

## **COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND GOVERNANCE**

### **Summary of Findings and Recommendations**

In the area of Governance and Community Relations, the Oakland Unified School District has demonstrated progress on many of the priority standards during the past six months, most notably those related to policy development. The district also continues to make efforts to strengthen overall communications, parent-community relations and the effectiveness of district and school advisory councils, although not all of these efforts have produced the desired results. A number of significant, positive steps have also been taken relative to boardsmanship, although the board continues to seek to clarify its appropriate role and level of engagement during this time when the state maintains authority over the district's affairs.

### **Communications**

The district continues to pursue a range of strategies to strengthen both internal and external communications. Most elements of the communications and marketing plan adopted in February 2004 are being effectively implemented, although there is a need for ongoing strengthening of the district's media relations. In addition to continuing many of its previous activities (e.g., a weekly e-mail bulletin, site visits by the State Administrator), the district has expanded its activities to include a new staff and department directory, more effective use of electronic communications, an update of the district's Web site to provide more pertinent information, and launching of a cable television show by the State Administrator. Much of the recent communications work in the district has focused on using multiple avenues to explain the district's new results-based budgeting system: While these efforts have been thorough, the site staff have expressed a desire for even more communication on this topic. Progress has also been made in clarifying when board members are acting as spokespersons on behalf of the district and when they are representing individual views. Several board members also identified a need for even more aggressive communications to help promote the district's schools and to proactively communicate occasional high-profile district actions such as school closures. As the district continues to implement its communications plan, it will be important for the district to actively monitor the effectiveness of its efforts, and to make adjustments as necessary.

### **Parent-Community Relations**

Outreach to involve parents and community members in the schools is an ongoing need in all school districts, especially those as large and diverse as Oakland Unified. Within the past six months, in addition to its regular activities and communications, the district strongly encouraged parents to be informed about the results-based budgeting initiative by holding a summer institute with information geared specifically towards parents. Parents are also encouraged to be involved through specific programs, such as those aimed at improving campus safety and increasing student attendance. The administration's cable television show added another avenue for increased communications with parents and community members. The greatest challenge continues to be increasing the involvement of underrepresented and disenfranchised parents and community members. Despite district efforts in this area, further strategies tailored to these groups are needed to produce desired results. The district also should continue its efforts to ensure that information about complaint procedures is distributed to parents and community members and that these procedures are effectively and fairly implemented. When administrator training on complaint procedures is implemented as planned, it should be evaluated to determine its effectiveness and whether any additional efforts will be needed to reach other audiences.

## **Collaboratives/District Advisory Councils/School Site Councils**

The most notable improvement in this area was the district's clearer delineation of the statutory objectives of the site and district councils in the revised School Site Council and English Learner Advisory Committee handbooks and in a newly adopted district policy. Additionally, the teachers on special assignment who provide direct support to sites for the operation of their site councils have been cited as particularly effective. However, little improvement is evident on most of the other priority standards pertaining to district and school site councils and committees. The extent to which parent members understand the council's goals is inconsistent. Trainings are scheduled to begin this fall to ensure that all members clearly understand the purpose and goals of the councils. The membership of these groups continues to lack sufficient diversity, despite the district's additional outreach efforts to encourage greater participation of parents of ethnically varied backgrounds. Recruitment by principals appears to be an effective strategy that should be enhanced, as should the availability of interpreters to facilitate participation by non-English-speaking or limited-English-speaking members. The overall effectiveness of district and site councils varies and is largely determined by the leadership of the principal at each site. Effectiveness may be improved through additional training and greater communication between the district-level and site-level councils and committees.

## **Policy**

In the past six months, a large number of district policies were reviewed and adopted, and updating the policy manual has been nearly completed. Most district policies are now up to date and reflect current law. This review included two policies that are mandated by law to be annually reviewed. The updated policy manual is now on-line and accessible in the district office lobby via public access computers. The process used to conduct this large-scale policy review involved various levels of central office staff and multiple departments; the level of opportunities for involvement by principals and other site staff could not be adequately determined. As the district works to maintain its policy manual with periodic reviews, it will be important to formalize the policy development process in order to effectively utilize available resources, ensure adequate staff and public input, bring a more manageable number of policies to the board for consideration at any one time, and provide sufficient notice and distribution of policies that affect staff and other stakeholders.

## **Board Roles/Boardsmanship**

Due to the board's current advisory status, it is difficult to fully assess progress in all of the standards related to board roles; however, it does appear that in many instances, the board has the capacity to begin resuming at least some local governance authority in the near future. In May, the board returned to being a seven-member, all-elected body, with the elimination of three mayoral-appointed positions. At that time, a new board majority elected new officers who have articulated a more public willingness to work cooperatively with the State Administrator in the district's recovery. The board has also worked to clarify when individual board members are presenting personal views and when they are representing the board or the district. Relationships among individual board members remain functional, courteous and respectful, and nearly all of the individual members demonstrate impressive knowledge and dedication. Collectively, board members do not feel they have a cohesive sense of what their appropriate oversight role should be, both during this time when the state has authority in the district and in a future time when local governance authority is restored. The board and administration have participated in governance training and are committed to a series of additional governance workshops in the future.

## **Board Meetings**

Conduct at board meetings among board members and among members and staff continues to be generally characterized as respectful. Meetings are run efficiently and many thorough presentations on important student-related matters have been provided by the staff at these meetings. The district also holds board study sessions and public forums as ways to facilitate further discussion of important issues and solicit feedback. Regular board meetings have not been well attended by board members in the past six months, and preparation for these meetings by individual members continues to be uneven. There is a high degree of frustration among most board members who feel that, because of their advisory status, they are not truly involved in the decision-making process and that therefore meetings do not allow them the opportunity to have meaningful input into decisions. Nevertheless, it is critical that board members consistently attend board meetings and workshops and continue to enhance their understanding of, and commitment to, effective governance roles. To enhance the capacity of the board to resume governance authority, the administration should seek to provide adequate information, communication and support to the board.



## 1.1 Communications

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### Professional Standard

Information is communicated to staff at all levels in an effective and timely manner.

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. The district continues to place a priority on internal communications. As mentioned in the March 2004 progress report, the district's communications plan (see Standard 1.3) sets a primary strategic goal to "improve two-way communication among all internal audiences, departments and school sites regarding school district policies, services, strategic plans, program priorities and activities."

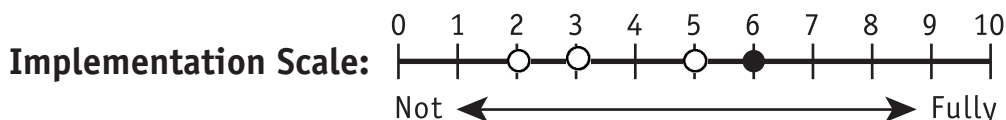
A variety of communications strategies continue to be in place, including the "Friday e-mail" which provides principals, administrators, board members, city council members and reporters with updates on district happenings; "Staff Connections," a monthly newsletter included with staff paychecks; the State Administrator's and individual board members' site visits; and coffee klatches, which provide an opportunity for principals and the State Administrator to interact. Central office and communications staff continue to indicate that the internal system of meetings has enabled the district to more effectively communicate with a unified voice. In addition, a new staff and department directory was developed, electronic communications are becoming much better integrated into the overall communications system, and the district's Web site contains more pertinent department and staff-specific information.

