

For more information, please contact your field services director today!

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9/09-2150-431



School Board Self-Evaluation

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS



What is a school board self-evaluation?

A school board self-evaluation is a key step on the road to governance excellence. Just as students, teachers, administrators and educational support personnel need performance reviews to enhance quality, so do school boards. IASB believes a school board is responsible for monitoring and evaluating its own performance - both its processes and its practices.

As the corporate entity charged by law with governing a school district, each school board sits in trust for its entire community with an obligation to govern effectively. The community elects school board members to govern its schools, turning over property tax dollars and entrusting the school district with the education of its children. In return, the school board promises to use the money to provide the best possible schooling for those children as defined by that community.

The best school boards recognize that in order for them to be effective, they need to take responsibility for their processes and work. When boards and board members develop a strong commitment to continuously evaluate and improve their processes and work, they are able to provide creative, decisive leadership for their district. IASB is available to help member boards meet this important challenge.

What are the benefits of a self-evaluation?

A board self-evaluation serves many purposes including:

- Gathering the perceptions of each board member,
- Initiating dialogue among board members,
- Analyzing board decision-making procedures, work and processes,
- Identifying the next steps for becoming a more effective board, and
- Providing an avenue for continuous board and district improvement.

Will our school board benefit from a self-evaluation?

Every board can benefit from a self-evaluation. Consider the following questions:

How effective is your school board in dealing with the following aspects of school board governance:

- Board meetings?
- Board member relationships?
- Board/superintendent relations?
- Ethics?
- Planning?
- Policy?
- Finance?

IASB recommends boards participate in some form of board self-evaluation annually. The self-evaluation process can provide preventive maintenance to alleviate issues before they become problems or it can be a problem-solving tool. It can help the board to further strengthen something it already does well or address an area of challenge. With continuous improvement in mind, some boards appreciate the opportunity to establish a base-line set of data and watch progress over the years.

How do we get started?

It's as easy as 1, 2, 3...

1. Contact your IASB field services director to discuss goals, process and timelines. Our staff will make every effort to meet the specific needs of your board. The process usually begins with establishing a date for the in-district session. A special meeting of 2 1/2 to 3 hours seems best.
2. The board, generally through the superintendent and board president, and the field services director discuss and select one of the options available to facilitate the board self-evaluation session. Among the options available are two proven board self-evaluation instruments. Both are available online and as paper and pencil documents. Most boards find the online format to be convenient, efficient and easy.
3. Board members individually complete the survey provided by IASB (either online or on paper) and submit to IASB. The field services director prepares a report for the board. This report is used to facilitate the board's conversation at the special meeting.

The Illinois Open Meetings Act allows boards to meet in closed session for the purpose of self-evaluation when meeting with a representative of a statewide association of which the board is a member. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(16). The board can choose whether to meet in closed or open session.

A fee of \$400 for this service covers all expenses including IASB staff travel and one in-district visit of up to four hours. Fees for any additional in-district visits or future workshops requested by the board as a result of this session will be quoted as provided in the Field Services Catalog.

The board self-evaluation process is not an attempt by an outsider to evaluate the board, nor is it an exercise in blame fixing or finger pointing. Board self-evaluation is a means by which a board, as a governance team, steps back and looks at itself, then critically examines its strengths and weaknesses, and makes plans for continuous improvement.

The mission of the Illinois Association of School Boards is excellence in local school governance and support of public education.