



Foundational Principles of Effective Governance

As the corporate entity charged by law with governing a school district, each school board sits in trust for its entire community. The obligation to govern effectively imposes some fundamental duties on the board:

1. The board clarifies the district purpose.

As its primary task, the board continually defines, articulates, and re-defines district ends to answer the recurring question — who gets what benefits for how much? Effective ends development requires attention to at least two key concerns: student learning and organizational effectiveness.

- Ends express the benefits the school district should deliver, thereby providing the entire system with clarity of purpose and a clear direction. A school board rarely creates district ends; rather, it most often detects them through listening and observing.
- Ends reflect the district's purpose, direction, priorities, and desired outcomes and are recorded in statements of core values/beliefs, mission, vision, and goals.
- In effective school districts, every part of the organization is aligned with the ends articulated by the school board in written board policy.
- Well-crafted ends enable the school board to effectively and efficiently monitor district performance and assess organizational success (Principle 5).

2. The board connects with the community.

The school board engages in an ongoing two-way conversation with the entire community. This conversation enables the board to hear and understand the community's educational aspirations and desires, to serve effectively as an advocate for district improvement, and to inform the community of the district's performance.

- Community engagement, also called public engagement or civic engagement, is the process by which school boards actively involve diverse citizens in dialogue, deliberation, and collaborative thinking around common concerns for their public schools.
- Effective community engagement is essential to create trust and support among community, board, superintendent, and staff.
- A board in touch with community-wide concerns and values will serve the broad public good rather than being overly influenced by special interests.
- The school board must be aggressive in reaching out to the community — the district's owners — to engage people in conversations about education and the public good. In contrast, people who bring customer concerns to board members should be appropriately directed to the superintendent and staff.

continued

3. The board employs a superintendent.

The board employs and evaluates one person — the superintendent — and holds that person accountable for district performance and compliance with written board policy.

- An effective school board develops and maintains a productive relationship with the superintendent.
- The employment relationship consists of mutual respect and a clear understanding of respective roles, responsibilities, and expectations. This relationship should be grounded in a thoughtfully crafted employment contract and job description; procedures for communications and ongoing assessment; and reliance on written policy.
- Although the board is legally required to approve all employment contracts, the board delegates authority to the superintendent to select and evaluate all district staff within the standards established in written board policy.

4. The board delegates authority.

The board delegates authority to the superintendent to manage the district and provide leadership for the staff. Such authority is communicated through written board policies that designate district ends and define operating parameters.

- Ultimately, the school board is responsible for everything, yet must recognize that everything depends upon a capable and competent staff.
- “Delegates authority to” means empowering the superintendent and staff to pursue board ends single-mindedly and without hesitation. A board that does (or re-does) staff work disempowers the staff. High levels of superintendent and staff accountability require high levels of delegation.
- Delegation is difficult for anyone accustomed to direct action. However, to appropriately stay focused on the big picture and avoid confusing the staff, members of the school board must discipline themselves to trust their superintendent and staff and not involve themselves in day-to-day operations.

5. The board monitors performance.

The board constantly monitors progress toward district ends and compliance with written board policies using data as the basis for assessment.

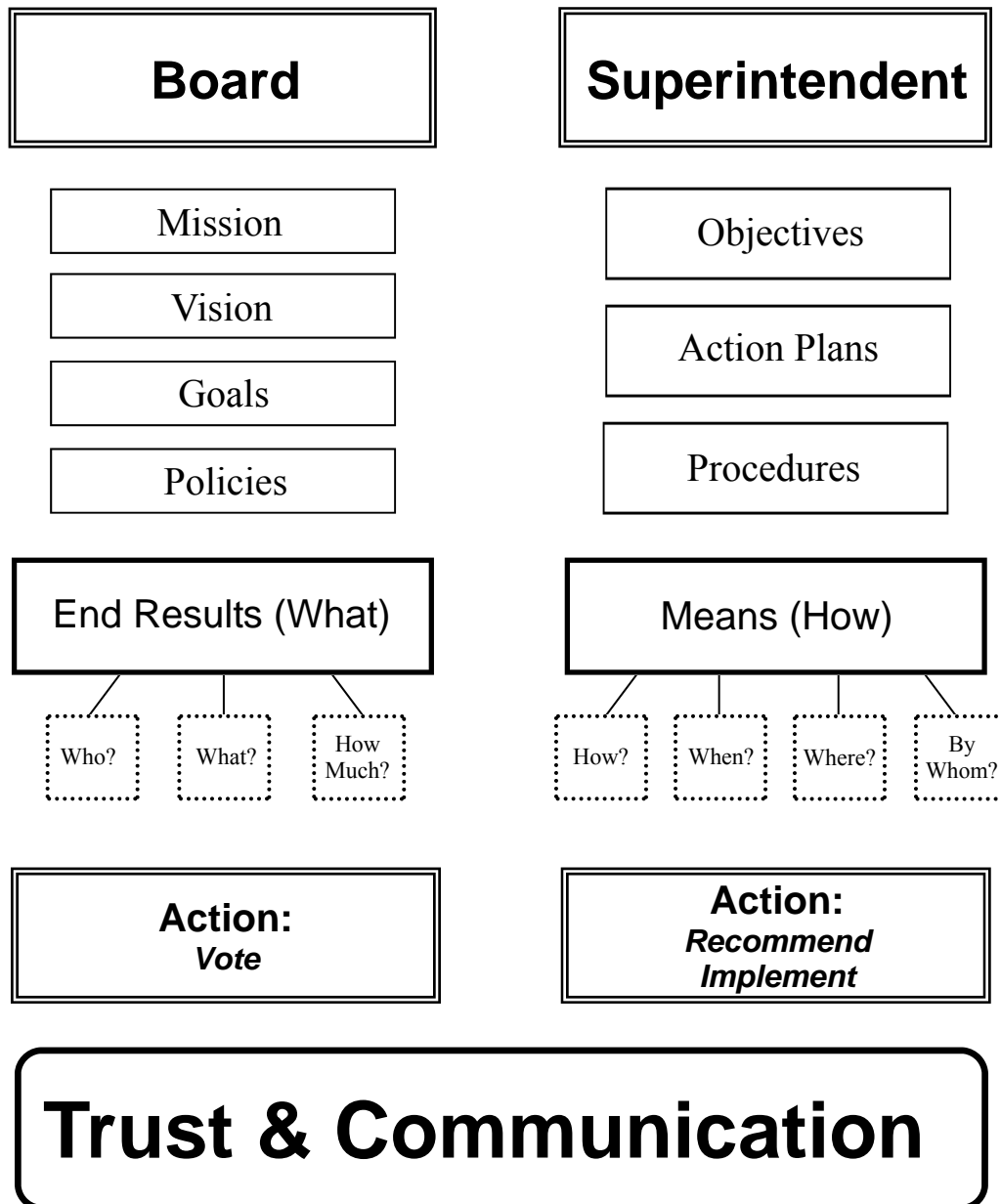
- A school board that pursues its ends through the delegation of authority has a moral obligation to itself and the community to determine whether that authority is being used as intended.
- Unless the board is clear about what it wants, there is no valid way to measure progress and compliance.
- A distinction should be made between monitoring data (used by the board for accountability) and management data (used by the staff for operations).
- The constructive use of data is a skill that must be learned. The board should have some understanding of data, but will typically require guidance from the staff.

