

PORT TOWNSEND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 50

School Board Retreat

July 13, 2015 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

“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

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

02. Call to Order

03. Agenda

03.01 Agenda Approval

04. Year in Review

05. Policy and Governance

05.01 Role of the Board

05.02 Team Building

06. Strategic Goals

06.01 Action Plan Outlined

06.02 Ethics of Board Service

06.03 Rubric

07. Executive Session (If Necessary)

08. Next Meeting

08.01 July 13, 2015, Budget Public Hearing, 5:00 p.m., 1610 Blaine St., Room S-11

08.02 July 13, 2015, Regular Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m., 1610 Blaine St., Room S-11

09. Adjournment

2013-2017 Strategic Goal Areas:

“When we try to pick anything out by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe.” –John Muir

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Core Principles:

- Access to knowledge from multiple disciplines
 - Learner-focused education for each student
 - Community-based relationships and connections
 - Accountability—set high expectations and achieve them
 - Continuous improvement informed by data and research
 - Life-long learning
 - Culture of common purpose and interdependence
 - Culture of wellness
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2015-16 Action Planning

A. Teaching and Learning

a. Integration areas

- i. MDS Initiative: developing capacity for Project-Based Learning (PBL), Place-Based Learning pedagogies**
 - ii. Next Generation Science Standards implementation: support Brandi Hageman’s leadership with science teachers**
 - iii. Digital tools: utilization of digital resources across all schools, curricular areas and projects (‘capillary’ science projects, Google school applications etc.)**
- b. Curriculum adoption: Revise process for the provisioning of instruction from the traditional textbook adoption process to one predominantly based on online educational resources (OER), change review and selection process around instructional materials so that there is close alignment with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).**
- c. Expand library services to support shifts in instructional practice.**

B. Technology

a. Deployment and utilization

- i. Teacher capacity developed through district-level training: instructional integration with emphasis on digital citizenship, research, information literacy**
- ii. Technology innovation: robotics, engineering/manufacturing with CAD/CAM, Project Lead the Way, mini-super computer project, interactive white boards**
- iii. Assessment and data management: continued support for online assessment practices, data-dashboard development to support school and district improvement plans, support interoperability efforts to connect disparate assessment systems across the district (STAR, SBAC, MAPS, etc.)**

b. Policy development

- i. Responsible Use Compact: universal document, parental review and implementation across schools**
- ii. Review of district policy to revise and upgrade policy related to technology use across the district**

c. Library services

- i. Continue developing libraries as technology innovation areas (maker spaces, online research centers, digital skill building and citizenship etc.)**

d. District Technology Planning: revise and update current plan

- i. Technology Committee meetings to continue with building staff representation (stipend/Surface Pro) on a monthly basis**
- ii. Exploration and innovation: Surface Pro project (8 devices in use for the school year), next generation teacher devices**

C. Community Engagement

a. District-City Library collaborative expanded

- i. Extended library hours**

- ii. Collaborative projects
 - b. Summer program development with YMCA
 - c. MDSI community partnership development expanded and deepened
 - i. All MDSI projects to include community partners
 - ii. Internship/apprenticeship development (Skillmation project, senior projects etc.)
 - d. Continue development of institutional partnerships
 - i. Formally support Mountain View YMCA project
 - ii. MOU development to support new MDSI partnerships, as they become necessary
 - iii. Expand existing partnerships (District-City Library Collaborative, CLAN relationship with Jefferson County Library, NW Maritime Center etc.)

D. Facilities

- a. Long-Range Facilities Planning: Committee to make recommendation to Board (10/15) for Bond issue in 2016
- b. Capital projects levy resources to improve district energy efficiency, safety and security across all schools
- c. Remodeling to support emerging district programs (i.e. engineering/robotics and maritime studies programs)

E. Financial Stability

- a. Budget building process that continues to align with instructional programs and initiatives
- b. Plan to increase cash reserve to meet district target of 5% for the 2016-17 budget year
- c. Address 2015 state audit findings and management recommendations: clean audits in 2016

