Student Outcomes Focused Governance

A Continuous Improvement Framework

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Introduction	1	The journey toward this framework began in 2014 when a group of rambunctious CGCS board members and
Framework		superintendents came together with the intention of defining
Vision & Goals	2	and supporting effective governance throughout the CGCS family of member school systems. Referring to themselves as
Values & Guardrails	3	"TeamRogue" a designation intended to describe the break from existing governance doctrine they believed necessary to
Monitoring & Accountability	4	position boards as entities capable of driving improvements in student outcomes they began by reviewing existing
Communication & Collaboration	5	research and asking a great number of questions. After
Unity & Trust	6	conducting what was, at that time, the nation's most comprehensive survey of urban board members and
Continuous Improvement	7	superintendents on the topic of improving governance effectiveness, the group began formulating a series of
Definitions	8	workshops geared toward new board members, board chairs, and whole board teams. Those early efforts have since
Examples	12	evolved into this framework. None of this would be possible
Sources	14	without significant contributions from each of the following:
Progress Monitoring Student Outcomes	17	Michael Casserly (CGCS), Darienne Driver (Milwaukee), Cindy Elsbernd (Des Moines), Eric Gordon (Cleveland), Leslie
Board Quarterly Self Evaluation	21	Grant (Atlanta), Ray Hart (CGCS), Jumoke Hinton (Oakland), Pamela Knowles (Portland), Larry Nyland (Seattle), Michael
Board Monthly Time Use Evaluation	22	O'Neill (Boston), Moses Palacios (CGCS), Ashley Paz (Fort Worth), Josh Reimnitz (Minneapolis), Miguel Solis (Dallas),
Board Continuous Improvement Evaluation	23	Teri Trinidad (CGCS), Airick Leonard West (Kansas City),
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Overview

Student outcomes don't change until adult behaviors change. Or said differently when placed in the context of governing, patterns of behavior that are exhibited in the boardroom can reasonably be expected to be found paralleled in the classroom. This concept, which offers a summation of the current literature on board behaviors and their relationship to improving student outcomes, is as simple as it can be confounding. The intention of the Council of the Great City Schools' (CGCS) Student Outcomes Focused Governance framework is to translate existing research and the collective experience of dozens of CGCS board members and superintendents into a set of tools that boards can use to identify their strengths and weaknesses as well as to track progress along their journey toward improving student outcomes.

The framework is built around six research-informed competencies that describe school board behaviors and the degree to which they create the conditions for improvements in student outcomes: Vision & Goals, Values & Guardrails, Monitoring & Accountability, Communication & Collaboration, Unity & Trust, and Continuous Improvement.

How To Use

This document is best used by the full board and superintendent with guidance from a facilitator specifically trained in its application. After receiving an orientation to the framework, each individual board member and the superintendent should fill out the Board Quarterly Self Evaluation. Using the self evaluation instrument will reveal a score between 0 and 100, where a 0 indicates that the Board is not at all focused (yet) on its goals for student outcomes and a 100 which indicates that the Board has mastered the behavior of focusing on its goals for student outcomes. Then the facilitator should lead the board through a process of collectively completing the self evaluation for the first time. This will create the Board's starting point data which, in addition to providing a measurable score, provides the board with clarity about its strengths and weaknesses relative to being focused on improving student outcomes.

Once a baseline has been set, the board should schedule time during a public meeting every three months to complete the self-evaluation again as a means of monitoring the board's progress over time. Ideally each quarter the board's focus on improving student outcomes meaningfully increases -- a process tracked for the first two years using the Board Continuous Improvement Evaluation.

Not Student	Approaching Student	Meeting Student	Mastering Student
Outcomes Focused (0)	Outcomes Focus (10)	Outcomes Focus (25)	Outcomes Focus (35)
The Board is Not Student Outcomes	No items from the Not Student	All items from the Approaching Student	All items from the Meeting Student
Focused if any of the following are true:	Outcomes Focused column, and:	Outcomes Focus column, and:	Outcomes Focus column, and:
The Board has not adopted goals . The Board has not consistently demonstrated the ability to distinguish between inputs , outputs , and outcomes . The Board has not hosted opportunities to listen to the vision of the community during the previous thirty-six month period.	 starting point, an ending point, a starting date, and an ending date. The Board has adopted no fewer than one and no more than five goals. Fewer goals allow for greater focus; more allow for less. The Superintendent has adopted, in collaboration with the Board, one to three interim goals to progress monitor each goal, and each interim goal is SMART. The status of each interim goal is 	In addition to the goal ending points, the Board has adopted annual targets , goal ending points for each year leading up to the ending dates. The Superintendent has provided interim goal ending points for each year leading up to the ending date. All interim goals pertain to student outputs or student outcomes, not inputs or adult outputs. The Board included students, parents, staff, and community members in the goal development process. All Board goals last from three to five years; all interim goals last from one to three years.	The Board used a process that included students, parents, staff, and community members in a way that leads them to express ownership of the adopted goals. All of the interim goals are predictive of their respective goals, and are influenceable by the Superintendent (and the Superintendent's team). Predictive suggests that there is some evidence of a correlation between the interim goal and the goal. Influenceable suggests that the Superintendent and through them, the staff has authority over roughly 80% of the inputs the interim goal is measuring. The Board relied on a root cause analysis, comprehensive student needs assessment, and/or similar research-based tool to inform identification of and prioritization of potential goals.

