



ASSESSING BOARD EFFECTIVENESS:

**RESOURCES FOR BOARD
OF TRUSTEES SELF-EVALUATION**

Community College League of California



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ASSESSING BOARD EFFECTIVENESS

Successful colleges are the result of effective leadership and governance. Effective leadership and governance are the result of ensuring that highly qualified people serve in leadership positions and that they embrace their responsibilities and continually improve their performance. Effective governing boards are committed to assessing how well they perform their governance responsibilities and to using the results of the assessment to enhance board effectiveness.

Community college boards are under more scrutiny than ever before by the public, media, government, the accrediting commission, and college constituencies; these entities expect and deserve a high degree of professionalism and performance from their trustees. An effective board self-evaluation process responds to these expectations.

While it is true that the public “evaluates” board performance when it re-elects (or not) trustees to the

board, this political evaluation provides only the broadest feedback to the board. To assess and improve its performance, a board needs ongoing information on how it is doing on specific roles and responsibilities – information that simply cannot be obtained through the election process.

Assessing board performance involves looking at the board as a unit. While individual trustee behavior contributes to effective board functioning, the focus of a board self-evaluation is not on individuals, but on how they work together to govern the district. The evaluation focuses on board policies and practices and the role of the board in representing the community, setting policy direction, working with the CEO, and monitoring institutional effectiveness.

Board Responsibilities:

- Adopt a board self-evaluation policy and process;
- Implement the policy – regularly conduct a board self-evaluation;
- Discuss the results of the evaluation to identify strengths and areas for improvement; and
- Use the results to enhance board effectiveness and set annual board goals.

Given the unique nature of the relationship between the board and CEO, the evaluations of the board and the CEO are intertwined. When the board evaluates itself, it is evaluating in part how well the CEO supports the board; when it evaluates the CEO, it is evaluating the direction and support the board provides for that position. The CEO contributes to board evaluation and evaluates his or her support and leadership to the board. The board conducts the CEO evaluation and looks at its own behavior in fostering CEO effectiveness. A number of boards schedule their CEO and board self-evaluation discussions in conjunction with each other to capitalize on this link.

The importance of regular board self-evaluations is underscored by the Western Association's Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. Standard IV.B.1.g states that "The governing board's self-evaluation processes for assessing board performance are clearly defined, implemented, and published in its policies or bylaws." The accreditation self study, conducted every six years, should include evidence that boards have a policy and procedure and have conducted regular self-evaluations.

Purpose and Outcomes

The purpose of the board self-evaluation is to identify areas of board functioning that are working well and those that may need improvement. It is an opportunity for an open and candid discussion about board and trustee responsibilities, and trustees' interests and desires for the college(s). Exploring these areas fosters communication among the members and leads to more cohesive board teams. Reports from boards that regularly conduct self-evaluations include that they gain an increased appreciation for and understanding of their fellow trustees, their board meetings run more smoothly and they receive better information, and they increase the time they spend on college policy, goals and accomplishments.

The desired outcomes of a board self-evaluation include:

- a summary of what the board does well and its accomplishments;
- a better understanding of what is needed from each trustee and the CEO to be an effective board and board/CEO team;
- an assessment of progress on the prior year's goals and identify what needs to be completed; *and*
- goals and tasks for the coming year related to board performance and its leadership for district goals.

When planning an evaluation, boards should ask themselves what they want to learn from it. The emphasis may change from year to year; the evaluation may be tweaked to focus on a specific area. For instance, during an accreditation self-study, the board may want to focus on the accreditation standards. If the board has hired a new CEO in the past year, the evaluation may focus on the board/CEO relationship. Colleges generally undergo comprehensive planning every four to six year – boards may wish to focus on their role in planning during that process. Or, if a board has not been functioning well, it may wish to focus on teamwork and ethics.

Evaluation Process

Self-evaluation processes range from informal discussions to formal, structured assessment surveys or interviews. A board evaluation, whether formal or informal, should result in a report that describes the process, summarizes the results, and identifies actions that the board may take as a result of the evaluation. The self-evaluation process and results are public information under California's Brown Act.

Annual board self-evaluations provide a time for the board to review the past year and set priorities for the coming year. A comprehensive self-evaluation, involving more extensive surveys, may occur every two or three years. Boards may choose to select processes to review more often; for instance, some boards will quickly assess a board meeting discussion and agenda content at the end of each meeting, which provides immediate feedback. Another example is a board assessing how it oriented and integrated newly elected trustees, or its process of hiring a new CEO, after those events occurred.

Informal Evaluation. Informal processes do not use surveys or structured interviews to gather information. Rather, the board allots time for a substantive discussion of board strengths, accomplishments, weaknesses and areas for improvement. It is recommended that such discussions be structured and facilitated by a consultant working with the board to allow the board chair ample opportunity to participate. The consultant, a member of the board, or the CEO prepares a report that summarizes the discussion and identifies further board action.

Surveys. In recent years, surveys have become the most common approach to gathering information about board performance. There are a number of models and examples; however, the board should review any survey prior to its distribution to ensure that the questions address areas of interest to the board.

