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## **A REENGINEERING THE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD TOWARDS A RESPONSIVE AND TRANSPARENT GOVERNANCE**

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**Abstract** – The system of decentralization from national to Local Government Unit (LGU), exercised through authority and responsibility provides a more responsive and transparent local government structure. The Local School Board (LSB) channels governance to serving the constituents in a province, city, or municipality. The underpinning concern on the nature of operationalization of local school board in the LGU is a perennial matter in most of the implementing units which is delimited to more of funding and addressing the needs of the schools. This study capitalized into perspective of the internal and external members of the local school board in regard to reengineering its structure, policy, and operationalization as the art of a more responsive and transparent governance. A descriptive method of research with the questionnaire checklist as the instrument was utilized. To realize its goal, this study unearthed significant pivotal considerations to reengineer the local school board as enunciated in Republic Act No. 5447, Section 1 to 145, and Local Government Code of 1991, Section 98 to 101. These facets are critical considerations to reengineer the operationalization of the LSB especially on how to transparently utilize the special education fund allotment for programs, projects, and activities of the schools. Supplemented with review of recent literature and studies published, reengineering the operationalization of the local school board in the City of San Pedro, Philippines, this study is found to be relevant for a more engaging stakeholders' participation in the delivery of education services.

**Keywords:** governance, local school board, management, responsiveness, transparency

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the context of educational governance, the Local School Board (LSB) is a pivotal entity responsible for shaping the educational landscape at the local level. Since education serves as the cornerstone for societal progress, the LSB's effectiveness in decision-making and resource management is paramount. However, the sources highlight a "perennial concern" where the operationalization of the LSB is often delimited to mere funding and

addressing basic school needs, failing to engage in broader, more inclusive governance. Furthermore, pressing issues such as budgetary constraints, a lack of transparency regarding the reporting of unutilized Special Education Funds (SEF), and insufficient communication with stakeholders have historically diminished trust and involvement within the local school community. This study is significant because it seeks to reengineer these structures and policies to foster a more equitable, accountable, and effective

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education system that optimizes resource allocation and builds community confidence. The primary objective of this research is to reengineer the LSB's governance framework in the City of San Pedro to enhance its responsiveness and transparency. Specifically, the study aims to assess the extent of implementation of Republic Act No. 5447 (Sections 1 to 14) and the Local Government Code of 1991 (Sections 98 to 101). It further evaluates the current level of responsiveness—measured by accessibility, timeliness, relevance, reliability, and empathy—and transparency, determined by information access, clarity of decisions, participatory governance, and accountability mechanisms. Ultimately, the research seeks to identify governance gaps and propose actionable reengineering mechanisms to improve the LSB's structure, policy, and functions.

This research focuses on the City of San Pedro, Laguna, and utilizes a descriptive-correlational research design to explore the relationships between governance variables in a real-world setting. The study kinalap (gathered) data from a total of 115 respondents, representing a 100% sample of the target population. These participants include core LSB members, school heads, Chief Education Supervisors, Education Program Supervisors, Public Schools

District Supervisors, and the Presidents of both Faculty and Parent-Teacher Associations. Data collection was achieved through a questionnaire checklist and complemented by unstructured interviews to ensure a nuanced understanding of the LSB's operational challenges and successes.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

In this study identifies a critical gap in government education policy, specifically the limited structural responsiveness and transparency of Local School Boards (LSBs). Despite the legal mandates established by Republic Act No. 5447 and the Local Government Code of 1991, the operationalization of LSB functions remains largely confined to budgetary compliance, with insufficient emphasis on inclusive governance, stakeholder engagement, and the transparency of decisions. Consequently, this research seeks to reengineer the Local School Board's governance framework to better serve the needs of local educational communities through enhanced responsiveness and transparency.

Specifically, the study addresses the following key research concerns:

1. To what extent are Republic Act 5447 (Sections 1 to 14) and the Local Government Code of 1991 (Sections 2.1 to 2.14, covering composition,

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duties, budget prioritization, and remuneration) implemented as planned?

2. To what extent does the current operationalization of the LSB reflect responsiveness (measured by accessibility, timeliness, relevance, reliability, and empathy) and transparency (measured by information access, clarity of decisions, participatory governance, and accountability mechanisms)?
3. What are the underlying causes of governance gaps in terms of transparency and responsiveness, and what reengineering mechanisms can be proposed to improve the board's structure, policy, and functions?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of implementation of RA 5447 and the Local Government Code of 1991 and the resulting responsiveness and transparency of LSB operations

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design to investigate the relationships between governance variables in a real-world setting. This approach was chosen to provide a foundation for understanding how the implementation of legal mandates relates to

governance outcomes without making claims about causation. The research integrated explanatory, descriptive, and evaluative components, allowing for a nuanced analysis of why certain governance mechanisms are effective and how they impact educational outcomes in the City of San Pedro, Laguna.