A major emphasis in the past six months has been communicating information about the new results-based budgeting system. A committee of principals receives regular communication about this issue, and a number of staff and communitywide forums and trainings have been held to help educate staff about the system. However, a presentation at a board meeting noted that the site staff has expressed a desire for even more communication about results-based budgeting.

As the district moves forward in implementing the communications plan, it should establish mechanisms for monitoring the effectiveness of its efforts.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	2
September 2003 Rating:	3
March 2004 Rating:	5
September 2004 Self-Rating:	6
September 2004 New Rating:	6



# 1.2 Communications

## Professional Standard

Staff input into school and district operations is encouraged.

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

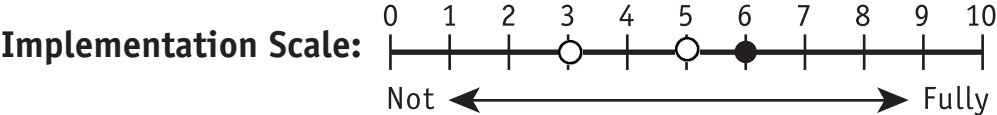
1. The district’s primary strategies for enhancing opportunities for staff input continue to include transmitting site feedback to the senior staff (through the executive directors); eliciting staff input during the State Administrator’s visits to school sites; promoting staff input at board meetings; and using outreach activities such as the coffee klatches to develop positive two-way communications between the district administration and the school site staff. Union representatives also provide input at board meetings, and meet on occasion with the State Administrator. Plans are also underway to develop a system for teleconferencing of staff meetings.

As noted in Standard 1.1, significant communication efforts in the past six months have centered on the implementation of a new results-based budgeting system. A committee of principals provides input and feedback on this topic to the State Administrator. Because of the speed with which the district is moving in implementing this system, the extent to which staff members at all levels feel they have had opportunities to provide input on this matter is not yet clear.

The district should continue to regularly seek feedback from the staff members at all levels to ensure that they are satisfied with the available opportunities to provide input.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	3
September 2003 Rating:	3
March 2004 Rating:	5
September 2004 Self-Rating:	6
September 2004 New Rating:	6



## 1.3 Communications

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### Professional Standard

The district has developed and implemented a comprehensive plan for internal and external communications, including media relations.

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. In February 2004 the district adopted a “Strategic Communication and Marketing Plan 2003-2005.” The plan addresses both internal and external goals, strategies and action steps. The plan includes:
  - Numerous steps to enhance communications with internal audiences
  - Methods to expand community outreach and involvement
  - Strategies to foster a working relationship with local media

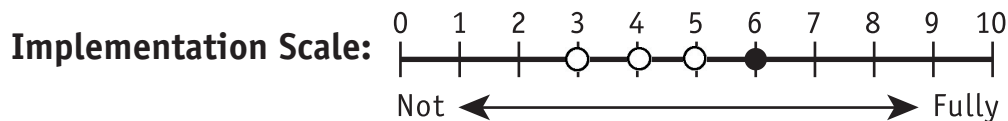
Implementation of strategies for two-way internal communications is discussed in Standard 1.1 and 1.2. Examples of external communication strategies include expansion of community outreach and efforts related to the district’s “Attend and Achieve” campaign, which emphasizes the importance of student attendance. In addition, the district Web site continues to be enhanced with added features and resources. Twice a year the district sends a newsletter, “Transformations,” to every household (produced in four languages). The State Administrator meets with a range of community leaders, and also meets with the “All City Council” — students from throughout the district — to discuss issues that affect them. More recently, the State Administrator has launched a cable television show on KDOL called “Community Connections.” The district is also currently preparing a range of communications materials aimed at providing information to parents in conjunction with the opening of the school year. The communications plan also includes strategies addressing media relations, although many of the plan’s action steps merely describe current, ongoing activities (e.g., issuing press releases, arranging interviews, utilizing the public information office).

Although the plan is now in place, and a number of elements are being effectively implemented, several board members identified a continued need for even more aggressive communication to parents that would help promote the district’s schools, in order to attract and retain students in the public school system. Board members also cite a need for strategies and materials to be more proactively discussed and prepared to help communicate occasional high-profile district actions, such as the closure of schools earlier in 2004. The district’s work in providing information about the district’s shift to results-based budgeting has been a positive example of strategies merging with practical implementation. Both internal and external strategies, including presentations at multiple board meetings, community forums, staff workshops and written materials, have been utilized in an effort to help people understand the new system and prepare for it (although, as noted in Standard 1.1, many staff still desire even more information).

2. The board received and reviewed the updated communications plan, but the district reported no other effort over the past six months to enhance the skills of board members and administrators in working with the news media, the public and community groups. Some board members have expressed a desire to focus their communications activities around critical issues such as the district's budget, perhaps through the development of key messages. Formal or informal educational opportunities designed to facilitate effective implementation of the communications plan are recommended.
  
3. The position of Public Information Officer is being eliminated and a new position of Communications Director with a new reporting structure is being established to enhance the overall district communications and public relations program. In making this change, the district should clearly assign ongoing accountability for implementing the comprehensive plan and updating it as appropriate. A significant emphasis of this new position should be to strengthen the district's relationships with the news media.

**Standard Implemented: Partially**

January 2000 Rating:	3
September 2003 Rating:	4
March 2004 Rating:	5
September 2004 Self-Rating:	6
September 2004 New Rating:	6



## 1.5 Communications

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### Professional Standard

The district has established and adheres to procedures for communications with the media, including identification of district contacts and spokespersons.

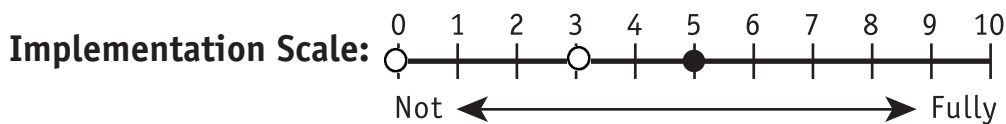
### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. As noted in the March 2004 progress report, the district has distributed guidelines for press calls and a memorandum to principals, department heads and managers regarding the functions of the public information office. The topic has also been addressed in meetings with the Executive Cabinet and principals. The district indicates that staff training is planned on media policy and awareness.

