

Leading Practices of Effective Public Institution Boards

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia



**Henry Stoeber, AGB President & CEO
October 19, 2021**

About AGB – Celebrating Our 100th Anniversary

- **AGB Vision**

- AGB aspires to a world where college, university, and foundation board members are relied upon as **indispensable, strategic partners** for chancellors, presidents, and CEOs to advance student success and well-being, institutional vitality, and the public's understanding of the role and benefits of higher education.

- **AGB Mission**

- AGB empowers college, university, and foundation boards and board members to govern with knowledge and lead with confidence by delivering practical insights through its publications, events, and services.

- **AGB Members**

- 40,000 trustees and leaders of higher education institutions.
- Nearly 2,000 colleges, universities, and institutionally related foundations.

Highly Effective Boards – *Rowing Together!*



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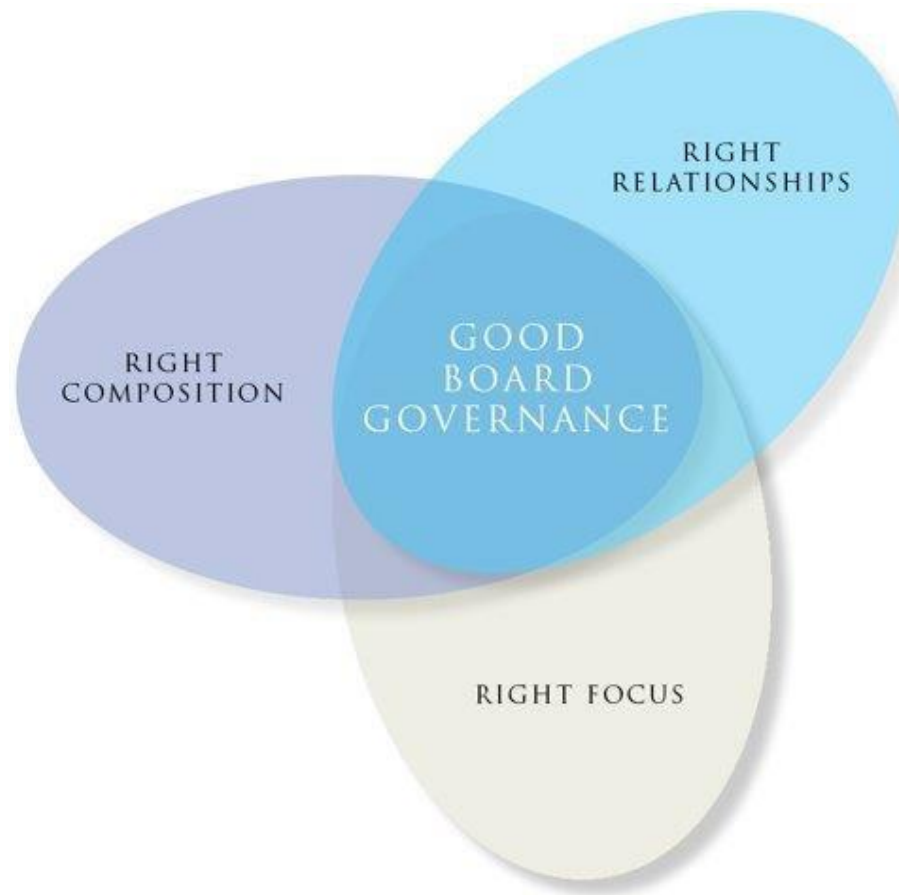
Agenda

- Strategic Board Leadership
- AGB Principles of Trusteeship

The Environment

- Brutally Challenging
- Sustainability of the Business Model
- Value Proposition and Relevance
- Student Access and Success
- Regulations

Anatomy of an Engaged Board



Attributes of a Strategic Governing Board AGB

- **Independence** of mindset and of influence
- Focus on **institutional** vitality and **student** success
- Prioritize **strategic** opportunities
- Build **trust** via collaborative engagement
- Serve as a **thought partner** with the president
- Leverage **diversity, equity, and inclusion** to establish a community of belonging

Principles of Strategic Board Leadership **AGB**

1. Accountability
2. President
3. Strategy
4. Composition
5. Oversight
6. Commitment

Six Principles of Board Leadership

1. Accountability

- The board is accountable for everything that happens and/or fails to happen within institution.
- While accountability cannot be delegated, responsibility *can* be delegated.

2. President

- Hiring, supporting, and assessing the right President is the most critical responsibility for the board.
- The President-board chair and the President-board partnership are critical—mutual expectations for effective leadership.

3. Strategy

- Strategies should focus on both student success & well-being and institutional vitality.
- Boards' focus should ensure a collaborative, on-going process.
- Evaluate options and alternatives, implications and risks.

Six Principles of Board Leadership (cont'd) AGB

4. Composition

- Diverse skills, experiences and competencies should align with the institution's mission and priorities.
- Same with board committees – where work gets done.

4. Oversight vs. Management

- Noses In, Fingers Out (NIFO) to oversee execution of strategies and policy development to mitigate risks.
- Risk appetite vs risk tolerance.
- Crisis leadership and understanding the board's role.

4. Commitment

- Effective board governance requires significant time.
- Suggest at least several hours per week spanning meetings, reading and learning to understand the issues facing the institution and prepare for committee and full board meetings.

What's next?

- Continuous learning.
- Leverage your board professional.
- Communicate with your board chair and president.
- Know when your next board & committee meetings are and ask how to prepare for them.
- Deepen your knowledge and understanding of your institution and strategic plans / priorities – now.

Agenda

- Strategic Board Leadership
- Principles of Trusteeship

- Three key themes:
 1. **Understand governance** by embracing all of your responsibilities in a structure of shared leadership.
 2. **Lead by example** by upholding the highest standards of integrity.
 3. **Think strategically** by focusing on what matters most to the long-term success of the whole enterprise.

Principles of Trusteeship

1. Embrace the full scope of your responsibilities.
2. Respect the difference between the board's role and the administration's role.
3. Be an ambassador for your institution and higher education.
4. Conduct yourself with impeccable integrity.
5. Think independently and act collectively.
6. Champion justice, equity, and inclusion.
7. Learn about the mission, constituents, culture, and context.
8. Focus on what matters most to long-term sustainability.
9. Ask insightful questions and listen with an open mind.

Principles of Trusteeship



Thank you for your leadership!

- Your service to the colleges and universities in the Commonwealth of Virginia is critically important to the future of your students and communities and to the state, our nation, our society, and global economies.
- Board service is a team sport and requires personal commitment.
- Trusteeship is a journey spanning core governance matters and many other topics.
- My door is always open for you...contact me at any time.
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Back Up – Resources

- Visit the [AGB Knowledge Center](#)
- [Principles of Trusteeship](#) – How to Become a Highly Effective Board.
- [National Conference on Trusteeship 2022](#)
- Select AGB Resources for New Board Members:
 - [Public Board Member Orientation](#)
 - [Higher Education Governing Boards](#)
 - [AGB Board of Directors' Statement on the Fiduciary Duties of Governing Board Members](#)
 - [An Anatomy of Good Board Governance in Higher Education](#)
- [AGB Board of Directors' Statement on J, D, E, and I](#)
- [AGB FAQs](#) – dozens available, select below
 - [Highly Effective Boards; Governance Basics for Public Institutions; Fiduciary Duties for Institutional Board Members](#)