



# Policy

## A New Way of Doing Business

# Governance

*The Austin School District's Board of Trustees made an important governance change when it adopted the Policy Governance model. Trustees completed the transition to Policy Governance when they approved the seven Results Policies which articulate what our Board and community believe that students should know and be able to perform. Governance Policies are not etched in stone, and this is particularly true of Results Policies. By adopting these Results Policies, the Board is embarking on a profound journey with the Austin community. Through community meetings, Trustees engage in a number of meaningful conversations that are heavy on listening. Over a period of months, Trustees learn how well these Results Policies reflect Austin's educational values. Based upon community feedback, these Results Policies are then revised to reflect emerging and shared beliefs and vision. The following Q&A is offered to help the community better understand Policy Governance, its value, and what it means for student achievement in AISD.*

### ***What is Policy Governance?***

Policy Governance is a theory and model of board governance that focuses Board work on policy decisions, not operational issues. Policy Governance

boards adopt a set of broad policies based on values, and focusing on end results. These policies direct the Superintendent who acts as chief executive officer.

### ***What are the benefits of Policy Governance?***

Accountability. Policy Governance provides the Board with a clear framework for monitoring the Administration's progress in meeting the Boards' expectations for student achievement as established in its Results Policies. Policy Governance also clarifies the roles and responsibilities that are necessary for achieving the Board's vision for all Austin students. In addition, this form of governance provides a clear process for Board communication with the Austin community and the Superintendent.

***The Governance Policies focus the Board's emphasis on organizational vision and student achievement. Governance Policies have been developed in four areas:***

- **Results Policies** — The Board and community's desired achievement and outcomes for students.
- **Executive Limitations** — The boundaries within which the Board delegates responsibility for the day-to-day operations to Administration.
- **Governance Process** — Board philosophy, accountability, and specifics of how the Board conducts business.
- **Board/Superintendent Relations** — The manner in which the Board delegates authority to the Superintendent and how School Trustees evaluate the Superintendent's performance.

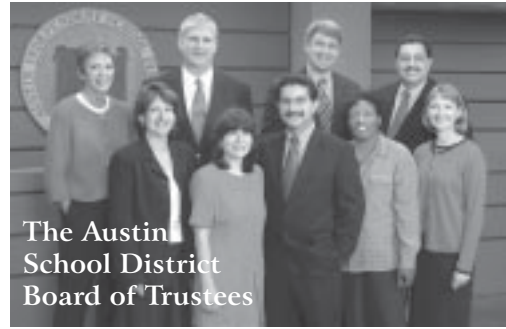
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***In Policy Governance, the School Board sets the vision and provides the resources, then tells the Superintendent to make it happen — with monthly monitoring of progress.***

## *Our Mission*

*All students will progress academically and intellectually, and will graduate prepared for personal success and inspired to contribute to society. (R-1)*

*Adopted June 2003*



*(Front row, left to right) Ingrid Taylor, Patricia Whiteside, Doyle Valdez, Cheryl Bradley, Johna Edwards.  
(Back row, left to right) Ave Wahrmond, Robert Schneider, John Fitzpatrick, Rudy Montoya, Jr.*

### ***Why did Trustees choose this governance approach?***

Trustees want to focus on establishing policies that will take AISD to the higher levels of stability and performance.

### ***What does Policy Governance mean to the Austin community?***

Under Policy Governance residents of the District are “owners,” “customers,” or sometimes both. Owners are citizens who pay taxes, but do not have children in school. Customers are those who live in AISD and send their children to District schools. Policy Governance invites both owners and customers to help develop the Results Policies. The Board becomes more of a “think tank” for vision than a “reviewer” of District operations and activities. Board meetings have changed as Trustees spend more time discussing important components and standards for student performance. The Board discusses the future in terms of what students will

need to know and what the community values. Trustees monitor progress in terms of how well the District is doing in accomplishing the Results Policies. Trustees ask if resource allocation is producing the desired results. There are fewer items on the agendas. Board members focus more on the “big picture.”

### ***What does Policy Governance mean for District staff?***

Under Policy Governance, the Board expresses to staff what benefits the District should provide to all students. The Superintendent and staff determine how to reach these end results. Policy Governance enables the staff to work with the support of the Board, and the knowledge that the Superintendent will evaluate the staff for their ability to produce the Board’s desired results — without violating Board values and policies. This approach should enhance the staff’s creativity, accountability, and success.

## *2003-2004 Results Policies of the Austin School Trustees*

### ***Academic Achievement***

All students will think critically and analytically and will achieve at high academic levels that meet or exceed state and national performance standards, including the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), effectively eliminating any achievement gap. (R-2)

### ***College and Career***

All students will demonstrate and understand the skills, knowledge, work habits, attitude, leadership and teamwork required by employers for success in the global 21st century workplace (R-3)

### ***Arts***

All students will participate in and appreciate the arts. (R-4)

### ***Citizenship***

All students will be productive members of the community and know the values of democracy. (R-5)

### ***Essential Life Skills***

All students will demonstrate the aptitude, attitude and skills to lead responsible, fulfilling, and respectful lives. (R-6)

### ***Health and Safety***

All students will understand the components of a healthy lifestyle. (R-7)