

August 2010 Board Watch Report Card

The Pittsburgh Public School Board earned another B- for their governance for the months of May, June and July.

Some Things to Note in this Report Card:

- Grades improved in all areas except for Role Clarity
- Role Clarity grades dropped from the last report period
- In every meeting, the grades in Role Clarity were consistently the lowest
- Board Watch volunteers counted significant numbers of discussion topics and with very few policy actions in comparison.

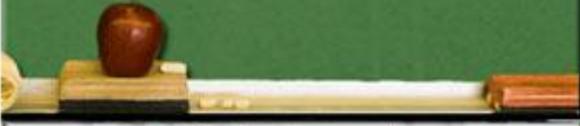


Board Watch

A Good Governance Program of A+ Schools

Report Card Issued to:
Pittsburgh Public Schools
Board of Directors

| | March 2009 | June 2009 | Nov 2009 | Feb 2010 | May 2010 | Aug 2010 |
|--------------------------|------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Focus and Mission | C+ | C+ | B- | C | C+ | B- |
| Transparency | B- | B+ | B+ | B+ | B+ | B+ |
| Conduct | B- | C+ | B | B- | B- | B |
| Role Clarity | C+ | C | C+ | C+ | C+ | C |
| Competency | C+ | C+ | B- | B- | C+ | B- |
| Overall | C+ | B- | B- | B- | B- | B- |



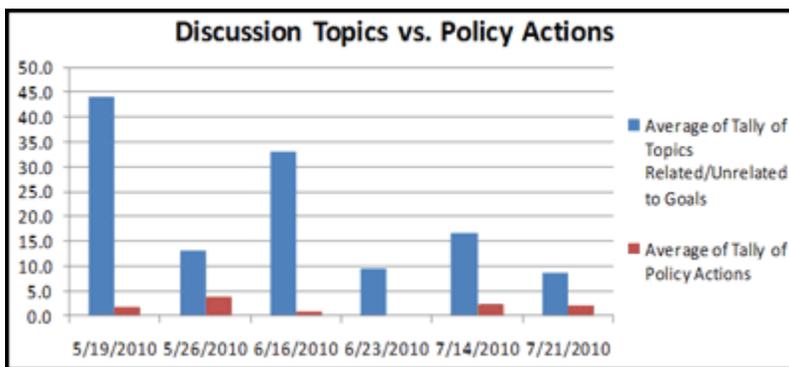
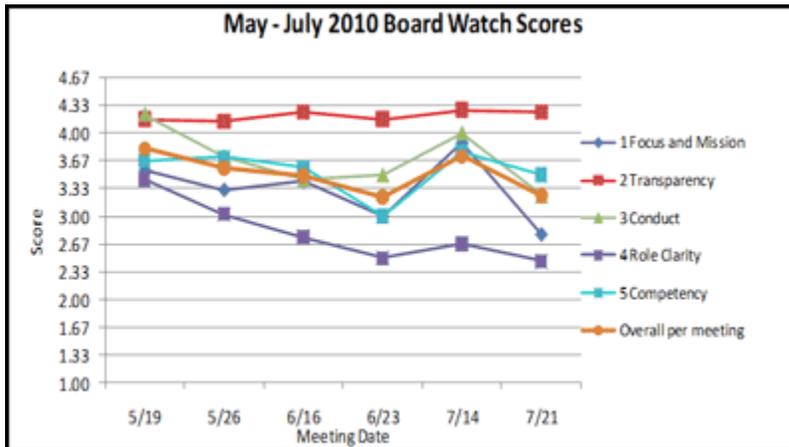


A+ Schools

Pittsburgh's Community Alliance for Public Education

For more information visit www.apluschools.org.

All grades were calculated from the responses of informed citizens serving as independent observers and evaluators of school board governance.



| Minimum Score | Grade |
|---------------|-------|
| 5.0 | A+ |
| -->4.67 | A |
| --> 4.33 | A- |
| --> 4.00 | B+ |
| -->3.67 | B |
| --> 3.33 | B- |
| --> 3.00 | C+ |
| --> 2.67 | C |
| --> 2.33 | C- |
| --> 2.00 | D+ |
| --> 1.67 | D |
| --> 1.33 | D- |
| --> 1.0 | F |

What is the Grading Scale?

Scores are calculated on a scale with a 1.0 being the lowest possible score (an F) and a 5.0 being the highest. (an A+). The grading scale listed to the left shows the minimum score required to earn each letter grade. So, for example, the lowest score the Board could earn and still get a B- would be a 3.33.

Here is a breakdown of the scores for each report card:

| | Mar 09 | June 09 | Nov 09 | Feb 10 | May 10 | Aug 10 |
|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Focus & Mission | 3.28 C+ | 3.24 C+ | 3.59 B- | 2.95 C | 3.29 C+ | 3.33 B- |
| Transparency | 3.51 B- | 4.02 B+ | 4.29 B+ | 4.14 B+ | 4.05 B+ | 4.20 B+ |
| Conduct | 3.43 B- | 3.25 C+ | 3.74 B | 3.39 B- | 3.49 B- | 3.67 B |
| Role Clarity | 3.10 C+ | 2.98 C | 3.10 C+ | 3.00 C+ | 3.05 C+ | 2.83 C |
| Competency | 3.28 C+ | 3.27 C+ | 3.39 B- | 3.34 B- | 3.31 C+ | 3.59 B- |
| Overall | 3.32 C+ | 3.35 B- | 3.62 B- | 3.36 B- | 3.44 B- | 3.53 B- |

The Moral of the Story: FOCUS ON POLICY

The area of greatest challenge for the School Board has been in the area of ROLE CLARITY. Fulfilling their role as a Reform School Board means they are focusing time and energy on reviewing, modifying and setting policies that are focused on achieving the district's goals. School Board leadership requires planning for change and monitoring factors that would indicate success, not just reacting to proposed changes.

With each report card, A+ Schools has made recommendations for ways that the School Board could better function. Larger improvements in scores will require deeper, more structural changes to be made. Much work is still left to be done in the area of creating a deliberate time and process for policymaking.

Some ways that the board can do that is:

1. On each board tab, list the district policy number that corresponds to the item for quick reference by Board members and the public- for example, a board tab related to guidance counseling would be related to policy #107.
2. Assign someone to maintain the list of policy issues that need to be revisited at a later date as they arise in discussion. Some examples are:
 1. Minority/Women Business Enterprise contract procurement- Rather than discuss individual contracts in a meeting, the Board could set a policy that lists goals for participation and how the status will be monitored.
 2. Student Reassignments- When discussing the disadvantages to students being reassigned multiple times to different schools, the Board could set a policy that limits the number of times a student can be transferred by the district because of school closings within a certain time frame.
3. Assign a section of the Board meeting's agenda to discussing new policy matters from the list of items that arose in Board meeting conversations.

A+ Schools asks the Pittsburgh Public School Board to better fulfill their role as policy-makers by creating a deliberate time and process for the act of policy-making. We also ask the public to join us in our request.