

## GP-4.2: BOARD MEMBERS' PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION

Adopted: 06/21/12

Revised: 10/13/16; 05/25/17

The Clark County School District Board of Trustees shall follow principles that shall enable it and its members to operate lawfully, efficiently, respectfully, and strategically focused on District progress toward the Board Vision, Strategic Imperatives, Pledge of Achievement, and other support strategies to improve learning for all students.

1. The Board shall engage in Balanced Governance™ with an emphasis on beliefs and action emulating the 10 Balanced Governance™ Individual Board Member Characteristics as described in GP-4.1: Board Members' Conduct and Ethics.
2. Board members shall strive to make policy decisions based on information received from the Superintendent, which reflects the progress or the need for improvement toward the Board Vision, Strategic Imperatives, Pledge of Achievement, and other support strategies. Superintendent or staff reports to Board members and during Board meetings shall, at a minimum, follow these Balanced Governance™ Tracking and Reporting Protocols:
  - A. Ensure that the policy incorporates or supports the Board Vision.
  - B. Ensure that the policy incorporates or supports one or more Board Strategic Imperatives, Pledge of Achievement, and other support strategies.
  - C. Ensure that the policy incorporates or supports concepts within the Balanced Governance™ Board Standards.
  - D. Ensure that measurable outcome criteria are included in the policy.
  - E. Ensure that specific data are identified for purposes of Board reporting and monitoring through informed oversight.
  - F. Ensure that specific timelines are indicated for Board review of goal progress.
  - G. Ensure that problems or challenges are specific, targeted, and clearly communicated in the Board meeting presentation as part of the Board review and oversight.

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- H. Ensure that new, revised, or existing program components and procedures, or elimination of programs or program components address specific identified problems or challenges.
  - I. Ensure and specifying a timeline for regular goal progress checking during the Board meeting.
3. Board members shall ensure all Board policies support the Balanced Governance™ Standards. Board member discussion should focus on the extent to which policy, programs, and processes of both the District educational system and Board governance actions support Balanced Governance™ Standards. Balanced Governance™ Standards include:
- A. **Vision-Directed Planning (BG-1).** Board engages families, communities, and staff in the development of a shared vision focused on student learning. The vision is the foundation of the mission and goals that direct Board policy-making, planning, resource allocation, and activities.

### **Indicators for this standard are:**

- 1. The Board collaborates with families and the community to articulate core values and beliefs for the District.
- 2. Board members can clearly articulate the vision and goals of the District.
- 3. The Board, in collaboration with the District, has developed a long-range plan for improving student learning.
- 4. The Board regularly monitors the progress of goals to improve student learning.
- 5. The Board adopts a budget and appropriates resources aligned to the vision and goals.
- 6. The Board establishes and models a culture of high expectations for all students.

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7. Board members have a vision and expectations for excellence beyond the present.

**B. Family/Community Engagement (BG-2).** All members of the family/community are stakeholders in the success of their schools. Family/community engagement is a reciprocal advocacy process that creates and sustains meaningful conversations, systems connections, and feedback loops with multiple groups in the family/community. Successful family/community engagement results in collaborative partnerships and new types and levels of family/community participation in schools.

**Indicators for this standard are:**

1. The Board promotes practices that solicit input and involvement from all segments of the family/community.
2. The Board collaboratively develops vision and goals with staff, parents, students, and the broader family/community.
3. The Board recognizes and celebrates the contributions of school and family/community members in school improvement efforts.
4. The Board is responsive and respectful to family/community inquiry and feedback.
5. The Board advocates for public policy that supports education through relationships with community leaders, city and county government officials, and state legislators.

**C. Effective Leadership (BG-3).** Board leadership is proactive, integrated, and shared. The Board establishes focus, direction, and expectations that fosters student learning. Across education systems, the Board supports policy to develop and implement collaborative leadership models and practices that are guided by shared student learning goals. Within organizations, the Board ensures the alignment of authority and responsibility so that decisions can be made at levels closest to implementation.