6. The board takes responsibility for itself.

The board, collectively and individually, takes full responsibility for board activity and behavior — the work it chooses to do and how it chooses to do the work. Individual board members are obligated to express their opinions and respect others’ opinions; however, board members understand the importance of the board ultimately speaking with one clear voice.

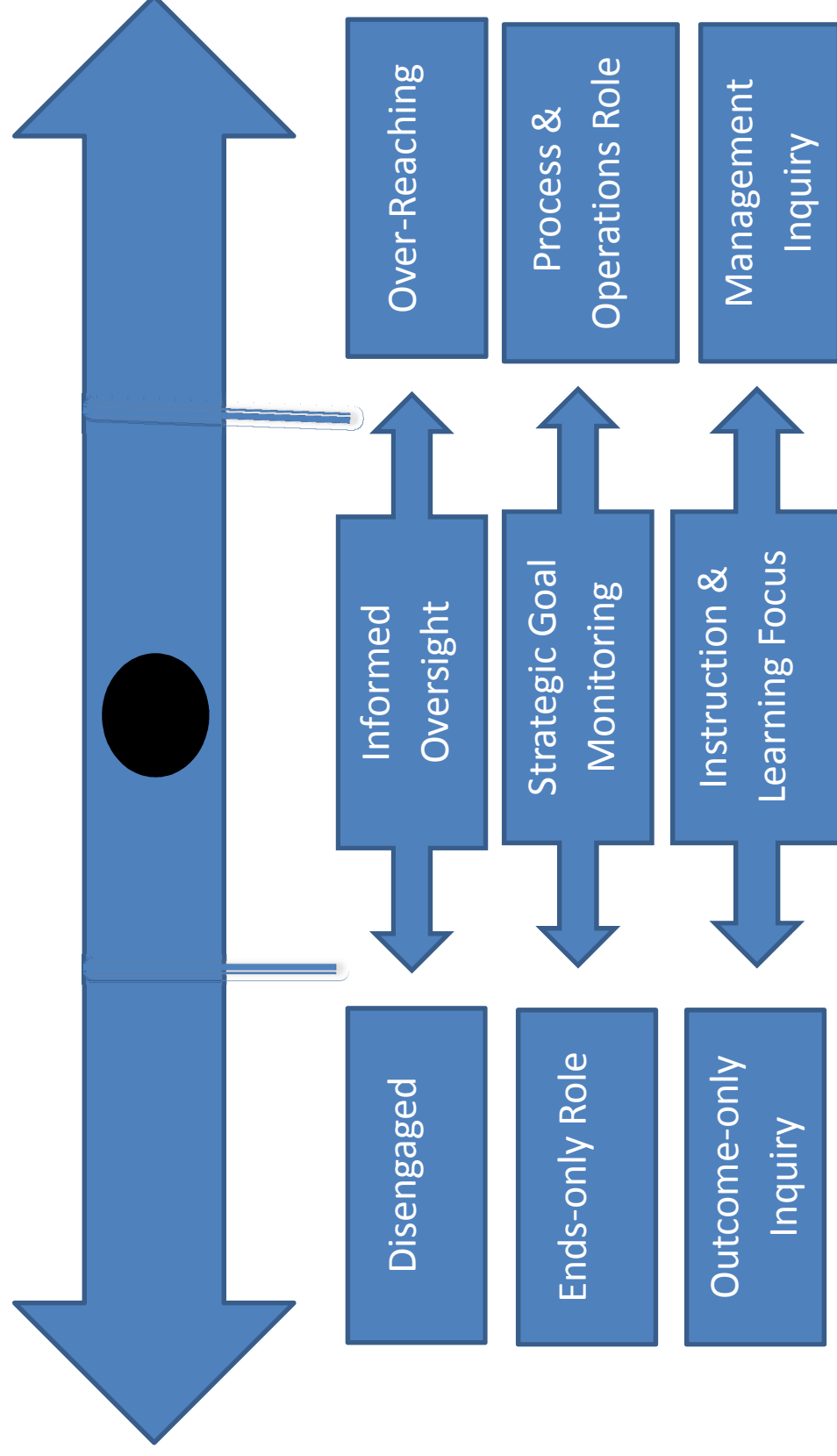
- The school board’s role as trustee for the community is unique and essential to both the district and community.
- While the board must operate within legal parameters, good governance requires the board be responsible for itself, its processes and contributions. Board deliberations and actions are limited to board work, not staff work.
- The board seeks continuity of leadership, even as it experiences turnover in membership. The board accomplishes this by using written board policies to guide board operations, by providing thorough orientation and training for all members, and by nurturing a positive and inviting board culture.