A purposive sampling technique was employed to select a total of 115 respondents, representing 100% of the target population. The participants were selected based on their pivotal roles and unique perspectives within the local educational system. The sample included 9 members of the Local School Board, 2 Chief Education Supervisors, 9 Education Program Supervisors, 11 Public Schools District Supervisors, 28 School Heads, 28 Presidents of Faculty Associations, and 28 Presidents of School Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA). This diverse group ensured a comprehensive representation of both internal and external stakeholders in the local education governance.

The primary data collection tool was a questionnaire checklist designed with a 5-point Likert scale to measure the extent of implementation of legal mandates and the perceived levels of responsiveness and transparency. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, the instrument was subjected to expert validation and a

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reliability test using Cronbach's alpha. Furthermore, unstructured interviews were conducted to verify, supplement, and complement the quantitative data, allowing for the collection of detailed comments and suggestions from the participants.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**1. Extent of Implementation of Republic Act 5447**

The implementation of RA 5447 is found to be effective, with an overall weighted mean of 3.81, interpreted as "Implemented to the Full Extent". Section 6 (Functions of City School Boards) received the highest rating of 4.01, indicating that the board is perceived as highly effective in carrying out its legal duties. Section 13 (Repealing Clause) received the lowest rating of 3.59, suggesting some lingering challenges in the removal of outdated or conflicting laws that may affect school board operations.

**Table I**  
**Summary of Extent of implementation of Republic Act 5447 as Planned**

FACTORS	WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Section 1, declaration of policy and creation of Special Education Fund;	3.99	Implemented to the Full Extent
Section 2, financing source of the fund;	3.91	Implemented to the Full Extent
Section 3, allocation of taxes on Virginia-type cigarettes and the duties on imported leaf tobacco;	3.72	Implemented to the Full Extent
Section 4, imposition of additional tax on real property and disposition of proceeds;	3.85	Implemented to the Full Extent
Section 5, creation of local school board;	3.92	Implemented to the Full Extent
Section 6, functions of city school boards;	4.01	Implemented to the Full Extent
Section 7, expenditure of city special education fund;	3.92	Implemented to the Full Extent
Section 8, administrative provisions;	3.79	Implemented to the Full Extent
Section 9, turnover of the collections;	3.67	Implemented to the Full Extent
Section 10; rules and regulations;	3.65	Implemented to the Full Extent
Section 11, penal provision;	3.80	Implemented to the Full Extent
Section 12, separability clause;	3.81	Implemented to the Full Extent
Section 13, repealing clause	3.59	Implemented to the Full Extent
Section 14, effectivity	3.64	Implemented to the Full Extent
<b>OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>3.81</b>	<b>Implemented to the Full Extent</b>

**2. Extent of Implementation of the Local Government Code of 1991**

**Table II**  
**Summary of Extent of implementation of the Local Government Code of 1991**

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FACTORS	WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Establishments of the city school boards	3.67	Implemented to the Full Extent
Composition of the city school boards	4.14	Implemented to the Full Extent
Performance of the duties and responsibilities	3.80	Implemented to the Full Extent
Determination of criteria set by the Department of Education on the annual budgetary needs for the operations and maintenance of public schools within the city;	3.80	Implemented to the Full Extent
Disbursement of funds from the Special Education Fund	3.78	Implemented to the Full Extent
Serving as an advisory committee to the Sanggunian concerned on educational matters	3.71	Implemented to the Full Extent
Recommending changes in the school name of public schools for enactment by the Sanggunian concerned	3.77	Implemented to the Full Extent
Local school board meeting;	3.82	Implemented to the Full Extent
Protocol matter in presiding a meeting	4.26	Implemented to the Full Extent
Accountable preparation of the budget	4.57	Implemented to the Full Extent
School budget prioritization on construction, repair, and maintenance of school buildings and other facilities of the public elementary and secondary schools	4.17	Implemented to the Full Extent
School budget prioritization on establishment and maintenance of extension classes	3.60	Implemented to the Full Extent
School budget prioritization on sports activities at the division, district, city, and Barangay levels	3.75	Implemented to the Full Extent
Compensation and remuneration of the members of the city school board	3.39	Implemented to the Full Extent
<b>OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>3.87</b>	<b>Implemented to the Full Extent</b>

The implementation of the LGC of 1991 is also rated as "Implemented to the Full Extent" with an overall weighted mean of 3.87.

The accountable preparation of the budget earned a score of 4.57, reflecting a very strong commitment to financial accountability and compliance with government regulations.

