

Board Size Evaluation

Board Self-Evaluation Data Analysis

The slide features a white background with a decorative graphic on the right side. This graphic consists of several overlapping, semi-transparent green shapes in various shades, including light lime green, medium forest green, and dark forest green. These shapes are primarily triangular and polygonal, creating a modern, abstract design. A thin, light gray line also extends from the bottom right towards the center of the slide.

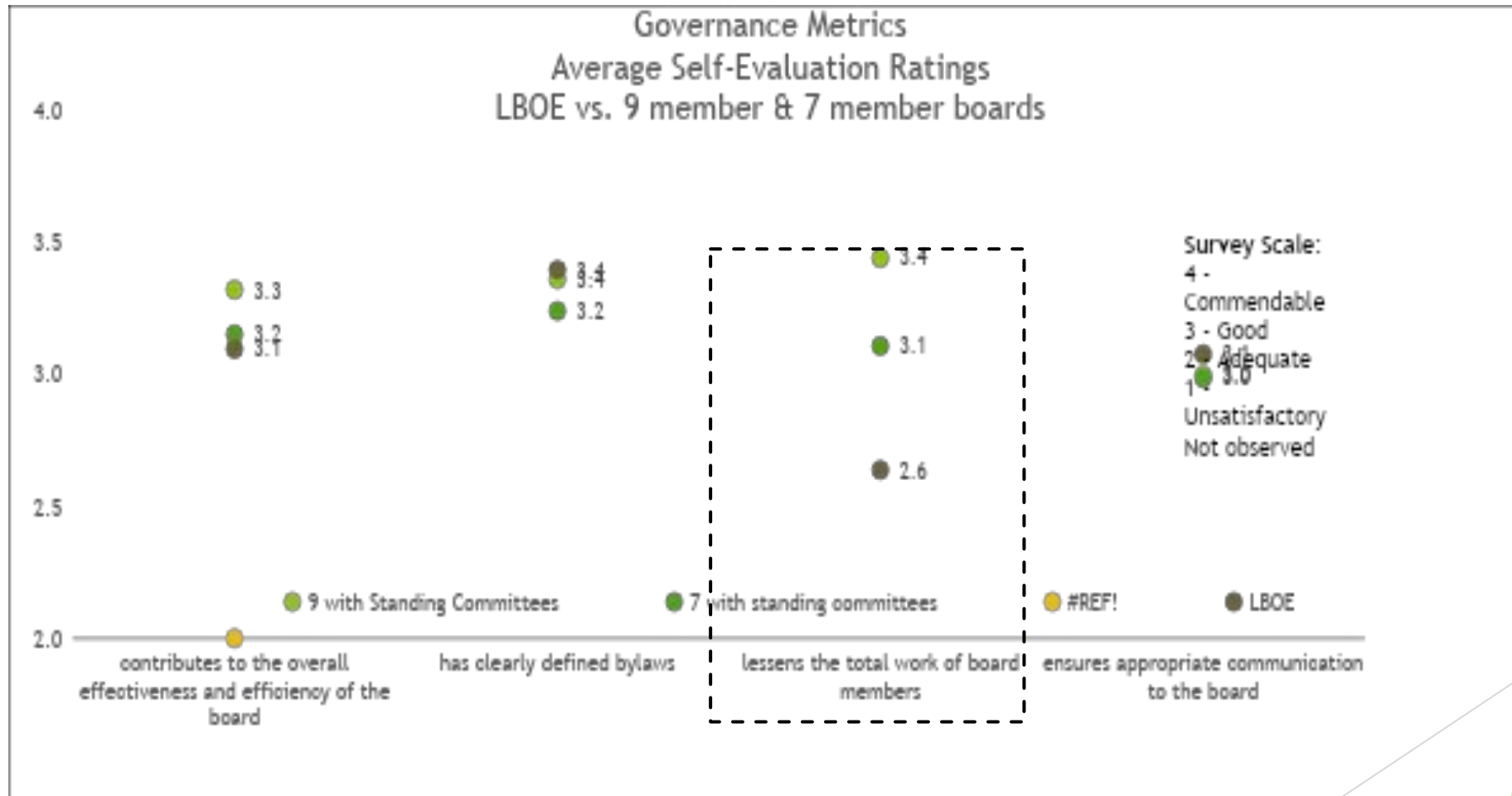
Analytics Objective & Method

- ▶ Objective: Leverage board self evaluation to assess whether 7 or 9 member boards evaluate themselves differently than LBOE
- ▶ Method: Analyzed board self-evaluation data for governance metrics across multiple 7 member and 9 member boards of education in comparison to Livingston BOE
 - ▶ Boards analyzed had anywhere from 1 to 3 years of available self-evaluation data
 - ▶ LBOE self-evaluations exist for 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 & 2020
 - ▶ Analysis focused on measures of governance, specifically method of board governance:
 - ▶ contributes to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the board; has clearly defined bylaws; lessens the total work of board members; ensures appropriate communication to the board

Data Analysis Summary

- ▶ In general, members of Livingston BOE rate themselves similarly to other boards on measures of governance, except on lessening the work of board members
- ▶ Livingston BOE members are equally likely to members on larger boards to rate themselves as ‘adequate’ or ‘unsatisfactory’ on individual measures of governance
- ▶ Livingston BOE members appear much less likely to rate themselves as ‘commendable’ and tend to use ‘good’ more often in their positive ratings