Board-Superintendent Roles



Balanced Governance™ Model

Governance Continuum



Governance Clock





Working at the 'green line'

How the board actually oversees management of the district

by William Nemir

Defining the line between the board's job and the superintendent's job is a crucial task in ensuring effective leadership in a local district. Board-superintendent teams who have clearly and completely defined that line will tell you not only that they operate more efficiently and accomplish more of substance but also that they get greater satisfaction from their efforts.

Board-superintendent teams who have inadequately defined the line will admit to spending more time on the job than they had planned, feeling frustration and sometimes anger and suspicion in the performance of their duties, and frequently losing sight of the things that matter most in delivering the district's educational mission.

Where do we draw the line between the board's job and the superintendent's? What does the board actually do to fulfill its duty to govern and oversee the management of the district?

And, in particular, how does the board "oversee" management of the district without "micromanaging," a charge board members are weary of and a fear that keeps superintendents wary?

The 'green line.'

A good, if very basic, tool for picturing the board's job in relation to that of the superintendent is the "green line" drawing—a drawing familiar to many Texas board members. The drawing depicts an "old-time" clock face (that is, a round face with numbers, not a digital clock), on which have been placed, at different times of the "day," the major activities that any organization—a school district, a small business, IBM, TASB—would perform if it wants to operate effectively, efficiently, and successfully.

The list of activities is simple:

- **12:00** At the start of the "day," or 12 o'clock, the organization will establish the goals and priorities it hopes to realize through its activity—what it hopes to accomplish, what results it hopes to see as a consequence of its efforts.

- **2:00** Once the organization has set its goals and priorities, it will, at 2 o'clock, set some guidelines for its operations. In a school district, policies serve as the guidelines. When a board of trustees adopts policies, it is in essence setting the guidelines, the parameters, within which the dis-

"The trustees as a body corporate have the exclusive power and duty to govern and oversee the management of the public schools of the district."

—TEC 11.151(b)

"The duties of the superintendent include . . . managing the day-to-day operations of the district as its administrative manager . . ."

—TEC 11.201(d)(5)

"Unity: The board understands and adheres to laws and local policies regarding the board's responsibility to set policy and the superintendent's responsibility to manage the school district and to direct employees in district and campus matters."

—Framework for School Board Development: Unity

trict—the board, the staff, the students, and the patrons—will operate in working to achieve the goals.

- **4:00** At 4 o'clock, once guidelines have been set, the organization will develop plans for accomplishing the goals and priorities and will put systems in place for implementing plans.

- **6:00** Once plans and systems are developed, they will be implemented. In a school district, the day-to-day operations are the implementation phase. On the clock face, implementation occurs at 6 o'clock.

- **8:00** As the organization begins implementing its plans, it also begins collecting data on what's happening as a

result of implementation. This data collection occurs at 8 o'clock.

- **10:00** Finally, using the data that's been collected, the organization, at 10 o'clock, assesses how well it's doing in meeting its goals and priorities and, on the basis of that assessment, begins a "new day" by reviewing and revising existing goals and priorities or establishing new ones.

Of course, in operation, these activities don't take place in quite so linear a fashion. They overlap, with several activities happening simultaneously. The leadership of an organization—in the case of a school district, the board-superintendent team—is responsible for making sure the

activities occur and that they occur at appropriate times.

A little reflection reveals that the tasks on the top half of the clock face, above a horizontal line from 3 o'clock to 9 o'clock, are quintessentially acts of governing. They are activities of deciding purpose, direction, and priorities, of setting parameters, of assessing success and adequacy of overall effort relative to purpose.

Those activities on the bottom half of the clock face are essentially management activities: the activities of putting work in motion to accomplish the purpose, monitoring the work, and measuring its effects.

Thus, one can represent the division of labor between a board and superintendent simply by drawing a horizontal line through the middle of the clock face.

That line is sometimes depicted as a green one, perhaps in reference to the green line drawn down the middle of the streets of Beirut during the Lebanese civil war to mark off areas of the city under Moslem authority from those under Christian authority.

In the case of our "green line," the activities above the line, the activities of governing, are under the authority of the board, which it will perform with advice and recommendations from the superintendent; the activities below the line, the activities of managing, are under the authority of the superintendent, which he or she will perform within the guidance provided by the board through its activities above the line.

Life at the line.

But what about the line itself? And where does "oversight of management" fit in?

In Beirut, the green line was quite literally a line painted on the street, marking off

areas of authority. It could be transgressed, though not without consequence. However, it was very decidedly and intentionally not a wall, like in Berlin, but a simple line—something that allowed for meaningful exchange back and forth. Beirut citizens, Moslem and Christian, were expected to, and indeed did, meet at the line and have conversation back and forth, important conversation about their respective needs, and friendly conversation about their aspirations.

If the board governs the district by performing the tasks above the line, it fulfills its second statutory duty, that of overseeing the management of the district, through the conversations it has with the superintendent across the line.

Oversight of management is essentially a process of exchanging information across the line about respective areas of authority—about the plans and systems in place to realize goals and priorities, their effectiveness, the compatibility of the goals and priorities with resources and realities, and the value of the data used to assess results.

Where board-superintendent teams often run into problems is that they don't realize that "oversight of management," like the governing activities above the line, needs to be a clearly defined set of tasks, a group of more or less structured activities the board-superintendent team performs on a regular, periodic basis.

In the absence of a clear and shared concept of what "oversight of management" involves and how the board performs it, the duty will be fulfilled haphazardly or perhaps not at all. More disruptively, it may end up being done not by the board as a body corporate—the only form in which board members have authority to oversee management—but by seven individuals with seven different notions of what's entailed.

In the absence of a clear and shared concept of the task, board members may be tempted to believe the "oversight of management" means simply second-guessing individual decisions of the superintendent when those decisions trigger someone's concern. When these latter conditions

occur, micromanagement may not be far behind.