Not Student Outcomes Focused (0)	Approaching Student Outcomes Focus (5)	Meeting Student Outcomes Focus (10)	Mastering Student Outcomes Focus (15)
	Outcomes Focus (5) No items from the Not Student Outcomes Focused column, and: The Board has adopted, in collaboration with the Superintendent, guardrails based on the community's values and that do not hinder pursuit of the goals. Each guardrail describes a single operational action or class of actions the Superintendent may not use or allow in pursuit of the goals.	Outcomes Focus (10) All items from the Approaching Student Outcomes Focus column, and: The Superintendent has provided interim guardrail ending points for each year leading up to the ending date. All interim guardrails pertain to outputs or outcomes, not inputs. The Board included students, parents, staff, and community members in the guardrail	Outcomes Focus (15) All items from the Meeting Student Outcomes Focus column, and: The Board used a process that included students, parents, staff, and community members in a way that leads them to express ownership of the adopted guardrails and, if applicable, theories of action. All of the interim guardrails are predictive of their respective guardrails, and are influenceable by the Superintendent (and the
	than one and no more than five guardrails. Fewer guardrails allow for more focus; more allow for less. The Superintendent has adopted, in collaboration with the Board, one to three interim guardrails for each guardrail, and each interim guardrail is SMART.	development process. The Board has considered adoption of one or more theories of action to drive the school system's overall strategic direction. If there is a permanent Superintendent, that person was included in the theory consideration process.	Superintendent's team). Predictive suggests that there is some evidence of a correlation between the interim guardrail and the guardrail. Influenceable suggests that the Superintendent and through them, the staff has authority over roughly 80% of whatever the interim guardrail is measuring.
	is able to be updated multiple times during each school year. The Board publicly posted the guardrails for public comment prior to adoption.	All Board guardrails last from three to five years; all interim guardrails last from one to three years. The guardrails, interim guardrails, and theories of action will challenge the organization and require change in adult behaviors.	In addition to the guardrails on the Superintendent's authority, the Board has adopted one to five guardrails on its own behavior and evaluates itself against them at least quarterly.

Not Student Outcomes Focused (0)	Approaching Student Outcomes Focus (10)	Meeting Student Outcomes Focus (20)	Mastering Student Outcomes Focus (30)
The Board is Not Student Outcomes Focused if any of the following are true:	No items from the Not Student Outcomes Focused column, and:	All items from the Approaching Student Outcomes Focus column, and:	All items from the Meeting Student Outcomes Focus column, and:
The Board has not adopted goals. The Board does not schedule each goal to be monitored at least four times per year.	The Board invests no less than 10% of its total Board-authorized public meeting minutes monitoring its goals.	The Board invests no less than 25% of its total Board-authorized public meeting minutes monitoring its goals.	The Board invests no less than 50% of its total Board-authorized public meeting minutes each month into effectively monitoring its goals.
The Board does not schedule each guardrail to be monitored at least once per year.	The Superintendent led the interim goals/guardrails and monitoring calendar development processes while working collaboratively with the Board.	No more than two goals are monitored per month. Every goal is monitored at least four times per year.	Only Board work was discussed and/or acted on during Board-authorized public meetings. The Board modifies its goals,
The Board has not adopted a monitoring calendar . The Board does not track its use of	The Board has a Board-adopted monitoring calendar.	Every guardrail is monitored at least once per year.	guardrails, and monitoring calendar no more than once during the span of the Board's adopted goals (unless they are met sooner). A
time in Board-authorized public meetings.	The Board's monitoring calendar spans the length of the Board's goals. A longer span allows for	The Board has been provided copies of but, unless required by law, did not vote to approve /	longer period allows for more focus; shorter allows for less.
The Board has not consistently demonstrated the ability to distinguish between customer service/issues and owner service/issues.	more focus; shorter allows for less. The Board has received monitoring reports in accordance with its monitoring calendar.	disapprove the Superintendent's plan(s) for implementing the Board's goals and worked to ensure that the plan included both an implementation timeline and	The school system has achieved at least half of its interim goals during the previous twelve month period. If the Board approves an annual
The school system has not achieved any of its interim goals during the previous twelve month period.	The Superintendent is evaluated only on performance regarding the Board's goals, guardrails, and interim goals/guardrails. The Board considers Superintendent performance to be indistinguishable from school system performance.	implementation instruments. The most recent annual Superintendent evaluation took place no more than twelve months ago.	budget, it does so only after determining that the Board's goals are the first priority for resource allocation.

COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION: The Board will lead transparently and include stakeholders in the pursuit of the goals.

Not Student Outcomes Focused (0)	Approaching Student Outcomes Focus (1)	Meeting Student Outcomes Focus (5)	Mastering Student Outcomes Focus (10)
The Board is Not Student Outcomes Focused if any of the following are true:	No items from the Not Student Outcomes Focused column, and:	All items from the Approaching Student Outcomes Focus column, and:	All items from the Meeting Student Outcomes Focus column, and:
	All consent-eligible items were placed on the consent agenda and	There are no more than four Board-authorized public meetings	There are no more than two Board-authorized public meetings
	all but a few were voted on using a consent agenda.	per month and none lasts more than three hours.	per month and none lasts more than two hours.
the Board-authorized public	The Board tracks its use of time in		The Board schedules no more than
would be considered.	Board-authorized public meetings, categorizing every minute used as one of the following:	five topics for discussion during any one Board-authorized public meeting.	three topics for discussion during any Board-authorized public meeting.
There were more than six	- Goal Setting: reviewing,		
Board-authorized public meetings in		The Board limits its adoption of	The Board has adopted few enough
a single month during the previous twelve month period (Board	- Goal Monitoring: reviewing, discussing, and/or approving/not	Board policies regarding school system operations to matters that	policies that the full Board as a whole is able to review every policy
	approving goal monitoring reports	are 1) required by law or 2) an	at least once during every length of
total).	- Guardrail Setting: reviewing,	appropriate exercise of the Board's	time equal to a Board Member's
,	discussing, and/or selecting	oversight authority as defined by	term of office.
Any meeting of the Board lasted	guardrails	the Board's adopted goals and/or	
more than eight hours during the	- Guardrail Monitoring: reviewing,	guardrails. Existing policies that do	The Board received the final
	discussing, and/or approving/not	not meet one of these criteria have	version of materials to be voted on
	approving guardrail monitoring	been removed from the Board's	at least seven calendar days before
	reports	policy manual (though the	the Board-authorized public
agenda.	- Leadership Evaluation: Board self eval, Board time use eval, and	Superintendent may retain them as administrative policy/regulation).	meeting during which the materials would be considered.
The Board has not hosted	Superintendent eval		
opportunities to listen to the vision	- Voting: debating and voting on	The Board made no edits to the	The Board used a process that
	any item (these activities are never	Board's regularly scheduled	included students, parents, staff,
• •	a form of goal/guardrail monitoring)		and community members in a way
	- Community Engagement:		that led them to express ownership
	two-way communication between	before the meeting unless a state of	of the adopted goals and guardrails.
	the Board and community members - Other	emergency was declared.	

