

VISION

What is it?

A vision is a statement that paints a picture of the school district's future. Vision is a picture of where you want to be rather than where you are.

What role does the school board play?

The school board engages all district stakeholders in a comprehensive planning process to establish a clear vision of student achievement as the top priority of the school board, staff, students, parents, and the community.

How does the board do it?

- Involve the community in setting the vision through soliciting input, community forums, and a broad-based review process.
- Involve the community in regular re-evaluation and modification of the vision.
- Develop a process for ongoing community involvement in district planning.
- Use the district vision as a filter for decision making.

STANDARDS

What are they?

Standards are statements that define and explain what the school district expects students to know and be able to do at all grade levels. Standards should support the district vision.

What role does the school board play?

- The board leads the process for setting clear standards for student performance.
- The board and staff base the standards on credible external sources (e.g. other districts that have successfully adopted standards).
- The board helps to communicate the standards to students, staff, parents, and the community.
- The board helps to make sure that district standards are consistent with state and federal standards.

How does the board do it?

Use community forums to discuss:

- What standards should be set for students
- How local standards relate to state, federal, and even international norms
- The knowledge, skills, understandings, and experiences parents, business, and representatives of higher education feel that students should have.

ASSESSMENT

What is it?

Assessment consists of tools and processes that measure educational outcomes as compared to the stated standards.

What role does the school board play?

- Ensures that assessments are tied to the standards
- Supports the use of multiple assessments
- Establishes an assessment process that measures student achievement regularly

How does the board do it?

- Set up a community advisory committee as part of the assessment development and review process.
- Make sure that the assessment program is clearly explained to the community.

ACCOUNTABILITY

What is it?

Accountability is the act of taking responsibility for educational outcomes.

What role does the school board play?

- The board overtly shares responsibility for student achievement with staff, students, and parents.
- The board establishes a strong and positive, rather than punitive, system of accountability.

How does the board do it?

- Include parents and other community members in developing the accountability process.
- Promote widespread review and comment on published data, including achievement, discipline, dropout, and attendance data.
- Review learning and teaching styles and techniques.

ALIGNMENT

What is it?

Alignment refers to the process of supplying the necessary resources to support the district's educational vision, goals, objectives, and tasks.

What role does the school board play?

- In budgeting, the board revisits the district vision and standards to ensure that resources are aligned in ways to support the district meeting its student achievement goals.
- The board asks if staffing patterns reflect alignment with meeting the district vision (for example, Where are the most experienced teachers assigned? Where are the experienced teachers most needed?)
- Looks closely at other material resources (facilities, transportation, media, learning materials, etc.) to ensure that distribution is equitable.

How does the board do it?

- Establish processes for community input into the budgeting process.
- Include parents in the district curriculum review process.
- Budget for resources to support parents who want to assist their children with academic work.
- Recruit volunteers in schools to help with academic work.
- Establish business partnerships.

CLIMATE AND CULTURE

What is it?

Culture is comprised of the values and beliefs that shape the school district's behaviors, creating the conditions for teaching and learning. Those conditions are the *climate*. Positive climate nurtures board, administration, and student productivity.

What role does the school board play?

- The school board overtly supports and demonstrates its belief in the philosophy that all children can learn at high levels.
- The board empowers the staff to meet the needs of students by delegating authority.
- The leads by modeling mutual respect and professional behavior.

How does the board do it?

- Including parents, students, and staff on district task forces.
- Survey graduates, parents, and the broader community to gauge their degree of satisfaction with school district services and operations.
- Use insights gained from students, parents, and patrons as part of the planning and budgeting processes.
- Encourage a strong “customer service ethic” in the district.
- Provide opportunities for public comment/feedback.

COLLABORATION and COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

What is it?

Collaboration is a cooperative working relationship among educational stakeholders (board, staff, students, parents, patrons). Collaboration is based on trust and confidence.

What role does the school board play?

The school board should be assertive in building collaborative relationships with parents and students. Additionally, the board should seek to engage business leaders, government entities, political leaders, and other child-centered organizations. The focus should be to develop a consensus for making student achievement a community priority.

How does the board do it?

- Model behaviors that emphasize trust, teamwork, and shared accountability.
- Take opportunities to educate the public about the role of the school board.
- Communicate regularly with local, state, and federal officials about student achievement.
- Encourage the superintendent to establish regular communication and working relationships with other child-centered organizations.
- Invite local officials to be a part of efforts to recognize academic achievement in the district.
- Stay in touch with the area's legislative delegation.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

What is it?

Continuous improvement involves regularly seeking ways to improve all components of the school system so that student achievement is realized.

What role does the school board play?

- The board uses data to set priorities for allocating resources.
- The board models continuous improvement by participating in regular self-evaluation and professional development.
- The board engages the community when modifying the strategic plan.

How does the board do it?

- Discuss the board's self-evaluation process and professional development activities during a board meeting, with emphasis on how those activities will improve the board's governance.
- In budgeting, the board supports school improvement through professional development for all staff.
- With the district administration, take an active role with the media to discuss district successes and planned improvement.
- Assure that the community is involved in the regular review of data and in making recommendations.