

HCBOE Exemplary Committee Assessment

7/1/2017 - 6/30/2018

Houston County Schools

The governance team self-assessment, which is based upon the Georgia State Board of Education Standards for Effective Governance, will provide the board and superintendent a status review on implementation of identified best governance practices. The roles and responsibilities of the governance team are clarified and quantified. The self-assessment instrument is not intended to be utilized as an evaluation instrument. However, it is designed to provide benchmarks for the governance team and for their consideration in establishing improvements of governance best practices.

The self-assessment instrument can be used by the governance team internally, or an internal review committee or an external review committee.

After completion of the review, recommendations and action plans should be developed for the board's consideration. The recommendation may impact the system's strategic planning goals, the superintendent evaluation instrument, policy changes and financial planning.

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Domain I. Governance Structure

Description

The board of education and superintendent form the governance leadership team of the local school system, and act in a manner that focuses on improving student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

Board: The local board of education has "legislative," "executive" and "judicial" duties or functions in exercising control and management over a school district. A local board's "legislative" function is to adopt policies to govern the operation of the schools and have the authority to determine the amount of school taxes to be levied upon property in the school district. A board's "executive" function includes the employment and assignment of personnel on the recommendation of the superintendent, acquiring or disposing of real estate and other property, construction of facilities, preparation and adoption of an annual budget using the procedures mandated by the State Board of Education, entering into contracts, and borrowing money and signing promissory notes, subject to certain limitations. The "judicial" role of the board is to serve as a tribunal or school law court in order to resolve local matters of school law when specifically authorized or required by Georgia law.

Superintendent: The school superintendent is appointed by the board and who "shall be the executive officer" of the board of education. The "fundamental role" of a superintendent is to administer the implementation of policy established by the local board. In addition the superintendent serves as secretary to the board and is responsible for maintaining the minutes of board meetings. Additionally, the superintendent serves as the liaison between the State School Superintendent, makes all employment and assignment recommendations of school system personnel to the local board for approval, signs all employment contracts on behalf of the board, is responsible for any money borrowed and received by the school district to the same extent that the superintendent is responsible for other public school funds, signs notes along with the board chair to borrow money for the school system, acts as the agent of the board in procuring school equipment and materials, is responsible for ensuring that students receive and use prescribed textbooks, enforces all rules and regulations of the State School Superintendent and the local board according to the laws of the State, visits all schools in the school system; counsels with the faculty; files reports with the State Department of Education required by the State Board of Education from time to time; and performs any additional duties and responsibilities prescribed by the local board of education as part of the job description of the superintendent or contained within the contract of the superintendent.

Standard(s)

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Standard(s)

A. STANDARD: The governance leadership team is comprised of the local board of education and the superintendent, and adheres to appropriate roles and responsibilities, as defined in the state constitution, state law, local act, and board policy.

Element(s)

1. The board elects officers using procedures defined in state law, local legislative act and local board policy.

2. The board designates the superintendent as the Executive Officer of the school system and fully delegates the authority to provide educational leadership, manage daily operations, and perform all duties as assigned by law.

3. The superintendent acts as board secretary.

Evidence

- Board Policies
- Board Meeting Minutes

Policy

BBAA Board Officer Method of Election
BBAB Board Duties

Rating

Exceeds Expectations	10
Meets Expectations	0
Progress but did not Meet	0
Needs Improvement	0

Comments

- The Board works well with the Superintendent and the Executive Staff. They understand their role as Board members and allow the staff to handle the day to day operations of the schools. The Board members do not have personal agendas and instead work collaboratively together to make decisions that will make a positive difference in the life of our students.

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Standard(s)

- Our board fully delegates authority of the school system to the superintendent.
- The Board trusts Dr. Scott as the leader of the school system.

Review Comments

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B. STANDARD: The governance leadership team executes its duties as defined in the state constitution, state laws, and state board rules consistent with local board policies, accreditation standards, procedures and ethical standards, which govern its conduct.

