WASHINGTON SCHOOL BOARD STANDARDS

A RESEARCH-BASED FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE



WSSDA

These five Standards describe the primary areas where school boards have the most leverage to support the success of their students, reflect their community's goals for its children, and responsibly lead the school district.

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WASHINGTON SCHOOL BOARD STANDARDS:

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WSSDA

Introduction

In 2009, the Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA) established the Washington School Board Standards to support effective school board governance leading to positive student outcomes. In 2023, WSSDA bolstered the standards with new, ground-breaking longitudinal research spanning more than a decade. Enhanced with new findings, the standards give school board members a common framework to guide their efforts at the *individual* and *team* levels.

School boards are uniquely positioned in the public education system as locally elected officials. Their governance role provides a connection between a community and its school district. This connection allows school boards to lead districts toward realizing their community's vision for its schools and its responsibility to the next generation. To equip boards for this role, the standards identify the key elements of responsible governance and effective board leadership.

The Power of Standards

Connecting the work of school boards with student success

WSSDA continues to grow a large collection of data connecting school board actions with student outcomes. Multiple years of data cross-referenced with academic outcomes show a strong relationship between board actions and student success. The research is clear: school boards that adhere to the standards are more likely to see higher levels of student success over time; those who don't are likely to experience declining student achievement. That research is the basis of the Washington School Board Standards and its companion tool, WSSDA's free board self-assessment survey.

Empowering school boards and building the public's knowledge

The Washington School Board Standards clearly describe board roles and responsibilities. Understanding those clearly is key to serving on the board and for citizens to know how boards operate. More than that, the standards identify which skills, knowledge, and behaviors contribute to successful board service. Having that knowledge, citizens may consider those attributes when choosing their elected representatives.

Knowing what to look for in effective leaders, citizens can also support their board in adhering to practices that foster student success. Seeing those qualities in their school board that lead to positive student outcomes over time, the public's trust may grow. And that growth is crucial because public confidence and support for school district leadership are essential foundations for the success of students and staff.

Boards that ignore or allow themselves to be distracted from research-proven elements associated with high levels of student achievement risk losing the public's confidence and jeopardizing the success of their students and staff. To avoid that scenario, boards should improve their effectiveness through self-assessment and goal-setting in relation to the Washington School Board Standards. Over time, doing so will set in motion a repeating cycle of embodying the standards, facilitating student success, and growing public trust.

Putting the Standards to Work.

The best way to put the standards to work is through honest individual and team self-evaluation coupled with goal setting. For boards in need of some corrective measures, the standards are your roadmap to better governance. Effective school board governance is not intuitive, but research is revealing some of the highest-leverage principles. Those principles are infused into the Washington School Board Standards and WSSDA's board self-assessment survey.

Research-based and scientifically validated, the board self-assessment survey is based on the standards. If taken annually, the assessment report provides a year-to-year comparison that allows boards to identify progress made or areas in which they may want to set goals. Using the assessment to set targeted goals is an excellent way to ensure your school board governs in a way that will benefit students.

WSSDA recommends a three-part approach: become familiar with and apply the standards to your board work, use WSSDA's free board self-assessment survey annually to track your progress in relation to them, and supplement individual and team learning through professional development, including taking trainings offered by WSSDA and attending its annual conference.



How the Standards Work

A research-based framework for effective school board governance

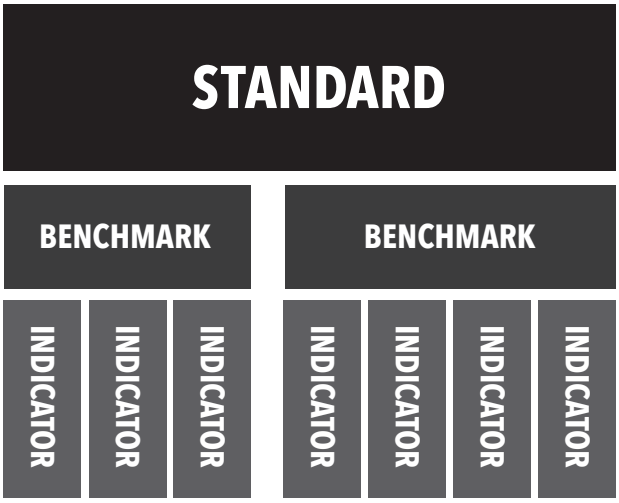
These five Standards describe the primary areas where school boards have the most leverage to support the success of their students, reflect their community's goals for its children, and responsibly lead the school district to meet its mission and vision expressed in its strategic plan.

The five Standards, each of which encompasses a core principle, are:

1. **Responsible school district governance**
2. **Communication of and commitment to high expectations for student learning**
3. **Creating conditions district-wide for student and staff success**
4. **Holding the district accountable for student learning**
5. **Engagement of the community in education**

Using the benchmarks and indicators

Within each Standard, there are multiple benchmarks that identify the knowledge and skills that high-performing boards demonstrate in meeting each standard. Each benchmark has a set of key indicators to further define and help translate the standard into practice. The indicators under each benchmark are in the form of questions to show what each standard looks like when applied at the local board level.



Sources that support the Standards

References are identified to indicate the supporting sources for each of the Standards and the related benchmarks and indicators. The sources that informed the 2022 update, including the review of professional literature and related research, are included as "new" references. "Original" references indicating the sources used in the 2009 Standards are retained in this update.

In 2020, Washington state legislation required WSSDA and the Washington Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) to "collaborate… to compare and align the standards for school director governance" with standards of practice for educators. **(WA RCW 28A.345.115)**. Those PESB standards are indicated at the bottom of each table, showing the alignment between PESB's and WSSDA's standards at the benchmark level.