The compensation and remuneration of board members received the lowest score of 3.39, indicating concerns regarding the adequacy of financial support for non-government board members

**3. Current Operationalization: Responsiveness and Transparency**

**Table III**  
**Summary of The Extent of implementation of the Local Government Code of 1991 in terms of Responsiveness and Transparency**

FACTORS	WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Responsiveness	4.67	Implemented to the Fullest Extent
Transparency	4.49	Implemented to the Fullest Extent
<b>OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>4.58</b>	<b>Implemented to the Fullest Extent</b>

The study found that the Local School Board (LSB) in the City of San Pedro performs exceptionally well in these two areas, both interpreted as "Implemented to the Fullest Extent".

Responsiveness. With a mean of 4.67, the LSB is highly proactive in addressing educational needs and allocating resources to urgent school concerns.

Transparency. With a mean of 4.49, the board demonstrates a strong commitment to financial accountability, particularly in providing clear and accessible financial reports (4.70). However, community engagement in budget discussions was identified as a relative area for growth (3.67)

**4. Governance Gaps and Reengineering Mechanisms**

The results identified several governance gaps, including:

1. Insufficient stakeholder awareness regarding the specific financing

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sources of the Special Education Fund (SEF)

2. A need for more equitable and strategic resource distribution rather than just basic funding.
3. Limited active public participation in decision-making processes beyond the core board members.
4. Proposed mechanisms for reengineering include institutionalizing performance monitoring, strengthening inter-agency coordination, and adopting digital innovations for real-time financial reporting

The study confirms that the implementation of legal mandates is directly tied to governance quality:

RA 5447. There is a significant relationship between the implementation of this act and the LSB's responsiveness ( $r=0.650$ ) and transparency ( $r=0.870$ ) LGC of 1991. Similarly, a strong positive correlation exists between LGC implementation and the board's responsiveness ( $r=0.690$ ) and transparency ( $r=0.850$ ).

These results indicate that as the enforcement of these laws improves, the overall quality of local education governance also significantly increases

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**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

The study concluded that the governance framework of the Local School Board is firmly established and effectively operationalized, although specific areas for refinement exist:

- The research confirms that Republic Act 5447 is effectively implemented (overall weighted mean of 3.81), ensuring the proper utilization of the Special Education Fund (SEF) for school facilities, teacher training, and learning materials. However, while Section 6 (Functions of the Board) is highly effective, there are lingering concerns regarding the Repealing Clause (Section 13), indicating challenges in removing outdated or conflicting laws.
- The LSB successfully upholds the mandates of the Local Government Code of 1991 (overall weighted mean of 3.87), demonstrating exceptional strength in accountable budget preparation (4.57) and the prioritization of school infrastructure. Conversely, the compensation and remuneration of board members, particularly for non-government personnel, remains a weak point, potentially affecting long-term engagement.

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- The board has achieved "fullest extent" implementation in its operational quality (overall mean of 4.58). It is highly proactive in addressing urgent school concerns and providing accessible financial reports. However, the results show that community engagement in discussions regarding education funding is significantly lower than other transparency indicators, suggesting that decision-making remains somewhat centralized among core members.
- There is a strong, significant positive correlation between the extent of implementation of legal mandates (RA 5447 and LGC 1991) and the board's responsiveness and transparency. This implies that the more strictly these laws are enforced, the more accountable and effective the LSB becomes in serving its constituents.
- collections and the removal of conflicting outdated regulations.
- Enhance Stakeholder Representation: There is a need to broaden the composition of the board to include more active participation from school heads, parents, teachers, and community organizations to ensure a more inclusive decision-making process.
- Strategic Budget Prioritization: The board should adopt a more equitable approach to resource distribution, specifically increasing support for extension classes and sports development, which were rated lower than infrastructure projects.
- Improve Transparency Mechanisms: Beyond just providing reports, the LSB should institutionalize regular public reporting and open forums to actively involve the community in discussions about how education funds are spent.

**RECOMMENDATION**

To address the identified gaps and further enhance local education governance, the study proposes the following recommendations:

- Strengthen Legal Compliance: The LSB should maintain strict adherence to RA 5447, particularly in ensuring the timely turnover of
- Institutionalize Performance Monitoring: A system for periodic audits and performance-based evaluation should be established to measure the LSB's responsiveness and transparency against key performance indicators.
- Adopt Digital Innovations: The study recommends implementing online

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financial reporting systems and publicly accessible databases to allow real-time tracking of SEF utilization, which will foster greater public trust.

- Legislative Advocacy: Policy-makers should consider legislative reforms to reengineer the LSB structure to better align with the evolving needs of 21st-century education and ASEAN integration

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