NITY & TRUST: The Board will lead with one voice in its pursuit of the goals.					
Not Student Outcomes Focused (0)	Approaching Student Outcomes Focus (1)	Meeting Student Outcomes Focus (3)	Mastering Student Outcomes Focus (5)		
	No items from the Not Student Outcomes Focused column, and:		All items from the Meeting Student Outcomes Focus column, and:		
 Focused if any of the following are true: The Board has not adopted goals. The Board has not adopted policies that establish Board operating procedures. Any Board Member voted on an item on which they had a conflict of interest, as defined by law, during the previous three month period. Board Members serve on committees formed by the Superintendent or staff without approval of the Superintendent and a majority of the Board. 	Outcomes Focused column, and: Attendance at all regularly scheduled Board meetings was over 80% during the previous three month period. The Board has adopted a policy or procedure requiring that information provided by the Superintendent to one Board Member is provided to all Board Members. The Board reviews all policies governing Board operating procedures at least once during every length of time equal to a Board Member's term of office. The Board has adopted an Ethics & Conflicts of Interest Statement and all Board Members have signed the statement during their current term of office. All Board Members agree that if the Board has committees, their role is	Outcomes Focus column, and: The Board has included language in its Ethics & Conflicts of Interest Statement requiring that Board Members do not give operational advice or instructions to staff members. The Board has included language in its Ethics & Conflicts of Interest Statement requiring that Board Members are responsible for the outcomes of all students, not just students in their region of the school system. The Board has included language in its Ethics & Conflicts of Interest Statement requiring that Board Members fully recuse themselves from matters involving individuals or organizations who made campaign contributions to them or who appointed them. The Board unanimously agreed			
	only to advise the Board, not to advise the staff.	during the most recent self-evaluation that all Board Members have honored the three aforementioned ethical boundaries during the previous evaluation period.			

LINUTY & TOUCT THE

C	ONTINUOUS IMPRO	VEMENT: The Board w	ill invest time and resource	s toward improvin	a its focus on the goals.

Not Student	Approaching Student	Meeting Student	Mastering Student
Outcomes Focused (0)	Outcomes Focus (1)	Outcomes Focus (3)	Outcomes Focus (5)
The Board is Not Student Outcomes	No items from the Not Student		All items from the Meeting Student
Focused if any of the following are true:	Outcomes Focused column, and:	Outcomes Focus column, and:	Outcomes Focus column, and:
The Board has not adopted goals.	The Board tracks its use of time	The most recent Board annual	The Board included students as
· •	and reports monthly the percentage	self-evaluation took place no more	presenters in at least one of the
The Board has not conducted a	of Board-authorized public meeting	than 45 days before the most	Student Outcomes Focused
self-evaluation during the previous	time invested in monitoring the	recent Superintendent evaluation.	Governance training sessions
twelve month period.	Board's goals and interim goals.		during the previous twelve months.
		The Board has hosted and the	
The Board has conducted a	The Board tracks the average		Prior to being selected, all newly
self-evaluation during the previous	annual cost of staff time invested in	5	selected Board Members received
•	governance during its annual		training on Student Outcomes
vote to adopt the results.	self-evaluation. This includes the	5 1	Focused Governance from fellow
	time of any staff members invested	•	Board Members on their Board or from a certified Student Outcomes
The Board has not participated in a governance team training or	in preparing for, attending, and debriefing after meetings. This	The Board has continuously	Focused Governance Coach.
retreat where all members of the	includes all Board-authorized public	updated the status and targets of all	Focused Governance Coach.
governance team were present,	meetings as well as all closed	goals, guardrails, and interim	The Board conducted the most
during the previous twelve month	sessions and all hearings.	goals/guardrails, and publicly	recent quarterly self-evaluation
period.		displays them in the room in which	or annually if the most recent score
	The Board has provided time during	the Board most frequently holds	was 80 or higher and
	regularly scheduled	regularly scheduled Board	unanimously voted to adopt the
	Board-authorized public meetings	meetings.	results.
	to recognize the accomplishments		
	of its students and staff regarding	The Board conducted the most	
	progress toward goals and interim	recent self-evaluation and voted to	
	goals.	adopt the results.	
	The most recent Board		
	self-evaluation took place no more		
	than 12 months ago using this instrument or a research-aligned		
	linstrument.		

DEFINITIONS

Adult Outcomes: A measure of school system results that are not student results; outcomes that are not student outcomes. [see Outcomes, Student Outcomes definitions]

Adult Outputs: The adult experiences resulting from a particular set of inputs that are usually knowable in the midst of a cycle and that are a measure of the adults' role in the implementation of the program or strategy. Outputs that are not student outputs. [see Outputs, Student Outputs definitions]

Annual Targets: Goal/interim goal ending points for each year leading up to the ending dates.

Board-Authorized Public Meeting: Any non-privileged meeting authorized by the Board or Board Chair including, but not limited to, Board workshops, Board hearings, and Board committees. Legally mandated hearings are exempted from this definition. Trainings led by a certified Student Outcomes Focused Governance Coach may be exempted from this definition. [see Board Work definition]

Board Work: Items that are discussed and/or acted on during Board-authorized public meetings because either state or federal law/rule requires the Board to do so or because the items directly pertain to the Board's adopted goals or guardrails. Items that are not legally required and that the Board has not designated as Board work through the Board's goals or guardrails are, by default, Superintendent work. [see Board-authorized Public Meeting, Superintendent Work definitions]

Community Engagement: Time invested by the Board in two-way communication between the Board and community members.

