

# Effective Board Practices:

## An Inventory for School Boards



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# Effective Board Practices: An Inventory for School Boards

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# Introduction

Every school board wants first and foremost to ensure that students in the district succeed at the highest levels possible. Every decision the board makes and all the resources it marshals for the district are ultimately intended to promote this end.

To be successful over the long haul in promoting increased student achievement, the board must govern with vision, knowledge, and consistency.

Effective boards are marked by certain characteristics:

1. *They have embraced a vision and a set of clearly defined priorities for the district that structure both the board's decision making and the work of the district staff.* Vision and goals ensure both the district and the board have a clear focus for their efforts. When well considered, a vision and goals can also energize the staff, the students, and the entire community to work together for the common good of the community's and its citizens' future.
2. *They have a clear picture of what their work entails.* That is, the board understands its job relative to the work of others and knows the tools at the board's disposal for performing the job.
3. *They have formalized their work.* That is, the board has developed and follows clearly defined procedures and schedules for doing its work.
4. *They foster, through their own practices, the free flow of information within the community.* The free flow of information ensures the community is informed about and involved in the district's efforts to make its vision a reality.



All boards embody these characteristics in some measure. But truly effective boards—those that have positioned themselves to contribute consistently to increased student achievement—have institutionalized certain practices to make sure the tasks that promote improvement are performed regularly, consistently, and effectively.

*Effective Board Practices: An Inventory for School Boards* examines how fully the board currently embraces these characteristics of effectiveness. It lists practices in four areas that are the foundations for embodying the characteristics. If the board ignores the

practices listed here or performs them only perfunctorily, its capacity for leadership and the district's capacity for sustained improvement are left to chance and haphazard action. If it embraces them fully, the board will be positioned to make a consistent and sustained contribution to increased student achievement.

The Inventory is intended in large measure as a *planning* tool for boards that want to move to a higher level of effectiveness. *Very few boards are expected to be able to check off all the items on the Inventory in their initial review.* In fact, many boards will be able to check off only a handful. Inability to check off many items on the list does not mean the board is doing a poor job. It means only that the board may not be in a position to sustain its success over the long run. By incorporating more of the practices into its standard operations, the board will be providing both the district and the community with important vehicles for continued success.

Before checking your board's practices against the Inventory, be sure to read the pages that follow. These pages provide insight into why each of the activities is important. For more information about different activities contained in the Inventory, check the TASB Web Site at [LTS.tasb.org/resources](http://LTS.tasb.org/resources). This resources section contains information about the Inventory and other information about best practices in governance and oversight.

Working as a corporate board to secure the best education for the children of the community is a far more difficult task than it may seem to the average community member. The Inventory can help your board make sure its work is structured to promote both board and district success.

# 1. Planning and Governance

The primary way a school board governs a district is by setting direction for the district—articulating the culture it wants the district to embody, establishing the outcomes the board would like the district to achieve, and expressing and supporting the aspirations of the community for the future of its children. The most efficient vehicles for doing this are a clearly articulated vision and both annual and long-term goals. The goals give staff clear direction in achieving the district vision. Without a well-formed vision and goals there can be a lack of a clear sense of purpose and direction in the district. A clear district vision and goals coordinate the decisions and focus of the district staff.

It is important that the board and superintendent ensure that a vision and goals are in place for the district and that they use them to guide their own work and the decisions they make. In doing so, the board-superintendent team expresses its commitment to the vision and goals and ensures that they are used to coordinate the efforts within the district.

## Vision

A vision statement outlines an ideal picture of what is desired for the district in the long term. It should be attainable and cause the district to reach beyond where it is currently. A well-formed vision statement is written and usually speaks to what is desired for the students, their learning environment, and the community.

A good vision statement should energize the board-superintendent team and the district staff. It should go beyond platitudes or generic statements and express the real aspirations of the community for the future of its children. Because the vision statement is really a statement of community aspirations, the board-superintendent team, which has been entrusted by the community to articulate and follow through on these aspirations, may want to solicit input from the staff and community when the vision is being developed. This will make the vision broader and will increase the support by the community and staff for its long-term attainment.

