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# BOARD ASSESSMENT:

Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP



**OLA**  
**SUPER**  
CONFERENCE  
January 27 - 30, 2016

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**OLBA Boot Camp**

**January 30, 2016**

**Margaret Andrewes & Randee Loucks**

*BUILDING STRONG BOARDS*

[andrewesloucks.ca](http://andrewesloucks.ca)

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*“Effective governance is more than simply complying with laws and regulations, monitoring finances and strategic planning. Libraries need trustees who are willing to take up the mantle of leadership. The ability to guide, direct, and lead the way, requires vision and the skills that inspire others to action. **Leadership requires continuous learning, self-improvement and the knack of encouraging the same in others.** Leaders must also ensure that their followers have the necessary tools to meet challenges and effect change.”*

Board Challenge: Checklist of Good Governance Activities  
Randee Loucks, ACCESSola, Summer 2006

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*“As a result of increased scrutiny and the demand for boards to have greater objectivity, board “professionalism” is becoming a key to good governance.*

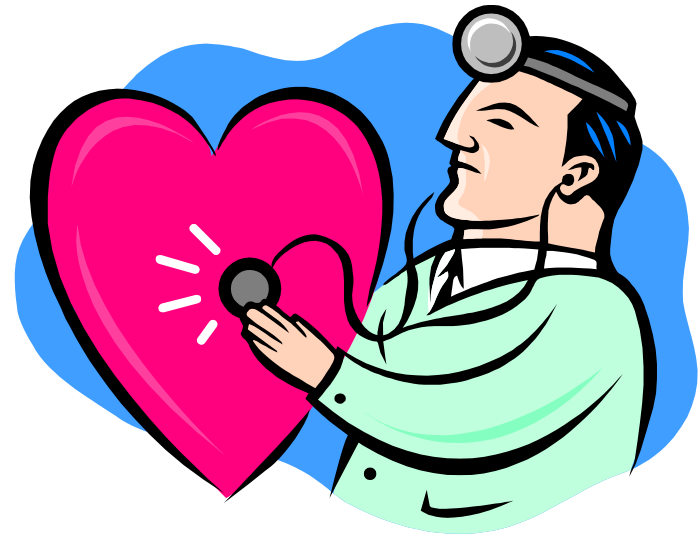
*The strength and professionalism of the board is ultimately measured by its performance. **A structured, systematic, annual board self-evaluation is an important process and is now common practice.**”*

Best Practices: Professionalism & Board Evaluation  
Jane Hilton, InsideOLBA, Spring 2012

# BOARD ASSESSMENT:

## Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP

- To stay FIT & STRONG, regular CHECK UPS are essential to the practice of GOOD GOVERNANCE



# BOARD ASSESSMENT:

## Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP



- A strong, vibrant board is a clear indicator of a healthy organization.
- To check your board's vital signs and put in place strategies for improving performance, ongoing assessment is essential.

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# BOARD ASSESSMENT:

Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP

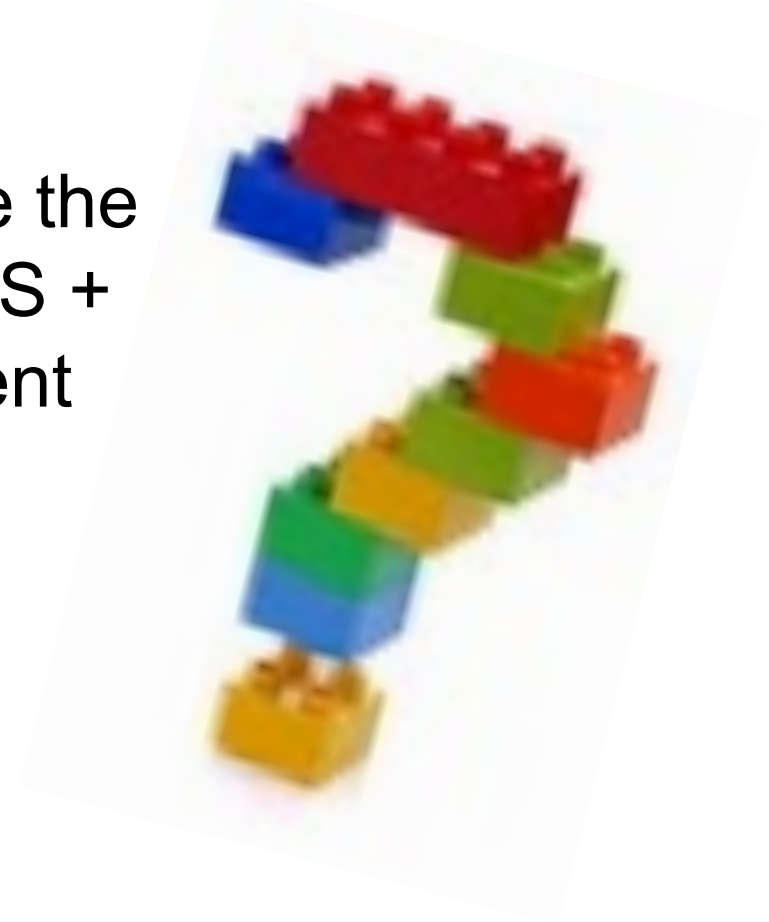
**BOARD ASSESSMENT** is...

