Each time the OSIEA Regional Board begins a new two-year term, board and staff share “messages” to each other to foster communication and maintain a healthy organization.

In January 2010, the OSIEA Regional Board came into existence when OSIEA graduated from being an OSI NY initiative to a regional foundation. At that time, staff were anxious about what this change would mean and how the board would interact and influence OSIEA programming. As part of managing this changing relationship, OSIEA began the practice of having staff individually share up to three messages with the board and to have the board do the same.

In January 2012, the OSIEA board and staff undertook to share the next set of “messages” to each other. We also looked back and reviewed the messages exchanged in 2010. Staff agreed that their concerns had not materialized and that in fact the OSIEA board had met all expectations. Nonetheless, it was agreed that articulating the fear of organizational change had contributed to building a relationship between board and staff that was healthy and supportive of each other.

On reviewing this practice of “message sharing,” it was decided that it was a good organizational practice to maintain. At the March 2012 regional board meeting, the messages from board to staff were collected. It is now time to share the messages at the July 2012 board/staff meeting.

**2012 Board Messages to** **staff…**

Keep the productivity high but don’t lose the OSIEA ‘free spirit’

Keep the thoroughness seen in preparatory work for the dockets

We have built a family, let is sustain it

**Keep up the professionalism and efficiency**

**Post OSIEA values where you can see them on a daily basis**

**Remember that board members are also human at the end of the day**

Continue with dynamism and creativity

Continue working to create a work culture consistent with OSIEA values

Pay a little more attention to the budget details in the dockets

**Working on social change issues is bigger than a day to day job, always think, don’t be afraid of self- criticisms, find new ways.**

***These are our heartfelt messages to the OSIEA staff. Let us review each other’s messages at the end of our term – 2013- or before should either one of us feel the need to do so.***

Remember: we are accountable first and foremost to constituencies w claim to serve and protect

Always recall: in communities we want to support, the most innovative and legitimate groups are often informal ones, not necessarily recognized by authorities and other international actors. How to work with such groups?