

The Board & Superintendent Relationship is the Foundation of Effective School Leadership

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An effective relationship requires clear understanding of roles and responsibilities

The **Board** is elected by the public to set priorities, establish policy and evaluate the outcomes of district operations.

The **Superintendent** is hired by the Board to manage the day-to-day operations of the district, develop procedures and policies for the operation of the district, and to provide leadership for the districts staff.

EXERCISE

Whose Job Is It?

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The length of time allocated for lunch is often a topic of discussion and concern for parents.

As the district prepares for the next school year, several parents have asked the district to extend the time period allocated for lunch.

Is this a Board or a Superintendent decision?

Whose Job Is It?

The football team is heading to the state tournament for the first time in over 20 years.

The week before the big game the QB is caught drinking beer or smoking a cigarette. According to District policy he is automatically suspended from all activities for 6 weeks. Several parents, players and even the coaches ask the superintendent to hold off on the suspension until after the state tournament.

Is this a Board or a Superintendent decision?

Whose Job Is It?

A local business is willing to pay for new stands at the football field in exchange for naming rights and their company logo on the field.

The district has a policy in place.

The district doesn't have a policy.

Is this a Board or a Superintendent decision?

Whose Job Is It?

The district is having trouble filling their substitute teachers and para-professional needs. While there may be many reasons for this, one possible solution might be to increase the hourly or daily rate of pay.

Is this a Board or a Superintendent decision?

Whose Job Is It?

The district has some unspent ESSER dollars and can invest them in either brick and mortar projects or in additional instructional supports for students, both of which would be beneficial for the students.

Is this a Board or a Superintendent decision?

Don't be...

The Board member who believes they're elected because they are the wisest and/or making decisions for the good of the community.

DON'T seek advice from citizens on important decisions and allow that advice to make the decision for you.

While it is important to listen to our community – that should not override good decision making in every scenario.

DO receive feedback from all sides and bring that feedback to a Board meeting for discussion.

The Superintendent or Business Manager who shares selective data or information in an attempt to influence Board decisions.

DON'T give input the Superintendent/Business Manager feels the board needs.

DO provide the Board the information the Board requests.

The Board member who gets engrossed in the details of running a school district and loses track of their main purpose – *doing what is best for kids.*

DON'T spend too much time dealing with “adult” issues or be concerned about the issues of adults or certain interest groups.

Remember, the best boards spend their time on policy governance. Boards want to remove themselves from the preoccupation with the day-to-day operation of the district – rather than trying to run the district, policies should be created that help either direct certain conditions to exist, or to prohibit things that are unacceptable.

DO keep students at the front and center of Board discussion.

The Superintendent who thinks they know what is best for the school district and implements their ideas without consulting with the board.

DO involve Board members in the discussion or decision-making process.

The Board member who does Board business when the Board is not in session and the person who gets on the Board because they dislike an employee or have a “bone to pick.”

DO remember open meeting laws.

DO build a trusting relationship with your chief administrator.

DO think and act as a “reasonable and prudent” individual who responds ethically in doing what is best for the community’s school and children.

The Superintendent who is unable, unwilling, or incapable of communicating adequately with principals, faculty, staff, Board members and the public.

DON'T try to implement changes without preparing for those changes.

DO overcommunicate with staff, the Board and the public.

The Board member
who thinks they are
the Chief
“Publicity”
Spokesperson for
the board.

DON'T be a Board member who attempts to do all the Board business on their own.

DON'T talk to the press or members of the community to gain an advantage and/or support.

DON'T prioritize your individual opinions over the Board decision once it's been made.

DO have message maps/talking points in place for any issue that might generate media attention so all Board members are speaking with one voice.

The Board member who thinks they are elected to be an administrator instead of a policy setter.

DON'T be a micro-manager.

The line between policy and practice is thin. Boards are to set policy, and the administration is to carry it out.

DO have clearly stated goals or standards to determine board's responsibility versus administration's responsibility.

DO hold yourself and other Board members accountable for staying in your lane.

The Board member who brings complaints from the staff to the Board before the complaint has been heard by the chief administrator.

DON'T depersonalize a person in public.

DO establish and follow a chain of command.

DO refer complaints to the proper authority for review or investigation.

DO share concerns with the appropriate administration in nonpublic settings unless it is regarding a Board item to be discussed.

The Board member who expresses their opinion on a decision/policy outside of a Board meeting before the Board has made a decision and/or continues dissent after the Board's decision.

DO remember the proper time for this discussion is during the board meeting. Once a decision is made, the Board should stand unified on the decision.

The unprepared
Board member
who does not do
their homework.

DO read your meeting packet before the Board meeting and come prepared to discuss and act.

QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU!

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