226 - POLICY
APPENDIX A
Board Self-Evaluation

	EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOL BOARDS	Score 0 – 10	Evidence
1.	**Effective school boards commit to a vision of high expectations for student achievement and quality instruction and define clear goals toward that vision.** Effective boards make sure these goals remain the district's top priorities and that nothing else detracts from them. In contrast, low-achieving boards are only vaguely aware of school improvement initiatives.		
2.	**Effective school boards have strong shared beliefs and values about what is possible for students and their ability to learn, and of the system and its ability to teach all children at high levels.** In high-achieving districts, poverty, lack of parental involvement and other factors are described as challenges to be overcome, not as excuses. Board members expect to see improvements in student achievement quickly as a result of initiatives. In low-achieving districts, board members frequently refer to external pressures as the main reasons for lack of student success.		
3.	**Effective school boards are accountability driven, spending less time on operational issues and more time focused on policies to improve student achievement.** High-performing boards focus on establishing a vision supported by policies that target student achievement. Poor governance is characterized by factors such as micro-management by the board.		
4.	**Effective school boards have a collaborative relationship with staff and the community and establish a strong communications structure to inform and engage both internal and external stakeholders in setting and achieving district goals.** In high-achieving districts, school board members are able to provide specific examples of how they connect and listen to the community, and school board members receive information from many different sources, including the superintendent, curriculum director, principals and teachers.		
5.	**Effective school boards are data savvy: they embrace and monitor data, even when the information is negative, and use it to drive continuous improvement.** Board members in high-achieving districts identify specific student needs through data, and justifiy decisions based on that data. Board members regularly seek such data and are not shy about discussing it, even if it is negative. By comparison, board members in low-achieving districts tend to greet data with a blaming perspective, describing leaders, teachers, students and families as major causes for low performance. In these districts, board members frequently discuss their decisions through anecdotes and personal experiences rather than by citing data.		
6.	**Effective school boards align and sustain resources, such as professional development, to meet district goals. Effective boards see a responsibility to maintain high standards even in the midst of budget challenges.** Successful boards support extensive professional development programs for administrators and teachers, even during times of fiscal restraint. In low-achieving districts, board members say teachers make their own decisions on staff development based on perceived needs in the classroom.		
7.	**Effective school boards lead as a united team with the superintendent, each from their respective roles, with strong collaboration and mutual trust.** In successful districts, boards define an initial vision for the district and seek a superintendent who matches this vision. In contrast, in stagnant districts, boards are slow to define a vision and often recruit a superintendent with their own ideas and platform, leaving the board and superintendent to not be in alignment.		
8.	**Effective school boards take part in team development and training, sometimes with their superintendents, to build shared knowledge, values and commitments for their improvement efforts.** High-achieving districts have formal, deliberate training for new board members. They also often gather to discuss specific topics. Low-achieving districts have board members say they do not learn together except when the superintendent or other staff members make presentations of data.		
	GRAND TOTAL Add the numbers in the column to the right.		