

Building Relationships with a New Superintendent and/or New Board

Wednesday, April 18, 2018 – Session B14

Presented By:

Cheryl S. Wald, CPA, CFO, Chief Financial Officer, Mason Public Schools

Glenna MacDonald, CPA, CFO, Director of Finance, Howell Public Schools

Rick Terres, CFO, Associate Superintendent of Business, Howell Public Schools

Introductions

- Background & history
- Experiences from you

Focus of presentation

- Building Relationships
 - Information
 - Support
 - Partnership building

Superintendents resources

- MASA
- Recruiters
- Educational leadership classes
 - Superintendents are being taught governance models for their relationship with the Board

Emphasis is on systems

- Core values
- Guiding principles
- Governance models
 - We can apply the same models to our relationship with the Superintendent

Ground rules

- Establish them early
- Establish them cooperatively
- Make sure they are working as planned
- When communicating with Board members, it is important to keep Superintendent informed

What is your style

- How do you approach your role?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
Your staff's?
 - Take advantage of each other's strengths?
- What is your standing in the district with the Board, the unions, the support staff?
 - What impact will this have on the Superintendent?

Internal or External Superintendent selection?

- Know where they 'come from'
 - And their level of experience
- Why this might matter
 - A bad experience?
 - Money?
 - Lack of candidates?

Understand *Their* Role

“Leaders need to be “contextually literate,” that is, able to read organizational culture, history and micropolitics. Then comes the core tasks of leadership: building vision and setting direction, understanding and developing people, redesigning the organization, and managing teaching and learning.”

From “The Context of Superintendent Entry” by James H. Lytle. *The School Administrator*, May 2009

Key Information

- Enrollment trend and schools of choice impact
- Fund balance and foundation allowance trends
- Understanding the Foundation Allowance calculation and property tax effect
- Special Ed enrollment
- ISD support/relationship
- Federal funding
 - Significant sources
 - Any compliance issues?

More Key Information

- Staffing FTE's and trends
 - Class size ratios
 - Schedules, e.g. semesters, trimesters, block scheduling
- Expiration dates of CBA's and history of settlements
 - Chief negotiator
- Privatization
- Insurance plans
- Public stats for your district
 - Bulletin 1014
 - Munetrix/Eidex
 - MI School Data

More Key Information

- Major programs and funding streams
 - CTE
 - Early college
 - Seat time waiver programs
 - Dual enrollment
- Cash flow
 - Timing of tax collections (summer/winter)
 - Amounts borrowed and how/when

What if things go bad?

- Obey directives
 - Unless illegal or immoral
- Document your objections
 - Non-confrontational,
 - Agree-to-disagree
- Don't sweat the small stuff
- Don't publicly embarrass them

What if things get worse?

- Don't lead the mutiny!
- Pay attention to micropolitics and tread carefully
- Don't form alliances you'll regret later
- Plan an exit strategy for yourself, even if you never have to use it

What about the Board?

- They hired the Superintendent
 - They want the Superintendent to succeed
- Did the Board hire on a split vote?
- How much turnover has occurred since the hire?
- Does the Board micromanage?

New member considerations

- How many board members are new?
 - Were they appointed or elected?
 - Can and do they swing votes?
- What was their platform?
 - Do they have personal agendas?
- Does the Board collectively honor established protocols?
- Is the President able to enforce norms?

Things to do

- Stay in the informed
- Manage your stress levels
- Be predictable and consistent
- Be present
- Be loyal to the *district*
- Take advantage of professional organizations like MSBO

Questions?

➤ Thanks for participating!