

Strategic Plan: Year Two 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 two of the plan. But, first, let's revisit the plan...

Mission Statement

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 boards of education.

Beliefs

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

We believe that...

- An educated population is fundamental to the success of our society.
- Society has a duty to care for all children.
- Every human life has value.
- The family is the most important influence in the development of a person.
- Effective public education is the cornerstone of an educated population.
- In unity there is strength.
- The sharing of ideas leads to collective wisdom.
- Collaborative efforts of all stakeholders are necessary for successful public education.
- Local school boards are in a strategic position to improve public education.

Objective

...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

...guiding principles.

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

Strategies

...tell how GSBA will deploy resources to achieve the association's objectives.

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.

Key Results are on the next page...

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Results achieved under each key result are listed below. These achievements are new initiatives and are in addition to ones that GSBA has traditionally provided its membership.

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 in year one...

- Moved forward with ad hoc committee to align GSBA Standards for Local Boards of Education with the board and superintendent self-assessment instruments. Instrument is in the pilot stage.
- Our eSolutions program has seen tremendous growth. There are now 103 systems using eLaw - the online law guide, 85 subscribers to ePolicy - the online Policy service, and 22 subscribers to eBoard - the web-based board meeting solution.
- Selected architects and other consultants/contractors. Finalized budget and facility plan for new GSBA headquarters. Broke ground on the new building.
- Had a school board member from every school board except one attend a GSBA workshop or training activity. Continued offering Saturday sessions in more areas of the state. Increased assessibility of training opportunities.
- Continued to build relationships with other organizations such as Georgia Power, Metro Atlanta Chamber and RESAs to enhance training opportunities.
- Sought out and was awarded three major grants to enhance GSBA's training initiatives.
- Expanded ePolicy service to include organizations outside of Georgia.
- Promoted efficient use of eLaw to all subscribers through e-mail and flyers.
- Developed version 3.0 of GSBA eBoard.
- Used webinars for training and marketing of services.
- Awarded a grant from Georgia Power to deploy eSolutions to a few districts meeting key criteria.
- Expanded team of consultants to conduct superintendent searches.
- Risk Management Fund costs were held below market. New members have joined both the Workers' Compensation Fund and the Risk Management Fund. A large deductible program was also introduced. A number of staff positions were added in the risk management area.
- Published "Ethics for School Board Members" based in part on focus group results with school board members.
- Created a school finance communications kit for school board members and others to use in communicating school finance information to school and community groups.
- Worked with the Study Circles Resource Center to bring their model of study circles to Georgia school systems. Completed one initiative in a Georgia district this spring.
- Designed and rolled out a new website.

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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.
- Develop, implement and evaluate model strategies that may be used in advocating for public education initiatives.

Results achieved in year two...

- Convened Ad Hoc Group to study Adequacy in Funding.
- Expanded participation in Legislator Site Visits and Day at the Capitol.
- Increased collaboration with Georgia School Superintendents Association by working on initiatives such as the Task Force to study standards, the school finance communications kit, Day at the Capitol, Legislator Site Visits and the Superintendents Advisory Committee.
- Developed a cadre of board members to testify at the Capitol.
- Increased response on Alerts and Calls to Action.
- Refined the Capitol Watch Online website to link bills to legislative positions.

How are we doing with our strategic objective...

In 2003, we had 73 boards that had completed our program of Standards. By the end of July, there were 90. In addition, we now have 19 boards that have gone to the next level and achieved the Board of Distinction designation. There were only six Boards of Distinction in 2003.

What's on the horizon...

In January 2006, a Strategic Planning Retreat will be convened with some of the original team members and a few new members to the group. The team will review the plan with an eye toward the progress that has been made and will make suggestions for areas that need refinements. Also on the horizon for 2006 is the completion of the new addition to the current building at 5120 Sugarloaf Parkway in Lawrenceville.