Element(s)

- 1. The board establishes and follows local board policies, procedures, and ethical standards governing the conduct of the governance leadership team, board, and individual board members.**
- 2. The board adopts, commits to, and follows a Code of Ethics, including a Conflict of Interest policy consistent with Domain VIII - Ethics.**

Evidence

- Board Policies
- District Accreditation Report
- Code of Ethics
- Conflict of Interest Policy

Policy

BH

Board Code of Ethics

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Standard(s)

Rating

Exceeds Expectations	10
Meets Expectations	0
Progress but did not Meet	0
Needs Improvement	0

Comments

- The Board commits to following the Code of Ethics.

Review Comments

C. STANDARD: The board acts as a policy-making body separate from the roles and responsibilities authorized to the superintendent.

Element(s)

- 1. The board establishes and follows written policies governing its work in compliance with state constitution, state law, local legislative act(s) and policy.**
- 2. The board fully supports and recognizes that operational issues are the responsibility of the superintendent and school system personnel.**

Evidence

- Board Policies
- Administrative Regulations

Policy

ABB Board Powers and Duties

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Standard(s)

Rating

Exceeds Expectations	10
Meets Expectations	0
Progress but did not Meet	0
Needs Improvement	0

Comments

- Our board establishes and follows the school district policies.
- Board members do a great job of sharing stakeholder concerns presented to them so that they are addressed in a timely manner by appropriate school system staff.
- The Board believes that Dr. Scott and his Executive Cabinet hold the responsibility of running the system in an effective manner.

Review Comments

D. STANDARD: The governance leadership team demonstrates a unified approach to governing the school system in order to assure effective fulfillment of roles and responsibilities.

Element(s)

- 1. The board participates in annual professional development that meets or exceeds the requirements of Georgia Law and the State Board of Education. The superintendent's participation in this training, while voluntary, is strongly encouraged.**
- 2. The governance leadership team differentiates professional development curriculum and delivery for the whole board and individual members based upon the experience and needs of members.**

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Standard(s)

Element(s)

3. New members are provided with induction, orientation, and mentoring in order to support their effectiveness as members of the governance leadership team.

Evidence

- Annual Board Training Plan and Training Records
- New Board Member Orientation

Policy

BBBB

New Member Orientation

BBBC

Board Member Development Opportunities

Rating

Exceeds Expectations	10
Meets Expectations	0
Progress but did not Meet	0
Needs Improvement	0

Comments

- The Board members always exceed the number of training hours required annually.
- The Superintendent and local BOE work in a cooperative and collaborative manner to keep our system running efficiently.
- The Board takes professional learning very seriously and each member participates in a way that is appropriate for them.

Review Comments

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Domain II. Board and Community Relations

Description

In order to ensure improved student achievement and organizational effectiveness, the governance leadership team creates and sustains healthy community relations, models professional relationships, creates a culture of mutual respect, and serves as a public school advocate for effective collaboration and engagement of internal and external stakeholders.

Board: As the elected officials charged with the constitutional authority to "manage and control" our state's public school districts, school board members have an obligation to communicate what they are doing to the citizens in the communities they serve. Effective communication, media relations, advocacy, crisis communications and planning, community relations, public engagement, outreach -- school board members must plan for and engage in these activities if they are to reach a level of excellence in governance.

Superintendent: The superintendent, with board guidance will develop, recommend and implement a communications plan for the school district and board to promote better public understanding and accountability. This communication plan needs to build relationships with the school district staff, the community, parents, legislators, county and city governments, community groups and more so that there is mutual trust and opportunities for information to be exchanged, not just handed out.

Standard(s)

A. STANDARD: The governance leadership team develops a process for creating a culture where input is sought, heard, and valued.

Element(s)

- 1. The interactions of the governance leadership team with the community create a culture in which ideas are sought, heard, and valued, and are based on collaborative review of research and data.**

Evidence

- Board meeting agendas and minutes
- Board policy process
- District Website
- District Publications
- Strategic Plan Process

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Standard(s)

- Community engagement meetings and surveys

Rating

Exceeds Expectations 10

Meets Expectations 0

Progress but did not Meet 0

Needs Improvement 0

Comments

- All board members and the superintendent are very involved in the community. They are all responsive and accessible to employees and the community as a whole.

- On many topics, the Board members regularly seek feedback from stakeholders either through surveys, public hearings, meetings, etc.

- Our board listens to and values community input.