the process by which the board determines how well its performance is enabling the library to achieve what it should.

# BOARD ASSESSMENT:

## Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP

- How can our board make the most of the next 2 YEARS + 10 MONTHS of our current term?
- What will we have built?



# ONTARIO PUBLIC LIBRARY GOVERNANCE

## at a glance...

## OLBA's Leadership by Design

## CUT TO THE CHASE

### 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, September 2012

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BUILDING STRONG BOARDS

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OLBA's Leadership by Design

## Cut to the Chase

Ontario public library governance  
at-a-glance



### Definitions

**A public library board** is a governing board, a legal corporation, with the authority to make policy and to govern the library's affairs under the Public Libraries Act, RSO 1990, c. P44.

**Governing** is different from managing. A board doesn't run an organization but ensures that it is properly run.

**Governance** is the entire framework set by the board to direct the organization, that identifies how a board will conduct business, how power will be divided and delegated and what processes will be set up to achieve accountability.

*Cut to the Chase* is a quick reference guide on public library governance in Ontario and the library board's fundamental responsibilities for achieving effective leadership and sound governance. It serves as the foundation document in *OLBA's Leadership by Design* – a primary resource for library trustees to find the information and make the connections they need to strengthen their capacity as key decision-makers in their communities.

[www.accessola.com/olba/LBD](http://www.accessola.com/olba/LBD)

### Ten principles guiding effective library governance

- Build a solid governance framework that includes by-laws, policy and an achievable plan that is based on why you exist: your mission.
- When you've built it, make sure it works and keep it in shape.
- Know who you are there to represent and how to connect with them.
- Make good decisions on their behalf.
- Know what it is that you need to achieve.
- Assess what you have accomplished and report progress regularly.
- Know what information you need and where and how to get it in order to manage risk.
- Know who you need on the board and who you need to run the library.
- Know where and how to get the resources you need.
- Remember, you are not there to manage – you are there to govern.

### The Board's authority

#### 3 Major Responsibilities

1. A board's duty is to provide comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects its community's unique needs.
2. A board must submit budget estimates to municipal council and participate in the municipality's annual audit that includes boards.
3. To receive its annual grants from the Government of Ontario, a board is required to submit statistics and financial information along with a completed public library operating and pay equity grants application form to the province each year.

The Public Libraries Act, RSO 1990, c. P44 governs the operation of public libraries in Ontario and is specific legislation that can override certain sections of other more general acts such as the Municipal Act.

A library board is an independent body and cannot become a committee of council without legislation being passed that enables this.

### Membership

- Members are appointed by municipal council according to rules set out in the Act.
- Minimum size for a library board is five members.
- The number of municipal councillors on a library board may not exceed one less than the majority; a county board may have a bare majority of councillors.
- Library or municipal employees may not be board members.

### Municipal integration

Ontario public libraries enjoy varying levels of integration with their municipalities. One library may operate with separate financial policies and processes, while another may simply adopt its municipality's policies. Many boards have forged closer ties with their municipality to maximize their effectiveness and to collaborate in achieving common goals. While the library board is an independent body and responsible for directing the disbursement of library funds, it can be advantageous to align agendas and streamline business processes with its municipality. Both the library and the municipality serve the same public and address issues common to both bodies.

### Fiduciary duty

As a member of a library board, your fiduciary duty is to act honestly and in good faith and in the best interests of the library. This means that the interests of the library take precedence over your personal interests or those of any other group with which you are associated.

