

# Modernizing Student Association Governance

Matt Risser and Michael Hughes



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### Matt Risser

- Previous student association experience: SMUSA VP External, StudentsNS Board Chair, CASA Atlantic Regional Director
- Chair of StudentsNS advisory committee overseeing a governance review of Nova Scotia student associations
- Over a decade of experience studying, practising, consulting, and educating on governance issues
- Currently Mayor of Lunenburg, NS



### Michael Hughes

- Previous student association experience: SMUSA CRO and constitution committee member, ANSSA delegate
- Served as a governance consultant to StudentsNS and authored the 2015 report: *A Blueprint for Student Driven, Professionally Supported Students' Associations*
- Over a decade of experience in non-profit management, research, and governance consulting
- Currently Senior Advisor (Operations & Strategy) at a large Canadian charity

# Presentation Agenda

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Purpose

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Recent Trends

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Issues & Challenges

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Discussion & Analysis

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Success Cases

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Benefits

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Purpose



## Purpose

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- To demonstrate a path toward, modern, productive, accountable student association governance that is student driven and professionally supported



R&H

# Recent Trends

# Recent Trends

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High-profile misconduct incidents

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Disruption due to conflicts and resignations

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Increased public scrutiny

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Student Choice Initiatives

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Declining student participation

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Covid-19 disruption



# Issues & Challenges



# Issues & Challenges

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Lack of student control

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Overlapping authorities

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Duplication of work

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Lack of clarity/transparency