Using the board self-assessment survey

The indicators are also found in WSSDA's Board Self-Assessment Survey (BSAS), which boards can use to measure their application of the Standards. This online, user-friendly tool offers a straightforward way for board members to assess their board's performance based on the governance standards and best practices outlined in the Washington School Board Standards.

Many boards make it a practice to take the BSAS annually to measure and strengthen their performance in governing for improved student learning. The longitudinal data created by this annual practice allows board-superintendent teams to track their growth over time and measure goals they've set for their own practice.

Research-based and scientifically validated, the assessment tool is available at no charge to school districts throughout the state. Learn more at **wssda.org/bsa**.


“What school boards do matters, and they have an impact on student outcomes – for better or for worse.”

STANDARD 1
Responsible School District Governance

Provide responsible school district governance by:

Benchmark 1a: Conducting board and district business in a fair, respectful, and responsible manner.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
1.a.1 Does the board base its decisions on what is best for each and every student? 1.a.2 Does the board conduct its meetings in a businesslike manner? 1.a.3 Do board meeting agendas and minutes provide meaningful details regarding the business of the board in a way that each member of the public can understand the issues addressed and the decisions made? 1.a.4 Does the board ensure that time spent on each agenda item is appropriate in terms of the item's importance and impact on student learning? 1.a.5 Does the board use methods to study and gain a deeper understanding of issues (e.g., study sessions, work groups, board training, or public forums)? 1.a.6 Does the board model respect and integrity in all its interactions?	**New:** (1.a.1) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** **Original:** Townsend, R.S., Brown, J.R. and Buster, W.L. (2005) *A practical guide to effective school board meetings*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. Carol, L.N., Cunningham, L.L., Danzberger, J.P., Kirst, M.W., McCloud, B.A., and Usdan, M.D. (1986). *School Boards: Strengthening Grass Roots Leadership*. Washington, D.C.: Institute for Educational Leadership.

Benchmark 1a alignment with WA Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) equity standards:
1B: Understanding self and others: Understanding others
2A: Student, family, and community engagement: Relationships
2B: Student, family, and community engagement: Communication
2C. Student, family, and community engagement: Service
4B: Leading for educational equity: Commitment

STANDARD 1 (CONT)

Provide responsible school district governance by:

Benchmark 1b: Ensuring the board is accountable and open to the public, including seeking divergent and diverse perspectives in its decision-making process.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
1.b.1 Does the board understand and comply with the Open Public Meetings Act? 1.b.2 Does the board encourage and provide opportunities to all members of the public to provide input on topics before the board? 1.b.3 Does the board make available to the public, with sufficient notice and time for input, information which supports board discussions and decisions? 1.b.4 Does the board follow a defined process for gathering input from the community, staff, and other partners prior to making critical decisions? 1.b.5 Does the board carry out annual evaluations of its own performance and set goals for improvement? 1.b.6 Does the board solicit input from the public regarding its own performance? 1.b.7 Does the board ensure that board meetings are welcoming and accessible to all members of the public?	**New:** (1.b.2, 1.b.7) Ocasio-Stoutenburg, L., Harry, B., & Fenton, P. (2017). The Power of Parent Engagement: Sociocultural Considerations in the Quest for Equity, Theory into Practice. Theory Into Practice. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2017.1355686. (1.b.3, 1.b.4) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** (1.b.3) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Sections: A. Student Achievement, B. Students Qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL), C. English as a Second Language, D. Students with Disabilities** (1.b.7) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Disabilities** **Original:** Henderson, E., Henry, J, Saks, J.B, and Wright, A. (2001) *Team Leadership for Student Achievement.* Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association (NSBA). Carol, L.N., Cunningham, L.L., Danzberger, J.P., Kirst, M.W., McCloud, B.A., and Usdan, M.D. (1986). *School Boards: Strengthening Grass Roots Leadership.* Washington, D.C.: Institute for Educational Leadership. Washington State School Directors' Association. (2008). *The evaluation process: Board self-assessment and superintendent evaluation.* Olympia, WA: WSSDA.

Benchmark 1b alignment with PESB equity standards:
1A: Understanding self and others: Understanding self
1B: Understanding self and others: Understanding others
1C: Understanding self and others: Responsiveness
2A: Student, family, and community engagement: Relationships
2B: Student, family, and community engagement: Communication
2C: Student, family, and community engagement: Service
3A: Learning Partnerships: Shared expertise
3B: Learning Partnerships: Collaboration
3C: Learning Partnerships: Shared decision-making

STANDARD 1 (CONT)

Provide responsible school district governance by:

Benchmark 1c: Respecting and advocating mutual understanding of the roles and responsibilities of board members and the superintendent.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
1.c.1 Does the board recognize the superintendent as an integral part of the governance team and model collaboration and commitment to a shared purpose? 1.c.2 Does the board delegate through written policy authority for the superintendent to manage district operations and implement policy? 1.c.3 Does the board provide the superintendent with a clear statement of its expectations for their performance which is used in the superintendent's evaluation? 1.c.4 Does the board honor the roles and responsibilities of the superintendent and staff? 1.c.5 Does the board thoughtfully consider recommendations of the superintendent and staff prior to making decisions? 1.c.6 Does the board establish and commit to written protocols for respectful internal and external interactions?	**New:** (1.c.2) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hispanic** (1.c.4) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** **Original:** Goodman, R.H. and Zimmerman, W.G. (2000). *Thinking Differently: Recommendations for 21st Century School Board/Superintendent Leadership, Governance, and Teamwork for High Student Achievement.* Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service. Carol, L.N., Cunningham, L.L., Danzberger, J.P., Kirst, M.W., McCloud, B.A., and Usdan, M.D. (1986). *School Boards: Strengthening Grass Roots Leadership.* Washington, D.C.: Institute for Educational Leadership.

