

## Principles of Board Self-Assessment

- Assures the board is accountable for its own performance
- Allows each member of the board to assess his or her individual performance as a member of the board
- Improves communication among members of the board and between the board and the superintendent
- Reinforces a thorough understanding of the vision and goals of the district
- Provides an opportunity for individuals to address concerns about the board's performance, so that board members clearly understand those concerns
- Strengthens the decision-making process meeting the expectations of board members
- Provides an opportunity for the newly elected board member to understand the roles and responsibilities and board expectations
- Affords an opportunity for continued improvement and capable leadership by the board

## Elements of a Quality Assessment Process

- The assessment should be constructive
- The board should clearly define the purpose of the assessment
- The assessment should identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas of improvement
- A formal assessment should take place at least once a year
- The board should meet to discuss the assessment results
- Following the discussion of the results, the board should identify performance goals and objectives to be accomplished before the next assessment

The goal of helping the board to reflect on its strengths and areas of growth and improvement is more important than the format of the assessment process. Reflection allows the board to gain a better understanding of agreement areas, and identify goals to improve the work of the board.

## Board Self-Assessment Process

The board must understand one size does not fit all. Simply put no single evaluation process and instrument is ideally suited for all boards. Boards should be willing to adopt a process that holds promise for effectively measuring performance, with the understanding that the process and instrument may change with the board as it grows. The assessment process is evolutionary.

Any evaluation system should provide criteria against which performance is measured, and should provide opportunities for recognition and evaluation of high performance and for identification of areas of substandard performance. Although the board is assessing its own performance independent of the superintendent of schools, it is important to realize that the performance of each affects the performance of the other.

The board should discuss and adopt procedures allowing the board members to express their individual views about the degree to which the board has performed effectively and where improvement may benefit the board's work and behavior.

## **Board Self-Assessment Instrument**

The Association provides a variety of assessment instruments from which the board can select. We encourage the board to review each document, selecting the tool that most closely reflects the board's values, and then modify the document accordingly. Keep in mind, the board assessment process must be a continuous one. The evaluation instrument can and will evolve as the board's own performance evolves.

As you review the assessment instruments, consider the following:

- Is the format easy to understand and follow?
- Is the scoring relatively easy to understand? Is the scoring by number or by narrative response?
- Do the questions relate to the work of the board?
- Do board members contribute an individual response, adding to the discussion of the results?
- Is the instrument too simple or too difficult for the board to use?
- Will board members commit the time necessary to complete the assessment?
- Does the instrument identify and assess board standards, the working relationship with the superintendent, and the manner in which the board conducts business during board meetings?
- Does the instrument assess participation and support of the district vision, planning, and goals?
- Does the instrument allow for the board to assess its goals?
- Is it necessary to modify the assessment by rewording, removing, or adding questions?
- Does the assessment provide a timeline for completing formal board self-evaluation and goals for improvement?
- Is each board member given the opportunity to complete their own evaluation?
- Will the board meet to review and discuss the results?

## **Post-Assessment Improvement Plan**

Once the board has completed the self-assessment and the results have been determined, the board as a collective body will discuss the results and identify areas of improvement. The board must address the areas of growth and improvement identified through proper board goals. For example, board goals may address specific actions that may be taken to improve the working relationship between the board and the superintendent.

To meet the goals, develop a sequential systematic process and timeline to hold the board accountable and to achieve success. Place the board improvement plan on the Annual Board Calendar to ensure the presence of the goals in the board's work and progress updates.