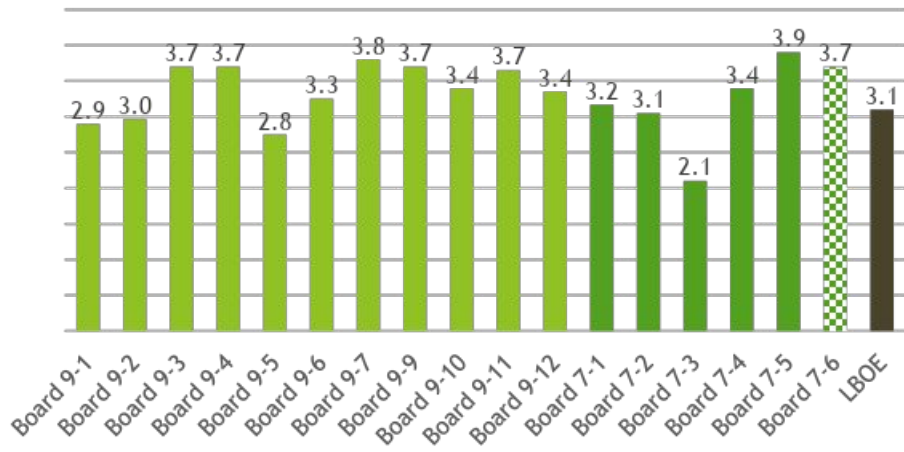
Looking at average of all years of reported self-evaluation data, LBOE rates itself comparatively across most metrics. Key difference exists on measure of lessening total work of board members.



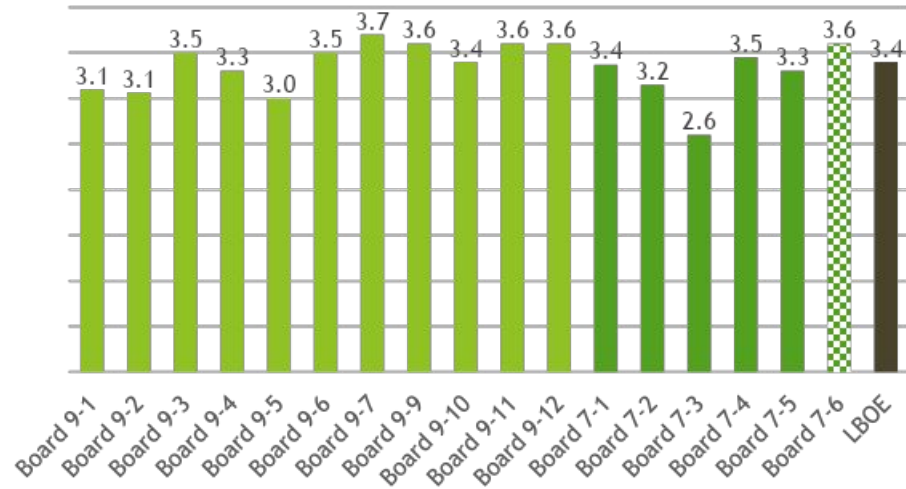
Source: NJSBA - Completed Board Self-Evaluations

Average of all years of self-evaluation data for individual boards on governance metrics. LBOE rates themselves comparatively to most districts, but tends to be lower on lessening work of Board members.

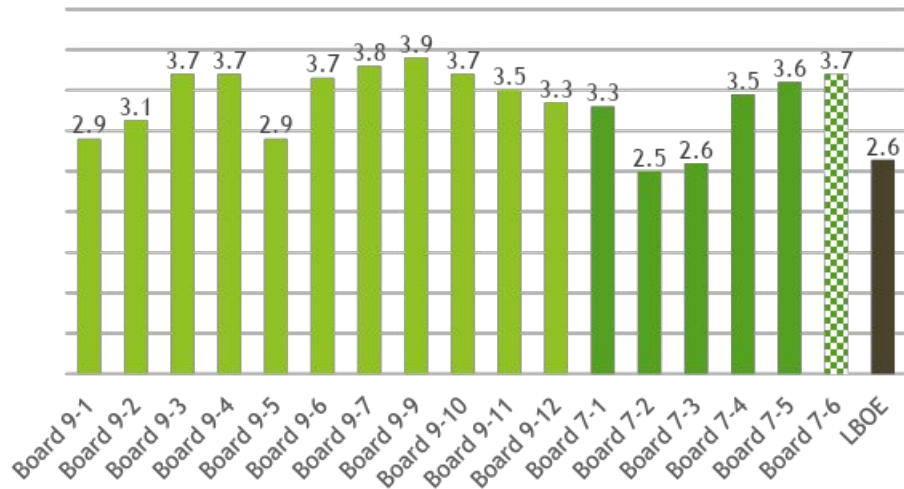
Contributes to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the board