The nature of management.

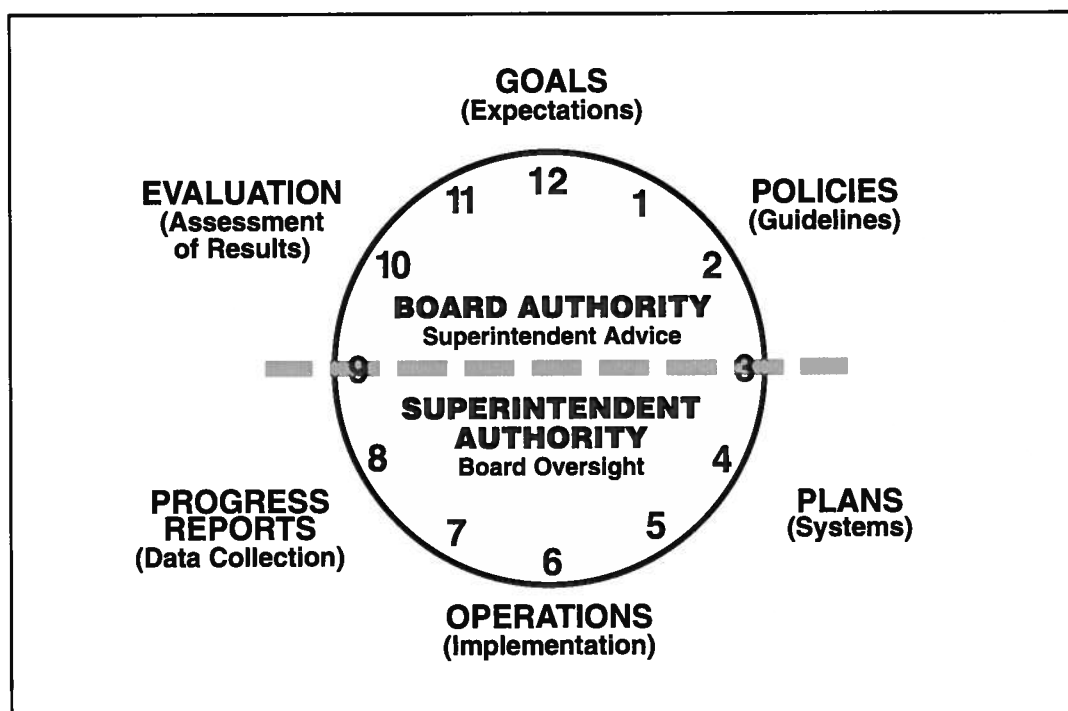
Take a look at the management activities on the clock face diagram. They are tasks such as developing plans and establishing systems, monitoring and supervising them as they are put in operation, and collecting data on their progress and consequences.

Management of a school district, even a very small school district, is a process of putting systems and plans in place to accomplish purposes within the parameters of policy. It is not so much a matter of making individual decisions on specific issues or specific staff as it is a matter of putting mechanisms in place that channel decisions and efforts toward desired ends.

Oversight of management is a process of making sure that systems and plans are in place, that they have a clear purpose, and that they are being used and monitored.

Some tips and tasks.

Some of the things the board can do to make sure it is



adequately and appropriately fulfilling its duty to oversee the management of the district are the following:

1. Make sure each major management function in the district has a clearly defined purpose or desired result. Every district in Texas, for example, even the smallest, has a human resources function. What result is the human resources function expected to accomplish for the district? Are there specific expectations or desired outcomes the human resources system is expected to achieve?

In a large district, the human resources function may be quite complex, with careful and systematic coordination of central office and local campus tasks, with cross-divisional activities between instructional supervisors and human resources training specialists.

In a small, rural district, the human resources "system" may be no more than a personnel manager with a job description.

But in either case, there can still be a clearly defined and desired outcome or outcomes to the "system's" work that will structure how the work gets done.

Perhaps the desired outcome is simply to make sure that all classes are staffed with certified personnel—a significant goal in some small and many large districts. This goal will shape how and where recruiting is done, how compensation is structured, and perhaps how assignments to campuses are made.

In some cases, the board may choose to define these expectations in local policy. But in any case, the board and superintendent should discuss their expectations and try to reach consensus on the intended purpose.

Similar kinds of questions can be posed about each major

management function in the district—about the facilities and maintenance program, for example, about the student services program, about the financial operation. What is each of these operations designed to accomplish? What targets is each designed to meet? How is success measured and reported to the board? How are the measurement results used by the administration to make improvements?

It's not the board's job to decide how these operations are structured or to intervene in their functioning. But it is the board's job to make sure that each of these important aspects of district operations has ideals or goals it is shooting for, that the board is comfortable with those goals, that success in reaching the ideal is being measured, and that the system is being examined by staff when success is not being achieved.

The board can be involved in articulating the desired results and boundaries for the various areas of district operations as a part of its governing responsibility to adopt goals, priorities, and policies that set direction for the district.

It can also, if it wishes, leave decisions on these matters to the superintendent. At the least, however, the board should make sure that management of the district is driven by a clear picture of desired results. This is a fundamental task of board oversight of management.

2. Make sure the board gets periodic reports from the superintendent on the major areas of district operations. Such reports give the board an opportunity both to see if the operation is successful and to see how the systems and plans in place are designed to achieve the desired end.

If the goal of the human resources function, for exam-

Governance Guides

Overseeing the Management of the District

Make sure that systems and plans:

- Are in place.
- Have a clear purpose.
- Are being used.
- Are being monitored and assessed for effectiveness.

1. Make sure each major management function in the district has a clearly defined purpose or desired result.

- What is the operation designed to accomplish?
- What target(s) is the operation designed to meet?
- How is success measured and reported to the board?
- How are the measurement results used by the administration to make improvements?

