

**PORT TOWNSEND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 50**

**School Board Retreat, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.**

**June 27, 2016**

***“Discover the Power of Learning”***

**Mission:**

In partnership with home and community, Port Townsend School District provides a learning environment where each student develops the knowledge and skills to become a creative, successful and engaged citizen.

**01. Location/Time**

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01.01 Gael Stuart Building, 1610 Blaine St., Room S-11, Port Townsend, WA, 1:00 p.m.

**02. Call to Order**

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02.01 Roll Call

**03. Agenda**

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03.01 Approval of Agenda

**04. Public Comments**

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**05. Completion of Phase 5 of Superintendent Search Consultant Contract**

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05.01 Meeting Plan

05.02 Review Policy 1630 (Superintendent Evaluation)

05.020 Improving Superintendent Evaluation

05.021 Standards for Superintendent Evaluation

05.022 Superintendent Evaluation Recommendations

05.03 Review Policy 1720 (Board and Superintendent Operating Principles, Superintendent Contract/Terms)

05.04 Establish performance objectives for new superintendent

05.040 Entry Plan

**06. Discussion of District Motto, Vision, Mission, and Core Principles Statements**

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06.01 District Statements

**07. Executive Session (if needed)**

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**08. Adjournment**

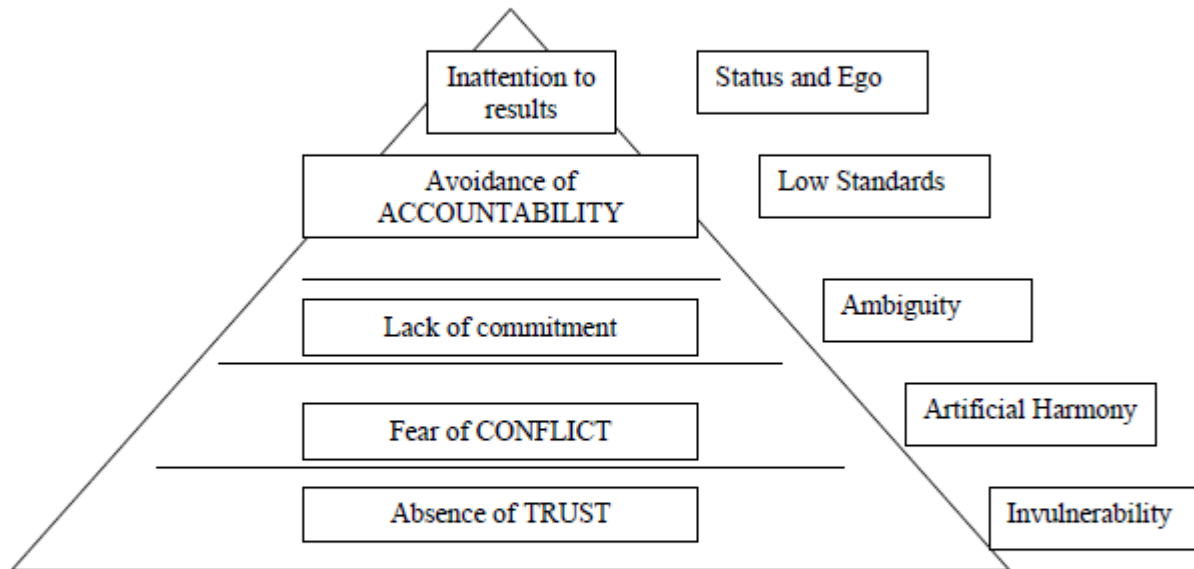
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**Agenda:**

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|---|------------|
| 1) Five Dysfunctions of a Team – Patrick Lencioni   | 15 minutes |
| 2) Public Values and Decision-Making                | 15 minutes |
| 3) Board-Superintendent Roles and Responsibilities  | 30 minutes |
| Break   | 5 minutes  |
| 4) Board-Superintendent Expectations                | 30 minutes |
| 5) State of the District: Vision, Mission and Goals | 30 minutes |
| Break   | 5 minutes  |
| 6) Superintendent 100 Day Plan                      | 30 minutes |
| 7) Accountability and Evaluation                    | 30 minutes |
| Break   | 5 minutes  |
| 8) Next Steps: Desires, Needs and Plans             | 45 minutes |

# The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

By Patrick Lencioni



## Positive Approach:

1. They trust one another.
2. They engage in unfiltered conflict around ideas.
3. They commit to decisions and plans of actions.
4. They hold one another accountable for delivering against those plans.
5. They focus on the achievement of collective results.

Instructions: Use the scale below to indicate how each statement applies to your team. It is important to evaluate the statements honestly and without over-thinking your answers.

3 = Usually  
2 = Sometimes  
1 = Rarely

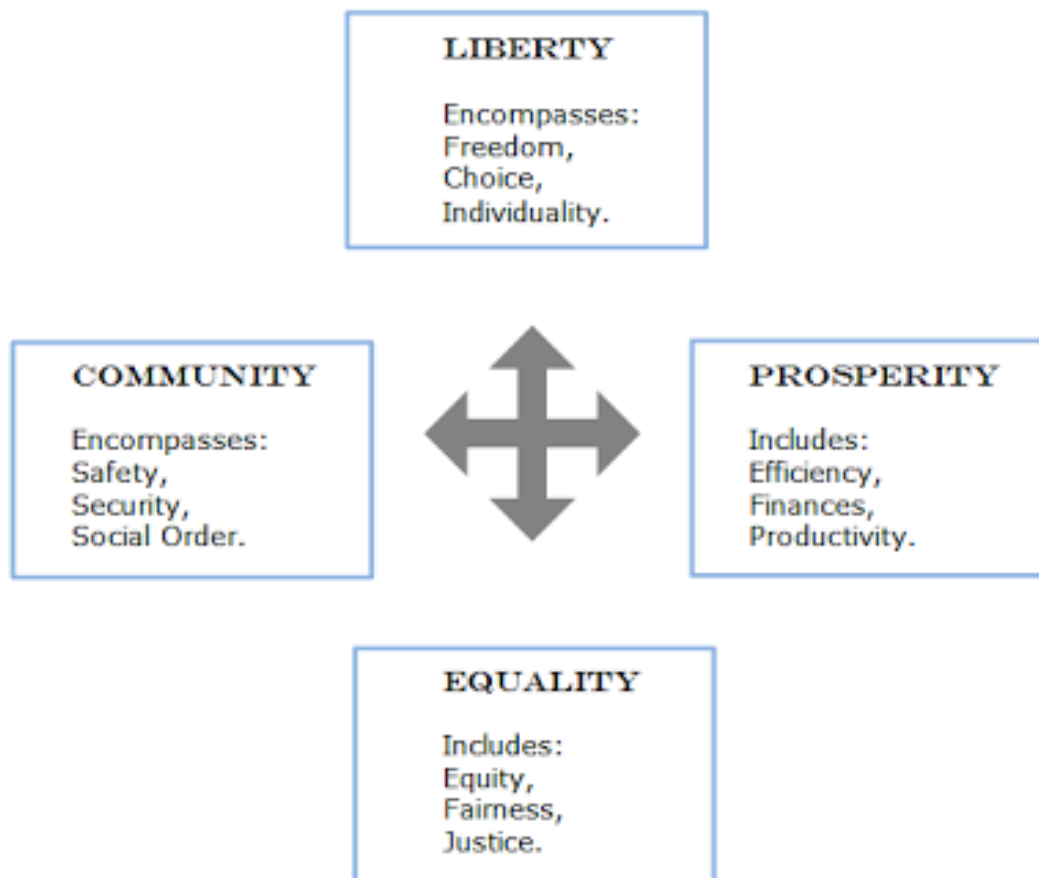
1. Team members are passionate and unguarded in the discussion of issues. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Team members call out one another's deficiencies or unproductive behaviors. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Team members know what their peers are working on and how they contribute to the collective good of the team. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Team members quickly and genuinely apologize to one another when they say or do something inappropriate or possibly damaging to the team. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Team members willingly make sacrifices (such as budget, turf, head count) in their departments or areas of expertise for the good of the team. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Team members openly admit their weaknesses and mistakes. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Team members are compelling, and not boring. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Team members leave meetings confident that their peers are completely committed to the decisions that were agreed on, even if there was initial disagreement. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Morale is significantly affected by the failure to achieve team goals. \_\_\_\_\_
10. During team meetings, the most important and difficult issues are put on the table to be resolved. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Team members are deeply concerned about the prospect of letting down their peers. \_\_\_\_\_
12. Team members know about one another's personal lives and are comfortable discussing them. \_\_\_\_\_
13. Team members end discussions with clear and specific resolutions and calls to action. \_\_\_\_\_
14. Team members challenge one another about their plans and approaches. \_\_\_\_\_
15. Team members are slow to seek credit for their own contributions, but quick to point out those of others. \_\_\_\_\_

Scoring. Combine your scores for the preceding statements as indicated below:

Dysfunction 1: Absence of Trust	Dysfunction 2: Fear of Conflict	Dysfunction 3: Lack of Commitment	Dysfunction 4: Avoidance of Accountability	Dysfunction 5: Inattention to Results
Statement 4 _____	Statement 1 _____	Statement 3 _____	Statement 2 _____	Statement 5 _____
Statement 6 _____	Statement 7 _____	Statement 8 _____	Statement 11 _____	Statement 9 _____
Statement 12 _____	Statement 10 _____	Statement 13 _____	Statement 14 _____	Statement 15 _____
Total	Total	Total	Total	Total

### Public Problems, Values and Choices

Public issues involve four principle values: liberty, equality, community, and prosperity. These values are present in many historical documents, including the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States and Martin Luther King Jr.'s, "I Have a Dream" speech.