Consent-Eligible Items: Matters on the Board agenda that include, but that are not limited to, personnel actions, contract renewals, previous meeting minutes, policy updates, construction amendments, non-monitoring administrative reports, committee reports, enrollment updates, and regular financial reports where financial activities remained within budgetary parameters. [see Board-authorized Public Meeting, Board Work definitions]

Customers: The organization's recipients of services and/or transactional beneficiaries -- such as students and staff -- for whom the staff is better positioned to address and/or resolve issues in a timely and effective manner. In a school system, customers and owners can be the same people, and therefore care must be taken to distinguish customer issues from owner issues. [see Owner definition]

Ending Date: The month/year by when the goal will reach the ending point. In goal setting, the ending date can be no less than one and no more than five years away. The ending date is often represented by the 'Z' in sample goals: "the measure will move from W% on X to Y% by Z." [see Ending Point, Goal Setting, SMART definitions]

Ending Point: The goal's desired number/percentage at the time of the ending date. The ending point is often represented by the 'Y' in sample goals: "the measure will move from W% on X to Y% by Z." [see Ending Date, Goal Setting, SMART definitions]

Goals: Policy statements that are SMART, that are student outcomes focused, and that describe the Board's top priorities during the timeline for which they are adopted. The first priority for resource allocation in the school system should be toward achieving the Board's goals. Once those allocations are complete, remaining resources may be allocated in a manner that addresses the additional needs and obligations of the school system. Goals generally are set for a three to five year period.Goals generally take the form of "student outcome will increase from X to Y by Z." [see Goal Examples section; see SMART, Student Outcome definitions]

Goal Monitoring: Time invested by the Board in reviewing, discussing and/or accepting/not accepting goal monitoring reports. No fewer than 50% of the minutes spent in Board-authorized public meetings should be invested in goal monitoring or goal setting. Debating and voting on Board items is never a form of goal monitoring. [see Board-authorized Public Meeting, Goal, Goal Setting, Interim Goal, Monitoring definitions]

Goal Setting: Time invested by the Board in reviewing, discussing, and/or selecting goals. No fewer than 50% of the minutes spent in Board-authorized public meetings should be invested in goal monitoring or goal setting. [see Board-authorized Public Meeting, Goal, Goal Monitoring, Interim Goal, Monitoring definitions]

Governance Team: All Board Members and the Superintendent. The Superintendent is not a member of the Board, but is a member of the governing team.

Guardrail: An operational action or class of actions, usually strategic not tactical, the Superintendent may not use or allow in pursuit of the school system's student outcome goals. Guardrails are based on the community's values and should not undermine the school system's ability to meet the goals — though guardrails will often require the Superintendent to accomplish the goals in a different way. [see Examples section; see Guardrail Monitoring, Guardrail Setting, Interim Guardrail, Theory of Action definitions]

Guardrail Monitoring: Time invested by the Board in reviewing, discussing and/or accepting/not accepting guardrail monitoring reports. [see Guardrail, Interim Guardrail, Monitoring definitions]

Guardrail Setting: Time invested by the Board in reviewing, discussing, and/or selecting guardrails. [see Guardrail, Interim Guardrail, Theory of Action definitions]

Implementation Instruments: Measures that describe the quality of effort that goes into execution of inputs or outputs. This document is an example of an implementation instrument for the governing team's outputs.

Inputs: Resources and activities invested in a particular program or strategy that are usually knowable at the beginning of a cycle and that are a measure of effort applied. [see Outcomes, Outputs definitions]

Interim Goals: A measure of progress toward a defined goal that can be expressed as a number or percentage. [see Goal Examples section]

Interim Guardrail: A measure of progress toward a defined guardrail that can be expressed as a number or percentage. [see Guardrail Examples section]

Leadership Evaluation: The Board conducting routine self-evaluations and Superintendent evaluations. It is recommended to include months during which leadership evaluation will take place on the monitoring calendar.

Measure: The instrument, assessment, or other means used to quantify something. In the context of goals, this is often an evaluation of student performance such a school system or state exam. [see Goal Setting, SMART definition]

Monitoring: A Board process that includes the Board receiving monitoring reports on the timeline indicated by the monitoring calendar, discussing them, and choosing to accept or not accept them. The intention of monitoring is to determine whether reality matches the Board's goals / guardrails.

Monitoring Calendar: A Board-adopted multi-year schedule that describes months during which goals, interim goals, guardrails, and interim guardrails are reported to the Board.

Monitoring Report: A report that provides evidence of progress to the Board regarding their adopted goals and guardrails. Each monitoring report must contain 1) the goal/guardrail being monitored, 2) the interim goals/guardrails showing the previous three reporting periods, the current reporting period, and the annual and ending point numbers/percentages, 3) the Superintendent's evaluation of performance ("red/yellow/green" or "on track/partially off/off track" or "compliant/partially compliant/non-compliant" or whatever other status labels the school system uses for progress monitoring), and 4) supporting documentation that shows the evidence and describes any needed next steps.