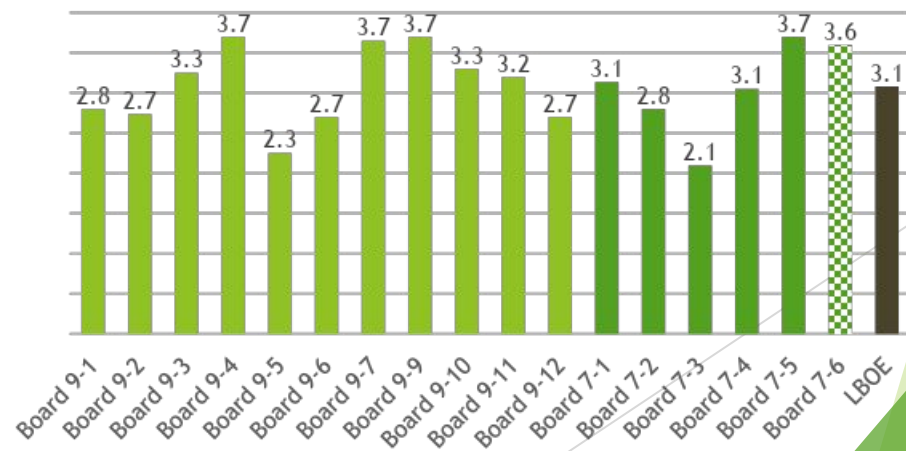
Has clearly defined bylaws



Lessens the total work of board members

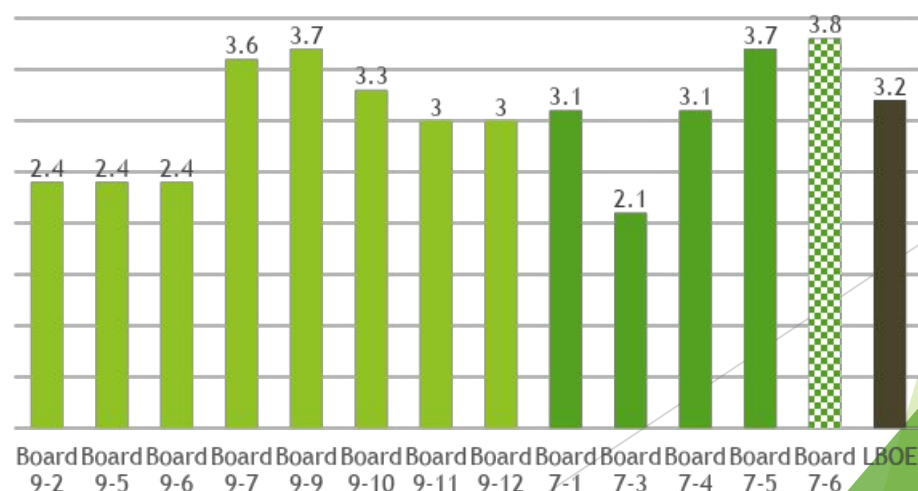
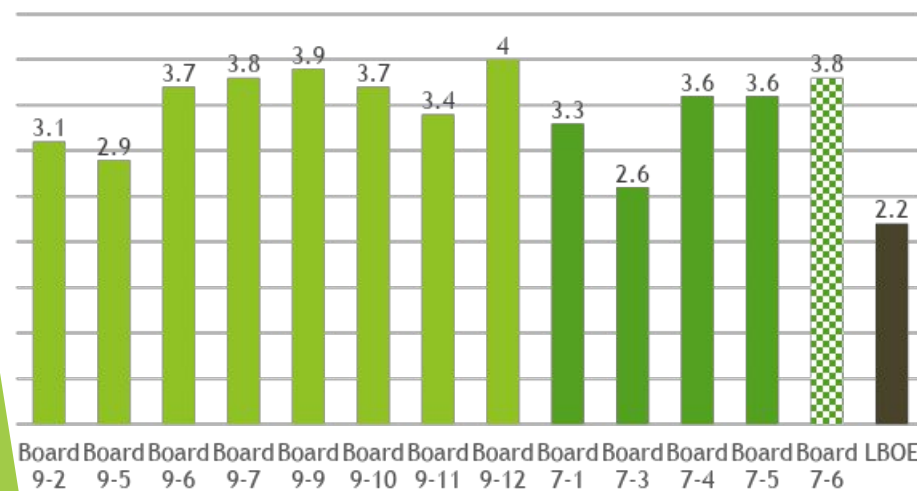
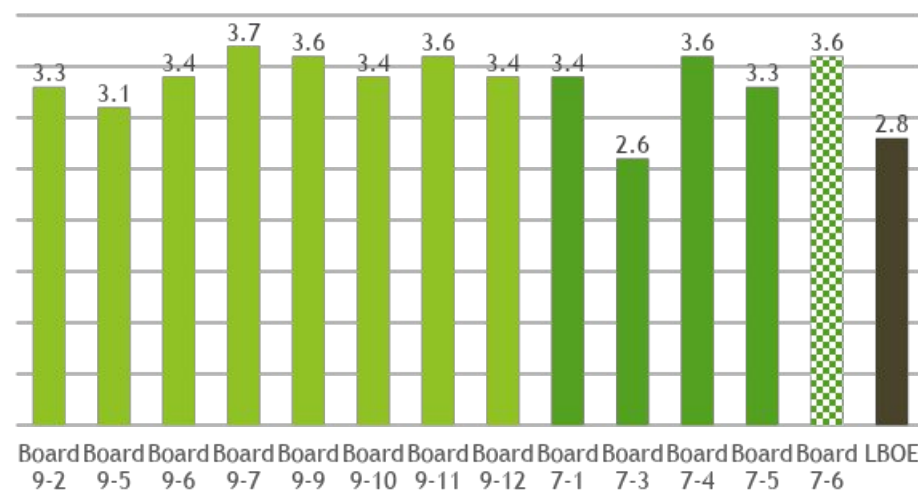
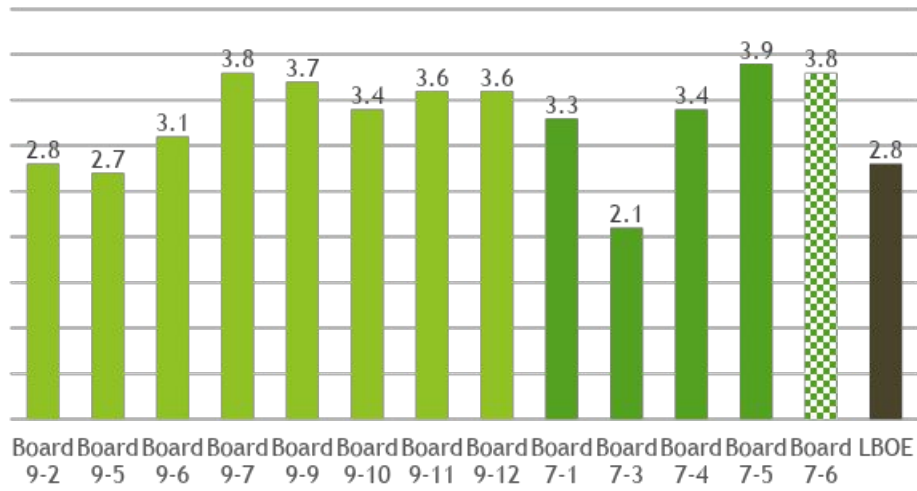