- Parents and community members are provided with opportunities to share ideas and concerns at the monthly board meetings in an open forum. Student matters are discussed in closed sessions.

- Community members regularly participate in Board meetings through attendance, as well as by speaking on various issues.

Review Comments

B. STANDARD: The board develops policies to ensure effective communication and engagement of all stakeholders' which support the strategic plan, desired culture and continuous improvement of the school system.

Element(s)

- 1. The governance leadership team formally and informally communicates to stakeholders, its strategic plan, desired culture and improvement needs, and student performance expectations progress, targets, and results.**

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Standard(s)

Element(s)

2. The governance leadership team and individual member's communication demonstrate transparency of intentions, actions, decisions, successes, progress statuses, benchmarks and barriers to achievement of goals and performance targets.

3. The governance leadership team will implement a communication plan consistent with Domain VIII – Ethics.

Evidence

- Board policies
- Public participation policy
- Communication plan
- Community engagement activities
- Board meeting agendas and minutes

Rating

Exceeds Expectations	9
Meets Expectations	1
Progress but did not Meet	0
Needs Improvement	0

Comments

- This board and superintendent are very transparent and encourage input from parents, employees, other elected officials and the community at large.
- Our Board is a huge part of the positive culture that permeates our school district and community.

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Standard(s)

- Have held Public Forums, Budget Hearings, and other forums seeking public input.

Review Comments

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Domain III. Policy Development

Description

The board adopts, revises, and follows written policies in accordance with laws and state board rules that include but are not limited to those that support improved student achievement, fiduciary responsibility, community and stakeholder engagement, organizational effectiveness, and continuous improvement.

Board: The Georgia Constitution delegates the control and management of public schools to local boards of education. The board is a group of individuals operating as a single entity through the policies it adopts or let stand. Board policies carry the force of law in the school system. Policies are principles and goal statements adopted by the board to define the parameters within which the superintendent and staff carry out their assigned duties. Policies, then, are statements describing what the board expects and requires. Once adopted, they continue in effect until revised or rescinded.

Superintendent: Regulations are the superintendent's plan to meet the policy expectations and requirements of the board. As long as the administration operates within the guidelines of policy adopted by the board, it may issue regulations without prior board approval unless board action is required by law or unless the board has specifically directed that certain types of regulations be submitted to the board for approval. The superintendent recommends policy actions to the board for adoption.

Standard(s)	
A. STANDARD: The board of education adopts, revises, and follows written policies that are clear, up-to-date, and in compliance with the school system's strategic plan, state constitution, state and federal laws and state board rules.	
Element(s)	
1. The governance leadership team promotes policy development that is aligned with the system strategic plan and supports improved student achievement and organizational effectiveness.	
2. The board, through a local board policy, adopts, revises, and follows effective procedures for:	

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Standard(s)

Element(s)

3. The board solicits and receives recommendations from the superintendent on any proposed policies.

4. The board provides opportunities for public review on proposed policies before final board action is taken.

5. The board holds the superintendent accountable for the consistent implementation of adopted policies.

6. The governance leadership team develops policies consistent with Domain VIII – Ethics.

Evidence

- Board policies and administrative regulations
- Strategic plan
- Annual budget
- Board meeting agendas and minutes

Policy

BD Policy Development
BDG Administration in Policy Absence

Rating

Exceeds Expectations	10
Meets Expectations	0
Progress but did not Meet	0
Needs Improvement	0

Comments

- The Board adopts, revises and repeals policies as necessary. When new policies are presented, the Board tables the policy for 1 month to allow time for public review before final board action is taken.
- Our board is very supportive of proposed policies and is consistent with

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Standard(s)

the implementation of policies.

- The Board gives careful consideration to each proposed policy and policy change.

Review Comments

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Domain IV. Board Meetings

Description

In order to conduct official business for the purpose of improving student achievement and organizational effectiveness, the governance leadership team plans and conducts board meetings in accordance with Open Meetings law and local board policy.

Board: The board conducts all meetings of the board with approved agendas in accordance with state laws and local board policies.

Superintendent: The superintendent assists the board in conducting all board meetings and maintains the "official" record of the meetings.

