



ALL REVISIONS
ARE IN BOLD

Mission Statement (Revised)

The mission of the Georgia School Boards Association is to ensure excellence in the governance of local school systems by providing leadership, advocacy and services, and by representing the collective resolve of Georgia's 180 **elected** boards of education.

Beliefs (Revised)

...GSBA's fundamental convictions, values and character.

We believe that...

- Every human life has value.
- The family is the most important influence in the development of a person.
- Society has a duty to care for all children.
- An educated population is fundamental to the success of our society.
- Effective public education is the cornerstone of an educated population.
- Collaborative efforts of all stakeholders are **essential** for successful public education.

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STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

In September 2002, a diverse group of school board members, superintendents, legislators and business people from every part of the state spent 1,000 hours developing GSBA's strategic plan. The GSBA Board of Directors formally adopted the plan in February 2003. On the following pages, you will find a report on the progress made during year three of the plan and a report on the work of the Strategic Planning Team that was reconvened in 2006 to review the plan.

Some strategic plans stay on a shelf gathering dust. GSBA's strategic plan is never idle. In every area of operation, the GSBA strategic plan is in force.

"Every staff member knows how serious we are about our mission," says GSBA Executive Director Sis Henry. "With our strategic plan firmly in place, we operate with our mission and strategies in mind. In addition, our budget is tied to it and each staff member has his or her job accountability tied to the plan." Henry affirmed that evaluations are also tied to the job accountabilities.

Having such high stakes for your strategic plan makes it imperative that it be reviewed periodically by an outside team. In January 2006, a team of school board members, superintendents, business leaders and legislators came together to review the progress that GSBA has made on the original plan and decide whether any new strategies or revisions to the plan were needed to move the association forward.

Outside facilitator Odell Stuckey led the group — as he did in 2002 — through a number of discussions about GSBA and the "state of the plan." The following sections report on those discussions and the resulting actions of the Strategic Planning Team.

The Mission Statement - Participants felt the mission statement that GSBA had been operating under was still a good one and that it gave a good "picture" of what the association is about. However, participants also felt strongly that by adding the word "elected" towards the end of the statement it would better define GSBA's membership. (See the revised mission statement in the left hand column.)

Belief Statements - These are statements of GSBA's fundamental convictions, values and character.

First, the team wanted to put the statements in order of importance. Then they came to consensus on adding and revising a few statement to strengthen the language. Finally, they added the belief statement: Trust is vital for effective leadership. (All of these revisions appear in the left and right hand columns.)

Major Areas of Focus - The Strategic Planning Team did not think it was necessary to add another strategy to the plan at this time. The two strategies already contained in the plan, which tell how GSBA will deploy resources to achieve the association's objectives are:

Strategy I

• We will develop processes and programs to help GSBA and local school boards to continuously improve and to use data effectively.

Strategy II

• We will improve our effectiveness in advocacy by building unity with all stakeholders and by developing strong grassroots efforts.

However, the Planning Team did feel that the GSBA staff needed to find ways to increase efforts under Strategy I to market programs and services and communicate with the membership and others. Under Strategy II, the Team felt more needed to be done in the area of advocacy to "frame complicated messages" and communicate them more widely across the state. The Team recognized the constraints of the staff in terms of staff size and time, however, and commended the work that has been done.

On the next pages, find update reports on all that has been accomplished during 2005-2006. **GSBA**

Results achieved under each key result are listed below. These achievements represent progress made in 2005-2006 and are in addition to ones that GSBA has traditionally provided its membership.

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Key Results for Strategy I:

- Increase participation in GSBA's programs and services.
- Develop processes to assist boards in the effective evaluation of the board and superintendent.
- Develop processes and/or programs to assist boards in identifying and using data to make decisions.
- Increase the number of boards and superintendents operating as effective "leadership teams."
- Develop programs to help boards and superintendents use technology to increase board effectiveness.
- Identify and make available opportunities to share "best practices."

Results achieved on Strategy I in 2005-2006 includes...