Ensures appropriate communication to the board



Survey Scale:
 4 - Commendable
 3 - Good
 2 - Adequate
 1 - Unsatisfactory
 Not observed

2020 self-evaluation comparison on governance metrics. In general, LBOE rated itself in the bottom tier across all metrics, except ensuring appropriate communication to the Board.



Survey Scale:
 4 - Commendable
 3 - Good
 2 - Adequate
 1 - Unsatisfactory
 Not observed

Individual 2020 Board member ratings show LBOE members were no more likely to rate themselves as ‘adequate’ or ‘unsatisfactory’ on governance ratings, but tended to rate themselves as ‘good’, rather than ‘commendable’

	2020 - LBOE				
	Commendable (4)	Good (3)	Adequate (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)	Not Observed
contributes to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the board	1	3	0	1	0
has clearly defined bylaws	1	3	0	1	0
lessens the total work of board members	1	0	3	1	0
ensures appropriate communication to the board	1	4	0	0	0
	BOE 7-3 2020				
contributes to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the board	0	2	5	1	0
has clearly defined bylaws	1	3	4	0	0
lessens the total work of board members	1	3	4	0	0
ensures appropriate communication to the board	1	0	6	1	0
	BOE 7-5 2020				
contributes to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the board	6	1	0	0	0
has clearly defined bylaws	2	5	0	0	0
lessens the total work of board members	5	1	1	0	0
ensures appropriate communication to the board	6	0	1	0	0

Summary of Work

▶ Interviews:

- ▶ 3 Current Board of Education Members
 - ▶ Vice President - 9 Member Board
 - ▶ President - 7 Member Board (board member was part of board size increase)
 - ▶ Member - 9 Member Board
- ▶ 2 Former Livingston Board of Education Members

▶ Data Analysis:

- ▶ Analyzed board self-evaluation data for governance metrics across multiple 7 member and 9 member boards of education in comparison to Livingston BOE
 - ▶ Boards analyzed had anywhere from 1 to 3 years of available self-evaluation data
 - ▶ LBOE self-evaluations exist for 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 & 2020
 - ▶ Analysis focused on measures of governance, specifically method of board governance:
 - ▶ contributes to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the board; has clearly defined bylaws; lessens the total work of board members; ensures appropriate communication to the board

▶ Other:

- ▶ Watched nearly 10 hours of board meetings from other districts to observe public work of both 7 member and 9 member boards of education.

Overall Interview Themes - 7 & 9

Member Board Members

▶ Positives

- ▶ Members of larger boards who work in standing committees state division of work and ability to focus on a few topics as positives of that structure
- ▶ Boards working in standing committees felt stronger, more trusting relationship with superintendent/district

▶ Negatives

- ▶ Members of larger boards interviewed discussed difficulty in transparency, communications, consensus building and decision-making
- ▶ While overall division of labor increases, work does not necessarily decrease. Standing committees result in different work, such as additional meetings and creation of minutes, that do not necessarily alleviate board member burden.
- ▶ Additionally, all cite frustration with amount of time for public meetings with the number of people that need to participate

Overall Interview Themes - Former Livingston BOE Members

- ▶ Both interviewees did not feel Livingston was disadvantaged by size
- ▶ However, both see some value in use of committees, but state that Livingston has not fully leveraged committee potential and that sharing of information is a larger impediment to depth of analysis than is board size

Interview Details: Vice President - 9 Member Board

- ▶ 9 Members
 - ▶ Large Suburban School District
 - ▶ Board of Standing Committees
 - ▶ Curriculum
 - ▶ Finance/Facilities/Technology
 - ▶ Personnel
 - ▶ Policy
 - ▶ 2 Meetings per month (1 committee / 1 public)
- ▶ Strength is commitment to equity & inclusion; Weaknesses are communication, transparency & ability to reach consensus
 - ▶ Committees have formal process for reporting to full board. Committee chairs (district & BOE member) put out minutes to full board. All members have opportunity to ask questions/make comments to committee chair and at public meeting
 - ▶ To address transparency, board sends an email to community every Friday after board meeting to summarize work
 - ▶ Difficulty in reaching consensus results in incredibly long public meetings with many going past midnight

Interview Details: President - 7 Member Board

- ▶ 7 Members
 - ▶ Small Suburban School District
 - ▶ Board of a whole, but have committees
 - ▶ Curriculum
 - ▶ Finance/Facilities/Technology
 - ▶ Personnel
 - ▶ Policy
 - ▶ 3 Meetings per month (1 committee / 2 public)
- ▶ Board increased from 5 to 7 members several years ago
 - ▶ Reason for increase was public push because of “extremely poor” representation. Board members focused on self betterment, rather than community/district.
 - ▶ In general, increase has been positive as it has addressed public concerns and has spread the work for board members. Important to note, board has not seen new members in a few years. Current BOE president has held position for last 5 years, after holding it for 3 additional years previously.
 - ▶ At time of change, district had long serving superintendent, making change a bit easier
 - ▶ Board may be going back to 5 members as candidate pool has dwindled since initial change was made

