

The Superintendent – Communicating and Building a Relationship

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Teaming For Success

“UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL.”

AESOP

© Lifehack Quotes



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What is all the fuss about a good Board/Superintendent Relationship?

- **Why is a good relationship so important?**



True or False?

- The board/superintendent relationship can do more to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of education in schools than any other single factor.

True or False?

- The relationship between and among board members and the superintendent is healthier when all parties discuss and resolve misunderstandings and disagreements *before* serious conflict.

Reality— Partnership Is Complex

*Relationships
Vary from District
to District

*Disagreements
Are Part of the
Relationship

Strength lies
in differences,
not in
similarities.

– Stephen Covey



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Strengthening the Relationship

- 1 Build mutual trust and understanding.
- 2 Develop a shared understanding of roles and expectations of the board as well as the superintendent.
- 3 Build a shared vision that focuses on student needs for the future.

Strengthening the Relationship, continued

- 4 Ensure long term **communication** within and between the board and the superintendent.
- 5 Make effective decisions emphasizing consensus building, conflict resolution, and **learning together**.
- 6 Develop positive links with the **community**.

Strengthening Board of Education /
Superintendent Relationships In America's
Schools
The University of Iowa

Roles and Responsibilities

Board...(as a convened body),

- 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...

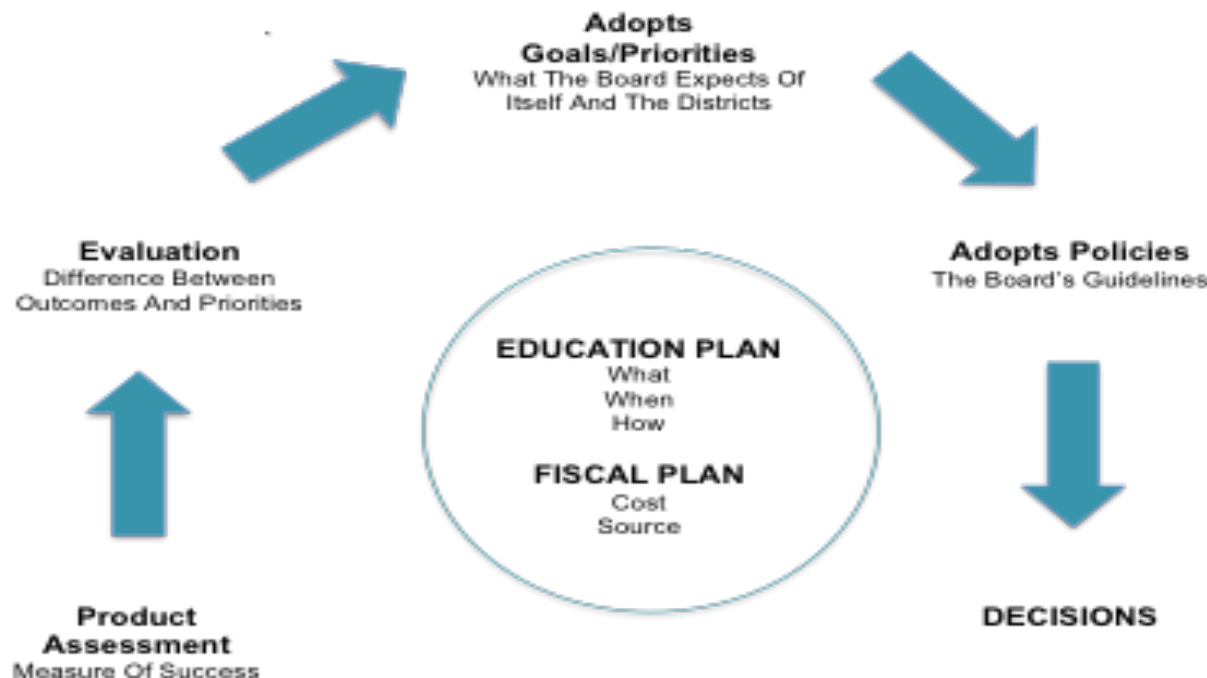
- Loyal to Board
- Assists Board with Counsel and Advice
- Keeps the Board Fully Informed
- Recommends Instructional Improvements
- Recommends Purchases and Services
- Manages the Finances of the District
- Directs Gains in Student Achievement