Even though a good vision statement may be useful for many years, it should be reviewed periodically and updated as needed. A good rule of thumb is to review the vision statement at least every five years. Some districts choose to review their vision statement more frequently.



## Goals

District goals are more specific than a district vision. They can be short- or long-term and are focused on the results the district's leaders would like as part of the effort in achieving the vision. The goals address the issues the board would like the district's staff to spend special time, effort, and resources on in the coming year and in the long term. The board uses these goals to assess its decision making. The administration should use the goals to set work priorities for itself and the staff.



When setting goals, it is important that the board look comprehensively at the needs of the district and choose priorities carefully. To do this, the board needs the input of the superintendent and staff when setting district goals.

In addition to goals, the board must adopt student performance objectives each year. These objectives are related to the measures in the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS). These objectives address specific and important student achievement measures. While these student performance objectives are required by law, they may not fully reflect the board's top priorities for the district. It is common for a district to have a set of district goals (three to eight is a common number) along with performance objectives related to the AEIS. Some of those goals may pinpoint aspects of the student performance objectives the board feels deserve special attention.

For each goal that is developed, there should be specific criteria included. These criteria help clarify what is expected by those charged in achieving them. Without clear criteria for achieving goals, staff may become confused about what specifically is expected.

District goals can be developed in a number of different ways. They can be developed by the board and the superintendent and possibly the inclusion of some other key administrators. In some districts, other staff members and/or parents may be involved in the development of the district goals. In others, district goals are developed by the administration and given to the board for its consideration and adoption.

Regardless of how the goals are developed, it is important that the board be fully committed to them. To ensure that the goals consistently represent the priorities of the district, it is important that the board take some action on them annually. This can include the board's reviewing, revising, and readopting the goals.

## Achieving the Vision and Goals

The district's vision and goals should be consistently on the board's mind. The board should take no action on major items without first formally questioning what, if any, effect it will have on the district moving forward toward accomplishing its goals.

One of the ways the board can monitor the advancement of district goals is by focusing the superintendent's evaluation process on the attainment of the district goals. To do this the board will want to develop superintendent performance goals. These performance goals clearly articulate what the board wants to see the superintendent focusing his or her time on to achieve the district goals. If the board is clear in its expectations, it is more likely that the superintendent will devote significant time in ensuring the district's priorities are achieved.

As part of the process of developing superintendent performance goals, the board should request scheduled periodic reports from the superintendent. These reports are designed to give the board information on what the superintendent and staff are doing to ensure progress is being made on specific district goals. Another of the things the board must do to ensure the successful completion of district goals is to adopt a budget that adequately funds the district's priorities. The board needs to ask questions about the adequacy of funding for district goals of the superintendent when he or she presents the budget. If the goals are adequately funded, the likelihood of their being achieved is far greater than if they are underfunded.

The Planning and Governance items in the Inventory will assist the board in knowing if it has fully incorporated effective practices into its routine operations.



## 2. Oversight of Management

Clearly defining and respecting the differences between the board's and superintendent's roles are crucial to avoiding misunderstandings, inefficiency, and possible conflict between the board and superintendent. Texas statute assigns to the board the task of "overseeing the management of the district." The task of managing the district is assigned to the superintendent, who is the chief executive officer of the district. Understanding the difference between these two functions is absolutely essential.

A simple but effective way to characterize these two distinct activities is as follows:

**Management** consists of three activities:

- Putting plans, procedures, programs, and systems in place to achieve a clearly defined, desired result
- Monitoring those plans, procedures, programs, and systems against appropriate benchmarks or measures of effectiveness
- Changing the plans, procedures, etc., if they are not proving successful in achieving the desired result



**Oversight of management** consists of three related activities:

- Making sure there are clearly defined, desired results in place for the major areas under management
- Making sure the clearly defined, desired results are appropriate
- Making sure that plans, procedures, programs, or systems are in place, that they are monitored, and that they are changed if necessary

One sometimes hears about board efforts to "micromanage" the district. Micromanagement by boards, when it occurs, is usually a product of the failure of the board and superintendent to adequately and explicitly discuss and define the difference between management and oversight of management. Micromanagement by individual trustees usually occurs when the board has not fully established appropriate vehicles for the board to oversee management as a body corporate.