### Meeting requirements

The Public Libraries Act, RSO 1990, c. P44:

- Board shall hold regular meetings once a month for at least 10 months each year and at such other times as it considers necessary.
- Meetings are open to the public.
- Majority of members must be present.
- Chair may vote with other members.
- Tie vote is deemed to be negative.



# Ten PRINCIPLES Guiding Effective Library Governance

1. Build a solid governance framework - by-laws, policy, an achievable plan, etc. based on why you exist: **your mission.**
2. When you've built it, make sure it works and keep it in shape.

Cut to the Chase, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition  
OLBA's Leadership by Design

# Ten PRINCIPLES Guiding Effective Library Governance

3. Know who you are there to represent & how to connect with them.
4. Make good decisions on their behalf.
5. Know what it is that you need to achieve.
6. Assess what you have accomplished and report progress regularly.

Cut to the Chase, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition  
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# Ten PRINCIPLES Guiding Effective Library Governance

7. Know what information you need and where and how you can get it in order to manage risk.
8. Know who you need on the board and who you need to run the library.
9. Know where and how to get the resources you need.
10. Remember, you are not there to manage, you are there to govern.

Cut to the Chase, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition  
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# Seven AREAS of RESPONSIBILITY in Achieving Effective Library Governance

1. Board Organization
2. Board Performance
3. Planning
4. Library Management
5. Stewardship
6. Community Development
7. Accountability

Cut to the Chase, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition  
OLBA's Leadership by Design

# BOARD ASSESSMENT:

Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP

**POLICY is the CORNERSTONE of governance...**

- Sets direction on how the library will operate and be used
  - Defines how the library board will operate
- → → → → →

**ANNUAL BOARD ASSESSMENT**



# Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP...

*Where do we start?*

## ■ Governance KNOWLEDGE

*Board members check to ensure that they have a COMMON UNDERSTANDING of their governance roles & responsibilities and all those whose interests they represent*

## ■ Governance PERFORMANCE

*Board policies and processes are monitored and evaluated regularly to enable ongoing attention to NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES for improvement*

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# Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP

## Take TIME to Take STOCK...

### Group or Self-assessment

- What would your Board's epitaph be if it went under tomorrow?
- If you were asked to leave the Board, what would be the most likely reason?

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# Take TIME to Take STOCK...

*What will we gain?*

- What our **GREATEST STRENGTHS** as a governing board are...
- Where we should be **TAKING ACTION** to improve our library governance capacity and effectiveness...



# Take TIME to Take STOCK...

*What's working? What's NOT working?*

## Board Self-Evaluation Questionnaire

A Tool for Improving the Governance Practices  
of Non-Profit Organizations

Dalhousie University College of Continuing Education  
Copyright 2013 Version 3



- A. How well has the Board done its job?
- B. How well has the Board conducted itself?
- C. Board's relationship with Executive Director
- D. My performance as an individual Board member
- E. Feedback to the chair of the Board

# Take TIME to Take STOCK...

*What's working? What's NOT working?*

## **The Complete Library Trustee Handbook**

Sally Gardner Reed & Jillian Kalonik

Copyright 2010 Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends & Foundations, a division of the American Library Association

### **Chapter 6. Doing It Right: The Best Practices of Effective Library Boards**

## **Board Self-Evaluation**

General Knowledge ● Board Operation ● Fund-Raising  
Advocacy ● Strategic Planning ● Policy Making  
Finance ● Professional Development

# Take TIME to Take STOCK...

*What's working? What's NOT working?*



Leadership by Design: Module 1

## Leadership Development Toolkit

**3-part PLANNING EXERCISE** for your library board to use in planning its **LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE** development program

- ✓ **identify knowledge gaps of individual board members & the library board as a whole**
- ✓ **plan board training & development activities**
- ✓ **build library governance capacity & effectiveness**

