

Building Relationships with a New Superintendent and/or New Board

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Focus of presentation

- Building Relationships
 - Information
 - Support
 - Partnership building

Super's resources

- MASA
- Recruiters
- Educational leadership classes
 - Supe's 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

What do you
want in a
Superintendent?



Set ground rules

- Establish them early
- Establish them cooperatively
- Check in with each other to make sure they are working as planned

Know your style

- How do you approach your role?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
Your staff's?
 - Can you play to each other's strengths?
- What is your standing in the district with the Board, the teachers, the support staff?
 - How might that impact the Supe?

Tales from the Trenches - Supe A: Mr. Aww Shucks

- Collegial,
- Able to laugh at himself,
- A bit of a good old' boy,
- Rash at times
- Fun



Internal or External?

- Know where they 'come from'
 - And their level of experience
- *Why* might matter
 - A bad experience?
 - Money?
 - Lack of candidates?
- It will change your approach

Tales from the Trenches - Supe B: The Manager

- Internal Hire
- A good technician
- Not dynamic
- Got things done
- But 'wore out'



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

Tales from the Trenches - Supe C: The Angler

- What's in it for me?
- Always focused on the money . . .
- His* money
- Not very supportive



Some Nuts & Bolts

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

More Nuts & Bolts

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

More Nuts & Bolts

- Major programs and funding streams
 - CTE
 - Early college
 - Seat time waiver programs
 - Dual enrollment
- Cash flow
 - Amounts borrowed and how/when
- Software
 - Financial
 - SIS
 - Food Service and Transportation
 - Other

More Nuts & Bolts

- Major programs and funding streams
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- Cash flow
 - Amounts borrowed and how
- Software
 - Financial
 - SIS
 - Food Service and Transportation
 - Other systems (data warehouse, screeners like NWEA, etc.)

Tales from the Trenches - Supe D: The Underestimated

- Hard to pigeonhole
- 'Hire good people'
- Good at messaging
- Very supportive
- Long tenure



What if things go bad?

- Obey directives
 - Unless illegal or immoral
- Document your objections
 - Non-confrontational, agree-to-disagree
 - You may need to ramp this up later
- Don't sweat the small stuff (but know what that means)
- 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
 - Even if you're sharing a foxhole
- Plan an exit strategy for yourself
 - Even if you never have to use it

**Don't work for
THEM!!**



What about the Board?

- They hired the Supe –
 - They have skin in the game and want the Super 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 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?
 - For example, conflicts of interest

Things to do

- Stay in the loop
- Manage your stress levels
- Be predictable
- Be present
- Be loyal to the *district*
- Lean on professional organizations like MSBO

What we really want!



Dr. McDreamy

Questions?

- Thanks for participating!

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