Additionally, the staff indicates that updates made to the district's policy manual in July and August reflect and incorporate elements of the district's communications plan as appropriate. The State Administrator has been clearly identified as the district's primary spokesperson. As a result of the board's reorganization and election of new officers in May 2004 (see Standard 5.4), efforts have been made among the board members to more clearly delineate when individual board members are or are not speaking on behalf of the entire board or representing an official district position.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	0
September 2003 Rating:	0
March 2004 Rating:	3
September 2004 Self-Rating:	5-6
September 2004 New Rating:	5



## 2.4 Parent-Community Relations

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### Professional Standard

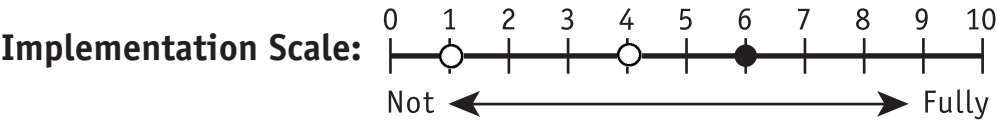
Parents' and community members' complaints are addressed in a fair and timely manner.

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. As noted in the March 2004 progress report, the district has state-compliant complaint procedures.
2. There is no indication that board members attempt to resolve complaints that should otherwise be referred to the administration.
3. The district has indicated a number of activities that are in-progress to more fully implement this standard. For instance, the district plans to conduct ongoing training for administrators on the complaints process to ensure that complaints are resolved consistent with the law. However, there may still be some additional effort required to ensure that all types of complaints receive a response. Interviews with parents indicate that some complaints do not receive responses. While the district's Office of the Ombudsman is generally well regarded by those who are familiar with it, there was a general lack of knowledge among parents about the Office of Ombudsperson, despite greater efforts on the part of the district to notify parents of their rights to complain.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	1
September 2003 Rating:	4
March 2004 Rating:	6
September 2004 Self-Rating:	7
September 2004 New Rating:	6



## 2.7 Parent-Community Relations

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### Professional Standard

Parents and community members are encouraged to be involved in school activities and their children's education.

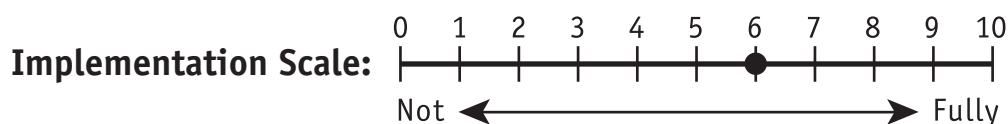
### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. In the past six months, the district has continued to pursue a number of activities to encourage involvement by parents and community members. The district has continued its Family Reading Night activities at school sites throughout the year; the "Principal for a Day" program; a new system of mandatory school registration was being established, which requires parents to visit the school site; and there was an expanded focus group conducted on the issue of truancy as part of the Community Partnership Marketing task force and the "Attend and Achieve" campaign. Parents have also been encouraged to be informed about the results-based budgeting initiative, such as through participation at a summer institute entitled "Understanding results-based budgeting" with information geared specifically towards parents.

However, with the exception of some efforts to recruit more Asian parents for school site councils and committees (see Standard 3.3), the district does not appear to have fully developed or implemented a strategic approach to encourage greater involvement of underrepresented and disenfranchised parents and community members in the schools. Additionally, interviews revealed that at least some parents perceive that decisions made at the site level are sometimes changed by the district office without explanation, a perception that does not help facilitate greater involvement. The district should monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the strategies in its communications plan to enhance involvement of non-English-speaking groups.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	6
September 2003 Rating:	6
March 2004 Rating:	6
September 2004 Self-Rating:	7
September 2004 New Rating:	6



## 3.2 Collaboratives/District Advisory Councils/School Site Councils

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### Professional Standard

Community collaboratives and district and school advisory councils all have identified specific outcome goals that are understood by all members.

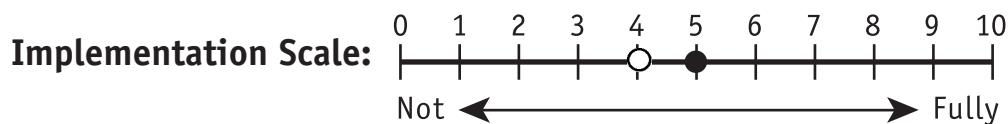
### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. The district has revised the School Site Council (SSC) and English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) handbooks, which clearly delineate the statutory objectives of the site and district councils. In addition, district policy related to the establishment of school site councils was adopted in July (see Standard 3.7). This school year, the district has delegated additional authority to SSCs relative to school safety: SSCs will now also assume the responsibility of making recommendations to ensure a safe school environment.
2. The extent to which parents who serve on the councils/committees understand their goals is inconsistent and depends largely on the leadership and training provided by the principal. The district indicates that it will conduct two phases of training to ensure that all members clearly understand the purpose and goals of the site councils. The first trainings will be in late September/early October to provide an overview of the structure and process for SSCs. Later trainings are under development to provide instruction on effective practices, paying particular attention to the SSC's role in evaluating and revising the site plan.

Additionally, the teachers on special assignment who provide direct support to sites for the operation of their site councils/committees have been cited as particularly effective in supporting the work of these groups.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	4
September 2003 Rating:	4
March 2004 Rating:	4
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	5



### 3.3 Collaboratives/District Advisory Councils/School Site Councils

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#### Professional Standard

The membership of community collaboratives and district and school advisory councils reflects the full cultural, ethnic, gender and socioeconomic diversity of the student population.

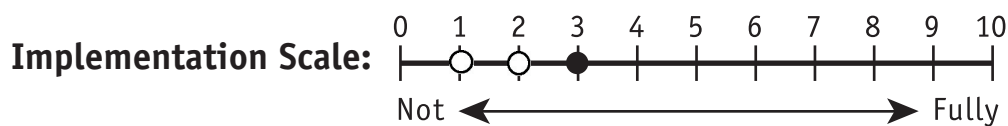
#### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. The district has continued its outreach efforts to encourage more parents of ethnically varied backgrounds to participate on district and site councils, including holding the Title I parent conference at Lincoln school in an attempt to recruit more Asian parents for the various governance bodies in the district. However, the district is still experiencing limited success. Principals continue to play a critical role in this area since many council members cite the principal's recruitment to be the key factor in determining whether they participated on a site council.

While the district provides interpreters for site councils when needed, it is not always clear when an interpreter might be needed. In some instances, non-English-speaking parents have attended site council meetings where no interpreter was available, and it was too late to summon an interpreter. The district might consider having an emergency on-call pool of interpreters to accommodate such situations when possible.

#### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	1
September 2003 Rating:	1
March 2004 Rating:	2
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	3



### 3.5 Collaboratives/District Advisory Councils/School Site Councils

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#### Professional Standard

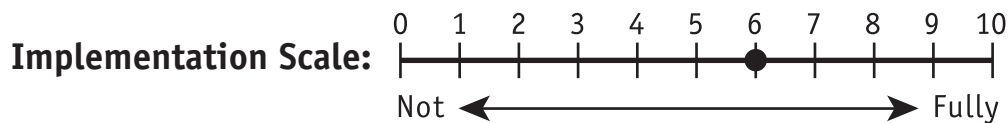
Collaborative and advisory council processes are structured in such a way that there is a clear, meaningful role for all participants with appropriate input from parents, members of the community and agency policymakers.

#### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. The revised SSC and ELAC handbooks provide thorough information to members regarding both the legal context in which the councils/committees operate and the processes to which they should adhere (see Standard 3.2). However, there is still a need for additional training for members that is uniform from site to site. Council/committee organization and success are still largely dependent upon the leadership of the principal.
2. Council/committee members also expressed difficulty in getting parents to attend meetings if they are not actually voting members. Councils/committees would benefit from greater participation and input from a wide variety of parents.

#### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	6
September 2003 Rating:	6
March 2004 Rating:	6
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	6



### 3.6 Collaboratives/District Advisory Councils/School Site Councils

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#### Professional Standard

Community collaboratives and district and school advisory councils effectively fulfill their responsibilities (e.g., research issues, develop recommendations, etc.).

#### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

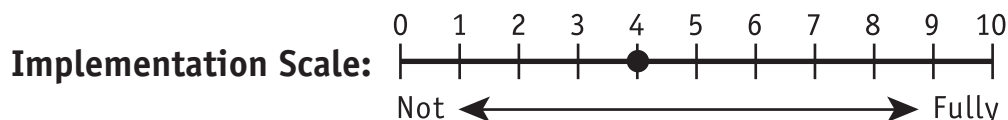
1. As described in Standard 3.2 and 3.5, the district has revised the handbooks for SSCs and ELACs, and these revised handbooks provide a thorough resource guide for site councils/committees.
2. The effectiveness of these groups still varies significantly from site to site. The district is planning trainings for site councils in the fall which should help facilitate a deeper understanding of responsibilities. The district is additionally planning a training for the middle of the school year to provide a deeper exploration of the roles of site councils and how they can be most effective in carrying out those roles. In both cases, the trainings are planned to be held at several different school sites in order to maximize attendance from throughout the district.

District Advisory Committee members do not uniformly report back to their respective site councils/committees of the activities of the DAC. DAC members need to be encouraged to continue the communication loop from the DAC to the sites.

Principals continue to play a critical role in ensuring that site councils/committees understand and fulfill their responsibilities. The teachers on special assignment can also provide support to principals in carrying out their responsibility in this area. Principal training is still needed to ensure uniform commitment to and understanding of the critical role of these groups.

#### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating: 4  
September 2003 Rating: 4  
March 2004 Rating: 4  
September 2004 Self-Rating: None Provided  
September 2004 New Rating: 4



### 3.7 Collaboratives/District Advisory Councils/School Site Councils

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#### Legal Standard

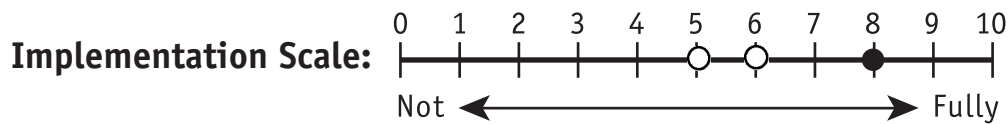
Policies exist for the establishment of school site councils for schools that participate in School-Based Program Coordination. (EC 52852.5)

#### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. In July, the district adopted a revised policy on the establishment of school site councils that reflects current law. The district should use available resources to monitor any future changes in law in order to ensure that the policy remains accurate and meets district needs.

#### Standard Implemented: Fully - Substantially

January 2000 Rating: 6  
September 2003 Rating: 6  
March 2004 Rating: 5  
September 2004 Self-Rating: None Provided  
September 2004 New Rating: 8



## 4.1 Policy

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### Professional Standard

Policies are written, organized and readily available to all members of the staff and to the public.

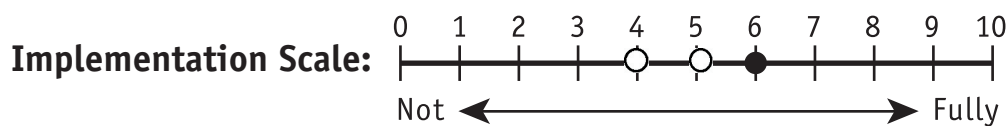
### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. As the district is substantially updating its policies (see Standard 4.2), it is organizing its policy manual using the indexing system provided by the California School Boards Association.
2. Policies are being made available to the staff and the public through the district's Web site as they are adopted. Computer access is available in the district office lobby for those who do not have computers.

In order to increase overall staff awareness about district policies, the district staff plans to schedule workshops to train the staff about how to access policies online. Staff also indicates plans to send bulletins whenever new policies are approved. As the district moves forward in maintaining an updated manual, it should ensure that these distribution procedures are utilized consistently and that all stakeholders have sufficient notice, access and understanding of policies that affect them.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	4
September 2003 Rating:	5
March 2004 Rating:	5
September Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	6



## 4.2 Policy

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### Professional Standard

Policies and administrative regulations are up to date and reflect current law and local needs.

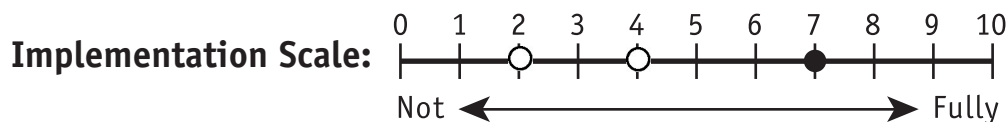
### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. Most district policies are now up to date and reflect current law. As of August 25, 2004, the district will have updated approximately 95 percent of its policy manual. The bulk of these updates were approved at the July and August board meetings after staff conducted a review. The board bylaws are also currently under review by staff and a member of the board.
2. To ensure that the policy manual is kept current, the district should implement a sustainable and regular system of review that involves staff and the board. The district continues to subscribe to external policy services that alert the district to changes in legal requirements and provide sample policy language. The district indicates this service will be utilized as part of this system to ensure periodic updating of the policy manual.

It is recommended that, in the future, the board be provided more opportunities to engage in the policy-setting process, and that board members actively participate. In an effort to make whole-scale updates to the district's manual, a large number of draft policies were brought to the board in large batches. Now that the manual has generally been brought up to date, the district should utilize a process where a more manageable number of policies are brought to the board for review at regular intervals.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	2
September 2003 Rating:	4
March 2004 Rating:	4
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	7



## 4.3 Policy

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### Professional Standard

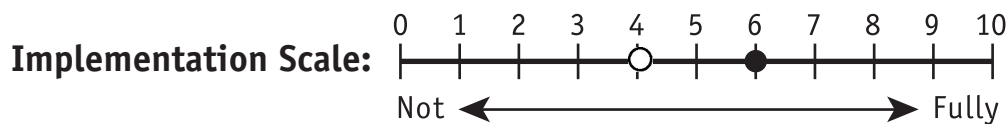
The board has adopted all policies mandated by state and federal law.