F. Culture of Wellness

- a. Food service improvements: moving from a feeding to meals program, scratch cooking, simplified menu, emphasis on local, fresh food sources (identify equipment, furniture, material and supply needs to support needed changes)**
- b. Continue to integrate active lifestyle instruction into physical education program (bicycle safety and skill building program, swimming instruction across grade levels, rowing, sailing etc.**
- c. Enhance school infrastructure to encourage and support walking and bicycling to school for all**
- d. Discipline practices that encourage social and emotional skill building**
 - i. Increase understanding of ACES and its relationship to discipline practices that encourage self-management skills (Peace4Kids)**
 - ii. Restorative justice practices explored as alternative to suspension and expulsion**



The Ethics of Board Service

If only the board can assume a strategic role, why do so many board members abandon that role and venture into a tactical role? Table 7-1 summarizes the reasons we've discussed. But once you understand your board role as part of a complex, collaborative system, you'll see the true value and power of your strategic role for making a poor school district into a good one and a good one into a great one.

Once you accept your role as a member of the school district *team*, you'll be free to devote your time and energy to the one thing that only you and other board members can do successfully: to assume strategic leadership and demonstrate that leadership through developing strategic charges. And once you accept both the potential and the limits of the strategic role, you'll become essential to any improvement effort by the school district and highly desirable as both a leader and as a symbol of aligned, sustained, and effective school district change.

Table 7-1: Why Many Board Members Abandon Their Strategic Role

Experience	It's so tempting to take what you know from your personal life and try to apply it to school districts as if there were no need for any translation.
Action Rather Than Leadership	The strategic role, though powerful, is indirect. Many people connect leadership with <i>doing</i> (making plans oneself) rather than <i>leading</i> (setting the direction but allowing others to carry out the direction).
Personal Agenda	Board members come to a board because of tactical or operational issues they understand through the experiences of their own or a close friend's children.
Overestimation of Tactical Effects	Board members think their tactics will change the school district, but those tactics inevitably fail to account for operational realities and needs.
More Fun	It's just plain more fun to dabble into tactics than it is to stick to strategies.
Time Concerns	Of all the role groups, boards are most in a hurry to see change occur. These board members think that by taking over tactics themselves, change will speed up.

However, here's the rub: No one can make a board member assume the strategic role. True, at every board election, a board member is held accountable for what he or she did the preceding term. But on a day-to-day basis, he or she is evaluated by no one, and no one can veto a board's decisions. At best, a superintendent can advise and try to convince, but he or she can't dictate strategic policy. And as soon as the board-superintendent relationship heads south, so does the superintendent, while the school board remains. For this reason, a superintendent will only go so far in trying to redirect a board member who has gone astray. And the board president, along with a board majority, can try to manage out-of-role members, but this will only slow the board bleeding—not stop it—if the board members at issue don't agree to change their behaviors. *The most effective policing of a board member's behavior will come from himself or herself.*

The plain fact of the matter is that a board member's multiyear term is a period during which he or she can either add value or wreak havoc, whether knowingly or unknowingly. Yet no one is going to police a board member's behaviors as effectively as the individual member himself or herself. So a successful board member must make a personal commitment to buying into a strategic leadership role. To add value, he or she should understand and try to live the ethics of the strategic role, including:

- Committing to the discipline of collaboration
- Staying within your strategic role
- Being aware of slipping into micromanaging behaviors
- Crafting communications so that individuals within and outside the school system will understand what the board wants to communicate
- Worrying as much about how change will affect the players in the school system as about the nature of the change itself
- Modeling thoughtful and aligned behaviors
- Responding humanely to problems with students and staff while also setting challenging but attainable targets for school district improvement

This constitutes the ethics of a strategic role. There are no rules or laws that govern a board member's behavior; there's nothing anyone else can effectively enforce. There's only each board member's ethical commitment to embrace a strategic role as the most effective way to move the school district forward, even if it isn't the most personally interesting or rewarding role to embrace. In short, a board member must buy into a *team* concept and embrace a strategic *team* role.

Collaborating for Change

Collaboration isn't just a style that you can choose or not because being a successful school board member is due to your talent and skill sets alone. It isn't. *Rather, collaboration is essential to your role; you and other board members must work collaboratively to make real change in the school district happen.*



So if collaboration is essential to a board member's success, what are the rules for successful collaboration?

1. Craft strategic charges with input from the larger community.
2. Assign the planning to achieve these charges to tactical staff.
3. Assess, through reliable data, progress toward attaining those strategic charges.
4. Highlight school district achievements and opportunities for improvement.

