Presented by
Steve Lamb, Board Development Specialist
OREGON SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

Preventing the 7 Boardroom Dysfunctions
Preventing the 7 Boardroom Dysfunctions
40th Annual COSA Seaside Conference
June 2014

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Presented by
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Our Learning Objectives

• Why Andy does what he does
• Workable strategies

Dysfunction can lead to:
• Lower student performance
• Lower property values
• Higher crime
• Lower community social capital

Can put district at risk for financial harm

Handouts
Board protocol worksheet
Sample protocol
Communication strategies
Sample meeting script
New member orientation
13 behaviors of high trust
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7 Boardroom Dysfunctions

Major
1. They don’t know why they’re there.
2. They don’t have a common vision of success.
3. They don’t know the rules.
4. They don’t know their role.
5. They have personality differences.
6. They have different value priorities.
7. They don’t attend to 3 critical cultures
   A. Board
   B. Staff
   C. School

Why does this matter to you?

Benign Neglect
Superintendent Turnover
Values Conflict
Board Turnover
Dissatisfaction

Dissatisfaction Theory
Iannaccone & Lutz, 1979

School Board Research
“Politically motivated board turnover results in student achievement decline.”
Iannaccone & Lutz, 1979

School Board Research
“Superintendent tenure is positively correlated with student achievement.”
Marzano & Waters, 2006
What is the core value of school boards?

They don't know why they are there!

#1

They don't know why they are there!

Dysfunctional Boardroom

What is the core value of school boards?
Research

“Academic optimism and community engagement in urban elementary schools” Kirby, 2010

“Academic optimism and community engagement in urban schools” Kirby, 2011

“Research on the Relationship Between Mental Health and Academic Achievement” (several hundred studies) Charvat, 2012


Students who **strongly agreed**

“I have a teacher who makes me excited about the future.”

30X more engaged

“State of America’s Schools” Gallup, 2014

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The Golem Effect

“… the soft bigotry of low expectations” Michael Gerson

The Pygmalion Effect

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

Benjamin Franklin

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#2

They don’t have a common vision.

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Shared Vision

What does success look like in our district?
Did you all use the same yardstick?

Is this board work?
Do you have a policy on this?

#3
They don't know the rules.

#4
They don't know the board's role.

Dr. George Wilson
Superintendent
**Neuroscience**

- Affect Heuristic
- Thin Slicing
- Confirmation bias

**Neuroscience**

“The emotional brain wants victory, not truth.”

*The Beginner’s Guide to the Brain*
Elaine Johnson, 2012

**The Outlier**

Options:
1. Protocols
2. Train
3. Facilitate
4. Counsel
5. Admonish
6. Censure
7. Empower the rest

**What can we do?**

Protocols

**Appeals Court Role**

#5

They have personality differences.
They have different value priorities.

Most common conflicts are over HOW!

Expressive
- Optimistic
- Visionary
- Enthusiastic
- Social
- Creative

Amiable
- Procrastinator
- Indecisive
- Smothering
- Collaborative
- Helpful

People Focus

Assertive
- Decisive
- Confident
- Risk taker
- Competitive
- Leader

Driver
- Judgmental
- Pushy
- Bully

Analytical
- Perfectionist
- Obstructionist
- Data, Data

Analytical
- Punctual
- Concise
- Methodical
- Deliberate

Task Focus

4 Public Values

- Liberty
- Equality
- Prosperity
- Community

- Freedom
- Voluntary
- Privacy

- Opportunity
- Tolerance
- Justice

- Efficiency
- Productivity
- Growth

- Trust
- Sharing
- Diversity

Based on “Preserving the Public in Public Schools”, Boyle & Burns
Protocols
1. We do not have different values. We have different priorities.
2. There are no single-value problems.
3. We seek the **best** rather than the **right** solution.

They don't attend to the three critical cultures.

The role of **culture**
- Board
- Staff
- Students
- Community

How does the board impact district culture?

The board decides:
- What is important
- What is celebrated
- What is tracked
- Who is valued
- How things get done
- Resources allocation

School Culture Triage Survey
Kentucky Test Scores
Triage Survey
Melton-Shutt, 2002

Resource: www.schoolculture.net
Domains of Trust
1. Responsibility
2. Shared values
3. Goals
4. Transparency
5. Demonstrated competence
6. Consistency
7. Caring
8. Other voices

Your To Do List
1. Board Training
2. Protocols
3. Evaluation
4. Policy Review
5. Vision & Goals
6. Culture Review
7. Leadership Institute
8. Leader Cultivation
Neuroscience Notes

Data dump triggers emotional response

Neuroscience Notes

- Instinct, intuition, snap judgment, gut reaction
- Confirmation bias

“The emotional brain wants victory, not truth.”

A Beginner’s Guide to the Brain
Elaine Johnson

Improved:
Board function
District culture
Staff performance
And . . .

Student Success

Steve Lamb
slamb@osba.org
503-485-4809
“If the fish in your aquarium are not as healthy as they should be . . .

Don’t blame the fish!

Instead, consider changing the water.”

Kent Peterson

“Needs are never in conflict.