**Liberty** means having personal freedom, expressing yourself as an individual, and making your own choices and decisions free from coercion or constraint.

**Equality** means feeling that you are treated fairly, that you have equal rights and opportunities, that your voice matters and vote counts as much as everyone else's.

**Community** means feeling connected to and sharing a sense of belonging with people where you live and work. It means feeling safe and secure and having a decent quality of life.

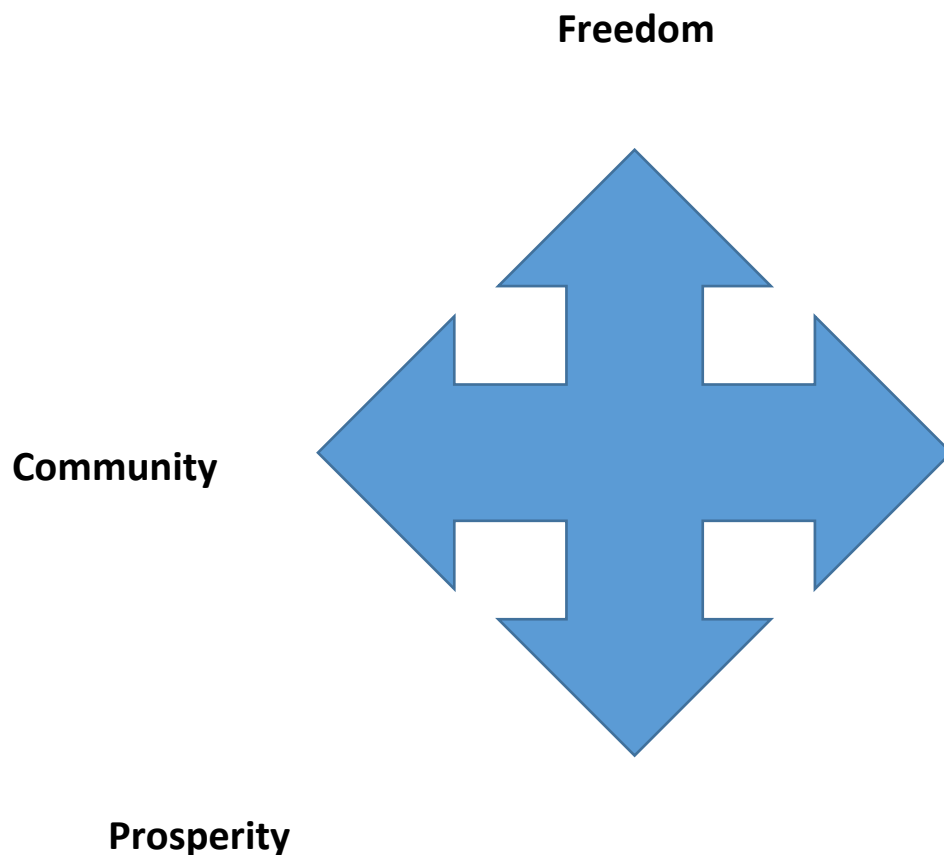
**Prosperity** means being able to support yourself and your family, or having resources available to meet your physical needs, and using resources productively and efficiently.

### **Public Values Activity: School Uniforms**

**Issue:** Mandatory school uniforms will decrease bullying and other social problems.

**Proponents:** School uniforms create a socially just environment. Children are safer and perform better academically due to the decreased distraction from inappropriate attire.

**Opponents:** A school uniform mandate violates the 1st Amendment right.



# Equality

## Creating Culture and Climate for Student Success

### School Board and Superintendent Roles and Responsibilities

<b>SCHOOL BOARD - Governs:</b> <b>Guides, directs (What and Why)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decides what</li><li>• Requests information</li><li>• Considers issues</li><li>• Creates, reviews and adopts policy</li><li>• Reviews and approves plans</li><li>• Monitors progress</li><li>• Contracts with personnel</li><li>• Approves evaluation criteria</li><li>• Reviews and approves budget</li><li>• Represents public interests</li></ul>	<b>SUPERINTENDENT - Administers:</b> <b>Operates, manages (How and When)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decides how</li><li>• Seeks and provides information</li><li>• Provides recommendations</li><li>• Recommends and carries out policy</li><li>• Develops and implements plans</li><li>• Reports progress</li><li>• Supervises hiring process</li><li>• Supervises and evaluates personnel</li><li>• Formulates budget</li><li>• Acts in public interest</li></ul>
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### Key Functions of the Board – Roles and Responsibilities

Acting on behalf of the people of each community, the school board will fulfill the following functions:

#### Responsible Governance:

The board, with participation by the community, will envision the future of the school district's educational program and formulate goals, define outcomes and set the course for the school district. This will be done within the context of racial, ethnic and religious diversity and with a commitment to education excellence and equity for all students.

#### Creating Conditions for Student and Staff Success:

To achieve the vision, the board will establish a structure which reflects local circumstances and creates an environment designed to ensure all students the opportunity to attain their maximum potential through a sound organizational framework. This includes employing a superintendent, developing and approving policies, formulating budgets, setting high instructional and learning goals for staff and students, and nurturing a climate conducive to continuous improvement.

### **High Expectations for Student Learning:**

The board will continuously articulate the belief that all students can learn and that each student's learning can improve regardless of existing circumstances or resources. The board will act as leaders of a vision of shared learning that is supported by individual schools and the community.

### **Accountability for Student Learning:**

The board's accountability for student learning will include adopting a system of continuous assessment of all conditions affecting education, including assessments for measuring staff and student progress towards goals. The public will be kept informed about programs and progress. Staff and board training will be provided to ensure continuous improvement of student achievement.

### **Community Engagement:**

The board will serve as education's key advocate on behalf of students and their schools. The board will work to advance the community's vision for its schools, pursue the district's goals, encourage progress and energize systemic change and ensure that students are treated as whole persons in a diversified society.

For boards of education and superintendents to establish a positive working relationship, the first thing that needs to be accomplished is the establishment of boundaries, parameters, and expectations.

Roles need to be clearly defined and understood by both the board and superintendent. Additionally, it's important that both parties understand the difference between policy and administration.

Always remember, the relationship between the board and the superintendent should be one of mutual respect and confidence. There should be no surprises or hidden information between the superintendent and the board.

## **Key Functions of the Superintendent – Roles and Responsibilities**

**1. Visionary leadership:** The superintendent is an educational leader who improves learning and achievement for each student by leading the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision that is shared and supported by school and community stakeholders.

- Builds commitment to the district's vision and mission.
- Develops strategies to implement the district's vision.
- Holds board and staff mutually accountable for striving toward the vision.
- Aligns district procedures and practices with the vision.
- Uses the vision as an indicator of progress.



**2. Instructional leadership:** The superintendent is an educational leader who improves learning and achievement for each student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a district culture conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

- Advocates for student learning as the district's highest priority.
- Promotes the systematic improvement of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Assures that district policies, practices, and resources support student learning.
- Promotes values, beliefs and behaviors that create an organizational culture devoted to student learning.
- Gives a high priority to reducing achievement gaps.
- Focuses evaluation and professional development on the improvement of student learning.
- Implements effective procedures for staff evaluation.
- Develops systematic strategies for using professional development to improve student learning.
- Personally models effective professional development.
- Builds leadership capacity to improve student learning.

**3. Effective management:** The superintendent is an educational leader who improves learning and achievement for each student and employee by ensuring management of the organization, operations, facilities planning, and resources for a safe, effective, and humane learning environment.

- Uses a continuous improvement process for implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and improving district operations.
- Effectively manages fiscal resources to support instructional improvement and other district goals.
- Strategically manages human resources to support instructional improvement and other district goals.
- Effectively manages key elements of district operations.
- Develops system for assuring that employee performance meets district expectations.
- Ensures long-range facilities planning and maintenance schedules are monitored, and that cost effective strategies are implemented to meet board priorities.
- Develops and implements procedures and practices that ensure the safety and wellbeing of students.
- Develops and implements procedures and practices that ensure the safety and wellbeing of employees.
- Develops and implements procedures and practices that ensure an orderly learning environment.
- Assures that district policies and practices result in a climate that is positive, friendly, and responsive to the needs of students and employees.

**4. Inclusive practice:** The superintendent is an educational leader who improves learning and achievement for each student by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

- Develops two-way communication strategies to reach families, and other individuals, agencies, or community members.
- Develops strategies to involve families and community members in the educational process.

- Develops strategies for constructive resolution of conflicts with families and community members.
- Mobilizes community resources to support district goals.
- Assists board in planning, conducting, and building support for levy and bond campaigns.
- Recognizes and responds to the diversity within the district.
- Capitalizes on the diversity of students and community to improve learning.
- Increases district capacity to positively address cultural tensions or conflicts.
- Works to reduce achievement gaps.
- Identifies and eliminates district policies and practices that have discriminatory effects.

**5. Ethical leadership:** The superintendent is an educational leader who improves learning and achievement for each student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

- Models high standards of professional and ethical behavior.
- Interacts respectfully with others.
- Articulates high expectations for ethical and professional behavior of district employees and students.
- Examines district procedures and practices for possible violations of fairness, social justice, and human dignity.

**6. Socio-political context:** The superintendent is an educational leader who improves learning and achievement for each student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

- Gains understanding of the community by interacting with local community members and engaging in community activities.
- Engages with local, state and federal officials in order to protect and promote the interest of children in the district.
- Engages with professional associations, business organizations, and other external groups to gain understanding of the current environment and develop district responses to emerging issues.
- Respects and advocates mutual understanding of the roles and responsibilities of superintendents and board.
- Honors board policy.
- Provides the board with timely information.
- Treats all board members fairly, respectfully, and responsibly.
- Provides necessary support for effective board decision-making.
- Builds strong team relationships with the board.

