

Taking the Wise Stewards journey:

A pathway to enhanced board effectiveness

Participation in the Wise Stewards Initiative empowers governing boards of theological schools as agents of institutional change through one-on-one coaching, board self-assessment, peer learning, and immersion into governance habits for long-term effectiveness. Follow these steps to enhance your experience.

1

RALLY YOUR BOARD

When: Before the year **Who:** President & board

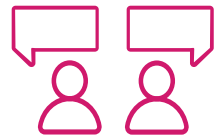
Participation in the Wise Stewards Initiative is not for the faint of heart. To ensure the fullest benefit from the Initiative, it's crucial that all members of your board understand and are willing and ready to put in the work that will be asked of them.

2

MEET YOUR COACH

When: In the fall **Who:** President & coach

Get to know your Wise Stewards coach through a meet-and-greet phone conversation that includes the board chair and president. This is the opportunity to clarify expectations, define roles, and declare commitments for the year.



3

ASSESS PERFORMANCE

When: Late August **Who:** All members of the board

In late August, members of your board will complete a board assessment designed by the In Trust Center specifically for boards of theological schools. (Make sure everyone does it.) The asset introduces your board to the six principles of exemplary board governance that are foundational to the whole of your Wise Stewards experience.

4

INTERACT WITH FINDINGS

When: Fall/Winter **Who:** Board, president & coach

Your governance coach will facilitate a board education session during your fall (preferred) or winter board meeting, focusing on the findings from the assessment. The board will identify a short (3-5 items) list of technical issues suggested by the assessment as needing their immediate attention.



5

CONVERSE WITH PEERS

When: During the year **Who:** Board & administration

Monthly facilitated Zoom conversations provide opportunity for members of your board and administrative team to engage with peers from within the cohort around issues critical to effective board governance.

6

LEARN ALONGSIDE PEERS

When: March **Who:** Your 4-person team & peers

With board tune-up work completed, your team will arrive at the Wise Stewards Seminar in March ready to tackle issues of longer-term consequence. Over the course of two days, your team of four will work alongside peers in exploring big-picture challenges. You'll be encouraged to dig deeper into the six essentials of exemplary board governance and to think strategically about the board's role in driving change.





DEVELOP A PLAN

When: After seminar Who: President, board & coach

Beginning at the seminar and continuing in the weeks following, your team will lay out the framework of a longer-term plan for moving your board from technical adjustments to generative thinking and leadership. Coaching time is available to assist with this work.



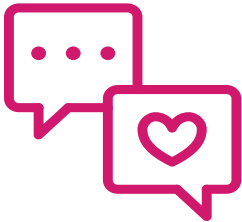
SUM IT UP

When: October after the year Who: President & board

The final step in your Wise Stewards year is to prepare a brief report outlining the benefits to your board of participation in the Wise Stewards Initiative. The report should also include next steps for continuing board development for sustained change in the way the board performs.



BEYOND THE WISE STEWARDS YEAR: KEEP GOING



Completing the 8 steps is **just the beginning** of an ongoing journey toward exemplary board governance. Your board has put in the work and the changes you've made are already evident in board member engagement, productivity, and satisfaction.

But how do you make the changes stick? How do you prevent back-sliding; to the board returning to old patterns and practices?

The In Trust Center is here to help with resources, services, and connections, including grant opportunities, webinars, podcasts, newsletters, and a magazine specifically for leaders in theological schools. In addition, we offer customized Resource Consulting to meet your board's unique needs and address their specific challenges using our extensive database of resources. Our carefully vetted and knowledgeable Resource Consultants walk alongside board leaders as they define challenges, discern directions, and initiate solutions.

QUESTIONS & RESOURCES: ENGAGE FOR MORE

You can find plenty of resources at www.intrust.org and you can find the Wise Stewards Initiative page at www.intrust.org/WSI. As well, our team is here to help and is easy to reach at resources@intrust.org.