- Trained a cadre of veteran school board members that will go to boards upon request and provide two-and-a-half-hour sessions on basic boardmanship. Also greatly increased the number of retreats offered to boards with the help of a grant from the Georgia Department of Education.
- Developed, piloted and have ready for use a new system of board/superintendent self-assessment. The new program, the Governance Accountability Self-Assessment Process, aligns GSBA's Standards for Local Boards of Education with a long-range planning process to assist the local leadership team with planning, accountability, assessment and evaluation. All of the information on this program is available on the GSBA website from the homepage under the "Services" menu.
- GSBA ePolicy was upgraded and now includes 104 Georgia school systems and organizations. The Mississippi School Boards Association has also begun using GSBA ePolicy with its members.
- GSBA has also rolled out a new version of GSBA eBoard. There are currently 34 school boards plus the Georgia Board of Education; the Colorado Board of Education; the Vestavia Hills City Board of Education, Alabama; the Georgia Department of Natural Resources; Bright From Start-GA DECAL; among others using the paperless meeting solution.
- Rolled out the Online Newsroom, which provides daily news clips of news from around the state, information about GSBA, education and a special section on "Issues and Answers." There is a "Newsroom" button on the homepage of the GSBA website.
- Assisted 15 boards with eSolutions grants provided by the Georgia Department of Education and Georgia Power. These grants allowed GSBA to set up and train these boards with GSBA eBoard, GSBA ePolicy and/or GSBA eLaw. Some of the boards got one or a combination of the services for free with the grant. Hardware was not included.
- GSBA staff held numerous webinars on the use of GSBA eSolutions products.
- GSBA support staff job accountabilities were complete and tied to the strategic plan.
- Developed the soon-to-be delivered boardmanship manual - the revised version of GSBA's "What School Board Members Must Know." Focus groups were held in December 2005 with school board members and an outline was developed. From that, writers developed each chapter. An online version is also going to be unveiled soon. The project was made possible by a grant from the Georgia Department of Education.
- GSBA's new building, which included refurbishing the old building and an addition, is complete.
- Held renewal costs for Risk Management programs below market and announced a large deductible program.
- Developed a number of new safety initiatives under the GSBA Risk Management program.
- Expanded risk management services to self-insured school districts.
- Conducted a study circles program with Putnam County Schools on their facilities and growth plan, with an added component that allows for a future conversation on student achievement and community support. Also worked with two other districts on preliminary plans for community conversations on diversity and student achievement.

- The sharing of ideas and perspectives promotes collective wisdom.
- **Trust is vital for effective leadership.**
- In unity there is strength.
- Local school boards are in **the most strategic leadership** position to improve public education.

Objective (No Change)

...the desired and measurable outcome for the association.

- To have all local school boards achieve and maintain the GSBA Standards for Local Boards of Education.

Parameters

(No Change)

- ...guiding principles.
- We will always encourage high academic achievement.
- We will always strive to serve the needs of local boards.



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What's on the Horizon...

- Convening of a Task Force to study the Local Control of Education. Members of the task force will include school board members, superintendents, state legislators, business and community leaders.
- Regional legislative update meetings in the fall. These meetings will provide information useful for the November elections.
- A Q&A publication on all of the candidates for major statewide offices. GSBA and other education associations will work together and send candidates a list of questions to answer about their views on education and then publish their answers. These brochures will be distributed to all school board members, superintendents and members of the other associations that participate.
- Distribute a new GSBA services brochure that outlines all of the programs and services of the association. One comment made often by the Strategic Planning Team was that GSBA needs to do a better job of letting others know about all that it does.
- Distribute the new boardsmanship manual and unveil the online version - GSBA eBoardsmanship.

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Key Results for Strategy II:

- Establish a network of state-wide, regional, and local groups and associations interested in public education for the purpose of discussing and seeking consensus on educational issues.
- Create and distribute information relating to education reform and other initiatives.
- Design and implement ways to solicit opinions of members and others on educational issues.
- Review procedures for establishing positions GSBA will advocate.
- Enhance the ability of school board members to advocate for public education and to increase stakeholder support.
- Maintain and expand the current GSBA database to ensure the inclusion of relevant information on local, state and federal decision-makers, special interest groups, stakeholder groups and others.
- Develop, implement and evaluate model strategies that may be used in advocating for public education initiatives.

Results achieved on Strategy II in 2005-2006 includes...

- Convened a group of key individuals to discuss educational issues (group included representatives from the Governor's Office, legislators, board members, superintendents and other educational associations).
- Added staff to the GSBA's legislative team in 2006.
- Moved the Advocacy Workshop (former Legislative Workshop) to October from December to allow greater time for use of the information before the General Assembly begins.
- Upgraded Capitol Watch Online.
- Used surveys with school board members and superintendents to gain valuable feedback on key legislative issues such as the school calendar issue.
- Included advocacy information on the online newsroom site and sought to build relationships with the news media.
- Utilized technology at the Capitol in order to better report action during the General Assembly. **GSBA**