2. Make sure the board gets periodic reports from the superintendent on the major areas of district operations.

- How is this system or plan designed to achieve the desired results?
- Is the operation successful?
- When will the board receive reports on the various operations?
- What will be included in the reports to the board?

3. Evaluate the superintendent on how effectively he or she sets up and operates district operations rather than on individual operations decisions.

4. Make sure board members are clear about how they can raise a concern about district operations in a timely and appropriate manner.

- How should an individual member go about requesting information about district operations?
- What questions can the board ask that will focus on the adequacy of the system in place rather than the individual action or decision that initiated the concern?
- When did the board last review policy BBE(Local) on Board Member Authority or discuss its procedure for addressing concerns about management and operations?

5. Evaluate the board's performance of its oversight duties at least once a year.

- Are we receiving the right amount of information about management and operations systems?
- Is the information we receive in a useful format and available to all board members equally?
- Is the board using the information to make decisions about goals and policies?
- Does the board ask appropriate questions about management systems and follow established procedures for raising concerns and requesting information about management? ★

ple, is in fact to ensure that all classes are manned by certified staff, the superintendent or designated staff should be able to explain how the system is set up to accomplish precisely this.

Most boards get information on the various aspects of district operations throughout the year. But often this information comes piecemeal or

haphazardly or in response to questions raised on specific pending issues. A recommendation from the superintendent to hire someone who is not yet certified in the areas he or she is going to teach might, for example, in a district with the human resources goal mentioned above, prompt a question about what the district does in its efforts to

attract and assign certified staff.

Information about management systems obtained in such circumstances is certainly valuable, but it cannot be as appropriately, impartially, and fully explored when discussed in the context of a pending decision.

Brief periodic reports about the structure and success of the district's major operational functions give the board an opportunity to get the kind of information and ask the kinds of questions appropriate to oversight of management and to do so as a corporate body.

Some districts find it useful to schedule these on a board agenda calendar throughout the year, along with reports on district education goals and objectives.

3. Make sure the superintendent evaluation instrument, in those parts that address district operations, focuses on how effectively the superintendent sets up and operates systems for the district.

Many instruments, and many conversations during the evaluation process, turn the board's attention to the quality of individual management decisions in the past. If good management systems, aimed at well-defined ends, are in place and are effectively used, high-quality decisions should be a natural by-product.

Assessing the superintendent on how proficiently he or she manages systems is ultimately far more productive for the district than assessing the quality of specific, individual decisions.

4. Make sure the board-superintendent team has a very clearly defined procedure in place for how an individual member of the board can share a concern about district operations addressed in a timely and appropriate fashion.

If an individual board member has questions or concerns about the transportation program, for example, what are the appropriate steps for him or her to take in addressing the concern? Does the board member go to the superintendent? To the board president? To a designated staff person? Does he or she request the issue be placed on an agenda or wait to address it in the next superintendent evaluation conference? What authority does an individual board member have in requesting information from the superintendent about management and operations issues?

Many superintendents have an "open door" policy and invite any board member to approach them at any time with concerns they may have. In such cases, it also can be useful to require a board member to alert the board president that he or she is going to talk with the superintendent. If the board president is familiar with who is talking with the superintendent about what issues, he or she can better decide which issues may need to be addressed by the board-superintendent team as a whole and whether board members are taking up inordinate amounts of the superintendent's time.

Board members also need to understand the appropriate level on which to broach concerns with the superintendent about management issues. The initial approach should always be an inquiry into what kinds of systems, procedures, or mechanisms the superintendent has in place that would normally handle the concern.

If the board member's transportation concern, for example, were a concern or belief that many buses are arriving late to school, the proper inquiry is what kinds of mechanisms are in place to help administration know if there are arrival time problems

and what sorts of arrival performance triggers action from the administration. This level of address ensures the board member doesn't overlook the "big picture" of management's efforts by focusing too narrowly on an individual incident. It also reduces the likelihood that similar problems will reoccur.

A good practice is for the board-superintendent team to establish a clear procedure on handling concerns about district management and review the procedures every year. At the time the procedure is reviewed, boards that have TASB localized policy manuals should also review policy BBE (Local) on Board Member Authority to make sure practice is in line with policy and to make sure the policy accurately and completely reflects desired parameters on individual member authority.

5. Sit down once a year as a board-superintendent team and simply review how the board as a whole has handled oversight of management.

This review should include a discussion of the kinds of information the board receives from the superintendent (is it enough, too much, the right format, appropriately distributed; is the board really using the information it requests or receives?) as well as the way oversight of management issues were handled (did the board initially focus on systems and their purposes; did all board members follow agreed-upon procedures?)

A good way to conduct this review is simply to look back on specific matters that came before the board-superintendent team and ask if there are things the board and superintendent might reasonably have done to make their handling of the matter more expeditious and effective as a team.

A good time to have this discussion, as well as a discus-

sion of the procedures and policy mentioned in item 4 above, is during a board self-evaluation or following a board election, when many board-superintendent teams meet to review board operating procedures and orient new members to the board.

Talking across the fence.

When board and superintendent teams take the time to discuss and agree on specific ways that information about management and operations can be shared with the board, the board's oversight responsibility becomes much simpler.

