

Reaching The High Bar

Where is Your Board on its Path to Excellence?

Exceptional governance is achieved by following a systematized process.

Boards and their CEOs don't just attend a training and miraculously govern at a very high level. However, it is a skill you can learn which is rooted in developing strong, repeatable group processes, collecting and analyzing data and building an institutional memory. We have developed a model to help you identify the capability of your current governance practices and give you concrete knowledge, tools and resources to help you and your board progress to the next level.



Path to Excellence

Level 1	<p>Basic</p> <p>Ad hoc, reactive, heroics Desire to understand and improve</p>	<p>Majority of board's time is spent just trying to execute the basics, and understand their roles and responsibilities. Desire to understand and improve. Significant disconnect between the board's work and direct impact on kids.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very reactive: 10% of time spent on strategic, 90% reacting to things happening right now, feels like survival mode• Heroic individual actions get the job done• Overly reliant on CEO to drive board-level work• Processes are ad hoc and hard to repeat consistently• Time wasted reinventing the wheel; inefficient use of time
----------------	---	--

Level 2	<p>Emerging</p> <p>Begin to develop repeatable processes, connect board work to results for kids</p>	<p>CEO and board leadership have defined mission critical work of the board, and begin to understand how to execute on some of this. A tangible connection between the work of the board and outstanding results for kids is emerging.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20% of time spent on strategic, 80% reacting to things happening right now• Success depends on the strengths and skills of individuals• Subset of board starts working at an individual level collaboratively with the CEO• Have strengthened board structures and composition• Work is slightly more strategic but uneven, some execution goes well, some does not• Most basic processes become repeatable• Emergence of one or more committees; committee work uneven
----------------	---	--

Level 3

Intermediate

Processes defined, significant board value-add becomes evident

CEO and the full board understand how the board will directly add value to the organization, what role they will play in helping shape the future of the organization, and ensure all students are getting the outstanding education they were promised.

- 40% of time spent on strategic; 60% reacting to things happening right now
- Majority of the board work collaboratively as a team with the CEO and senior staff
- Form follows function. Board recruitment, composition, and structure is aligned to mission critical work of the board and directly aligned with ways the board will add value to the institution
- Defined processes and procedures for getting most of the board's work done, initial institutional memory is created
- Substantive work happens in between board meetings through committees

Level 4

Advanced

Sustainable processes, institutional memory, succession planning, outstanding results

CEO and the full board work together as a finely honed team. The board consistently tackles significant strategic issues that directly impact educational results for students now and into the future.

- 80% of time spent on strategic, 20% reacting to things happening right now
- There is a strong working relationship between the CEO and the full board built on mutual trust and respect
- Complete knowledge and action, executing all defined processes at a very high-level, repeatable year over year, evidence of strong institutional memory
- Quantitatively managed: use data to make decisions and measure organizational improvement
- Robust set of committees aligned with strategic work of the board diving into substantive issues which guides the board decision-making processes

Excellent

Optimizing mission, sustainability, growth and replication, sustained outstanding results

CEO and the full board work together as a finely honed team. The board consistently tackles significant strategic issues that directly impact educational results for students now and into the future. Much of their time is spent optimizing their focus on mission, serving kids at a deeper level and on growth/replication.

- 90% of time spent on strategic, 10% reacting to things happening right now
- There is a strong working relationship between the CEO and the full board built on mutual trust and respect, long-term succession plans in place for board and CEO
- Executing all defined processes at a very high-level, repeatable year over year, evidence of strong institutional memory that can easily be accessed by all
- Quantitatively managed: use data to make decisions and measure organizational improvement and to continuously improve
- Exemplary committee work aligned with strategic direction of the organization diving into substantive issues which guides the board decision-making processes