In essence, the superintendent is responsible for systematically managing the district by ensuring plans, systems, and procedures exist, are monitored, and adjusted as necessary. The board's oversight function is to ensure that the superintendent is systematically managing the district by doing these things.



As the manager of the district, the superintendent should ask and answer certain questions about the major areas of district operations. “What are we trying to accomplish in this area of district operations?” “How can we assess whether or not we are succeeding?” “What standard of performance are we aiming at?” Some of the areas of operations the superintendent should be asking these questions about include maintenance, transportation, food services, human resources, and curriculum development and assessment, among others. Another important part of the superintendent's job is determining how to measure and assess the effectiveness in each of these areas.

The board, in its oversight role, will want to ensure that the superintendent is clear on what the measures for success or standards are for all of the major areas of district operations. To do this, the board should to be systematically briefed by the superintendent about key operational areas. These periodic briefings should include what the measures of success are in the different operational areas and how well the district is doing in meeting these measures. By understanding the standards, the board can use this information to guide its deliberations on budgets, policy, and other issues related to operations that come before the board. The briefings about the operational areas will help the board understand what areas need improvement so it can make decisions to support those areas as needed.

Systematic management by superintendents will compel better decision making and should discourage second guessing by the board. Second guessing the superintendent's individual management decisions by the board is counterproductive and does not further the cause of good management or good oversight of management over the long term.

## **Oversight and Superintendent Evaluation**

The board's annual evaluation of superintendent performance should focus foremost on the superintendent's success in meeting priority performance goals discussed in the Planning and Governance Section above. These goals should be tied to district goals, including those that address student achievement. The focus of priority performance goals should be how well the superintendent has done in moving the district forward in achieving the district's goals.

In addition, however, the board will want to evaluate the superintendent's success in systematically managing the district. Items on the evaluation document that target systematic management should focus on how well the superintendent has done in putting plans, programs, and procedures in place to achieve desired results in the major areas of district operations; whether the standards are appropriate; how effectively the plans are monitored; and whether data from the monitoring is used to plan improvements.

This approach offers a suitable avenue for assessing oversight of management. It discourages the common tendency among boards to focus on management style in the evaluation instead of on recognizing where the superintendent is effectively performing the basic tasks of systematic management.

The Oversight of Management items in the Inventory will assist the board in knowing if it has fully defined with its superintendent the respective roles of the board and superintendent in this crucial area of district operations.

### 3. Board–Superintendent Team Operations

#### Clarifying Assumptions and Expectations

Local school boards are expected to work as a body corporate in making decisions. To do this well, the board must set shared and clear assumptions and expectations for the group’s work to function in this unique way. Several tools and practices exist to help clarify the work and expectations of the board-superintendent team. These include team building, a code of ethics, written board operating procedures, and a board activity calendar. These practices and tools can help clarify the work of the board-superintendent team. Working as a body corporate demands that the members agree on procedures in advance, since no one member has the authority to dictate or decide for the entire team. Personal conflicts will decrease and the possibility of the board’s success will increase as each member gains familiarity with his or her colleague’s intentions, expectations, and assumptions.



#### Self-Assessment and Team Building

Any organization that expects to operate effectively will periodically engage in some form of self-assessment. Conducting a self-assessment is an opportunity for the board to evaluate how well it has done in functioning as a body corporate. Completing a self-assessment as part of the annual team-building requirement is an opportunity for the board and superintendent team to determine what needs to be improved to function more effectively in the future. It is important that expectations and standards on how to improve the team’s practices and behaviors are clearly articulated during this process.

#### Ethics and Operating Procedures

Two good ways for a board to clarify assumptions and expectations are to adopt a code of conduct or statement of ethical principles and written board operating procedures. Statements of ethical principles help to articulate ideal behavior and are intended to guide board members’ actions. Discussion by board members about what to include in a code of conduct and in a set of operating procedures can help the members of the team further understand the expectations, priorities, and motivations among members of the board. These types of discussions can help identify possible sources of conflict in the future and reduce their likelihood.