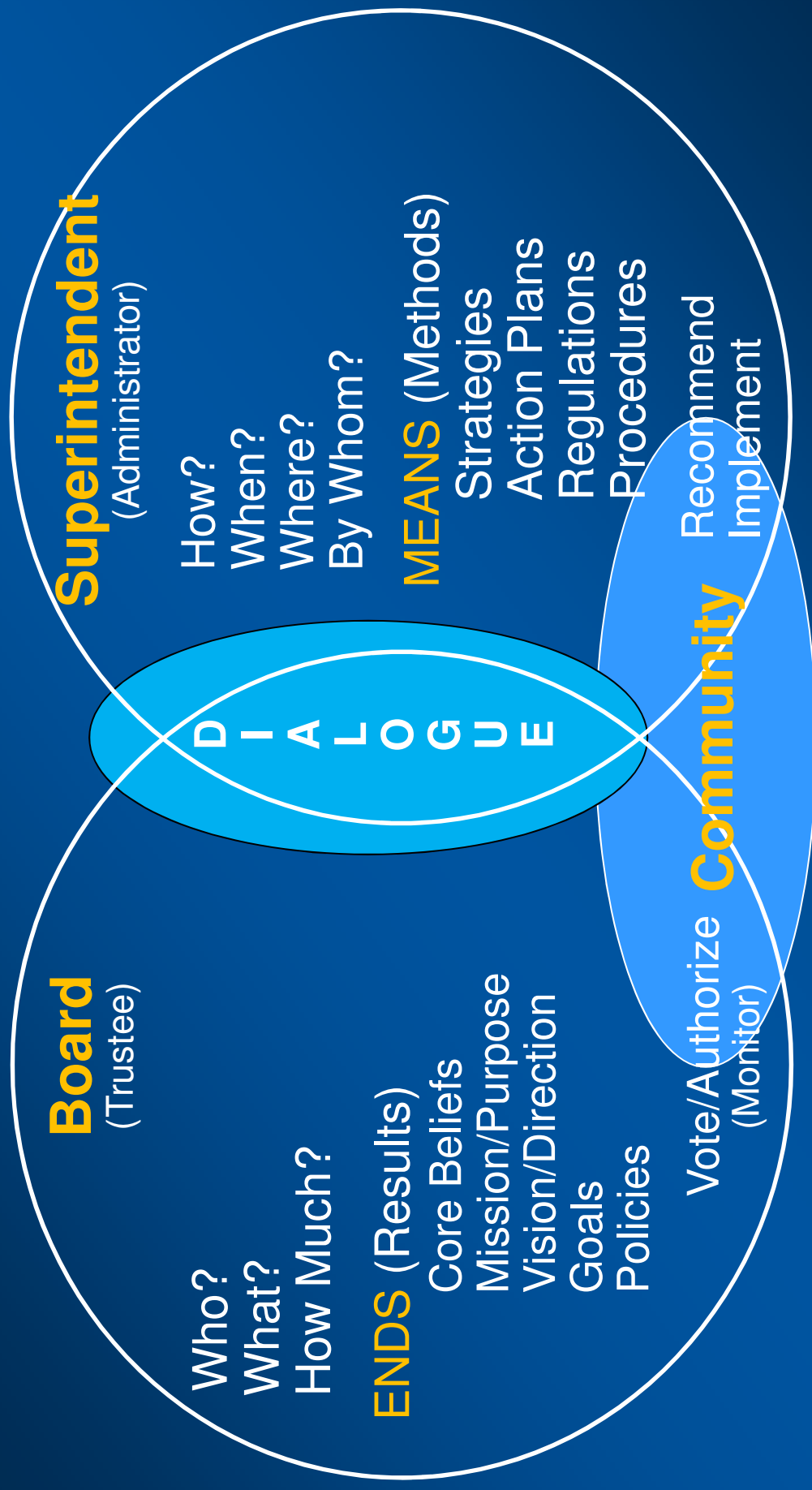
Boards are less likely to drift "below the green line" and be accused of micromanagement because the superintendent is making available to them exactly the kind of information they requested to ensure them that operational systems are in place and working effectively.

Superintendents are less likely to be "second-guessed" about individual decisions because the board can be confident that the systems in place reflect the board's goals and policies. The "green line" becomes less a line of demarcation distinguishing areas of authority and more a neighborly picket fence across which the board and superintendent can exchange information in a friendly way.

Remember the old saying, "Good fences make good neighbors"? The board and superintendent can build a good fence between governance and management by clarifying procedures that will be used to establish the purpose of operational systems, monitor their progress, and report to the board on their effectiveness.★

William Nemir is director of TASB's Leadership Team Services Division.

Stewards for the Community



Three Levels of Trust

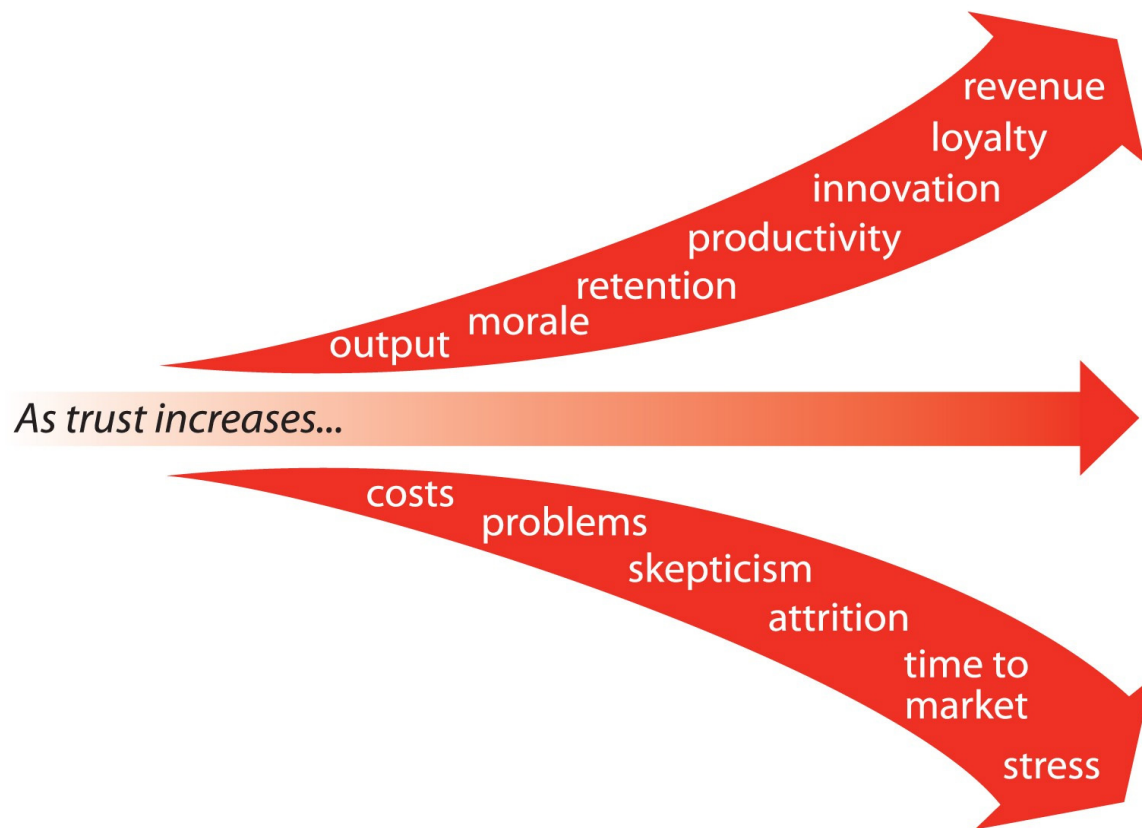
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Public Participation Spectrum

