WSSDA Boards of Distinction Application

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Applications are due by September 21, 2017. Submit the application as a single Word or PDF document to Connie Lauderdale at C.Lauderdale@wssda.org.

2. The date range for this year's application is 9/1/16 – 9/1/17.

TIPS

You will be asked to submit two written sections (hereafter referred to as "essays") with accompanying evidence: one on the opportunity gap and one you select. The optional topics are benchmarks from three different WSSDA School Board Standards.* Guiding questions for the judging, and therefore recommended for the essays, are:

1. What decisions did the board make?
2. What is the evidence of the results?
3. How this evidence fits the standard?

We suggest approaching the application in the following order:

1. Identify the evidence of your board's success from the past year.
2. Select the benchmark option your board will address in this application, based on what your evidence supports best.
3. As a board, assign tasks to complete the application, such as:
    a. Who writes each of the two essays
    b. Who fills out the application
    c. Who edits and or checks the content

Each of the five school board standards has several benchmarks. Each benchmark has a number of indicators for success. All are in the standards document accessible from the link on the Boards of Distinction webpage.

ESSAYS & EVIDENCE INSTRUCTIONS

Essays may be in the form of narrative, bullet points, or a combination of the two, and should reflect the work/decisions of the board. For each essay & evidence (opportunity gap plus one of your choice):

- Please submit an essay of no more than 300 words explaining up to three ways in which the board supports the topic.
- Please consider mentioning whether this is an initial decision made by the board or if you are monitoring progress towards goals.
- Please identify supporting documents by name within each essay, e.g. "Appendix A."

Immediately after each essay, insert no more than three pages of the evidence selected to support that essay (e.g., portions of board meeting minutes, protocols, policies, evaluation tools, communications, etc.).

- Evidence demonstrates the impact of your actions or outcomes relevant to the essay topic.
- The same piece of evidence may be used to support more than one essay.

SECTION I: DISTRICT INFORMATION

School District Name: **Issaquah School District 411**

Street Address or PO Box: **565 NW Holly Street**

City: **Issaquah**   State: **WA**   ZIP: **98027**

Student enrollment: ☐ 1 – 1000   ☐ 1001 – 9000   **XX 9001 and over**

Board Chair: **Lisa Callan**

Superintendent: **Ron Thiele**

SECTION II: BOARDSMANSHIP

1.   What was the date of your most recent superintendent evaluation?   **June 2017**

2.   What is the date of your most recent board self-assessment?   **Aug / Sept 2017**

3.   Do you have a current strategic/district improvement plan?   **XX Yes**   ☐ No

4.   What years does it cover?   **Ongoing – reviewed annually**

SECTION III: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development is a common element among highly successful boards. **In a short paragraph or a few bullets, please describe one professional development activity your board completed together, and the outcome.**

Enter your answer below this line.

All ISD Board members and the Superintendent attended multiple conferences and joint learning opportunities over the last year. Of particular value was the all-day training session offered by PSESD / WSSDA, "Achieving Educational Racial Equity through Policy and Beyond - Part V," held on May 4th, 2017. The outcome of attending was threefold:

- We were able to discuss and better understand our individual and collective "why" for creating and implementing race equity policies in our district.
- We have a better understanding of the process, work, and length of time it may take to write and adopt race equity policies, providing direct insight into the challenges we have been facing.
- We were able to develop an action plan and next steps to further our writing of race equity policy, including how to bring all stakeholder voices into the process.

Since that session, the Board has been working through draft revisions for a dedicated Executive Limitation Policy on Equity within our Policy Governance Model framework.

For the opportunity gap content, please address numbers 1-4, below.
1. What decisions did your board make this past year to positively change the opportunity gap?
2. What evidence of success resulted from previous decisions by the board?
3. Demonstrate how you analyze data and how you apply the results towards closing the opportunity gap.
4. Link your evidence to your decision-makers.

