The Reward of the Board/Superintendent Relationship
Overview/Review

- Texas Education Code
- Board Policy
- Board Role
- Superintendent Responsibilities
- Relationships
- The Organization
- Questions, Comments, Observation
Toughest Job in America

- Thoughts???
Texas Education Code (TEC)

- Board’s Governance of I.S.D. – TEC § 11.051
  - Oversee the management of the district
  - Ensure that the superintendent implements and monitors plans, procedures, programs, and systems to achieve appropriate, clearly defined, and desired results in the major areas of district operations.
More TEC

- The Board and the Superintendent shall work together to:
  - Advocate for the high achievement of all District students;
  - Create and support connections with community organizations to provide community-wide support for the high achievement of all District students;
  - Provide educational leadership for the District, including leadership in developing the District vision statement and long-range educational plan;
  - Establish District-wide policies and annual goals that are tied directly to the District’s vision statement and long-range educational plan;
  - Support the professional development of principals, teachers, and other staff; and
  - Periodically evaluate Board and Superintendent leadership, governance, and teamwork. TEC §11.1512(b)
Policy, Policy, and More Policy

- BBD (LEGAL)
  - The entire Board, including all Board members, shall annually participate with the Superintendent in a team building session facilitated by the regional education service center or any registered provider. The team building session shall be of a length deemed appropriate by the Board, but generally at least three hours.

- BBD (LOCAL)
Policy (continued)

- BJA (LEGAL)
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    - Periodically evaluate Board and Superintendent leadership, governance, and teamwork. TEC §11.1512(b)
Policy (continued)

- BJA (LOCAL)
  - Board and Community Relations
    - 3. Maintain positive and professional working relationships with the Board.....
      - Keep the Board informed of significant issues as they arise, using agreed upon criteria and procedures for information dissemination.
      - Respond in a timely and complete manner to Board requests for information that are consistent with Board policy and established procedures.
      - Provide recommendations and appropriate supporting materials to the Board on matters for Board decisions.
      - Articulate and support Board policy and decisions to staff and community.
Delegation

To the extent permitted by law, the Superintendent may delegate responsibilities to other employees of the District but shall remain accountable to the Board for the performance of all duties, delegated or otherwise.

“All duties, delegated or otherwise.”
Boards

- Boards are elected to provide democratic oversight of Public Schools.
- Elections are held every May (November).
  - Turnout can be as low as 5% of the local citizens.
  - This is a situation rife for manipulation.
  - Those elected also maybe looking to straighten out management.
- Human tendency is for individuals on the Board to mistake their oversight role for a management role.
Superintendents

- Outside the School District the Superintendent is likely to be viewed as an imposing and impressive figure with tremendous authority.
- The fact is that Superintendents work for the Board.
- Boards may frequently micromanage district affairs.
Survey Said?

- 61% of Superintendents surveyed said:
  - Micromanagement is a “moderate” or “major” problem.
  - 44% of Superintendents describe lack of Board focus as an impediment to District effectiveness.
Boards and Superintendents

- Deal with:
  - Local politics
  - Conflicting public demands
  - Mandates from above (funded and unfunded).
  - Pressures on and for increased accountability
Relationship with the Board

- Who’s responsibility?
  - Team Building
    - Annually done “with the Superintendent.”
  - Continuing Education
    - First Year Board Members
      - Local Orientation – 60 days
      - TEC Orientation – within 1st year
    - Subsequent Years
Relationship with the Board (cont’d)

➢ Who’s responsibility?
  ➢ President
  ➢ Local Training – at least 50% outside of District
  ➢ Open Meetings and Open Records
  ➢ Announce Compliance
  ➢ Proposed Budget
  ➢ Recommend Policies for Adoption
In the Beginning

- Review the District’s past history.
- Establish Goals, Objectives, and Board Operating Procedures.
- Establish the Superintendent Evaluation Instrument with formative and formal dates.
- **Insist** that staffing issues, including hiring and firing, are **Your** responsibility.
Honeymoon

- Visit each board member individually away from the District.
  - Talk only 20% of the time.
  - LISTEN the other 80%.
- Talk to as many people as possible:
  - Board
  - Administrators
  - Staff
  - City Council and Managers
  - Community Groups
- Surface Big Problems Early
Relationships Over Time

- This requires WORK!
- Regular (quarterly) formative evaluations.
- Identify/re-identify priorities.
- Minimize board micromanagement and confront it early and immediately.
- Empower the board to make policy, address constituents concerns, run perpetual campaigns in support of schools.
- Conduct Board Evaluations
- TAKE CARE OF THEIR MONEY!!!!!!
Time to Go

- Part of the Job:
  - Stress.
  - Unexpected surprises.
  - Downright unpleasant interactions.
- Conflict is the price you pay for leadership.
- Don’t take it personally!
Survival

- Keep your eye on student learning.
- Focus on student success.
- Accountability is measured by the difference in the life you made on every student.
- Remember that no matter what you decide - “YOUR WRONG”
- Don’t take it personally.
Survival (continued)

- Listen to what is going on around you.
- Permanent change \textit{MEANS} -- Changing the things that are permanent.
- Get up on the balcony and off the dance floor.
- We are all in transition – whether we succeed or fail.
Wrap-up

- Questions
- Comments
- Other observations
Lastly

➢ “If you wrestle with pigs – you get dirty and the pigs have fun.”
➢ “You get paid for this.”
References