



Welcome to **LeadingAge Kansas'** eighth issue of Guiding Governance. Each quarter this publication focuses on a specific governance topic to help you, your leadership team and your board in planning, strategic thinking, and execution as you seek to sustain and amplify your mission. Our next 12 issues will each highlight a principle from BoardSource's [The Source – Twelve Principles of Governance that Power Exceptional Boards](#).

Remember, exceptional governance does not happen by accident. If we want staff and volunteer leadership partnerships that add value to our organizations, we must intentionally focus on our governance practices - constantly refining and evolving.

Please [let us know](#) how you use this publication, if it proves helpful, what other topics you would like to see us focus on and how we can best serve you and your board. We would love to discuss being part of your next Board or Leadership Team retreat, so contact debra@leadingagekansas.org to learn more.

Mission Driven

“Exceptional boards shape and uphold the mission, articulate a compelling vision, and ensure the congruence between decisions and core values.”

– BoardSource, *Twelve Principles of Governance that Power Exceptional Boards*

A crucial aspect of governance is being guardians of the mission, vision and values of the organization. These statements are not simply fancy sentences on our annual reports, websites or walls of our community. They are statements of critical importance that guide decision making and are included in regular board conversations.

Leadership (and governance *is* leadership) requires setting an aspirational vision and using it to inspire and motivate staff in imagining a preferred future. We also must be courageous enough to acknowledge that, from time to time, we may need to rearticulate our mission and vision depending on where we are in the life cycle of our organization and what external factors might be affecting our business model.

Values are also not statements to craft and then file but are meant to be lived out and modeled both at the board and staff levels.

Can your individual board members recite your mission, vision or values? What about your staff leadership? Where do you articulate these foundational elements of your organization to ensure you are living into them? If you don't currently, begin placing your mission, vision and values on your regular board meeting agendas. How can we use mission in our deliberations if we don't know what the statement means?

Starting the Conversation

[The Source: Twelve Principles of Governance that Power Exceptional Boards](#) from BoardSource

[The Importance of Having a Mission Driven Company](#) by William Craig for *Forbes*

[Mission Matters Most](#) by Kim Jonker & William F. Meehan III for *Stanford Social Innovation Review*

[How to Guide your Nonprofit toward Mission-Friendly Growth](#) by Kevin Xu for *Forbes*

[5 Reasons Why Mission Driven Leaders are the Most Successful](#) from Trustologie

[Mission Statement](#) from BoardSource

[Strategic Planning and Redefining the Vision](#) from BoardSource

Tools & Templates

[What Does it Mean to be Mission Driven?](#) from NESCC

[Mind the Gap: Mission Accomplishment Measures](#) by Robert M. Sheehan, Jr. for BoardSource

[Tips for Developing a Mission Statement](#) from BoardSource

[9 Characteristics of a Mission Statement](#) from BoardSource

[Mission vs. Vision](#) from BoardSource

[30 Example Vision Statements](#) from TopNonprofits

[50 Example Mission Statements](#) from TopNonprofits

[8 Elements of an Effective Vision Statement](#) from The NonProfit Times

[Elements of a Vision Statement](#) from BoardSource

For more information, or to have Debra Zehr talk to your Board about trends in aging services, governance or the current state of our field, please contact Debra at 1.800.264.5242 or debra@leadingagekansas.org

"For Your Board" is adapted from LeadingAge Virginia's "Guiding Governance" Board Series.