# BOARD ASSESSMENT:

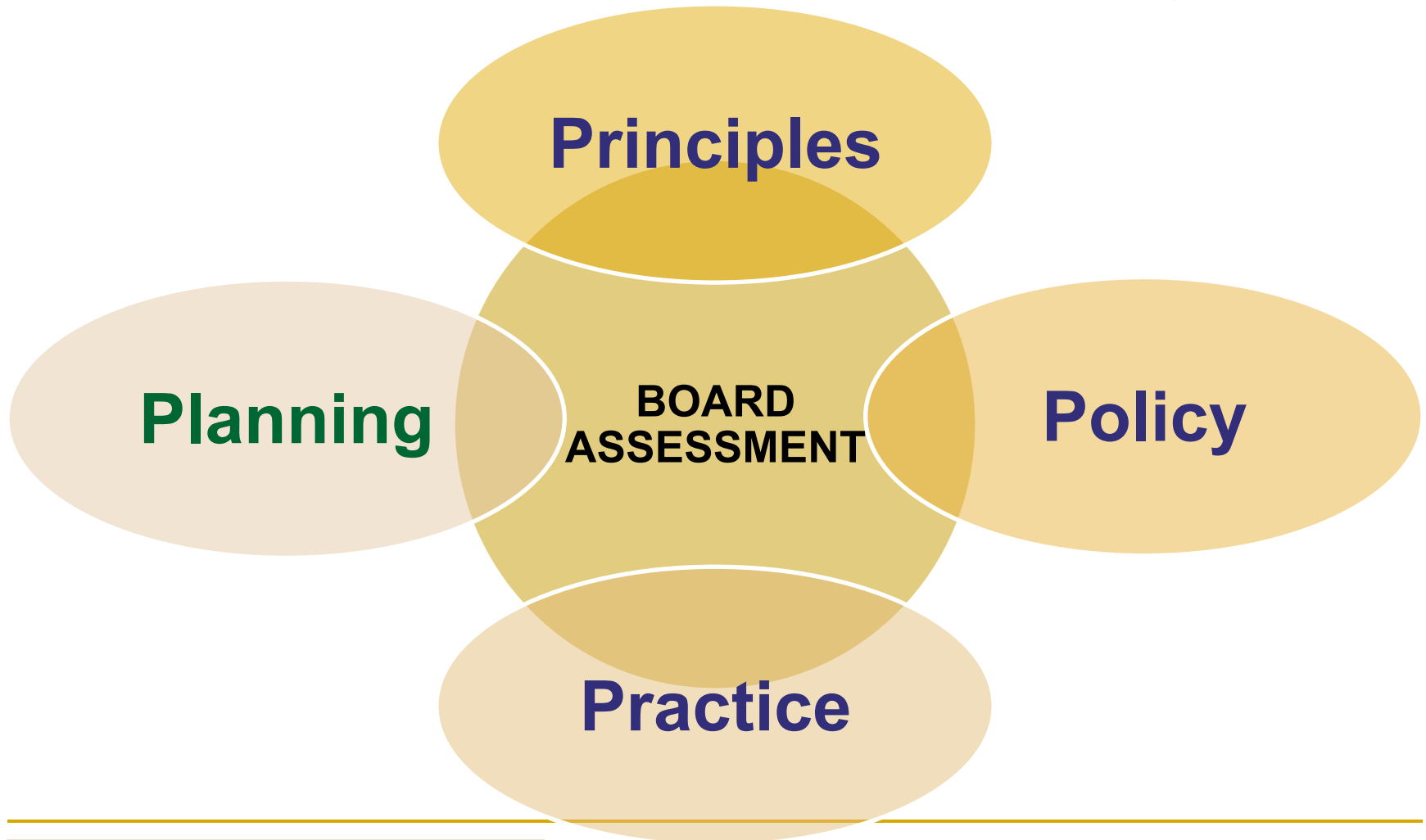
## Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP

- How can our board make the most of the next 2 YEARS + 10 MONTHS of our current term?
- What will we have built?



# BOARD ASSESSMENT:

Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP



# Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP

*Where are we now SWOT?*

	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
INTERNAL	<p><b><u>Strengths</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Advantages?</li><li>✓ Resources, assets, people?</li><li>✓ Experience, knowledge, data?</li><li>✓ Outreach?</li><li>✓ Returns?</li><li>✓ Innovative aspects?</li><li>✓ Value?</li><li>✓ Communications?</li></ul>	<p><b><u>Weaknesses</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Disadvantages?</li><li>✓ Gaps?</li><li>✓ Presence and reach?</li><li>✓ Vulnerabilities?</li><li>✓ Timeframe?</li><li>✓ Pressures?</li><li>✓ Morale, Commitment, Leadership?</li><li>✓ Volunteer capacity?</li></ul>
EXTERNAL	<p><b><u>Opportunities</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Recognition?</li><li>✓ Funding?</li><li>✓ Positioning?</li><li>✓ Leadership?</li><li>✓ Membership?</li><li>✓ Relationships/Alliances/ Partnerships?</li></ul>	<p><b><u>Threats</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Trends?</li><li>✓ Obstacles?</li><li>✓ Relevancy?</li><li>✓ Sustainability?</li></ul>

# Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP

*Where are we now SWOT?*

**RANMAR PUBLIC LIBRARY, Ontario**

with 4 locations serving a population of approximately 83,000

## **Board ACCOMPLISHMENTS** (2015)

- Completed **NEW Strategic Plan** (2015-2019) & our monthly board meeting agenda clearly reflects our strategic priorities
- Completed a **BOARD WORKPLAN**, which will be updated annually as our board works to advance its strategic plan
- Completed review and update of **Operational Policies**
- Shorlisted for a **provincial award** for TEEN SERVICES PROGRAM initiated in 2014

## **Board CHALLENGES** (2016-2018)

- Council is holding the line on the library's 2016 capital budget causing plans to renovate the Children's Area in our main branch library to be in jeopardy.
- Our Board recently lost 2 citizen members (one to illness; one to a move out of our municipality); Council has filled one vacancy with a citizen appointee & the other with a Councillor. For the first time ever, our 9-member board has 2 Councillor members.
- Our CEO is about 18 months from retirement.
- One of our board members caused quite a stir when she recently spoke to a local newspaper reporter about our CEO's pending retirement.

# Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP

*Where do we want to be in December 2018?*

## RANMAR PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

- All board members fully engaged & working as a **strong governance team**
- Comprehensive **governance policy** framework in place
- **Current CEO** retired & celebrated
- **New CEO** hired & successfully transitioned into executive leadership role
- **Children's area renovation** completed

*This is what we will have BUILT!*



# Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP

## Take TIME to MAP your COURSE...

*New Board Members* → *Orientation*

### KEY QUESTIONS

- How can we ensure that our new members are informed & engaged?
- What is our board orientation policy?
- Who will take the lead?
- What is our timeline?

### STRATEGIES

- Confirm & implement orientation plan for new board members

# Take TIME to MAP your COURSE...

*Board Member Conduct → Governance Policy*

*Development*

## KEY QUESTIONS

- What prompted this incident?
- What is our board's Code of Conduct policy?
- What intervention do we need to employ to avoid this situation again?
- How do we ensure that our governance policy framework is intact and sound?

## STRATEGIES

- Discuss situation with board member involved
- Review Governance Policies & update to clarify & confirm code of conduct for board members
- Identify other governance policy gaps that need to be addressed & develop policy accordingly

# Take **TIME** to **MAP** your **COURSE...**

*CEO Retirement → NEW CEO Hire*

## **KEY QUESTIONS**

- What expertise do we have available to us?
- What is our policy?
- Who will take the lead with the hiring process?
- What is our budget?
- What is our timeline?

## **STRATEGIES**

- Secure expertise – library board & staff, municipal staff, other libraries, OLS, etc.
- Confirm policy, budget & timeline
- Implement process

# Take TIME to MAP your COURSE...

*Capital Budget → Children's Area Renovation Project*

## KEY QUESTIONS

- How do we strengthen our case for capital funds required?
- What are our options for alternative funding sources?
- Is it feasible to phase the project over two years?

## STRATEGIES

- Root project as a strategic goal
- Secure Council's commitment
- Secure local business sponsorship
- Confirm & complete project workplan

# Take TIME to NAVIGATE your COURSE... Find RESOURCES & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT Opportunities



:. ontario library boards' association



Federation of  
ONTARIO  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARIES

La Fédération des  
BIBLIOTHÈQUES  
PUBLIQUES  
DE L'ONTARIO



Find Training



Southern  
Ontario  
Library  
Service  
Service des  
bibliothèques  
de l'Ontario-Sud