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General frustration/burnout

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Lack of managerial latitude



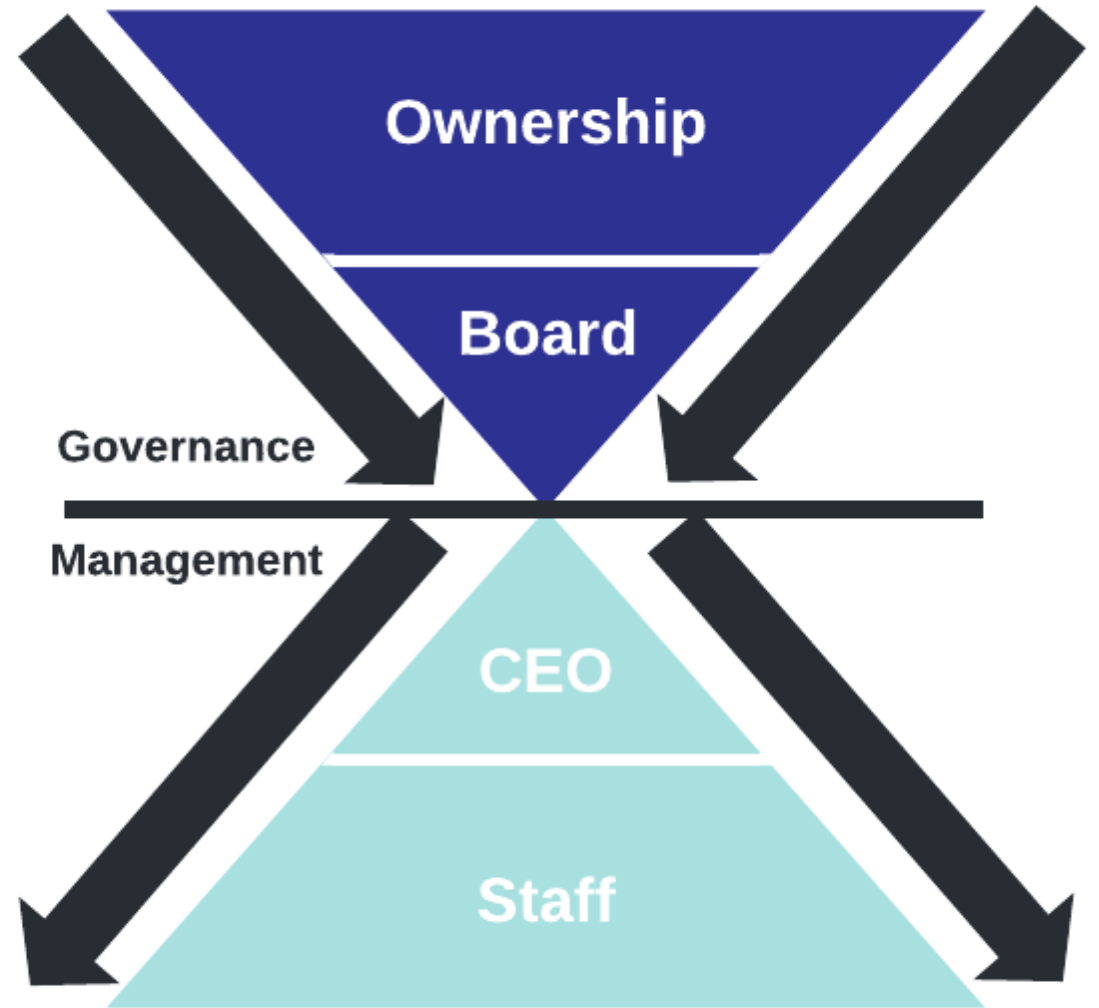
# Discussion & Analysis

# Discussion & Analysis

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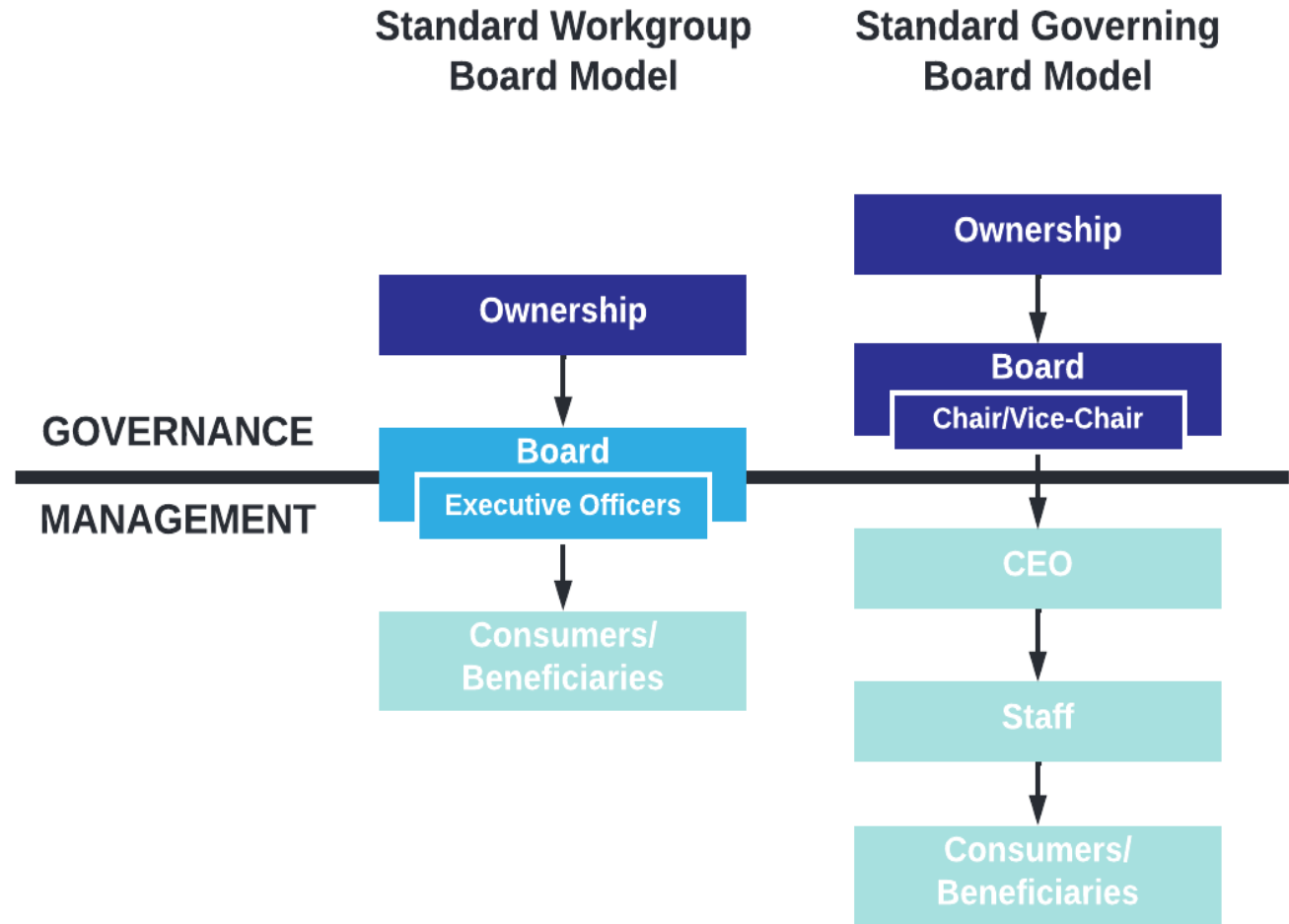
Governance is about ***synthesis*** i.e., the diverse views and interests of the ownership are combined into an integrated whole

