

Board of Directors

Guiding principles of governance

Exceptional boards add significant value to their organizations, making a discernible difference in the fulfillment of their mission. Good governance requires the board to balance its role as an oversight body with its role as a force supporting the organization. The difference between responsible and exceptional boards lies in thoughtfulness and intentionality, action and engagement, knowledge and communication. The following twelve principles, as prioritized by the CSBA Board of Directors, provide a vision of what is possible and a way to add lasting value to the association.

Strategic thinking

We allocate time to what matters most and continuously engage in strategic thinking to set CSBA's direction. We use our vision, mission, goals, core values and strategic priorities to drive meeting agendas, work with Delegates and constituent groups, improve board leadership and evaluate the executive director.

Results-oriented

We are results-oriented. We measure the progress toward CSBA's vision, mission and goals and evaluate the performance of major programs, products and services.

Intentional board practices

We purposefully organize our Board structure to fulfill essential corporate and leadership duties and activities and to support and adopt CSBA's priorities. Making governance intentional, not incidental, we invest in structures and practices that can be thoughtfully adapted to changing circumstances.

Mission driven

We shape and uphold the mission, articulate a compelling vision, and ensure the congruence between decisions and core values. We treat questions of mission, vision and core values as statements of crucial importance to be explored and incorporated into deliberations.

Culture of inquiry

We establish a culture of inquiry, mutual respect and constructive debate that leads to sound decision making. We seek information, question assumptions and challenge conclusions so that we may advocate for solutions based on analysis.

Transparency

We promote transparency by ensuring that members of the Board have equal access to relevant information including finances, operations and results.

Continuous learning

We embrace the qualities of a continuous learning organization, evaluating our own performance and assessing the value we add to CSBA. We embed learning opportunities into routine governance work and activities outside of board meetings.

Board development and renewal

We improve the performance of the Board by mentoring and training Directors, and by encouraging diverse membership and perspectives. We thoughtfully consider how turnover impacts the Board and foster discussion about succession planning that strengthens the leadership of CSBA.

Independent-mindedness

We value independent thinking. We base our votes on personal examination of the facts, full and rich discussion at the board table, in consultation with other Delegates, board members and stakeholders. We are non-partisan. We operate using democratic principles and consensus.

Standards of integrity

We promote strong ethical values by establishing appropriate mechanisms for active oversight. We put statewide interests above local or personal benefit when making decisions.

Sustaining resources

We link our visions and plans to financial support, expertise and networks of influence. Linking budgeting to strategic planning, we approve activities that can be realistically financed with existing or attainable resources, while ensuring that CSBA has the infrastructure and internal capacity it needs.

Constructive partnership with the executive director

We govern in a constructive partnership that is built on trust, candor, respect and honest communication. The effectiveness of the Board and executive director are interdependent.

Adapted and modified from The Source (2005). Twelve Principles of Governance That Power Exceptional Boards. Washington, D.C.: Board Source. | Adopted June 29, 2008