#### **Joint Board-Superintendent Responsibilities**

- To work together with the community to develop a vision and goals for the school district and to monitor the achievement of those goals.

- To advocate for students and the school district and promote the benefits of public education.
- Provide community leadership on educational issues by creating strong linkages with appropriate organizations, agencies and other groups to provide support for healthy development and high achievement for all children.
- To collectively execute their legal responsibilities.
- To work collaboratively with agencies, and other bodies, as appropriate, on an ongoing basis.
- To collaborate with other school boards and superintendents to inform legislators of local concerns and issues relative to education.
- To participate in continuing education specifically regarding their roles and responsibilities and on relevant content areas.
- To support board actions and decisions.
- To semiannually set aside time, to discuss school board-superintendent relations.
- To belong to, actively support and participate in their professional organizations, and that each will encourage the other to do so.
- To institute a process for strategic planning that will position the school district for success.
- To ensure that quality professional development opportunities, consistent with district goals, are available to all school district employees.
- To serve as liaisons to the community.
- To ensure adherence to federal and state laws and board policies.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

### **Board's Expectation of the Superintendent**

**Success of Policy:** School Boards have the right to expect the superintendent will support all policies. The board also has the right to expect implementation of policy.

**Decisions:** The board has the right to expect the superintendent to refrain from making decisions the board should make.

**Information:** The board has the right to be fully informed.

**Recommendations:** The board has the right to expect the superintendent to make clear and concise recommendations, based on available information, data, best-practice, and board policy.

**Sharing:** The board has the right to expect the superintendent to share in the hard work, credit and blame.

**Team-Work:** The board has the right to expect the superintendent to conduct business with the board as a whole.

**Support:** The board has the right to expect the superintendent to be responsible for having confidence and respect for the board and supports board action. Differences of opinion must not interfere with the superintendent's loyalty to the board.

### **Superintendent's Expectation of the Board**

**Policy:** The superintendent has the right to expect the board to establish and operate by a complete set of policy guidelines.

**Team Operation:** The superintendent has the right to expect the board to operate as a team, not as individual factions.

**School Personnel:** The superintendent has the right to expect all board members to refer school personnel issues to the appropriate person. The superintendent has the right to expect any action involving school personnel to be predicated on administrative recommendations.

**Protection:** The superintendent has the right to expect the board to protect him/her against unwarranted demands, and excessive or unfair criticism. The board does not need to act as a shield, however, the superintendent must not be subjected to unjust or unfounded public criticism.

**Evaluation:** The superintendent has the right to expect a fair, timely, and honest evaluation. The evaluation must reflect concerns related to job performance, district improvement and student achievement.

**Support:** The superintendent has the right to expect full support from the entire board. Boards should trust and have confidence in the Superintendent's abilities.

#### **Expectations of the Board - Superintendent Team**

Trust and professional respect

Fair, honest evaluation based on agreed criteria

Adherence to and support of policies it has adopted

Willingness to consider staff recommendations

Prepared to do the job

Adherence to high standards of ethical behavior

Realism, confidence and patience

Strives for organization goals above personal goals

No surprises

**Activity:**

To reach more clarity in understanding the Board and Superintendents' decision-making responsibilities. The following exercise can be valuable in surfacing areas of uncertainty or where a difference of opinion exist.

**The Four Levels of Decision-making:**

Level 1: The Superintendent has complete authority to decide and act within the limits of the law, Board policy and common sense.

Level 2: The Superintendent has complete authority to act, but must inform the Board about each decision or action.

Level 3: The Superintendent must obtain prior approval from the School Board before taking action.

Level 4: The School Board makes the final decision, but may request or require a recommendation from the Superintendent.

Establish a citizen advisory committee to recommend goals for the district.

1 2 3 4

Retain a consultant to help set up an instructional technology program.

1 2 3 4

Add a new course in family life education at the high school level.

1 2 3 4

Determine the policy for student dress.

1 2 3 4

Set attendance, achievement, and subject requirements for graduation.

1 2 3 4

Establishing new position entitled, "Director of Research and Development."

1 2 3 4

Temporarily suspend a principal for cause pending an investigation.

1 2 3 4

Permit a religious group to present a program to a student club.

1 2 3 4

Lease for portable classroom's for temporary use until completion of the new school that is seven months behind its construction schedule.

1 2 3 4

## **Port Townsend Maritime Discovery School District**

**Motto:** Learning through a sense of place.

**Mission:** We create and enable the culture, competence and conditions to ensure each student is prepared for meaningful work and engaged citizenship in our diverse and rapidly changing world.

**Vision:** Through community focused maritime place-based projects, students develop effective thinking, effective action, and effective relationships. As a result, our students demonstrate meaningful accomplishments as engaged citizens.

### **Core Principles:**

- Innovation impacts real community needs
- Empowered learners own their learning
- Learning is connected day-to-day and year-to-year
- Learning is embedded in authentic activities and projects
- Meaningful relationships develop while learning
- Our maritime community, in all its facets, provides rich resources for place based learning

### **Strategic Plan – Goals**

**2013-2017 STRATEGIC GOALS** – The Port Townsend Public Schools will continue to develop its public education system with a focus on the following:

#### **Teaching and Learning**

Develop and support reflective thinkers and citizens who are well equipped for life beyond high school. In service of this goal, Port Townsend educators will design and model standards-based learning that is challenging and engaging, developmentally appropriate and relevant to all learners, grounded in relationship, and focused on understanding.

- Maritime Discovery Schools Initiative underway
- TPEP implementation
- PD Wednesdays
- CCSS and NGSS implementation
- Project-based and place-based learning planning supported at all grade levels

#### **Technology**

Use data and technology to individualize student education by providing equity of access, by sharing appropriate community access to technology resources, and by utilizing periodic third party technology integration audits to incorporate new learning into educational design.

- Modernization of district and school websites
- VOIP installation completed across the district
- District-wide Chromebook distribution and Google school apps program implementation
- Technology plan implementation
- Online infrastructure in place for implementation of Smarter Balanced Assessments

- Project Lead the Way: Gateways to Technology project at Blue Heron

### **Community Engagement**

Engage families and the greater community in quality reciprocal communication, service learning, and student internships that develop and support citizens who will be successful in their pursuits beyond high school.

- Maritime Discovery Schools Initiative (presentations, branding and fund-raising efforts) in place
- Facilities planning process (public forums) underway to support future building recommendations
- Hour of Code events sponsored at Blue Heron School
- Engineering and robotics program in place at PTHS
- STEAM Advisory Team in place
- Maritime Discovery Schools Advisory Council in place
- Four-year levy approval (2015)

### **Facilities**

Build, operate, and maintain flexible and user-friendly learning spaces in a responsible, environmentally sensitive way. In service of this goal, we will seek LEED or equivalent certification in future facility development and will sponsor energy-efficiency audits that lead to cost effective retrofitting projects.

- Active long-range planning process in place
- Capital Projects (capital projects levy funded)
- BH track repaved
- Energy retrofitting (state grant-McKinstry partner)
- Summer building projects completed
- Technology upgrades and student device deployment

### **Financial Stability**

Provide sound, responsible financial stewardship by managing and maintaining adequate financial reserves and by aligning resources and facilities to meet these strategic goals.

- Balanced budget (approx. 3% cash reserve)
- Full utilization of CPF
- External resources through MDS fund-raising, PT Education Foundation grants and PT Booster
- Club donations

### **Culture of Wellness**

Focus on supporting active, healthy lifestyles for its students and staff through an improved food service program and through the development of school infrastructure that encourages physical activity in multiple arenas.

- Bicycle Safety curriculum at Blue Heron
- Enhanced funding for Food Services to support Farm to School initiatives

- Director of Kitchens position funded to provide strategic food service planning (new menus implemented at all schools)
- Arran Stark as district consultant to improve kitchen design and food preparation practices
- Long-range facilities planning to design infrastructure that supports increased activity and improved food service options

## **Important Components of Goal Setting**

### **Theory of Action**

A good theory of action does not simply elaborate which actions to take. Too often leaders jump immediately to actions without fully examining or otherwise appreciating what is happening for students and adults. As a result, sometimes there is an investment of considerable time, funding, and other resources in particular activities before we realize that what we have set out to do won't actually get us where we want to go. If we had only suspended action and carefully examined what is happening in our settings, we might not have embarked on the wrong course.

### **Goal Setting Starts with SMART Goals**

#### **Make Your Goals SPECIFIC**

Ambiguous or undefined goals aren't going to provide you with the direction you need to succeed. You want to give yourself a concrete goal so you know exactly what you're working toward. You know your goal is specific if it answers these questions:

- WHO: Who will be involved in helping you reach your goal (including yourself)?
- WHAT: What exact goal do you want to accomplish? Be very specific.
- WHEN: When will you start and when will you reach your goal?
- HOW: How will you make this happen? These are the action steps to get you toward your goal.

#### **Make Your Goals MEASURABLE**

Now that you have some of the specifics of your goal nailed down, it's time to look at how you will gauge your progress. After all, if you don't have any way to measure your goal, how will you know when you've reached it? Your goal is measurable if you can find a way to quantify your success using real numbers. Some examples of measurable goals might be pounds lost, a positive change in blood work numbers, or fitness minutes accumulated.

#### **Make Your Goals ATTAINABLE**

It's good to think big, but it's also important that you don't set a goal that is too big. A goal that's attainable for you is one that you believe you can reach and have the means necessary in order to achieve. So if you plan to work out with a personal trainer but don't have the discretionary dollars in your budget, that goal wouldn't be attainable for you.