In the Issaquah School District, within the use of Governance Policy, the monitoring of Ends and Executive Limitations is used to ascertain the success of the work of the district and helps identify areas to improve effectiveness. This year, the Board created a subcommittee to determine how to include equity within the framework of Policy Governance. The work of the subcommittee was discussed by the Board at four Board meetings, three Board work studies and the Board Winter Retreat[1.1]. The Board will begin working with the community to refine the proposed equity policies prior to implementation.

Previous decision of the Board to implement free full-day kindergarten early allowed 83 low-income students to receive a more equitable educational opportunity, removing the barrier of fee-based full-day kindergarten[1.2]. As well, through a Board-supported partnership with the Issaquah Schools Foundation, the district has provided a summer kindergarten-readiness program for incoming kindergarten students identified using multiple criterion[1.3].

The Issaquah School Board is requesting disaggregated data in additional areas as part of its monitoring. In particular, the Board looked at the significant gap in opportunities for students of color within highly capable programs[1.4] despite concerted efforts to provide equitable access to the identification process[1.5]. The Board had a work study in March to discuss and analyze the data and review the process by which students are identified as highly capable. It is clear that in Secondary, where highly capable identification is not required for advanced level classes, the gap of participation closes[1.6]. The Director of the district's highly capable program and a member of the Board also attended the Equity Summit on Gifted Education, hosted by the University of Washington. The Board will continue to monitor outcomes and work to achieve equity for all students to meet the Board's mission[1.7].

1.1 Board Conversations on Equity

1.2 Kindergarten Enrollment Data

1.3 Issaquah School District Kindergarten-readiness (Pre-K) Summer Program

1.4 Elementary high cap by race vs dist. Elem by race

1.5 Second Grade Testing Timeline

1.6 Districtwide Student Demographic Data – 2015-16 OSPI Wa State Report Card

1.7 Issaquah School Board - Mission

1.1

Board Conversations on Equity

- September 14, 2016 School Board Meeting. Agenda item to discuss the possibility of establishing a board policy on equity, or modifying current board policy to include equity.
- October 12, 2016 School Board Meeting. Agenda item to continue discussion on equity. Subcommittee presented draft of possible policy changes to Executive Limitations
- November 9, 2016 School Board Work Study on equity
- January 27, 2017 School Board Retreat agenda item on equity policy and draft language
- March 8, 2017 School Board Work Study on equity in the Highly Capable Program
- May 10, 2017 School Board meeting on equity policy
- May 24, 2017 School Board Work Study
- June 28, 2017 School Board Meeting agenda item on equity

1.2

Kindergarten Enrollment Data

Year	Total F&R	Total Students	% F&R	# in HDK	% in HDK	# F&R in HDK	% F&R in HDK	# in FDK	% in FDK	# of F&R in FDK	% F&R in FDK
14-15	106	1386	7.6%	465	33.5%	74	15.9%	921	66.5%	32	3.5%
15-16	80	1345	5.9%	503	37.4%	51	10.1%	842	62.6%	29	3.4%
16-17	112	1443	7.8%	14	1.0%	0	0.0%	1429	99.0%	112	7.8%

F&R – Free & Reduced Meals; HDK – Half-day Kindergarten; FDK – Full-day Kindergarten

1.3

Issaquah School District Kindergarten-readiness (Pre-K) Summer Program

Goals of the Program:

- Develop reading readiness skills and background knowledge/schema
- Develop vocabulary and immerse students in the language of school
- Help students learn "how to do school" while focusing on social emotional skills
- Create a school-to-home connection and develop partnerships with parents

Identification of incoming Kindergarten students selected and identified by greatest need and by rank order using the following criterion:

- Academic assessment results
- Number of years of preschool opportunities
- Self-reported low income
- Identification as English Language Learner

