

# Governance Toolkit

Board Session 5

## Board Self-Assessments

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**ACHD**  
ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA  
HEALTHCARE DISTRICTS

## ACHD Governance Series

Effective Board Work for Enhanced Service and Performance

Six Short Programs for use by ACHD Members

1. Community Engagement
2. Balancing Governance & Management
3. Board Orientations
4. Strategic Planning
- 5. Board Self-Assessments**
6. Board Education Programming

Good Board Work: Better Service. Better Performance.

## Jim Rice: Governance Adviser



Experienced. Practical. Responsive.

Jim Rice, PhD, FACHE is Senior Adviser with the Governance & Leadership service line of Gallagher's Human Resources & Compensation Consulting practice, and Chairman of the Akadimi Foundation. Having served on many boards, Jim focuses his consulting work on strategic governance structures and systems for high performing medical groups, hospitals, credit unions and integrated care systems. He is often engaged for enhanced strategic alliances and mergers for large and small not-for-profit organizations; as well as leadership development programming for Physicians, Boards and C-Suite Senior Leaders.

Dr. Rice holds a masters and doctoral degree in management and health policy from the University of Minnesota. He has received the University of Minnesota, School of Public Health Distinguished Alumni Leadership Award; a National Institute of Health Doctoral Fellowship; a US Public Health Service Traineeship in Hospital Management; a Bush Leadership Fellowship at Stanford and the National University of Singapore; and the American Hospital Association's Corning Award for Excellence in Hospital Planning. He is a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) and has worked in over 35 countries in North America, Asia, Africa and Latin America.



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## 1. What is a good "Board Self-Assessment"?

An effective and valuable BSA (Board Self-Assessment) is a survey, usually conduct every year or every two years, to evaluate the degree to which the board (and often management) believes the board's work is functioning at a high level of performance.

The survey incorporates questions about key dimensions for good governance of healthcare districts, and invites each board member (and periodically the senior management team) to assess the degree to which they believe the board and its committees are accomplishing their fiduciary duties.

ACHD offers a very [good survey tool](#) for free to all Members that generates a useful and easy to read summary of the performance review. The results can then be used to shape an annual board education and development plan for the coming 12-24 months.

## 2. Why is it important?

Conducting, and then using the results of a Board Self Assessment (BSA) to continuously improve your board work is important because:

1. Continuous review and improvement is a [best practice](#);
2. Medicare requires good governance as a means to ensure a [culture of good performance](#) via better quality, use of resources, and good access to needed to care;
3. Boards help ensure [compliance](#) with public payer rules;
4. Performance review helps build confidence among providers, staff, media and donors; and
5. Board member time, talent and pride are more likely optimized when good self-reflection yields better governance.

## 3. Common Issues or Challenges?

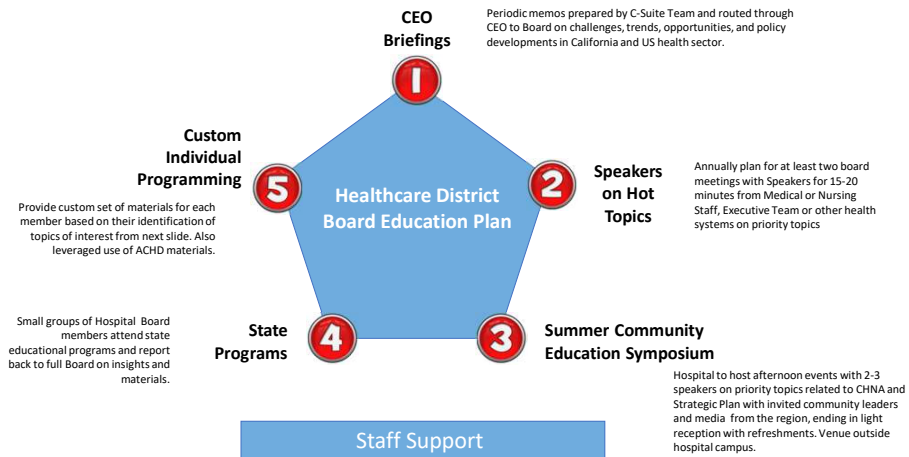
1. Lack of board and CEO recognition of the value of Board Self-Assessment to be used as a means to continuously enhanced board work.
2. Lack of commitment to use the assessment results to guide future board work performance enhancement via board education and development.
3. Unprepared to invest in ongoing board development to improve the board's effectiveness and performance growth.
4. Lack of experience with use of web based, confidential survey tools.
5. Discomfort of board members to identify less than perfect performance.

## 4. What can Boards do to be more successful?

1. Establish a Board Commitment to **continuously improve** the performance of the Board on behalf of the people served by the healthcare district;
2. Design assessment process to balance board only survey with one that invites senior managers' input;
3. Consider periodically using interviews via outside consultants;
4. Commit to use results to design annual board education program (See next slide);
5. Consider comparative discussions with other organizations on their approach and tools.

Good Board Work: Better Service. Better Performance.

## Revisit Governance Educational Framework



Good Board Work: Better Service. Better Performance.

## 5. Resources for further insights:

Board and Executive Teams may explore these resources :

- ACHD Supportive Resources on [Board Assessments](#)
- Sample BSA [Guide](#)
- BoardEffect Strategy for Board [Self-Assessments](#)
- BoardSource insights for [good assessments](#)

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**Thank you** for all you do for the people in your healthcare district!

We hope this short program stimulates your continuous pursuit of enhanced board work to strengthen your healthcare district's support for *health care* and *health gain* in challenging times.

Please contact ACHD to access their many other board support resources.



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