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### **Indicators for this standard are:**

1. Board members develop relationships to improve student learning and opportunities for students.
2. Board activities, analysis, and decision-making are aligned to vision and goals.
3. The Board solicits input from multiple sources to assist in making informed decisions.
4. The Board establishes and sustains relations with community leaders, city and county government officials, and state legislators.
5. Board members model and empowering leadership style.
6. Board members promote change through dialogue and collaboration.
7. Board members understand and are knowledgeable about school improvement initiatives and their role in supporting those initiatives.

### **D. Using Data for Continuous Improvement and Accountability (BG-4).**

The Board communicates high expectations for all students and holds themselves and the District accountable for reaching those goals. The Board uses data and information, from multiple sources and in various formats, to identify areas for improvement, set priorities, and monitor improvement efforts. At the same time, the Board continually seeks new and innovative ways to increase student success and achievement in programs already established.

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### **Indicators for this standard are:**

1. Board members use, and expect the Superintendent to use, a variety of types of relevant quantitative and qualitative data in decision-making (e.g. survey results, interviews, staff evaluations, staff and student feedback, test results).
  2. The Superintendent provides data to the Board on the measureable outcomes of all programs that they have approved.
  3. The Board uses data to identify discrepancies between current and desired outcomes.
  4. The Board identifies and addresses priority needs based on data analysis.
  5. The Board communicates to the public how policy decisions are linked to student learning data.
  6. The Board creates a culture that encourages the use of data to identify needs throughout the system.
  7. The Board regularly conducts a self-evaluation to monitor its performance.
- E. **Cultural Responsiveness (BG-5).** The Board creates a climate of expectations that all students can learn at high levels and fosters a positive and safe learning climate that supports this vision. The cultural diversity of a family/community has many facets – social, economic, political, religious, geographical, generational, linguistic, ethnic, racial, and gender. The Board develops an understanding of this diversity and hold perspectives that reflect the cultures in their community. Effective family/community engagement and expectancy strategies build on the strengths of a community's cultural diversity.

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**Indicators for this element are:**

1. Board outreach and family/community engagement activities accommodate cultural differences in values and communication.
2. The Board actively encourages and expects the Superintendent to facilitate the participation of culturally diverse groups.
3. The Board has a process to review policies that involve cultural, racial, and ethnic bias.
4. Board members approach decision-making with culturally diverse perspectives.
5. The Board creates a culture of acceptance for innovation that increase student success and achievement.
6. A climate of caring, respect, and the valuing of students' cultures is established through Board policy and goals.
7. The Board ensures that the Superintendent regularly assesses the District climate.

- F. Learning Organizations (BG-6).** A learning organization is a self-renewing professional community that supports reflection, discovery, learning, improvement, and success at all levels. The Board encourages professional development that empowers and nurtures leadership capabilities across the organization.

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**Indicators for this element are:**

1. Board policies nurture leadership capabilities across the organization.
2. The Board creates and pursues opportunities to learn about research-based strategies that ensure continuous improvement for the next generation of learners.
3. Board members promote positive change through dialogue and collaboration.
4. The Board encourages professional development that increases learning and empowerment.
5. The Board fosters an environment of mutual cooperation, emotional support, and personal growth throughout the organization.

**G. Systems Thinking (BG-7).** Systems thinking allows Boards to break single District thinking and act on an integrated view of education within and across systems and levels (e.g. grade K-12, educational co-operatives, community college, and university). The Board practices systems thinking by collaborative partnerships with local, state, and national entities, coordinated programs, and shared resource models to improve student learning.

**Indicators for this Standard are:**

1. The Board works to avoid shifting problems from one part of the system to another.
2. The Board engages in process thinking, seeing beyond the immediate situation and easy solutions.
3. The Board analyzes issues for their impact on other parts of the system.

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4. The Board team is solution oriented.
5. The Board works collaboratively with other agencies to encourage dialogue that fosters continual growth.