Outcomes: The impact of the program or strategy that is usually knowable at the end of a cycle and that is a measure of the effect on the intended beneficiary. [see Adult Outcomes, Inputs, Outputs, Student Outcomes definitions]

Outputs: The result of a particular set of inputs that is usually knowable in the midst of a cycle and that is a measure of the implementation of the program or strategy. [see Inputs, Outcomes definitions]

Owners: The organization's moral and legal authority -- such as residents and taxpayers -- for whom the board is better positioned to address and/or resolve issues in a timely and effective manner. In a school system, owners and customers can be the same people, and therefore care must be taken to distinguish customer issues from owner issues. [see Customers definition]

Population: The group of students who will be impacted and/or who are being measured. [see Goal Setting, SMART definition]

SMART: An acronym for "specific, measurable, attainable, results-focused, time-bound." Goals and interim goals partially accomplish SMART-ness by having a specific measure, population, starting points, ending points, starting dates, and ending dates. [see Ending Date, Ending Point, Measure, Population, Starting Date, Starting Point definitions]

Starting Date: The month/year that the goal is set. The starting date is often represented by the 'X' in sample goals: "the measure will move from W% on X to Y% by Z." [see Goal Setting, SMART, Starting Point definitions]

Starting Point: The goal's current number/percentage at the time of adoption. The starting point is often represented by the 'W' in sample goals: "the measure will move from W% on X to Y% by Z." [see Goal Setting, SMART, Starting Date definitions]

Student Outcomes: A measure of school system results that are student results rather than adult results; outcomes that are a measure of what students know or are able to do. Student outcomes are distinct from adult outcomes. [see Adult Outcomes, Goals, Outcomes definitions]

Student Outputs: The student experiences resulting from a particular set of inputs that are usually knowable in the midst of a cycle and that are a measure of the students' role in the implementation of the program or strategy. Student outputs are distinct from adult outputs. [see Adult Outputs, Outputs definition]

Superintendent Work: Items that are not legally required and that the Board has not designated as Board work through the Board's goals or guardrails. [see Board Work definition]

Theory of Action: A set of high level strategies to which all school system inputs and outputs must be aligned. Unlike other guardrails, theories of action do not have interim guardrails. [see Examples section; see Guardrail definition]

Values: The shared understanding of what the community considers important but that is not the vision. Where the vision describes what the community wants to see happen, values describe what the community does not want to see happen. Values describe protections the community wants to see put into place. It is not appropriate for the Board to allow the community's values to be violated, even if doing so would support the accomplishment of the vision. The values are most often expressed as a guardrail or a theory of action. Guardrails generally are set for a three to five year period; theories of action generally are set for a five to ten year period.

Vision: The shared understanding of what the community ultimately desires to accomplish for all students. Where values describe what the community does not want to see, vision describes what the community does want to see happen. Vision describes the direction the community wants to see the school system go. A vision is most often expressed as an aspirational policy statement that describes what the Board understands the community's desire for the future to be. Vision statements generally are set for a five to ten year period.

Voting: Time invested by the Board in debating and voting on any item. Unless indicated elsewhere in this document, these activities are never a form of goal monitoring or guardrail monitoring.

GOAL EXAMPLES

Sample Goals:

- Many of these examples are drawn from current or proposed goals from CGCS member school systems (or adaptations of their policy that meet the goal definition).
- The percentage of kindergarten students who will enter kindergarten school-ready on a multidimensional assessment will increase from W% on X date to Y% by Z date
- The percentage of graduates who are persisting in the second year of their post-secondary program will increase from W% on X to Y% by Z
- The percentage of free and reduced lunch-eligible students in kindergarten through 2nd grade who are reading/writing on or above grade level on the school system's summative assessment will increase from W% on X to Y% by Z
- The percentage of students at underperforming schools who meet or exceed the state standard will increase from W% on X to Y% by Z
- The percentage of males of color who graduate with an associate's degree will increase from W% on X to Y% by Z

Sample Interim Goals:

- Many of these examples are drawn from CGCS' "Academic KPIs" work.
- The percentage of students successfully passing Algebra I by the end of ninth grade will increase from W% on X to Y% by Z
- The percentage of students showing growth from one formative assessment to the next will increase from W% on X to Y% by Z
- The percentage of students earning at least three IB, AP, or college credits each semester will increase from W% on X to Y% by Z

GUARDRAIL EXAMPLES

Sample Guardrails:

- Many of these examples are drawn from current or proposed guardrails from CGCS member school systems (or adaptations of their policy that meet the guardrail definition).
- The Superintendent will not allow underperforming campuses to have principals or teachers who rank in the bottom two quartiles of principal or teacher school system-wide performance
- The Superintendent will not propose major decisions to the Board without first having engaged students, parents, community, and staff
- The Superintendent will not operate without a system that uses student growth data to identify, retain, and place highly effective staff
- The Superintendent will not allow the inequitable treatment of students

Sample Interim Guardrails:

- Many of these examples are drawn from CGCS' "Managing for Results" work.
- The percentage of People Incidents per 1,000 Students at underperforming schools will decline from W% on X to Y% by Z
- The Employee Separation Rate for principals and teachers in the top quartile of school system-wide performance will decline from W% on X to Y% by Z

THEORY OF ACTION EXAMPLES

Sample Theories of Action:

• Some of these examples are drawn from current or proposed Theories of Action from CGCS member school systems (or adaptations of their policy that meet the Theories of Action definition).

• Managed Instruction:

- If instructional materials and methods are directed by the central office to ensure that students experience consistency and quality of instructional delivery across a system of campuses;
- Then central office will be responsible for accomplishing the Board's goals while operating within the Board's other guardrails.

• Earned Autonomy:

- If the central office directly operates some schools and grants varying levels of autonomy to other schools; and
- If the central office clearly defines operational thresholds that deserve higher levels of autonomy, and the specific autonomies earned, consistent with Board goals and guardrails;
- Then responsibility for accomplishing the Board's goals while operating within the Board's guardrails will vary between central office and school leaders based on school-level operational capacity and student outcomes.

• Performance Empowerment:

- If the central office devolves autonomy to schools; and
- If the central office empowers parents to make choices among schools operated by differing partners; and
- If the central office creates performance contracts with schools, annually evaluates performance of and demand for schools, and makes strategic decisions regarding growing access to high performing schools and addressing low performers;
- Then school performance contracts will require the school to accomplish the Board's goals while operating within the Board's other guardrails.