To determine whether your goal is attainable, ask yourself honestly if you believe you can achieve it and have all the resources (including time) available to make it happen. Do you have (or will you be able to obtain) all the support, equipment, knowledge and resources needed to put your goals into action?



### **Make Your Goals RELEVANT**

You need to make sure that you're choosing a goal that fits you and your lifestyle. Don't choose a goal out of guilt, or just because someone else thinks it's something you "should" do. Pick something that is meaningful and relevant to you and you'll set yourself up for success.

To determine if your goal is relevant, ask yourself why you want to achieve it. So you can feel more confident? Be a good example to your kids? Or live a longer, healthier life? These whys are important because they will serve as your motivation throughout the process.

### **Make Your Goals TIMELY**

If you don't put a deadline on your goal, it will be difficult to know how to pace yourself to reach it. Every goal should have a date, which will help you stay on track. In addition, set up a few benchmarks, or "mini-deadlines" to keep you on track to reaching your big-picture goal and keep yourself accountable.

## **Port Townsend School Board 2016 Superintendent Selection Criteria:**

The Port Townsend School District Board of Directors is seeking a highly qualified superintendent of schools. This candidate will appreciate working in a small, dynamic school system in the process of aligning K-12 curriculum along a place-based maritime thread called Maritime Discovery Schools. Weaving community values of craftsmanship, stewardship, citizenship, and leadership into its curriculum, the district is looking for a superintendent who is passionate about children and wants to be a lead learner, an ambitious explorer, and a community school builder.

The successful candidate must possess strong communication skills, both written and verbal, and be proficient with multiple forms of media. The superintendent needs to be visible and accessible both inside and outside of the schools, able to nurture common purpose, listen, cultivate trust, maintain transparency and sometimes make tough decisions.

Port Townsend's next superintendent supports a healthy professional climate throughout the district and community by encouraging and empowering students, staff, families and partners to grow as a cohesive community with deep connections to learning and youth development.

The superintendent comes with a demonstrated grasp of instructional practice that is standards-based, learner-focused, relevant and grounded in context and relationship. The superintendent sets high standards and expectations for all students and staff while supporting the progress of the MDS model. The superintendent will inspire students, staff, and community to collaborate, experiment, create, problem solve and have fun in this work.

The superintendent is visionary, forward thinking, and strategic in leveraging school resources and community assets and can craft, develop and work to sustain mutually beneficial partnerships. He or she understands how to further develop use of the technology environment in the service of learning. The superintendent is fiscally sound and is knowledgeable with school finance.

The superintendent recognizes the role public schools should have in fostering positive habits and practices around health, nutrition, physical activity and personal responsibility, and can show experience in developing infrastructure that support a culture of wellness.

The superintendent can demonstrate readiness to engage on multiple levels in the construction of a new elementary school; reconfiguring grades at two schools, updating a high school campus and envisioning its future uses, partners and programs, and managing plans for a school campus under lease.

## **School Board Policies**

1630 – Evaluation of the Superintendent

1810 – Annual Goals

1820 – Board Evaluation

## **School Board-Superintendent Operating Policies**

1005 – Key Functions of the Board

1720 – School Board-Superintendent Operating Principles

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Evaluation of the Superintendent

The board shall establish evaluative criteria and shall be responsible for evaluating the performance of the superintendent as provided by statute.

The superintendent shall have the opportunity for confidential conferences with the board members on no less than two occasions in each school year, the purpose of which shall be the aiding of the superintendent in his/her performance. The board, on the basis of the evaluation, may renew and/or extend the superintendent's contract for periods not to exceed three years.

Legal References:           RCW 28A.405.100           Minimum criteria for the evaluation of certificated employees, including administrators - Procedure - Scope - Penalty

**Date: 6/4/01; 3/8/04.**

**PORT TOWNSEND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 50**

## **A Case for Improving Superintendent Evaluation**

### **Introduction**

A 2002 NSBA report suggested that the most significant role of a school board may be “selecting and overseeing the district superintendent.” The report describes superintendent evaluation as the most important factor in the board/superintendent relationship. Effective evaluation can help lead district improvement. An accurate, fair, and objective evaluation of a school district superintendent may be one of the most significant levers a school board has for driving district improvement.

However, research on superintendent evaluation suggests current practice typically lacks a clear process with objective measures. This is not surprising because performance evaluation, by school boards, of a district superintendent, poses unique challenges regarding accuracy, fairness, and substance. Addressing these complications may be essential for stakeholders to have confidence that the evaluation will do what it sets out to do—provide an accurate measure of performance. Just as with teacher and principal evaluation, this work needs to be supported through research-based, defensible frameworks. Not all districts are the same, and different districts may benefit from different leadership frameworks, evaluation instruments, and processes.

To provide meaningful evaluations, boards need to agree to evaluate superintendents on objective measures of performance. In 1987, education researcher and Professor David Peterson questioned whether board members needed to evaluate superintendents and could provide an objective evaluation. Dr. Peterson answered “yes” to both of these questions.

### **Legal basis for evaluation**

Typically board policy and superintendent contracts speak to when and how evaluation is to take place. Most states have laws that require boards to evaluate a superintendent annually, but rarely, if ever, do statutes require a certain process or criteria for evaluation. Currently, there is no standard of practice or requirement for the quality or objectivity of superintendent evaluation. Sometimes, boards completely neglect or provide a cursory, subjective and inconsistent performance review. Illinois Superintendent Larry Weber portrayed these concerns in his 2007 article, *Evaluate Me on Measures, Not Tales*.

### **Current status of evaluation**

Although performance evaluation is common practice in public education, its consistency, relevance, and effectiveness is frequently questioned. In a 1997 research paper, Carl Candoli and others wrote, “There is widespread dissatisfaction, especially on the part of the public, but among school professionals as well, concerning evaluations of school professionals, schools, and programs.”

Superintendent evaluation poses particular and well-noted challenges. The challenges question the board’s capacity for objective, fair, and substantive outcomes that inspire the confidence of stakeholders. These concerns sometimes reinforce a common complaint that school boards often have difficulty working together and with their superintendent. This problem hinders the ability of boards and superintendents to be an effective governance team.

A useful evaluation needs to be about job performance and based on meaningful criteria. As Linda Dawson lamented in an October, 2010 article for *School Administrator*, the monthly magazine of the American Association of School Administrators, “Most superintendent evaluation ‘processes’ (we

use the term loosely) have little or nothing to do with job performance, and usually all to do with whether board members like the superintendent's style, appearance, or other subjective criteria. Most of the time, the evaluation is based on a checklist or values that were never discussed with the superintendent in advance. Result? The superintendent has little more than a vague notion about what was expected during the period being evaluated, and certainly no idea how to predict the result of the process." One important step is to move away from personally subjective and often inconsequential measures.

The significance of superintendent evaluation cries out for valid and meaningful performance criteria, and a process that all parties trust. These criteria need to be agreed to and clearly understood by the board members and superintendent. The evaluation process itself must also be recognized as meaningful and valid, and accepted by all parties in advance.

### **Superintendents' perspectives**

Superintendents cite a general lack of objective, clear, and consistent performance evaluation by school boards. That belief does not seem to affect superintendent's opinion about the fairness of their own evaluations. When asked, superintendents typically respond that their most recent evaluation by their school board was fair. Michael DiPaola, Chancellor Professor in the School of Education at the College of William & Mary and a former superintendent, observed from a 2007 survey of superintendents that more than three quarters said they were treated fairly in their most recent evaluation.

On the other hand, DiPaola recalls of his time as a superintendent, "I often would ask: 'What does this rating mean?' and 'What data were used to arrive at this rating?' Absent specific responses to these questions, it was impossible to plan for growth and improvement."

One difficulty, DiPaola claimed, is that lay elected school board members typically lack the experience and expertise to consistently evaluate a superintendent's performance based on previously agreed upon evidence and outcomes. He cites research contending that a superintendent could be highly rated on evaluation criteria and still be non-renewed due to politics or personality conflicts outside his or her control.

### **Relationships and tenure**

An effective and fair evaluation can clarify board/superintendent roles and strengthen their relationship. The evaluation process provides an opportunity to enhance collaboration that improves district performance and accomplishes a long-term vision. However, it is rare to find board members or superintendents who are comfortable with the level of clarity of expectations and rigor in the process of evaluation. Inadequate and unfair evaluations can lead to unnecessary turnover among superintendents. If boards increase their capacity to conduct performance evaluation, superintendents may have longer tenure, which generally corresponds with improved student learning.

Research suggests that a superintendent's longevity can enhance system performance and student achievement. Tim Waters and Robert Marzano concluded in 2006 that "superintendent tenure is positively correlated with student achievement." Statistically significant effects between superintendent tenure and student achievement begin to occur in as early as two years into the job. The Waters and Marzano study describes key actions of a superintendent that impact the outcomes of the district. These actions include: focus on creating goal-oriented districts, and "defined

autonomy”—the practice of establishing clear student learning goals for schools while allowing school leaders authority and latitude in how they meet those goals.

Longevity of board members also seems to relate to longevity for superintendents and may relate to improved student achievement. Researchers suggest that turnover on school boards creates challenges that increase administrative turnover and reduce consistency of programs.

### **The potential for superintendent**

Superintendent evaluation provides an opportunity for boards and superintendents to develop shared and clearly understood objective measures of performance. In 1987, education researcher and Professor David Peterson questioned whether board members needed to evaluate superintendents and could provide an objective evaluation. Dr. Peterson answered “yes” to both of these questions.