Surveys should be designed to assess two areas of board functioning:

- The progress made on achieving board priorities and tasks set the previous year; *and*
- Board performance on characteristics of effective board functioning.

Survey instruments that assess achievement on board priorities need to be developed at the local level as the criteria vary from district to district (and perhaps from year to year). Board priorities are derived from two main sources. One key source is the college's goals and plans; the board's priorities are developed in conjunction with the CEO's priorities. The second source may be areas of board functioning on which the board chooses to focus. *Some examples are included in the section on criteria in these resources and in Sample 3 in Appendix B.*

There are two primary types of instruments that assess board functioning. The first involves using a generic survey based on criteria that reflect commonly accepted standards that define board effectiveness. The second involves developing a survey using criteria in local board policy and practice related to ethics, board meetings, delegation to the CEO, monitoring policy implementation, and other

board roles. An alternative approach is to use accreditation standards on the board as criteria – this approach would be appropriate when the district is undergoing the self-study.

The criteria in these surveys are further explored in the section on criteria, and samples are provided in Appendix B.

Interviews. Another evaluation strategy is for someone, usually a consultant, to conduct structured interviews of all board members, the CEO and others (if any) identified by the board. Through a series of questions, the interviewer gathers information about board performance, summarizes the results of the interviews and writes a report to the board. It is a qualitative approach to evaluation.

An interview approach allows for more in-depth exploration of issues, highlights accomplishments, and identifies specific areas of concern and suggestions for improvement. It is beneficial to use when the board has not had an evaluation for some time, when trustees prefer this method and don't want to complete surveys or don't find survey information useful, or when there are ongoing concerns about board functioning. Drawbacks include that it is a time-consuming process, and does not, in itself, result in numerical ratings that can be compared from year to year.

Designing the Evaluation Process

All boards should have a policy on the self-evaluation process. Periodically, the board should review the policy and process to ensure it continues to provide useful information to the board. *Sample policies are in Appendix A.*

A committee of the board may be assigned to develop and recommend the process and criteria to the board; the CEO and board executive assistant usually provides support to the committee. Alternatively, the CEO and his or her staff may be asked to research and recommend a self-evaluation process to the board. The board will decide on specific purposes of the evaluation, whether or not the evaluation will include a survey and/or interviews, who will participate, which criteria will be used, consultant roles (if any), how the results will be shared and discussed, and who will write the report.

Designing the process involves answering the following questions:

- Will the self evaluation be conducted through an evaluation discussion, survey, interviews, or a combination of approaches?
- Who will be asked to evaluate the board?
- Who will gather the information and compile the results?
- How and when will the results be shared with the board?

Who Participates in the Board's Self-Evaluation?

The expectation is that the board evaluates itself. Each and every publicly elected trustee should be involved in assessing board performance and in discussing the results of the evaluation. Newly elected trustees may think they don't have enough experience on the board to provide useful feedback; however, virtually all new trustees have spent time observing the board prior to being elected, and their input can be very valuable. Student trustees should be encouraged to contribute feedback and participate in the evaluation discussion.

The CEO is in a position to provide essential feedback to the board on its performance, and is key to ensuring that the board has the information and other resources to fulfill its responsibilities on many evaluation criteria. Therefore, the CEO should participate in some way, although the method of contributing feedback may be different than for the trustees or others. For instance, the CEO may provide feedback during a discussion of the results of a survey rather than completing a survey form.

A growing trend is providing an opportunity for college constituents and selected community representatives (such as those on foundation boards or advisory committees) to complete surveys on board performance. Some districts allow any employee to complete a board evaluation; others only request survey information from those college leaders (senior administration, faculty and staff representatives) who regularly attend board meetings and have the opportunity to see the board in action.

The benefit of seeking broad input is that the board gathers information on how it is perceived by others. However, the results of such an evaluation may or may not be useful and must be considered with care. Respondents may have expectations for the board that do not reflect appropriate roles and responsibilities. It is not unusual that trustees learn that college constituencies are unaware of governing board roles and responsibilities. A negative evaluation may result from board decisions that were unpopular with one or more internal constituencies, even though the board was acting for the good of the entire district or community.

If the board evaluation process includes feedback from college and community, the summary of the survey or feedback should be presented separately from the board's self-evaluation data, so that the board may compare trustee perceptions with those of others.

Evaluation Discussion & Report

The evaluation session must take place in an open meeting, which could be a regular business meeting, workshop, or retreat. The schedule should allow for enough time to discuss the evaluation and identify priorities for the following year. The discussion of what the results mean and what can be improved is generally more useful and valuable than the specific numbers or ratings obtained from the instrument. It may be useful to hold the discussion early in the budget development process to ensure that board and CEO priorities can be incorporated.

Consultants and facilitators are often helpful to boards in developing and conducting an evaluation. They can provide an independent, non-biased influence to help keep board discussions focused and productive. They allow the board chair, who would normally chair the discussion, to participate fully.