Management is about ***analysis*** i.e., the integrated whole is broken down into workable but mutually re-inforcing parts

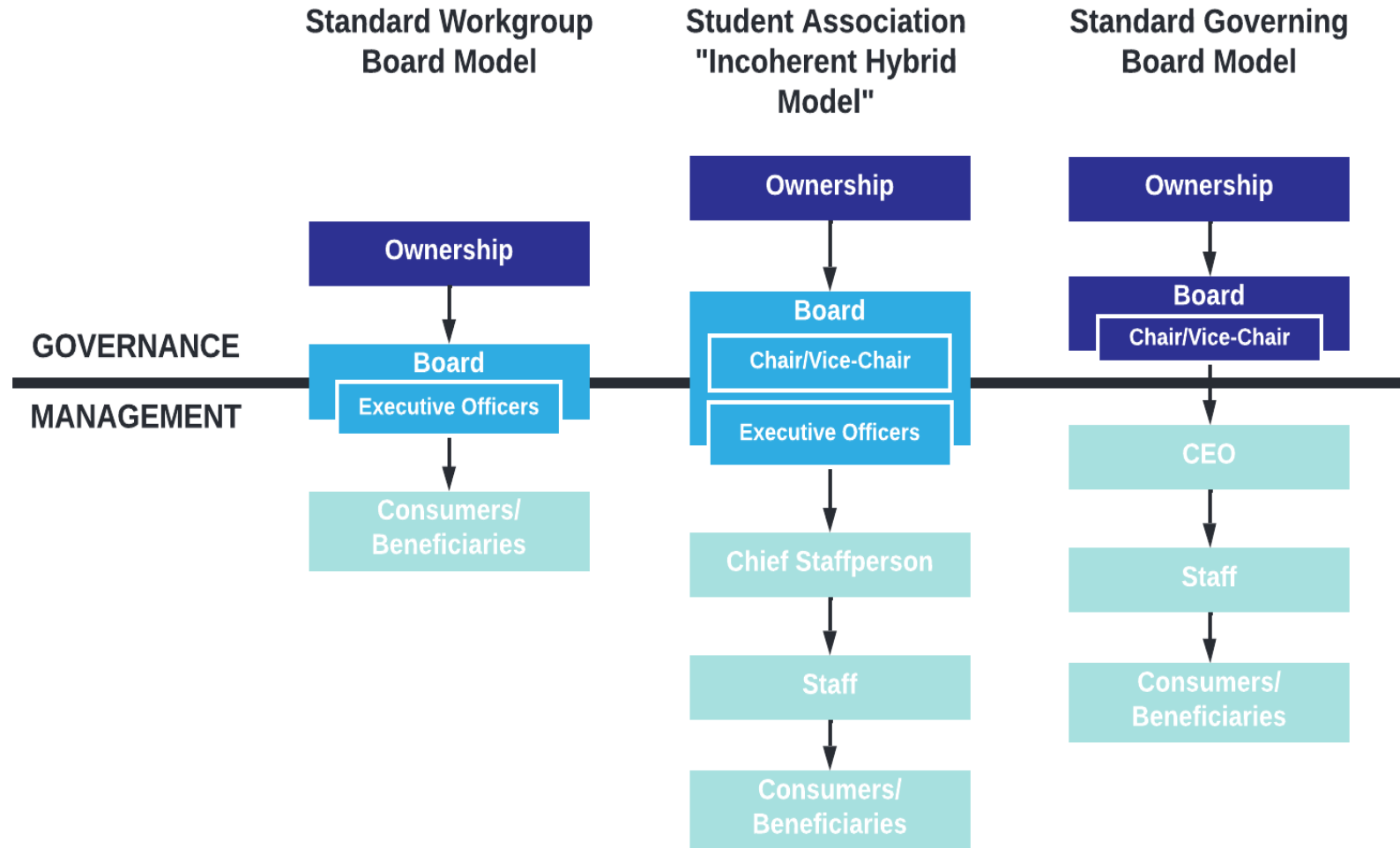


# Discussion & Analysis

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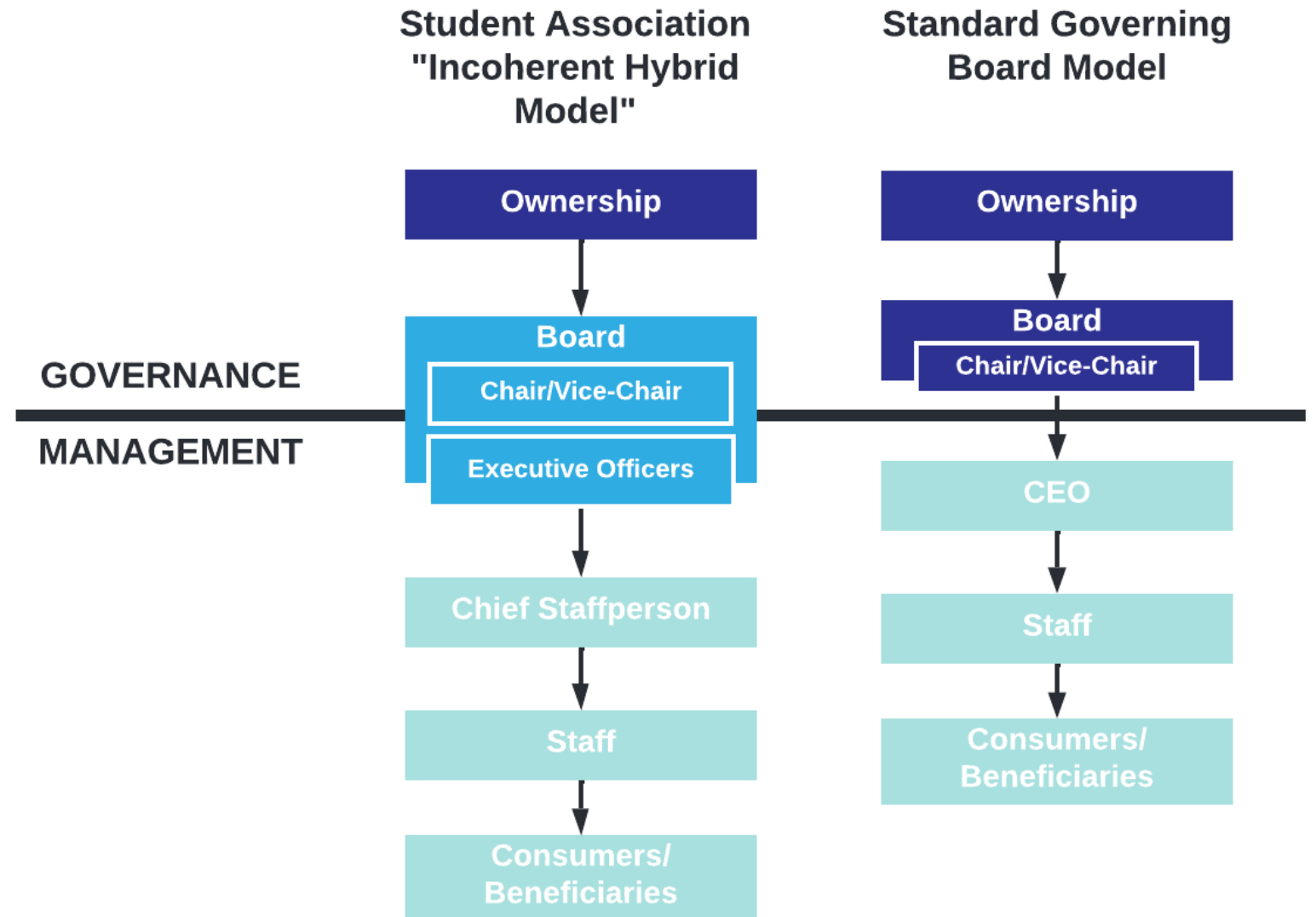