One of the best ways for a board to demonstrate commitment to improving student learning could be objective, fair, and valid performance reviews of the superintendent. Larry Lashway, a researcher and former Wisconsin school board member, described how superintendents can directly influence student achievement. “By focusing professional development on instructional issues and basing principal evaluation on instructional improvement,” Lashway said, “superintendents can create powerful learning communities within their districts ... District leaders can be firm in asserting the instructional agenda and aligning the organization to support it.” Evaluating a superintendent on these types of actions and performance, provides an opportunity to focus the system on what we know improves student achievement.

Lashway suggests that boards should work closely with superintendents to clarify their expectations for performance and evaluation. “Without strong and highly visible board support,” he wrote, “district administrators will be preoccupied with shoring up their political base and thus unlikely to take the bold steps needed for transforming schools.”

Daniel Stufflebeam and many others have argued that systematic, careful evaluation is vital for an effective school system. The performance of the superintendent and the alignment between what he or she and the board are working toward is critical. The evaluation process provides an opportunity for better communication and clearer roles. In turn, this makes it easier to identify expectations and priorities for the district and maintain a consistent course of action.

### **Summary**

Superintendents and boards play a key role in the performance and outcomes of school systems. Fair, valid, and objective evaluation of a superintendent’s performance is imperative for supporting the work of the superintendent and holding the system accountable for success. As Peterson suggested and emerging research supports, school boards and their members are capable of doing this hard work. Effective and fair evaluation of the superintendent may be one of the most important ways school boards can lead an aligned and highly effective school system.

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# Evaluate Me on Measures, Not Tales

by Larry E. Weber

Evaluation of the superintendent, if done at all, has often been conducted as an anecdotal, verbal exercise in subjective criticism by the board of education.

This is certainly not how it should be. The school district's goals should determine what is important in assessing the performance of the superintendent. Yet most districts have not sufficiently defined the expectations for what they want to accomplish, thus leaving no basis on which to gauge the superintendent other than anecdotal information and his or her personality.

In our 300-student school district, I have been fortunate to work with our seven-member school board to develop a performance evaluation based on an objective assessment of progress toward meeting specific goals. All goals and accompanying strategies have specific dates for district completion and therefore are a measurable indicator of my performance.

From the goals document we are able to identify specific reasons why I should be re-employed as well as areas for attention. The key question becomes: Are we realizing the district's goals? We supplement that information with two surveys. One is completed by the board; the second survey is completed by the faculty and staff. Both surveys are based upon the dispositions and indicators within the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards.

## Strategic Plans

The essential component of the evaluation process is developing the goals and strategies for the district. Germantown uses an internal review committee comprised of four students, four to six teachers, four to six parents, two board members and both administrators. Their task is to review test scores, student and parent survey results and other data to develop a set of recommendations for the superintendent to consider including in the school's improvement plan.

The plan then is reviewed at the school board's strategic planning meeting held every other year. This meeting includes administrators and other key administrative staff as well as teacher representatives. The Illinois Association of School Boards or the superintendent facilitates the strategic planning meeting, where goals and strategies are developed in the areas of curriculum and instruction, district finance, buildings and grounds, community involvement, personnel,



support services and transportation. The goals and strategies are adopted by the board at its June meeting.

As superintendent, I am charged with the responsibility of assuring adequate progress toward realizing the goals and strategies. Every three months I provide indicators to board members that reflect the progress to date. This means that in January, when it is time to review my performance, the board already has an indication of the district's progress toward the goals for the year. There are no surprises for board members or me.

### **ISLLC Indicators**

The purpose for using the ISLLC standards is to provide additional evidence that the superintendent has the character and leadership skills to further the objectives of the district. Each December the board president and I determine which performance indicators within each standard we will include in the surveys that the board and faculty/staff will complete.

For example, Standard 1 relates to visioning and stewardship. We would select performance indicators relating to articulating the vision and involving others in the development and refinement of that vision. The performance indicator has a direct relationship to some of our goals or strategies, serving to corroborate that we are accomplishing the goal.

Standard 4 deals with community collaboration and mobilizing resources. One of our stated goals is to identify additional methods of communication as we facilitate community involvement. Not all indicators need to be included because we want to select those that relate most closely to our goals for that year.

Likewise, the faculty and staff's survey may have different performance indicators to indicate the progress the superintendent is making in using resources to attain the district's goals. The board president tabulates the surveys and offers a preliminary overview to me prior to the board's formal evaluation of me during its executive session in January.

Because the board and I have agreed that performance-based indicators are the best measure of my performance, the board relies most heavily on the progress indicated in the goals and strategies document to determine if I should be re-employed. The information gathered from the board survey is a secondary source of documentation for my performance. The teacher and staff survey validates the information gathered from Part One, the goals and strategies, and Part Two, the board survey.

The evaluation of the superintendent becomes a performance-based exercise as we are constantly monitoring the district's performance and validating it each year with other survey information from the ISSLC instruments. The board has measurable goals in various stages of attainment as well as an evaluation of their superintendent without the subjective personality

issues.

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### Links

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# What Won't Work

*Here's a list of 10 ways to fail at superintendent evaluations*

A friend with more than 30 years of school board service tells a story from his first year on the board. Eager to learn, he attended an annual school board conference. At one of the luncheons, he asked others around the table to describe an effective school board. A businessman and urban board member responded: "The ideal school board meets once a year. At this meeting the board considers a single agenda item, a motion to fire the superintendent. If the motion passes, the board begins a search for a new superintendent. If the motion fails, the annual evaluation is declared satisfactory, the meeting adjourns, and the board goes home for the year."

My friend tells this story when discussing the board's accountability role, and it never fails to get a laugh. He often follows by telling of another board member he met a few years later who had a different approach to supervising the superintendent. This board president routinely visited the district office on Monday mornings to review the superintendent's personal calendar and approve or disapprove each meeting or appointment planned for the week.

Accountability in the form of superintendent evaluation is arguably the board's most important function. The superintendent is hired by the board to run the district, and the board is elected by the community to see that the district runs well. More than just another district employee, the superintendent represents to the board the sum total of the organization, so system accountability comes with the title.

The school board, for its part, is positioned between the community and its schools to provide that accountability function. Nevertheless, boards struggle with carrying out this responsibility. We try to do the job conscientiously, but many of us still fall short, either by not doing enough (like the urban board member in my friend's story) or by doing too much (like the schedule-approving board member my friend encountered).

My board has had challenges figuring out how to evaluate our superintendent. Although we knew we didn't have the expertise to run a district by ourselves, we also knew that our community held us responsible for appropriate oversight. We weren't happy with the status quo, which was to give the superintendent a free hand, then complain and criticize, mostly about our relationship with the superintendent.

Occasionally, like a blind squirrel that finds a nut, we enjoyed high-level, in-depth conversations with our superintendent about student learning. Unfortunately, these discussions were pretty rare, and they always took place out of the public

eye. We hoped to change the evaluation process from an exercise in personal criticism to one that helped raise student achievement.

We looked for a better evaluation tool, but most gave only secondary attention to student learning—as if the two were not connected. It wasn't until we adopted an entirely new approach to evaluation that we were able to convert this very private conversation into one with system wide perspective.

When asked about not getting results from many of his experiments, Thomas Edison replied, "Results! Why, man, I have gotten a lot of results. I know several thousand things that won't work!" In developing our superintendent evaluation tool, we are in the same position as Edison. Here is our Top 10 list of what doesn't work:

## 10. Missing community

The community—whose resources fund the public school system and whose children are entrusted to our care—is justified in expecting us to account for its investment. But when evaluations focus on personal critique, school boards inevitably conduct their most important discussions in executive session, closed to the public and the press.

Our board used to spend several hours each year entirely by ourselves, preparing the end-of-year evaluation, then several more with the superintendent, still behind closed doors while we delivered the evaluation. Important conversations about district performance occurred, but they were held in private. The district's annual report, when published, lacked the rich discussions we had shared, so the public missed valuable information.

Solution: Conduct most if not all of the evaluation conversation in open, public meetings.

## 9. Subjective evaluation

Most evaluation instruments are written in checklist form, listing personal traits, characteristics, and practices exhibited by successful superintendents. Board members rate items, attempting to assess how well the superintendent exhibits each of them.

In an attempt to be objective, we used a numerical rating scale, but we found that the scale was inherently subjective because it focused on the superintendent personally. Our checklist, for example, included items such as "sense of humor" and "style" that, while desirable in a good leader, were clearly subjective. The problem was that we were focusing on the person of the superintendent, a very subjective subject.

Solution: Envision superintendent success as the success of the district as a whole. Define superintendent performance as

equivalent to district performance, then describe that performance in objective terms.

#### 8. Lack of attention to results

Another problem with subjectivity in personal evaluations is that it diminishes the importance of results. “Traits and competencies” of good superintendents describe who the superintendent is (personality characteristics) and what the superintendent does (skills and abilities) rather than results the organization has achieved under the superintendent’s leadership.

They reflect a focus on inputs to rather than outputs from the system. How should we evaluate a leader whose practices seem ideal, but who doesn’t achieve results? How about a leader whose behaviors don’t fit the “mold” but who sees to it that the organization is successful?

Solution: Evaluate the superintendent based primarily on results achieved for students.

#### 7. Not enough time

Evaluations suffer from a lack of dedicated time, making it difficult to carry out a thorough process. Some superintendents note that their boards spend only five to 10 minutes per year on their evaluations. Time seems always in short supply for a part-time board that meets only once or twice a month. No matter when the evaluation is due, we have difficulty dedicating a block of time for a comprehensive performance review and in-depth conversation.

Solution: Divide up the evaluation conversation into

smaller pieces (key components of the job) and review one at a time. Schedule enough time to conduct each piece of the evaluation in depth.