Written board operating procedures are intended to define clearly how to carry out regular board tasks. Many people wrongly assume that the way to perform routine tasks is commonly known and understood by all members of the board. This is an incorrect assumption and often contributes to inefficiency, inconsistency in trustee actions, and failure to carry out important tasks.



New board members and new superintendents often find written operating procedures to be very helpful. They help new members of the team understand the operations of the team in an efficient and useful manner. Lack of operating procedures can cause new members to learn by trial and error.

Operating procedures should be reviewed at least once a year to make sure they are still benefiting the team. Of course, procedures can be reviewed and updated at any time the board believes it is necessary. The review needn't be extensive, but members should have an opportunity to comment on any procedures they think can be improved. Many board-superintendent teams like to review and discuss their procedures after board elections or when new board

members join the team. The discussion can form part of their required orientation to the local district. A more thorough review, including development of additional, needed procedures, is one option for the annual team-building session.

It is important that all members of the board reach consensus on the language for board operating procedures and a code of ethics when they are being developed and updated. The process in reaching consensus requires discussion that further clarifies expectations and assumptions. The consensus process increases the value of these types of documents and the level of commitment to them by members of the board-superintendent team.

## **Annual Board Activity Calendar**

Another tool that is helpful to maintain smoother board-superintendent operations is a written board activity calendar. This calendar outlines the key tasks and commitments the board will be responsible for throughout the year. Ideally the calendar will also include details about the types of information and reports the board will receive and take action on during the year.

A written board activity calendar serves several purposes. Among them, it does the following:

- Helps the board, especially new board members, know what to expect at any given time of year
- Ensures the board does not overlook any major responsibilities
- Helps the board prepare in advance for the regular tasks an effective board performs

- Assists the board and administration in judiciously scheduling their work, including developing agendas
- Ensures the board receives the regular information on district progress and operations success

Board activity calendars can take many different forms. The bottom line is that the calendar be (1) comprehensive, (2) consulted regularly in planning the board's work, and (3) followed. The calendar should be reviewed and updated at least once a year, or whenever necessary, to ensure that it is accurate and up-to-date. One of the times to consider reviewing the calendar is after board elections or any time new members join the board-superintendent team.

The Board-Superintendent Team Operations items in the Inventory will assist the board in knowing if it has in place and appropriately used the tools that promote efficiency in its own operations.

## 4. Advocacy

The school board is entrusted with the education of the children of its community. One of the things that the board does to advance this aim is to advocate for the district within the community and beyond.

Within the community, the board should take an active role in generating support for the district. This can be done in a number of ways. First, board members need to listen to what is going on in the community. Next the board needs to ensure that the community is aware of what is happening in the district. They can do this by ensuring that the community and staff are aware of the district's vision and goals, among other things. Some boards go a step further by inviting a broad range of community and staff members to participate in the development and/or revision of the district's vision and goals.

The board makes sure that the superintendent and staff have a plan in place to keep the community and staff aware of what is happening in the district. The superintendent should keep the board informed regularly about how the community and staff are being kept aware of district issues.

### Developing Partnerships

School board-superintendent teams that wish to build partnerships with their communities have to plan for it. Partnerships must be grown in a systematic way. Therefore, it is important that the board ensure that a plan is in place to develop partnerships. In addition to relying on the superintendent and staff to implement a plan, the board will want to decide what the board itself can do to build partnerships. Whether the goals of a partnership are to share resources between the schools and a municipality, find tutors for students, or raise funds, the board as a body corporate and board members individually can be very helpful in developing these relationships. To ensure that the board is engaged in the process of building partnerships with the community, it is important that the board has a plan in place to hold itself accountable. This plan should include what the board members will do to assist in the development of partnerships. Additionally, the board will want to note on its board activity calendar when it will review progress.



## **Advocacy for the District with Other Elected Officials**

School boards have an important responsibility to advocate for the district with legislators and other elected officials. Since school board members are entrusted by the local community with the interests of students of their district, they need to remember that occasionally they need to promote those interests with other elected officials. The board should plan for how it will represent the district. The plan for advocating for the district should be written and should list the activities the board as whole, individual board members, and the superintendent will undertake to gain support for the district.

