



BOARD STANDARDS

A FRAMEWORK FOR ALASKA SCHOOL BOARDS



association of
ALASKA
school boards

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*To learn more about these standards
visit our website at www.aasb.org*

Many thanks to the original team who
developed these Board Standards

ASSOCIATION OF ALASKA SCHOOL BOARDS **SCHOOL BOARD STANDARDS**

The education community is intimately familiar with standards. Standards for students have been around for many years in the form of grades, report cards and most recently many forms of assessments. Likewise, teachers, administrators and support personnel live by standards in the form of annual evaluations, classroom observations and peer monitoring. In Alaska, school districts have embraced board standards as an appropriate process for ensuring that our public school students achieve the very best academic success possible. Board standards were created through a process that involved a broad based group of people within and without the education community. This group brought together experience from the business world, the political arena, and families as well as from education. Together they determined the standards that should guide a person to become the best governance official possible to oversee school districts in Alaska. In 1998 this group of 25 individuals over a two day period created the framework of Board Standards and later that same year the AASB Board of Directors approved them for distribution to local school boards.

Too often across the nation the media reports on inappropriate behavior and even criminal acts from elected municipal bodies. School boards across the state have embraced these standards and are utilizing them as a model of behavior. By using the standards to influence behavior every board member will become a role model, districts will function as a governance model and students will be well served.



AASB's Board Standards have served as a foundation for development programs and resources available to school board members in Alaska.

Shortly after being adopted by the AASB Board of Directors, the Board Standards Framework (Vision, Structure, Accountability, Advocacy and Conduct and Ethics) was used to develop a three-year syllabus of topics that guided the Board development programming for the Association. This syllabus ensures that members will be provided with information and skill training aligned to the Standards during their first term in office.

A school board self-assessment was created based on Board Standards and performance indicators. The assessment is available on the AASB website (aasb.org) for use by boards. AASB staff, during a custom workshop, are also available to facilitate the assessment and help a board develop their own plan for improvement.

A sample Board Bylaw identifying Board Standards as a guide for orienting new Board members to the standards, provide on-going board development opportunities to assist all Board members in meeting those standards, and assess board performance to measure the Board's effectiveness was included in the AASB Policy Reference Manual and has been adopted by almost all members.

The Alaska School Board Member Handbook was designed around the Standards Framework and serves as a reference guide for members seeking information about their roles and responsibilities.

VISION

The Board Creates A Shared Vision To Enhance Student Achievement

1.1 Board develops a dynamic shared vision for education that reflects student needs and community priorities.

INDICATORS

- Educational stakeholders are invited to participate in the development and revision of the school district's mission and vision.
- Stakeholders have regular opportunities to provide input throughout the development of the district's plan.
- The board seeks input from Elders and other leaders to incorporate traditional values and ways of knowing into the district mission and vision.

1.2 Board keeps the district and community focused on educating students

INDICATORS

- The "IS IT GOOD FOR KIDS" question guides all board deliberations and actions.
- The board refers to mission and vision when communicating with staff, groups, and organizations.

1.3 Board demonstrates its strong commitment to vision by using the shared vision to guide decision-making.

INDICATORS

- The board uses the mission and vision as a guide in planning, decision making, and evaluating district operations.
- The board communicates its rationale for decisions to the community as a way to reinforce its commitment to the mission and vision.

STRUCTURE

The Board Provides A Structure That Supports The Vision

2.1 Board establishes a management system that results in effective decision making processes and enables all to help the district achieve its mission and vision while making the best use of its resources.

INDICATORS

- . The board develops policies that require and support strong leadership by the superintendent.
- . The board develops policies that enable the staff and the public to participate in board deliberations, school programs, and activities in a meaningful way.
- . The board ensures that financial and human resource decisions directly support the district's mission and vision.

2.2 Board ensures that long and short-term plans are developed and annually revised through a process involving extensive participation, information gathering, research, and reflection.

INDICATORS

- . The board invites input from individuals, school staff, community and other organizations about improving the school program.
- . The board engages in annual planning and review.
- . The board directs use of appropriate committees for action planning.



2.3 Board sets high instructional standards based on the best available information about the knowledge and skills students will need in the future.

INDICATORS

- The board establishes appropriate committees to advise on the establishment and revision of district standards.
- The board makes instructional resource decisions based on emerging instructional needs and redirects existing resources as appropriate to meet them.

2.4 Board acts to ensure vision and structure comply with legal requirements

INDICATORS

- The board establishes policy requiring internal and/or external evaluations of district operations.
- The board reviews the results of all assessments as part of their deliberations.

2.5 Board encourages and supports innovative approaches to teaching, learning, and the continuous renewal of education.

INDICATORS

- The board invests in staff development tied to the skills students will need in the future.
- The board supports a cultural orientation program for new school staff and encourages their involvement in the community.
- The board oversees continual review of curriculum and the development of instructional techniques that enhance student achievement.
- The board communicates new developments in instruction to the community and provides a rationale for them.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Board Measures District Performance Toward Accomplishing the Vision And Reports the Results To The Public.

3.1 Board receives regular reports on student progress and needs based on a variety of assessments to evaluate the quality and equity of the educational program.

