implications of demeanor and behavior.					
5	Keeps confidential matters confidential.					Maria Salaharan
6	Participates in professional development and commits the time and energy necessary to be an informed and effective leader.					
7	Understands the distinctions between board and staff roles, and refrains from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the superintendent and staff.					
8	Understands that authority rests with the board as a whole and not with individuals.					
	TOTALS:					

DO THIS:



STEP SIX

determining $\boldsymbol{M}\boldsymbol{Y}$ personal governance goals

As we strive to govern effectively, we have the greatest control over our own actions, behaviors and attitudes. This section of the self-evaluation is an opportunity for board members to set personal goals that will enhance the governance team's collective efforts.

Mv personal governance goals

Based on the discussion and Governance Goals agreed to by the board, and your responses to the Individual Trustee section of the Board Self-Evaluation Survey, choose two to three Standards or Success Indicators you want to focus on for personal growth over the next year.

Goal I:
To me this means
What I will do
How and when I will measure improvement or success
012-
 Goal 2:
To me this means
What I will do
How and when I will measure improvement or success
now and when I will measure improvement of success
Goal 3:
To me this means
What I will do
How and when I will measure improvement or success

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NOTES

