

BOARD RELATIONS

Introduction

Judicial education boards can improve the quality of judicial education programs through conferences, publications, and a wide range of other activities. The creation of a board is based on the fundamental belief that a group of individuals can make better decisions than can any single individual. And, the quantity of work achieved by a group can usually far exceed the capabilities of any one individual.

Boards can provide advice, assistance, and support to program planning, implementation, and evaluation efforts. Because of members' knowledge, expertise, and experience, a board can make decisions and/or recommendations which accurately reflect the needs of the judicial community. Boards can assist in identifying priorities for programs and can help distribute limited resources among competing needs.

Individual members who serve on boards can strengthen the bond among various constituencies within the judiciary and serve as a link to other groups who have an interest in the court system. A board, if it is representative in nature, can give judicial education programs greater credibility among decision-makers and program participants.

Anyone who has worked with boards, committees, and other small groups knows that some are effective while others are unproductive. And, even though a group may be productive, members and staff may walk away from the experience feeling exhausted and emotionally drained. So how can judicial educators create boards which will be effective in achieving their goals and will provide a valuable experience for the members? How can established groups be more effective and efficient? This chapter, by exploring the nature of effective groups and providing guidelines for the establishment and management of judicial education boards, will provide some answers to these questions. It will also attempt to stimulate further reading and thinking about effective groups, particularly judicial education boards.

Effective Groups

The judicial educator must understand how groups work and what can be done to help them work better. The judicial educator who is able to predict, facilitate, and interpret group processes is much more likely to enhance the group's growth and development than one who can only react to developments in the group. Those who appreciate the complexity of group work are also much more likely to find their role satisfying and rewarding.

The Nature of Groups

Groups are more than a collection of individuals; groups have dynamics and identities quite independent of individual member characteristics (Tennant, 1988; Fisher & Ellis, 1990). The interplay among individuals and the relationship each person has with the group also shape the characteristics of the group (Fisher & Ellis, 1990).

Individuals who provide leadership or support to groups must be able to think simultaneously about the individual members of the group, subsections of the group, the group as a whole, and the organizational structure within which the group operates. Staff and board leadership must be prepared for the changes that occur within a group as it solidifies its group identification. They must be sensitive to the issues that might arise at any given state of maturity (Ephross & Vassil, 1988).

Group Maturity

For an assortment of individuals to transform themselves collectively into a group takes competency, commitment, and time on behalf of the members, the leadership, and the support staff. Frequently referred to in the literature as “group maturity,” these developmental stages directly impact group effectiveness.

When a group (or a significant number of its members) is new, it will be uncertain of its role and function. Individuals within the group will depend heavily upon the group leaders, the sponsoring organization, and the staff for guidance and direction. For survival, a group will try to define itself as a unit, distinct from the definition of any individual member or any other group or organization.

In this phase, groups need structure, support, and opportunities to coalesce, bond, and develop an identity. The group needs to know its purpose, the expectations of the leadership and sponsoring organization, and why the work of the group is important. Attention to social interactions among members is particularly important. Groups need immediate feedback about small accomplishments, achievements, and successes. The collective ego of a group needs positive reinforcement so it can gain faith in its own abilities.

As a group matures, it will struggle with its role, function, identity, and even its leadership. Not unlike adolescence, this phase is normal and necessary if a group is to become strong and independent. From this struggle will emerge shared goals, a sense of belonging, and commitment to the success of the group. A group that has the ability to solve internal problems, create its own identity, and resolve individual differences will have a much higher level of group cohesion.

Conflict is often viewed as a negative process, but under these conditions, conflict can be healthy.

As the group experiences internal conflict, however, the individuals within the group must feel safe. Ephross and Vassil (1988) encourage staff to trust the group growth process and to “discern the differences between destructive processes and constructive growth processes that are simply messy” (p. 54).

