the superintendent/board relationship
understanding the organizational situation
what the board expects you to accomplish
today’s realities for School Boards and Districts…

- preparing all students to be competitive and successful
- mere improvement is not sufficient
- facilitation of diversity
- meeting the needs of all learners
- financial challenges and constraints
- quality of staff...recruitment, professional development, evaluation
- and local factors/pressures
communication styles...yours and theirs (individualized)
be visible

be valuable
Today's Lesson

Educate yourself.

personal development - for you and the Board
trust and collaboration
- development of superintendent and board (district) goals
- professional and ethical communication with and about each board member
- individual board member interests and talents
- appropriate board member involvement based upon those
the special case of the board president/ chair

- Build your relationship with him/her
- Clarify your perspectives and mutual concerns, and reach agreements on action plan for supporting and/or improving the work of the board
- Work to present a united front to the board as a whole and the district community

...but don’t forget or neglect the others
Be careful *not to...*

- criticize the past
- neglect communication
- surprise the board
- try to change too fast
if the board is *not* unanimous...

- always set the board up to succeed with the decisions they make, providing options and pros and cons
- ask non-threatening questions for clarification
- keep the focus on student learning
- always assume positive intent
Board/ Superintendent Team Operating Principles
(example provided)

- Leadership Team Roles
- Communications/cooperation and support
- Judgment and trust
- Decision making
- Dealing with citizen or staff complaints
- Board meetings
- Listening/communication
- Honesty, loyalty, and disagreement
**avoid micromanagement...**

**Signs of:**
- the board tells you *how* to do projects rather than focusing on what needs to be done
- the board’s focus appears to be on specific details rather than the big picture
- the board frequently sends messages to you that members want to be consulted before decisions are made, even in areas clearly within your scope of responsibility
- the board has a habit of becoming directly involved in tasks because members are concerned that you and the administration may not do what they want
and what to do...

- start by having an open and direct conversation about your perception of micromanagement
- suggest that when a task, project, or initiative is identified, the board should focus on outcomes that all would agree define success
- identify intermediate points at which progress reports and updates will be provided and how
- be open and timely with your communication regarding adjustments, change of course, or when success might be impossible
- be quick to recognize and compliment the board and individual members when progress is noted
what type of organization is your school district? what type of organization can and should it become?
to become great, schools must be transformed into learning organizations that nurture engagement
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School as:</th>
<th>School Board as:</th>
<th>Parent as:</th>
<th>Supt. &amp; CO as:</th>
<th>Principal as:</th>
<th>Teacher as:</th>
<th>Student as:</th>
<th>Commitment to Shared Beliefs &amp; Values</th>
<th>Likely Classroom Profiles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Delivery System</td>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
<td>Guarantors &amp; Questionable Allies</td>
<td>CEO Technicians &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>Chief of Staff</td>
<td>Clinician &amp; Diagnostician</td>
<td>Client</td>
<td>Calculative</td>
<td>Well Managed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory</td>
<td>Owners &amp; Advocates</td>
<td>Supply Source &amp; Determinant of Product Quality</td>
<td>Plant Manager, Inspectors &amp; Supervisors</td>
<td>Shop Foreman</td>
<td>Skilled Worker</td>
<td>Raw Material &amp; Product</td>
<td>Passive Compliance</td>
<td>Passive Congenial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warehouse</td>
<td>Safety Inspectors &amp; Fire Marshals</td>
<td>Primary Shipper &amp; Receiver</td>
<td>Property Managers, Director of Maintenance, Shipping, &amp; Personnel</td>
<td>Mid-level Bureaucrat &amp; Keeper of the Keys</td>
<td>Clerk &amp; Keeper of Records</td>
<td>Excess Inventory</td>
<td>Passive Indifferent</td>
<td>Threatened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prison</td>
<td>Hearing Officers &amp; Parole Board</td>
<td>Distrusted Visitor</td>
<td>Bureau Chief Department Directors, Hearing Officers &amp; Parole Officers</td>
<td>Warden</td>
<td>Guard</td>
<td>Inmate</td>
<td>Alienated</td>
<td>Conflict Habituated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Most School Boards Are Like This:**

- Inward Focused
- Constituent Driven
- Responding Personally
- Micromanaging
- Individual Authority
- Personal Conflict
- Responding to Community
- Arms Around

**In a Learning Organization, the School Board Would Be More Like This:**

- Outward Focused
- Values and Purpose Driven
- Creating a Responsive System
- Not Managing
- Group Authority
- Societal Conflict
- Building Community
- Arms Length
the *most* important relationship in the school district is *between* you as superintendent, and your board of directors