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. Of 53 policies identified as being mandated by state or federal law, 47 were found in the district manual at the end of August 2004. The district must continue to update its policies to reflect continuing changes in law.
2. The district has access to policy resources that identify new policy mandates. As it continues to work toward instituting its policy development process, it should place a high priority on monitoring and responding to policy mandates.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	4
September 2003 Rating:	4
March 2004 Rating:	4
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	6



## 4.4 Policy

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### Legal Standard

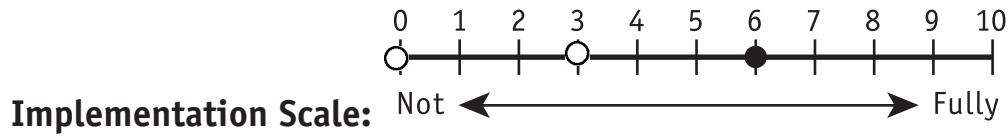
The board annually reviews its policies on intradistrict open enrollment and extracurricular and cocurricular activities. (Education Code 35160.5)

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. The district reviewed these policies and adopted them in July 2004. Pursuant to law, the staff should ensure that these policies are submitted to the board annually for review.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	0
September 2003 Rating:	3
March 2004 Rating:	3
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	6



## 4.5 Policy

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### Professional Standard

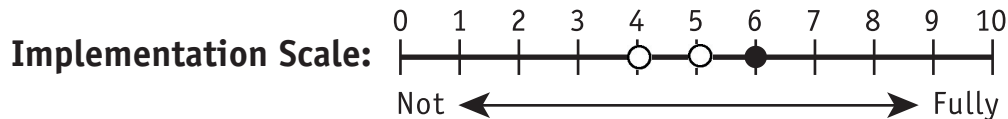
Existing board policies are reviewed regularly with the involvement of the staff.

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. The district staff and records indicate that various levels of central office staff and multiple departments were involved in the thorough review and updating of the policy manual that has occurred in the past six months. The level of involvement by principals and other site staff could not be adequately determined.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	4
September 2003 Rating:	5
March 2004 Rating:	5
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	6



## 5.4 Board Roles/Boardsmanship

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### Professional Standard

Functional working relations are maintained among board members.

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

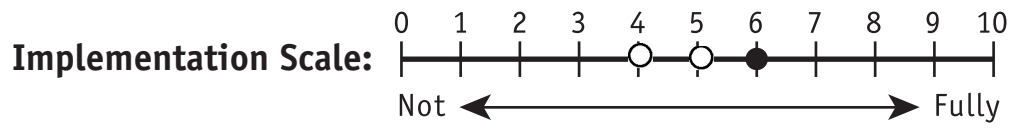
1. Overall, board member relationships continue to be functional, courteous and respectful. Board members are generally regarded by the administration and by each other as highly intelligent and dedicated, and sharing a common interest in serving students.

In May 2004, two significant events occurred that affect board relations: 1) the terms of the mayoral-appointed members sunsetted, resulting in a return to a seven-member board; and 2) the board elected new officers. It is generally perceived that the return to seven members has improved functional relations among board members and led to a greater sense of decorum at meetings. The change in board leadership is also viewed by the majority of board members and the administration as a positive step because the new leadership has demonstrated more public willingness to work cooperatively and collaboratively with the State Administrator in achieving the district's goals. However, a few board members also expressed concerns that collective relations among members have at best remained static during the past six months because member-to-member communication has diminished under the new board leadership.

2. In addition to regular meetings, the board has continued to meet with the State Administrator and other central office staff for quarterly retreats, as well as in study sessions. The focal point of these sessions is often a specific topic such as reviewing the findings from the state controller's audit of the district or learning about the district's new results-based budgeting system. The board and administration are working with outside consultants to develop a specific, ongoing governance training program. One session has been held dealing primarily with the board's role in budget and finance and the district's budget processes, and a follow-up session is scheduled for September. It is generally believed that the board has gained a stronger understanding of the traditional fiscal oversight role, although individual board members' ability to read and understand budget materials is perceived to be uneven across the whole board — and some members believe they need to receive more detailed budget-related information from the administration. Some board members also indicate that they would like to see the district's budget and multiyear fiscal recovery plan become more of a focal point for discussions related to clarifying appropriate board roles and oversight functions, both in the short-term working with the State Administrator and for when local authority is restored.
3. Participation by members of the board in the FCMAT progress-report process continues to constitute one form of regular board assessment in this area. Part of the ongoing governance training program should also include mechanisms for the board and administrator to regularly assess progress in this area.

## Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating: 5  
September 2003 Rating: 4  
March 2004 Rating: 5  
September 2004 Self-Rating: None Provided  
September 2004 New Rating: 6



## 5.5 Board Roles/Boardsmanship

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### Professional Standard

Individual board members respect the decisions of the board majority and do not undermine the board's actions in public.

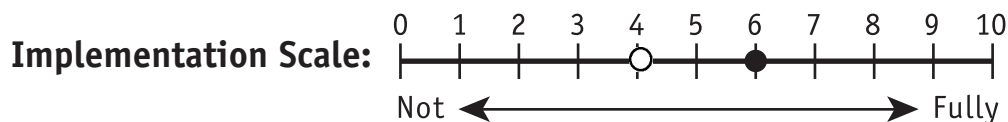
### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. In their current advisory capacity, board members do not typically vote on matters before the board. At public meetings, an unofficial "canvas" of support or concerns is often taken before decisions are approved by the State Administrator. Given this current circumstance, it is difficult to fully assess the commitment of board members to respect majority decisions made at meetings.

In the March 2004 progress report, it was noted that some individual board members' words or actions, especially those perceived by some as antagonistic toward the administration, might be misunderstood by the public as representing official positions of the district or board. This matter appears to have been addressed in the past six months, partly through the board's election of new leadership (individual members have not attempted to publicly undermine the board majority's decision to elect these new leaders) and also through discussions at meetings among the board members. Board members continue to advocate strongly for the rights of all individual members to express their views and opinions; however, there appears to be greater understanding and acceptance by all that, unless articulated by the board president or designated spokesperson, those views reflect individuals and do not represent the board or district.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating	4
September 2003 Rating:	4
March 2004 Rating:	4
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	6



## 5.6 Board Roles/Boardsmanship

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### Professional Standard

Functional working relations are maintained between the board and administrative team.

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. The role of the advisory board is primarily determined by the State Administrator. Overall, the State Administrator appears to have made reasonable (though not comprehensive) efforts to involve the board in its advisory capacity. Regular board meetings continue to be held, as well as special meetings, retreats and working sessions.

However, most board members also express a strong desire to be more meaningfully involved in the governance of the school district. They express frustration over what they perceive to be a lack of utilization, engagement and support of the board by the administration. They believe the district as a whole and the administration would benefit by more consultation with the board, as elected representatives of the community. A few board members also believe engagement would be strengthened by re-establishing certain board committees that the State Administrator previously eliminated due to concerns about the amount of staff time that was needed to support them.