A mature group is one which operates democratically, one in which each member feels that he or she has control over the direction of the group, and one in which each member feels valued. This level of maturity does not come quickly or easily. And, although a democratic environment may develop as a group works together to solve problems, such an environment may be a necessary prerequisite for group problem-solving.

Groups that do not operate democratically are more likely to produce solutions of a lower quality because creativity and risk-taking are reduced. Non-democratic groups frequently lose the participation of members. Members attend meetings but do not really participate. A third risk, and one of great concern, is that non-democratic groups are much more likely to develop “groupthink,” where the suggestions of one or two powerful members are endorsed without critical review or careful investigation.

As a group reaches maturity, it is important that board leadership and support staff protect the individual and help the group maintain a central focus. The group needs to be nurtured and supported, reminded of its reason for existence, and given positive feedback about its successes and accomplishments. Feedback enables a group to develop a collective sense of self-esteem and competence. It also helps to reinforce the importance of the group’s work.

If the group experiences failure in this stage of its development -- and groups who take risks are likely to fail occasionally -- it is important for the failure to be put into perspective (leadership and staff can often provide a valuable historical perspective). The group needs to see the balance between success and failure. The group also needs to be empowered to glean insight from failure. “Groups who are afraid to fail usually do” (Ephross & Vassil, 1990, p. 111). Failure, like healthy conflict, can strengthen a group and enhance its development more than continual success.

Group Cohesion

The degree to which group members experience a sense of belonging and share a vision of the group's purposes is generally called group cohesion. Valued in team sports for its contribution to a sense of "group" rather than "individual" importance, group cohesion is critical to effectiveness. Figure 1 identifies ways to promote group cohesion.

Figure 1

FOSTERING GROUP COHESION

- *Encourage external threats.* A group coalesces when it feels threatened or challenged from the outside. An "us vs. them" challenge can bring a group closer together.
- *Create a history.* A group that has a sense of shared history is more likely to see itself as a cohesive unit than individuals who have no historical perspective.
- *Establish interdependent goals.* Individuals who rely on each other and see each other as instrumental in achieving group goals have greater cohesion than individuals who are independent of one another.
- *Accomplish something.* A sense of pride or power develops when groups see the results of their efforts. Groups who see themselves as productive are more cohesive, and more cohesive groups are more productive.
- *Develop relationships and shared norms.* Relationships among members of the group and shared values or beliefs help a group function effectively.
- *Promote acceptance for group members.* When security is high, groups perform better and each individual is more likely to participate.

[Fisher & Ellis (1990) pp. 38-40.]

New groups. When a group is new, group cohesion develops when individual member's goals and values are merged with the group's goals and values. Total congruence within a new group would be impossible, but the sooner a group shares a vision, the more productive it will be. Members must begin to value group membership and to internalize the importance of the group's work.

For group cohesion to develop, the identity of the group must be well-defined. Much has been written about vision statements, mission statements, charters, logos, and other documents that define what a group is and why it exists. Without such documents, group identity becomes fuzzy, abstract, and/or remote. Without group identity, there can be no group cohesion. The identity must be unique. If the group is like others, there is no need for it to exist as a separate entity.

Mature groups. Mature groups may need to be reminded of their purpose and helped to keep “on track.” The group leadership and staff must constantly remind the group of its central reason for being. When groups are bombarded with requests, proposals, and issues, they must be assisted in deciding which ones are relevant to their central purpose. A group that tackles every problem thrown its way soon loses energy, focus, and definition and spreads valuable resources too thinly.

Group Communication

Another critical factor which contributes to group cohesion is communication. Effective communication patterns are essential to an effective group. Open communication between the leadership and the members is critical. Members must also communicate freely among themselves and with support staff. All communication, whether oral or written, must be open, supportive, and receptive. Nothing shuts down the work of a group more quickly than poor or restricted communication.

Essential to the development of a democratic group is the right of all members to be heard. The democratic process is dependent upon open communication and equal opportunity for communication among all members. Learning to express and to listen to differing opinions within a group is critical in a democracy. It is especially important if the work of the group is to result in the best possible solution for all concerned parties.

