



# Developing an Engaged Board of Directors to Advance Equity

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# Credit and disclaimer

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# Presenter

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**Kenosha Davenport**  
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# Learning Objectives

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**As a result of this webinar, participants will be better able to:**

- Examine the current board infrastructure and its relationship with the executive director with an equity and racial justice lens.
- Explore strategies for recruiting and engaging meaningfully board members that represent the communities served.
- Apply organizational policies, bylaws, onboarding process, and systems that can generate and sustain an active and diverse board.



# Poll 1: Roles

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Which of the following best describes your role at your agency?

- Executive Director
- Program Director
- Administrative Staff
- Program Staff
- Board Member
- Other, state in chat



# Poll 2: Members

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How many members currently serve on your agency's Board of Directors?

- 5 or less
- 6 – 10 members
- 11 – 15 members
- More than 15 members
- Unsure



# Two Key Board Responsibilities



Taking care of the organization



Taking care of itself

# Poll 3: Which one best represents the Board and ED relationship?

A.



C.



B.



D.



E.





# Board and Executive Director Relationship

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## Executive Director Expectations from the Board

- The Board to act and speak as one.
- Directors who are engaged, informed, and prepared.
- The Board makes timely decisions based on accurate information.
- The Board, and individual directors, are accountable.
- The Board views the relationship with the Executive Director as a partnership.
- No micromanagement (only governance)



# Board and Executive Director Relationship (2)

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## Board Responsibilities to the Relationship

- Support the ED and commit to appropriate resources.
- Respect ED's role as head of the staff.
- Trust the ED and the information provided.
- Ensure fair and competitive compensation.
- Openly and transparently communicate.
- Manage itself and its interactions with the CEO.
- Assist CEO in developing a succession plan.
- Properly utilize committees.



# Importance of a Healthy Board Chair and CEO Relationship

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“Exceptional boards govern in constructive partnerships with the chief executive, recognizing that the effectiveness of the board and chief executive are interdependent.” -BoardSource



# Scenario 1: Share in the Chat

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## Board Challenge -

Help! My board won't stop micromanaging me!"  
The board is not listening to me and wants me to do what they say. They keep piling work on me and I am desperate for advice."

Imagine you are the chair of the board, how might you address this?

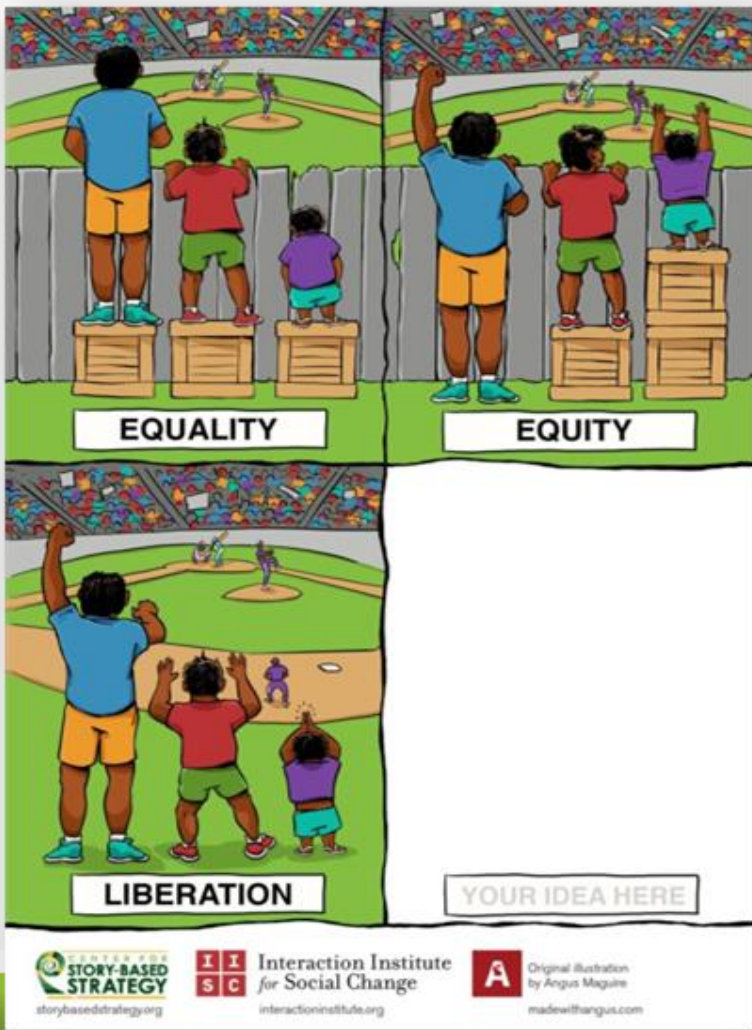


# Racial equity

A process of eliminating racial disparities and **improving outcomes for everyone.**

It is an intentional and continual practice of changing policies, practices, systems, and structures by prioritizing measurable change in lives of people of color.