SOURCES

Primary Sources

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What School Boards Can Do, Donald R. McAdams: https://www.amazon.com/dp/0807746487/
The 4 Disciplines of Execution, Chris McChesney, Sean Covey, & Jim Huling: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B005FLODJ8/
The Future of School Board Governance, Thomas L. Alsbury: https://www.amazon.com/dp/1578867959/
Boards That Make A Difference, John Carver: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B008L01JWO/
Good To Great, Jim Collins: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0058DRUV6/
The Fifth Discipline, Peter M. Senge: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B000SEIFKK/
Influencer, Joseph Grenny, Kerry Patterson, et al: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00BPO7710/
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Leadership and Self-Deception, The Arbinger Institute: https://www.amazon.com/dp/1523097809/
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Standardized Testing Primer, Richard P. Phelps: https://www.amazon.com/dp/082049741X/

PROGRESS MONITORING STUDENT OUTCOMES

What Is Progress Monitoring?

Progress monitoring is a conversation between the school board and superintendent that provides boards the opportunity to evaluate the alignment between the community's vision (goals towards student outcomes) and the school district's reality (current student performance/growth). While student outcome goals and current student performance may not match perfectly, it only becomes problematic when there is no evidence of student growth and progress. And even if students aren't yet growing and making progress, that's only catastrophic if the superintendent doesn't have sufficiently aggressive strategies in place for increasing growth and helping students make progress. These are the fundamental concerns of monitoring: 1) does reality match the vision, 2) is there growth toward the vision, and 3) is there a strategy and plan sufficient to cause growth toward the vision?

- If the answer to all three is yes, then the board can accept the monitoring report confident that the superintendent is performing.
- If the answer to only one or two of these questions is yes, the board may opt to table the matter (see *Keep the Conversation Going* below).
- If the answer to all three is no, the board may opt to reject the report and reflect on how to respond to the superintendent's non-performance.

UNDERSTANDING PROGRESS MONITORING

How Is Monitoring Beneficial?

In addition to clarifying student and superintendent performance, monitoring -- when done well -- confers several other organizational benefits:

- Lead by Example: What happens in the boardroom is more likely to be echoed in the classroom. Board behavior sets the culture for an institution. If board members want a culture where teachers are open and reflective in their craft, they set the stage for that by demonstrating what it looks like for the board and superintendent to be open and reflective -- grounded in student outcomes data -- in their craft as well.
- **Clarify Strategies**: When the board receives monitoring reports from the superintendent, the report should include how the superintendent will respond to the data. If the data says things are slightly off track, the superintendent's strategy should reflect that. If the data says that performance is completely off track, the superintendent's strategy should reflect the urgency that the current reality demands.
- **Communicate Expectations**: By investing at least 50% of the board's time each month into monitoring progress toward the vision, the board makes clear what the priorities of the entire organization are expected to be. This is a powerful tool for creating organizational alignment.
- Formative Evaluation: With each monitoring report the board is conducting a micro assessment of superintendent performance which creates an opportunity for the superintendent to make adjustments. As a continuous improvement strategy, providing this regularly recurring feedback loop is a superior approach to the outdated concept of merely conducting annual performance evaluations.

Tips For Effective Monitoring

• **Do Your Homework**: Board members should arrive at board meetings having already read the monitoring report and having already come

up with at least three or four questions each regarding the "who", "what", "why", and "how" of the monitoring report (see *During Monitoring* below).

- Understanding Reality: The desired result of monitoring is to understand the current reality for your students as compared to the vision you've adopted for them (goals). Whether you enjoy the current reality isn't the point of monitoring; whether or not you fully know the current reality is.
- Keep the Conversation Going: If the superintendent presents a monitoring report that is missing the prerequisites (see *Before Monitoring* below) or that fails to clarify for board members the extent to which reality matches the goals, consider tabling the conversation and giving the superintendent a chance to fix it and re-offer it at a subsequent meeting, instead of choosing not to accept it and ending the discussion.
- No Gotcha Governance: Adopt a monitoring calendar that describes which goals will be monitored during which months. The ideal monitoring calendar will span the full term of the goals -- if they are five year goals, the calendar should cover five years.
- **Don't Offer Advice**: Monitoring is never an opportunity for board members to provide advice to the superintendent regarding what should/shouldn't be done about student outcomes. It's also not about liking/not liking the superintendent's strategies.

PRACTICING PROGRESS MONITORING

Before Monitoring

Here are four issues to ask about the 1-5 page monitoring report before you can begin progress monitoring (if the answer to any of these is "no", hand the report back to the Superintendent and have them complete it before proceeding -- likely at the next regularly scheduled board meeting):

- 1. Does it clearly show what is being monitored (which specific policy / end / goal / interpretation / etc)?
- 2. Does it clearly show data for the 3 previous reporting periods (preferably on a line graph)? Does it clearly show the current reporting period? Does it clearly show the target reporting periods (annual targets and deadline target)?
- 3. Does it clearly show the Superintendent's evaluation of performance?
- 4. Does it clearly show supporting documentation that evidences the Superintendent's evaluation? If the district is not at target or the Superintendent's evaluation indicates implementation is not on track, does the monitoring report clearly describe any needed next steps?

During Monitoring

Monitoring is about understanding the extent to which reality matches policy -- and in this case, the Board's adopted goals / ends. Monitoring is never about offering advice or recommendations. The Board's curiosity is focused on what's true for students, not on what adults are/aren't doing. Here are observations to look for / questions to ask (and the order in which to ask them) that support progress monitoring. Notice that none of these questions offer advice concerning which inputs/outputs the Superintendent should select; these are monitoring questions, not managing questions.

	Who?	What?	Why?	How?
Conversation Focus				Which changes will happen based on the data? [future

		struggling and excelling students? [past focus]	past focus]	focus]
Conversation Starters	 Who is struggling the most? Who is getting it the most? Who is not moving? Who is not included in this data? 	 What is currently happening? What else do we need to know about this? What did work? What didn't work? What did we learn from this? What did we learn from this? What are the strengths? What are the limitations? What gaps exist between student groups? What's working? Not working? What do you see as accounting for <anomalous data="" in="" report="">?</anomalous> 	 Why is it working in this area? Why is it not working in this area? Why such a significant growth? Why was there no growth? Why do gaps between student groups exist? Why is <data a="" point=""> so much <higher lower="" or=""> than <data b="" point="">?</data></higher></data> 	 How can we replicate what is happening in? Given what we know about, how are you going to speed up the progress? How do you know that strategy is going to work? How are we going to address (issue not resolved)? How might changes show up in the future (budget, etc.)? How can the board help?