Interview Details: Member - 9 Member Board

- ▶ 9 Members
 - ▶ Large Urban School District
 - ▶ Board of Standing Committees (7 total)
 - ▶ 3 Meetings per month (1 committee / 1 workshop / 1 voting)
- ▶ Similar challenges to other 9 member board member interviewed; transparency & consensus-building
 - ▶ Additional conversation focus was on diversity of board members
 - ▶ BOE size did not create increased diversity
 - ▶ Diversity is driven by candidate pool and not by board size
 - ▶ With 3 seats being elected per cycle, there was often groups of people being elected together and, at times, minimizing the diversity of the people and their backgrounds

Interview Details: Former LBOE Member 1

- ▶ Did not feel board size was determinant of board's ability to effectively govern
- ▶ Is a strong proponent of increased and improved use of committees, regardless of board size
 - ▶ Feels board could improve setting of goals and diving into information
- ▶ Recognizes any change will result in potentially increased burden on administration (increased meetings, meeting summaries/minutes). Also recognizes cultural shift will need to occur in order to effectively move to any committee structure

Interview Details: Former LBOE Member 2

- ▶ Did not feel board size was determinant of board's ability to effectively govern - District performance shows that
- ▶ Strong proponent that board governance improves when all board members have equal access to information
- ▶ Expressed concern that increased board size may result new challenges that are not present today (i.e. poor board communication)
- ▶ Feels board size is not determinant of the board's ability to deep dive into information, but rather what is shared by district dictates that

Sam Messer Research

- ▶ 2 Superintendents (1 sitting, 1 former)
- ▶ 2 Former LBOE Board Members
- ▶ 2 Current Members from 7 member boards
- ▶ 2 Former Board Members from other Districts
- ▶ 1 attorney that represents school boards throughout the state
- ▶ 2 district administrators from other districts
- ▶ 2 Board Presidents from other Industries
- ▶ 1 District Administrator charged with “board relations”

Trends Across Interviews

(Representative Quotes)

“There is no causation between the size of the board and the student achievement outcomes. You may see that higher performing districts have larger boards, and that there is some correlation. However, it is silly to think that there is a causal relationship.”-Former Board Member (Essex County)

“You can have a great 5 member board and a tough 5 member board. You can have a great 7 member board and a tough 7 member board. What’s most important is the people on the board and ensuring that each member can get along with others and puts kids first.” Superintendent (Somerset County)

“When you get to a 7 member board, most boards will operate in committees. The key to a successful committee structure is ensuring you have people with a mix of backgrounds so that board members can serve on committees that align to their professional expertise. Our board has an expert in finance on the finance committee, someone who works in HR on the personnel committee, etc. We trust each other’s expertise, so the structure works.” Current Board Member (Union County)

Strengths & Drawbacks of a 5 Member Board

Strengths of a 5 Member Board

- Communication and Decision Making should be easier and streamlined
- Board functions as a board of the whole, which ensures transparency among board members and among the public
- Given that many school board races go uncontested, and some boards struggle to fill their seats, a 5 member board helps ensure you have a group of committed individuals
- From a superintendent's perspective, a five member board is more manageable because the superintendent can communicate with each board member. As the board size gets larger it can take an inordinate amount of the superintendent's time to communicate with the board. In such cases, the superintendent sometimes has to deputize another individual to work with the board.

Drawbacks of a 5 Member Board

- It is more work for each individual board member when the board size is smaller. The time commitment is significant, and you might more qualified candidate if the job of a board member was more manageable. A larger board could help accomplish that.
- A board of five can realistically become a board of 3. When you only need 3 "yes" votes or 3 "no" votes, there is a lot of power concentrated in the hands of very few people.

Strengths of a 7 member board & drawbacks of a 7 member board

Strengths of a 7 Member Board	Drawbacks of a 7 Member Board
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Committee work can decrease the work and the time commitment for individual board members and can lead to more robust conversations.*● There is more of an opportunity for people with different backgrounds to participate and lend their professional expertise to the board.● The group size is manageable. There is an opportunity for everyone to be heard.● If you go to a 7 member board, you need to make sure you do not have too many seats up during a single election.● <i>“I’m not sure if there is a difference between 5 and 7, but 7 allows for more people to be included.”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Board meetings can become lengthy, particularly if there is mistrust among the board. If the entire board wants to hear outcomes from committee meetings and wants to ask in depth questions, board meetings can be long and redundant of the committee meetings.● Less of a concern with 7 member board than 9, but you could start to see people running together as a “ticket” based upon when seats are up. This sets up more of a potential for a voting block.● If the board works as a committee, there is less transparency with the public, which could lead to mistrust.

**SM: Some boards of 7 operate as a committee of the whole. My opinion is that if we go to 7 members, we should continue to operate as a committee of the whole at first.*

Board Size Evaluation

Pam Chirls

Literature Summary

Boards That Make a Difference
John Carver (Jossey-Bass)

“Values and perspectives are thus powerful, often invisible forces that determine not only organizational circumstances, activities, and goals, but even the data that organizations admit into their assessment of reality.”