Benchmark 1c alignment with PESB equity standards:
3A: Learning Partnerships: Shared expertise
3B: Learning Partnerships: Collaboration
3C: Learning Partnerships: Shared decision-making

STANDARD 1 (CONT)

Provide responsible school district governance by:

Benchmark 1d: Adopting policies based on well-researched practices that emphasize a belief that all students can achieve at high levels and that support continuous improvement of student achievement.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
1.d.1 Does the board govern using written policies that align with current laws and best practice research? 1.d.2 Does the board focus its policy decisions on what is necessary to further the achievement for each and every student? 1.d.3 Does the board conduct periodic reviews to identify and adopt policies needed or to revise and update existing ones? 1.d.4 Does the board identify, revise, and adopt policies that result in reducing and eliminating disproportionate student outcomes? 1.d.5 Does the board communicate and collaborate with colleagues across the state and nation regarding current and emerging issues, trends, and viable policy solutions?	**New:** (1.d.1, 1.d.5) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** (1.d.1) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students Qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL)** (1.d.2, 1.d.4) Losen, Daniel J. and Martinex, Paul (2020). *Lost Opportunities: How Disparate School Discipline Continues to Drive Differences in the Opportunity to Learn.* (1.d.2) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** (1.d.4) Barton, A. C., & Tan, E. (2020). *Beyond Equity as Inclusion: A Framework of "Rightful Presence" for Guiding Justice-Oriented Studies in Teaching and Learning.* Educational Researcher. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X2092736 **Original:** National School Boards Association (2005). *Targeting Student Learning: The School Board's Role as Policymaker.* Alexandria, VA: NSBA. Resnick, M.A. (1999). Effective School *Governance: A Look at Today's Practice and Tomorrow's Promise.* Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States. Danzberger, J.P., Kirst, M.W. and Usdan, M.D. (1992). *Governing Public Schools: New Times, New Requirements.* Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership.

Benchmark 1d alignment with PESB equity standards:
3A: Learning Partnerships: Shared expertise
3B: Learning Partnerships: Collaboration
3C: Learning Partnerships: Shared decision-making
4B: Leading for educational equity: Commitment

STANDARD 1 (CONT)

Provide responsible school district governance by:

Benchmark 1e: Promoting healthy relationships by communicating supportively; inspiring, motivating, and empowering others; and exercising influence in a positive manner.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
1.e.1 Does the board provide an opportunity for staff and students to provide input and information to the board? 1.e.2 Does the board foster an environment of empowerment to promote a culture of continuous improvement and flexibility throughout the organization? 1.e.3 Does the board use its credibility and influence to mobilize resources and accomplish productive work? 1.e.4 Does the board promote school board service to all segments of the community as a meaningful way to make long-term contributions to the community? 1.e.5 Does the board treat all individuals, including fellow board members, staff, students, and community, with respect? 1.e.6 Does the board create policies and foster an inclusive environment that supports school board service by any community member?	**New:** (1.e.1, 1.e.5) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** (1.e.2) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hispanic** (1.e.4, 1.e.6) Fischer, B. (2021). *No Spending Without Representation: School Boards and the Racial Gap in Education Finance.* SSRN. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3558239 **Original:** Washington State School Directors' Association. (2007). *Serving on Your Local School Board: A Guide to Effective Leadership*. Olympia, WA: WSSDA. Baldrige National Quality Program. (2004). *Education Criteria for Performance Excellence.* Gaithersburg, MD: Baldrige National Quality Program.

Benchmark 1e alignment with PESB equity standards:
2A: Student, family, and community engagement: Relationships
2C: Student, family, and community engagement: Service
1C: Understanding self and others: Responsiveness
4B: Leading for educational equity: Commitment
4C: Leading for educational equity: Advocacy

STANDARD 1 (CONT)

Provide responsible school district governance by:

Benchmark 1f: Working as an effective and collaborative team.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
1.f.1 Does the board work with the superintendent to achieve mutual trust and commitment to each other through teamwork and clear communication? 1.f.2 Does the board build its influence by learning from others and striving to continuously improve its expertise, knowledge base, skills, reputation, credibility, character, and effort? 1.f.3 Does the board, as a team, pursue professional development activities to improve its knowledge and governance skills? 1.f.4 Does the board demonstrate collaborative problem-solving and decision-making? 1.f.5 Do the board and superintendent share responsibility for the orientation of new board members and work together to form a new inclusive team?	**New:** (1.f.1, 1.f.4) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Sections: Hispanic, Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** (1.f.3) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Sections: Asian, Hispanic, White** **Original:** Goodman, R.H. and Zimmerman, W.G. (2000). *Thinking Differently: Recommendations for 21st Century School Board/Superintendent Leadership, Governance, and Teamwork for High Student Achievement.* Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service. Eadie, D. (2005). *Five Habits of High-Impact School Boards.* Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Education, Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, and the National School Boards Association.

