

Framework for School Board Development

Preamble

The mission of the public education system of this state is to ensure that all Texas children have access to a quality education that enables them to achieve their potential and fully participate now and in the future in the social, economic, and educational opportunities of our state and nation (Texas Education Code, §4.001).

The board of trustees is the governing body for Texas public schools. To effectively meet the challenges of public education, school boards and superintendents must function together as a governance leadership team. Each leadership team will annually assess its development needs both as a corporate body and as individuals. As a team, they will focus on the improvement of locally developed student outcomes and provide support for opportunities and experiences through vision and goals, systems and processes, progress and accountability, advocacy and engagement, and synergy and teamwork. Teams ensure that their districts provide equitable and effective educational programs and services for all students. The Framework for School Board Development has been approved by the State Board of Education to provide the critical areas of development for all public school boards.

Framework

- I. **Vision and Goals**—The board ensures creation of a shared vision and locally developed, measurable goals that improve student outcomes and provide support for opportunities and experiences. The board:
 - Keeps the district focus on the well-being of all children
 - Adopts a shared vision that incorporates input from the community to reflect local aspirations as well as present and future needs for all children
 - Ensures that the vision aligns with the state's mission, objectives, and goals for education established by law or rule
 - Adopts a reasonable number of specific, quantifiable, research-based, and time-bound goals that align with state law, are developed with community input, and support the vision to improve student outcomes
 - Embraces, supports, and fulfills the vision that all students receive what they need to learn, thrive, and grow, including resources, opportunities, and experiences
 - Uses the vision and goals to drive all deliberations, decisions, and actions

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II. **Systems and Processes**—The board ensures systems and processes are in place to accomplish the vision and goals. The board:

- Regularly develops, reviews, and adopts board policies for effective support of the district's vision and goals
- Approves a budget that aligns with and maximizes resources to fulfill the district's vision and goals
- Monitors multiple, measurable elements of student progress and achievement throughout the year
- Incorporates equity when making decisions and evaluating systems and processes
- Focuses its actions on following board operating procedures while providing oversight of the superintendent, policymaking, planning and goal setting, progress monitoring, and evaluation, while avoiding involvement in daily operations and management
- Approves goals, policies, and programs that ensure a safe and secure learning environment
- Ensures the equitable distribution of resources, opportunities, and experiences based on the diverse needs of students and schools
- Adopts a planning calendar and engages in a decision-making process consistent with state law and rule to help achieve the district's vision
- Ensures that the district's planning and decision-making process enables all segments of the community, families, and staff to meaningfully contribute to achieving the district's vision
- Welcomes and values all people and cultures as important stakeholders in the process for student success
- Ensures the district has a system that monitors for sound business and fiscal practices
- Adopts policies regarding hiring, assigning, appraising, terminating, and compensating school district personnel in compliance with state laws and rules
- Ensures the district adopts a protocol regarding the recruitment, determination of professional development needs, building of leadership capacity, and retention rates for the district's teachers
- Fulfills the statutory duties of the local board of trustees and upholds all laws, rules, ethical procedures, and court orders pertaining to schools and school employees

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- III. **Progress and Accountability**—The board sets clear goals, provides resources and support, evaluates goal attainment, and engages in ongoing objective feedback on progress and commitments. The board:
- Holds itself accountable to its adopted vision, goals, commitments, and operating procedures
 - Ensures progress toward achievement of district goals through systematic, timely, and comprehensive reviews of relevant reports and student data that illustrate progress toward locally developed student outcome goals
 - Ensures equity throughout the system by regularly identifying inequities, updating policies, and appropriately distributing resources
 - Differentiates among resources, intermediate measures, and outcomes, especially when focusing on student outcomes
 - Monitors and evaluates the allocation of resources in support of the district's vision and goals and sustainability
 - Reviews the efficiency and effectiveness of district operations and use of resources in supporting the district's vision and goals
 - Employs and annually evaluates the superintendent on the achievement of district goals, including locally developed academic goals, demonstration of educational leadership, and management of daily operations
- IV. **Advocacy and Engagement**—The board promotes the vision and engages the community in developing and fulfilling the vision. The board advocates on behalf of Texas public schoolchildren. The board:
- Demonstrates its commitment to, and advocates on behalf of, the shared vision and goals by clearly communicating them to the superintendent, staff, and community
 - Regularly reports district progress to families and the community, which could include an online dashboard for the community
 - Ensures multiple forms of two-way communication will be used to engage, empower, and connect students, families, staff, media, and community with the district
 - Builds collaborative relationships and partnerships with families and community, business, nonprofit, higher-education, education support organizations, and governmental leaders to influence and expand educational opportunities and experiences to meet the needs of students
 - Recognizes the respective roles of and provides input and feedback to the legislature, State Board of Education, and the Texas Education Agency to ensure maximum effectiveness and benefit to Texas schoolchildren
 - Promotes school board service by educating the community about the role of a school board and encouraging leadership opportunities within the community

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- V. **Synergy and Teamwork**—The board’s duties are distinct, and the board works effectively as a collaborative unit and as a team with the superintendent to lead the district in fulfilling the vision and goals. The board:
- Recognizes its distinct role in establishing the vision and the goals, adopting policies that guide the district, setting priorities, establishing governance protocols to oversee management of the district, adopting and overseeing the annual budget, and hiring and evaluating the superintendent
 - Recognizes each individual trustee’s duty as a trustee and fiduciary for the entire district
 - Remains focused on its goals and priorities, as opposed to individual agendas separate and apart from the shared vision
 - Annually evaluates its performance as a team, with attention given to the district’s vision and goals; fulfilling the board’s duties, responsibilities, and commitments; and the board’s working relationship with the superintendent
 - Makes decisions as a whole only at properly called meetings and recognizes that individual members have no authority to take individual action in policy or district and campus administrative matters
 - Respects the right of individual members to express their viewpoints and vote their convictions and honors the decisions of the majority
 - Develops teamwork, problem-solving, and decision-making skills as a team with its superintendent
 - Understands and adheres to laws and local policies and respects the superintendent’s responsibility to manage the school district and to direct employees in district and campus matters
 - Adopts and adheres to established policies and procedures for welcoming and addressing ideas and concerns from students, families, staff, and the community
 - Establishes and follows local policies, procedures, and ethical standards governing the conduct and operations of the board
 - Understands the leadership role of the board president and adheres to local policies and procedures about the duties and responsibilities of the board officers