**H. Innovation and Creativity (BG-8).** The Board recognizes, values, and supports the advancement of innovation and creativity across the District. Innovation and creativity are assets to the process of development and change, leading to new types of thinking and better ways of meeting student needs. Innovation and creativity are not predictable, but the Board shall align vision throughout the organization, engage in collaborative partnerships, and encourage dialogue, new ideas, and differing perspectives.

**Indicators for this standard are:**

1. Board members create time and opportunities for their own creative thinking.
2. Board members partner with families, the community, and educational organizations to remove real and perceived barriers to creativity and innovation.
3. The Board sets meeting agendas that allow it to proactively identify and explore strategic issues.
4. The Board incorporates flexibility into its future plans to enable the District to look and move in unforeseen directions in response to unexpected events.
5. The Board recognizes the risk of creative and innovative practices and supports such practices at all levels of leadership.



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- I. **Board Member Conduct, Ethics, and Relationship with Superintendent (BG-9).** The relationship between the Board and the Superintendent is a delicate one and it is essential that they have a clear, mutual understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities. Team building is an essential part of this relationship and a clear District goal shall help maintain a respectful relationship.

### **The Indicators for this standard are:**

1. Each member of the Board understands and respects the distinction between the Board's responsibilities and the Superintendent's duties.
2. The Board and Superintendent trust and respect one another.
3. Board members represent the interests of the entire District.
4. Board members preserve the confidentiality of items discussed in closed session.
5. Board members do not use their office for personal gain or advancement.
6. Board members do not attempt to individually speak on behalf of the entire Board or commit the Board.
7. Board members direct complaints and requests to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's Liaison to the Board of Trustees rather than attempting to solve them directly.
8. The Board and Superintendent agree on the information needed by the Board, and when and how the Board receives that information.
9. The Board and Superintendent participate in learning opportunities as a team.

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10. Board members come to the meeting familiar with the agenda and prepared to discuss, ask questions, and take action on agenda items.

J. **Budgeting and Financial Accountability (BG-10).** One of the important activities in translating the educational goals of schools into reality is the adoption of a budget and making sure that the District is fiscally sound. Boards utilize fiscal resources based on student needs and District policies and goals.

### **Indicators for this element are:**

1. Board members are knowledgeable of the District budgeting process.
  2. Budgeting decisions are based on student needs, adopted District policy and goals, and the Districts financial ability to meet those needs.
  3. Board members have a basic understanding of District revenues and expenses.
  4. The Board reviews monthly financial statements (purchase orders and purchase awards) provided by the Superintendent and understand their role in the oversight of the budget.
4. Board members shall respect relationships with other members of the Board by:
- A. Recognizing the integrity of predecessors and associates and the merit of their work.
  - B. Refusing to make statements or promises regarding voting on any matter that should properly come before the Board as a whole.
  - C. Respecting the right of others to their opinions and, while striving for consensus, supporting the majority rule principle.

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5. Board members and the Superintendent shall engage in professional public communications to respect and ensure an unobstructed process of whole-Board deliberation and policy approval. This includes:
  - A. Suspending decision-making and public comment until proper analysis of data and whole-Board discussion is concluded and a vote is cast.
  - B. Supporting the integrity of final Board decisions and supporting the implementation of those policy decisions while retaining the right to publicly share one's own reasons for voting against a particular policy or program.
  - C. Refraining from speaking individually to the media or posting public comment on social media regarding Board or District matters that are under policy or program deliberation, and prior to a discussion and vote by the Board. Individual Board members shall defer Board inquiries on such matters to the Board President, who shall prepare a statement speaking on behalf of the whole Board. The written statement shall include the vote count and the reasons behind dissenting votes.
  - D. Providing appropriate deference when approached by the public. For example, Board members shall defer comments regarding inquiries about District issues, i.e. media inquiries, to the Superintendent, who will speak for the District. Likewise, public comments or inquiry directed to the Superintendent regarding Board practices or actions, should be deferred without comment to the Board President who will confer with the whole Board on such matters during a regular Board meeting, and when directed by the whole Board, respond on their behalf.
  - E. Board members who fail to follow governance process policies, either during or outside of a Board meeting shall be addressed using the Balanced Governance™ Progressive Response process listed below in items 1-6. The governance process includes.

