

Alignment

Key Action – **Align resources** to focus on students’ meeting the standards.

Self Assessment -- Indicate the degree to which your board/district has achieved the following elements in aligning resources for improving student achievement

Fully Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Beginning to Achieve
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We have established a specific and limited set of priorities for improving student achievement that give everyone in the district clear focus

We make staffing and resource allocation decisions based on our student achievement priorities

We ensure resource equity for schools by providing additional supports to schools in communities with higher needs

We view the budget as the vehicle for accomplishing our priorities rather than simply as our spending plan

We leverage resources within our budget to achieve our priorities

We add or delete programs and initiatives based on analysis of data and district priorities

We have no “sacred cows” within our budget

Our curriculum and program initiatives are directly aligned to our student achievement priorities

Our textbook, instructional materials and technology selections are directed by our student achievement priorities

Our staff training is designed exclusively to support our student achievement priorities

All units in the district including all support services focus on their role in accomplishing the student achievement priorities

As a Board the criteria we use to make all decisions are our student achievement priorities

Alignment

A. Staff

Questions the School Board Should Ask Itself

- How do staff development efforts relate to student achievement goals and objectives?
- How do the qualifications of our teachers compare to those in districts with high student achievement?
- Do teachers have the skills to address the learning needs of students – at risk, special needs, and achieving?
- How are decisions about spending for professional development made?
- How are teachers involved in setting professional development objectives and establishing professional development programs?
- Do we know the kinds and costs of training that are purchased or are different accounting methods needed?
- How can teacher mentoring and collaboration be encouraged?

Questions the School Board Should Ask the Superintendent and Staff

- What percentage of teachers is qualified to teach in their field of instruction?
- Does the quality of teachers vary from school to school and if so why?
- Are compensation rewards linked to obtaining professional development in the teacher's subject area?
- How are staff assignments made? Are they based on accountability and student needs?
- How are teachers evaluated to determine if they are teaching to the standards they and their students are held to?
- What needs to be done to improve the quality of teaching – changes to collective bargaining contracts, identification of research-based instructional practices, working with colleges and universities to ensure that new and veteran teachers are well prepared?
- What are our staff development priorities?

B. Curriculum and Technology

Questions the School Board Should Ask Itself

- Is the curriculum aligned with state and district standards?
- How are the needs of at-risk, special needs, and accelerated students met?
- Are students encouraged to challenge themselves and to take challenging courses?
- Is technology incorporated into the curriculum to enhance student learning?

- Do teachers know how to effectively use technology?
- How do the board and school administrators use technology to improve decision-making?

Questions the School Board Should Ask the Superintendent and Staff

- Are there enough adequately trained staff to develop curriculum?
- Do teachers have the support and understanding they need to align instruction with curriculum?
- Are subject areas explored in-depth?
- Are textbooks and teaching materials aligned with standards and the curriculum?
- Are textbooks and other materials current?
- How are decisions about textbooks and learning materials made and do they take into consideration the treatment of subject matter to provide understanding and the acquisition of knowledge?
- Is technology distributed and used equitably by staff and students?
- What is the ratio of students to personal computers?
- How is technology integrated into the curriculum to enhance student achievement -- higher order thinking and learning skills, student-centered learning, and collaboration and teamwork?

C. Supplemental Services

Questions the School Board Should Ask Itself

- How do students' social and emotional needs impact achievement?
- Do we reach out to other organizations to ensure that student needs are met?
- What can we do to promote parental involvement in student learning?
- How can greater use be made of school facilities to promote achievement?
- Has the community been surveyed about the types of student and community services it wants and would support?

Questions the School Board Should Ask the Superintendent and Staff

- Is there timely identification of students who are having difficulty meeting standards or who have social and emotional needs that affect their academic performance?
- What assistance is available to such students – tutoring, summer school, remediation, transition classes, conflict resolution, youth programs?
- What services are available to students who are doing well -- advance placement and other enrichment programs?
- How effective are parent involvement programs and how could they be improved?
- What organizations use district facilities and for what purposes?

- What community services are offered in schools -- early childhood education, parenting classes, day care?

D. Funds

Questions the School Board Should Ask Itself

- Are financial resources aligned with student achievement plans and priorities?
- Do operational plans and budgets provide the necessary programs and resources to promote student achievement?
- Are programs evaluated for effectiveness and are ineffective programs discontinued?
- Are funding decisions data-driven and research based?
- Do we have a good understanding of budget reports, procedures, regulations, and opportunities for flexibility?
- Is budget information provided to parents and other community members in an easy to understand format that conveys the relationships between budget items and student achievement initiatives?

Questions the School Board Should Ask the Superintendent and Staff

- What programs are evaluated for effectiveness?
- How are programs evaluated for effectiveness/productivity – identification of inputs and outputs, controls for students' social and economic backgrounds, and links to student achievement?
- What value do programs add to the educational experience?
- What kinds of grants or technical assistance from government agencies are available to advance student achievement plans?
- What are future budget requirements and on what information are they based?
- How is the community engaged in the budget process?