Pre-K Summer Program

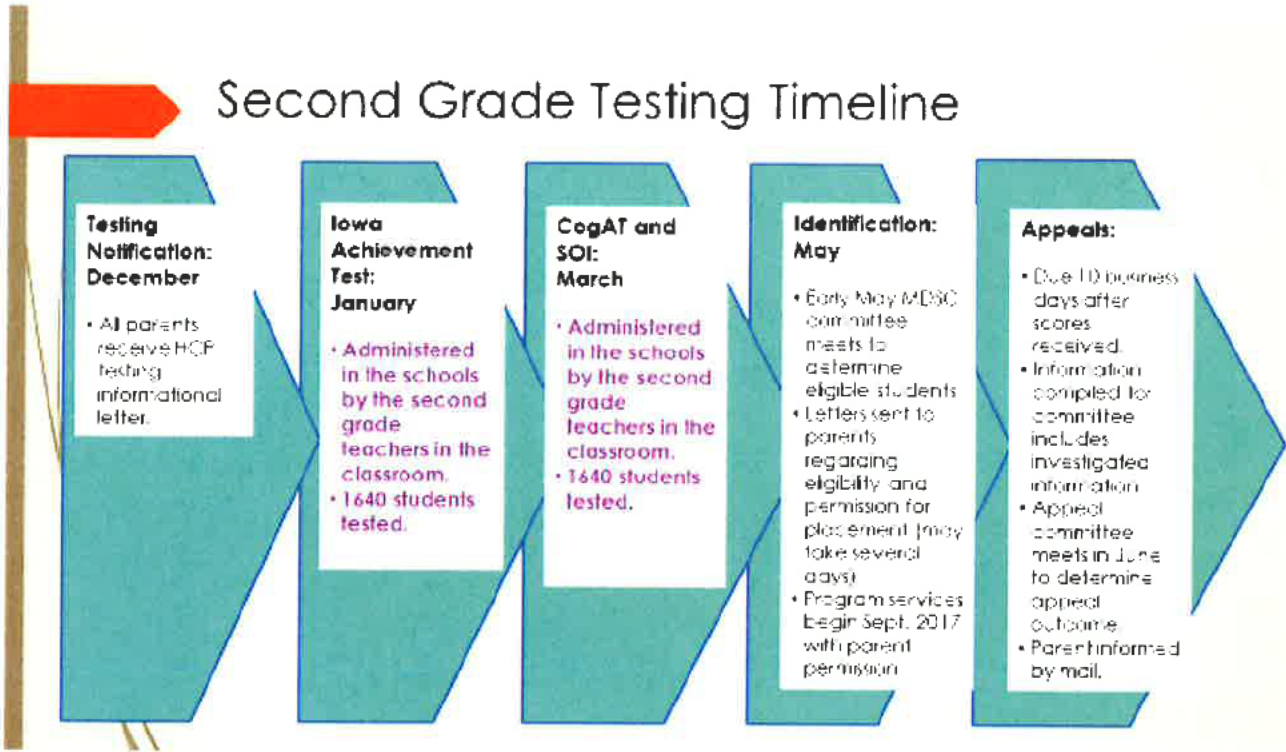| (Numbers are approximate as each site experiences + or - 5 students due to enrollment changes)	July 2012	July 2013	July 2014	July 2015	July 2016	July 2017
# of sites	1	2	3	3	3	3
Total enrollment	40	80	120	120	120	120
% of students attending who are F&R	85% *	90.5% *	26.0%	14.0%	17.0%	14.1%
% of all ISD students who are F&R	10.3%	10.1%	9.3%	8.4%	7.9%	8.1%
% of students attending who are ELL	25.0%	25.7%	32.0%	28.0%	35.0%	29% **

F&R – Free and Reduced Meals

* In 2012 and 2013 only students from Title 1 schools were included in the program. In 2014 and beyond students from all schools could attend the program.

** In 2017 the ELL percentage is based on students whose families reported the home language is not English. The process to determine Kindergarten ELL eligibility has not been concluded at this time. In the years prior, numbers represent students who qualified for services.