#### 6. Bad timing

Another problem is one of timing. Incidents occurring shortly before the annual evaluation, no matter when it’s scheduled, are distracting and tend to have a disproportionate impact on the conversation when compared with those that happened 10 months earlier.

In this way, timing can magnify a small glitch in the consciousness of board members completing a once-a-year evaluation checklist. The perceived significance of an issue often hinges on whether it is still on the radar screen when the evaluation is due.

Solution: Spread the evaluation conversation throughout the year, scrutinizing a few areas of overall district performance each month during regular board meetings.

#### 5. Unstated expectations

Superintendents can find themselves judged based on criteria that the board has neither stated nor clarified. Their board members nurture expectations about “it”—as in “I’ll know it when I see it.” They assume the superintendent can read their minds and predict how they will react. This is comparable to a teacher making students guess what it takes to pass, or to earn an A.

Failing to clarify expectations is a poor practice in the classroom, and it is an equally poor practice in the boardroom. It is

## Electronic superintendent evaluations make strategic plans come alive

### Kathleen Vail

Today’s students are regularly tested using computers or hand-held wireless devices that allow teachers to track progress and make instant decisions about instruction.

Evaluations for school leaders have gone electronic, too. The governance software tools developed by eBOARDsolutions, which include modules for online board meetings, now include online superintendent evaluations as well as self-evaluations for school board members.

The superintendent evaluation tool is designed to link with the district’s strategic plan, allowing the board and superintendent to ensure the plan is being followed.

“Our motto was: Eliminate SPOTS—strategic plans on the shelf,” says Mark Willis, assistant executive director of the Georgia School Boards Association, which operates eBOARDsolutions.

Using this module, the superintendent’s

goals and evaluation criteria are set in June for the next school year and loaded into the software. Each month, the superintendent can fill in things online as they occur. The superintendent and the board can discuss and adjust as the year goes along. By year’s end, all of the information is in the system.

“That’s what we encourage them to do,” says Willis, “Build the documentation throughout the year, rather than waiting.”

School boards opting for the electronic superintendent evaluation usually start with data from their own paper tool, which gets loaded into the software. Willis says there’s nothing wrong with the traditional process, in which the board and superintendent meet to determine the criteria in advance, then conduct an end-of-the-year evaluation that feeds into the strategic plan. “We said, ‘There are things that can be enhanced through technology. Lay the technology on top of the framework.’”

When both the board and the superintendent do their evaluations online and then link

to the strategic plan, he says, the module can provide structure and save administrative time and paperwork. A review stage in the software allows board members to build in action plans based on the strategic plan—including what needs to be done, who will do it, and when it needs to be done.

eBoardsolutions made the superintendent and board evaluation module available in mid-2010, and almost 20 districts are using it. Although the software tool was designed to be a top-level governance tool, some superintendents have adapted it to evaluate central office administrators and building principals. One principal is using it with staff and department meetings as part of the school improvement plan.

“The evolution of how it’s expanded,” says Willis, “from the school board and beyond. That has been exciting.”

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not fair to the superintendent for past performance, and provides no guidance for future performance.

**Solution:** Establish written criteria for each topic covered in the evaluation, and use only those criteria when evaluating the superintendent.

#### 4. Misalignment

Unfortunately, boards often conduct the superintendent performance review and set priorities for the coming year without connecting these actions with other important related actions. They give mixed signals about board priorities. Superintendents have a job description, but few are evaluated against job description criteria.

Other actions most boards forget to link to the evaluation process are the superintendent's contract, board policies, the strategic plan, and the budget. When created and reviewed separately, they inevitably will contain conflicting or inconsistent language about what the board considers to be important.

**Solution:** Connect all of these important links in the accountability chain. Incorporate language from the superintendent's job description, the contract, board policies, the strategic plan, and the budgeting process in the criteria used for the evaluation so that the evaluation process is aligned with these board priorities.

#### 3. Divided voice

Boards find it difficult to speak with one voice, composed as they are of individual members. The evaluation offers a great opportunity for meaningful dialogue between board and superintendent, but if one party (the board) fails to speak coherently, that opportunity is squandered.

An evaluation that dutifully records every board member's comment without regard to how many opinions it represents will confuse the message. Personal agendas and individual perceptions can lead to comments that reflect neither board consensus nor majority opinion.

They are nevertheless included out of a mistaken desire to have each member's contributions included in the final written evaluation. When it fails to give voice to a coherent message, the board confuses its most important—and many would say only—employee.

**Solution:** Draw a distinction between individual comments, which board members have a right to express, and the board's formal message, which is our collective duty to deliver. Before the meeting, collect every member's input in response to each criterion. Consider all such comments and then deliberate as a board to decide which comments reflect the opinion of the majority. Only include majority opinions in the final evaluation.

#### 2. Missed opportunity

Many boards and superintendents miss the opportunity for in-depth dialogue that is important to district progress. Under pressure to move on to other matters, boards may hurry to get the evaluation over with. They just go through the motions.

Others miss this opportunity by failing to plan, or by taking a casual approach to this serious conversation.

**Solution:** Plan the time it takes to engage in constructive two-way dialogue, ensure that every board member addresses each criterion in the evaluation, prepare a draft evaluation with those comments a majority of board members support, and give the superintendent an opportunity to respond to the draft before the board decides on a final document.

#### 1. Not doing it

Some boards never get around to doing superintendent evaluations. By some estimates, as many as one-fourth of all boards fail to evaluate their superintendents on an annual basis. These boards are just waiting for the next crisis to occur. Ignoring issues when they are small enables them to grow until they become too big to resolve easily. At best, nothing is accomplished when we completely skip the evaluation.

**Solution:** Plan the evaluation as a board activity on the annual calendar, and then follow the schedule.

#### Making the change

Of the 10 problems listed above, most are unintended consequences of a deeper issue: treating superintendent evaluation as a subjective personnel action without tying the evaluation to the performance of the district as measured by results. The rest are symptomatic of not planning or devoting enough time to do the evaluation well.

We need to change the way we think about this process. Three steps will help:

1. Change the subject of the evaluation by shifting attention from superintendent performance to district performance.

2. Limit the scope of evaluation by shifting attention from how the superintendent is performing as an individual to (primarily) the results the superintendent is achieving for the district and (secondarily) how the district is performing as a total system.

3. Increase the time and attention given to the evaluation function by extending this important conversation over the entire year.

If we take these steps and follow them through to their logical consequences, we will elevate superintendent evaluation from its present status as primarily a personnel action to a matter of total system accountability. In the process, we will elevate our purpose as a board.

We aren't there primarily to teach (or critique) our superintendents, nor to advise (or nag) them. Our primary role, standing in for the community, is to ensure accountability for the community's schools. When we make system accountability our priority, superintendent evaluation will be worth the time and effort we put into it, because that time and effort will be focused on student success. ■

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## OPERATING PRINCIPLES

### PORT TOWNSEND SCHOOL BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT

#### Philosophy Statement

Operating principles define beliefs, values and methods of working together. Successful organizations are the result of effective and dynamic leadership. To assure quality of operations, leaders must agree on basic ways of working together. The school board is most effective when it is able to constructively integrate the diversity of its members into a strong, dynamic voice for quality education for all students. The difference between diverse and divided boards is that a diverse board is able to express diversity without questioning one another's motives while a divided board can find no way to reconcile differences and is unable to govern effectively.

We must agree on both philosophical ideas and practical ways of working together to achieve the common goals that provide quality education for all students. Effective working relationships are most likely when all parties know and agree to accepted ways of working together.

To that end, the Port Townsend School Board and Superintendent have adopted the following operating principles. We agree the board shall review this document annually, in January, make any needed additions or changes and reaffirm support by re-signing this working agreement.

DATED: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board member

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent

**POLICY 1720  
OPERATING PRINCIPLES**

**PORT TOWNSEND SCHOOL BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT**

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### PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

The most effective way to operate and supervise a dynamic school district is through close cooperation between the school board, the superintendent, administrative teams and the staff. The example by which the board and superintendent lead the district becomes the model for the administrative team, staff, parents and community on how issues and problems are resolved.

Our approach is to work in an open, positive problem-solving atmosphere to achieve the goals of the organization. Cooperation, support and loyalty do not mean we will agree on every issue; dialogue, divergent thinking and debate will encourage the best decisions. We have agreed to the following principles:

### COMMUNICATION

The centerpiece of this agreement is focused on communications. The board and superintendent agree to conduct the business of the district in a courteous, positive manner with open communications and an attitude of sharing and respect. We will make deliberate attempts to share information and data.

### LOYALTY AND COMMITMENT TO THE DISTRICT

Each individual has a responsibility to be loyal to the district and has a commitment to our common cause – a quality education for every child and a quality of life for the community.

To maintain a close and positive working relationship between the board and the superintendent, each member of the board agrees to the following:

**PROBLEMS:** Problems or perceived problems are those areas of concern that involve a breach of any district policy. The board members agree to direct questions or concerns about perceived or actual problems to the superintendent or designee rather than solicit information from employees.

**INFORMATION:** Board members should feel free to seek information to increase their understanding of procedures and practices. Each board member may engage in open communication within the district in an effort to gather information. To ensure the effectiveness of board-superintendent relationships, information concerning policy or general information that requires research and/or data, will be directed to the Superintendent.

### EMPLOYEES

The board is encouraged to offer praise for employees, but criticism must be channeled through the superintendent's office.

### PUBLIC AND EMPLOYEE COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

When an individual board member is contacted by a staff or community member, either by phone or correspondence, each member agrees to the principles of the following model:

1. Listen to the concern or complaint and find out if the individual is “venting” or wishes to know the steps to resolve the issue.
2. Inform the individual of the appropriate policies and channels regarding the complaint or concern. Assist by informing the individual of the correct procedures to resolve the issue.