An evaluation is not complete until a final report is prepared that summarizes the discussion of the results and identifies actions to be taken as a result of the evaluation. Doing a report helps ensure that the results will be used and that any issues will be addressed. It is evidence for the public and college community that the board is serious about assessing its performance and that trustees are committed to being an effective governing body.

Evaluation Criteria

Boards may use a variety of types of criteria to assess performance, and may use a combination of approaches. A good practice is to combine assessing progress on board priorities (#1) with criteria from one of the other types (#2, 3, 4):

1. Progress on annual board goals or priorities established by the board, including board roles in furthering the strategic goals of the district.
2. Commonly accepted standards for community college boards of trustees.
3. Criteria gleaned from the board's own policies, including, but not limited to, the code of ethics policy, practices related to conducting board meetings, and delegation to the CEO.
4. During an accreditation self study, compliance with the Accrediting Commission standards for governing boards.

Annual Board Goals or Priorities

Effective boards identify specific goals or priorities that guide their work for the coming year. These priorities are designed to accomplish long-range institutional goals, respond to current issues, and improve performance. They are developed in conjunction with the CEO and complement the CEO's annual goals and priorities.

Annual goals clarify where board and CEO resources and time should be spent in the coming year. They comprise steps toward longer-range goals and help determine specific tasks for the board. Evaluating how well the priorities were addressed and if the board has achieved the tasks become key criteria in the board's annual self evaluation and its evaluation of the CEO the following year. Benchmarks or measures may be established as appropriate for certain goals.

On the following page are just a few examples of district goals, related board priorities or tasks, and a possible benchmark. There are countless possibilities; priorities and goals will vary from district to district and year to year.

EXAMPLE 1. District Strategic Goal: Improve Student Learning and Achievement of their Educational Goals.

Board Priority: Expect and monitor progress on establishing and assessing student learning outcomes.

Board Task: Review and discuss progress reports presented by staff on establishing and assessing student learning outcomes. (The board and CEO may establish a benchmark, such as “SLOs will be established at the program level for all career and technical education programs.”)

EXAMPLE 2. District Strategic Goal: Maintain the Fiscal Stability of the District.

Board Priority: Ensure that all board members are knowledgeable about the district’s fiscal condition.

Board Task: Hold board study sessions on state and other revenues, long-range budget projections. Support trustee education on understanding budgets, financial statements and audit reports.

Board Priority: Maintain a 7% unrestricted general fund balance.

Board Task: Expect that the budget presented for review will include a 7% unrestricted general fund balance.

EXAMPLE 3. District Strategic Goal: Promote a college culture that fosters innovation, excellence, and commitment to education.

District Objective: Strengthen professional and leadership development opportunities for all staff.

Board Priority: Focus on enhancing management and leadership development to address retirements and turnover in administration.

Board Task: Expect and review a report on leadership development within the administration.

Board Task: Expect that the budget will include resources for professional and leadership development.

These examples barely scratch the surface of possible criteria and approaches to goal setting. Governing boards and CEOs will have their own approach and language to describe goals, objectives, priorities and/or tasks. *Other examples are included in Sample 3 in Appendix B.*

Board Development Goals

In addition to priorities related to achieving institutional goals, effective boards will set goals related to improving their own performance as a governing body. These goals may reflect areas that respond to current conditions (such as passing a bond election or hiring a new CEO), foster board leadership, and/or respond to accreditation recommendations or areas that were not rated highly in a board self-evaluation. Examples include:

1. **Board Priority:** Strengthen the board's connections with and knowledge of K-12 trends and issues.

Board Task: Participate in a joint workshop with local K-12 boards of trustees.

2. **Board Priority:** Ensure that board meetings are positive and productive.

Board Task: Revise the board meeting agenda to include a consent agenda on routine items to allow more time to discuss issues.

Board Task: Maintain respectful, inclusive and professional attitudes and language during board meetings.

3. **Board Priority:** Strengthen the board's policy role.

Board Task: Approve an updated board policy manual by the end of the academic year.

Board Task: Uphold the principle that delegation to the CEO is only through the board as a unit.

Sample 3 in Appendix B, Sample Evaluation Instruments, provides one illustration of this approach.

Board Performance Standards

A common approach to board self-evaluation is to use a survey based on commonly accepted criteria for effective boards. Boards may develop their own survey based on general criteria or adapt or adopt instruments used by others. *Appendix B, Sample Evaluation Instructions includes a comprehensive survey as well as a short form.*

The survey should help the board assess its performance in the areas on the following pages.

District Mission and Planning: Does the board regularly review the mission? How involved is the board in planning? What issues have most occupied the board's time and attention during the past year? Were these closely tied to the mission and goals of the institution?

Board Policy Role: Does the board understand and fulfill its policy role? Is the board policy manual up to date? Does the board clearly differentiate between its role and the administrative role of the CEO?

Board/CEO Relationship: Is there an open, respectful partnership and good communication between the board and the CEO? Does the board clearly delegate to and set clear expectations for the CEO? Is there an effective CEO evaluation process? Does the board create an environment that supports CEO success?