1.4

Highly Capable Student Ethnicity Distribution Compared to ISD 2017 - Elementary Students
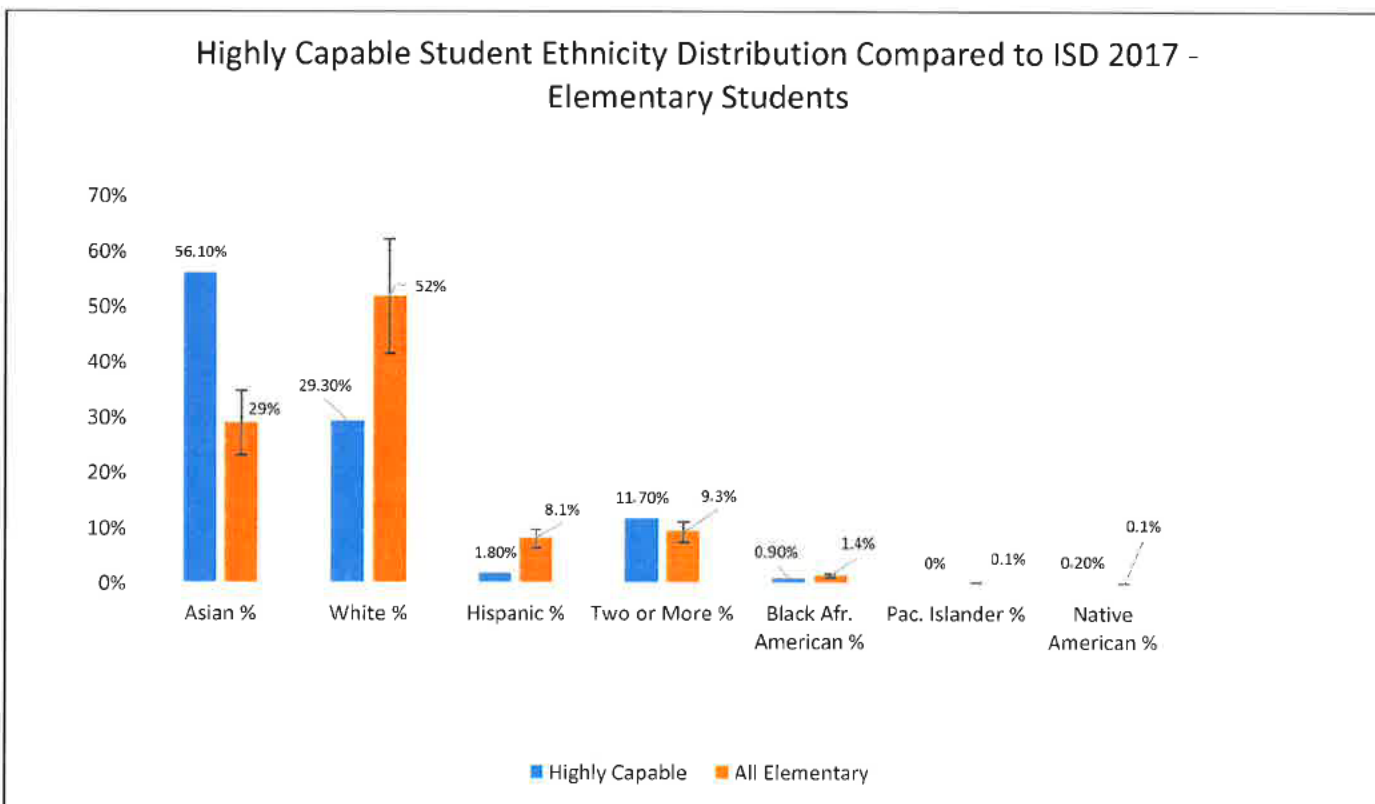
Vertical lines indicate the 20% equity allowance, which is used when considering the ethnicity distribution of students in Highly Capable Program compared to total students in the district.

1.5

Second Grade Testing Timeline

Testing Notification: December

- All parents receive HCP testing informational letter.

Iowa Achievement Test: January

- Administered in the schools by the second grade teachers in the classroom.
- 1640 students tested.

CogAT and SOI: March

- Administered in the schools by the second grade teachers in the classroom.
- 1640 students tested.