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1. Board member(s) with a concern about another Board member shall report the concern to the Board President privately.
2. The Board President shall meet with the offending Board member and remind them of their commitment to follow governing policies and protocols.
3. If this is ineffective, the Board President and one other Board Member shall meet with the offending Board member, remind them of their commitment to follow governing policies and protocols, and ask them to honor their commitment through appropriate action.
4. If this is ineffective, the Board President, during a public Board meeting, shall remind the offending Board member of their commitment to follow governing policies and protocols, and ask them to honor their commitment through appropriate action.
5. If this is ineffective, the Board President shall engage in informal censure of the offending Board member through interrupting ensuing infractions in Board meetings and making formal public statements both during the Board meeting and outside the Board meeting as needed, to distance the Board's position from the infracting Board member' position or statements.
6. In the event that the Board President fails to follow governance policies and processes, the Board Vice President will engage the Balanced Governance™ Progressive Response process listed above in items i-iv. If these steps are ineffective, the Board Vice President may entertain a recall vote of the seated Board President. By a two-thirds super-majority, the seated President can be removed. The Board Vice President shall assume the role of Board President and employ the Balanced Governance™ Progressive Response process item v, if necessary.

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6. Board members shall respect the authority of the Superintendent of Schools and the staff by:
  - A. Giving the Superintendent full administrative authority for properly discharging the professional duties of the position and by holding the Superintendent accountable for progress toward the Board Vision, Strategic Imperatives, Pledge of Achievement, and other support strategies.
  - B. Recognizing individual interactions with employees of the Superintendent lack authority except when explicitly authorized by the Board.
  - C. Refraining from expressing individual judgments of performance of the Superintendent or employees of the Superintendent except as described in the Balanced Governance™ Progressive Response process in item 7 A-D below.
  - D. Acting only upon the recommendations of the Superintendent in matters of employment or dismissal of District personnel.
  - E. Excluding the Superintendent at regular and special meetings of the Board only when the contract and salary of the Superintendent or his/her confidential employees are under consideration.
  - F. Referring all complaints to the Superintendent or his/her designee and discussing such complaints at a regular meeting only after exhausting all other steps described in the Balanced Governance™ Progressive Response process described in item 7A-D below.

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- G. Providing an environment in which the Superintendent and staff may function effectively within the community and discharge their educational functions on a thoroughly professional basis.
- H. Presenting any criticisms of any employee directly to the Superintendent or his/her designee.
- I. As an elected Trustee for the Clark County School District (CCSD), mutual respect for each other as elected officials and the work of our employees is a priority. Trustees shall adhere to the following guidelines when visiting individual schools or school/District employees.
  - 1. Respect fellow Trustees by not visiting schools outside of your District. If you are invited by the principal or school personnel, do not respond in the positive unless you have a verbal or written approval from your fellow Trustee.
  - 2. Respect the work that the administrative, licensed, and support staff must complete on a daily basis in order to increase student learning and meet the goals identified in the Strategic Imperatives. Dropping in at a school campus is a distraction from the work our employees are paid to do. Surprise visits disrupt schedules and instruction. Call before you visit a school in your District. If the principal or administrative staff is not available, ask to schedule a time for a visit.
  - 3. If the principal or administrative team members are not available or say that this is not a good time, respect their decision and ask to schedule a better time. Walking the building without an administrator would be considered a disruption to the learning environment. CCSD has hired them to be in charge of the building. If there is an issue, contact the Superintendent's Liaison to the Board of Trustees or the Superintendent.