# Discussion & Analysis



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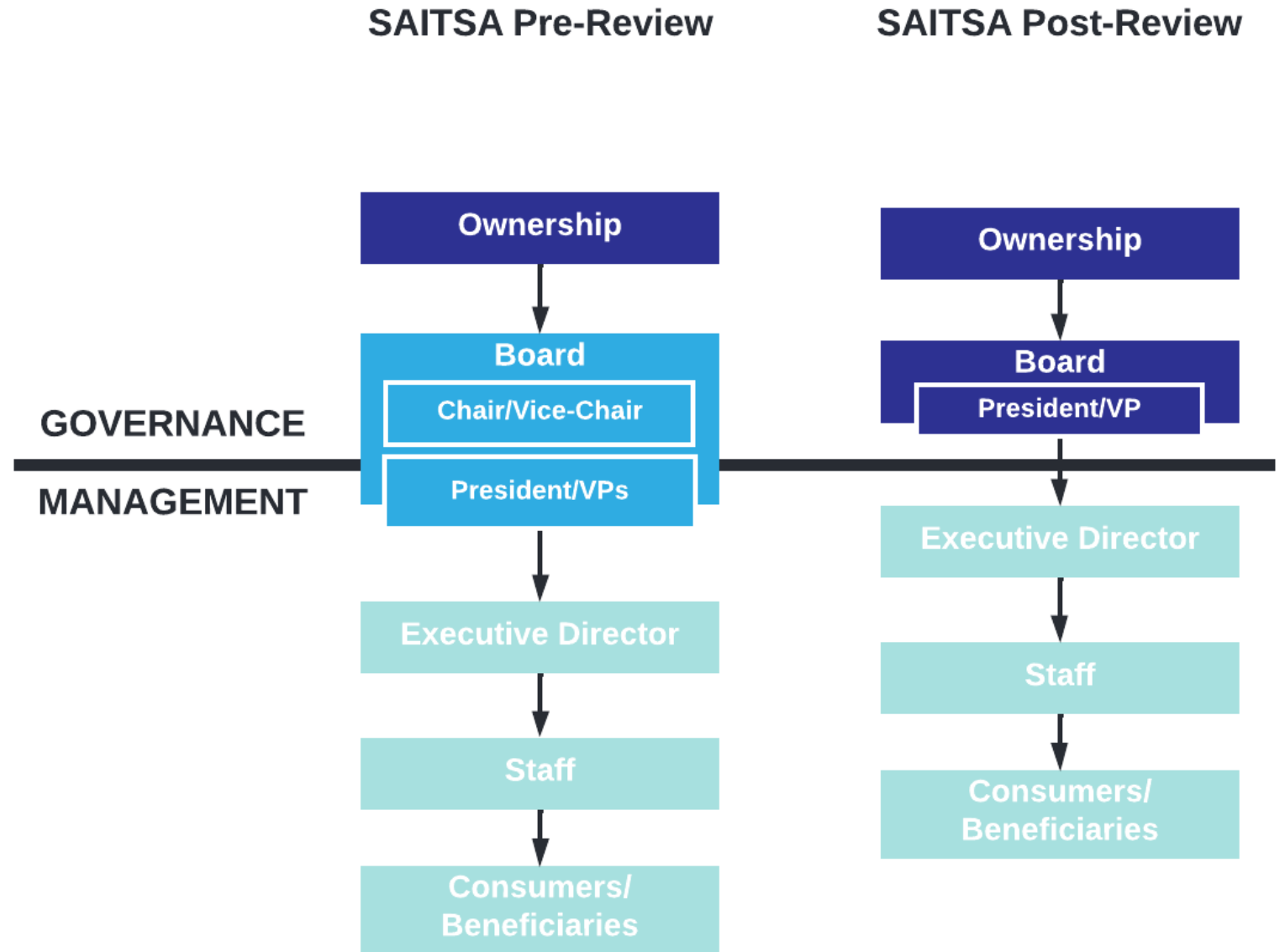
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# Success Cases