There are four reasons that policy-focused leadership is a hallmark of good governance:

1. Leverage and Efficiency -- capture the most fundamental elements of an organization
2. Expertise -- govern by policy does not require specialties and can often be done better without them
3. Fundamentals -- policies deal with the real heart of the matter, and they can have enduring importance
4. Vision and Inspiration -- dreaming is permissible, and it is also an obligation to serve the present and imagine the future

Interview Summary

3 Former Livingston Board of Education Members

3 Current Board of Education Members

- ▶ President - 9 Member Board
- ▶ Member - 9 Member Board
- ▶ President - 5 Member Board

2 Former Superintendents

- ▶ Former Interim Superintendent, Livingston Public Schools
 - ▶ Long serving Superintendent, Chatham
- ▶ Retired Superintendent, High Performing District, 7 Years with 9 Member BOE and 12 Years with 5 Member BOE
- ▶ Former Interim Superintendent, Livingston Public Schools
 - ▶ Long serving Superintendent, Chatham
- ▶ 5-Member BOE
 - ▶ Focus on District operations
 - ▶ Negative public understanding of no votes, which are based on philosophical or operational objections
- ▶ 7-Member BOE
 - ▶ Active committees represent opportunity to build engagement in the process of development and with new ideas and consensus

Overall Themes: Superintendents

Former Interim Superintendent, Livingston Public Schools: “Regardless of size, BOE members must do what is in the best interest of all students in mind and do what is right for the community.”

Five-Member BOE

- ▶ Focus on district operations
- ▶ Negative public understanding of no votes, based on philosophical or operational objections

Seven-Member BOE

- ▶ In a committee structure, there could be proactive, progressive action, deepening BOE and community participation
- ▶ At the idea stage, build engagement and create consensus during the process development,
- ▶ Committee Chair should collect questions and the district should do full presentation to the BOE and community, which would feel a higher degree of representation
- ▶ There is not a correlation between board size and student achievement

Former Superintendent, 2 High-Performing Districts: “There is no correlation between board size and student achievement or the responsibility of BOE member to represent student matters.”

- ▶ With the 5-member BOE, 3 committees met each month. BOE members had direct contact with the superintendent
- ▶ With the 9-member BOE, committees met frequently and explored matters deeply, with individual member communication through the President
- ▶ Across the state, there is limited participation, and the community should consider the motivations for this change

Overall Themes: Former LBOE Members

High-Performing District

- ▶ The combination of weekly meetings and appointment of highly qualified community members led to clear direction to superintendent, high quality of staff, and a difference in student achievement
- ▶ There was an application process for special committees; there were Listening Posts for community engagement; and supervisors made presentations “without any filter”

Positive Governance with 5-Member BOE

- ▶ It was easy to have communication with the superintendent, as an individual and a board of the whole
- ▶ A larger BOE could lead to better engagement among board members and with stakeholders and lead to better accountability for the superintendent
- ▶ Every discussion of the BOE was in public, increasing transparency

Negative Governance with Larger Board

- ▶ A larger BOE could be a burden to the superintendent, have political factions, and limit information sharing with the community
- ▶ Increasing board size could “upset balance, filter of information, politicize decisions, and insert another layer of decision makers.”
- ▶ A 5-member board could lead to more “rubber stamping,” especially in the face of a superintendent who is tightly managing their board

Overall Themes: Current BOE Members

“Effective governance is dependent on [each BOE] member’s willingness to operate effectively and work as a team.”

General Themes

- ▶ NSBA research determined 7-members are the most common boards in U.S.
- ▶ I and J district research determined members preferred their size
- ▶ A survey of former members indicated 5 or 7 members create a good dynamic

Positive Governance with Larger Board

- ▶ Board is structured and controlled, and committees meet each month and explore ideas directly with district staff
- ▶ Committees review recommendations, but deep discussion must happen at the table, where decisions are made [in public]

Negative Governance with Larger Board

- ▶ Board must work on board communication with each other and across the community
- ▶ As the board becomes larger, the superintendent can leave members off the team and consensus building can create challenges

Opportunities for Change

Benefits

- ▶ A 7-member board is a reasonable step for the community to consider
- ▶ It is not cumbersome and can allow the District to achieve its goals
- ▶ Committees can explore and solve problems of the district and build community consensus
- ▶ Strategic Planning can be an opportunity to engage stakeholders in meaningful work

Needs

- ▶ Collaborate with *all* stakeholders to enable a proper rollout if the community supports expansion
- ▶ Work with attorney directly in order to enhance policy and ensure district success
- ▶ Make a collective commitment to ongoing professional development with a consultant for its design
- ▶ Reflect on current practices with *all* stakeholders and adjust based on qualitative and quantitative data

Board Size Evaluation

Vineeta Khanna

Vineeta Khanna Research

- ▶ 1 former LBOE member-served 2 terms.
- ▶ 1 former LBOE Member served one term.
- ▶ 1 former member of a 9 member board. Served 2 terms.
- ▶ 1 sitting Board Member from a 9 member board from other District.
- ▶ 1 sitting Superintendent working with a 9 member board.
- ▶ 1 former superintendent with experiences of 5, 7, 9 and 12 member boards

Interesting takeaways from the interviews:

The experience on the Board is more complex and challenging than expected. One has to believe in the school system, and have genuine and honest passion to serve.
~Former Board Member (Essex County)

Talking about the ease of work and communication with a smaller Board...After working with a 12 member board, when he joined a district with a 5 member board, “I felt I had died and gone to heaven.” ~ Former Superintendent (Essex County)

“The Board is not supposed to run the schools, but to make sure that the schools are run well.”

“It’s an honor and privilege to serve.”

Five Member Board vs. a Larger Board

BOARD MEMBERS' PERSPECTIVE

FIVE MEMBER BOARD	LARGER BOARD
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Communication is stronger and easier in a small board size.● There is strength in operating as a Board of the whole.● Board member's presence on a standing committee allows proximity and cohesion.● Every conversation is public. All questions are asked and responded to in public meetings.● Smaller board creates better visibility and transparency..● There are better chances of equal division of workload in a smaller board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Being on the BOE is a huge task and responsibility requiring substantial time commitment. A larger board may enable the workload to be shared without any overwhelm.● A larger board may be more productive.● A larger board could avail of members' specializations in different areas.● Committees help establish stronger and close knit relationship between the board and the district.● A larger board allows for a better balance of power.

