



This bulletin, produced by TASB Leadership Team Services, examines research and shares philosophies to inform and promote exceptional governance within school boards across Texas.

Learning Together as a Board Team

by Phil Gore, PhD, Division Director of Leadership Team Services

Boards that want to improve outcomes for students in their district make it a point to learn together as a team with their superintendent. The multi-state Lighthouse Research Project showed a clear link between boards learning as a team and improved student learning in school districts. School boards in districts showing improvements had regular learning sessions with each other, with administrators, and with outside facilitators. In the Lighthouse Study, boards in “stuck” districts with stagnate or declining student learning failed to meet regularly to learn together as a team. The team mentality drives districts to succeed more often than not.

Figuring out the ways

A board-superintendent team can learn together in multiple ways. Focusing on student achievement data by reviewing it, asking good questions about it, and comparing it to other data over time is one essential way that all boards and superintendents can learn together. Attending conferences or having facilitated in-district workshops are additional great methods for learning together. Book studies on governance, leadership, and school improvement are excellent resources for the governance team to focus on together to sharpen its skills.

Prioritizing learning while leading

We know that leaders are learners. There is no time more critical for leaders to continue learning than while governing an education system such as a school district. Trustees, whole boards, and superintendents wanting to commit to improve student outcomes must discipline themselves to make a lifestyle of learning their priority. You can look to the Texas Association of School Boards as your trusted resource for research-driven learning opportunities that improve the outcomes for students in your district.

eXceptional Governance Board Development with TASB

TASB is pleased to offer a five-session, whole-board learning experience that strengthens essential perspectives, builds governance capacity, and equips boards to act confidently with a focus on improving student outcomes. Boards will be led through a series of reflective exercises that lead to a strong vision, meaningful student learning goals, and an established monitoring system that supports the board’s work to ensure progress toward the established vision. The outcomes of these five sessions will equip boards to enter a process for continuous improvement. This could require follow-up sessions, quarterly or semiannually for ongoing refinement. This new, research-informed approach to whole-board development extends TASB’s commitment to eXceptional Governance that improves outcomes for students. Learn about how your board can participate in this customized governance training by e-mailing LTS@tasb.org.