Identification: May

- Early May MDSC committee meets to determine eligible students
- Letters sent to parents regarding eligibility and permission for placement (may take several days)
- Program services begin Sept. 2017 with parent permission

Appeals:

- Due 10 business days after scores received.
- Information compiled for committee includes investigated information
- Appeal committee meets in June to determine appeal outcome
- Parent informed by mail.

1.6

Sources: Districtwide student demographic data - 2015-2016 OSPI Wa State Report Card

AP Test Passing Rates by Ethnicity, Gender and Fee Reduction - 2016								
	Percent of students in ISD	Number of Students taking test	Percent of Students taking the test	Number of tests taken	% of Total tests taken	Mean Score District Mean = 3.69 *	% Passing test	District-wide Pass rate
American Indian	0.20%	0	0.00%	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	84%
Asian	25.90%	292	26.64%	543	29.60%	3.79	84.50%	84%
African American	1.70%	14	1.28%	23	1.25%	3.17	74%	84%
Hispanic	7.80%	56	5.11%	80	4.36%	3.44	74%	84%
Native Hawaiian	0.30%	1	0.09%	1	0.05%	**	100%	84%
White	57.30%	631	57.57%	1036	56.43%	3.68	85.30%	84%
2 or more (non Hisp)	6.80%	85	7.75%	133	7.20%	3.72	85.70%	84%
No response	N/A	17	1.55%	20	1.11%	2.95	65%	84%
Male	51%	512	47%	890	48.50%	3.74	84.40%	84%
Female	49%	584	53%	946	51.50%	3.64	84%	84%
Fee Reduction	7.90%	25	2.30%	45	2.40%	3.4	82%	84%

Percentages of students taking/passing tests - 2015-2016 College Board Score Report

NOTE: 1096 students took the test. A total of 1836 tests were taken. A score of 3 on an AP exam is passing.

* State Mean = 2.92 **Suppressed

1.7

Issaquah School Board – Mission

Our students will be prepared for and eager to accept the academic, occupational, personal, and practical challenges of life in a dynamic global environment.

Please select <u>one</u> of the options below and check the box next to your choice. Address the underlined benchmark in your essay and evidence. Indicators have been included for your convenience to identify areas of narrative content and evidence applicable for that benchmark.

XX   Standard 1/Benchmark C: Provide responsible school district governance by <u>respecting and advocating mutual understanding of the roles and responsibilities of board members and the superintendent.</u>

Indicators:

1. Does the board recognize the superintendent as an integral part of the governance team and model collaboration and commitment to a shared purpose?
2. Does the board delegate through written policy authority for the superintendent to manage district operations and implement policy?
3. Does the board provide the superintendent with a clear statement of its expectations for his/her performance which is used in the superintendent's evaluation?
4. Does the board honor the roles and responsibilities of the superintendent and staff?
5. Does the board thoughtfully consider recommendations of the superintendent and staff prior to making decisions?
6. Does the board establish and commit to written protocols for respectful internal and external interactions?

☐   Standard 4/Benchmark A: Hold school district accountable for meeting student learning expectations by <u>committing to continuous improvement in student achievement at each school and throughout the district.</u>

Indicators:

1. Does regular communication from the board to the staff and community reinforce its commitment to high levels of achievement for all students?
2. Does the board establish and follow a schedule for the timely review of the district plan?
3. Does the board ensure a high degree of coherence between the district's plan and individual school improvement plans?
4. Does the board annually review district and school improvement plans?
5. Does the board publicly recognize the efforts of individuals and schools in improving student learning?

☐   Standard 5/Benchmark C: Engage local community and represent the values and expectations they hold for their schools by <u>ensuring district information and decisions are communicated community-wide.</u>

Indicators:

1. Does the board ensure that a proactive communications system is in place to disseminate information and address issues in the schools and community?
2. Does the board identify and use key communicator groups to provide input and disseminate district information and decisions?
3. Does the board communicate district performance to the public in clear and understandable ways?

