



Information Briefing

IOWA SCHOOL BOARDS FOUNDATION

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The Role of the School Board for Improving Student Achievement

The board makes extensive use of data as they:

1. Set clear expectations

- a. Get clear about the greatest student learning needs – the most important content area to improve first
- b. Believe more is possible and communicate high expectations
- c. Establish a clear and narrow focus for improvement – clarify improvement goals and specific targets
- d. Focus on student learning and teaching (Improving teaching as the key strategy for improving learning)

2. Create conditions for success

- a. Demonstrate commitment to the improvement focus through board actions and decisions
- b. Support quality professional development
- c. Stay the course
- d. Support & connect with districtwide leadership
- e. Develop and nurture the board/superintendent team leadership
- f. Ensure all parts of the system are aligned around the learning needs of students (curriculum, instruction, assessment; goals, actions, resource allocation; etc.).

3. Hold the system accountable to the expectations

- a. Use data extensively
- b. Determine what you will accept as evidence of progress/success
- c. Monitor progress regularly
- d. Apply pressure for accountability

4. Build public will

- a. Create awareness of the need
- b. Create urgency around the moral purpose of improvement
- c. Instill hope that it's possible to change
- d. Connect with the community

5. Learn together as a board team

- a. Establish board learning time
- b. Learn together
- c. Talk to each other – extensive board conversations
- d. Develop a willingness and readiness to lead and allow others to lead
- e. Build commitment to the improvement focus through shared information and discussion
- f. Engage in deliberative policy development – lead through board policies