A board that consistently follows these four rules provides tremendous strategic leadership to the school district that will enable it to achieve ever greater things in the future.

In short, the functional definition of collaboration for a school board is: Stay strategic and don't get tactical or operational; work with others and don't make any of your decisions in isolation from other roles and groups; be aware of different needs and how they affect others' perceptions of time and their communications; don't assume others will understand your intent through your board actions alone; and be the visionary that every great school system must have.

Above all, be a collaborative team member both with your fellow board members and with people in other roles. Believe in the power and expertise of your strategic role, but respect the expertise and necessity of tactical and operational roles. Provide the strategic guidance that only the school board can. Be the visionary dreamer that every great school system must have.

Is it really this simple? Yes, it really is.

But being a collaborative board member isn't easy. It's tremendously time-consuming, sometimes frustrating, and always challenging. You need to realize that your ideas for change typically won't become school district realities in the precise way that you conceived them. If they survive at all, they'll be molded by tactical and operational realities, as well as by political, legal, and socioeconomic realities from outside the school district. "Your" idea will become everyone's idea, and your ego will probably be bruised in the process. But your visionary dreams will ultimately be realized, one step at a time.

Achieving the Gold Standard

Many school districts aren't yet good, and most of those that are—or think they are—aren't yet great. But all of them have the potential to become great. That's the gold-standard promise that is ushering us into one of the most exciting and potentially revolutionary times in the history of public education.

Yet at least four long-term developments are putting increased strain on the educational field:

1. Internet technology, making for more sophisticated and accessible data
2. Groundbreaking scientific research on the brain and on how we learn, leading to improved learning strategies and techniques

3. Technologically driven communications vehicles, encouraging more and faster organizational transparency
4. The workforce demands of a global economy, resulting in more people being needed who not only can master facts and concepts, but also can analyze and synthesize them

These developments require a more sophisticated approach than ever before to school district leadership, particularly at the board level. No longer can a school board be content with ensuring that the school district keeps running smoothly, teacher contracts are obtained with a minimum of discontent, and the community is happy enough with its schools to pass an occasional referendum. While these used to be a sterling trio of accomplishments for any school board, they represent barely adequate performance today. The future is making more frequent and complex demands upon public schools; those demands bang ever harder and more impatiently on every schoolhouse door.

As demands for schools to transform themselves become ever more strident, a school's leadership must transform itself as well to stay current with and to stay ahead of the demands. This need for the transformation of school leadership, particularly board leadership, is the impetus of this book.

For a school board, *the gold standard for board leadership comes from leading from a strategic role through a collaborative approach so as to provide the visionary leadership that will turn a system of schools into an aligned school system.* This kind of leadership is within the grasp of every citizen who aspires to serve on a school board.

Everyone is qualified to fulfill this role. Your leadership roadmap is before you, and it's simple to read. You just need to understand how a complex school system works and make a commitment to serving collaboratively from within the framework of a strategic role. All the time, effort, challenge, messiness, and frustration inherent in serving in one of the most important public-service positions will also bring you immense satisfaction and benefit the school district.

A board of education needs to formally and annually reflect upon its effectiveness. Boards can reflect on the school district's mission, vision, values, and goals; progress in achieving the goals of their strategic plan; their effectiveness as a team; and the quality of their communication with tactical and operational staffs and with the public. We've designed Table 7-2 (page 128), which is grounded in research and best practice, to serve as a checkpoint for boards to apply the tools, strategies, and principles we've outlined in this book.

The appendix *A Rubric for Achieving the Gold Standard* (page 148) contains a longer version of this table. With either form, you can assess your board's performance and determine where you need to go to reach a gold standard of board function and leadership.

Two concluding observations on the gold standard: First, while this rubric is primarily designed for board members, it can also be used by tactical and operational leaders. We've emphasized throughout this book the importance of strategic leaders working collaboratively with their tactical and operational counterparts to achieve the



gold standard. No board, whatever its effort, will ever alone attain the gold standard independent of staff expertise at the tactical and operational levels.

Second, the notion of a board's strategic role in creating an effective school system is relatively new, even if the desire for an effective school system is not. Some of the concepts and practices we've discussed, such as the district performance scorecard, will continue to be developed and refined. While we've attempted to chart a clear path for the strategic role, the practices that derive from that role are still evolving.

