Superintendent and School Board Relations

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ROLE CLARITY
School boards are elected by the community to:
• set priorities
• establish policies
• monitor the outcomes of the district
• hire and evaluate the superintendent

Superintendents are hired by school boards to:
• identify needs and policies
• develop regulations
• provide leadership
• manage the day-to-day operation of the district
Finding the Right Balance
Superintendent

- Hires and Manages Central Office Staff and Principals
- Operationalizes Steps to Accomplish High End Goals Set by the Board
- Day to Day Decisions
- Engages in Protocols to Surface the Needs of Key Stakeholder Groups

School Board of Directors

- Hires and Manages the Superintendent
- Sets High End Goals for Student Learning
- Monitors Outcomes
- Listens to Community Stakeholders to Develop Policy
Superintendent

Hires and Manages Central Office Staff and Principals
Operationalizes Steps to Accomplish High End Goals Set by the Board
Day to Day Decisions
Engages in Protocols to Surface the Needs of Key Stakeholder Groups

School Board of Directors

Hires and Manages the Superintendent
Sets High End Goals for Student Learning
Monitors Outcomes
Confusion over roles can cause inefficiency and conflict.
BOARD GOVERNANCE MODEL
DOES YOUR SCHOOL BOARD HAVE AN ADOPTED GOVERNANCE MODEL?
Good Governance is a Choice is a book about, and for, boards of public and non-profit organizations. Its central focus is on public school boards and the special challenges they face, but the governing model it introduces, Coherent Governance, is applicable to any board of any type. Coherent Governance is a policy-based governing model that features a fail-proof means for creating absolute role clarity for boards and their CEOs. The model offers a process for boards to control operational decisions without making them, allowing them to spend the dominant part of their time on what matters whether the organization is delivering the goods for the clients it serves. The authors challenge readers to consider themselves to be the very first board elected or appointed to serve their organization and to thoughtfully craft a governance role and board processes to allow them to best do their work unencumbered by past practice and tradition. They draw from their combined 60-plus years of experience in working with public and non-profit boards as they present their state-of-the-art governing model.
Improving School Board Effectiveness: A Balanced Governance Approach

By Thomas L. Alsbury and Phil Gore

Improving School Board Effectiveness offers a clarifying and essential look at the evolving role of school boards and how they contribute to efforts to improve student learning. It examines how board members can establish effective district priorities, and it explores those board policies and actions that result in shared, districtwide commitments to heightened student achievement.

This book arises out of a critical need for a better understanding of school boards and the development of helpful tools and guidelines for school board members. At its heart is the notion of Balanced Governance, a principle that most generally “balances the authority of a superintendent to lead a school district with the necessary oversight of a locally engaged and knowledgeable board.”

Improving School Board Effectiveness is a helpful and practical book that will prove indispensable for school board members, school and district administrators, and everyone with a stake in school improvement and reform.
The Policy Governance Model and the Role of the Board Member

By John Carver & Miriam Carver

The Carver Policy Governance Guide series includes six booklets that offer board members a description of John Carver’s Policy Governance model of board leadership. Policy Governance enables a board to fulfill its accountability to its organization’s "owners," whether the owners are association members, city residents, company shareholders, or a community of interest. Policy Governance addresses the board’s engagement in financial, programmatic, and personnel matters; roles of officers and committees; reporting and evaluation; agendas; and other aspects of the board job. The Policy Governance Model and the Role of the Board Member sets out a clear vision for excellence in board leadership. It gives board members an understanding of the concepts and principles that are at the very heart of John Carver’s innovative Policy Governance model. This guide details members’ main tasks and presents the guidelines needed to transform a board into an effective group that consistently leads powerfully.

The Policy Governance model is based on the functions rather than the structure of a governing board. It outlines commonsense principles about governing that fit together into an entire system. The practices of the Policy Governance board, which are consistent with the principles, allow it to control without meddling, focus on long-term organizational outputs, powerfully delegate to a CEO and staff, and discharge its fiduciary responsibility in a visionary, strategic manner. Because the model is a total system, the Carver Policy Governance Guide series offers boards a complete set of principles for fulfilling their various obligations.
TOOLBOX

Assume positive intent

Intentionally engage in professional learning together

Define a governance model
COMMUNICATION
Successful governance requires effective collaboration, which hinges on strong communication.
“Superintendents should first and foremost be a communications expert.” - T.J. Kowlaski, *Evolution of the School Superintendent as Communicator*
TOOLBOX

Conflicts Resolution Skills

Informal 1:1 Check Ins

Regularly Scheduled Retreats

Conflict Resolution Skills
TOOLBOX

Friday Update

Protocol for Dealing with Complaints

Crisis Communication Protocols
TRUST
WHAT IS ONE (1) STRATEGY THAT YOU HAVE USED THAT RESULTED IN BUILDING TRUST?
THE KEY TO SUCCESS

School boards and superintendents must lead as a united team, each from their respective roles, with strong collaboration and mutual trust.
BUILDING TRUST WITH YOUR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Never underestimate the power of individual conversations focused on genuine curiosity.
TOOLBOX

Deep Active Listening

Open Ended Questions

One on One Conversations
TOOLBOX

Align Your Words and Actions

Follow Up and Follow Through

Be Mindful of Favoritism
VISION
BUILDING A COMMON VISION THROUGH STRATEGIC PLANNING

Building relationships takes planning, which includes a strategic plan for the school district based on the vision initially created by the community. It all boils down to student learning, and every school district should cite student achievement as its top goal.
BUILDING A COMMON VISION THROUGH STRATEGIC PLANNING

It is up to the school board to approve the planning process and include all stakeholders and to the superintendent to incorporate participation, ensure the integrity of the planning process, ensure staff development to carry out the planning process, ensure that the recommendations of the strategic planning team are presented to the board for action and coordinate periodic review of the plan.
TOOLBOX

Connect the Dots

Get Deeply Curious with Your Board

Mine for Areas of Overlap

Connect the Dots
Measurable District Goals

Curriculum Materials and PLCs

Data Focus

Philosophy of Improvement

Public Facing Monitoring Framework
Hanover Research report: Effective Board and Superintendent Collaboration, January 2014
BUILDING TRUST WITH YOUR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Mine for areas where individual board members interests align and overlap with the needs of the organization.