

DATE: September 7, 2021

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee Ken Gibson, Chair, Governance and Evaluation Committee
Trustee Michelle Draper, Governance and Evaluation Committee
Trustee Shelagh Dunn, Board and Superintendent Evaluation Committee

SUBJECT: 2020-2021 Board Self-Evaluation Summary

RESOURCE

STAFF: Karen Mills

REFERENCE: [Trustees' Handbook – Section 6.1.1 Governance and Evaluation Committee](#)

ISSUE

The Board of Trustees provides to the public a summary of the annual Board Self-Evaluation survey results from the previous school year.

BACKGROUND

Each year, the Board conducts a self-evaluation to assess its performance with respect to the Board's roles and responsibilities. The purpose of the self-evaluation is to review the Board's performance with the goal of determining:

- a) what is being done well, and
- b) what aspects of Board activity require improvement and a corporate commitment to Board development

In an election year such as this one, the results can serve to inform the new Board of the previous Board's perception of its performance in key areas of governance and provide a starting point for the new Board's work.

The 2020-2021 Board of Trustees' self-evaluation survey was organized into eleven categories relating to the Board's roles and responsibilities. For each section, Trustees were asked chose from two options: *Board performing satisfactorily* or *Board growth required*. Trustees were encouraged to include comments that illustrate or support their choices.

The survey opened Wednesday, May 12 and closed Tuesday, May 25, 2021. Seven Trustees participated in the survey, with one completing only the first question.

CURRENT SITUATION

A summary of responses for each category is provided on the following pages and is being reported to the public as part of the Board's annual accountability practices.

Board Performance Summary



Mission, Vision, Values and Priorities

Rating: 71 per cent rated performance as satisfactory, 29 per cent indicated growth required

Comments indicated that although the year had a lot of uncertainty due to the pandemic, the Board remained focused on their Strategic Plan.

Results Oriented

Rating: 67 per cent rated performance as satisfactory, 33 per cent indicated growth required

Comments received signify that the Board's decisions are highly driven by data and results. There was an appreciation for disaggregated data for literacy and numeracy, along with a desire for further conversation around measures of student well-being.

Alignment of Resources

Rating: 50 per cent rated performance as satisfactory, 50 per cent indicated growth required

The Equity Fund and the decision to increase funding for high social vulnerability schools and literacy and numeracy support were cited as examples of aligning resources with the Division's vision. Lack of clarity around decision processes, priorities and the disruption caused by the pandemic and Provincial funding cuts were noted as particular challenges in the year.

Budgeting Practices

Rating: 67 per cent rated performance as satisfactory, 33 per cent indicated growth required

Qualitative comments noted that the budget process has a number of strengths, and there is a strong desire to increase community input into the budget planning. The Board's strong advocacy for adequate, predictable and sustainable funding was also noted.

Climate and Culture

Rating: 50 per cent rated performance as satisfactory, 50 per cent indicated growth required

Comments indicated that the shared belief that all children can learn at high levels given the support needed was reflected in both policy and practice. The Board's anti-racism work and leadership through the pandemic were also highlighted as strengths. Desire was expressed for clarification of the roles of the Board for the public and possibly governance professional development, as well as working toward a more diverse workforce.

School Board and Superintendent Relationships

Rating: 80 per cent rated performance as satisfactory, 20 per cent indicated growth required

Comments confirmed that the Board working relationship with the Superintendent is a continued strength, but greater clarity on roles would be helpful.

School Board Relationships and Conduct

Rating: 67 per cent rated performance as satisfactory, 33 per cent indicated growth required

Comments indicated that while relationships were respectful and courteous for the most part, remarks that were perceived as defensive or personal and not dealing effectively with conflict sometimes hampered communication. It was also acknowledged that operating "virtually" made interaction more challenging.

Community Relations

Rating: 83 per cent rated performance as satisfactory, 17 per cent indicated growth required

Remarks indicated that communication with community continued to be a strength of the Board, even through the pandemic.

Advocacy Practices

Rating: 67 per cent rated performance as satisfactory, 33 per cent indicated growth required

Comments cited the Board's strong advocacy efforts and cited the addition of an Advocacy Committee as helpful. Comments also indicated divergence of opinions on the efficacy and direction of some advocacy efforts.

Policy Governance

Rating: 50 per cent rated performance as satisfactory, 50 per cent indicated growth required

Comments noted stakeholder engagement as a strength of the Board's policy work. Monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of policies was cited as an area for improvement.

Committee and Representative Work

Rating: 100 per cent rated performance as satisfactory

Comments indicated that committees were focused and communicated well with the Board.

The final survey question asked: *How could the Board improve its achievement of goals identified in the Strategic Plan?* Suggestions included:

- Encouraging the incoming Board to draft a plan that is more focused, with specific, measurable goals
- Designing a strong orientation plan for the incoming Trustees to set them up for success

KEY POINTS

Overall, Trustee evaluation of the Board's performance was more divided than in the previous three years of the Board's term.

- All respondents agreed that Board committees and representatives operated effectively.
- There was also strong agreement that community relations practices, the relationship with the Superintendent and the alignment of work with the Division vision, mission, values and priorities went well.
- Two-thirds of respondents felt that the Board was results oriented, demonstrated transparent and responsible budgeting practices, and demonstrated excellent policy governance practices.
- Two-thirds of respondents also felt that Trustees consistently modelled respectful relationships and professional conduct.
- In the areas of alignment of resources based on data and the Division vision, mission, values and priorities, respondents were evenly split. This was also the case when evaluating the Board's performance in creating and promoting a positive climate and culture and demonstrating excellent policy governance practices.

NEXT STEPS

The information in this report will be used to inform recommendations brought forward to the incoming Board as part of their orientation.

KM:sj