Board/Community Relationship: Does the board represent the community it serves? Is the board knowledgeable about community trends and needs? Does the board help promote the image of the college in the community? Does the board effectively advocate on behalf of the college?

Educational Programs and Quality: Does the board understand the educational programs and services? Is there a process in place that enables the board to monitor the educational quality? Does the board ensure that the faculty is appropriately involved in decision-making? Does the board support academic freedom?

Fiduciary Responsibilities: Does the board ensure that the district is fiscally healthy? Does it approve a budget that supports educational and strategic goals? Does it effectively monitor fiscal management? Does it approve and monitor a facilities plan that addresses construction and maintenance?

Board/Staff Relations & Human Resources: Does board policy provide for equitable treatment of staff? Does the board provide leadership and clear parameters for the collective bargaining process? Does the board refrain from micromanaging staff work? Does board policy and practice ensure faculty, staff, and student participation in decision-making?

Board Leadership: Does the board understand and uphold its role and responsibilities? Does it have and adhere to a code of ethics? Does the board deal effectively with perceived ethical violations? Do board members declare and avoid conflicts of interests? Do board members work together as a unit for the good of the district? Do board members respect each other's opinions? Does the board have its own annual goals and objectives and evaluate itself on how it has achieved them?

Board Meetings and Agendas: Do meeting agendas focus on key policy issues and board responsibilities? Does the board have the information it needs to make good decisions? Are meetings conducted in such a manner that the purposes are achieved effectively and efficiently?

Trustee Education: Do new board members, including the student trustee, receive an orientation to the roles and responsibilities and to the district's mission and policies? Are all board members encouraged to engage in ongoing education about college and state issues? Is information shared among board members about important issues?

Criteria from Local Board Policy

One of the purposes of self-evaluation is to answer the question, "Are we doing what we say we are going to do?" A board may decide to use criteria derived from its local policies. The code of ethics policy, and policies on board roles, meetings, delegation to the CEO, and how the board monitors policy implementation are all rich sources of criteria. A benefit of this approach is that the board reviews its policies during the course of the evaluation.

Legal Authority and Responsibilities.

Education Code 70902 defines the authority and responsibilities for community college boards of trustees. Governing boards fulfill these responsibilities through adopting relevant policies and exercising their authority at board meetings.

Evaluating a board's performance of these responsibilities is addressed through the other criteria described in this chapter, including that the board has an up-to-date policy manual, complies with its policies, and is satisfied with their board meeting agendas and discussion.

Using this approach requires a board committee and/or staff to develop a customized survey instrument. The following are examples of items found in various board policies:

1. Individual trustees have no legal authority outside the meetings of the board; they shall conduct their relationships with the community college staff, the local citizenry, and all media of the community on the basis of this fact.
(From a board code of ethics policy.)
2. The board delegates to the CEO the executive responsibility for administering the policies adopted by the board and executing all decisions of the Board requiring administrative action.
(From a board policy on delegation to the CEO.)
3. Board members shall not communicate among themselves by the use of any form of communication (e.g., personal intermediaries, e-mail, or other technological device) in order to reach a collective concurrence regarding any item that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the board.
(From a policy on communication among board members.)

Sample 4 in Appendix B, Sample Evaluation Instruments, provides an illustrative example based on ACCT's Standards of Practice.

Accreditation Standards

Every six years, colleges undergo the reaccreditation process, which includes a comprehensive self-study. As part of the self-study, boards may wish to assess whether or not they are meeting the specific standards in ACCJC's Standard IV.B.1. This assessment should be done the year prior to or early in the self-study process to allow the board time to correct any deficiencies.

The Commission appoints teams that visit colleges to confirm the self-study and review college's compliance with all standards. They review evidence that boards uphold Standard IV.B.1, including that they have regularly evaluated themselves. Annual evaluation results and evidence of how boards have used the results to improve board performance reflect well on the college and the board.

See Sample 5 in Appendix B, Sample Evaluation Instruments, for a common approach.

Summary

This resource guide and the appendices are intended to help boards of trustees design a self-evaluation process that meets specific board needs and cultures. The information should help boards determine the approach they will use, which criteria will provide the best information for the board, who will be asked to evaluate the board, and how the results will be used.

Governing boards that engage in the self-evaluation process and thoughtfully consider and use the results to improve their performance provide excellent leadership for their communities and colleges. They are embracing their responsibilities and ensuring that board members have the skills and knowledge to lead and govern. High performing boards of trustees add value to their districts, thereby ensuring that their colleges make a difference in the lives of students and for the community.