All new ideas, regardless of their soundness, generally create a disturbance in a group. Humans have an incredible propensity to resist change and typically react negatively to new ideas. By threatening the status quo, new ideas create stress in a group. But where would a group be without new ideas? To overcome the initial negative response, groups have to develop a comfort level with new ideas. Acceptance of new ideas is enhanced by open communication.

A mature group, with effective communication, will openly explore the advantages and disadvantages of new ideas, suggest plausible alternatives, and then select the solution which best meets the purposes of the group. And the group, despite disagreement and differences of opinion among members during the process, will emerge with a sense of group cohesion and shared commitment to the decision.

Effective Leadership

Effective groups need effective leadership. Leadership may be elected or appointed from within the group, or it may be appointed by a higher authority to guide and direct the work of the group. Staff assigned to support the group certainly fulfill a leadership role, although much of staff's leadership role may be hidden or "behind the scenes." Leadership can also come from the sponsoring organization.

Regardless of the source, leadership is critical to effective group work. Leaders must assist groups through the developmental phases and must create a climate in which group cohesion (and effective communication) can develop. Frequently, leaders must make the group purpose and mission visible and remind the group of its importance.

Leadership must help the group develop sufficient structure to guide its work. Meeting agendas, minutes, committee assignments, and planning documents all provide structure which increases effectiveness. This support of task-related functions is critical if a group is to develop a sense of accomplishment. In addition, leadership must help the group develop the skills that enable members to function within a group. Communication, decision-making, and problem-solving skills enable a group to function as a whole rather than as a collection of individuals (see Figure 2).

In addition, group leaders must develop an environment which enables the group to develop a sense of balance, a sense of power, and a sense of responsibility. Members must feel that each person is important to the group and has a valuable contribution to make. Each person must feel a sense of responsibility to and ownership of the group. Only through group-centered leadership, where all members share leadership responsibility, does such an environment develop.

Finally, leadership must develop a trusting relationship with the members of the group. Members of a group must be able to trust the recommendations, the information, and the confidence of its leadership in order to have the freedom to speak openly, to disagree with the leadership, and to struggle through difficult decisions. Without trust, no meaningful conflict (and therefore growth) can take place.

Those who serve in a leadership capacity, including staff, must be constantly aware of their power and authority and must take care not to be abusive or overly directive. Opinions given by leadership carry far greater weight than those of other group members and should, therefore, be given cautiously and infrequently. The balance of power is particularly delicate and needs to be protected.

Figure 2

GUIDELINES FOR GROUP PROBLEM-SOLVING

- Separate the problem from the solution.
- Identify all possible solutions. Withhold criticism — some good solutions can come from “wild” possibilities.
- Separate facts from opinions. Use both in solving problems, but know which is which.
- Check frequently for agreement on basic ideas or assumptions.
- Divide large or complex problems into manageable sections.
- Check occasionally to review and determine what has been agreed to.
- Do not force a final decision on reluctant members.
- Verify that solutions are both acceptable and realistic.

[Yoder (1981) p. 29.]

Leadership Functions

The essential functions of effective group leadership, particularly those in a staff capacity, include:

- *Providing information.* Groups need accurate, complete, and concise information upon which to base deliberations. Board members should explore issues from all perspectives, negative as well as positive. Advise the board of potential problems, issues, or concerns. Provide all information requested in a timely fashion. If it cannot be provided, notify the board of the reason for the delay.
- *Providing guidance and support.* Members and group leaders need guidance and support to fulfill their roles. Help board members gain the skills needed to function effectively as a group member. Provide an orientation for new members which reviews roles and responsibilities. Board leaders also need an orientation to their responsibilities (see Figure 3).
- *Establishing high expectations.* Communicate needs, goals, and timelines to the board in a way that motivates members to participate and contribute to the work of the group. Provide real problems that are meaningful for the board to deliberate and ponder.