Example: Teacher complaint by parent

- a. Refer parent to teacher and principal
  - b. Continue to channel the individual to the next immediate level, if the issue is unresolved.
  - c. Insure contractual agreements are considered.
  - d. The issue is only placed on the board agenda when all appropriate levels and channels of responsibility have been pursued, including the superintendent's office.
3. The superintendent will be informed by the board member of the complaint or concern and, except in unusual or extenuating circumstances, the information will be shared by the superintendent or the board member with the remaining members of the board.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

Without exception, all information received and/or discussed in executive sessions will remain completely confidential. Information given in confidence, particularly when planning and exploring alternatives within the confines and laws that determine executive privileged information, must also remain confidential.

Public debate and information, while being open and honest, must not disclose information held to be confidential in regards to negotiations, the purchase of real estate, personnel and other topics covered by the confidentiality of the executive session laws.

### AGENDA PREPARATION

Individual member's agenda must be open and on the table for meaningful dialogue to occur. Surprises at meetings are counterproductive. If a board member wishes to have an item or items placed on the board meeting agenda for discussion or action, the item(s) must be in writing explaining the content of the item and the reason for submitting the item(s) or, during a regular board meeting a board member may request an item(s) be placed on a future board meeting agenda. In either case, the superintendent and board chair should be advised in a timely fashion to allow the administration the appropriate time to gather data and prepare the board packet according to established deadlines.

### DISTRICT NEGOTIATORS, ATTORNEYS AND CONSULTANTS

Only the superintendent or his (her) designee are to contact the district's attorneys, consultants, or negotiators. If a majority of the board feels a need to consult with the district counsel, consultant or negotiator, the board chair may request that the superintendent arrange such a meeting.

The board chair, on behalf of the board, may contact the district's legal counsel in reference to the superintendent's contract and share that information with the remainder of the board.

### THE MEDIA

The superintendent is responsible for communicating official district positions to the media. There will also be occasions when the board chair communicates the boards' or district's position.

We understand that the best practice of the board, especially relative to controversial issues and negotiations is to speak as one voice as the board and administration. However, it is not the intent of the superintendent or board to negate a member's right to speak to the media or community. Board members may state personal positions as long as they make it known they are not speaking on behalf of the board or the district.

It must also be understood that divisiveness through the media is inappropriate. It must be clear that we agree not to use the media to strike out at the district, superintendent, board members or other administrators and staff members or to use it for one's personal political gain.

### **SCHOOL VISITATIONS**

Board members are welcome in all schools and facilities at any time. However, out of courtesy a board member should advise the principal of his/her intent to visit a school.

### **MEETINGS**

School board meetings are the community's window to district operations. As per Board Policy 1400/1400P, "...all meetings will be conducted in an orderly and businesslike manner, using Robert's Rules of Order as a guide."

Meetings will begin promptly at 6:00 p.m. or as otherwise announced, and end at a reasonable time.

Executive sessions will take place as needed, consistent with board policy. Board members will be advised of the intent of the executive session in advance of the meeting.

Except in cases of emergency, issues not set on the agenda or addendum will not be presented by either board or administration, with the exception of announcements that require no action by the board. Announcements are defined as pieces of information regarding various meetings and items of interest. (An emergency is defined as being a situation involving injury or damage to persons or property or the likelihood of such injury or damage when time requirements of notice would make notice impractical and increase the likelihood of injury or damage [see RCW42-40-080]).

Before each meeting the board members agree to read all available agenda materials and contact the superintendent prior to the meeting if he/she feels clarification is necessary. Each agenda item requiring action by the board and all reports to the board will be accompanied by appropriate information provided by the superintendent in the board's meeting packet. The board packet will be sent in a timely manner to allow the board to study the agenda items.

It is understood that on occasion it may be necessary for the administration to provide additional information at the board meeting.

### **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Members of the audience may address the board at the scheduled time for community input at each meeting. Audience members may address agenda items or other topics during this scheduled time. The board will listen to the information and opinions presented, and through the superintendent provide answers to questions, but is under no obligation to take action by audience request. An issue may be put on a future agenda if it is deemed appropriate for board

action or reports. If a member of the audience requests information that is not immediately available at the time of the meeting, the board understands it may direct the superintendent or his/her designee to provide information to that person in the future. No board member or administrator should be expected to provide information if it is not readily available.

### DECISION MAKING

Each board member recognizes that he/she has no power or right to make individual promises that would be binding upon the board and district.

Each member has the obligation to state his/her point of view prior to a board action, including the chair of the board.

Because the board functions as a team, each member has the responsibility to support final decisions and aid in their implementation even though the member may not agree with or favor the decision. Concurrently, board members respect the right of individual members to oppose a proposal and vote against the majority of the board.

The board and superintendent will prepare a tentative calendar of regular events requiring board attention during the year including reporting systems of annual goals.

An individual board member may request that the superintendent prepare information and reports to assist in making informed decisions. If the request requires an excessive and unusual amount of staff time in the opinion of the superintendent, he/she may direct the member to the board chair. It is the chair's responsibility to discuss the request with the rest of the board to insure the request is a need and is of interest to at least the majority of the board.

Board members may make suggestions to the superintendent at any time, but he/she is not bound to follow such suggestions. If a member wishes to pursue his/her idea, he/she will request that it be considered as a regular item of business through the board chair and superintendent.

### CRITERIA FOR DECISION MAKING

(See attachment #1)

### THE ART OF POLITICS

Board members each have different experiences, beliefs, needs, and community support. It is the art of persuasion and politics to provide convincing testimony to persuade at least a majority of the board, in open meeting, to agree to an issue. If that is not possible, the individual agrees that the majority rules. After stating his/her arguments through orderly debate and consideration, he/she recognizes the need to move on to other issues. It is not in the best interest of the district to hold tightly to past disappointments, disagreements, and debates.

### THE WSSDA CODE OF GOVERNANCE

The Washington State School Directors' Association holds that the values, knowledge and skills of effective school board members are based on adherence to basic principles such as honesty, integrity and respect for human dignity.

We, as independently elected officials, recognize and accept the responsibility of our role and our personal authority to act only within the structure of a school district's board of directors.

We commit to taking the time necessary to understand the beliefs, acquire the knowledge, and develop the skills necessary to be effective school board members.

### Beliefs

We believe each individual board member is responsible to:

- Be fully prepared and work within the board's structure;
- Make decisions to ensure equal access to public education;
- Acknowledge that an effective board must be composed of members who respect the processes and recognize dissenting viewpoints;
- Respect the professional expertise of district staff as necessary for the operation of effective schools;
- Recognize that schools thrive in a community where there is an atmosphere of mutual respect;
- Support actions take by the board, and clearly differentiate personal opinion from board decisions when speaking in the minority;
- Make decisions to ensure the rights and welfare of all students;
- Make decisions that respect and accommodate diversity;
- Maintain independent judgment free of special interest and partisan political groups, and avoid the use of schools for personal gain;
- Promote environments that meet the educational needs of all students;
- Recognize that effective internal and external communications are an essential part of our public schools and the role of a school board member;
- Consider educational research, proven practices and community input in making decisions;
- Be accountable for personal actions;
- Work cooperatively with other board members, the staff and the community;
- Understand his/her role in making, monitoring and evaluating school district policies; and
- Be sensitive to how independent statements or actions of a board member may be perceived.

### Knowledge and Skills

We believe that successful school board members will acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to:

- Understand the state's laws and regulations and their district's policies and procedures and contractual obligations which govern the operation of schools;
- Recognize that their school board authority to act can be exercised only when participating in an official meeting of the board;

- Hold confidential from the public, including families and friends, all matters discussed in executive session;
- Accept the appropriate roles of the board and superintendent in the operation of the school district;
- Strategically plan for the schools' short-, intermediate- and long-range futures; enact policies to ensure fair, efficient and effective operations; monitor – not manage – the implementation of plans and policies and evaluate the district's educational effectiveness;
- Develop interdependent relationships based on collaboration with other school board members, boards, other educational policymakers and appropriate agencies which will improve public education; and,
- Keep abreast of important developments in educational trends, research and practices.

(From: WSSDA's publication: "Serving on Your Local School Board: A Guide to Effective Leadership. Revised July, 2007)

**Attachment #1**

**Criteria for Decision Making**

1. Whose decision is it?
2. Is it consistent with the vision and mission?
3. Is it legal and in accordance with directives?
4. Is it supportive of the strategic plan's goals?
5. Is it in the best interests of students?
6. Can the decision be supported by staff, students, parents and the community?
7. Are the implementation risks manageable?
8. Are the implementation funds budgeted and available?
9. Are staffing and other resources available?
10. Will failure to make the decision have an adverse impact?
11. What result(s) is expected from the decision?
12. What result(s) is expected of making a negative decision?