In June 2004, the Issaquah School Board adopted the Policy Governance model. Since that time, the Board has focused on establishing policies that provide guidance to the District with the expectation that the Superintendent will execute the effective operations of our schools. This delegation of authority is explicitly stated in our Board/Superintendent Linkage-4 policy. [2.0] What this means is that the majority of decisions are made by the Superintendent rather than the Board. An example from November 2016 is the adoption of later start times based on the accumulation of medical research supporting adolescents' need for more sleep. The District engaged parents and the community through a Thought Exchange with 10,000+ participants and held three community meetings with every Board member in attendance. While the ultimate decision was made by the Superintendent, the dialogue at Board meetings and the Board presence at the community meetings modeled a unified approach to governance and demonstrated our commitment to our shared purpose of optimizing the learning environment through later start times.

While the Board has delegated significant authority to the Superintendent, it maintains strategic oversight through its annual monitoring of our established goals for students (Ends) as well as our Executive Limitations that provide explicit guidance to our Superintendent. These monitorings are a key part of the Superintendent's Annual Summative Evaluation and are listed as part of our expectations for Superintendent job performance provided in Board/Superintendent Linkage. [2.1]

In addition to the policies that delegate authority to the Superintendent through the B/SL policies and set expectations for students through Ends, the Board has established policies that define how the Board operates through Governance Process and Operational Governance Policies. These policies provide guidance for how Board members interact with each other, District staff, and the community. [2.2]

2.0 Board/Superintendent Linkage Policy 4: Delegation to the Superintendent

2.1 Board/Superintendent Linkage Policy 5: 2017 Superintendent Evaluation Monitoring Report Log

2.2 Excerpt from Board/Superintendent Linkage Policy 3: Accountability of the Superintendent; and Excerpt from Governance Process 6: Board Members' Code of Conduct

2.0
Board/Superintendent Linkage-4
Delegation to the Superintendent

The Board will instruct the Superintendent through written policies which prescribe the organizational Ends to be achieved, and describe organizational situations and actions to be avoided, allowing the Superintendent to use any reasonable interpretation of these policies. Accordingly:

1. The Board will develop policies instructing the Superintendent to achieve specified results, for specified recipients, based on identified priorities. These policies will be developed systematically from the broadest, most general level to more defined levels, and will be called Ends policies. All issues that are not Ends issues as defined above are Means issues.

2. The Board will develop policies which limit the latitude the Superintendent may exercise in choosing the organizational means. These policies will be developed systematically from the broadest, most general level to more defined levels, and they will be called Executive Limitations policies. The Board will never prescribe organizational means except in Executive Limitations policies.

3. As long as the Superintendent uses any reasonable interpretation of the Board's Ends and Executive Limitations policies, the Superintendent is authorized to establish all further District Regulations, make all decisions, take all actions, establish all practices and develop all activities subject to approval by the Board where required by law. Such decisions of the Superintendent shall have full force and authority as if decided by the Board.

4. The Board may change its Ends, Executive Limitations and Governance policies at any time, thereby shifting the boundary between Board and Superintendent domains. By doing so, the Board changes the latitude of choice given to the Superintendent. But as long as any particular delegation is in place, the Board will respect and support the Superintendent's choices, subject to approval by the Board where required by law, even though such choices may not be the choices the Board or its members may have made.

2.1

Monitoring Report Log
(July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017)

BOARD MTG	EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS	ENDS	BOARD ACTION
July 13, 2016	None	None	
August 10, 2016	EL-4 Financial Planning EL-5 (Internal) Actual Financial Condition EL-6 Asset Protection	None	EL-4 Accepted EL-5 Accepted EL-6 Accepted
August 24, 2016	None	None	
Sept. 14, 2016	EL-7 Superintendent Succession	None	EL-7 Accepted
Sept. 28, 2016	EL-11 Discipline	None	EL-11 Accepted
October 12, 2016	EL-3 Personnel Administration EL-8 Communications and Support EL-13 Facilities	None	EL-3 Accepted EL-8 Accepted EL-13 Accepted
October 26, 2016	*EL-8 (Emergency Contact Flow Chart – Internal Monitoring) moved to November 9*	End 2 Academics – Review/Draft	E-2 Reviewed
November 9, 2016	EL-1 (Internal) Executive Constraint EL-14 Instruction	End 2 Academics – Final Inter. & Evidence	EL-1 Accepted EL-14 Accepted E-2 Accepted