Five Member Board vs. a Larger Board

BOARD MEMBERS' PERSPECTIVE (Cont'd)

FIVE MEMBER BOARD	LARGER BOARD
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Smaller Board has better accountability.● Being a liaison with the district, town council, schools and community can be far more demanding on a small Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Committee structure allows for a deeper dive into the workings and decision making, understanding and reviewing.● Transparency could be an issue sometimes.● Committee structure allows opportunity for better relationship building with the district.● Committee structure makes board and district better partners.

Five Member Board vs. a Larger Board

SUPERINTENDENT'S' PERSPECTIVE

FIVE MEMBER BOARD	LARGER BOARD
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Easy to work with.● Discussions at the board table are more transparent than in the committee structure.● Communication is better and stronger with a smaller board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Working with a larger board can be a nightmare.● The demarcation lines of control are constantly crossed.● Communication with committees and subcommittees can be a challenge.● The experience through the pandemic should not be a cause to discuss board size expansion.● Committee structure is not healthy, said the former superintendent.● Committee structure works well, said the sitting superintendent.● Board size may only improve representation.● Larger board will be able to have even presence in the committees.

Board Size Evaluation

Ronnie Konner

New Jersey School Boards Presentation

Considerations for Changing the Membership Size of a Board of Education

Presented by Charlene Peterson, NJSBA Field Services at
the March 15, 2021 LBOE Meeting:

[NJSBA Presentation to the LBOE March 15, 2021](#)

Statute re: Board Size

18A:12-12. Increase or reduction in membership; resolution; submission of question

If the board of any district shall determine by resolution that it is for the best interest of the schools that the membership of the board shall be increased from whatever number of members then composes it to five, seven or nine members, or reduced from said number to seven, five or three members, the question of such increase or reduction shall be submitted to the voters of the district at the next annual school election and the question shall be stated in the notice of the election.

L.1967, c.271.

18A:12-13. Membership increase

18A:12-13. If at the election the question of increasing the membership of the board shall be adopted, the membership of the board shall be increased accordingly as of the organization meeting next following the next annual school election and the additional members shall be elected at such annual school election, for terms as follows:

- a. If the increase is from three to five, two for three years and one for two years;
- b. If the increase is from three to seven, two for three years, one for two years and one for one year;
- c. If the increase is from five to seven, one for three years and one for a term of either one or two years, whichever is necessary to cause the terms of two members to expire at each of the next two annual school elections;
- d. If the increase is from any other number to nine, for such terms not over three years, as will as soon as possible constitute a Board of nine, with three-year terms expiring, three each year. Each year thereafter successors to the members whose terms expire shall be elected for three years.

L. 1967, c. 271; amended by L. 1987, c. 289, s. 3.

Livingston Board of Education Relevant By-laws and Policies

[Policy 0130 - Governance](#)

[Policy 0131 - By-laws and Policies](#)

[Policy 0134 - Board Self-Evaluation](#)

[Policy 0141 - Board Number and Term](#)

[Policy 0155 - Board Committees](#)

[Regulation 0155- Board Committees](#)

Livingston Board Governance changes as a result of Board Self-Evaluation

After Board Self-Evaluation in 2017 the Board adopted a change in Board By-laws through Policy 0155 to include standing committees. The intention was to provide the Board with opportunities for deeper discussions in the areas of Finance and Facilities and Curriculum and Instruction. The effectiveness of these committees has not been assessed.

Retired Superintendent (5- member Board) & Former Board Member (9-member Board)

BENEFITS OF BOARD SIZE	DRAWBACKS OF BOARD SIZE
<p>Comments on 5-Member Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● 5 Member Board in a K-12 worked well.● Board focused on same idea together, not on individual special interests.● Might see possibilities with 7 members if functioning as a Board of the Whole.	<p>Comments on 9-Member Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Unwieldy, special interests,● 9-12 Regional district, members distributed by town,● Larger Board some members often came unprepared to meetings,● Focused on individual special interests.● Power not equally shared.● Work done in committees, not shared by all-only outcomes.● Committees: Discussions are not held in public only outcomes are shared with Full Board prior to a vote.

Retired Board Member (7-member Board)

BENEFITS OF BOARD SIZE	DRAWBACKS OF BOARD SIZE
<p>Comments on 7-Member Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worked as a Board of the whole with committees• Committees shared minutes and questions, 3 members of each committee. President did not serve on committees. Superintendent sat on all Board Committees. Could have in depth discussions - however they are not in the public. Only recommendations shared with the public.• Gave Board members a chance to informally get to know other Board members working in small groups. In-depth discussions with staff. 2 meetings monthly - first is a workshop, second is to adopt Board Business, although this year both meetings were used for discussion and voting.• Committees: Curriculum, Facility and Finance, Policy, Personnel - now personnel is done by entire Board. All BOE members are liaisons to different school and community groups.• Committees helped minimize affiliations by mixing members on committees. Members were able to get more information in their committee. They developed better relationships in smaller groups. Communication is important to whole Board.• Board committees: Negotiations; Curriculum, Special Ed, Technology; Culture & Climate; Transportation; Facility and Finance; Policy; Previously also Personnel.	<p>Comments on 7-Member Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem with turnover, when three people left at same time.• Need to be aware of when new Board members are sworn in that there is balance with experienced Board members and opportunities for training for new Board members as to their roles.• Communication of committee work essential so all are familiar with recommendations - they don't get the behind the scenes discussions done in committee.• Greater Workload - multiple meetings with committees. In addition to public meetings, and liaison meetings.