Once the Board has completed the task of monitoring and chosen to accept or not accept the report (and only after), then it is appropriate to ask: is this still the right policy?

IMPROVING PROGRESS MONITORING

Evaluating The Quality Of Monitoring

Once the Board has completed monitoring, it would be wise to reflect on its performance. Using the following rubric, identify which column most describes the completed monitoring session.

	Ineffective Monitoring	Approaching Effective Monitoring	Effective Monitoring	Highly Effective Monitoring
Preparation	Any Board members have not read the monitoring report prior to the meeting.	Some Board members have read parts of the monitoring report prior to the meeting and have begun developing potential questions.	Every Board member has read the monitoring report prior to the meeting and has shared potential questions with the Superintendent.	Every Board member read the monitoring report and shared potential questions with the Superintendent three working days prior to the meeting.
Data & Opinions	Any conversation is focused on Board member opinions of school system performance.	Conversation is focused on Board member opinions of school system performance	Conversation is focused on understanding the data presented in the monitoring	Conversation is focused on understanding the data presented in the monitoring

	Any Board comments are focused on blaming rather than on ways the Board can be supportive.	with reference to the data presented in the monitoring report.	report.	report with each question referencing specific data within the monitoring report.
Questions & Statements	Any conversation is focused on Board member opinions and recommendations for what the school system should do. Mostly yes/no inquiry.	Conversation is largely statements of opinion but includes some questions about the data presented in the monitoring report.	Conversation is mostly focused on questions about the data presented in the monitoring report. Mostly multiple choice or open ended inquiry.	Conversation is exclusively limited to questions about the data presented in the monitoring report. Mostly open ended inquiry.
Past & Future	Most or all of the monitoring conversation is focused on future action rather than reflection on past action.	The plurality of the monitoring conversation is focused on future action rather than reflection on past action.	The large majority (² / ₃ +) of the monitoring conversation is focused on reflecting on past action.	The super majority (¾+) of the time spent monitoring is focused on reflecting on past action.
Progress Monitoring & Project Management	Any conversation is focused on offering advice concerning school system operations or programs. Questions are about technical or tactical issues.	Conversation is a blend of offering advice, discussing programs, and understanding performance.	Conversation is mostly focused on understanding performance rather than discussing school system operations or programs.	Conversation is exclusively focused on understanding performance specific to the monitoring report. Questions are about strategic issues.

BOARD QUARTI	ERLY SELF-EVAL	JATION				
Current Date	1	1		Votes For/Against		1
	January -March	April -June	July -September	October -December	January -March	Total Possible
Vision & Goals						35
Values & Guardrails						15
Monitoring & Accountability						30
Communication & Collaboration						10
Unity & Trust						5
Continuous Improvement						5
Total						100

Directions

- 1. You will enter five sets of evaluation results: three previous quarters, most recently completed quarter, and the next quarter estimate.
- 2. **Enter** the self-evaluation results for the previous three completed quarterly self-evaluations. (For example, if it is currently January then enter the self-evaluation results for Jan-Mar, Apr-Jun, and Jul-Sep.)
- 3. **Conduct** the quarterly self-evaluation for the most recently completed quarter and vote to adopt the results. (Continuing the example, conduct the quarterly self-evaluation for Oct-Dec.)
- 4. **Compare** the quarterly self-evaluation results with the estimated self-evaluation results from the previously completed self-evaluation (Continuing the example, compare the self-evaluation results for Oct-Dec with the estimated Oct-Dec self-evaluation results that were entered during the Jul-Sep self-evaluation.)
- 5. Enter the self-evaluation results. (Continuing the example, enter the self-evaluation results for Oct-Dec.)
- 6. **Estimate** the self-evaluation results the Board can achieve during the next quarter. (Continuing the example, estimate the self-evaluation results for Jan-Mar.)
- 7. Enter the estimated self-evaluation results for the next quarter. (Continuing the example, enter the estimated self-evaluation results for Jan-Mar.)
- 8. Update the Board Continuous Improvement Evaluation to ensure meaningful progress toward focusing on improving student outcomes.

	LY TIME USE EVALUA			
Framework	Activity	Mins Used	% of Total Mins Used	Description
Vision	Goal Setting			Reviewing, discussing, and/or selecting goals
& Goals	Goal Monitoring			Reviewing, discussing, and/or approving/not approving goal monitoring reports in accordance with the monitoring calendar
		T	1	
Values	Guardrail Setting			Reviewing, discussing, and/or selecting guardrails
& Guardrails	Guardrail Monitoring			Reviewing, discussing, and/or approving/not approving guardrail monitoring reports in accordance with the monitoring calendar
			_	
Monitoring & Accountability	Superintendent Evaluation			Annual evaluation of Superintendent/school system performance
	Voting			The Board debating and/or voting on any item (voting on goal/guardrail adoption and/or scheduled monitoring reports & evals are counted elsewhere, not here; all other incidents of debating/voting are never a form of goals/guardrails "monitoring")
		-		
Communication & Collaboration	Community Engagement			Two-way communication opportunity where Board Members listen for and discuss the vision/values of their staff and community members
	Student / Family Engagement			Two-way communication opportunity where Board Members listen for and discuss the vision/values of their students and family members
Continuous Improvement	Board Self Evaluation			Quarterly and/or annual Board self-evaluation using the Student Outcomes Focused Governance instrument
	Board Time Use Evaluation			Meeting evaluation using this time use instrument
	Board Training			Training for the Board on Student Outcomes Focused Governance and related topics
	Board-led Community Training			Board-hosted and Board Member-led or co-led training on Student Outcomes Focused Governance and related topics
	<u></u>			
Other	Closed Session		NA	Time spent in non-public meetings, consistent with open meetings laws; this time is not calculated
	Other			Any time spent on an activity that is not one of the above
Total Student Ou	tcomes-focused Mins			Goal Setting & Goal Monitoring combined
Total Public Mee	ting Minutes			All minutes in Board-authorized public meetings combined