Since board members are elected, they often have more influence over legislators and other publically elected officials than individuals or special-interest groups. Therefore, it is important that the board is actively involved in the process of advocating for the district. Some things that board members can do to advocate effectively for their district include keeping in touch with their legislators, inviting legislators to visit their districts, and encouraging the communities to contact legislators before crucial votes.

To ensure that the board is actively involved in advocating for the district, it should consider making it a long-term commitment. It is helpful for the board to review its advocacy activity on a regular basis. The board should review this activity at least every two years and make adjustments where necessary.

The Advocacy items in the Inventory will assist the board in knowing if it is taking all the steps necessary to have an effective advocacy program for the district.



# 5. Effective Board Practices: An Inventory for School Boards

Note that in the Inventory checklist, to respond to each of the numbered and shaded statements, please review the lettered criteria first. Each criteria item should be marked “Yes,” “No,” or “Unsure.” After responding to the criteria statements, respond to the numbered main item. The “Yes” response should be marked for the main item only if all the criteria received a “Yes.” Otherwise, “No” or “Unsure” is the appropriate response.

After individual members have completed the inventory, it is important that the entire board-superintendent team discusses the results together, reaches consensus on the rating of each item, and determines the next steps the team will take in improving its performance.



## Planning and Governance

### 1. A vision statement is in place for the district.

1.1 The vision statement meets the criteria for a well-developed vision statement listed in the supporting materials.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>You can check “Yes” for the above item if you check “Yes” to all the criteria below:</i>			
a. Your vision statement is written.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
b. It lists or describes desired qualities for at least each of the following: students of the district, the community, and the schools in the district.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Staff and community input was solicited in some fashion and was considered.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
d. All current members of the board and the superintendent have agreed, in a formal adoption or readoption by the board, to be guided by the vision.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>

1.2	The board reviews and readopts the vision through formal board action.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>You can check "Yes" for the above item if you check "Yes" to all the criteria below:</i>				
a.	The board has formally adopted or readopted its vision statement within the last five years.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
b.	The board's annual calendar of activities or another written document clearly specifies when the vision statement will next be considered for review.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>

  

1.3	The vision is disseminated throughout the district.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>You can check "Yes" for the above item if you check "Yes" to all the criteria below:</i>				
a.	The vision statement is clearly posted in the board meeting room or copies are available at each meeting.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
b.	The vision statement is available on all campuses and all staff members have been informed about it.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>

**2. A comprehensive statement of goals for the district is in place.**

2.1	The board adopts or reaffirms a comprehensive list of district goals each year through formal board action.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>You can check "Yes" for the above item if you check "Yes" to all the criteria below:</i>				
a.	The board formally adopted or reaffirmed a list of goals within the past 12 months.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Workshop documents from the goal-setting process indicate the board considered a broad range of district issues and student achievement measures before limiting the goals to those included in its list.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
c.	Each member of the board can state in general terms the substantive content of current goals.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
d.	The board can point to specific, written criteria that will be used to assess whether the district is succeeding in reaching its goals.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>

2.2 Mechanisms for disseminating the goals for the district are clearly identified and in writing. Yes No Unsure

*You can check "Yes" for the above item if you check "Yes" to all the criteria below:*

a. Current goals are either posted in the board room or made available to the audience at board meetings. Yes No Unsure

b. The goals are available on all campuses and the district Web site, and all staff members have been informed about them. Yes No Unsure

2.3 The board is familiar with administration's written plans for accomplishing the goals. The plans include time lines for implementation, specific mechanisms for assessing the effectiveness of the plans, and specific times for reporting to the board on progress. Yes No Unsure

*You can check "Yes" for the above item if you check "Yes" to all the criteria below:*

a. The board has looked at copies of, or been formally briefed about, the administration's plans for accomplishing the current district goals. Yes No Unsure

b. The written plans state what results the board will see after implementation and include time lines for implementation, procedures for assessing effectiveness, and a schedule for progress reports to the board. Yes No Unsure

### **3. Board actions reinforce the central importance of the goals to the work of the district.**

3.1 Deliberation on major items before the board routinely includes a discussion of the recommended action's impact on meeting district goals. Yes No Unsure