**Date: 8/19/93; 7/22/96; 2/8/99; 12/20/99; 2/23/04; 2/4/08; 2/22/10; 3/8/10.**



# PORT TOWNSEND

## School District



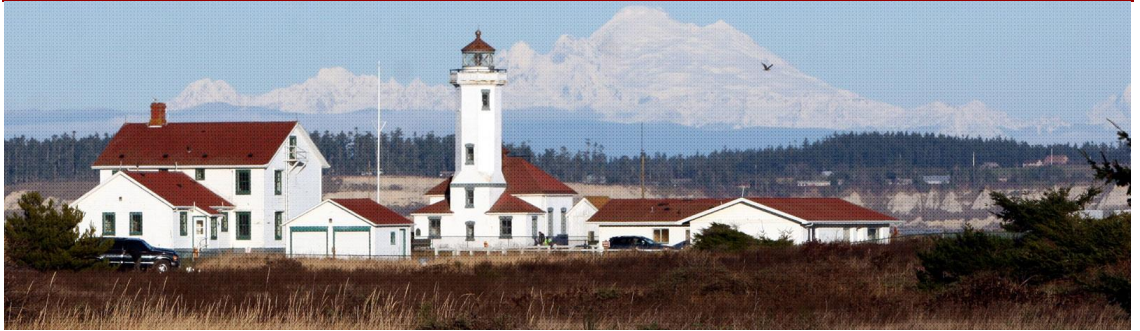
### Entry Plan

*For Superintendent John A. Polm, Jr.*

Fall 2016

#### **Belief...**

*The education of each student is a responsibility shared by students, families, schools and communities.*



## Commitments

One of our prime objectives is to help all students graduate with the skills, knowledge and disposition to be successful.

- In all interactions, I will be fair, truthful, reliable, and respectful.
- I will be competent in all phases of school leadership and serve as a steward and guardian of school district values, vision and mission.
- I will obey all local, state, and national policies and laws, and work to correct any that are not in alignment with best educational practices.
- I will endeavor to conduct myself as a positive role model for students, colleagues, parents and community.
- At all times I will carry out my duties and responsibilities without prejudice in regard to the gender, age, ethnicity, cultural background, religious or political affiliation, any disability, socioeconomic status, or sexual preference of any of students, colleagues, parents or community.



## MISSION STATEMENT

*In partnership with home and community, Port Townsend School District provides a place-based learning environment where each student develops the knowledge and skills to become a creative, successful and engaged citizen.*

## Partnering for Student Success

### Entry Plan

*The governing board made it clear they were seeking a superintendent who will appreciate working in a small, dynamic school system in the process of aligning K-12 curriculum along a place-based maritime thread called Maritime Discovery Schools (MDS). I am that person.*

*I will develop and execute an entry plan focused on reflective listening, active engagement, and collaboration designed to partner with the governing board to build on the recent successes and momentum in the Port Townsend Schools.*

### Phases of this plan include:

**Phase 1: July-August, 2016** – Introduction, Listening, and Learning. I understand there will be a period of transition during which stakeholders need to get to know me, my leadership style, and build a sense of trust. I will be intentional to reach out to as many people as possible in the weeks leading up to the start of school so that I learn as much as possible while sharing my heart for education and for serving the Port Townsend School District.

**Phase 2: September-October, 2016** – Understanding, Relationships, and Respect. I will focus on understanding the values and culture of PT Schools and seek to build relationships with stakeholders. I will seek to understand by continuing to listen. I will build trusting relationships through transparency and honest/open communication. I will build respect through credible and competent leadership.

**Phase 3: October-November, 2016** – Connecting the Dots and Building Upon the Plan. I will partner with the governing board to begin to review collected data and perceptions in order to uncover misperceptions and gain clarity around our strategic initiatives.

**Phase 4: November-January, 2016-2017** – Engagement and Developing the Strategic Initiatives. I will be fully engaged in the process of bringing people together to support and develop the vision of the governing board. I will attend school events, participate in community organizations and events, and help build a sense of community around “our schools”.





## Goal 1

### Governing Board:

Ensure a Strong,  
Unified and Effective  
Governance Team  
for the Port  
Townsend Schools

### Intended Activities:

- Communication and Planning
  - Establish regular meeting times with the board chair and vice chair for planning and reviewing board agendas.
  - Establish regular meetings with each board member for one-on-one conversations and perspectives.
  - Establish regular weekly written communication with the governing board.
- Transparency and Unity
  - I will avoid confidential conversations. If you visit with me about a school subject, it will be shared in my Friday letter.
- Establish clear and continuous understanding of roles, responsibilities, expectations, and accountability.
  - Engage in professional learning experiences with the governing board to establish roles and responsibilities as well as expectations.
  - I would like the board and superintendent to agree participate in annual training on liability and responsibilities provided by Mac & Jacobson, our insurance provider or appropriate WSSDA personnel.
- Vision for the District
  - I will partner with the governing board to identify the components of the strategic plan that have been implemented, are being implement, and have yet to be implemented. I will work with the board to leverage their expertise and energy to further develop the strategic plan.



## Goal 2

### Visibility and Community Building:

Provide Effective  
Communication and  
be Visible Inside and  
Outside of the Schools

#### Intended Activities:

I plan to be a very visible superintendent – both in the community and schools.

- Prior to July I plan to conduct pre-start phone meetings and in person meetings for the purpose of introductions and a smooth transition.
- I will meet with the Superintendent, Finance Director, Facility Director and District Administrators.
- I intend to structure regular ongoing times to meet with school board members, district administrators, professional and support staff, and community organizations and partners.
- I intend to identify key stakeholders and schedule time to meet with them within the first months on the job.
  - I intend to complete an "Influentials" study. This activity uses Floyd Hunter's Elite Theory to identify current influential people in a community. The procedure is a simple short qualitative interview (about 15 minutes) in which the interviewee identifies people they believe would be important to have support of a school bond or maintenance and operations levy.
  - I intend to calendar 20-25% of my time to be in schools regularly.
  - I intend to commit 20-25% of my time to focused efforts of communication to include large groups, small groups, and individual face-to-face. I will utilize available media to extend communication to school-based and community-based stakeholders.
  - I intend to visit with the Mayor to investigate a potential community-wide celebration of September as Achievement Month and encourage set goals to learn and achieve in the year ahead.
  - I intend extend invitations to principals to form student leadership groups and explore events such as a Friday morning monthly fun run with a morning healthy snack at one of the schools,
  - In order to maintain wellness, I will not always stay to the end of school and community events. During the week I will try to be home by 8 pm when possible. I will commit to at least one and up to three evening events in during a typical week. This limitation is necessary to maintain good health.



## Goal 3

### Instructional Leadership, Capacity Building, and Student Achievement

Lead to support a standards-based, learner-focused, and relevant curriculum.

#### Intended Activities:

- Support the progress of the Maritime Discovery Schools model. I will seek to inspire students, staff, and community to collaborate, experiment, create, problem solve and have fun in their work.
- Support a strategy to continue to develop and leverage local expertise both inside and outside of the schools.
- Seek to raise the PTSD on time graduation rate to 85+% and extended graduation rate to 90+% within five years. District on-time rates are as follows as per OSPI:
  - On time: 2011 = 78.6 2012 = 79.6 2013 = 69.7 2014 = 81%
  - Extended: 2011 = 84.9 2012 = 82.5 2013 = 75.9 2014 = TBD
- Collect, review, and organize a comprehensive profile of the school district in order build a collective picture of student achievement and performance, student/staff/community perceptions, and other indicators of student learning and success.
- Partner with faculty to continue to build a learner-focused and relevant curriculum.
- Connect with all of the Port Townsend educational partners to support their relationship with the school system.



## Goal 4

### Effective Systems Design to Support Vision:

Establish/Maintain a  
Strong District  
Leadership Team  
Focused on  
Effectiveness, Efficiency,  
and Accountability

#### Intended Activities:

- Partner with the outgoing superintendent, current district leadership, and central office team to ensure a smooth transition and start to the school year for students, staff and faculty.
- Request a current status assessment from each director/supervisor.
- Evaluate the performance of all schools, their initiatives for improvement, and data to determine progress
- Review the following:
  - District Improvement/Strategic Plan
  - Board policies and administrative regulations
  - Bond program plans, construction and facilities utilization reports
  - Financial projections
  - Population projections
  - Employee handbooks and manuals
  - Available disaggregated student achievement data
  - Legal proceedings and settlements
  - Scorecards/report cards for schools and departments
  - Safety and emergency plans
  - Allocations
- Build performance expectations for leadership around the key indicators set by the board of directors.





## Goal 5

### Healthy, Productive and Safe Environment:

Identify and Analyze the  
Issues that may act as  
Barriers to a  
Healthy/Productive Culture  
and Seek Support for Port  
Townsend Schools

### Intended Activities:

Many of the intended activities from above will contribute to identifying and analyzing critical issues and potential barriers to success. I will be a listener....a really good listener.

- Meet with union/association leadership to understand structure, deepen instructional focus, content and working relationships (Certificated, Classified, Principals, etc.)
- Meet with the local newspaper to develop a relationship that showcases the strengths of Port Townsend and offer to write a periodic editorial article highlighting PTSD's assets.
- Arrange to meet the mayor and the city council, and state legislators.
- Join Rotary and/or other appropriate civic organizations
- Seek to continue to empower and engage students, staff, families and partners in the educational structures in place, and to focus on growing the community connections to learning and youth development.
  - Identify structures to connect adult mentors with secondary students
  - Support adult volunteers as meaningful contributors in the elementary and middle schools

*"One is not born into the world to do everything but to do something." ~Henry D. Thoreau*

## **Port Townsend Maritime Discovery School District**

**Motto:** Learning through a sense of place.

**Mission:** We create and enable the culture, competence and conditions to ensure each student is prepared for meaningful work and engaged citizenship in our diverse and rapidly changing world.

**Vision:** Through community focused maritime place-based projects, students develop effective thinking, effective action, and effective relationships. As a result, our students demonstrate meaningful accomplishments as engaged citizens.

### **Core Principles:**

- Innovation impacts real community needs
- Empowered learners own their learning
- Learning is connected day-to-day and year-to-year
- Learning is embedded in authentic activities and projects
- Meaningful relationships develop while learning
- Our maritime community, in all its facets, provides rich resources for place based learning