



Purpose of the Effective Board Governance Observation Diagnostic

The purpose of the Effective Board Governance Observation Diagnostic is to observe and measure the degree to which board practices exist within a system to support the continuous improvement journey.

Who will use this diagnostic?

- Lead Evaluators for Systems Accreditation Reviews
- Engagement Review Team members as identified and assigned by the Lead Evaluator

When will the diagnostic be used?

The Effective Board Governance Observation Diagnostic will be:

- used before or during a Systems Accreditation Engagement Review
- used to observe a live board meeting(s) or board work session(s)
- used to observe recorded or streamed board meetings
- *The Board Governance Observation Diagnostic will not be used for individual school reviews. It is possible for the diagnostic to be used for private or international schools that have governing boards. This decision will be determined by the AdvancED Director and the Lead Evaluator.

How long will it take to conduct the observation?

One observation should be conducted for a minimum of one hour. The team member(s) may conduct more than one observation if time permits prior to or within 30 days of the Engagement Review.

How will the observation results be used by the Engagement Review Team?

Following the completion of the board observation(s), the Engagement Review team member will provide an overview of the board observation to the team during the evening work session.

The results will be used to inform the:

- Engagement Review process
- Discussions within the team work sessions
- AdvancED Standards Diagnostics
- Engagement Review actions (Improvement Priorities, Opportunities for Improvement, Powerful Practices)

Will the board observation results be included in the final report?

The results will be used to inform the Engagement Review and the Standards Diagnostic. The Lead Evaluator may include statements about the board observation within the final Engagement Review Diagnostic Report. Names of specific board members will not be included in the final Engagement Review Diagnostic Report.

What does the Engagement Review Team Member do with the observation document(s)?

Keep all documents organized and use for discussions during the team work sessions. All final observation documents (paper and/or electronic copies) should be given to the Lead Evaluator of the team. The Lead Evaluator will submit all final observation documents (paper and/or electronic copies) to the AdvancED Managing Office of the respective state or region.

Will the results be included or factored into the institution’s IEQ? No

What is the research behind the development of this tool?

National School Boards Association (NSBA)

- <https://www.nsba.org/>
- Key Work of School Boards (Guidebook)
- Iowa Lighthouse Project
- The Keys to Board Excellence

Center for Public Education

- www.centerforpubliceducation.org
- Five Characteristics of an Effective School Board
- Eight Characteristics of Effective School Boards

Completing the Effective Board Governance Observation Diagnostic

Effective Board Governance Observation Tool



The purpose of the Effective Board Governance Observation Tool is to measure the degree to which effective board practices exist within a system to support the continuous improvement journey.

Observer Name:		Observe one or more meetings live, streamed and/or recorded for a minimum of 1 hour.				
Date:	Type of Board Meeting	Observation Time	Observations (circle one)			# in Attendance
Institution:	<input type="checkbox"/> full board	Start	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	Board members
City:	<input type="checkbox"/> committee					Administrators
State:	<input type="checkbox"/> special purpose	End	<input type="checkbox"/> Live <input type="checkbox"/> Streamed <input type="checkbox"/> Recorded			Stakeholders
Country:	<input type="checkbox"/> other					Other
						Unknown

Board Meeting Information

1. Complete each field. Do not record the names of school board members.
2. Identify the type of board meeting you are observing (Full Board, Board Committee, Special Purpose Board Meeting or other type of board meeting)
3. Enter the observation start and end time if observing a live or streamed board meeting. If observing a recorded board meeting, identify the start and end time codes from the video player that reflects the portion of the meeting that was observed.
4. One observation should be conducted for a minimum of one hour. The team member(s) may conduct more than one observation if time permits prior to or within 30 days of the Engagement Review.
5. Observations may be conducted live, streamed and/or recorded.
6. Tally the number of stakeholders in attendance.
7. Utilize the Comments section for clarity in your thinking and to be able to provide information to the Engagement Review Team during the Work session.