Standard(s)	
A. STANDARD: The board announces and holds meetings in accordance with local board policy and the Open Meetings Law (O.C.G.A. §50-14-1).	
Element(s)	
1. The board adopts a policy defining the process for developing board meeting agendas, to include, but not limited to:	
2. The superintendent posts board meeting agendas for public review.	
3. The board of education uses a "consent agenda" procedure when appropriate.	
4. Once meeting agenda is approved, the board of education conducts meetings in accordance with the meeting agenda and departs from the agenda only under circumstances allowed under the Open Meetings Law (O.C.G.A. §50-14-1) and by a majority (simple majority, super majority, or unanimous vote) previously specified in local board policy.	
5. The Board is trained in, and conducts meetings in a manner consistent with, parliamentary procedure.	

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Standard(s)

Element(s)

6. The superintendent ensures accurate records are recorded and maintained as prescribed by the Open Records Act (O.C.G.A. §50-18-70).

7. The board of education plans and conducts business meetings in open and closed sessions in a manner consistent with the Open Meetings Law (O.C.G.A. §50-14-1)

8. The governance leadership team conducts meetings consistent with Domain VIII – Ethics.

Evidence

- Board meeting agendas and minutes
- Board policies
- Board training plan
- Postings of board meetings

Policy

BC	Board Meetings
BCAA	Annual Board Meetings
BCBD	Board Meeting Agendas
BCBH	Board Meeting Minutes

Rating

Exceeds Expectations	10
Meets Expectations	0
Progress but did not Meet	0
Needs Improvement	0

Comments

- Board meeting agendas are posted publicly several days in advance of the meeting. Parliamentary procedures are consistently followed at every meeting. Meetings are effective and efficient.

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Standard(s)

- Board meetings can also be viewed live online. This allows community members to view the meetings if they cannot attend in person.
- Our Board strives to conduct meetings in an orderly fashion that follows parliamentary procedure using Robert's Rules of Order.

Review Comments

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Domain V. Personnel

Description

The Board of Education employs, sets performance expectations for, and evaluates the work of the superintendent; sets personnel policies and approves or denies personnel actions recommended by the superintendent in order for him/her to manage the system workforce to improve student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

Board: The school superintendent is appointed by the board and who "shall be the executive officer" of the board of education. Georgia Law [§ GA Code 20-2-210] requires the board to conduct an annual evaluation of the superintendent and, if deficiencies are noted, to prepare a professional development plan.

Additional Summary Points

- Evaluations shall be performed by the local board of education
- Instrument must be a board approved instrument
- Performance evaluation records shall be part of the personnel evaluation file and shall be confidential

The board reviews and updates personnel policies to be in compliance with state statutes and state board rules. The board practices the board member code of ethics policy and maintains confidentiality pertaining to personnel. As with student records, in a rare case, the board may have a need to review a teacher's evaluation or a group of evaluations in order to carry out its lawful duties. In that case, the board may require the teacher evaluations to be produced to the board for its inspection or review during an executive session.

Superintendent: The "fundamental role" of a superintendent, as executive officer, is to administer the implementation of policy established by the local board. She/he assists the board in the development of an evaluation instrument which measures the board goals, strategic plan goals and system's operational effectiveness. The superintendent recommends to the board personnel policies for adoption, implements adopted policies, recommends personnel actions to the board and provides personnel data reports.

Standard(s)
<p>A. STANDARD: The board of education employs a superintendent who acts as the Executive Officer of the school system.</p> <p>Element(s)</p>

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Standard(s)

- 1. The board sets performance expectations for the superintendent through the adoption of a strategic plan, the adoption of a current job description, the adoption of professional development and evaluation plan, and adherence to state law.**
- 2. The board of education invests in the Superintendent professional development to ensure alignment to the school system strategic plan, and current job description.**
- 3. The board of education engages in planning for leadership continuity to support sustainability of improvement.**
- 4. The governance leadership team develops personnel policies consistent with Domain VIII – Ethics.**

Evidence

- Board Policies
- Superintendent Search Process
- Superintendent Job Description
- Superintendent Evaluation Instrument
- Superintendent Annual Professional Development Plan
- Board Meeting Agendas and Minutes
- System Strategic Plan