Benchmark 1f alignment with PESB equity standards:
3A: Learning Partnerships: Shared expertise
3B: Learning Partnerships: Collaboration
3C: Learning Partnerships: Shared decision-making
4A: Leading for educational equity: Self-reflection

STANDARD 2
Communication of and Commitment to High Expectations for Student Learning

Set and communicate high expectations for student learning with clear goals and plans for meeting those expectations by:

Benchmark 2a: Articulating the conviction that each and every student can learn and the belief that student learning can improve regardless of existing circumstances or resources.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
2.a.1 Does the board truly believe that each and every student can achieve? 2.a.2 Does the board articulate high expectations for each and every student? 2.a.3 Does the board engage all members of the community in developing and sustaining the belief that each and every student can achieve and that improvement in student learning can be made regardless of existing circumstances or resources? 2.a.4 Does the board commit to creating the conditions which foster a culture of collaboration around a shared purpose of improving student achievement?	**New:** (2.a.4) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** **Original:** Learning First Alliance (2003). *Beyond Islands of Excellence: What Districts Can Do To Improve Instruction and Achievement in All Schools.* Washington, D.C.: Learning First Alliance, http://www.learningfirst.org. Pellicer, L.O. (1999). *Caring Enough to Lead: Schools and the Sacred Trust,* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. Iowa Association of School Boards (2000). *The Lighthouse Study*. Des Moines, IA: Iowa Association of School Boards.

Benchmark 2a alignment with PESB equity standards:
4A: Leading for educational equity: Self-reflection
4B: Leading for educational equity: Commitment
2A: Student, family, and community engagement: Relationships
2B: Student, family, and community engagement: Communication

STANDARD 2 (CONT)

Set and communicate high expectations for student learning with clear goals and plans for meeting those expectations by:

Benchmark 2b: Leading the development, articulation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by schools and the community.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
2.b.1 Does the board include partners and all segments of the community in the development and revisions of the district's vision? 2.b.2 Does the board use the vision to drive planning, decision-making, and evaluation of district operations and progress? 2.b.3 Does the board communicate its rationale for decisions to the community as a way to reinforce its commitment to the vision?	**New:** (2.b.1) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** (2.b.3) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Black, Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** **Original:** Bracey, G.W. and Resnick, M.A. (1998). *Raising the Bar: A School Board Primer on Student Achievement.* Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association (NSBA). Dufour, R., and Eaker, R. (1998). *Professional Learning Communities at Work: Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement.* Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service. Eadie, D. (2005) *Five Habits of High Impact School Boards.* Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Education, Rowman and Littlefield Publishing Group and the National School Boards Association (NSBA).

Benchmark 2b alignment with PESB equity standards:
4B: Leading for educational equity: Commitment
4C: Leading for educational equity: Advocacy
2A: Student, family, and community engagement: Relationships
2B: Student, family, and community engagement: Communication

STANDARD 2 (CONT)

Set and communicate high expectations for student learning with clear goals and plans for meeting those expectations by:

Benchmark 2c: Adopting a collaboratively developed district strategic plan focused on learning and achievement outcomes for each and every student.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
2.c.1 Does the board, in collaboration with staff and the community, formulate and maintain a current strategic plan with vision, mission, goals, and measurable outcomes? 2.c.2 Does the board incorporate educational research, local issues, educational legislative initiatives, and national and global trends in the district strategic planning process? 2.c.3 Does the board ensure that partners, staff, and all segments of the community have easy access to and understand the vision/mission/goals articulated in the district strategic plan? 2.c.4 Does the board base its ongoing policy development, decision-making, and budgeting on the district strategic plan? 2.c.5 Does the board continually monitor implementation of the district strategic plan and progress toward the plan's goals and outcomes?	**New:** (2.c.1) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: White** (2.c.1) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students with Disabilities** **Original:** Gemberling, K.W. Smith, C.W. and Villani, J.S. (2000) *The Key Work of School Boards Guidebook.* Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association (NSBA). Washington State School Directors' Association. (2008). *Data Dashboards for School Directors: Using Data for Accountability and Student Achievement.* Olympia, WA: WSSDA.

Benchmark 2c alignment with PESB equity standards:
2A: Student, family, and community engagement: Relationships
2B: Student, family, and community engagement: Communication
3A: Learning Partnerships: Shared expertise
3B: Learning Partnerships: Collaboration
3C: Learning Partnerships: Shared decision-making

STANDARD 2 (CONT)

Set and communicate high expectations for student learning with clear goals and plans for meeting those expectations by:

Benchmark 2d: Ensuring non-negotiable goals for student achievement are established and aligned with the district's strategic plan.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
2.d.1 Do the board and superintendent agree on non-negotiable student achievement goals and review them regularly? 2.d.2 Does the board use the strategic plan and its non-negotiable goals to drive board decisions and actions? 2.d.3 Does the board regularly review disaggregated data to continually monitor district progress toward non-negotiable goals to ensure they remain the driving force behind every action?	**New:** (2.d.3) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: White, Hispanic** (2.d.3) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students with Disabilities** **Original:** Henderson, E., Henry, J, Saks, J.B, and Wright, A. (2001). *Team Leadership for Student Achievement.* Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association (NSBA).

Benchmark 2d alignment with PESB equity standards:
3C: Learning Partnerships: Shared decision-making
4B: Leading for educational equity: Commitment

STANDARD 3

Creating Conditions District-wide for Student and Staff Success

Create conditions district-wide for student and staff success by:

Benchmark 3a: Providing for the safety and wellness of all students and staff.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
3.a.1 Does board policy support student and staff wellness, safety, and security? 3.a.2 Does the board ensure that facilities meet the learning needs of students and comply with current health, safety, security, wellness, and accessibility standards for each and every student? 3.a.3 Does the board provide for student and staff wellness by creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all?	**New:** (3.a.2) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** (3.a.3) Johnston-Goodstar, K., & VeLure Roholt, R. (2017). "Our kids aren't dropping out; they're being pushed out": Native American students and racial microaggressions in schools. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work: Innovation in Theory, Research & Practice*. https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2016.1263818 **Original:** Henderson, E., Henry, J, Saks, J.B, and Wright, A. (2001). *Team Leadership for Student Achievement.* Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association (NSBA).