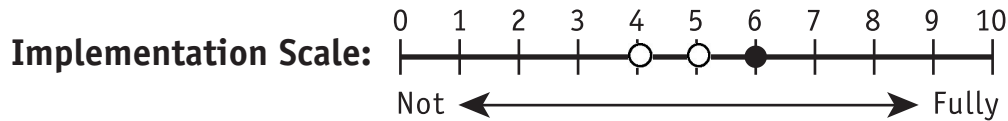
At the same time, individual board members appear to be struggling with trying to carry out their role in an appropriate way during this period when the state has authority over the district. Members sometimes are perceived as sending mixed signals to the administration about the ways in which they (the board) would like to be engaged in district affairs. There is no consensus or agreement among board members themselves about the appropriate ways in which they believe the board as a whole should be engaged in providing oversight while the State Administrator is in place.

2. Some initial discussions of appropriate board-administration communications and processes occurred during past retreats and workshops and were noted in the March 2004 progress report. Since then, the board has continued to meet with the State Administrator in quarterly retreats and study sessions, and the board and administration are working with an outside consultant to strengthen the board's overall governance capabilities. An emphasis of these efforts should be developing agreements and protocols regarding appropriate board-administration roles and relationships.
3. Overall relations between the board and administration appear to have improved slightly in the past six months as a result of new board officers being elected by the board majority. These new officers have communicated their intent to work more collaboratively and cooperatively with the administration. Individual board members also report positive, professional working relations on a personal level with the State Administrator, although individual board members do not appear to be meeting with the State Administrator as frequently as in the previous six months. Board members also note the State Administrator's personal responsiveness and integrity.

Most board members express a desire to receive more frequent and detailed communications from the administration. They believe that as the district moves forward with important educational initiatives such as results-based budgeting and central office reorganization, the administration should devote more time to building understanding and acceptance from the board, so that these reforms can be sustained in the district over time and after local authority is restored. The administration is working with board leadership to come up with an agreed-upon schedule of reports and data that would be provided to the board.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	6
September 2003 Rating:	4
March 2004 Rating:	5
September Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	6



## 5.7 Board Roles/Boardsmanship

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### Professional Standard

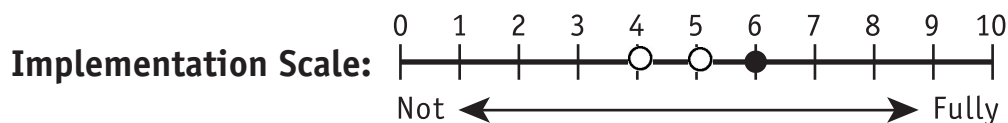
The board publicly demonstrates respect for and support for district and school site staff.

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. Board members continue to demonstrate an awareness of the way in which their statements and demeanor influence staff morale and the public's perception of the district. Board members demonstrate respect for staff making presentations at meetings and frequently praise staff for exceptional work. One of the strategies in the district's communications plan is to "design avenues to reward and recognize staff achievement." Toward this end, a reception honoring retiring employees was held during the summer. The staff also indicates plans to create and implement a formal employee recognition program. Additionally, the administrator and several board members often visit school sites. A few individual teachers and union representatives have expressed their feelings at board meetings that they are not valued enough by the board and administration.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	4
September 2003 Rating:	4
March 2004 Rating:	5
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	6



## 5.9 Board Roles/Boardsmanship

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### Professional Standard

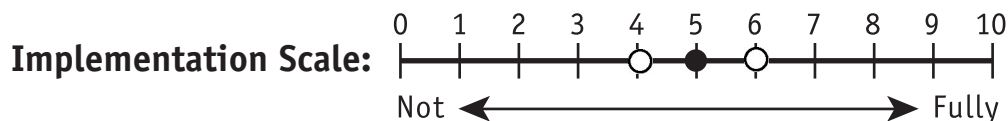
Board members respect confidentiality of information.

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. Since the state assumed authority in the district, less information of a confidential nature, such as information related to negotiations or personnel, has been shared with the board; therefore, it is difficult to fully measure progress on this standard. The board continues to meet in closed session primarily to review student discipline matters and some legal matters such as those related to property transactions. There continues to be a perception that one or more individual members of the board do not fully understand the implications of failing to maintain confidentiality, although this perception was not as strongly felt as in the past.
2. Board members have not received recent training and/or information directly related to confidentiality. The board should receive this training, as well as continue to consult legal counsel as needed with questions regarding the appropriate disclosure of information.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	6
September 2003 Rating:	4
March 2004 Rating:	4
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	5



## 5.11 Board Roles/Boardsmanship

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### Professional Standard

No individual board member attempts to exercise any administrative responsibility.

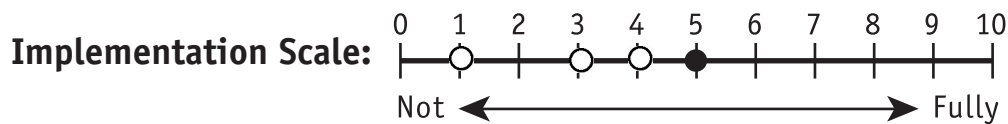
### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. The division of board and staff roles has been clearly articulated by the State Administrator and generally adhered to by the board. In general, board members work through the State Administrator or his designee instead of attempting to directly advise staff. With the exception of some minor instances, there were few indications that individual board members have attempted to exercise administrative responsibilities in the past six months.

As stated in the September 2003 report, it is still recommended that the district agree on and adhere to specific board policies or protocols for handling matters such as solicitations from vendors. Also, as mentioned in Standard 5.4, individual members have different perspectives about the board's appropriate oversight role, both under a State Administrator and when local authority is restored. Specific board discussions or workshops aimed at reaching a common agreement on appropriate board roles are recommended.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	1
September 2003 Rating:	3
March 2004 Rating:	4
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	5



## 5.13 Board Roles/Boardsmanship

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### Professional Standard

The board acts for the community and in the interests of all students in the district.

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

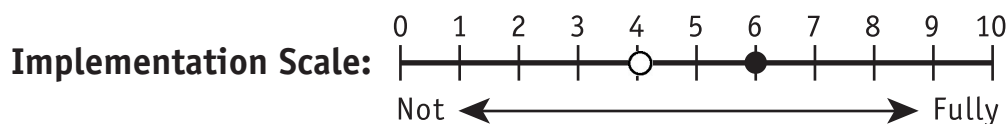
1. While there is some frustration among board members that the board currently lacks a collective vision while under the state's authority, many individual board members continue to conduct extensive outreach within their trustee areas and in the community at large. Several members hold regular community meetings, frequently visit sites and attend school and district events. There continue to be some perceptions that "adult issues" and politics too often interfere with board members' abilities to focus on the best interests of students, but these perceptions were not nearly as pronounced as they were a year ago. Interviews with board members and observations of board meetings reveal that each individual demonstrates a sincere desire for the district to focus on serving the needs of all students.

As mentioned in the March 2004 progress report, the board consists of individuals who bring broad individual experience and expertise, and who reflect the district's cultural and ethnic diversity. In March 2004, three out of four board members whose seats were up sought re-election and won another term without being challenged. (One member did not seek re-election and the new member will officially be seated in December.) While many interpretations for the election results and the lack of challengers have been offered, it must be recognized that, at least within their trustee areas, there continues to be a measure of public support for the individuals serving on the board.