	EL-8 (Emergency Contact Flow Chart – Internal Monitoring)		EL-8 Emergency Contact Flow Chart reviewed and updated (internal document)
December 14, 2016	EL-9 Annual Report to Comm.	Ends 3 Citizenship – Review/Draft	EL-9 Accepted
January 11, 2017	None	Ends 3 Citizenship – Final Inter. & Evidence	E-3 Accepted
January 25, 2017	EL-10 Structure of Schools	Ends 5 Personal Awareness Review/Draft	EL-10 Accepted E-5 Reviewed
February 8, 2017	None	Ends 5 Personal Awareness Final Interpretation & Evidence	E-5 Accepted
March 8, 2017	EL-12 Learn Envir. – Trtmt of Students	None	EL-12 Accepted
March 22, 2017	None	Ends 4 Technology – Review/Draft	E-4 Reviewed
April 26, 2017	EL-15 Technology EL-5 (External) Actual Financial Condition	Ends 4 Technology – Final Interpretation & Evidence	E-4 Accepted EL-15 Accepted EL-5 Accepted
May 10, 2017	EL-2 Treatment of People *EL-5 (External) Actual Financial Condition moved to April 26* Supt's Evaluation Process Begins (B/SL-5 Superintendents Evaluation	Ends 6 Life Management – Review/Draft	EL-2 Accepted E-6 Reviewed
May 24, 2017	None	Ends 6 Life Management – Final Interpretation & Evidence Supt's Evaluation Process (May and June)	E-6 Accepted
June 14, 2017	EL-1 (External) Executive Constraint	Finalize Monitoring Calendar for 2017-18	EL-1 Board Action Anticipated Monitoring Calendar for 2017-18 Board Action Anticipated
June 28, 2017	None	Finalize Supt's Evaluation & Contract	

2.2
Excerpt from Board/Superintendent Linkage-3
Accountability of the Superintendent

The Superintendent is the Board's only link to the operational organization. All authority over and accountability of staff, as far as the Board is concerned, are considered the authority and accountability of the Superintendent. Accordingly:
1. The Board will never give directives to persons who report directly or indirectly to the Superintendent.
2. The Board will not evaluate any staff other than the Superintendent.
3. The Board will view Superintendent performance as identical to organizational performance. Organizational accomplishment of Ends and operation within the boundaries of Executive Limitations will be viewed as successful Superintendent performance.
4. Except as required by law and thus disposed of by the consent agenda, the Board will not participate in decisions or action involving the hiring, evaluating, disciplining or dismissal of any employee other than the Superintendent.

Excerpt from Governance Process-6
Board Members' Code of Conduct

3. Board members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization.

    a. Members' interaction with the Superintendent or with staff must recognize the lack of authority vested in individuals except when explicitly Board authorized. Members will not give personal direction to any part of the operational organization or assume personal responsibility for resolving operational problems or complaints.

    b. Members' interaction with public, press or other entities must recognize the same limitation and the inability of any Board member but the President to speak for the Board except to repeat explicitly stated Board decisions.

    c. Except for participation in Board deliberation about whether the Superintendent has achieved a reasonable interpretation of Board policy, members will not express publicly individual negative judgments of performance of the superintendent or the superintendent's employees.

4. Members will protect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature and other matters that may compromise the integrity or legal standing of the Board and district, including matters discussed in executive session.

5. To build trust among members and to ensure an environment conducive to effective governance, individual members will:

    a. Focus on issues rather than personalities

    b. Support decisions of the full board

    c. Exercise honesty in all written and interpersonal interaction, never intentionally misleading or misinforming each other

    d. Criticize privately, praise publicly

    e. Make every reasonable effort to protect the integrity and promote the positive image of the district and one another

    f. Never embarrass each other or the district