Benchmark 3a alignment with PESB equity standards:
1C: Understanding self and others: Responsiveness

STANDARD 3 (CONT)

Create conditions district-wide for student and staff success by:

Benchmark 3b: Employing and supporting quality teachers, administrators, and other staff, and providing for their professional development.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
3.b.1 Does the board require and support recruitment of highly effective staff? 3.b.2 Does the board have policies in place to hire, evaluate, and retain qualified staff to meet the needs of students? 3.b.3 Does board policy support and promote continuous staff development and mentoring? 3.b.4 Does the board celebrate and publicize staff successes? 3.b.5 Does board policy support the hiring and retention of educators, administrators, and staff who reflect the demographics of their students and community?	**New:** Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students Qualifying for FRL** Thomas S. Dee (2005). "Teachers and the Gender Gaps in Student Achievement."www.nber.org/papers/w11660. **Original:** Togneri, W. and Anderson, S. (2006). "Beyond Islands of Excellence: What Districts Can Do To Improve Instruction and Achievement in All Schools. A Project of the Learning First Alliance [and] A Leadership Brief." www.learningfirst.org.

Benchmark 3b alignment with PESB equity standards:
4B: Leading for educational equity: Commitment
3A: Learning Partnerships: Shared expertise

STANDARD 3 (CONT)

Create conditions district-wide for student and staff success by:

Benchmark 3c: Providing for learning essentials, including rigorous curriculum, technology, and high-quality facilities.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
3.c.1 Does board policy ensure that a course of study and graduation requirements are established that align with the students' and community's goals for the success of each and every student? 3.c.2 Do the board policies and budget provide the necessary curricula materials, supplemental tools, technology, resources, and staff development to support student learning for each and every student? 3.c.3 Does board policy support a curriculum adoption cycle and a process for selecting curriculum that includes involvement of all segments of the community and families in curriculum selection? 3.c.4 Does board policy require rigorous and regular evaluation of learning essentials and supplemental materials to ensure that they clearly align with state and district standards, and are meeting student achievement goals? 3.c.5 Does the board have policy in place for the support, evaluation and updating of technology? 3.c.6 Does the board periodically review and evaluate district facilities and have in place a long-term facilities plan for construction and maintenance? 3.c.7 Does board policy ensure each student has access to high-level, engaging classes and other educational opportunities?	**New:** (3.c.1, 3.c.2) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** (3.c.2) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students Qualifying for FRL** (3.c.3) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: White** (3.c.3) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students Qualifying for FRL, Students with Disabilities** (3.c.7) Boaler, J., & Foster, D. (2014). *Raising Expectations and Achievement. The Impact of Wide Scale Mathematics Reform Giving All Students Access to High Quality Mathematics.* San Francisco Unified School District Mathematics Department. https://www.sfusdmath.org/uploads/2/4/0/9/24098802/raising-expectations.pdf **Original:** Henderson, E., Henry, J, Saks, J.B, and Wright, A. (2001). *Team Leadership for Student Achievement.* Alexandria, VA, National School Boards Association (NSBA). Gemberling, K.W. Smith, C.W. and Villani, J.S. (2000). *The Key Work of School Boards Guidebook.* Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association (NSBA).

Benchmark 3c alignment with PESB equity standards:
2B: Student, family, and community engagement: Communication
3A: Learning Partnerships: Shared expertise
3B: Learning Partnerships: Collaboration
3C: Learning Partnerships: Shared decision-making

STANDARD 3 (CONT)

Create conditions district-wide for student and staff success by:

Benchmark 3d: Ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for an efficient and effective learning environment.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
3.d.1 Does the board ensure that board policies and the district's organizational structure supports the district as a continuously improving learning organization? 3.d.2 Does the board communicate an expectation that effective instructional resources and strategies are used consistently in all classrooms across the district? 3.d.3 Does the board establish a framework for the district's negotiated agreements to support a high level of student achievement? 3.d.4 Does the board support a process for internal and/or external evaluation of district operations?	**New:** (3.d.2) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hispanic** (3.d.2) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students Qualifying for FRL** (3.d.4) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students with Disabilities** **Original:** Gemberling, K.W., Smith, C.W., and Villani, J.S. (2000). "The Key Work of School Boards Guidebook." Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association (NSBA).

Benchmark 3d alignment with PESB equity standards:
not applicable

STANDARD 3 (CONT)

Create conditions district-wide for student and staff success by:

Benchmark 3e: Adopting and monitoring an annual budget that allocates resources based on the district's vision, goals and priorities for student learning.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
3.e.1 Does the board keep all segments of the community informed about the financial needs of the school district and invite public input during the budget process? 3.e.2 Does the board provide guidelines for budget development, including a clearly defined expectation for a reasonable ending fund balance? 3.e.3 Does the board adopt a fiscally responsible annual budget and four-year projected budget that is aligned with the district's vision and plan? 3.e.4 Does the board regularly monitor the budget and fiscal status of the district? 3.e.5 Does the board adopt a budget that adequately provides for student learning, safety, and wellness?	**New:** (3.e.1) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Native American, White** (3.e.1) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students with English as a Second Language (ESL)** (3.e.2) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** (3.e.4) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, White** **Original:** Carol, L.N., Cunningham, L.L., Danzberger, J.P., Kirst, M.W., McCloud, B.A., and Usdan, M.D. (1986). *School Boards: Strengthening Grass Roots Leadership.* Washington, D.C.: Institute for Educational Leadership. Haycock, K., Jerald, C., and Huang, S. (2001) *Closing the gap: Done In a Decade.* *Thinking K-16: New frontiers for a new century, 5(2), 3-22.* A publication of The Education Trust. Annenberg Institute for School Reform. (2002). "School Communities that Work for Results and Equity." Providence, RI: Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University. www.annenberginstitute.org.

