

## **What is the Key Work of School Boards?**

*The Key Work of School Boards* is a framework for school board decision making and action. The Key Work consists of eight essential areas, which comprise principles, methods, and tools for understanding and creating more effective school systems. The eight areas are bound together by *Systems Thinking*, the concept that a school district consists of interrelated and interdependent elements that form a complex whole. What occurs in one part of that system affects other parts of that system.

### **Areas of the Key Work of School Boards**

#### **Vision**

Vision reflects the board, district staff, parents, students, and community's commitment to student achievement as a priority.

#### **Standards**

Standards identify community expectations for what students should know and be able to do. Standards provide a requirement or level of achievement against which to measure progress.

#### **Assessment**

Assessment is the process by which we determine how well students are meeting the standards.

#### **Accountability**

The school board assumes responsibility for student results using clear criteria and regular monitoring. Accountability is a shared process involving the school board, staff, students, parents, and the community.

#### **Alignment**

Alignment means that all aspects of the school system interconnect logically and smoothly to improve student achievement.

#### **Climate/Culture**

Climate is the "feel" or "tone" of individual classrooms, schools, or a district as a whole. Positive school climate can contribute to student success. Culture consists of the values and beliefs that shape the school district's behaviors.

#### **Collaboration**

Collaboration occurs when networks of individuals come together to solve problems and support the common goal of student achievement.

#### **Continuous Improvement**

Continuous improvement is part of the systems thinking concept. Improvement is more than a one-time event.