

Session 3 Ends Policies

Ends

Ends policies describe the effect an organization seeks to have on the world outside itself. Your board will be making hard choices about who will and who will not benefit from your organization and in what ways. Ends are about impact, and there are no right answers.

Ends Policies answer the questions: **What Benefits, for Whom, at what Cost?**

Organizations exist to cause something to be different. What's your difference? What is your organization for? What should result from organizational activity? What does it produce?

1. Brainstorm the following question:

What is our organization for? Why do we exist?

(Get a list of a dozen or more, until ideas stop coming – no judgment here!)

2. Critique the list:

Eliminate words that describe good intentions or effort rather than results (support, assist, advocate). These can be fulfilled while having absolutely no effect on consumers. *Your organization does not exist to try.*

Eliminate means of all types from the list (programs and services, check out verbs – “teaching children to read” is means, “children *can read*” is ends)

Eliminate or clarify statements that are ambiguous as to whether they are means or ends – is *education* a means or an end? Are *jobs* or *community support* means or ends? In other words, are the results or activities to achieve results?

3. Rewrite the list.
4. Create a statement that encloses these “lower-level” themes
5. Identify the “for whom” or recipients at the same time, are these benefits for all students? Are there some students that are targeted differently? For example, is there a focus on the gifted and talented student? Does the board want to ensure all students have a certain level of benefit before addressing gifted and talented students?
6. What are the results for these students worth? In monetary terms, opportunity cost (what is given up as a result) or their importance relative to each other? What are their relative priorities?
7. Review your statement from #4. It’s like a mission statement, but should be characterized as follows:
 - Brief, but including all 3 ends components
 - Doable, not merely a wish or unattainable goal
 - Clear, but not having the burden of being snappy, like a slogan
 - Expansive enough to embrace the fullness of our intent
 - Narrow enough to distinguish your organization from the larger world
8. Ask yourself if your Board would be willing to accept any reasonable interpretation the Superintendent choose to give the words of the statement in #4. If yes, you need say no more about ends. If no, the Board must go to the next level of detail and specificity. And so on...

9. Be sure to have received sufficient input from a variety of sources (and especially owners) before making any “final” decisions. Who do you need to talk to or meet with?

Adapted from *Reinventing Your Board* First Edition by John Carver

Process:

Take each statement about why we exist/what are we here for and check to see if it addresses any or all of results, recipients, or costs. Each ends statement must address at least one of these in order to be an Ends policy. Taken together, these statements will constitute your Ends Policies that address all 3 questions (what benefits, for whom, at what cost).

Examples:

Offer quality programs and services	Entirely Means
Support parents of mentally ill people	Recipients are defined But no results; support Is Means
Help people reach their potential	That people reach their Potential is a Result; “Helping” is a Means
Advocate for the mentally ill	Recipients are defined, but no results, ‘advocate’ is Means
Make life enjoyable for Low-functioning people	Very close – change to “Life is enjoyable....” Then results and recipients are defined
Responsible use of resources	Entirely Means
Community support	Ambiguous – could be Ends or Means
Assist families in solving problems	Means if focus is assisting; if “Families solve problems,” then a result and recipient are defined

Sample Ends Statements:

- Mentally ill people will achieve life skills consistent with their abilities
- Mentally ill people will have the ability to fulfill their potential
- Public policy and community standards will be accepting of the mentally ill
- Families will have the ability to solve problems without violence