Benchmark 3e alignment with PESB equity standards:
4B: Leading for educational equity: Commitment
3A: Learning Partnerships: Shared expertise

STANDARD 4
Holding the District Accountable for Student Learning

Hold school district accountable for meeting student learning expectations by:

Benchmark 4a: Committing to continuous improvement in student achievement at each school and throughout the district.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
4.a.1 Does the board provide opportunities for regular two-way communication among the board, staff, students, and all segments of the community to reinforce the board's commitment to high levels of achievement for each and every student? 4.a.2 Does the board establish and follow a schedule for the timely review of the district plan? 4.a.3 Does the board ensure a high degree of coherence between the district's strategic plan and individual school improvement plans? 4.a.4 Does the board annually review district and school improvement plans? 4.a.5 Does the board publicly recognize the efforts of individuals and schools in improving student learning?	**New:** (4.a.3) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: White** (4.a.3) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students Qualifying for FRL** (4.a.4) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students with ESL** (4.a.5) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students Qualifying for FRL** **Original:** Gemberling, K.W. Smith, C.W. and Villani, J.S. (2000). The Key Work of School boards Guidebook. Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association (NSBA). Washington State School Directors' Association. (2008). Data guide for Washington school directors: A guide to interpreting & using data to guide policy & governance. Olympia, WA: WSSDA.

Benchmark 4a alignment with PESB equity standards:
4B: Leading for educational equity: Commitment
2B: Student, family, and community engagement: Communication

STANDARD 4 (CONT)

Hold school district accountable for meeting student learning expectations by:

Benchmark 4b: Evaluating the superintendent on clear and focused expectations.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
4.b.1 Does the board establish a policy and a process for routine evaluation of the superintendent? 4.b.2 Does the board have written performance expectations for the superintendent and communicate those to all segments of the community? 4.b.3 Does the board ensure that the superintendent's evaluation includes previously agreed-upon accountability measures and data? 4.b.4 Does the board base the decisions about the superintendent's contract on the objective evaluation of the superintendent's achievement of performance expectations?	**New:** (4.b.2) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: White**. (4.b.2) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students Qualifying for FRL, Students with Disabilities**. **Original:** Goodman, R.H. and Zimmerman, W.G. (2000). *Thinking Differently: Recommendations for 21st Century School Board/Superintendent Leadership, Governance, and Teamwork for High Student Achievement.* Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service.

Benchmark 4b alignment with PESB equity standards:
2B: Student, family, and community engagement: Communication

STANDARD 4 (CONT)

Hold school district accountable for meeting student learning expectations by:

Benchmark 4c: Measuring student academic progress and needs based on valid and reliable assessments.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
4.c.1 Does the board expect and model the effective use of disaggregated data in monitoring student achievement and district performance? 4.c.2 Does the board review and understand the criteria, assessment tools, and methods to measure student achievement and district performance? 4.c.3 Does the board regularly review data, including disaggregated student achievement data, to measure progress toward district goals for all student groups? 4.c.4 Does the board regularly evaluate and adjust resources and strategies for closing opportunity and outcome gaps?	**New:** (4.c.1, 4.c.2, 4.c.4) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: White** (4.c.3) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Asian, White** (4.c.3) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students Qualifying for FRL, Students with Disabilities** **Original:** Fielding, I. Kerr N. and Rosier, P. (2004) *Delivering on the promise.* Kennewick, WA: New Foundation Press. National School Boards Foundation. (2001). *Improving school board decision-making: The data connection.* Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association (NSBA).

Benchmark 4c alignment with PESB equity standards:
3C: Learning Partnerships: Shared decision-making
4B: Leading for educational equity: Commitment
4C: Leading for educational equity: Advocacy

STANDARD 5
Engagement of the Community in Education

Engage the local community and represent the values and expectations they hold for their schools by:

Benchmark 5a: Collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
5.a.1 Does the board provide leadership on educational issues important to the community and advocate on behalf of students and the district? 5.a.2 Does the board actively pursue growth in its cultural proficiency including cultural, racial, and ethnic understanding and sensitivity? 5.a.3 Does the board establish partnerships to promote and expand educational opportunities for each and every student? 5.a.4 Does the board foster partnerships with a diversity of community organizations in the use of facilities and sharing of services? 5.a.5 Does the board maintain legislative awareness and communicate with local, state, and federal governments in its advocacy role? 5.a.6 Does the board follow an established process for referring citizens with questions, concerns, comments, or feedback to the appropriate personnel and following up appropriately?	**New:** Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** (5.a.5) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Native American, White** **Original:** Boeck, D.G. (2002). *Closing the achievement gap: A policy action guide for Washington state's school directors.* Olympia, WA: Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA). Gulden, G. E. (2002). *Cultural diversity in school: A guide for school board members and school administrators.* Olympia, WA: Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA).

