

Executive Summary

February 9, 2026 – SLP Board of Education Retreat

Prepared for the Board of Education and Superintendent

Purpose of the Retreat

The February 9, 2026 Board Retreat focused on strengthening governance effectiveness, clarifying Superintendent–Board alignment, enhancing communication practices, and improving transparency and accountability systems. The conversation reflected a shared commitment to high-functioning governance, community trust, and strategic coherence.

Key Themes & Strategic Priorities

1. Communications & Community Engagement

Focus: Increase transparency, clarity, and proactive communication with stakeholders.

Recommendations:

- Engage the **Communication Advisory Committee** in governance communication strategy.
- Identify and prioritize specific areas requiring proactive communication - Board member to Board member/Board to Superintendent.
- Create a **Board QR code (digital profile / “Linktree-style” access)** for streamlined public engagement.
- Enhance website visibility of:
 - Board processes
 - Professional development activities
 - Governance priorities
- Strengthen social media coordination.
- Formalize listening sessions with:
 - A consistent purpose statement read at each session.
- Establish **biannual Superintendent-hosted town halls**.
- Provide more context and narrative in Friday updates, including:
 - Color-coded status indicators (Green / Yellow / Red).

Impact: Improves community trust, reduces misinformation, and strengthens stakeholder alignment.

2. Meeting Effectiveness & Governance Clarity

Focus: Make meetings more strategic, efficient, and governance-centered.

Recommendations:

- Limit **Work Sessions to 2 hours**.
- Limit **Business Meeting presentations to 15 minutes**, inclusive of Q&A.
- Consider recording work sessions for transparency and institutional memory.
- Refine agenda-setting:
 - Consider shifting agenda authority from Cabinet to the **Board Chair and Superintendent jointly**.
- Clarify Superintendent report expectations:
 - Include updates on board member questions.
- Board Chair to include:
 - Listening session recap
 - Work session recap

Impact: Keeps meetings strategic and focused on governance, not operations.

3. Superintendent–Board Alignment & Governance Structure

Focus: Define what the Board needs from the Superintendent to govern effectively.

Recommendations:

- Clarify:
 - What information is required for high-level decisions.
 - Expectations around narrative context for major initiatives.
- Establish an accountability tracking system.
- Create clearer follow-up mechanisms.
- Strengthen alignment with:
 - MSBA
 - AMSD
 - Governance best practices
- Develop a structured new member onboarding process.
- Review annual goal alignment (Board and Superintendent)
- Align Board and Superintendent annual goals in a single shared framework.

Impact: Strengthens role clarity, reduces ambiguity, and enhances decision quality.

4. Crisis Management & Accountability

Focus: Ensure readiness and transparency during high-stakes situations.

Recommendations:

- Develop or refine a formal Crisis Management Plan.
- Implement a Board-level accountability tracking system.
- Clarify ownership structure for School Board Drive:
 - Define document management roles.
 - Review Open Meeting Law implications regarding shared access and comments.

Impact: Reduces risk exposure and increases institutional stability.

5. Community Intelligence & Feedback Loop

Focus: Close the loop between community voice and district leadership.

Recommendations:

- Board members document recurring community themes heard during community feedback and public engagement.
- Share compiled feedback with the Superintendent weekly.
- Establish structured feedback-to-action mechanism (communication plan).

Impact: Moves from anecdotal feedback to strategic responsiveness.

Immediate Next Steps (Next 90 Days)

1. Governance & Structure

- Establish Board–Superintendent working group to:
 - Finalize agenda-setting process.
 - Define Superintendent reporting format (including color coding).
- Set meeting time limits beginning next quarter.

2. Communications

- Convene Communication Advisory Committee.
- Draft standardized Listening Session Purpose Statement.
- Launch QR/Linktree-style public access tool.
- Develop Superintendent town hall calendar (2 per year).

3. Accountability & Tracking

- Create:
 - Board Action Tracking Dashboard.
 - Clear follow-up protocol after meetings.
- Review and clarify School Board Drive governance and Open Meeting Law implications (legal consultation if necessary).
- Create Board Norms

4. Alignment & Development

- Schedule MSBA governance alignment check-in.
- Develop structured New Board Member Onboarding Plan.
- Align Board and Superintendent annual goals in a single shared framework.

12-Month Implementation Roadmap (High-Level)

Q2 2026

- Implement meeting time reforms.
- Launch enhanced Friday update format.
- Establish accountability dashboard.
- Conduct first Superintendent Town Hall.
- Create Board Norms

Q3 2026

- Crisis management plan draft.
- Governance onboarding framework completed.
- Listening session cycle implemented with standard format.

Q4 2026

- Mid-year governance effectiveness review.
- Refine agenda-setting process based on feedback.
- Evaluate communication metrics.

Q1 2027

- Annual Board-Superintendent alignment retreat.
- Public governance impact report.