



## Emerging Understandings about the Role of the Board

### Overview

As part of the process to develop new board development programs, ASBSD presented research and information about the role of the board to the ASBSD Membership at the ASBSD Region Meetings in October 2006. The research review led to the development of the five emerging understandings about the role of the board, which reflect a modern definition of how district leadership teams function in high achieving districts. The “Emerging Understandings” document acts as a program descriptors for ASBSD Board Development programs.

- I. Set clear expectations related to improving student achievement
  - A. Create a focus to improve student instruction in an area of student learning need.
  - B. Develop policies that clearly communicate expectations in areas that directly impact learning.
  - C. Establish clearly shared targets for specific levels of improvement.
  - D. Establish district wide understanding and commitment to a student achievement goal.
  - E. Set an expectation for using evidence based strategies to improve instruction.
- II. Create conditions so the work (improving achievement) can succeed
  - A. Enable staff throughout the system to play a significant role in achieving the goal (establish district wide leadership teams that share the decision making).
  - B. Reallocate resources and support as determined by the progress monitoring.
  - C. Ensure staff members have the time and resources to study the content area, their practice, the effects on student learning and to implement strategies to improve achievement in the target area.
  - D. Ensure there is sufficient leadership, expert assistance and peer support so that staff members can learn and implement new instructional practices.
  - E. Celebrate successes.
- III. Hold the system accountable (for both improved practice and achievement)
  - A. Assure that there are data collection systems that track progress toward achieving the goals and targets.
  - B. Identify indicators the board will accept as evidence of progress/success.
  - C. Formally monitor student progress toward the indicators on a regular basis.
  - D. Formally monitor the implementation of strategies/initiatives to reach the goal.
- IV. Create the public will to succeed
  - A. Communicate commitment of the goal deep into the organization.
  - B. Create district-wide synergy around the improvement goal - enlist the entire system to attain the improvement goal.
  - C. Communicate progress and needs to the community.
  - D. Engage the community as partners focused on reaching the goal and targets.
  - E. Consistently communicate the importance and moral imperative of the improvement goal.

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V. Learn as a board team

- A. Become informed about necessary conditions (i.e. beliefs, vision, initiatives, professional development, assessment, etc.) for creating a district-wide culture for learning.
- B. Understand what it will take to improve in the target area and insure all of the components.
- C. Board members are very clear about current performance levels of students in the district.
- D. Attain knowledge and skills to study the data, make appropriate interpretations from the data, ask important questions, and communicate about the progress without alienating the staff.
- E. Study the cost effectiveness of strategies being developed to attain the improvement goal.