Benchmark 3a alignment with PESB equity standards:
2A: Student, family, and community engagement: Relationships
2B: Student, family, and community engagement: Communication
3A: Learning Partnerships: Shared expertise
3B: Learning Partnerships: Collaboration
3C: Learning Partnerships: Shared decision-making
1A: Understanding self and others: Understanding self
1B: Understanding self and others: Understanding others

STANDARD 5 (CONT)

Engage the local community and represent the values and expectations they hold for their schools by:

Benchmark 5b: Ensuring school board and district transparency through a process that is open and accountable.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
5.b.1 Does the board ensure that all segments of the public are well informed of the board's roles and responsibilities? 5.b.2 Does the board make itself directly accessible to all segments of the public? 5.b.3 Does the board maintain visibility, participating actively in a variety of school and community connections? 5.b.4 Does the board ensure that district and school staff have a student-centered focus? 5.b.5 Does the board ensure the district operates in a transparent and accountable manner? 5.b.6 Does the board ensure its policies are easily accessible to staff, students, and all segments of the community?	**New:** (5.b.5) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Native American, White** **Original:** Gemberling, K.W. Smith, C.W. and Villani, J.S. (2000). *The Key Work of School Boards Guidebook.* Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association (NSBA).

Benchmark 5b alignment with PESB equity standards:
2A: Student, family, and community engagement: Relationships
2B: Student, family, and community engagement: Communication
2C: Student, family, and community engagement: Service

STANDARD 5 (CONT)

Engage the local community and represent the values and expectations they hold for their schools by:

Benchmark 5c: Ensuring district information and decisions are communicated community-wide.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
5.c.1 Does the board ensure that a proactive communications system is in place to seek and disseminate information to address issues in the schools and all areas of the community? 5.c.2 Does the board identify and use key communicator groups from all segments of the community to seek input and disseminate district information and decisions? 5.c.3 Does the board communicate district performance to all segments of the community in clear and understandable ways?	**New:** (5.c.1) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** (5.c.3) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hispanic, Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** (5.c.3) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Students with Disabilities** **Original:** Gemberling, K.W. Smith, C.W. and Villani, J.S. Eadie, D. (2005). *Five habits of high-impact school boards.* Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Education, Rowman and Littlefield Publishing Group and the National School Boards Association.

Benchmark 5c alignment with PESB equity standards:
2A: Student, family, and community engagement: Relationships
2B: Student, family, and community engagement: Communication
2C: Student, family, and community engagement: Service

STANDARD 5 (CONT)

Engage the local community and represent the values and expectations they hold for their schools by:

Benchmark 5d: Soliciting input from staff and a wide spectrum of the community so that a diverse range of interests and perspectives on issues is considered.

Indicators for Evaluation	References
5.d.1 Does the board seek input from a diversity of parents, students, community groups, service organizations, and local governing bodies on important matters? 5.d.2 Does the board seek meaningful input from a diversity of staff on changes needed to strengthen instructional programs? 5.d.3 Does the board carefully consider input from all segments of staff and the community in its decision making?	**New:** (5.d.1, 5.d.3) Lorentzen, I. (2021). *A Report about Effective Boardsmanship in Relation to Seven Student Ethnicities.* [Manuscript in preparation]. wssda.org/research **Section: Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders** **Original:** Gemberling, K.W. Smith, C.W. and Villani, J.S. (2000). *The Key Work of School Boards Guidebook.* Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association (NSBA).

Benchmark 5d alignment with PESB equity standards:
3A: Learning Partnerships: Shared expertise
3B: Learning Partnerships: Collaboration
3C: Learning Partnerships: Shared decision-making


“Effective school board governance is not intuitive, but research provides a guide on the highest-leverage principles.”

Standards for Individual School Directors

The actions of individual school board members impact the effectiveness of the board as a governance body.

As anyone who has served on a team, committee, or orchestra knows, the actions of one or two members can have a significant impact on the entire group. Official school board action is taken by a quorum of the board, but the words, behaviors, or intentions of an individual board member can affect the tone within the district and the community as it relates to its schools. The School Board Standards describe actions that positively support student academic achievement. The Standards for Individual School Directors describe the expectations for school board members as elected officials entrusted by their communities to hold themselves to high standards.

The Standards for Individual School Directors describe six essential areas of focus for individual board members to contribute productively as a member of their school board:

1. Values and Ethical Behavior
2. Leadership
3. Communication
4. Professional Development
5. Accountability
6. Commitment to Educational Equity

1. Values and Ethical Behavior

Individual school directors model ethical behavior and are guided by values that:

Indicators

a. Place students' needs first.

b. Demonstrate commitment to equity and high standards of achievement for each student.

c. Commit to treating each individual with dignity and respect.

d. Model high ethical standards.

e. Advocate for public education.

Alignment with PESB equity standards:
4B: Leading for educational equity: Commitment
4C: Leading for educational equity: Advocacy

2. Leadership

Individual school directors serve as educational leaders in their communities and state by:

Indicators

a. Contributing to thoughtful governance discussions and decisions by being well informed, open-minded and deliberative.

b. Understanding that authority rests with the board as a whole and not with individual directors.

c. Articulating and modeling appropriate school director roles and responsibilities.

d. Actively participating in school director duties and responsibilities.

e. Demonstrating group membership and leadership skills, working within the board structure.

f. Respecting the board's role in policy making and supporting all adopted board policies.

Alignment with PESB equity standards:
2A: Student, family, and community engagement: Relationships
3B: Learning Partnerships: Collaboration

3. Communication

Individual school directors engage in ethical, transparent and inclusive communications by:

Indicators

a. Building and maintaining positive connections with the community and staff.

b. Communicating accurately and honestly, with awareness of the impact of their words and actions.

c. Listening carefully and with an open mind.

d. Maintaining civility and treating all people with respect and dignity.

e. Maintaining confidentiality of appropriate matters.

f. Referring people with needs or concerns to appropriate staff.

g. Welcoming family, student, staff and community input.