THE  
LIBRARY  
MARKETPLACE



Ontario Library Service – North  
Service des bibliothèques de l'Ontario – Nord

# BOARD ASSESSMENT:

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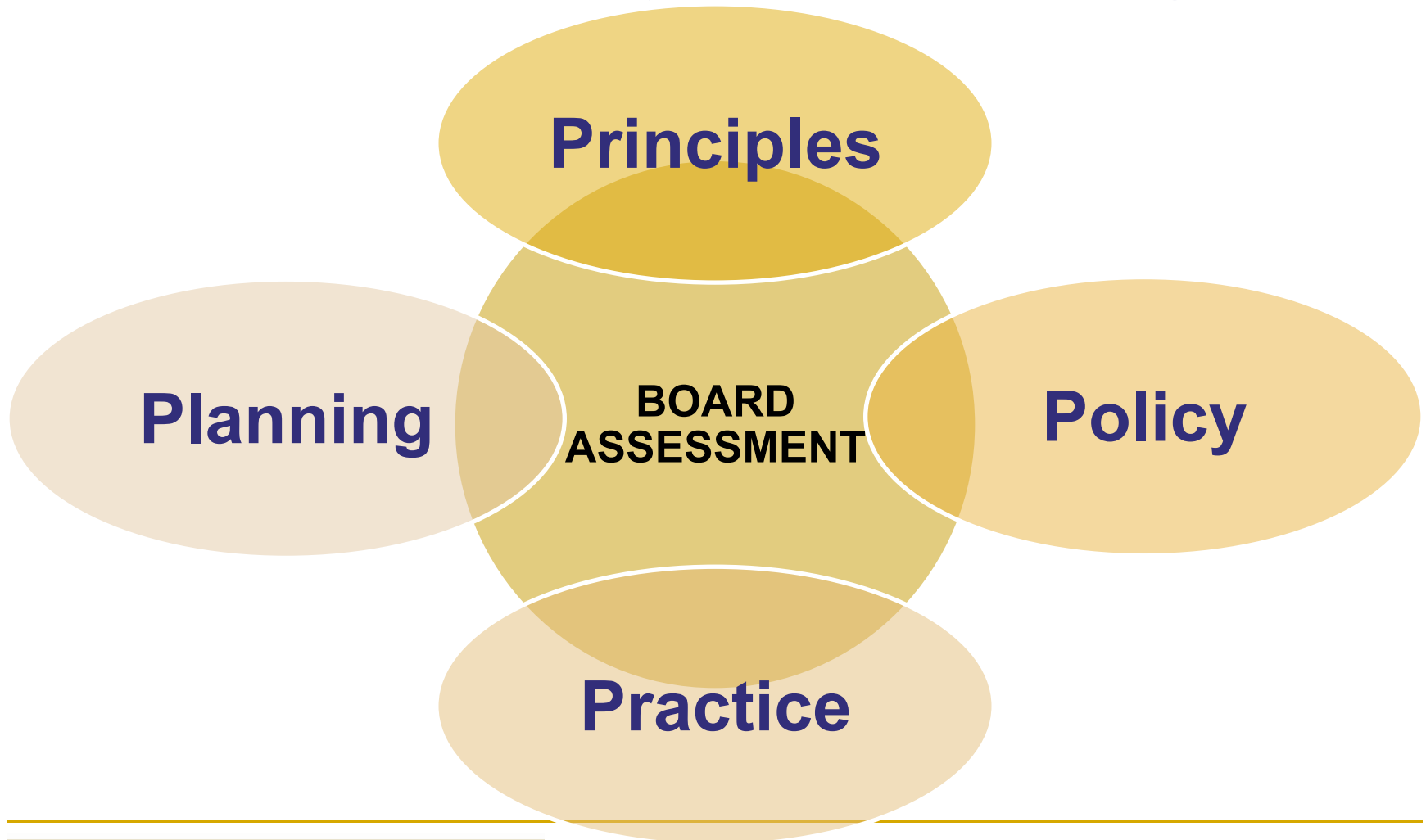


**CALLING ALL LIBRARY BOARDS!**

- Identify the areas of board performance that are strongest and those that need improvement
- Define governance priorities to address over the next 1, 2 & 3 years
- Establish an annual assessment routine to focus discussion on governance activities that will result in the greatest benefit to your library

# BOARD ASSESSMENT:

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# BOARD ASSESSMENT:

## Time for a GOVERNANCE CHECK UP

### While you consider...

- How can we make the most of the NEXT 2 YEARS + 10 MONTHS of our current term?
- What will we have built by December 2018?

### We ask...

Do you have **QUESTIONS** for us?

