

Improving School Board Effectiveness Self-Evaluation

Elements of Success: School board standards and characteristics found in highly effective school boards. Adapted from *Improving School Board Effectiveness: A Balanced Governance approach*, Alsbury & Gore 2015 Harvard Education Press

Technical Elements

Vision-Directed Planning: The Board engages communities and staff in the development of a shared vision focused on student learning. The vision is at the foundation of mission and sets goals that direct board policy making, planning, resource allocation and activities.

- Rarely Sometimes Often Routinely

Comments:

Community Engagement: All members of the community are stakeholders in success of their schools. Community engagement is a reciprocal advocacy process that creates and sustains meaningful conversations, systems connections, and feedback loops with all groups in the community. Successful community engagement results in collaborative partnership and new types of levels of community participation in schools.

- Rarely Sometimes Often Routinely

Comments:

Effective Leadership: Board leadership is proactive, integrated, and distributed. Boards establish focus, direction, and expectations that foster student learning. Across the district, boards develop and implement collaborative leadership models and practices that are guided by shared student learning goals. Within the district, boards align authority and responsibility so decisions can be made at levels close to implementation.

- Rarely Sometimes Often Routinely

Comments:

Accountability: Boards have high expectations for the learning of all students and hold themselves and their organizations accountable for reaching those results. Boards align policy, resource allocation, staffing, curriculum, professional development, and other activities with the vision and goals for student learning. The accountability process includes recognition of successes and support where improvement is needed.

- Rarely Sometimes Often Routinely

Comments:

Using Data for Continuous Improvement: Continuous improvement is the antithesis of complacency. Boards use data and information, from multiple sources and in various formats, to identify areas for improvement, set priorities, and monitor improvement efforts. At the same time, they seek even better ways to do things the organization is already doing well.

- Rarely Sometimes Often Routinely

Comments:

Adaptive Elements

Cultural Responsiveness: The cultural diversity of a community has many facets—social, economic, political, religious, geographical, generational, linguistic, ethnic, racial, and gender. Boards develop an understanding of this diversity and uphold perspectives that reflect the cultures in their community. Effective community engagement and expectancy strategies build on the strengths of a community’s cultural diversity.

- Rarely Sometimes Often Routinely

Comments:

Climate: Boards create a climate of the expectations that all students can learn at high levels. Board policy making and activities foster a positive and safe learning climate that supports the vision for student learning. The board models professional relationships and a culture of mutual respect.

- Rarely Sometimes Often Routinely

Comments:

Learning Organizations: A learning organization is a self-renewing professional community that supports reflection, discovery, learning, improvement, and success by staff at all levels. Boards encourage professional development that empowers staff and nurtures leadership capacity across the organization.

- Rarely Sometimes Often Routinely

Comments:

Systems Thinking: Systems thinking allows boards to break out of the box of single district thinking and act on an integrated view of education within and across systems and levels (e.g., K-12, ESD, community college, and university). Boards that practice systems thinking open the door for collaborative local, state and national partnerships, coordinated programs, and shared resource models to improve student learning.

- Rarely Sometimes Often Routinely

Comments:

Innovation and Creativity: Innovation and creativity are assets to the process of development and change, leading to new types of thinking and better ways of meeting student needs. Innovation and creativity are not predictable, but can flourish when boards align vision throughout the organization, engage in collaborative partnership, and encourage dialogue, new ideas, and differing perspectives.

- Rarely Sometimes Often Routinely

Comments:

Discussion Areas:

Board Priorities 2015

1. Support for Teachers;
2. Improved student learning outcomes;
3. Community engagement and transparency;
4. Be visible observers in schools and the community.

Board Overarching Goal for 2015

Building best practices for enabling students to learn and succeed.