Figure 3

HOW TO LEAD A GROUP AND NOT DO ALL THE WORK

One of the major tasks of a group leader is learning how to lead a group to achieve its goals and complete its responsibilities. At times, it seems the easiest way to get things done is to “do it all” rather than assign tasks to others in the group. After all, leaders know exactly what the task is, how best to do it, and if they do it, they know it will get done on time. But effective leaders know doing it all is impossible, ineffective, and detrimental to the good of the group. Effective leaders must delegate responsibility, and they must do so in a way which maximizes the probability of success. Individuals need support when they are given assignments. Here are some suggestions:

- Select people who have the ability to complete the task.
- Make sure the assignment and expectations are clearly understood.
- Let those selected know you believe in their ability to complete assigned tasks.
- Negotiate deadlines whenever possible.
- Get a commitment to follow through from those to whom tasks are assigned.
- Make sure that those who are assigned tasks know *at the outset* that there will be checks on progress.
- Provide enough latitude to those completing tasks to use their own imagination and initiative. Clarify standards, limits, and restrictions which cannot be changed.
- Don't do jobs that have been assigned to others.
- Reward people for tasks completed. Give recognition whenever possible.

[Adapted from course handout developed by Stephanie L. Braumann, Ph.D. (1990). Visiting Assistant Professor, School of Education at Seattle University. Course: EDCI 510, Basics of Curriculum and Instruction.]

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- *Following through.* Take action on board recommendations and follow through on suggestions made. Give board feedback about action taken and the impact of their recommendations.
 - *Recognizing contributions.* Recognition encourages further work by individual members and may encourage others to participate. The recognition does not need to be elaborate, but it must be sincere and meaningful.

Group and/or Leader Dysfunction

Occasionally, a group or its leadership will not function as a cohesive group. Factions may develop, responsibilities may be shirked, or participation in meetings may be avoided. Identification and solution of these and other related problems generally involve staff. Staff must carefully diagnose the problems and look for solutions which will foster effective group work. Although there are no easy solutions to these kinds of problems, staff may well want to keep the following principles in mind:

- Diagnose the problem carefully. The better a problem is understood, the more appropriate the solution can be.
- Move as quickly as possible. Don't ignore problems, hoping they will go away. The need for quick action, however, must be balanced with careful action. Do not act in haste!
- Try to solve the problem at the lowest level possible, with as little intervention as possible. For example, if an individual seems to be having difficulty, work with that individual in private before taking any public action.
- Focus on fixing the problem, not on fixing blame. Seek a solution which will prevent or minimize future problems.
- Don't become personally involved, take sides, or betray confidences. Staff must remain neutral and be seen as loyal to the larger group.
- Seek neutral counsel and advice from those who have faced similar problems. Protect the identity of those involved, if necessary.
- Involve the total group in decisions which affect the group. Staff should not make independent decisions without the input of the group.

Establishing a Board

This chapter will now focus on the mechanics of establishing a judicial education board. Some of these decisions may be made by the sponsoring organization before anyone is contacted to serve on a board. Other decisions may be best made by a temporary judicial education board or organizing committee and reviewed by the sponsoring organization, if necessary. Any of the decisions that can be left to the judicial education board should be. This can help strengthen the board's identity.

In 1988, The National Association of State Judicial Educators published the *Survey of State Judicial Education Organizations*. It provides many alternative models for the organization, structure, membership, and authority patterns of judicial education boards. It is a valuable reference for anyone involved in establishing a board. Here are some general recommendations for a board's establishment.

Determine Board Authority

Generally, boards fall into one of three categories of authority. An **advisory board** has no, or very limited, policy-making authority. Advisory boards make recommendations to decision-makers (e.g., state supreme court). **Coordinating boards** consist of representatives of various entities (judges, clerks, administrators) and make decisions regarding programs which affect areas of mutual concern. Generally, coordinating boards have limited power and make few policy decisions. An **executive board** is responsible for policy development and high level decision-making. An executive board has clearly delineated areas of authority and responsibility; however, its work could still be reviewed by a higher authority.

