

AGB CONSULTING

2019 Retreat—Board of Supervisors University of Louisiana System

George Pernsteiner, AGB Consultant

February 22-23, 2019

Lake Charles, LA

BUILD A BETTER BOARD | AGB.ORG/CONSULTING

AGB CONSULTING

THE AGB GUARDIANS INITIATIVE

BUILD A BETTER BOARD | [AGB.ORG/CONSULTING](https://agb.org/consulting)

Board Responsibility to Communicate

- With Citizens
- With State Government

The AGB Guardians Initiative

- Value of higher education is being questioned
- Board members can communicate and advocate
- AGB's Guardians Initiative (agb.org/guardians) provides a framework, facts, advice, and rationale that can be used to advance the value of higher education in the minds of citizens, policymakers, and state leaders

The Public Trust: Things to Consider

- Confidence in higher education is declining but still remains higher than that in all but three other institutions (military, small business, police) (Gallup 2017)
- Confidence is higher in education than in colleges and universities (Gallup 2018), so the words we use matter
- Most Americans believe higher education advances job prospects (Civis Analytics, 2017)

More Things to Consider

- Among young adults, 18-34 years of age, 57% say a four-year degree is not worth the cost (NBC/Wall Street Journal Poll, 2017)
- Most Republicans say colleges and universities have a negative effect on the country (Pew Research, 2017)
- But community college education is viewed very favorably (New America Foundation, 2017) due to workforce applicability
- Employers value critical thinking, problem solving in diverse groups, and intercultural skills by overwhelming majorities (AAC&U Employer Survey, 2015)

AGB Trustee Index, 2017 & 2018

- Most board members agree that public perceptions of higher education have declined in past decade
- Most also agree that there are paths to success in addition to college degrees
- Nearly all board members believe that higher education's business models need to change (but most also fear that colleges and universities are unwilling to make that change)
- Most board members say colleges and universities are not effective advocates for themselves
- Nearly all board members agreed that collective action is needed

The Guardians Initiative is a Response

- A response to negative and declining perceptions
- A response to criticism
- A response that recognizes both the true value of higher education to individuals, society, and the economy but also acknowledges the need for colleges and universities to change
- A response that is designed to be part of a true dialog with skeptics as well as supporters

Board Members as Exemplars

- Engaged
- Informed
- Articulate
- Aware of criticisms and willing to make change to meet them
- Ethical and Equitable
- Accountable
- Not adding risk to their institutions through their actions and words

Spokespeople and Advocates

- Meetings with leaders and community
- Engagement with state
- Op-eds and other vehicles for communication

AGB Has Resources to Help

- Prominent voices
- Outreach to institutions in key media markets
- Research and background documents
- Assistance to institutions and trustees/supervisors to engage through speeches, campus events, media outreach, testimony
- Supportive connections with other groups
- Highlighting trustee advocacy via social media @AGBGuardians

Board Members Assuming a More Public Role:

Raising our own level of accountability for meeting and fulfilling the public trust for our students, for our communities, for our nation.

What Can We Do? What Should We Do?
How Should We Do It?

The background of the image is a dark purple color. It features silhouettes of several business professionals in a meeting. Some are standing and talking, while others are sitting at a table. The silhouettes are reflected in the bottom half of the image, creating a symmetrical effect. In the center, there is a white rectangular box containing the text 'AGB CONSULTING'.

AGB CONSULTING

BUILD A BETTER BOARD | [AGB.ORG/CONSULTING](https://www.agb.org/consulting)