PURPOSE:	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE
OBJECTIVE:	Provide the public with information	Obtain public feedback	Work directly with the public throughout the process	Partner with the public in decision-making
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC:	We will keep you informed	Provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision	Ensure public concerns & issues are reflected in the alternatives	Incorporate public advice & recommendations into the decision
EXAMPLE TOOLS:	Fact sheets Websites Open houses	Public comment Focus Groups Surveys Public meetings	Workshops Deliberative polling	Citizen Advisory Committees Synergy-building Participatory decision-making

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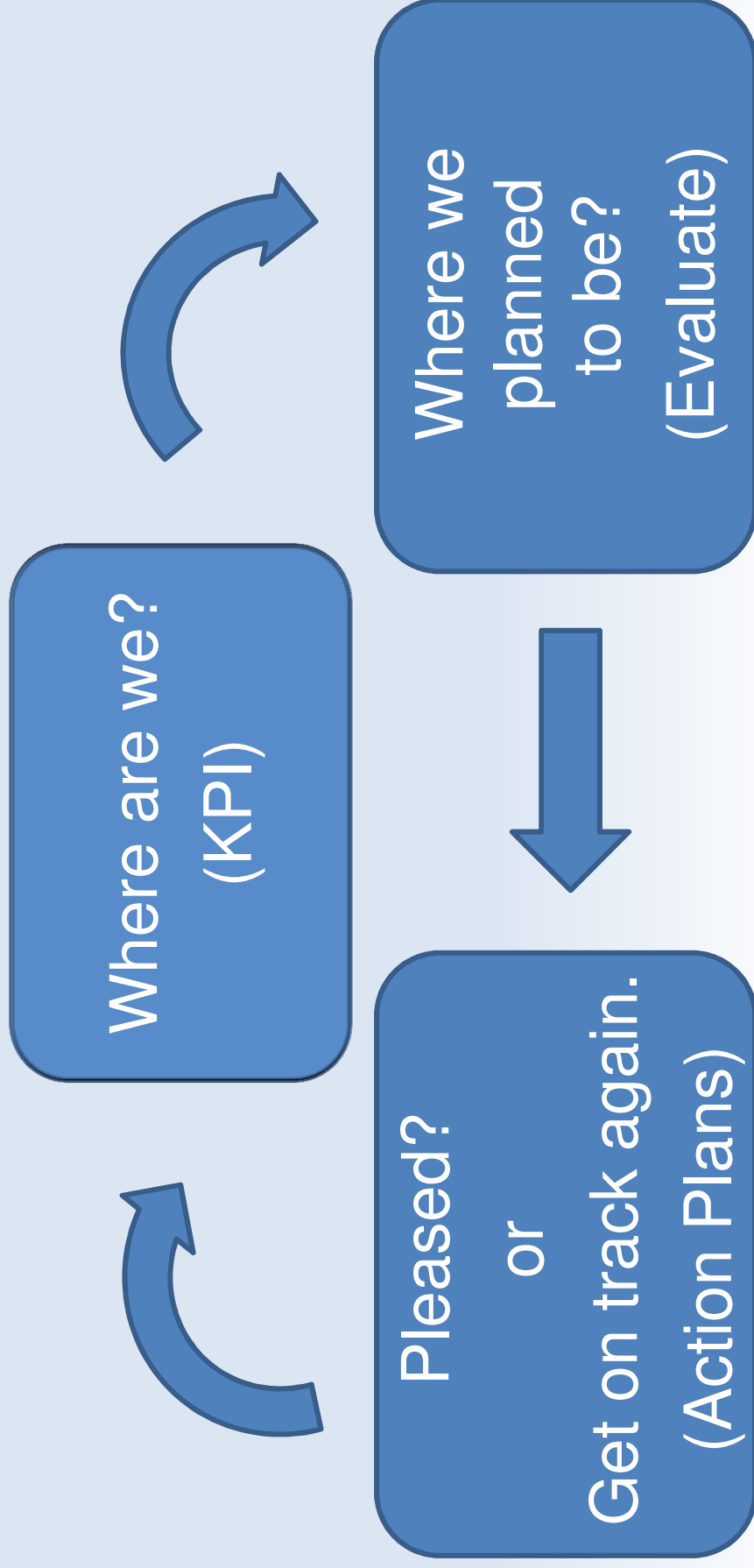
The Impact of Trust



“Everything of **value** is built on **trust**,
from financial systems to relationships.”

Used with permission from David Horsager’s national bestselling book, *The Trust Edge*,
p. 20. www.DavidHorsager.com

Monitor for Progress and Accountability



Iowa Lighthouse Study

Board in high achieving districts...

1. Consistently express the belief that _____
can learn, and _____ can teach them.
2. Were knowledgeable about _____ and _____.
3. Made _____, _____decisions.
4. Created a _____environment.
5. Close connection between the _____, _____, and the
_____.

