

For Immediate Release

New Tool Keeps Board Members on Right Side of Tracks

CONCORD, MA (April 3, 2007) — BoardSource, the national voice of nonprofit governance, released *The Nonprofit Dashboard: A Tool for Tracking Progress*, written by Lawrence M. Butler, senior consultant with Maguire Associates. *The Nonprofit Dashboard* describes how to improve board oversight by communicating critical information to the board in a concise, visual, more compelling way using a “dashboard” reporting format.

“Dashboards can help improve board oversight because they enable the board to focus on key indicators of program success and financial trends. Often, this means more effective meetings, more thoughtful and informed decision making, and better use of board members’ time,” said Deborah S. Hechinger, president and CEO of BoardSource. “*The Nonprofit Dashboard* describes how developing a dashboard fits with planning and evaluation and highlights the important partnership between staff and board in creating and effectively using a dashboard.”

The book defines the concept of a dashboard, offers guidelines for deciding what information should be presented in it, and recommends different ways to present that information graphically. This new resource educates readers on:

- dashboard reports and how they should be used
- deciding what to measure for mission effectiveness
- determining the board’s informational needs
- designing the reports, choosing data display formats, and communicating a specific focus
- maintaining a dashboard reporting system

According to Lawrence Butler, “The value of the dashboard *design process* goes beyond the reports it generates. By identifying what is important to measure — those few key indicators that reveal the most telling aspects of institutional performance — dashboards can help improve board decision-making and assure institutional success.”

To help organizations get started in creating their own dashboard reports, the accompanying CD-ROM contains a set of Microsoft Excel® worksheets for entering data and generating dashboards via templates that can be tailored to the institution’s needs. The CD also contains a questionnaire that can be sent to board members to determine the kind of information they would find valuable.

The Nonprofit Dashboard is available for purchase at www.boardsource.org/PS4 or by calling 800-883-6262.

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About the Author

Lawrence Butler is a senior consultant and strategic planning specialist with Maguire Associates (www.maguireassoc.com), a research-based consulting firm that helps colleges and universities advance their mission, strengthen their reputation, and enhance their vitality and effectiveness. He has written extensively on strategic planning and governance information enhancement and has worked with numerous institutions of higher education in these areas over a 30-year career. Mr. Butler holds a master's in business administration from Harvard Business School and a bachelor's degree from Harvard College.

BoardSource

BoardSource, formerly the National Center for Nonprofit Boards, is dedicated to increasing the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations by strengthening boards of directors. Through consulting, training, publications, and membership, BoardSource provides solutions and tools to improve board performance, acts as a convener and facilitator in the development of knowledge about boards, promotes changes and innovation to strengthen governance, and serves as an advocate for the value of board service and the importance of effective governance. BoardSource is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.