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4. Central office staff members have very difficult jobs to accomplish. The Superintendent holds them accountable for the work that must be done. If you are in the building, please be respectful of their time and work. A quick hello is appropriate but sitting down for a social or work discussion may be prohibiting them from the work that is needed to be completed. If a lengthy conversation is needed, please set up a time for a meeting or phone call if you have specific concerns or issues.
5. It is imperative when dealing with employees that an appropriate and professional behavior is required. Opportunities for training will be provided to you.
6. As a Trustee, there may be information shared that is in the planning stages. It is not your role to go to school locations or departments/divisions and tell them what may or may not happen. That is the role of the Superintendent or his staff. If confidential information is not kept confidential, details of the work will not be shared with you unless it is in a formal setting. This is a violation of the governance policies of the Trustees.
7. If you have ideas that can help with attaining goals in the Strategic Imperatives or improving work in CCSD, please discuss them with the Superintendent. It will be the best avenue for being able to talk through the idea.
8. Social network posts, videos, and pictures are a delicate issue. Media releases must be on file for every student. If a signed media release is not ensured, pictures must not be posted. Refrain from talking for streaming purposes during formal events and presentations.

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9. In the case of school visitation or visitation of a faculty or staff, Board members:
  - a. Shall only visit school sites during school hours after making an appointment in advance with the school principal. In most cases, the school should be given 24-hour notice prior to a visit during school hours.
  - b. May visit school sites to attend any and all after-school events and performances at their discretion.
  - c. Shall make an appointment in advance to meet with District staff.
  - d. Who believe an emergency warrants a more immediate meeting or visit shall first clear the visit with the Superintendent.
  - e. Who are parents or guardians of a student attending a school shall not be restricted by these guidelines, but shall follow school processes required by all other family/community members regarding school appointments and visits. The Board member shall endeavor to represent themselves only in their parental role for such visits and meetings and not as a Board member.
  
7. Concerns regarding school Board member/Superintendent communication or implementation of policy and procedures shall be addressed with the Superintendent through a Balanced Governance™ Progressive Response process as described in item 7A-D below. This process requires the Board member to:
  - A. First meet individually with the Superintendent to address and resolve any concern.
  - B. If this is not successful, the Board member shall meet to discuss the issue with the Board President and Superintendent together.



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- C. If still not resolved, the Board member can require the issue to be added to the next Board agenda. Note that the Board meeting discussion should include only the information requested or the concern reported, and recommendations for actions on the part of the Board to resolve the issue.
  - D. Finally, the Board should address concerns over Superintendent response or action only through the formal Superintendent evaluation.
8. Board members shall refrain from individually and privately monitoring the implementation of policy, programs, or operations processes. To ensure implementation fidelity and District culture, Board members shall ensure the use of an Organizational Capacity Monitoring System, like the Balanced Governance™ Strategic Teaming Model. This includes:
- A. A permanent District Strategic Team delegated with the authority to monitor organizational health and implementation fidelity.
  - B. The membership of the District Strategic Team shall be comprised of District faculty and staff from every level of the District organization with a plurality of members at the school level.
  - C. The Organizational Capacity Monitoring System is responsible for identifying barriers in the organization that prevent implementation fidelity of policies and programs.
  - D. The Organizational Capacity Monitoring System is responsible to craft an Implementation Support Plan including specific recommendations on how to remove or lessen barriers and improve implementation fidelity.
  - E. Data from the Organizational Capacity Monitoring survey and progress or lack of progress on components of the Implementation Support Plan shall be presented to the Board at least twice per year. The District Strategic Team shall include in their report, operations and procedural barriers and the solutions recommended and/or enacted.
  - F. The District Strategic Team will recommend policy changes to the Board and procedural changes throughout the District. All recommendations are subject to Superintendent and Board approval.

