

# EFFECTIVE BOARD GOVERNANCE



# Educational Service Districts . . .

- Provide leadership & cooperative services to increase number of students meeting standards.
- Assure excellent and equitable education through service and collaboration.
- Provide leadership and quality service in advocating innovative educational programs.
- Promote equity in educational opportunity for students.
- Coordinate and conduct cooperative programs.
- Deliver collaborate programs that promote learning.
- Provide efficiency of educational systems and equity of learning opportunities.
- Provide instructional and administrative support to PreK-12 schools.
- Promote educational excellence by delivering essential, cooperative services.
- Assure equal educational opportunities and lifelong learning for all.

# Definition

*“Governance is not leadership; rather, governance creates the framework through which high-quality leadership can be exercised throughout the educational system.”*

# Definition



Governance is about creating the framework and the conditions by which those of us inside the organization work to achieve its outcomes.

# Iowa Lighthouse Research

## High Achieving Districts

Boards had higher expectations and beliefs about:

- what was possible for their students
- what the schools in their district could do to improve student learning
- no excuses

## Low Achieving Districts

- The social and economic conditions of the homes and community were seen as challenges
- Board accepted limitations in students and the school system
- Their focus was on managing the learning environment

# Iowa Lighthouse Study

## Key areas of board performance:

- create a sense of urgency;
- develop a district-wide focus for improvement;
- create conditions within the system for success;
- monitor progress;
- engage in deliberative policy development; and
- support a distributed leadership model . . .

# Lighthouse Board Training

## Participating Boards:

1. Auburn
2. Tacoma
3. Marysville
4. Monroe
5. Mount Vernon
6. Shelton
7. Sunnyside
8. Methow Valley
9. East Valley
10. Warden

# Other Research



Waters and Marzano - examined the relationship between district-level leadership and student achievement.

# Waters and Marzano Research

- Goal setting;
- Non-negotiable goals for achievement;
- Board alignment with and support of district goals;
- Monitoring of goals for achievement; and
- Use of resources to support the goals for achievement

# What this means for ESD boards

- ESD boards set goals and expectations and the strategic direction of the organization;
- ESD boards set priorities and direct resources to those priorities; and
- ESD boards monitor goals and hold the organization accountable for achieving outcomes.

# Other Considerations for ESD Boards

- Role of ESDs in scaling up programs
- Challenges of ESDs in creating change as external organizations
- Capacity of ESDs to provide the state's infrastructure for scaling up best practices
- Innovation

## Governance practices that support this ESD role

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Ask questions about the capacity of ESDs to produce, implement and scale up evidence-based practices
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - Communicate an expectation for rigorous evaluation of our programs and services as a standard practice
- 3<sup>rd</sup> - Identify indicators or metrics to measure successful scale up of evidence-based practices

## Governance practices that support this ESD role

- 4<sup>th</sup> - Set priorities around research and development and creating pathways for staff to bring innovative ideas forward
- 5<sup>th</sup> - ESD Boards can commit learning and agenda time to understanding the process of validating and scaling up education programs to increase the impact on student learning
- 6<sup>th</sup> - ESD Boards can regularly evaluate the board around fulfilling these leadership and governance roles

# Washington State's School Board Standards

## Five Core Principles:

- Responsible school district governance
- Communication of and commitment to high expectations for student learning
- Creating conditions district-wide for student and staff success
- Holding the district accountable for meeting student learning expectations
- Engaging the community and representing their values and expectations

## School Board Standard 2: Communication of and commitment to high expectations for student learning

- Articulating the conviction that all students can learn and the belief that student learning can improve regardless of existing circumstances or resources.
- Leading the development, articulation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by schools and community.
- Adopting a collaboratively developed district plan focused on learning and achievement outcomes for all students.
- Ensuring non-negotiable goals for student achievement are established and aligned to the district's plan.

## School Board Standard 2: Communication of and commitment to high expectations for student learning

Benchmarks of Success	Indicators for Evaluation	References
d. Ensuring non-negotiable goals for student achievement are established and aligned to the district's plan.	1. Do the board and superintendent agree on non-negotiable student achievement goals and review them regularly?	Waters, J.T., and Marzano, R.J. (2006, September). <i>School district leadership that works: The effect of superintendent leadership on student achievement [A working paper]</i> . Denver, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.
	2. Does the board demonstrate responsibility for student learning by using the district plan and its non-negotiable goals to drive board decisions and actions?	Iowa Association of School Boards (2007). Iowa Association of School Boards (2007). <i>Leadership for student learning: The school board's role in creating school districts where all students succeed</i> .
	3. Does the board continually monitor district progress toward non-negotiable goals to ensure they remain the driving force behind every action?	

# School Director Professional Standards

- Values and ethical behavior
- Leadership
- Communication
- Professional development; and
- Personal accountability

# STANDARD 1 Values and Ethical Behavior

*To be effective, an individual school director:*

- Places students needs first.
- Demonstrates commitment to equity and high standards of achievement for each student.
- Commits to treating each individual with dignity and respect.
- Models high ethical standards.
- Advocates for public education.

In closing . . .

*“Student achievement is not just a school district issue - the ESD shares in the responsibility to improve achievement for all students.”*

# Do your governance practices:

- Act out of consensus based on a set of core beliefs and a common understanding about ESD roles and responsibilities for improving educational outcomes?
- Communicate the expectation for ESD programs to produce evidence of their effectiveness?
- Measure the return on investment of the education dollars spent by using regional metrics that rigorously evaluate ESD programs and services?
- Use data to identify and maintain successful policies and programs while redesigning or terminating ineffective ones?
- Hold the organization accountable for achieving outcomes that show evidence of improving student achievement?

# Question

Ideas for board governance  
issues/topics to be addressed  
in future gatherings