Resources

The Community College League of California provides consultants skilled in helping boards design and evaluation process, conducting self-evaluations and facilitating the self-evaluation discussion.
www.ccleague.org

The Association of Community College Trustees has information on board self evaluation on its website, and provides consultants to assist boards in the process.
www.acct.org

The Association of Governing Boards for Colleges and Universities provides consultant services and sample criteria, which may be adapted to fit community colleges.
www.agb.org

BoardSource is dedicated to increasing the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations by strengthening their boards of directors.
www.boardsource.org

APPENDIX A

Sample Policies on Board Self-Evaluation

Board policy should include a policy on the board self-evaluation, which may be accompanied by implementing procedures. The following examples are from districts that subscribe to the Community College League's Board Policy and Administrative Procedure Subscription Service; some examples reflect language provided in the League's policy template. The Service encourages districts to develop policy that reflects local practice. The reference for the board self-evaluation policy is Accreditation Standard IV.b.1.e & g.

The samples on the following pages are provided for illustrative purposes and may not reflect recent policy changes at the respective districts.

SAMPLE 1. YOSEMITE CCD

The board is committed to assessing its own performance as a Board in order to identify its strengths and areas in which it may improve its functioning.

To that end, the board has established the following processes:

- Once a year, at the annual Board Retreat, the board will conduct a self-evaluation.
- The evaluation instrument incorporates criteria contained in these Board policies regarding Board operations, as well as criteria defining Board effectiveness promulgated by recognized practitioners in the field.
- Board members will be asked to complete the evaluation instruments and submit them to the Secretary/Clerk of the Board prior to the retreat.
- A summary of the evaluations will be presented and discussed at the Board retreat session.

SAMPLE 2. MT. SAN ANTONIO CCD

The Board is committed to assessing its own performance as a Board in order to identify its strengths and areas in which it may improve its functioning.

The Board of Trustees will conduct a self-assessment process every two years to include:

- The completion of a self-assessment instrument by each member of the Board.
- A discussion of the compilation of the results.
- The development of a set of objectives for the next year (or next two years).

SAMPLE 3. NORTH ORANGE COUNTY CCD

Policy

- 1.0 The Board is committed to assessing its own performance as a board in order to identify its strengths and areas in which it may improve its functioning.
- 2.0 The Board shall conduct an evaluation process in April of odd-numbered years and place the results on a regular board meeting agenda for review and appropriate action.

Procedure

- 1.0 The following process will be used to conduct the self evaluation of the Board:
 - 1.1 An assessment form will be distributed to all Board members and members of the District staff who regularly participate at Board meetings at the first meeting in April of each odd-numbered year.
 - 1.2 The completed assessment forms shall be submitted to the Chancellor's Office on or before the second meeting in April of odd-numbered years.
 - 1.3 The Chancellor's Office shall complete results of the assessment for distribution at the first meeting in May of odd-numbered years.
 - 1.4 The assessment results shall be included as an agenda item for review and appropriate action at the second meeting in May of odd-numbered years.

SAMPLE 4. PALOMAR COLLEGE

The Governing Board is committed to assessing its own performance as a Board in order to identify its strengths and areas in which it may improve its functioning.

To that end, the Governing Board has established the following processes:

- A committee of the Governing Board shall be appointed in March to determine the instrument or process to be used in Board self-evaluation. Any evaluation instrument shall incorporate criteria contained in these Board Policies regarding Governing Board operations, as well as criteria defining Board effectiveness promulgated by recognized practitioners in the field.
- The process for evaluation shall be recommended to and approved by the Governing Board.

- If an instrument is used, all Governing Board members will be asked to complete the evaluation instrument and submit them to Secretary to the Board.
- A summary of the evaluations will be presented and discussed at a Board session scheduled for that purpose. The results will be used to identify accomplishments in the past year and goals for the following year.
- The goals of the self-evaluation are to clarify roles, to enhance harmony and understanding among Board members, and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Board meetings. The ultimate goal is to improve College District operations and policies for the benefit of the students and employees of Palomar College and the citizens of the Palomar Community College District.
- The evaluation instrument will be completed by each individual Board member, discussed at an annual Board retreat, and maintained in the District Office.

SAMPLE 5: PALO VERDE CCD

The Board is committed to assessing its own performance as a board in order to identify its strengths and areas in which it may improve its functioning.

To that end, the Board has established the following processes:

- The Board shall, in April, determine the instrument or process to be used in board self-evaluation.
- Any evaluation instrument shall incorporate criteria contained in these board policies regarding the board operations, as well as criteria defining board effectiveness promulgated by recognized practitioners in the field.
- The process for evaluation shall be recommended to and approved by the Board.
- If an instrument is used, all board members will be asked to complete the evaluation instrument and submit them to the Secretary of the Board.
- A summary of the evaluations will be presented and discussed at a board session scheduled for that purpose. The results will be used to identify accomplishments in the past year and goals for the following year.

SAMPLE 6. SIERRA CCD

The Board of Trustees realizes they are the legal owners and final authority for the institution whose assets and operations they hold in trust. The Board is committed to assessing its own performance as a board in order to identify its strengths and areas in which it may improve its functioning.

To that end, the Board has established the following process:

The Board will annually evaluate and assess its own performance, using the Trustee Evaluation Instrument and process as determined by the Board.