When the general policy-making scope of a board has been determined, the board should begin to establish its responsibility in various areas. While responsibilities differ from organization to organization, those areas that may be considered include product development, resource allocation, expenditure control, quality control, fund-raising, policy articulation, supervision of mandatory education, involvement with national providers of educational products, and establishment of a relationship with state-based peers. Appendix 12 gives an example of the roles and responsibilities of a policy-making board for a continuing judicial education program.

Establish Structure of the Board

Effective groups are those with clearly defined purposes and structure. To establish this framework, the following must be delineated in a charter or constitution (see Attachment A for a sample constitution).

Purpose. A statement of purpose should reflect why the board is needed, how its work will contribute to judicial education, and its level of authority.

Membership. A board should be representative of the constituencies or communities it serves or representative of those impacted by its decisions. Members should represent various geographic regions, court levels, positions within the court system, and experience levels. Members should also include men and women and representatives of racial and ethnic segments of the population.

A board should be small enough to be effective (fewer than 20 members) and large enough to reflect diversity.

Board members should also be selected because they are interested and able to attend meetings and carry out responsibilities. Membership on the board must be a priority for those selected. Those selected must be respected by decision-makers, program participants, and other board members. Members must have the courage to express their ideas and be willing to listen to others. They must also be willing to work in a group, to interact with others, and to support the work of the board.

Terms of service. Terms of service should be established and made known prior to the selection of individuals. Rotating terms of service can provide both continuity and change. Limiting the number of terms of service is also advisable to encourage board vitality.

Member selection process. Members may be elected or appointed to the board, and potential candidates can be nominated by individuals or groups or can be self-selected. The selection process should be: (a) established in advance, (b) approved by the appropriate authority, (c) made known to the community, and (d) followed precisely each time a member is selected or elected. Once an individual is selected, a formal letter of appointment should be sent stipulating the terms of service.

Procedures and guidelines. Bylaws (the procedural rules which outline the way the board works) and **policies** (which guide the decisions of the board) should be established. Attachment B provides a sample bylaw framework. The more the group can participate in establishing bylaws and policies, the more likely the group is to support and follow them.

Effective Meetings

As with most groups, judicial education boards will do the bulk of their work through meetings. Through these meetings members will primarily define their relationship with the board. Board leadership and staff must remember how important the meeting experience is and must make every possible effort to make the meetings successful. There are no unimportant meetings—each requires careful planning, implementation, and follow-up. Attachment C provides a checklist for planning an effective board meeting.

Planning

Successful boards meet regularly. Dates should be set cooperatively by all members far in advance. The agenda for each meeting also should be developed cooperatively by board leadership, board members, and staff. Agenda items may come from the minutes of previous meetings or from the annual plan of work. A typical agenda may include call to order, review and approval of previous meeting minutes, unfinished business (reports, updates, etc.), new business, reminder of next meeting and/or other upcoming events, and adjournment.

In addition to the business focus of the meeting, attention should be paid to social aspects of the meeting. Meetings, particularly when a group is new, provide opportunities for group development--meetings can reinforce a feeling of importance. Provide time for informal interaction. Be sure all members feel welcome and involved. Short progress reports from each committee or constituency represented provide good opportunities for active participation. Name tags and/or table tents are helpful if there are guests or new members.

Don't overlook the mechanical details, either. The location should be convenient and conducive to the work of the board. Refreshments should be served if at all possible. Participants need to know location of parking lots, restrooms, and smoking areas. Special care should be taken to facilitate participation of handicapped and/or disabled members of the board.

Conducting Meetings

Careful planning sets the stage for a successful meeting. The real work is making it happen. The leadership must work hard to make the meeting pleasant, productive, and conducive to the growth of the group. It takes a great deal of skill to guide a group through an agenda within the time limits of the meeting and still give support to each member and the group as a whole. The agenda can list topics in priority order. If time runs out, less crucial topics can be held over until the next meeting. Each agenda item can have a time estimation noted to encourage moving on to the next topic when the specified time has elapsed.

