Introduction

School Board Self Evaluation

Why Evaluate?

The culture of an organization is set at the top, and it is no different for school and educational organizations. School boards must be strong, effective leaders to meet the challenges faced by public education today. School board members direct the affairs of the district by setting goals, developing policy, communicating and evaluating, all with a focus on the achievement and best interests of all students in the district. Self-assessment by the board provides valuable information, discussion and communication.

Self-evaluation by the board:

- Holds the board accountable to itself, the staff and the community.
- Allows for reflection by board members on their individual and collective behavior and performance.
- Fosters open communication.
- Improves decision making by enhancing a common understanding of philosophies and goals.
- Resolves differences of opinion and challenges assumptions.
- Provides insight into how and why decisions are reached.
- Allows new board members an opportunity to understand board processes.
- Identifies strengths and weaknesses of individual board member performance and that of the board as a whole.
- Holds the board accountable in its role as representative of the public.
- Provides a starting point for effective goal setting and long range planning.

Board self-evaluation provides more than just accountability and communication. It provides an opportunity for building the best possible leadership for the school system and community. Commitment to quality, excellence, continuous learning, and local control of the educational system is demonstrated when boards lead by example.

Oregon School Boards Association’s Board Self-Evaluation document is designed to provide both a clear objective system for board evaluation and flexibility. Part 1 of the evaluation follows a set of performance standards focused on the roles, responsibilities and work of the
board. Part 2 focuses on the board’s performance in supporting the achievement of district goals.

Part 1 and Part 2 mirror the first two parts of the OSBA superintendent evaluation document and are intended to be used together, the board first undergoing a self-evaluation and then performing the superintendent evaluation. The board evaluation, unlike the superintendent evaluation, does not include a Part 3: 360-degree evaluation. This is because board members are subject to recall and undergo an election every four years. That election serves as a de facto 360-degree evaluation. For boards that would like to survey the community regarding their performance, the questions in Part 1 and Part 2 of the board self-evaluation can be put to administrators, staff and community members and will serve well as a 360-degree evaluation.