INDICATORS

- The board ensures assessments are locally appropriate, accurate, relevant, and use a feasible process.
- Reports on student progress are linked directly to district vision for student achievement.

3.2 Board evaluates the superintendent and board performance annually and reports the result to the public.

INDICATORS

- The board establishes policies and procedures for the routine evaluation of the superintendent.
- Written performance expectations for the superintendent and the board are developed and communicated to the community.
- The board solicits public input regarding its performance toward achieving performance expectations.
- The board routinely carries out these evaluations and set goals for improvement.



3.3 Board ensures long and short-term plans are evaluated and revised with the needs of students in mind.

INDICATORS

- . The board seeks input on the evaluation of the plans' progress and effectiveness.
- . The board ensures a variety of indicators are used for evaluations.
- . The board establishes a framework that supports reasoned decision-making.
- . The board schedules time annually for appropriate review.

3.4 Board uses an understandable format to periodically report district performance to the public.

INDICATORS

- . The board insists that all reports are written and presented in a way that is understandable and useful to the public.
- . The board hosts informal opportunities for the public to discuss all district performance issues.



ADVOCACY

The Board Champions The Vision

4.1 Board leads in celebrating the achievements of students and accomplishments of others who contribute to education.

INDICATORS

- . The board establishes policy to ensure individuals and groups are recognized for accomplishments.
- . The board recognizes students and others for accomplishments as part of their regularly scheduled meeting activities.
- . Board members attend and/or participate in recognition ceremonies when appropriate.

4.2 Board advocates for children and families and establishes strong relationships with parents and other mentors to help support students.

INDICATORS

- . The board adopts policies encouraging parental involvement.
- . The board promotes the “asset” framework with school staff, community, and students.

4.3 Board establishes partnerships with individuals, groups, and organizations to promote educational opportunities for all students.

INDICATORS

- . The board initiates opportunities to involve educational stakeholders in meaningful activities that meet student needs.
- . The board identifies community resources that can help provide basic academic and enrichment activities that will extend learning opportunities for students.

4.4 Board promotes school board service as a meaningful way to make long term contributions to the local community and society.

INDICATORS

- The board provides information to school staff and public about school board service to promote understanding and interest.
- The board actively informs the community regarding the role and purpose of school boards.
- The board invites interested community members to participate in committees.

4.5 The board is proactive in identifying and addressing issues that affect the education of students.

INDICATORS

- Board members influence all recommendations brought before them against the “IS IT GOOD FOR KIDS” criteria.
- Board members influence actions of individuals and groups that have the potential to impact the school system, and act in the best interest of the students.
- The board takes a leadership role in representing student educational interests to other organizations, agencies, local and state government.





CONDUCT & ETHICS

The Board And Its Individual Members Conduct District Business In A Fair, Respectful, And Responsible Manner

5.1 Board and its individual members act in a manner that reflects service to the community on behalf of students.

INDICATORS

- . Board members understand the significance of their role as models for students and representatives of the community and act accordingly.
- . Board members support decisions of the majority after honoring each member's individual right to express opposing views and state their convictions.
- . The board makes decisions as a group, only at properly called meetings, and recognizes that individual members have no authority to take individual action.

5.2 Board demonstrates a commitment to continually improving teamwork, problem solving, and decision-making skills through a conscious program of board development.

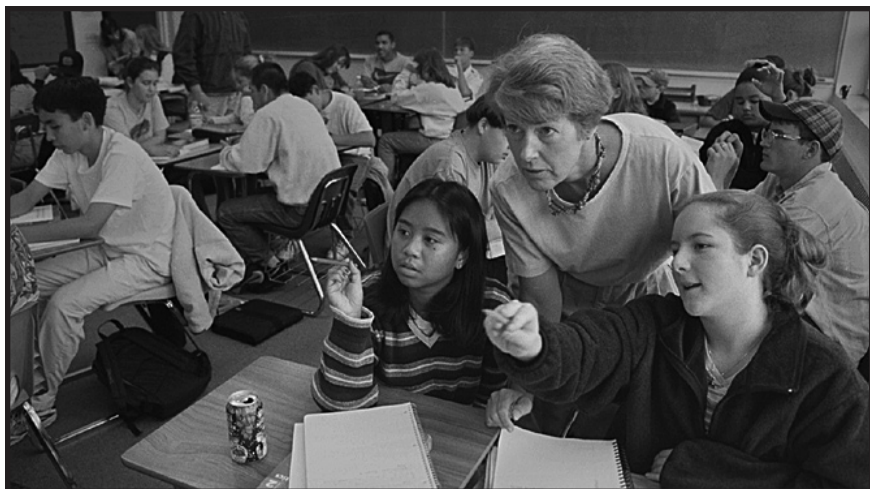
INDICATORS

- The board participates in board development activities to enhance their governance skills.
- Individual board members report the results of those activities to other board members and the community during board meetings.
- Board members attend and fully participate in all board development functions paid for by district funds.
- The board takes responsibility for the orientation of new members.

5.3 Expenditures for board activities are clearly identified in the budget, related to the district vision, and open to public scrutiny.

INDICATORS

- The budget for all board expenditures is easily identifiable.
- All board expenditures are compared against “IS IT GOOD FOR KIDS” criteria.
- The board invites the public to review and comment on expenditures for all board activities and functions.





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