*You can check "Yes" for the above item if you check "Yes" to all the criteria below:*

a. Board agenda materials routinely summarize the impact agenda items will have on the achievement of current goals. Yes No Unsure

b. Board deliberations routinely include an acknowledgement of whether the given agenda item directly or indirectly supports a district goal. Yes No Unsure

3.2 The board’s superintendent evaluation instrument and process focus first and foremost on the superintendent’s success in addressing the board-adopted goals. Yes  No  Unsure

*You can check “Yes” for the above item if you check “Yes” to all the criteria below:*

a. Board agenda materials or minutes indicate the board formally adopts written priority performance goals for the superintendent at the beginning of the evaluation cycle. Yes  No  Unsure

b. The majority of the priority performance goals for the superintendent are clearly derived from current or former district goals. Yes  No  Unsure

c. The board’s regularly scheduled formative and summative evaluation conferences begin with reports by the superintendent on actions taken in support of the priority performance goals or with summaries of reports provided earlier. Yes  No  Unsure

3.3 The board’s budget review process specifically identifies how goals are funded in the proposed budget, whether funding is adequate, and whether funding priorities are consistent with board-adopted goals. Yes  No  Unsure

*You can check “Yes” for the above item if you check “Yes” to all the criteria below:*

a. Board agenda materials or minutes indicate that the board annually discusses budget priorities with the superintendent in advance of the superintendent’s budget preparation. Yes  No  Unsure

b. Budget review materials used in adopting the current district budget clearly identify the funding associated with each district goal. Yes  No  Unsure

**4. The board monitors plan implementation and district success in a formal, scheduled manner.**

4.1 Time lines in the plans for reporting to the board are incorporated into the board’s annual activity calendar and included on appropriate monthly agendas. Yes  No  Unsure

*You can check “Yes” for the above item if you check “Yes” to all the criteria below:*

a. Board agendas or minutes from the past 12 months indicate the board received and formally discussed at least one report of progress on district goals. Yes  No  Unsure

b. The board’s calendar for the coming year lists the months in which reports on goal implementation will be provided. Yes  No  Unsure

# Oversight of Management

## 5. Goals, performance standards, and/or benchmarks have been established for major aspects of district operations.

5.1 The board receives information annually from the superintendent on the goals, standards, or benchmarks the administration uses to assess effectiveness for the major areas of district operations. Yes  No  Unsure

*You can check "Yes" for the above item if you check "Yes" to all the criteria below:*

a. Board agenda materials or minutes from the past 12 months indicate the board and superintendent formally discussed goals, standards, or benchmarks the superintendent uses in assessing operational effectiveness in major areas. Yes  No  Unsure

b. The board can point to a document or documents outlining the measures used by the administration to assess success in at least three major areas of district operations. Yes  No  Unsure

5.2 The board receives regular, scheduled updates on operations effectiveness as measured against standards or benchmarks. Yes  No  Unsure

*You can check "Yes" for the above item if you check "Yes" to all the criteria below:*

a. Board agenda materials or minutes indicate that the board received a report on operations success relative to established standards or benchmarks within the last 12 months. Yes  No  Unsure

## 6. The board is familiar with the broad outlines of the systems the superintendent has put in place to manage district operations.

6.1 The board and superintendent have a schedule for periodic updates on major management systems in the district, including presentations on how benchmark data is used to plan improvements. Yes  No  Unsure

*You can check "Yes" for the above item if you check "Yes" to all the criteria below:*

a. Board agenda materials or minutes indicate the board received a briefing on at least one major management system within the past 12 months. Yes  No  Unsure

b. The board can point to a document with a schedule for briefings on major management systems. Yes  No  Unsure

6.2 The board’s evaluation of the superintendent’s performance in district operations focuses on the superintendent’s establishing appropriate measures and standards of performance for major district operations, monitoring success, and using data for improvement.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>You can check “Yes” for the above item if you check “Yes” to all the criteria below:</i>			
a. Exclusive of priority performance goals, items on the board’s evaluation instrument focus on whether appropriate performance standards are in place for major areas of district operations, whether the standards are being monitored, and whether they are being met.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>

