

Learning Summary

Trustee Training Topics

January: Responsibilities and Relationships

February: Essential Roles of Board Members

March: Basics of School Law

April: Basics of School Finance

May: Making a Difference for Students

June: Making Sense of Student Achievement

This six-month governance learning series was designed to strengthen the effectiveness, clarity, and impact of a school board trustee. Each month builds on the last, creating a coherent progression from foundational responsibilities to data-driven decision-making that directly supports student success.

The series begins by establishing a strong grounding in board responsibilities and relationships, ensuring trustees understand their governance role, how it differs from management, and how to build productive partnerships with the superintendent, staff, and community. With this foundation in place, the focus shifts to the essential roles of board members, emphasizing policy development, strategic visioning, fiscal oversight, and advocacy and core functions that shape district direction and long-term success.

A clear understanding of the legal and financial landscape is critical for effective governance. The school law module equips board members with the legal frameworks that guide their work, including open meeting requirements, student and staff rights, and special education law. The following month, the school finance module demystifies funding sources, budget cycles, audits, and long-term planning, enabling trustees to make informed, responsible financial decisions.

The final two months turn toward impact. Making a Difference for Students connects board decisions to real student experiences, emphasizing equity, wellbeing, and the board's role in creating conditions for success. The series concludes with Making Sense of Student Achievement, giving trustees the tools to interpret data, identify trends, and ask strategic questions that guide policy and resources.

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