2. The majority of the board appears to be actively engaged in building positive support for the district and its programs. The board has had opportunities to discuss the district's strategic plan and provide input at meetings, although much of this work has been driven by the administration and staff. In general, board members express support for the overall direction the district is taking in promoting student achievement, such as with the shift to results-based budgeting and updating the district's equity plan. To the extent board members have concerns, these concerns often have more to do with the process for decision making rather than the decisions themselves. In some respects, the State Administrator has been able to implement certain policies that had long been priorities of the board and community.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	4
September 2003 Rating:	4
March 2004 Rating:	4
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	6



## 6.3 Board Meetings

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### Professional Standard

Board members are prepared for board meetings by becoming familiar with the agenda and support materials prior to the meeting.

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. Attendance at board meetings has not been regular or consistent for all members. Many meetings begin without a quorum, as members are not prompt in showing up for meetings. Some members attribute this lack of participation to frustration about their perceived lack of meaningful engagement by the administration (see Standard 5.6). Regular attendance by members is essential toward strengthening communication between the board and administration.

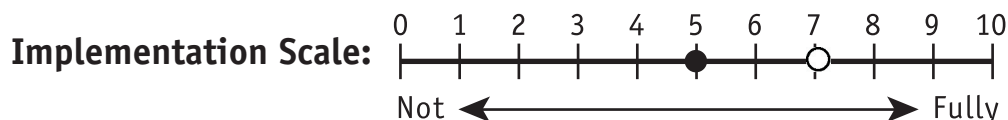
The level of preparation continues to vary among board members. Observations of meetings and interviews with administrators indicate that at least some individual members do not appear to consistently review board materials in advance of meetings. Members also do not avail themselves of opportunities to make inquiries of staff prior to meetings.

However, individual members continue to invest a significant amount of time conducting board-related work, even though the board is currently advisory in nature and members receive no compensation for their time. In addition to community outreach, some participate in district projects such as updating the board bylaws and making recommendations for central office reorganization, among others.

2. Board members continue to feel that the amount and scope of material provided to them in advance of meetings vary. Several board members have expressed a desire for materials to be presented within a broader fiscal context. For example, when one important district plan was brought to the board for review and input, the presentation did not include any projected costs or expected outcomes attached to each of the goals and strategies in the plan. As noted in Standard 5.6, the administration and board are working on an agreed-upon calendar for providing certain reports, information and data.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	7
September 2003 Rating:	5
March 2004 Rating:	5
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	5



## 6.4 Board Meetings

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### Professional Standard

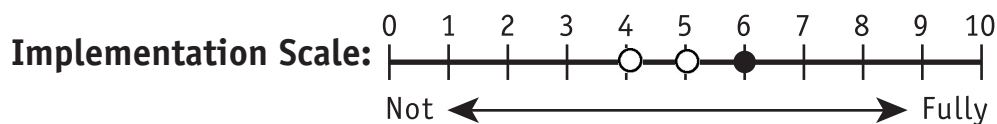
Board meetings are conducted in a businesslike manner while allowing opportunity for full discussion.

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

1. The district has a set of rules for meeting conduct. Updates to the board bylaws are under review, but have not been adopted.
2. Conduct at meetings among board members and among members and staff appears respectful. The administration generally feels that meetings are functioning efficiently and achieving their purpose. On the other hand, there is a high degree of frustration among board members who perceive that key decisions are made in advance of meetings and that their advice at meetings is not truly sought or considered. Observations of board meetings reveal that members do have opportunities to comment on agenda items and to ask questions. In fact, board members typically raise good questions that demonstrate an awareness of their focus on fiscal accountability and student achievement. To facilitate maximum opportunities for board and public engagement, the administration should consider ensuring that major topics are placed on one meeting agenda for presentation and discussion, and a subsequent agenda for action unless there is an urgency. In that case, the need for expedited action should be reasonably explained.
3. The new board president and vice president have not yet participated in formal training or education in running effective board meetings, though it is generally acknowledged that meetings are running well. In this district, a significant amount of responsibility for building cohesiveness among the board is placed on the board leaders; training or skill-building in this area might also be considered.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	6
September 2003 Rating:	4
March 2004 Rating:	5
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	6



## 6.8 Board Meetings

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This standard has been added since the 2000 report.

### Professional Standard

Board meetings focus on matters related to student achievement.

### Progress on Implementing the Recommendations of the Recovery Plan

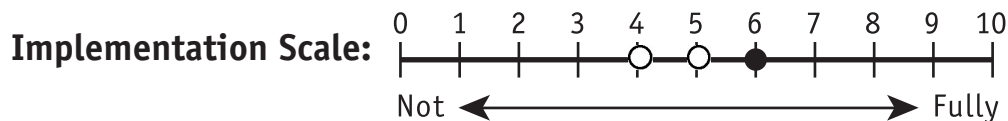
1. Board meetings appear to focus on matters related to student achievement. Observations of meetings and a review of agendas indicate a number of comprehensive staff presentations that relate to achievement, such as those on results-based budgeting, staff development, and the district's equity plan (which included important data on students disaggregated by subpopulations and English learners), among others. As the district continues to move forward with major strategic shifts in its educational delivery system, it is essential that board meetings continue to provide opportunities for public presentation and discussion about these items.

Regular board meetings are not utilized for extensive policy discussions among board members; for these types of discussions, the board has held study sessions and public forums on certain high-profile issues like the recovery plan, the state controller's audit findings and results-based budgeting. The district should continue to hold public forums and study sessions on critical issues, when possible.

2. The State Administrator continues to play a much more direct and significant role in the agenda-setting and agenda-management processes, and there appears to be strong alignment between meeting topics and the priorities of the district. As noted in the March 2004 progress report, the board does not engage in discussions about topics such as contract approvals, which occasionally took up considerable time at meetings in the past.

### Standard Implemented: Partially

January 2000 Rating:	Not Assessed
September 2003 Rating:	4
March 2004 Rating:	5
September 2004 Self-Rating:	None Provided
September 2004 New Rating:	6





## **Table of Standards for Community Relations/Governance**



<b>Standard to be addressed</b>		Jan. 2000 rating	Sept. 2003 rating	March 2004 rating	Sept. 2004 rating
1.1	<b>Information is communicated to staff at all levels in an effective and timely manner. (Reworded since the 2000 report)</b>	2	3	5	6
1.2	<b>Staff input into school and district operations is encouraged.</b>	3	3	5	6
1.3	<b>The district has developed and implemented a comprehensive plan for internal and external communications, including media relations. (Reworded since the 2000 report)</b>	3	4	5	6
1.4	News releases are prepared and made available simultaneously to all appropriate news media.	5	7	NR	NR
1.5	<b>The district has established and adheres to procedures for communications with the media, including identification of district contacts and spokespersons. (Reworded since the 2000 report)</b>	0	0	3	5
1.6	Board spokespersons are skilled at public speaking and communication and are knowledgeable about district programs and issues.	2	2	NR	NR
2.1	Annual parental notice of rights and responsibilities is provided at the beginning of the school year. This notice is provided in English and in languages other than English when 15 percent or more speak another language. (EC 48980)	9	9	NR	NR
2.2	A school accountability report card is issued annually for each school site. (EC 35256)	5	7	NR	NR
2.3	The district has developed and annually disseminated uniform complaint procedures. (California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 4621) (Reworded since the 2000 report)	9	9	NR	NR
2.4	<b>Parents' and community members' complaints are addressed in a fair and timely manner.</b>	1	4	6	6
2.5	Board members refer informal public concerns to the appropriate staff for attention and response.	4	4	NR	NR
2.6	(Renumbered as Standard 5.14)				NR
2.7	<b>Parents and community members are encouraged to be involved in school activities and their children's education. (Reworded since the 2000 report)</b>	6	6	6	6
2.8	The district has established procedures for visitor registration and posts registration requirements at each school entrance. (PC 627.2, 627.6) (Reworded since the 2000 report)	4	4	NR	NR
2.9	Board members are actively involved in building community relations.	4	5	NR	NR

