

KEY FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD

The research-based WA School Board standards outline the primary functions of the school board. These standards are linked to higher student achievement and more effective governance practices:

Responsible School District Governance:

Provide responsible school district governance by:

- Conducting board and district business in a fair, respectful, and responsible manner.
- Ensuring the board is accountable and open to the public, including seeking divergent and diverse perspectives in its decision-making process.
- Respecting and advocating mutual understanding of the roles and responsibilities of board members and the superintendent.
- Adopting policies based on well-researched practices that emphasize a belief that all students can achieve at high levels and that support continuous improvement of student achievement.
- Promoting healthy relationships by communicating supportively; inspiring, motivating, and empowering others; and exercising influence in a positive manner.
- Working as an effective and collaborative team.

Creating Conditions District-Wide for Student and Staff Success:

Create conditions district-wide for student and staff success by:

- A. Providing for the safety and wellness of all students and staff;
- B. Employing and supporting quality teachers, administrators and other staff and providing for their professional development;
- C. Providing for learning essentials, including rigorous curriculum, technology and high-quality facilities;
- D. Ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for an efficient and effective learning environment; and
- E. Adopting and monitoring an annual budget that allocates resources based on the district's vision, goals and priorities for student learning.

Communication of and Commitment to High Expectations for Student Learning:

Set and communicate high expectations for student learning with clear goals and plans for meeting those expectations by:

- Articulating the conviction that each and every student can learn and the belief that student learning can improve regardless of existing circumstances or resources;

- Leading the development, articulation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by schools and the community;
- Adopting a collaboratively developed district strategic plan focused on learning and achievement outcomes for each and every student; and
- Ensuring non-negotiable goals for student achievement are established and aligned with the district's strategic plan.

Holding the District Accountability for Student Learning:

Hold school district accountable for meeting student learning expectations by:

- Committing to continuous improvement in student achievement at each school and throughout the district;
- Evaluating the superintendent on clear and focused expectations; and
- Measuring student academic progress and needs based on valid and reliable assessments.

Engagement of the Community in Education:

Engage the local community and represent the values and expectations they hold for their schools by:

- Collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources;
- Ensuring school board and district transparency through a process that is open and accountable;
- Ensuring district information and decisions are communicated community-wide; and
- Soliciting input from staff and a wide spectrum of the community so that a diverse range of interests and perspectives on issues is considered.

- Annually the board will reflect on the degree to which it has operated according to its key functions by conducting a board self-assessment and engaging in board development activities where needed.

For more information, visit the WSSDA School Board Standards.

Cross References

1310 - Policy Adoption, Manuals and Administrative Procedures

1810 - Annual Governance Goals and Objectives

1820 - Board Self-Assessment

Policy News, October 2025

Management Resources:

Policy News, 2012 - February Issue