How Can Your Board Make a Difference in Student Learning?

- Hold _____ for all students.
- Support successful _____ and _____.
- Be accountable for _____.
- Link the schools with the _____.

Source: Iowa Association of School Boards
<http://www.ia-sb.com/uploadedFiles/IASB/Publications/Newsletters/Compass/Light2.PDF>



Eight characteristics of effective school boards: At a glance

What makes an effective school board – one that positively impacts student achievement? From a research perspective, it's a complex question. It involves evaluating virtually all functions of a board, from internal governance and policy formulation to communication with teachers, building administrators, and the public.

But the research that exists is clear: boards in high-achieving districts exhibit habits and characteristics that are markedly different from boards in low-achieving districts. So what do these boards do? Here are eight characteristics:

1. Effective school boards commit to a vision of high expectations for student achievement and quality instruction and define clear goals toward that vision. Effective boards make sure these goals remain the district's top priorities and that nothing else detracts from them. In contrast, low-achieving boards "were only vaguely aware of school improvement initiatives" (Lighthouse I). "There was little evidence of a pervasive focus on school renewal at any level when it was not present at the board level," researchers said. (Lighthouse I)

2. Effective school boards have strong shared beliefs and values about what is possible for students and their ability to learn, and of the system and its ability to teach all children at high levels. In high-achieving districts, poverty, lack of parental involvement and other factors were described as challenges to be overcome, not as excuses. Board members expected to see improvements in student achievement quickly as a result of initiatives. In low-achieving districts, board members frequently referred to external pressures as the main reasons for lack of student success. (Lighthouse I)

3. Effective school boards are accountability driven, spending less time on operational issues and more time focused on policies to improve student achievement. In interviews with hundreds of board members and staff across districts, researchers Goodman, Fulbright, and Zimmerman found that high-performing boards focused on establishing a vision supported by policies that targeted student achievement. Poor governance was characterized by factors such as micro-management by the board.

Eight characteristics of effective school boards: At a glance

4. Effective school boards have a collaborative relationship with staff and the community and establish a strong communications structure to inform and engage both internal and external stakeholders in setting and achieving district goals. In high-achieving districts, school board members could provide specific examples of how they connected and listened to the community, and school board members received information from many different sources, including the superintendent, curriculum director, principals and teachers. Findings and research were shared among all board members. (Lighthouse I; Waters and Marzano) By comparison, school boards in low-achieving districts were likely to cite communication and outreach barriers. Staff members from low-achieving districts often said they didn't know the board members at all.

5. Effective school boards are data savvy: they embrace and monitor data, even when the information is negative, and use it to drive continuous improvement. The Lighthouse I study showed that board members in high-achieving districts identified specific student needs through data, and justified decisions based on that data. Board members regularly sought such data and were not shy about discussing it, even if it was negative. By comparison, board members in low-achieving districts tended to greet data with a "blaming" perspective, describing teachers, students and families as major causes for low performance. In these districts, board members frequently discussed their decisions through anecdotes and personal experiences rather than by citing data. They left it to the superintendent to interpret the data and recommend solutions.

6. Effective school boards align and sustain resources, such as professional development, to meet district goals. According to researchers LaRocque and Coleman, effective boards saw a responsibility to maintain high standards even in the midst of budget challenges. "To this end, the successful boards supported extensive professional development programs for administrators and teachers, even during times of [fiscal] restraint." In low-achieving districts, however, board members said teachers made their own decisions on staff development based on perceived needs in the classroom or for certification.

7. Effective school boards lead as a united team with the superintendent, each from their respective roles, with strong collaboration and mutual trust. In successful districts, boards defined an initial vision for the district and sought a superintendent who matched this vision. In contrast, in stagnant districts, boards were slow to define a vision and often recruited a superintendent with his or her own ideas and platform, leading the board and superintendent to not be in alignment. (MDRC/Council of Great City Schools)

8. Effective school boards take part in team development and training, sometimes with their superintendents, to build shared knowledge, values and commitments for their improvement efforts. High-achieving districts had formal, deliberate training for new board members. They also often gathered to discuss specific topics. Low-achieving districts had board members who said they did not learn together except when the superintendent or other staff members made presentations of data. (Lighthouse I; LFA; LaRocque and Coleman)

Eight characteristics of effective school boards: At a glance

Though the research on school board effectiveness is in the beginning stages, the studies included in this report make it clear that school boards in high-achieving districts have attitudes, knowledge and approaches that separate them from their counterparts in lower-achieving districts. In this era of fiscal constraints and a national environment focused on accountability, boards in high-performing districts can provide an important blueprint for success. In the process, they can offer a road map for school districts nationwide.

- See more at: <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Public-education/Eight-characteristics-of-effective-school-boards#sthash.6qepnFat.dpuf>

A Dozen Danger Signs

While this paper did not specifically focus on characteristics of ineffective school boards, it may be helpful to review some of the descriptions of ineffective boards mentioned in the research:

- 1.** Only vaguely aware of school improvement initiatives, and seldom able to describe actions being taken to improve student learning
- 2.** Focused on external pressures as the main reasons for lack of student success, such as poverty, lack of parental support, societal factors, or lack of motivation
- 3.** Offer negative comments about students and teachers
- 4.** Micro-manage day-to-day operations
- 5.** Disregard the agenda process and the chain of command.
- 6.** Left out the information flow; little communication between board and superintendent
- 7.** Quick to describe a lack of parent interest in education or barriers to community outreach
- 8.** Looked at data from a “blaming” perspective, describing teachers, students and families as major causes for low performance.
- 9.** Little understanding or coordination on staff development for teachers
- 10.** Slow to define a vision
- 11.** Did not hire a superintendent who agreed with their vision
- 12.** Little professional development together as a board. –

See more at: <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Public-education/Eight-characteristics-of-effective-school-boards/Eight-characteristics-of-effective-school-boards.html#sthash.b8lONHJH.dpuf>

National School Board Association, 2011