**Board–Superintendent Team Operations**

**7. The board and superintendent team regularly checks expectations and assesses board–superintendent operations.**

7.1 The board and superintendent participate in an annual team-building activity.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>You can check “Yes” for the above item if you check “Yes” to all the criteria below:</i>			
a. Board agenda materials or minutes indicate the board and superintendent participated together in a team-building session or self-assessment discussion during the past 12 months.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Written documents or reports from the team-building session indicate the session included review of actual board practices and behaviors and resulted in agreements about future operations.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Board agenda materials, board minutes, or documents related to the most recent team-building session indicate the board formally discussed continuing education needs as a part of its team-building activity.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
d. The board can point to written plans for continuing education for its members that include, at a minimum, the topics to be addressed.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>

7.2 The board has adopted and annually reaffirms an ethics statement or code of conduct for board members. Yes No Unsure

*You can check “Yes” for the above item if you check “Yes” to all the criteria below:*

a. The board can point to a code of conduct or ethics statement that has been formally adopted by the board. Yes No Unsure

b. Board agenda materials or minutes indicate the statement has been affirmed by all current members of the board, or the board’s calendar of activities includes reaffirmation of the ethics statement or code of conduct as an agenda item within the next six months. Yes No Unsure

**8. Written operating procedures for the board and superintendent are in place.**

8.1 A written annual calendar of board events, outlining major board activities by month, is in place. Yes No Unsure

*You can check “Yes” for the above item if you check “Yes” to all the criteria below:*

a. All members of the board have copies of a written, 12-month calendar on which major board responsibilities have been scheduled. Yes No Unsure

b. At least 75 percent of the board tasks on the calendar for the past 12 months were performed in the months scheduled or were rescheduled on the calendar for another specific time. Yes No Unsure

8.2 Operating procedures are codified in a written board-superintendent procedures document; new board members are oriented to operating procedures within the first 60 days of service. Yes No Unsure

*You can check “Yes” for the above item if you check “Yes” to all the criteria below:*

a. The board can point to written board operating procedures. Yes No Unsure

b. The operating procedures are stated in terms of observable actions: what the board, trustee, or superintendent is actually expected to do or not do. Yes No Unsure

c. Any members who have joined the board-superintendent team within the last 12 months have copies of all written board operating procedures. Yes No Unsure

8.3 An annual review of operating procedures is included on the board activity calendar.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>You can check "Yes" for the above item if you check "Yes" to all the criteria below:</i>			
a. Board agenda materials, minutes, or other documents indicate the board and superintendent have formally discussed operating procedures within the past 12 months.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
b. The review of operating procedures usually occurs in the same month each year.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>

**Advocacy**

**9. The board is an active advocate for the district within the community.**

9.1 The board has an active plan for its generating support for the district, its vision, and its goals with patrons, the business community, and other organizations in the area.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>You can check "Yes" for the above item if you check "Yes" to all the criteria below:</i>			
a. The plan is written and reviewed each year.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
b. The plan lists activities the board members themselves or the board as a whole will do to generate support and partnerships within the community.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
9.2 The board reviews board and board member success in generating support for the district annually.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>You can check "Yes" for the above item if you check "Yes" to all the criteria below:</i>			
a. The board's activity calendar includes a month in which this review takes place.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Agenda materials, workshop materials, or minutes from the last 12 months indicate that board discussed the success of its plan and its efforts.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>



**10. The board is an active advocate for the district with other elected officials.**

10.1 The board has an active plan for advocating for the district's interest with legislators and other elected public officials. Yes  No  Unsure

*You can check "Yes" for the above item if you check "Yes" to all the criteria below:*

a. The plan is written and reviewed at least every two years. Yes  No  Unsure

b. The plan lists activities the board members themselves or the board as a whole will do to support the district's interest before legislators and other elected public officials. Yes  No  Unsure

10.2 Every two years, the board reviews board and board member success in advocating for the district with legislators and other elected officials. Yes  No  Unsure

*You can check "Yes" for the above item if you check "Yes" to all the criteria below:*

a. The board's activity calendar includes a month in which this review takes place. Yes  No  Unsure

b. Agenda materials, workshop materials, or minutes from the last 24 months indicate that board discussed the success of its plan and its efforts. Yes  No  Unsure



Texas Association of School Boards