BOARD CO	ONTINUOUS	S IMPROVEI	MENT EVAL	UATION							
						rter 0					
	The first tir	me a Board use	es the Board Qu	arterly Self-Eva	aluation; the Bo	ard's 'starting p	ooint' for their tw	vo year continuo	ous improveme	nt process.	
	Last Qua	arter Total			Current Qu	arter Total		Grov	vth From Last	to Current Qu	arter
								-			
Board's 2nd	Quarter 1 d Quarterly Sel	f-Evaluation	Board's 3rc	Quarter 2	-Evaluation	Board's 4th	Quarter 3	-Evaluation	Board's 5tl	Quarter 4	-Evaluation
Last Quarter Total	Current Quarter Total	Growth From Last to Current Quarter	Last Quarter Total	Current Quarter Total	Growth From Last to Current Quarter	Last Quarter Total	Current Quarter Total	Growth From Last to Current Quarter	Last Quarter Total	Current Quarter Total	Growth From Last to Current Quarter
	Total at least 30?	Growth at least 25?		Total at least 45?	Growth at least 15?		Total at least 60?	Growth at least 15?		Total at least 70?	Growth at least 15?
If either question the Board met continuous imp	on is 'yes', its quarterly provement goal	Met Meet	If either question the Board met continuous imp		Met Meet	If either questi the Board met continuous im	on is 'yes', its quarterly provement goal	Did Not Met Meet	If either questi the Board met continuous im		Did Not Met Meet
Board's 6th	Quarter 5	-Evaluation	Board's 7th	Quarter 6	-Evaluation	Board's 8th	Quarter 7	-Evaluation	Board's 9tl	Quarter 8	-Evaluation
Last Quarter Total	Current Quarter Total	Growth From Last to Current Quarter	Last Quarter Total	Current Quarter Total	Growth From Last to Current Quarter	Last Quarter Total	Current Quarter Total	Growth From Last to Current Quarter	Last Quarter Total	Current Quarter Total	Growth From Last to Current Quarter
	Total at least 75?	Growth at least 5?		Total at least 80?	Growth at least 5?		Total at least 85?	Growth at least 5?		Total at least 90?	Growth at least 5?
If either question the Board met continuous imp		Met Meet	If either question the Board met continuous imp	its quarterly	Met Meet	If either questi the Board met continuous im		Met Meet	If either questi the Board met continuous im		Did Not Met Meet

SUPERINTENDENT ANNUAL EVALUATION

A Goal or Guardrail's performance is **Met Standard** if:

- The Actual Ending Point >= Desired Ending Point OR
- At least two thirds of the Interim Goals'/Guardrails' Actual Ending Points >= their respective Desired Ending Points

Otherwise the Board must consider growth and performance and vote to determine whether or not a Goal or Guardrail's performance **Met Standard** or **Did Not Meet Standard**.

Overall School System/Superintendent performance is Met Standard if:

• At least two thirds of the Goals are Met Standard

AND

• At least half of the Guardrails are Met Standard

Otherwise the Board must consider growth and performance, and vote to determine whether or not overall school system/Superintendent performance **Met Standard** or **Did Not Meet Standard**.

Goal 1: Percentage of students meeting passing standard on the state assessment in reading will increase from 60% in July 2017 to 68% by July 2022						
Baseline Ending Point:		Desired SY17/18 Ending Poi	nt:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:		
Interim Goal 1.1:			Management Comments			
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:				
Interim Goal 1.2:						
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:				
Interim Goal 1.3:						
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:				
SY17/18 Evaluation						
	Met	Standard:	Did Not Meet Standard	1: □		

Goal 2: Percentage of schools meeting passing standard on the state assessment in math will increase from 60% in July 2017 to 68% by July 2022					
Baseline Ending Point:		Desired SY17/18 Ending Poi	nt:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:	
Interim Goal 2.1:	_	-	Management Comments		
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:			
Interim Goal 2.2:		-			
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:			
Interim Goal 2.3:	-	-			
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:			
SY17/18 Evaluation					
	Met	Standard:	Did Not Meet Standard		

Goal 3: Percentage of students who are more than a grade level behind and who show at least 1.5yrs academic growth during a single school year in reading will increase from 60% in July 2017 to 68% by July 2022					
Baseline Ending Point:	Baseline Ending Point: Desired SY17/18 Ending Poin			Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:	
Interim Goal 3.1:			Management Comments		
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:			
Interim Goal 3.2:	-				
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:			
Interim Goal 3.3:					
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:			
SY17/18 Evaluation					

Met Standard:

Guardrail 1: Superintendent will not allow the most underperforming campuses to have principals or teachers who rank in the bottom two quartiles of principal or teacher school system-wide performance					
Interim Guardrail 1.1:			Management Comments		
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:			
Interim Guardrail 1.2:					
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:			
Interim Guardrail 1.3:					
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:			
SY17/18 Evaluation					
	Met	: Standard: 🛛	Did Not Meet Standard:		

Guardrail 2: Superintendent will not operate schools without a system that uses student growth to identify, retain, and inspire placement of highly effective educators			
Interim Guardrail 2.1:			Management Comments
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:	
Interim Guardrail 2.2:			
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:	
Interim Guardrail 2.3:			
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:	
SY17/18 Evaluation			

(Guardrail 3: Superintendent will not propose major decisions without engaging impacted stakeholders					
Interim Guardrail 3.1:			Management Comments			
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:				
Interim Guardrail 3.2:						
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:				
Interim Guardrail 3.3:						
Baseline Ending Point:	Desired SY17/18 Ending Point:	Actual SY17/18 Ending Point:				
SY17/18 Evaluation						
Met Standard: 🛛			Did Not Meet Standard:			

NOTES

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