

# **The Superintendent – Communicating and Building a Relationship**

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# Teaming For Success

- The Board Governs and the Superintendent Administers
- Together We (Board and Superintendent) Form the District's Leadership Team

**“United We Stand, Divided We Fall”**



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# Reality—Partnership Is Complex

- Relationships Vary from District to District
  - Length of Relationship
  - Issue to Issue
  - Personalities
  - Local Traditions
- Disagreements Are Part of the Relationship
  - Poor Understanding or Communication
  - Uncompromising Differences
  - Personality Conflicts
  - Inadequate Superintendent Performance



# Roles and Responsibilities

## Board...

- Assists/Supports Superintendent with Advice and Counsel
- Considers and Approves Policies
- Adopts the Budget
- Delegates to Superintendent All Executive Functions
- Allows Superintendent to Manage All Employees
- Keeps Superintendent Informed – No Surprises
- Refers Complaints to Superintendent
- Holds the Superintendent Accountable



# Roles and Responsibilities

## Superintendent...

- Loyal to Board
- Assists Board with Counsel and Advice
- Keeps the Board Fully Informed
- Recommends Instructional Improvements
- Recommends Purchases and Services
- Manages the Finances of the District
- Directs Gains in Student Achievement

**Review the Superintendent's Contract For Defined Roles**



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# Who Is Responsible?

- Who is responsible for the supervision of employees at the school site?
- Who appoints, compensates and otherwise controls all school employees?
- Who approves the employment of the administrators, teachers and non-certificated personnel?



# Communicating with Superintendent

- Defining roles and responsibilities is an essential ingredient in a good relationship.
- Maintaining a relationship requires open, direct two-way communication.
- The Board and Superintendent must determine:
  - What methods will be used to communicate?
  - How much and about what issues you want to know about?
  - When do you want to know?
  - How will you ask for information you need?



# Problem-Solve for a Minute

You are confronted by a constituent in your local supermarket regarding the constituent's displeasure in having their child assigned to a particular 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher. How would you conduct yourself as a board member, and what would you do following the conversation?



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# Meaningful Communication

Meaningful communication is to a partnership what gas is to a car. Or air to a ball. Without it, the car can't move; the ball can't bounce. Partnerships need communication to function. Without it, the relationship becomes a masquerade.



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# Relationship Building -- Attitudes

- I assume good faith; I do not question your sincerity or your sanity.
- I care about our relationship and want to resolve this difference in perception. Please help me to see it from your perspective.
- I am open to influence and am prepared to change.



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# Communication – Behaviors

- Listen to understand.
- Speak to be understood.
- Start dialogue from a common point of reference or point of agreement; and move slowly into areas of disagreement.



# Influencing By Communicating

## 3 Basic Categories of Influence

- To model by example (others see)
- To build caring relationships (others feel)
- To mentor by instruction (others hear)



# 3 Key Character Traits

- **Integrity** – defined as the value we place on ourselves.
- **Maturity** – defined as the balance between courage and consideration.
- **Abundance Mentality** – defined as there is plenty out there for everybody.



# Getting Started

As a new board member, you find yourself unfamiliar with many issues coming before the Board despite your best effort to study the issues and read your meeting packets. What is a good strategy when casting a vote while you are still learning about the issues coming before the Board?



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# Superintendent Contract

As a new board member you will be asked to provide a written evaluation of your superintendent in either January or February, having attended only a few meetings.

How will you go about responding to the evaluation and participating in the evaluation process?



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# Questions and Answers



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