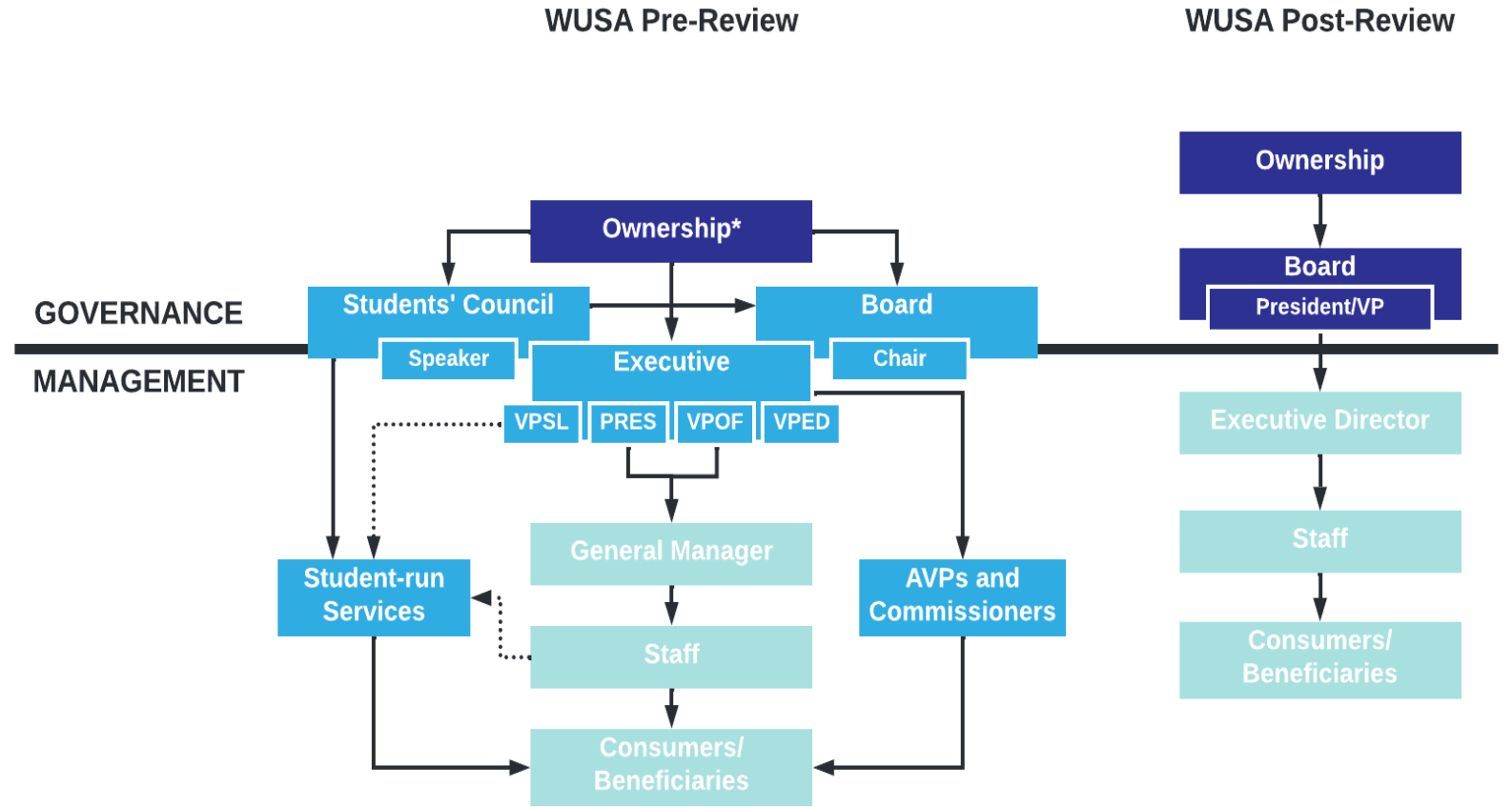
# SAITSA

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# WUSA



\*The Ownership elects individuals either through annual or by-election processes or general membership meetings.

Benefits

# Benefits for Students (as Owners and Representatives)

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Strategic direction driven by students

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Improved real-world applicability of board experience

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Genuine performance oversight of staff



# Benefits for Staff

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Clear lines of authority and accountability

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Elimination of duplicated work

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Managerial empowerment

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Enhanced opportunity to apply expertise

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# Benefits for Students (as Consumers/Beneficiaries)

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Better quality services delivered by professionals

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Services improved due to long-term investments aligned with strategic plans

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Needs of students better anticipated and addressed



Questions?

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