The instrument shall incorporate criteria contained in these board policies regarding Board operations, as well as criteria defining board effectiveness promulgated by recognized practitioners in the field. All trustees will be asked to complete the evaluation instrument, from which a summary will be presented and discussed in a Board meeting scheduled for that purpose.

The purpose of the Board self-evaluation is to identify those areas of Board functions which are working well and those which may need improvement. In addition to identifying specific issues, the discussion of the Board's roles and responsibilities can build communication and understanding among Board members of each others' values and strengths and lead to a stronger, more cohesive working group. The Superintendent/President may also provide the Board with comments and perspectives about the performance and accomplishments of the Board during the previous year and may suggest goals for the following year.

APPENDIX B

Sample Evaluation Instruments and Approaches

SAMPLE 1

GENERAL EFFECTIVENESS CRITERIA COMPREHENSIVE LONG FORM

Sample 1 consists of a comprehensive set of criteria reflecting commonly-accepted standards of board effectiveness. Boards may delete items and add others than address issues specific to the board.

If boards wish to add criteria such as local policy and board goals, it is suggested they select a limited number of items from this comprehensive survey, or use the short form survey provided as Sample 2.

Rating Scales

Two commonly used rating scales are:

A. Rate your level of agreement

- 5 Strongly Agree
- 4 Agree
- 3 Neutral
- 2 Disagree
- 1 Strongly Disagree

B. Rate how the board performs:

- 4 Outstanding
- 3 Good
- 2 Needs Improvement
- 1 Unable to evaluate

Survey Items

I. Mission and Planning

1. Board members are knowledgeable about the culture, history, and values of the district.
2. The board regularly reviews the mission and purposes of the institution.
3. The board spends adequate time discussing future needs and direction of the district.
4. The board assures that there is an effective planning process and is appropriately involved in the process.
5. The board assures that district plans are responsive to community needs.

6. The board has adopted and monitors the implementation of the district's strategic, educational and facilities master plans.
7. The board sets annual goals or priorities in conjunction with the CEO and monitors progress toward them.

II. Policy Role

8. The board clearly understands its policy role and differentiates its role from those of the CEO and college staff.
9. The board assures that the district complies with relevant laws, regulations and accreditation standards.
10. The board's policy manual is up-to-date and comprehensive.
11. The board relies on board policy in making decisions and in guiding the work of the district.

III. Board–CEO Relations

12. The board maintains a positive working relationship with the CEO.
13. The board clearly delegates the administration of the district to the CEO.
14. The board sets and communicates clear expectations for CEO performance.
15. The board regularly evaluates CEO performance.
16. The board periodically reviews the CEO contract to assure appropriate support and compensation.

IV. Community Relations & Advocacy

17. Board members act on behalf of the public and citizens in the district when making decisions.
18. Board members are active in community affairs
19. The board advocates on behalf of the district to local, state, and federal governments.
20. The board actively supports the district's foundation(s) and fundraising efforts.

V. Educational Programs and Quality

21. The board is knowledgeable about the district's programs and services.
22. The board is knowledgeable about the educational and workforce training needs in the community.

23. The board has established expectations or standards that enable it to monitor the quality and effectiveness of the educational program.
24. The board regularly receives and reviews reports on institutional effectiveness.
25. The board is appropriately involved in the accreditation process.
26. The board understands and protects academic freedom.

VI. Fiduciary Role

27. The board assures that the budget reflects priorities in the district's plans.
28. Board policies assure effective fiscal management and internal controls.
29. The board regularly receives and reviews reports on the financial status of the institution.
30. The board reviews the annual audit and monitors responses to recommendations.
31. The board adopts and monitors the implementation of a facilities master plan.
32. The board has provided appropriate direction for seeking external funding.
33. The board maintains an adequate financial reserve.

VII. Human Resources and Staff Relations

34. The board's human resources policies provide for fair and equitable treatment of staff.
35. The board has established and follows clear parameters for collective bargaining.
36. The board has and follows protocols regarding communication with college employees.
37. Board members refrain from attempting to manage employee work.
38. The board expects and supports faculty, staff, and student participation in college decision-making.

VIII. Board Leadership

39. The board understands its roles and responsibilities.
40. The board expresses its authority only as a unit.
41. Board members understand that they have no legal authority outside board meetings.

42. The board regularly reviews its code of ethics or standards of practice and has a policy on addressing violations of the code.
43. Board members uphold and comply with the board's code of ethics.
44. Board members avoid conflicts of interest and the perception of such conflicts.
45. Board members annually file a statement of economic interests.
46. Once a decision is made, board members uphold the decision of the board.
47. Board discussions and relationships reflect a climate of trust and respect.

IX. Board Meetings

48. Board meetings are conducted in an orderly, efficient manner.
49. Board meetings and study sessions provide sufficient opportunity to explore key issues.
50. Agenda items provide sufficient information to enable good board decision-making.
51. The board understands and adheres to the Brown Act.
52. The board maintains confidentiality of privileged information.

X. Board Education

53. New members participate in a comprehensive orientation to the board and district.
54. Board members participate in trustee development activities.
55. The board evaluation process helps the board enhance its performance.
56. The Board measures its accomplishments against board goals.