It is also critical that the meeting time provide an opportunity for each member to be heard and make a contribution to the work of the group. The leader must understand the needs of the group and its maturity level and must be able to respond to the unexpected.

Meeting Follow-Up

After the meeting, minutes and support materials should be distributed as quickly as possible. A list of assignments (with due dates) should also be sent. All requests for information or action should be noted and completed as soon as possible. It is critical to reinforce the work of the board and to support its progress.

The Work of the Board

To be effective, boards need a sense of direction and organization. A formal plan of action, program of work, or activity guide can provide the foundation for an efficient and effective board. The development of such a plan does not need to be complicated, but it should be carefully constructed to insure its acceptability (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

JUDICIAL EDUCATION BOARD PLAN OF ACTION

Goal of Board Action:

Objective # ____:

- Action Needed to Achieve Objective
- Who is Responsible?
- Resources Needed
- Check Points for Progress
- Deadline for Completion

Objective # ____:

- Action Needed to Achieve Objective
- Who is Responsible?
- Resources Needed
- Check Points for Progress
- Deadline for Completion

Plan of Action

Any plan of action needs to rest firmly upon the overall purpose of the board. Why was the board created in the first place? What challenges, responsibilities, and duties must it undertake to fulfill its responsibilities? Clarifying the purpose of the board enables members to focus on tasks consistent with the board's purposes and set aside those that are not within its scope. There are many possible approaches to developing a plan of action. The essential steps include:

- Review board purpose, functions, responsibilities, areas of authority.
- Identify potential activities (brainstorming, surveying, discussion).
- Prioritize activities (which are MOST important, vital, critical?).
- Clarify activities (goal, action needed, resources, timeline, outcomes).
- Delegate responsibility (assigning tasks to individuals and/or boards).
- Establish check points (progress reports, decision points).
- Establish deadlines (when will work be completed?).

Once a plan has been developed, it should be distributed to all members. The plan should be used to develop meeting agendas and should provide the foundation for a summary or annual report of the board's work. Every effort should be made to keep the plan visible, making it a vital document which provides a focus for members of the board.

Conclusion

Is working with a judicial education board worth all the work? Anyone who has worked with an effective judicial education board will quickly confirm that not only is the work beneficial, it is critical to the success of judicial education. Staff, working in isolation, can accomplish little, even if their work is supported by court leadership. Real success comes when judges and court personnel at all levels know their peers have planned educational programs to meet their real needs and interests. The credibility of the programs is enhanced and greater participation is insured.

Judicial education boards can have great impact on decision-makers, including legislators and members of the highest state court. Programs planned and endorsed by a judicial education board will have a much longer life, even when budgets are limited, than those planned by staff and/or a small group of court personnel. The power and influence of effective judicial education boards behoove judicial educators to nurture the boards carefully.

DEFINITIONS

Advisory Board: a board with very limited policy-making authority.

Bylaws: the procedural rules which outline the way a board works.

Coordinating Board: a board with representatives from various entities (judges, clerks, administrators) who make program decisions.

Executive Board: a board responsible for policy development and high level decision-making.

Policies: the procedural rules which guide the decisions of the board.

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Attachment A

Judicial Education Board Sample Constitution

Adapted from materials contained in *NASJE (1988) Survey of State Judicial Education Organizations*.

Judicial Education Board Sample Constitution

- I. Name
- II. Purpose
- III. Relationship of Board to Sponsoring Organization or Agency
- IV. Membership
 - Composition
 - Term of Services
- V. Officers
 - Titles
 - Terms
 - Selection
- VI. Executive Committee
 - Membership
 - Responsibilities
- VII. Procedural Rules
 - Bylaws - establishment, adoption, change
 - Meetings - number annually, requirement for notification
 - Minutes - distribution, retention
 - Member dismissal or replacement
- VIII. Amendments

Date of Adoption:

Attachment B

**Judicial Education Board
Sample Bylaws**

Washington State Advisory Council on Vocational Education (no date). *Advise for Action: A Pocket Guide on Advisory Committees*. Olympia, WA.