Former Livingston Staff, Served as Former Board member on 5-member and on 7-member Board

BENEFITS OF BOARD SIZE	DRAWBACKS OF BOARD SIZE
<p>Comments on 5-Member Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Easy to get questions answered.● Not much competition.● Worked as a team, even though different ideas.● Committee of the Whole has discussions at the public meetings.	<p>Comments on 7-Member Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Meetings are long, need time to address all members' questions.● More alignment among members. A larger Board is more political. Members view Board as stepping stone to Town Council.● Big concern: Timing for replacements in Board elections when making the change to increased size. Avoid doing if a majority elected in a particular year. May want to defer.● Committees: Operations, Education, Human Services, Policy and Governance, Negotiations. Committee Reports at public meeting - recommendations.

Former Livingston Board Member (9 years) Town Council Member (12 years)

BENEFITS OF BOARD SIZE	DRAWBACKS OF BOARD SIZE
<p>Comments on 5-Member Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• While on the Board was interested in the topic of Board size as most other districts were larger. After conducting extensive research in Group Dynamics, she concluded 5 members were the best. They form a better work group. A workgroup of five is a better combination allowing for more diversity, than committee workgroups with just three members. All members have access to the same information and participate in all discussions in the public.• 5-member Board and Town Council were determined to be the best size for our town.• “If it ain’t broken - Don’t fix it.”	<p>Comments on Larger Boards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Larger Boards of 7-9 frequently form factions, are not as efficient, don’t know or have access to sufficient information to make informed decisions as they may only be familiar with the committees on which they serve.• Committee members and remainder of the Board may have different information. Decisions are based on reports from committees and some members may not have access to all discussions that occurred in the committee and lack adequate information.• Larger Boards often have difficulty getting sufficient candidates to run. There is greater factionalism

Former Livingston Board Member & NJSBA Field Rep working with many different Board Sizes

BENEFITS OF BOARD SIZE	DRAWBACKS OF BOARD SIZE
<p>Comments on 5-Member Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5-Member Board works well!• Strong supporter of current 5-member Board size.• Decisions are made together with equal opportunities for input from all.• Discussion is more transparent when done in the public.• Size of the Board has not impacted student achievement.• Livingston Schools continue to do very well.	<p>Comments on Larger Boards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9-member Board has three well-informed members.• Discussion is not as open. They do not share at how they got to their decisions.• Trust is essential with operations by Committee.• Feedback and follow-up with Q/A s may be cumbersome.• Timing of change is VERY important. You do not want a change in the majority of elected members in the same year. Consider the timing when making a decision.

Former Board Member (5 - member Board) (13 years on Livingston Board)

BENEFITS OF BOARD SIZE

Comments on 5-Member Board:

- Would love to see more Diversity on Board - believes it is a function of who decides to run. In past PTA/HAS candidates had a better chance for election. Is there Diversity reflected in PTA/HSA leadership?
- Was a very engaged member in the school and township community. Committed to involvement in oversight of all aspects of the Board. Believes the Board of the Whole is preferred as everyone hears the same information and has an equal chance to ask their own questions and hear those of all other Board members before making a decision and voting.
- All Board members are involved in the process of decision making from the beginning.

DRAWBACKS OF BOARD SIZE

Comments on Larger Boards:

- Committee structure rather than Board of the Whole is a drawback. Less ability to be part of the entire process in arriving at decisions impacting budget, curriculum, etc. Less transparent.
- Larger board encourages candidates to run in teams, less independent views.
- Committees - not all members may show up or participate in all aspects of the Board.
- Would not prefer to hear recommendations with only input of some Board members.
- Should carefully look at timing if any changes decided, - do not to have a majority of the Board elected in first year of changes. Defer implementation for a year until when only one current Board seat is up.

Takeaways from Interviews

- 5 and some 7 Member Boards work as a Committee of the Whole
- Greater transparency as all discussions are held in public
- All members receive the same information and have equal say.
- Entire Board focused on a topic together at the same time.
- Greater diversity of opinion on a 5-member Board than when just 3 are part of a committee.
- Easier for the administration to prepare and communicate with all Board members prior to a vote.
- Fewer Committee meetings.
- Easier to arrive at consensus with fewer members.
- Size of the Board does not impact student achievement.
- Size of the Board does not guarantee diversity of membership; however larger Board allows for greater number of people with varied opinions,
- Timing of adding members should not be done when a majority of the Board will be elected if it can be avoided.
- If Board of Whole wishes to take a deeper dive into a topic, it is easier to add additional meetings when necessary or an ad-hoc committee of the Board can be appointed to do so with stakeholder participation.

Takeaways from Interviews

- 7 and 9 Member Boards working with Committee structure
- Only members serving on the committee gets the complete discussion and all information prior to a recommendation for a Board vote.
- Work is done behind closed doors.
- Communication is important in sharing agendas and minutes with committee members and all other Board members.
- Trust is essential among all Board members.
- Longer meetings to answer all questions and share feedback.
- Greater workload – attendance at Committee Meetings and Board Meetings..
- Committees give Board committee members the chance to go into greater depth in discussions.
- Board members get to work more closely with members of the administration in smaller groups.
- If Board committee members rotate membership, they get to know one another better.
- Harder to build consensus with larger number of Board members.
- Factions are more prevalent in larger Boards
- Larger Boards may be more political.
- Larger Boards sometimes have a greater number of members who come to meetings unprepared.
- Members of Committees may just be engaged in their special interests not the work of the Board as a Whole.
- More difficult to find times to schedule additional meetings if needed.