SAMPLE 2

GENERAL BOARD EFFECTIVENESS CRITERIA

SHORT FORM

The “short form” evaluation may be used when the self-evaluation includes assessing progress on annual board priorities or tasks or evaluating performance on local board codes of ethics. It may also be appropriate as a basis for college employee evaluations of the board.

Possible Rating Scales:

A. Please rate how the board performs on the following:

- 4 Outstanding
- 3 Good
- 2 Needs Improvement
- 1 Unable to evaluate

B. Please rate your level of agreement with the following criteria:

- 5 Strongly Agree
- 4 Agree
- 3 Neutral
- 2 Disagree
- 1 Strongly Disagree

I. Mission, Planning, and Policy

1. The board assures that there is an effective planning process and is appropriately involved in the process.
2. The board regularly reviews the district’s mission and goals and monitors progress toward the goals.
3. The board fulfills its policy role; the board’s policies are up-to-date and regularly reviewed.

II. Board–CEO Relations

4. The board maintains an excellent working relationship with the CEO.
5. The board sets clear expectations for and effectively evaluates the CEO.
6. The board delegates authority to and supports the CEO.

III. Community Relations & Advocacy

7. Board members represent the interests of the citizens in the district.
8. The board advocates on behalf of the college to local, state, and federal governments.

IV. Educational Programs and Quality

9. The board effectively monitors the quality and effectiveness of the educational program and services.
10. Board members are knowledgeable about the districts educational programs and services.

V. Fiduciary Role

11. The board assures the fiscal stability and health of the district.
12. The board monitors implementation of the facilities plan.

VI. Human Resources and Staff Relations

13. Board members refrain from attempting to manage employee work.
14. The board respects faculty, staff, and student participation in college decision-making.

VII. Board Leadership

15. The board understands and fulfills its roles and responsibilities.
16. The board expresses its authority only as a unit.
17. The board regularly reviews and adheres to its code of ethics or standards of practice.
18. Board members avoid conflicts of interest and the perception of such conflicts.

VIII. Board Meetings

19. Board meeting agendas and conduct provide sufficient information and time to explore and resolve key issues.
20. The board understands and adheres to the Brown Act.

IX. Board Education

21. New members receive orientation to board roles and the institution.
22. Board members participate in trustee development activities.
23. The board evaluation process helps the board enhance its performance.

SAMPLE 3

EVALUATING PROGRESS ON BOARD GOALS, PRIORITIES AND/OR TASKS

Annual board goals or priorities are developed in conjunction with the CEO; they are the most important tasks for college leadership. Boards may also identify what the board should do – its tasks or roles – to ensure that the priorities are accomplished. These tasks reflect board responsibilities to make policy, set expectations for and delegate to the CEO, and monitor institutional performance.

Board-identified priorities and tasks become criteria for the board self-evaluation. The board rates itself on how well it performed the task or role, and how well the priority was achieved.

The evaluation criteria are established through the board setting annual priorities and tasks. Therefore the criteria are different for each board, and may vary from year to year.

The following example is for illustrative purposes only. The example reflects an approach where the board identified tasks for itself related to district strategic directions. Other examples are provided in the “Criteria” section in the resources material.

Suggested Rating Scale:

- 5 Outstanding progress or performance
- 4 Good progress or performance
- 3 Performance met barely acceptable minimum standard
- 2 Poor progress or performance
- 1 No performance or progress

	RATING
District Direction: Maintain Enrollment Growth to Better Serve Our Community	
<i>Board Task.</i> Monitor enrollment patterns by review and discussion of relevant reports.	
<i>Board Task.</i> Assure that appropriate resources are allocated to foster enrollment growth through the budget approval process and the Board’s ongoing monitoring of expenditure categories.	
District Direction: Strengthen the Fiscal Health of the District	
<i>Board Task.</i> Ensure that all Board members have adequate and appropriate knowledge related to fiscal standards and accountability.	
<i>Board Task.</i> Make sound fiscal decisions, based on district priorities and good information that ensure the long term financial health of the district.	
<i>Board Task.</i> Monitor the fiscal health of the district through review and discussion of fiscal reports that provide accurate and timely information, and by conducting and reviewing the annual audit.	
District Direction: Strengthen Communication and Organizational Functioning throughout the District	
<i>Board Task.</i> The board maintains an open and respectful partnership with the CEO.	
<i>Board Task.</i> Board members fully participate in regular board retreats and study sessions to promote thoughtful and thorough discussion of issues.	
<i>Board Task.</i> Board members are knowledgeable about and adhere to principles of effective boardsmanship.	

SAMPLE 4

CRITERIA DERIVED FROM LOCAL BOARD POLICY

Criteria that are derived from local board policies help the board respond to the question, “Are we doing what we say we are going to do?” A primary source for criteria is the board’s code of ethics policy; other sources include policies on delegation to the CEO, board meetings, board roles and responsibilities, and other policies on board operations. Evaluation instruments that use this approach must be developed locally.