Effective Board Governance Observation Ratings Guide

When observing during a board meeting, consider the following factors as you determine the rating for each item: **Routine and Systemic, Quality of Application, and Frequency of Application**. The factors are listed in order of most to least importance. Thus, the **Routine and Systemic** factor carries more weight than **Frequency of Application**. The rubric is intended to provide guidance for rating but is not the simple average of the three factors as all factors may or may not be applicable to all items. Observers should use professional knowledge and judgment in determining the final item rating based on the rubric.

Factors to consider during observation	Very Evident 4	Evident 3	Somewhat Evident 2	Not Observed 1
Routine and Systemic To what degree is the practice a routine and regular part of board governance?	Clearly understood and a regular and routine part of the board environment	Generally understood but not completely routinized	Somewhat understood but applied singularly and/or not a part of the regular routine	Not Observed
Quality of Application How well is the practice applied?	Deep/Complex Application	Moderate Application	Superficial/Simple Application	Not Observed
Frequency of Application How frequently is the practice applied?	High Frequency	Moderate Frequency	Limited Frequency	Not Observed

Understanding and Using the Ratings Guide

Using the Ratings Guide and professional judgment, determine the degree to which the item is observed during the time period of the observation. Important questions to ask yourself throughout the observation:

- Did I observe this item in action during this meeting?
- How do I know?
- What evident during this meeting supports my observation of this item?

Factors to consider during the observation:

- Routine and Systemic - To what degree is the practice a routine and regular part of board governance?
- Quality of Application - How well is the practice applied?
- Frequency of Application - How frequently is the practice applied?

RATINGS: VE = Very Evident • E = Evident • SE = Somewhat Evident • NO = Not Observed						
Item Number	Effective Board Governance Observation Items	VE	E	SE	NO	Comments
Physical Setting						
1	Physical arrangement of board meeting is conducive to board members interacting with each other.	4	3	2	1	
Meeting Protocol						
2	The board meeting follows/adheres to the meeting agenda.	4	3	2	1	
3	The board addresses agenda items in accordance with policies.	4	3	2	1	
4	The board meeting process/protocol adheres to policy, guidelines and/or a pre-determined set of expectations.	4	3	2	1	
Leadership						
5	The board demonstrates respectful, ethical and professional behavior.	4	3	2	1	
6	The board demonstrates a thorough knowledge and understanding of policies and procedures.	4	3	2	1	
7	The board engages in a manner that empowers shared leadership between the governing body and professional staff.	4	3	2	1	
8	The board engages in a manner that creates a healthy and effective governance climate.	4	3	2	1	
9	The board uses the vision of the institution to drive strategic discussions.	4	3	2	1	

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Item Number	Effective Board Governance Observation Items	VE	E	SE	NO	Comments
10	The board reviews data and results as it relates to the achievement of the institution's goals.	4	3	2	1	
11	The board conducts healthy dialogue with stakeholders.	4	3	2	1	
12	The board demonstrates transparency in their decision-making.	4	3	2	1	
13	The board uses stakeholder feedback to inform decision-making.	4	3	2	1	
14	The board demonstrates knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities.	4	3	2	1	
15	The board reviews its actions and decisions to achieve the vision and goals of the institution.	4	3	2	1	
Learning						
16	The board focuses on student learning to achieve the vision and goals of the institution.	4	3	2	1	
17	The board reviews student learning results for continuous improvement and accountability.	4	3	2	1	
18	The board is knowledgeable about programs that impact teaching and learning.	4	3	2	1	
19	The board conducts transparent discussions regarding the institution's teaching and learning programs.	4	3	2	1	
20	The board supports programs and services that prepare students for college and career readiness.	4	3	2	1	
21	The board supports programs and services that address the specialized needs of learners.	4	3	2	1	
Resources						
22	The board aligns decision to the vision and goals of the institution.	4	3	2	1	
23	The board determines equitable resource distribution based on the needs of all students.	4	3	2	1	
24	The board communicates the importance of equitable distribution of resources to meet the needs of all students.	4	3	2	1	
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:						

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