Policy

CEB Superintendent Duties
CEG Superintendent Professional Development Opportunities

Rating

Exceeds Expectations	10
Meets Expectations	0
Progress but did not Meet	0
Needs Improvement	0

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Standard(s)

Review Comments

B. STANDARD: The board of education evaluates the professional performance of the superintendent.

Element(s)
<p>1. The board annually evaluates the superintendent’s job performance as outlined in the evaluation plan.</p>
<p>2. The superintendent’s evaluation will be reflected in meeting agenda minutes, noting participating members; however, the results of the evaluation of the superintendent will remain confidential.</p>

Evidence

- Superintendent Evaluation Instrument and Process
- Board Training Plan
- Board Meeting Agendas and Minutes
- Board Policies

Policy

CEI Superintendent Evaluation

Rating

Exceeds Expectations	10
Meets Expectations	0
Progress but did not Meet	0
Needs Improvement	0

Review Comments

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Standard(s)

C. STANDARD: The board adopts personnel policy that is implemented by the superintendent.

Element(s)

1. The board adopts personnel policies that are aligned with the school system's strategic plan and organizational effectiveness and consistent with applicable statutes.
2. The board and individual board members do not engage in the implementation of personnel policy, including the employment, assignment, or dismissal of personnel, except to accept or reject the recommendations of the superintendent.
3. The board holds the superintendent accountable for assuring that all personnel in the school system are evaluated in accordance with the school system's mission, strategic plan, school system personnel policies, and applicable statutes.
4. The board follows state laws in matters of school system employee discipline.
5. The board makes personnel decisions consistent with Domain VIII – Ethics.

Evidence

- Board Policies
- System Strategic Plan
- Board Meeting Agendas and Minutes

Policy

BD

Policy Development

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Standard(s)	
BDG	Administration in Policy Absence
CEI	Superintendent Evaluation
Rating	
Exceeds Expectations	10
Meets Expectations	0
Progress but did not Meet	0
Needs Improvement	0
Comments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Board members approve or reject the Superintendent's recommendations for employment or termination. They hold the staff responsible for assuring all personnel are evaluated appropriately.- The board supports the superintendent's recommendations for employee discipline.- The Board closely listens to the personnel recommendations of Dr. Scott in order to act upon them through acceptance or rejection.	
Review Comments	
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Domain VI. Financial Governance

Description

The board provides guidance to the superintendent and sets sound fiscal policy so that the school system is an effective steward of all resources to support student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

Board: One of the most important tasks for a local board is adopting the budget. The budget authorizes the targeted expenditure of revenue available to the school district, serves as a vehicle to control spending and clarifies the strategic goals and priorities of the school system. The board approves a process for budget development, community input and adopts each fiscal year budget consistent with strategic plan goals and State law provisions. The board adopts fiscal management policies to ensure effectiveness and efficiency for the implementation of adopted fiscal year budget.

Superintendent: The superintendent follows the board budget development processes as prescribed by board, state law provisions and recommends to the board the fiscal year budget. The superintendent provides monthly, quarterly, annual budget reports to the board, monitors the budget and makes budget recommendations when needed, manages the effectiveness and implements the budget accordingly to the state provisions and local board policies.

Standard(s)	
A. STANDARD: The board of education upon recommendation of the superintendent adopts a budget that adheres to State law provisions and consistent with its strategic plan.	
Element(s)	
1. The board provides guidance to the superintendent, who develops and manages the budget in accordance with the school system's strategic plan, and adopts fiscal policies that assure improved student achievement and organizational effectiveness.	
2. The board conducts budgeting discussions with the superintendent and establishes specific budget parameters where deemed necessary or appropriate.	
3. The board approves, after careful consideration of sound business and fiscal practices, the school system's budget	

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Standard(s)

Element(s)

reflecting the strategic plan.

