

Updated 4/22/22/MJL

Nova Classical Academy School Board Training Session  
Monday, April 25, 2022

Background

This session is a continuation of training that began at the board meeting of February 28, 2022. This training draws on materials prepared for Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) New School Board Members Training; my professional experience working closely with school boards for 40 years; content drawn from my work teaching graduate school and preparing and mentoring educational leaders through the University of Minnesota and University of St. Thomas; and concepts and principles developed and used for school board training by *Lovett Leadership LLC*.

Materials:

Attached are:

- Agenda and objectives
- Brief bio of facilitator
- “*Levels of authority affecting public preschool, elementary and secondary schools*”
- “*Building a strong school board/leadership team relationship*”

Objectives for board session on February 28, 2022 and continued and updated for April 28, 2022

- Understand the importance of organization mission and individual purpose.
- Understand the role of a school board and school board members under different levels of authority.
- Distinguish between board member roles as *Trustees vs. Delegates*, and develop a framework for respectful board discussions and decisions.
- Understand the role of a school board under Minnesota State Statutes and state rules; and be able to distinguish between what responsibilities are properly the role of a school board and what are properly delegated to the administration by law, policy and wise practice.
- Build communication skills and establish trust for board/executive director work and performance

## Outline of Training

### **Topic 1: Role and Purpose (Introduced and discussed at session of February 28, 2022)**

- Understand the importance of organization mission and individual purpose.

Beginning with reflections on **why** you are serving, we will consider the **role of the school board through two frameworks.**

For all board members, we will ask you to reflect and share:

- Why did you decide to serve on the school board?
- What do you think you have to offer that will help the board successfully serve students and the community?

Especially for experienced board members:

- What do you believe your board has been doing well?
- What are specific areas where you see opportunities as a board to learn and improve?

### **Topic 2: Levels of Authority (see attached document; please read in advance)**

- Understand the role of a school board and school board members under different levels of authority.

Source: Lovett, Michael J. and Martin, James K, (2022) “Levels of authority affecting public preschool, elementary and secondary schools”

### Topic 3: Trustee or Delegate

- Distinguish between board member roles as *Trustees vs. Delegates* and develop a framework for respectful board discussions and decisions.

**Delegate** board member: A board member who behaves politically in an effort to satisfy personal or pressure group interests.

**Trustee** Board member: normative role characterization that is the antithesis of a delegate board member; prescribes that board members act objectively and rationally serving broad public interest.

*Source: Kowalski, T. (2013). " The School Superintendent: Theory, Practice and Cases"(3rd ed.)*

### **Topic 4: Roles of School Board and Administration**

- Understand the roles of a school board under *Minnesota State Statutes* and *State Rules*; and be able to distinguish between what responsibilities are properly the role of a school board and what are properly delegated to the administration by law, policy and wise practice.
- Activities and discussion
  - Review and discuss common issues
  - Understanding and being able to distinguish between:
    - **Strategic** versus **operational** issues and decisions;
    - Decisions which the **board is required to make under State law**;
    - Decisions which are **appropriately made by administration**;
    - The proper roles of **board policy** (approved by the school board) and **administrative procedures** ( responsibilities delegated to the administration to be made consistent with and carrying out the intent of the more general legal framework or aspirational board policy.)
    - **Practical guidance** on understanding and respecting the respective roles of board and administration.

*Source: professional experience (unpublished); any materials used in examples or discussion from other sources will be properly acknowledged and cited.*

**Topic 4: The Six C's (see attached document; please read in advance)**

- Build communication skills and establish trust for board/executive director work and performance

Cohesiveness

Communication

Community

Conduct

Compliance

Compassion

*Source: February 2022 update based on work of Lovett, Michael and Kimball, George (2017)  
"Building a strong school board/superintendent relationship," Minnesota School Board Association.*

**Summary and Next Steps**

**Facilitator Biography**

**Bio for Dr. Michael J. Lovett**

*(updated February 2022)*

From 2008 through 2017, **Dr. Lovett** was superintendent of the White Bear Lake Public Schools in Minnesota, after serving as assistant superintendent with the Minnetonka Public Schools from

1988 to 2008. Between 1970 and 1988, he was a public school teacher in New York, an administrator at school site and district levels in Minnesota, and in a leadership role at the Minnesota Department of Education.

For more than 40 years, he has taught graduate level courses as an adjunct faculty in educational leadership and policy at four Minnesota universities. Areas of teaching experience include human resources; school finance; strategic planning; research design, analysis and critique; and superintendency.

During nearly five decades he has presented on a educational topics to Minnesota and National conferences; traveled internationally to Asia, Africa, and Europe for education and nonprofit partnerships; is the author of journal articles on educational finance and law; published a book and video series on teacher retention; an essay for an international text on leadership and administrative support of inclusion; and since 1999 has been a regular and extensive contributor to national publications on education.

Since his retirement from full time work in 2017 he has expanded teaching at the graduate level, currently serving as adjunct faculty at both the University of Minnesota and University of St. Thomas; provides both pro-bono and fee-based strategic leadership mentoring and management consulting to educational and nonprofit leaders through *Lovett Leadership LLC*; and is active on several nonprofit boards.

Dr. Lovett earned his B.A. in History from Carleton College, Northfield, MN, in 1970, also attending Doshisha University in Japan in 1969; and M.A. (1973) and Ph.D. (1979) degrees in Educational Leadership and Policy from the University of Minnesota.

For more detail please see <https://www.linkedin.com/in/michael-lovett-phd/>