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9. Board members shall meet responsibilities to the community by:
  - A. Attempting to appraise fairly both the present and future educational needs of the family/community.
  - B. Insisting that all District business transactions be conducted on an open, ethical, and above Board basis.
  - C. Vigorously seeking adequate financial support of the schools.
  - D. Engaging in proactive and on-going dialogue with the family/community. This shall be achieved by:
    1. Structured and intentional assignment of Board members to serve on or attend meetings and events held by external stakeholders throughout the District.
    2. Expansion of the external committee service should be planned during a Board work session at least annually. Board members shall report briefly on relevant and significant issues raised by external entities during a scheduled time at each Board meeting.
  - E. Seeking to involve the family/community in the schools and the educational process.
  - F. Seeking to improve education throughout the State of Nevada.
10. Board members shall conduct effective and productive meetings focused on open dialogue and policy actions intended to check the progress and improve achievement of the Board Vision, Strategic Imperatives, Pledge of Achievement, and other support strategies. Board members shall conduct their Board meetings in a professional manner with appropriate decorum through:
  - A. Well-attended meetings and well-prepared participants.
  - B. A well-planned agenda that is focused on progress checking and discussion of the Board Vision, Strategic Imperatives, Pledge of Achievement, and other support strategies.

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- C. Keeping discussions centered on the agenda and staying focused on progress checking and discussion of the Board Vision, Strategic Imperatives, Pledge of Achievement, and other support strategies.
  - D. Balanced participation with everyone participating and no one dominating.
  - E. Sharing viewpoints in a clear, concise manner.
  - F. Accomplishing work in an atmosphere of trust and openness with respect and courtesy.
  - G. Monitoring policies to facilitate accountability and assurance of policy implementation fidelity.
11. Supporting the Superintendent's reasonable interpretation of applicable Board policies or further clarifying Board intention by revising the policies.
12. Making decisions based on information garnered from Superintendent and staff reports presented at Board meetings, additional information requested through the Superintendent, and family/community input.
13. The Board shall follow parliamentary procedures utilizing Roberts Rules of Order as a guide, recognizing the exceptions for small Boards.<sup>1</sup> The following are recommended procedures:
- A. All main motions require a second.
  - B. Only one main motion can be active at a time.
  - C. The Board President presides over the meeting, introduces the item, recognizes speakers, repeats the motion before the vote, and summarizes the vote.
  - D. The Board President may vote on all motions and, with restraint, may make a motion and second motions, as well.

<sup>1</sup>See addendum for Rules of Precedence.

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14. Board members shall recognize that authority rests only with the Board during official meetings and that the individual member has no legal status to bind the Board outside meetings as defined by the Open Meeting Law.
  - A. Except as otherwise provided by NRS, four members of the Board shall constitute a quorum
  - B. No action of the Board shall be considered valid without the approval of a quorum of the Board.
  - C. A quorum of members shall only meet, deliberate, or vote regarding matters within the Board's jurisdiction in either an open meeting or a closed meeting in compliance with a specific statute.
  - D. Members' interaction with the public, press, or other entities must recognize Board decisions and the inability of any member to speak for the Board except to support Board decisions.
  - E. An agenda item which has previously been considered and decided by the Board within the past year may only be placed on the agenda for reconsideration by a Trustee who was on the prevailing side of the previous decision. The agenda item shall be preceded by a specific agenda to address whether the item should be reconsidered.
  - F. Within the first three months of being sworn in, the newly appointed or elected Board member may request reconsideration of a prior decision up to six months prior to being sworn in to the Board.
15. Board members shall receive on-going, annual training assessments in effective governance. All training sessions shall be provided by appropriate personnel trained in the Balanced Governance™ model. Board professional development shall include:
  - A. Annual Board self-assessment including the Balanced Governance™ Board Standards and the Balanced Governance™ Individual Board Member Characteristics.

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- B. Regular external Board evaluation including the Balanced Governance™ Board Standards, the Balanced Governance™ Individual Board-Member Characteristics, and Balanced Governance™ Effective Board Meeting Elements (meeting length, number of scheduled topics, time management, item typology and discussion categories, direct vs. supporting instructional topics, goal monitoring vs. management inquiry, and bridging vs. bonding).
- C. Required orientation training in Balanced Governance™ for new Board members.
- D. Periodic formative Board observation and evaluation including the Balanced Governance™ Board Standards and the Balanced Governance™ Individual Board-Member Characteristics.
- E. Embed Board member relationship-building opportunities into all Board member training.
- F. Embed opportunities for social dialogue and relationship building during Board work sessions.