Evidence

- Board policies
- Board meeting agendas and minutes
- Strategic plan
- Annual Budget
- Public budget hearing meetings

Policy

DC	Annual Operating Budget
DCC	Budget Preparation Procedures
DCE	Budget Final Adoption Procedures
DCH	Budget Periodic Budget Reconciliation
DF	Revenues
DFB	State Funds
DFC	Federal Funds
DFF	Grants
DFG	Fees, Payments, and Rentals

Rating

Exceeds Expectations	10
Meets Expectations	0
Progress but did not Meet	0
Needs Improvement	0

Comments

- The Board consistently exhibits great fiscal responsibility by carefully reviewing and discussing the system budget to ensure the focus remains on student achievement and organizational effectiveness.
- The Board holds budget hearings to seek public input into the budget. Boards approves the budget and sets the annual millage rate based on the approved budget.

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Standard(s)

Review Comments

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B. STANDARD: The board of education adopts policy for sound fiscal management and monitors the implementation of the budget in accordance with state laws and regulations.

Element(s)

- 1. The board develops policies to ensure sound fiscal management, including but not limited to: balanced budget requirements, spending level authorizations and permissions, deficit spending restrictions, establishment of special funds, and reserve maintenance requirements.**
- 2. The board holds the superintendent accountable for the implementation of the budget in a manner consistent with the strategic plan and state board rules.**
- 3. The board, working through the superintendent, monitors the school system's audits, reviews monthly financial reports and additional financial reports needed to make informed decisions and to ensure execution of the budget in a manner consistent with the strategic plan and strategic goals of the school system.**
- 4. The board reviews and addresses annually audited financial records and audit findings, with a goal of proactively preventing audit exceptions.**
- 5. The board addresses fiscal matters in a manner consistent with law, sound business practice, and ethical principles regarding conflicts of interest in Domain VIII - Ethics.**
- 6. The board operates in a manner such that the board's financial decisions and actions do not provide unfair**

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Standard(s)

Element(s)

financial or other opportunistic advantages to any member of the governance leadership team, their family members, associates, or individual constituents.

Evidence

- Board policies
- Board meeting agendas and minutes
- Annual audit reports
- Annual budget
- Strategic plan
- Code of ethics and conflict of interest policies

Policy

BH	Board Code of Ethics
BHA	Board Member Conflict of Interest
DCL	Fund Balance
DG	Depository of Funds
DH	Bonded Employees
DIA	Accounting System
DIB	Financial Reports
DID	Audits

Rating

Exceeds Expectations	10
Meets Expectations	0
Progress but did not Meet	0
Needs Improvement	0

Comments

- The board operates in a manner such that the board's financial decisions and actions do not provide unfair financial or other opportunistic advantages to any member of the governance leadership team, their family members, associates, or individual constituents.

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Standard(s)

- The Board approves the monthly financial statements in accordance with the annual budget. The board approves expenditures in accordance with the budget, policy, and state regulations. The Board discusses the annual audit results and are provided the official audit report. The Board adheres to generally accepted accounting principles.

Review Comments

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Domain VII. Ethics

Description

The governance leadership team conducts themselves, collectively and individually, in an ethical and professional manner.

Board: The board adopts and practices their Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policies that at a minimum meets the State Board of Education requirements.

Superintendent: The superintendent practices the Code of Ethics for Professional Educators as prescribed by the Professional Standards Commission.

Standard(s)	
A. STANDARD: The governance team adheres to, adopts and practices a Code of Ethics, avoids conflicts of interest, and annually reviews ethical standards to ensure and enhance governance structure and organizational effectiveness.	
Element(s)	
1. The board adopts and adheres to an ethics policy that includes, as a minimum, an ethical code of behavior based on the State Model Code of Ethics.	
2. The superintendent adheres to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission Code of Ethics for Educators.	
3. The board adopts and adheres to a Conflict of Interest policy that includes state law requirements, as outlined in the State statutory Conflict of Interest Provisions.	
Evidence	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board policies• Code of ethics and conflict of interest policies• Annual board training plan• Signed training affidavits of board members	
Policy	
BH	Board Code of Ethics

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Standard(s)

BHA	Board Member Conflict of Interest
GAG	Staff Conflict of Interest
GBU	Professional Personnel Ethics

Rating

Exceeds Expectations	10
Meets Expectations	0
Progress but did not Meet	0
Needs Improvement	0

Comments

- Board members and the superintendent are very ethical in all that they do.
- The superintendent adheres to the Code of Ethics.
- The Board members conduct themselves in an ethical and respectful manner.

Review Comments

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Board Chair

Superintendent