**Judicial Education Board
Sample Bylaws**

ARTICLE I

Board Operation

Section 1: Meetings will be held at a date and time specified by the board.

Section 2: At least (number of) meetings will be held each calendar year.

Section 3: The Executive Committee will develop the agenda for each meeting.

Section 4: The program of work will guide the activities of the board.

Section 5: Parliamentary procedure will be used when a decision is to be recorded and transmitted.

Section 6: A quorum will consist of a simple majority of board members.

Section 7: Minutes will be recorded for each meeting and distributed to board members (list recipients).

ARTICLE II

Subcommittees

Section 1: Standing subcommittees should be established for such areas as deemed necessary by the chair.

Section 2: Subcommittees may be of any size.

Section 3: Subcommittees will elect their own chairs.

ARTICLE III

Officers

Section 1: Officers will be elected by a simple majority. Officers will serve a one-year term and may be re-elected.

Section 2: Officers will include a chair, vice-president, and a secretary.

Section 3: Officers will be elected at the first meeting of each new year.

ARTICLE IV

Member Responsibilities

Section 1: Each member will attend meetings and participate in work activities of the board.

Section 2: Each member will study the issues or problems which come before the board and bring ideas from the constituency to the board meetings.

ARTICLE V

Section 1: A member may be removed from the board after three or more unexcused absences. The member must be notified of the pending action. Removal must be approved by two-thirds of the board members.

ARTICLE VI

Section 1: An annual program of work will be established by the board during its first two meetings of the calendar year. Included in the program of work should be goals, objectives, tasks, timelines, and member responsibilities.

Date of Adoption:

Attachment C

Judicial Education Board Meetings

Compiled by Carol Weaver

Judicial Education Board Meetings

Pre-Meeting Checklist

- B Establish and publicize date, time, and location of each meeting.
- B Schedule meeting room and reserve equipment.
- B Notify (in writing) members, guests, and appropriate authorities of meeting date, time, place and major agenda items.
- B Arrange for refreshments, meals, and/or other social events.
- B Reconfirm all arrangements several days before meeting.
- B Contact board members directly to remind them of board meeting.
- B Prepare support materials for meeting (agendas, minutes, handouts, visuals, etc.).

Meeting Management Guidelines

- B Begin and end on time.
- B State purpose of the meeting. Review agenda; add items as needed.
- B Introduce guests and new members. Encourage interaction among board members so they get to know each other's interests, abilities, and potential contributions to the board. Resumes or sketches can be useful tools.
- B Encourage all members to speak and to respect opinions of others.
- B Ask clarifying questions. Encourage questions and open discussion.
- B Summarize discussion frequently. Identify areas of consensus and issues needing resolution.
- B Use parliamentary procedure for decisions (majority rules, but minority opinion must be heard and given equal consideration).
- B Consider and resolve (or agree to table) one issue at a time.
- B Distribute responsibility and work assignments throughout group. Be sure assignments, responsibilities, and due dates are clearly understood.

- B Keep the meeting moving. Balance the need to discuss issues with the need to make decisions and achieve goals. Members should feel meeting was productive without feeling rushed or pushed into decisions.
- B Publicly recognize and acknowledge the contributions of board members.
- B Evaluate the work of the board frequently. Ask members and others how the meetings could be improved to be more productive and effective.

Meeting Follow-up

- B Distribute meeting documentation as soon as possible following the meeting.
- B Remind members of assignments due at next meeting.
- B Distribute information and or materials requested during the meeting.
- B Follow up on assignments given to members to check progress, provide assistance, clarify needs, etc.
- B Send "thank you" letters to those who made special contributions to the meeting.
- B File minutes, agenda, and other meeting documentation for future reference.