Now It's Up to You

Many school districts are hungry for visionary and effective leadership that leads to an aligned, continually improving school district. Such leadership is now within your reach. You've only to grasp it—lightly and with an eye toward collaboration—to transform both your contributions as a board member and the leadership of your whole board. With such leadership, you can help make learning potent and successful for all children. Such a visionary role for school board leadership excellence is yours for the taking. Seize it now.

Table 7-2: A Rubric for the Gold Standard

	Is Confused About the Strategic Role 1	Understands the Strategic Role 2	Fulfills the Strategic Role 3
Setting mission, vision, values, and goals	The board lacks an articulated, strategic vision and direction, and focused goals to guide work.	The board sets an articulated strategic vision and direction that result in clear, precise, and focused goals by which to guide the school district's work.	The board works collaboratively by utilizing extensive stakeholder input to set clear, precise, and focused organizational goals that are aligned to strategic priorities that guide the district's work.
Building a collaborative culture through shared leadership	The board addresses random acts of improvement. The lack of collaboration and trust among the strategic, tactical, and operational roles results in independent "silos" of unaligned efforts.	The board is committed to continuous improvement by the school district. It recognizes that collaboration and mutual trust among the three roles are necessary to form a sustained partnership.	The board creates a culture that embraces ongoing change and continuous improvement. It works collaboratively with the other two roles so that all three form a partnership based on mutual trust.
Measuring the important things to engage in data-driven decision-making	The board has insufficient data to guide its strategic priorities. It doesn't use a district performance scorecard to identify what its priorities are and to monitor progress in achieving goals; it has a scorecard but doesn't use it, or uses it to micromanage.	The board systematically uses data to focus upon its strategic priorities. It utilizes a scorecard to identify and track indicators of key strategic priorities, but doesn't use the scorecard to report progress to the community.	The board systematically uses student, classwide, and schoolwide data to focus on its strategic priorities. It also utilizes a scorecard to identify and track key strategic priority indicators and as a way of reporting progress toward meeting goals to the community.
Aligning roles, responsibilities, and behaviors with goals and actions	The board doesn't stay within its strategic role, but instead meddles in other roles' responsibilities.	The board adheres to its strategic role and recognizes the different levels of role expertise within the school district.	Board members consistently self-monitor to stay within the strategic role. They encourage collaborative efforts that tap the expertise found at each role.



	Is Confused About the Strategic Role 1	Understands the Strategic Role 2	Fulfills the Strategic Role 3
Building system accountability at all levels	The board has insufficient data to be accountable to the community for organizational progress. It either doesn't have the right data or doesn't know how to appropriately analyze data to guide continuous improvement.	The board has the data it needs to make strategic decisions that will lead to school system progress and to be accountable to the community. The board uses accurate, reliable, and appropriate data for strategic decision-making, and through this data, ensures its accountability to the community for continuous improvement.	Board members know how to appropriately analyze data to guide continuous improvement.
Evaluating the organization's, not an individual's, performance	The board confuses the evaluation of individual performance with the monitoring of organizational performance.	The board knows the difference between monitoring (oversight of process) and evaluating (determining overall effectiveness through outcomes) organizational performance.	The board monitors <i>organizational</i> performance, while allowing the evaluation of individual performance to take place at the tactical and operational levels.
Communicating with all stakeholders	The board doesn't recognize that different constituencies require different communication strategies. At its public meetings, the board doesn't have time to discuss the scorecard. Agenda issues for public discussion aren't aligned to strategic priorities.	The board recognizes that communicating with other roles and audiences is more complex than only communicating internally. The board regularly uses its scorecard to publicly focus upon its strategic priorities.	The board uses a variety of strategies to communicate appropriately with different roles and other constituencies. It uses its scorecard at each public meeting to focus upon its strategic priorities and to demonstrate results.
Assessing stakeholder perceptions	The board doesn't use stakeholder satisfaction data, fails to use what it collects, or uses them in isolation and makes inappropriate decisions. The board acts on an individual need without validating whether it's representative of a community need.	The board understands that it shouldn't act on the basis of an individual's needs alone and uses perception surveys to identify stakeholder desires.	The board links perception data with other indicators of success to determine long-term and short-term priorities.