Review the Superintendent's Contract For Defined Roles

Effective Board and Superintendent Decision-Making

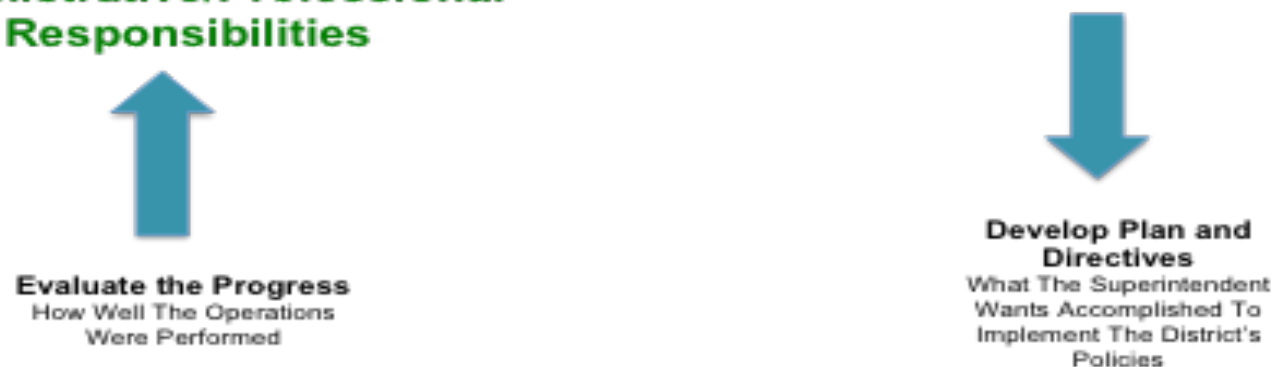
Board Responsibilities

Governance



Administrative/Professional Responsibilities

Management



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?

Getting Started

- What is a good strategy when casting a vote while you are still learning about the issues coming before the Board?

☐ *Irrelevant*
☐ *Irrelevant*
☒ **Relevant**
☐ *Irrelevant*
☐ *Irrelevant*

Communicating with Superintendent



- 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?



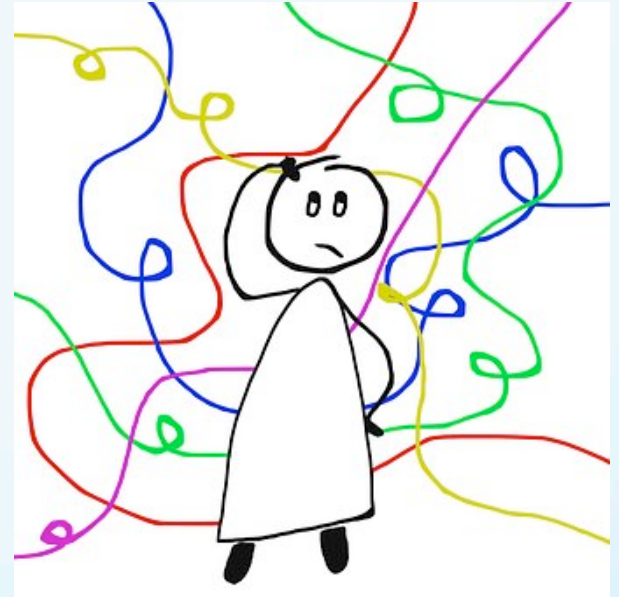
The Board Chair and Superintendent Relationship

- **Weekly check in's recommended**
- **Discussion of Agenda items**
- **Any issues around bargaining units**
- **Have your board calendar handy**



Problem-Solve for a Minute

You are confronted by a parent in your local store regarding the parent's displeasure with the 3rd grade teacher. How would you conduct yourself as a board member, and what would you do following the conversation?



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.

**The most
important thing in
communication is
hearing what isn't
said.**

KUSHANWAZOON
PETER DRUCKER



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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

Defining the Roles: Maintaining a Healthy



Thank you for Attending

You can reach Timi Tullis at the AASB office

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Thanks to Bill Hill, Superintendent of Bristol Bay for his time and hard work on behalf of students in Alaska!

- PS We would like to thank the Michigan Association of School Boards for sharing some of their slides with us! We appreciate all our school board members and organizations.

- **Questions and
Answers**