



SPRING BRANCH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT - TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING
MAINTAINING PRIDE – MAINTAINING EXCELLENCE
by Dr. Mike Moses

SPRING BRANCH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

**NOT TO BRAG OR ANYTHING,
BUT I GOT THE
HIGH SCORE ON MY SCALE TODAY!**

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

INSPIRING MINDS; SHAPING LIVES

- In a word, how are you feeling?
- Why are you doing this?
- How do we like what is going on?
- What do we not like about what is going on?

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

INSPIRING MINDS; SHAPING LIVES, CONT..

- What is the #1 thing about board service that you did not realize when you were elected?
- What is the #1 thing that you believe the public does not know about service?

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

INSPIRING MINDS; SHAPING LIVES, CONT..

- WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ABOUT YOUR ROLE AS A BOARD MEMBER?
- DO YOU CONSIDER THIS WORK TO BE:
 - FULFILLING?
 - GRATIFYING?
 - SATISFYING?
 - EXCITING?
- COULD YOU LIVE WITHOUT IT?

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

BOARD CHALLENGES

- BUILDING TRUST
- STICKING TOGETHER
- AVOIDING INTERNAL ATTACKS
- WORKING TOGETHER
- OUR ROLE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER OR COMMUNITY POLITICIAN TO BROKER THE SYSTEM?
- NO PROMISES TO SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

BOARD CHALLENGES, CONT..

- FACILITIES
- TEACHER RETENTION
- SOCIAL MEDIA
- EMAIL COMMUNICATION
- BOARD DYNAMICS OFFICERS, COMMITTEES

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR HEALTHY BOARD RELATIONSHIPS

DON'T

- ATTACK A FELLOW MEMBER
- TALK OVER ONE ANOTHER
- GO SOLO NO LONE RANGERS
- PERSONALIZE ISSUES
- ASSUME THE WORST/CONSPIRACIES
- PLAY GAMES
- UNDERMINE A DECISION OF THE BOARD

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR HEALTHY BOARD RELATIONSHIPS

DO

- ASK QUESTIONS FOR BETTER UNDERSTANDING
- LISTEN
- RESPECT THE GROUP AS A CORPORATE BOARD
- UPHOLD YOUR OATH
- KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY
- LOOK FOR COMMON GROUND FOR COMMON ACTION

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH PERFORMING BOARDS

A STRONG SENSE OF PURPOSE

- BOARD UNDERSTANDS THE “BIG” PICTURE
- EACH TRUSTEE HAS UNIQUE TALENTS AND IS AWARE OF THEIR ROLE
- NO CLASHING PRIORITIES OR HIDDEN AGENDAS
- COMMITMENT TO HIGH STANDARDS AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH PERFORMING BOARDS

OPEN COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPARENCY

- TRUSTEES SPEAK FREELY AND CANDIDLY
- ENVIRONMENT ALLOWS FOR HONEST OPINIONS AND QUESTIONS
- EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK
- LISTEN WITH RESPECT
- EMPHASIS ON RESOLVING CONCERNS AS OPPOSED TO DWELLING ON THEM

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH PERFORMING BOARDS

SHAPED OWNERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- NO “BLAME GAME” BOARD SHARES COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY
- DIFFICULT, SOMETIMES TOUGH CONVERSATIONS REQUIRED
- EVERYONE ON THE BOARD GETS RELEVANT, TIMELY INFORMATION (REGARDLESS OF COMMITTEES OR OTHER BOARD DUTIES).
- TRUSTEES TACTFULLY AND GRACIOUSLY HOLD ONE ANOTHER ACCOUNTABLE

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH PERFORMING BOARDS

FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABLE

- OPEN TO AND ENCOURAGING OF INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS
- BOARD EMBRACES A GROWTH MINDSET, CONTINUOUS GROWTH, CONTINUOUS PROGRESS, CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
- MONITORING PROGRESS
- CHALLENGING AND ADJUSTING WHEN NECESSARY

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH PERFORMING BOARDS

THREATS TO A HIGH PERFORMING BOARD

- LOSING FOCUS ON THE ENTIRE DISTRICT
- FAILURE TO PREPARE
- PLAYING “STUMP THE STARS”
- KNOWING WHEN A BOARD MAJORITY IS NOT ENOUGH

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH PERFORMING BOARDS

THREATS TO A HIGH PERFORMING BOARD, cont..

- UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA
- FAILING TO INVEST IN TEAM BUILDING, LEADING TO SURFACE CIVILITY, BUT SHALLOW WORKING RELATIONSHIPS
- ALLOWING TENSIONS OR GRIEVANCES TO FESTER, WHICH C ERODE TRUST
- FAILURE TO ASSUME POSITIVE INTENT AND GIVE GRACE

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

BOARD/ SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATION

AT THE ROOT OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EACH
BOARD MEMBER AND THE SUPERINTENDENT IS:

TRUST!

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

BOARD/ SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATION, CONT...

THE LOSS OF TRUST IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
EACH BOARD MEMBER AND THE SUPERINTENDENT IS
CAUSED BY:

SURPRISES!

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

DISTINGUISHING OVERSIGHT FROM MANAGEMENT

- In general, if the board's primary concern is with the presence and effectiveness of management systems that direct the actions and decisions of staff, the board is probably engaged in a legitimate oversight activity.
- In general, if the board's primary concern is with the actions or performance of an individual staff member (other than the superintendent) or the handling of an isolated and specific incident, the board may be verging on micromanagement.
- Although this test does not work in all circumstances, it provides a good starting point to help the board gauge its actions.

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT SCENARIOS

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

Scenario 1:

Board member Smith makes an appointment with the superintendent, goes to her office, sits down, and says, “Madam Superintendent, I’ve been hearing a lot of complaints from principals and parents about the performance of the area superintendent in my part of town. I really think you need to move her to another part of the district, or into central office because there is so much discontent about how this person is performing her job.”

Scenario 2:

Board member Jones calls the superintendent one day and says, “Mr. Superintendent, I want an update on the contract negotiations that are going on right now for the sale of the Main Street property. What’s the status of offers and how are negotiations going?”

Scenario 3:

Board member Enders goes to the board president and says, “Mr. Chair, I would like to put an item on an upcoming board agenda to reconsider our district policy of not naming schools after people who are still alive. Would you please do that?”

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

Scenario 4:

Board member Beazley, during a regular board meeting, says: “Madam Superintendent, I have a suspicion that we are spending too much to build our new schools. What is our cost per square foot, and how does this compare with the costs for neighboring districts?”

Scenario 5:

School board member Ketchum arrives unannounced at school one day, steps into the principal’s office and requests a tour of the building.

Scenario 6:

A board member calls up the superintendent and says, “I just had breakfast with a group of civic leaders, and there is a lot of anxiety about your upcoming recommendations to the board regarding the timing of a bond proposal. I just wanted to share this information with you and give you a heads-up, in case you haven’t heard this already in your circles.”

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

Scenario 7:

The Edge City School Board, operating in its judicial capacity, is meeting to hear a grievance from a teacher with a medical problem that requires her to use the bathroom often. The teacher has filed a grievance because the principal has assigned her to a classroom far away from the bathroom despite her request to be near one. At the grievance hearing, board member Shilling makes a motion to sustain the grievant and require the principal to reassign the teacher to a classroom near the bathroom. Shilling's motion is approved by the board. *(Contextual notes: State law gives principals the right to make teacher assignments. Also, the district has no policy requiring principals to take teacher's medical conditions into consideration when making placements.)*

Scenario 8:

During its regular monthly meeting, board member Smithers raises his hand and says, "Mr. Superintendent, I am very concerned about bus safety in our district. I am hearing stories about reckless driving and buses not being adequately maintained. I want to know what your perception is and what your plans are for dealing with this?"

TEAM OF EIGHT TRAINING

Scenario 9:

During a board workshop, board member Smith asks the superintendent, “What do you think of our district’s policy on nepotism?”

Scenario 10:

Board member Hazard meets with the superintendent one day and says, “I think we should consider launching a major district initiative around incentive pay for teachers. I wish you would start educating the board about this in preparation for eventual action.”

Scenario 11:

Board member Grouse is known for grilling staff during board meetings, asking them tough questions about various data and practices in their departments.

**What is the single most important thing
that the board can do?**

- **Teach classes**
- **Drive buses**
- **Prepare meals**
- **Monitor**
- **Evaluate**
- **Approve**

**CREATION OF ENVIRONMENT AND
CLIMATE THAT MAXIMIZES
TALENT ACQUISITION!**

POWER IS NOT A ZERO-SUM GAME

- A strong school board makes a superintendent more powerful.
- A strong superintendent makes a school board more powerful.

Have courage.
Have a great sense of life.
Have a sense of humor.
Thank you for your service.

SPRING BRANCH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

This kid knows what's up

6.

a) Who is your hero?

DAD

b) Why do you consider this person your hero?

HE IS BRAVE

c) Is there anything your hero is frightened of?

MOM