Source: <https://www.raceforward.org>



# Racial Equity as a Core Value

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- **Create an organization-specific definition**
  - Explicit equity goals can help create a culture of accountability to building equity through transformation and intentionality.
- Include in strategic plan, goals and strategies
- Implementation plan: advocacy, policies, programs, systems
- Incorporate budget and resources for racial equity
- Measure results and sustain change



# Keeping Your Board Engaged in Equity

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- Annual ED and Board assessments that include racial equity metrics
- Assess composition of executive board, decision-makers
- Committee comprised of board members and staff to review board policies and develop recommendations
- Board capacity building for onboarding and annually



# Keeping Your Board Engaged in Equity (2)

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- Include equity related topics in board meetings, discuss implicit bias in decision making
- Explicitly acknowledge and manage power dynamics that exist on the board
- Create group agreements to honor varying perspectives and address conflicts when they arise





# Promoting Equity Through the Bylaws

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- Compensation
- Meetings
- Committees
- Officers
- Recruitment



# Scenario 2: Share in the Chat

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## Board Challenge

Our board is not representative. We have had the same members for more than 5 years.

How should I address this?



# Poll 4: What backgrounds are on your board?

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- Law Enforcement
- Survivors
- Human Resources
- Prosecutors
- Medical
- Advocates
- Nonprofit Organizations
- Legal
- For-Profit Business



# Board Recruitment: A Tool to Advance Equity



# Board Member Needs Assessment

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- Board Matrix
  - Unique for organization, aligned with community
  - Community and professional background: CPA, legal, expertise, skills
  - Demographics: religion, age, gender identity, ethnicity, race
  - Lived experiences: advocacy, relationships, connections
- Assess organizational goals for the next 2-3 years
- Recruit board based on gaps and needs – pay specific attention to meaningful representation.



# Recruitment with an Equity Lens

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- ✓ Clarify values and alignment with board candidates
- ✓ Avoid tokenizing, make ask relevant to skills and experience
- ✓ Value lived-experience
- ✓ Highlight and value skills, knowledge, passion, life experience, non-traditional education



# Board Recruitment with an Equity Lens (2)

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- ✓ Build a pipeline of potential board candidates - mentorship.
- ✓ Start list with women, BIPOC, trans people, immigrants, etc.
- ✓ Inquire about needs for members to participate at fullest.
- ✓ Accessibility considerations: financial obligations, background, childcare, transportation, language, etc.



# Recruitment Journey

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1. Identify potential board members
  - Network, mentor, engage as advisory
2. Cultivate relationship, build trust
3. Recruit
4. Orient, buddy, mentorship
5. Build capacity
6. Involve and nurture





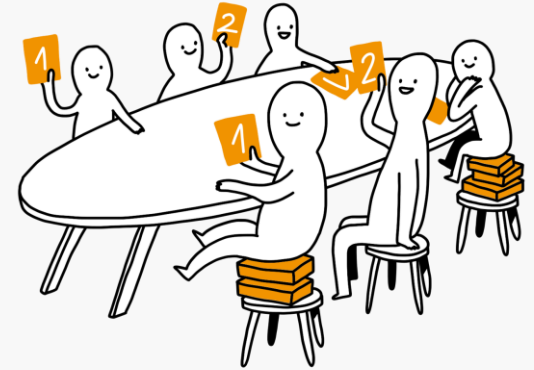


# Question & Answer Chat

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Please post your questions in the Q&A section of the webinar

What is one item you plan to put into action from what you just heard?



# Closing Points

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## Equity-Driven Board of Directors

- ✓ Commit to racial justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion
- ✓ Know the community and organization served
- ✓ Discuss and engage in fiduciary duties with an equity lens
- ✓ Build policies and structures that address equity



## Professional Leadership and Advancement Network (PLAN) Program – starting February 2023

### What you can expect:

- Seven live sessions, two hours/week
- Discussions and learning activities
- One-on-one TA and peer support

- Info Session: November 9, 2022
- Applications open: November 9, 2022
- Applications Due: December 9, 2022
- **PLAN Program:** February 2 - March 16, 2023 (seven weeks)



# Thank you!

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Please provide feedback regarding today's webinar, submit any questions, and request a certificate of participation:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScYbdXGF2KY\\_suc8cfUz4ZBu\\_bdFf5ke9y41aB3ZbcF\\_IMAjw/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScYbdXGF2KY_suc8cfUz4ZBu_bdFf5ke9y41aB3ZbcF_IMAjw/viewform?usp=sf_link)

SOS Institute page with webinars and resources:

<https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/organizational-leadership-training/supporting-organizational-sustainability-training/>

For information, resources, and technical assistance, please contact the Learning and Leadership team at [learning@futureswithoutviolence.org](mailto:learning@futureswithoutviolence.org)

