



HUNTER VALLEY
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

By email: bostes.review@det.nsw.edu.au

The Review Panel: Emeritus Professor Bill Loudon, Lisa Paul and Dr. Phil Lambert

Review of the NSW Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute my views to the review of BOSTES. I am going to restrict my remarks to the Governance and Management of BOSTES.

BOSTES is currently a statutory authority without contemporary and proper Governance. My view is that the Board of BOSTES should act in a governance role over the operations of the Office of the Board, in the way that the Councils or Boards of Directors function in most independent schools across the state.

The major concern that I have with the current arrangement is that the President of the Board is both Chair of the Board of BOSTES and also CEO of the Office of BOSTES. This raises serious questions about accountability. How is this achieved with a combined role? I don't understand the dynamics of the position and its relationship to the Minister or President, my observations of the performance of the President begs the question, what oversight and supervision are maintained over the performance of the President? In practice, it seems there is none; the President appears to be liberty to set the agenda and direction for the Board and then at will to implement direction and advice that the Board may set. Strategy and direction seem to be the preserve of the President under the current arrangements.

Another concern is the size of the Board; 23 members. Some may argue that its strength is representative, and this in part may be true. How do you achieve a position of consent or indeed effective decision-making when the size of the Board is unwieldy? The size of the Board has diminished the board's deliberation and decision-making effectiveness.

I note that there is a significant number on the 'Board' of BOSTES who would appear to be in place simply to serve constituents or stakeholders. To be effective, a board needs the right group of people, with an appropriate mix of skills, knowledge, and experience that together will best assist BOSTES to achieve its goals and aspirations.

My recommendation is that there is a Board of the authority with an independent and part-time Chair, with a small number of purposefully selected Governors. This Board oversees the office which has a CEO. The CEO is accountable to the Board for his/her performance and the performance of the Office. The Board of BOSTES would report to the Minister through the Chair. The independent Chair could then focus on the role and function of the Board and its educational objectives, removed from the management of the day-to-day running of the office, as well as being able to provide advice to the Minister. The Chair and the CEO ought to be outstanding educational leaders. This model being consistent with most current contemporary principles associated with effective corporate Governance.

Yours sincerely

Paul Teys
Principal