

Developing a High Performance Board/Superintendent Leadership Team

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- These potential problem areas should be anticipated and planned for through the development of Operating Principles that are developed via mutual consensus building.
- The Operating Principles should become part of the district and officially adopted as guidelines for behavior and action.

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- The Board/Superintendent relationship is the key to moving districts forward consistent with their goals. There is a direct correlation to an effective system and an effective leadership team.
- New superintendents or new board members mean change is imminent in the manner in which the district is lead.
- People can't be expected to alter their leadership styles but they can be expected to conduct themselves consistent with district expectations.

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THE ROLE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

1. Be responsible for setting the standard for ensuring rigorous academic progress.
2. Be active in building alliances and partnerships.
3. Bring the board of education in on all partnerships and alliances so they remain a part of the process—ownership.
4. Be seen as a coalition builder concerned with the big picture.
5. Continually communicate that education is the backbone of our democratic society.
6. Be visible in community, at events, in the classroom—"Roll up your sleeves and join the ranks."

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- This conduct will be tested many times during the term of a leadership team.
- There are numerous problem spots that can trigger stress for leaders (both board members and administrators) and cause their conduct to be tested. These might include:
 - Personnel (hiring/firing, reassigning)
 - Financial—taxation and budgeting and prioritizing expenditures
 - Evaluation of people and programs
 - Litigation
 - Chain of command
 - Individual and group communication
 - Agenda setting and meeting attendance
 - Board members with individual agendas

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THE ROLE OF THE BOARD

1. Articulate the school system goals. Be pro-active in improving education in their respective community.
2. Selection and evaluation of the superintendent.
3. Adoption of the operating policies.
4. Serve their constituency—(not just the squeaky wheel).

Always remember, the relationship between the board and the superintendent should be one of mutual respect and confidence. There should be no surprises or hidden information between the superintendent and the board.

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EXPECTATIONS BY THE BOARD OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

1. **Execution of Policy.** The board has the right to expect virtuous execution of policy. All policies, not just those the superintendent is in agreement with.
2. **Success of Policy.** Boards of education also have the right to expect the superintendent to give all policies a chance for success.
3. **Decisions.** The board has the right to expect the superintendent to refrain from making decisions the board should make.
4. **Information.** The board has the right to be fully informed.

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EXPECTATIONS BY THE BOARD OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (cont.)

5. **Recommendations.** The board has the right to expect the superintendent to make clear and concise recommendations, based on available information, past practice, and board policy.
6. **Sharing.** The board has the right to expect the superintendent to share in the hard work and blame, as well as the credit.
7. **Team Work.** The board has the right to expect the superintendent to conduct all official business with the board as a whole.
8. **Support.** The board has the right to expect the superintendent to be responsible for building confidence in, and respect for, the board by supporting board action. Differences of opinion must not be allowed to interfere with the superintendent's basic loyalty to the board.

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EXPECTATIONS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE BOARD

1. **Policy.** The superintendent has the right to expect the board to establish and live by a complete set of sound policy guidelines.
2. **Support.** The superintendent has the right to expect full support from the board as long as he/she is the superintendent of schools. Boards should employ an individual worthy of their trust and confidence and then provide full support.
3. **Unit Operation.** The superintendent has the right to expect the board to operate as a unit or team, not as individual factions. Those who elect to violate this practice do so at the cost of efficiency and sound administrative practice.

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EXPECTATIONS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE BOARD (cont.)

4. **School Personnel.** The superintendent has the right to expect all board members to deal with school personnel through them or their office. The superintendent has the right to expect any action involving school personnel to be predicated on administrative recommendations.
5. **Protection.** The superintendent has the right to expect the board to protect him/her against unwarranted demands, and excessive or unfair criticism. The board does not need to act as a shield, this simply suggests they are wrong to idly sit by while their superintendent is subjected to the wrong kind or unjust or unfounded public criticism.
6. **Evaluation.** The superintendent has the right to expect a fair, timely, and honest evaluation. The evaluation must reflect concerns related to job performance and not individual bias.

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EFFECTIVE SUPERINTENDENTS

LEAD BY:

- Envisioning ideals for the district and creatively developing strategies to work toward these ideals and solve problems.
- Setting personal goals and regularly assessing personal achievements.
- Working to maintain their physical and emotional wellness.
- Establishing a personal schedule that maximizes their effectiveness.
- Regularly participating in professional growth activities.
- Demonstrating the highest standards of moral, ethical, and professional conduct which serves as a model for those being led, and which build trust in the leader.
- Exchanging ideas with others through the use of effective communication skills, especially listening.

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EFFECTIVE SUPERINTENDENTS

LEAD BY: (cont.)

- Equitably dealing with all members of the district, thus assuring that all are treated fairly and that all students have maximum opportunities to learn.
- Encouraging collaboration and participation from everyone in the district, including students.
- Empowering staff to succeed by encouraging goal setting, offering in-service training, and providing appropriate information.
- Facilitating evaluation of the outcomes of the district to assure that students are learning and that district goals are being achieved.
- Enhancing the self-esteem of those being led. This is achieved through demonstrating belief in other's abilities, showing concern for their individual needs, and acknowledging their successes and accomplishments.

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COMMUNICATION

As a result of strong communication, the following

things will happen:

1. Honesty and trust will develop. Honesty and respect between two parties provides a firm foundation on which to build a strong relationship.
2. A strong district image will emerge. Nothing generates confidence among the public and professional staff more than a united front on the part of the board and superintendent.
3. Teamwork emerges as the rule, not the exception.

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Educational Advocacy

- Board members pledge high levels of support for programs within the district which are aimed at increasing the learning opportunities of all our students.
- Board members believe that the single most important responsibility of this team is to ensure the education of our youth.

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ROLE OF BOARD OF EDUCATION

- Set goals
- Develop policy
- Evaluate policy
- Employ superintendent
- Evaluate superintendent

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Leadership Team Development

- The board and administrative group will work as a team in conjunction with others to have a clear vision to meet the needs of the learners in the school district.
- Each board member realizes that the Board of Education is responsible for doing what is in the best interest of all learners in the district's schools.

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OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Operating Principles should be developed in the following areas and should include a statement which describes the beliefs of the team:

- Educational Advocacy
- Leadership Team Development
- Open Communication
- Handling of Concerns
- Meeting Format
- Planning, Goal Setting, and Accountability

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Leadership Team Development (cont.)

- Refrain from speaking negatively about another board member
- Seek ways to turn obstacles into opportunities
- Maintain a sense of hope, optimism, and humor in working together
- Seek ways to foster interpersonal understanding

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