Alignment with PESB equity standards:
2A: Student, family, and community engagement: Relationships
2B: Student, family, and community engagement: Communication
2C: Student, family, and community engagement: Service
3A: Learning Partnerships: Shared expertise
3B: Learning Partnerships: Collaboration



4. Professional Development

Individual school directors seek continuous growth in their own skills and knowledge by:

Indicators

a. Committing the time and energy necessary to be informed and competent.

b. Keeping abreast of current issues, research, applicable laws, regulations, and policies that affect public education.

c. Participating in professional development, individually and with the board/superintendent team.

Alignment with PESB equity standards:
1B: Understanding self and others: Understanding others
3A: Learning Partnerships: Shared expertise

5. Accountability

Individual school directors are accountable in their governance role to their students, families, staff, and community by:

Indicators

a. Contributing to a functioning and effective board-superintendent team.

b. Taking personal responsibility for their own words and actions and the impact they have on others.

c. Respecting and abiding by board decisions.

d. Meeting expectations for transparency, including disclosing potential conflicts of interest and refraining from discussing or voting on those issues.

e. Complying with board policies and all laws.

Alignment with PESB equity standards:
1C: Understanding self and others: Responsiveness
3B: Learning Partnerships: Collaboration
3C: Learning Partnerships: Shared decision-making

6. Commitment to Educational Equity

Individual school directors prioritize the success of each and every student in their district by:

Indicators

a. Engaging in ongoing learning about educational equity, diversity, inclusion and cultural competency as it relates to the role of the board.

b. Seeking to understand their own culture and how it may differ from others'.

c. Honoring the diverse experiences, strengths and barriers to success of students, staff and families.

d. Collaboratively and proactively working to remove barriers for students, staff and families.

e. Ensuring multiple perspectives are heard and honored by providing equitable opportunities for input.

f. Fostering a culture of dignity and belonging by example and through policy.

Alignment with PESB equity standards:
1A: Understanding self and others: Understanding self
1B: Understanding self and others: Understanding others
1C: Understanding self and others: Responsiveness
4A: Leading for educational equity: Self-reflection
4B: Leading for educational equity: Commitment



Putting the Standards into Practice

Striving for continual improvement as a governance team

Although school boards have adopted varying governance structures, and each district and community is unique, WSSDA encourages all school boards to put the Standards into practice in a way that is appropriate for their district. Not every benchmark and indicator under each Standard may be directly applicable to all districts.

Adopt policy supporting the Standards and annual Board Self-Assessment

In addition to taking the online Board Self-Assessment Survey annually and discussing the results as a team, boards are encouraged to include both the Standards and the commitment to annual self-assessment in their board policies. WSSDA's Online Model Policies 1005: Key Functions of the Board and 1820: Board Self-Assessment provide examples for incorporating them. Once adopted as policy, the Standards can be shared with staff and community to clarify board roles and responsibilities.

Ensure board policies are up-to-date, legal, and complete

Many of the Standards refer to the board adopting and following sound board policies. Keeping your board's policies current is challenging because changes in the law and recommended practices occur frequently. That means purposeful policy-making and revision is an ongoing task for school boards. WSSDA provides two services to assist with this work, including Online Model Policies and the Policy Manual Review Services. Both can assist in updating a board's policy manual and keeping it that way. Learn more at **wssda.org/policyreview.**

Build on individual commitments with board operating agreements

Both the Board Standards and Standards for Individual School Directors can be used as a foundation for board operating agreements or operating protocols. These tools are used to clarify and codify agreements among all members of the board-superintendent team. They serve as a written commitment by each team member to the high-leverage strategies proven to be effective in elevating student achievement as the primary goal.

Strive towards goals through the Boards of Distinction Program

The Washington School Board Standards also form the basis of the program that identifies WSSDA's Boards of Distinction and Boards of the Year. This annual program recognizes boards that demonstrate that they are applying these high-leverage practices in their governance and that they can show demonstrable positive outcomes for their district's students.

Selection for recognition is based on a board's application of the Standards to its own work. Participants have cited a variety of benefits just from going through the application process. Board members report that it allows for self-examination of the board's leadership and governance of the district's key initiatives. Boards of Distinction and Boards of the Year are recognized annually at WSSDA's Annual Conference. Learn more at **wssda.org/bod.**

Continue learning through WSSDA OnBoard

In 2017, WSSDA established OnBoard, a framework for curriculum and training that aligns with the Washington School Board Standards, the Standards for Individual School Directors, and WSSDA's online Board Self-Assessment Survey. This professional development program is designed specifically for the role of the school board member, incorporating best practices for adult learning theory. The highly-collaborative learning experiences give school directors a hands-on opportunity to learn more about the Standards and how to implement them in their own districts. Learn more about WSSDA OnBoard at **wssda.org/onboard**.

Formed in **1922**, the Washington State School Directors' Association has grown to include all **1,477** locally elected school board directors across Washington.

As a state agency, per chapter **28A.345 RCW**, WSSDA supports its members with research-based **leadership development** opportunities, **policy and legal** resources, and **legislative advocacy** support.

This work is critically important because school board directors build the future of public education by setting the policy, governance, and budgetary priorities for all of Washington's **295 school districts**, serving over **1.1 million students**.

For more information, visit wssda.org

WSSDA