The criteria on the following page are provided as examples only and are derived from the Association of Community College Trustees Standards of Practice. Boards would use the statement in their own policies as criteria in a board self evaluation instrument. A few other examples are provided in the “Criteria” section of the resource guide.

Possible Rating Scales:

A. Board performance is:

- 4 Outstanding
- 3 Good
- 2 Needs Improvement
- 1 Unable to evaluate

B. Level of agreement with the statement:

- 5 Strongly Agree
- 4 Agree
- 3 Neutral
- 2 Disagree
- 1 Strongly Disagree

	RATING
The board believes it derives its authority from the community, and that it must always act as an advocate on behalf of the entire community.	
The board clearly defines and articulates its role.	
The board creates and maintains a spirit of true cooperation and a mutually supportive relationship with its CEO.	
The board always strives to differentiate between external and internal processes in the exercise of its authority.	
Trustee members engage in a regular and ongoing process of in-service training and continuous improvement.	
Trustees come to each meeting prepared and ready to debate issues fully and openly.	
Board members vote their conscience and support the decision or policy made.	
Board behavior, and that of its members, exemplifies ethical behavior and conduct that is above reproach.	
The board endeavors to remain always accountable to the community.	
The board honestly debates the issues affecting its community and speaks with one voice once a decision or policy is made.	

SAMPLE 5 ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AS CRITERIA

Every six years, colleges undergo the reaccreditation process, which involves a self-study of colleges' compliance with accreditation standards and a visit by an accreditation team that results in recommendations from the Accrediting Commission. As part of the self-study, the board may wish to use the standards that apply to the board as criteria in an evaluation instrument. The same instrument may be used by both trustees and college employees to review board performance. Following is a sample instrument, using criteria from Standard IV.B.1 and other standards on boards and board policy.

A suggested rating scale for this approach is:

- 3 The board fully meets the standards
- 2 The board partially meets the standard
- 1 The board does not meet the standard

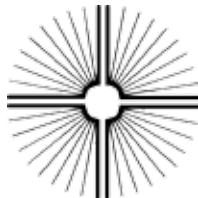
	RATING
1. The institution has a governing board that is responsible for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution.	
2. The governing board adheres to a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the chief administrator for the college or the district/system.	
3. The governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the public interest in board activities and decisions.	
4. Once the board reaches a decision, it acts as a whole.	
5. The board advocates for and defends the institution and protects it from undue influence or pressure.	
6. The governing board establishes policies consistent with the mission statement to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services and the resources necessary to support them.	
7. The governing board has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity.	
8. The institution or the governing board publishes the board bylaws and policies specifying the board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures.	

<p>9. The governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws. The board regularly evaluates its policies and practices and revises them as necessary.</p>	
<p>10. The governing board has a program for board development and new member orientation. It has a mechanism for providing for continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office.</p>	
<p>11. The governing board's self-evaluation processes for assessing board performance are clearly defined, implemented, and published in its policies or bylaws.</p>	
<p>12. The governing board has a code of ethics that includes a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that violates its code.</p>	
<p>13. The governing board is informed about and involved in the accreditation process.</p>	
<p>14. The governing board delegates full responsibility and authority to the CEO to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds him/her accountable for the operation of the district.</p>	
<p>15. In multi-college districts/systems, the governing board establishes a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the presidents of the colleges.</p>	
<p>16. The board regularly reviews the mission statement.</p>	
<p>17. The board adopts policies on academic freedom and responsibility, student academic honesty, and specific institutional beliefs or worldviews.</p>	
<p>18. The board has adopted personnel policies that are available for information and review. Such policies are equitably and consistently administered.</p>	
<p>19. The board has a written policy providing for faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation in decision-making processes.</p>	
<p>20. Through established governance structures, processes, and practices, the governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students work together for the good of the institution.</p>	

SAMPLE 6 OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

The previous five samples include items that require an evaluative rating and provide quantifiable data. Another approach, which may be used in combination with any of the five samples, is to ask open-ended questions that gather qualitative information. Following are some examples of questions that may be asked either on a survey or in an interview process. A board may develop other questions that address specific issues and concerns.

1. What are the board's greatest strengths?
2. What are the major accomplishments of the board in the past year?
3. What are areas in which the board could improve?
4. In order for our board to become a high performing board we need to
5. As a trustee, I am most pleased about _____
6. As a trustee, I have concerns about _____
7. As a trustee, I would like to see the following changes in how the board operates _____
8. What issues have most occupied the Board's time and attention during the past year? Were these closely tied to the mission and goals of the District and the Board?
9. Please describe how the board functions as a team. Is it functioning as a team as well as it should? Why or why not?
10. Please describe the board's relationship with the CEO? What does the board do to maintain a positive relationship? What does the board needs to change, if anything?
11. Describe a typical board meeting. Do the agendas and conduct of the meeting effectively meet the purposes of board meetings? Why or why not?
12. I recommend that the board has the following goals for the coming year _____



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