The identified subset of standards appears in bold print. Narratives for these standards are provided in this report.  
NR Indicates standard not reviewed

<b>Standard to be addressed</b>		Jan. 2000 rating	Sept. 2003 rating	March 2004 rating	Sept. 2004 rating
3.1	The board and Superintendent support partnerships and collaborations with community groups, local agencies and businesses. (Reworded since the 2000 report)	5	6	NR	NR
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Community collaboratives and district and school advisory councils all have identified specific outcome goals that are understood by all members.</b>	4	4	4	5
<b>3.3</b>	<b>The membership of community collaboratives and district and school advisory councils reflects the full cultural, ethnic, gender and socioeconomic diversity of the student population.</b>	1	1	2	3
3.4	The district encourages and provides the necessary training for collaborative and advisory council members to understand the basic administrative structure, program processes and goals of all district partners.	4	3	NR	NR
<b>3.5</b>	<b>Collaborative and advisory council processes are structured in such a way that there is a clear, meaningful role for all participants with appropriate input from parents, members of the community and agency policymakers.</b>	6	6	6	6
<b>3.6</b>	<b>Community collaboratives and district and school advisory councils effectively fulfill their responsibilities (e.g., research issues, develop recommendations, etc.). (Reworded since the 2000 report)</b>	4	4	4	4
<b>3.7</b>	<b>Policies exist for the establishment of school site councils for schools that participate in School-Based Program Coordination. (EC 52852.5) (Reworded since the 2000 report)</b>	6	6	5	8
3.8	The school site council develops a Single Plan for Student Achievement at each school applying for categorical programs through the consolidated application. (EC 64001) (Reworded since the 2000 report)	9	9	NR	NR
3.9	School plans are comprehensive and have sufficient content to meet the statutory requirements. (EC 64001)	9	9	NR	NR
3.10	The school site council annually reviews the school plan and the board annually approves or disapproves all site councils' plans. (EC 64001)	4	4	NR	NR
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Policies are written, organized and readily available to all members of the staff and to the public.</b>	4	5	5	6
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Policies and administrative regulations are up to date and reflect current law and local needs.</b>	2	4	4	7
<b>4.3</b>	<b>The board has adopted all policies mandated by state and federal law.</b>	4	4	4	6
<b>4.4</b>	<b>The board annually reviews its policies on intradistrict open enrollment and extracurricular and cocurricular activities. (EC 35160.5)</b>	0	3	3	6
<b>4.5</b>	<b>Existing board policies are reviewed regularly with the involvement of the staff.</b>	4	5	5	6

The identified subset of standards appears in bold print. Narratives for these standards are provided in this report.  
NR Indicates standard not reviewed

<b>Standard to be addressed</b>		Jan. 2000 rating	Sept. 2003 rating	March 2004 rating	Sept. 2004 rating
4.6	The district has established a system of securing citizen input in policy development and district operation.	2	3	NR	NR
4.7	The board supports and follows its own policies once they are adopted.	1	3	NR	NR
5.1	Each board member meets the eligibility requirements of being a board member. (EC 35107)	10	10	NR	NR
5.2	Board members participate in orientation sessions, workshops, conventions and special meetings sponsored by board associations.	4	4	NR	NR
5.3	Pertinent literature, statutes, legal counsel and recognized authorities are available to and utilized by the board to understand duties, functions, authority and responsibilities of members.	6	6	NR	NR
<b>5.4</b>	<b>Functional working relations are maintained among board members.</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5.5</b>	<b>Individual board members respect the decisions of the board majority and do not undermine the board's actions in public. (Reworded since the 2000 report)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5.6</b>	<b>Functional working relations are maintained between the board and administrative team.</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5.7</b>	<b>The board publicly demonstrates respect for and support for district and school site staff.</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
5.8	The board demonstrates respect for public input at meetings and public hearings.	4	5	NR	NR
<b>5.9</b>	<b>Board members respect confidentiality of information. (Reworded since the 2000 report)</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
5.10	The board does not involve itself in operational issues that are the responsibility of the superintendent and staff. (Reworded since the 2000 report)	6	6	NR	NR
<b>5.11</b>	<b>No individual board member attempts to exercise any administrative responsibility.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
5.12	The board evaluates the performance of the superintendent regularly on criteria which will encourage student achievement.	8	8	NR	NR
<b>5.13</b>	<b>The board acts for the community and in the interests of all students in the district.</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>
5.14	The district has identified the needs of the students, staff and educational community through a needs assessment process. (Previously numbered 2.6)	5	5	NR	NR
6.1	An adopted calendar of regular meetings exists and is published specifying the time, place and date of each meeting. (EC 35140)	10	10	NR	NR

The identified subset of standards appears in bold print. Narratives for these standards are provided in this report.  
NR Indicates standard not reviewed

<b>Standard to be addressed</b>		Jan. 2000 rating	Sept. 2003 rating	March 2004 rating	Sept. 2004 rating
6.2	The board agenda is made available to the public in the manner and under the timelines prescribed by law. (EC 54954.1, 54954.2) (Reworded since the 2000 report)	9	10	NR	NR
6.3	<b>Board members are prepared for board meetings by becoming familiar with the agenda and support materials prior to the meeting.</b>	7	5	5	5
6.4	<b>Board meetings are conducted in a business-like manner while allowing opportunity for full discussion. (Reworded since the 2000 report)</b>	6	4	5	6
6.5	Open and closed sessions are conducted according to the Ralph M. Brown Act. (GC 54950 et seq.)	9	9	NR	NR
6.6	The board has adopted bylaws for the placement of items on the board agenda by members of the public.	10	10	NR	NR
6.7	Members of the public have an opportunity to address the board before or during the board's consideration of each item of business to be discussed at regular or special meetings, and to bring before the board matters that are not on the agenda. (EC 35145.5)	9	10	NR	NR
6.8	<b>Board meetings focus on matters related to student achievement.</b> (Added since the 2000 report)	New	4	5	6

The identified subset of standards appears in bold print. Narratives for these standards are provided in this report.  
NR Indicates standard not reviewed