It is the strategies that people use to get their needs met that come into conflict.”

Marshall Rosenberg
“Districts with negative relationships, poor communication and a lack of trust among the board and superintendents also had lower student achievement outcomes.”

Getting there from here:
Richard H. Goodman
Luann Fulbright
William G. Zimmerman, Jr.

"Trust is the glue of life.
It's the most essential ingredient in effective communication.
It's the foundational principle that holds all relationships."

Stephen R. Covey
(High trust) companies outgrew comparable companies by 6:1. And had 20X the net income per employee.

Contented Cows Give Better Milk
Catlette and Hadden, 2001

Return to shareholders is 3X higher at companies with high trust levels than at companies with low trust levels.

Watson, Wyatt WorkUSA Survey
“When people perceive that others are acting cooperatively, individuals are motivated to contribute to the public good even without the inducement of material benefit.”

The Logic of Reciprocity
Kahan, 2003

“Schools with high trust are 3X more likely to yield positive student outcomes.”

Trust in Schools, 2002
Byrk and Schneider
“Shaping a culture in which group members can trust each other to work together is the first leadership task.”
Gilbert W. Fairholm

Higher climate =

• higher test scores
• higher graduation rates
“Widespread distrust in a society imposes a kind of tax on all forms of economic activity. A tax that high trust societies do not have to pay.”

- Francis Fukuyama

“Researchers found dramatic growth in student achievement coinciding with periods ... of high trust between the superintendent and the board.”

Iowa Lighthouse Study
## Board Protocol Worksheet

1 = No interest to include, 3 = Some interest to include, 5 = High interest to include

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prior to Meetings</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing the agenda</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda structure</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions about agenda items prior to meeting</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual requests for information</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing legal advice</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meetings</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boardroom layout</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board deliberation</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Board reports</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing agenda items back for further discussion</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting length</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing expertise</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unanticipated ideas or issues</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of work sessions</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict of interest</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of a consent agenda</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After and Between Meetings</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining Decisions</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unified board</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual requests for action</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidentiality</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of committees</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting schools</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in district activities</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communications</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board member to board member</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board member to superintendent</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent to board member(s)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board member to staff</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board member to community</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handling complaints</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handling email</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy role</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board self-evaluation</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent evaluation</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visioning and goal setting</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample School Board Operating Protocol

For the purpose of enhancing teamwork among members of the board and between the board and the administration, we, the members of the School District Senior Leadership Team (board and superintendent) do hereby publicly commit ourselves collectively and individually to the following operating protocol:

1. **Don’t spring surprises** on other board members or the superintendent. Surprises to the board or the superintendent will be the exception, not the rule. There should be no surprises at a board meeting. We agree to ask the board president or the superintendent to place an item on the agenda instead of bringing it up unexpectedly at the meeting.

2. **Communication** between staff and the board is encouraged as long as it follows board policy. The senior leadership team recognizes that “good,” “timely”, “open”, and “constant” communication regarding school district issues is extremely important. We will strive to anticipate issues which may become important or are sensitive to our school district and district stakeholders.

3. **Follow the chain of command.** The last stop, not the first, will be the board. We agree to follow the chain of command and insist that others do so. While the board is eager to listen to its constituents and staff, each inquiry is to be referred to the person who can properly and expeditiously address the issue. Board requests that will likely require considerable time or have political implications are to be directed to the superintendent. All personnel complaints and criticisms received by the board or its individual members will be directed to the superintendent.

4. **Own the collective decision making process.** The senior leadership team will support decisions made by the board and/or the administrative team once a decision is made. We will support the majority decision(s).

5. **Exemplify the governance role.** The leadership team (board and superintendent) will support the policies our district currently has in place. We will continue to annually study and review policies for effectiveness and appropriately engage key stakeholders in the development or deletion of policies and policy revisions. We will maintain and apply district policies consistently while being cognizant of and recognizing the potential uniqueness of any given situation.

6. **Annually conduct a self-assessment/evaluation.** The board will address its behavior by yearly self-evaluation and by addressing itself to any individual problems, such as poor meeting attendance or leaks of confidential information.

7. **Clearly state goals.** The board will set clear goals for themselves and the superintendent. The board and superintendent will set clear goals for the District.

8. **Utilize CEO input.** The superintendent is the chief executive officer of the senior leadership team and should make recommendations, proposals or suggestions on most matters that come before the board.
9. **Board acts only as a body.** Individual board members do not have authority. Only the board as a whole has authority. We agree that an individual board member will not take unilateral action. The board president will communicate the position(s) of the board on controversial issues. When board members serve on various school committees their role shall be defined by the board as silent observer or active participant.

10. **Meeting protocol.** Conduct at a board meeting is very important. We desire to have a legacy of a well functioning, effective board. We agree to avoid words and actions that create a negative impression on an individual, the board or the district. We will be open minded and willing to “deeply listen” to all speakers/presenters. We agree that we can disagree and will do so using common courtesy and respect for others. We will not react to impromptu complaints on the spot, but will assure any individual(s) that the school district will follow-up.

11. **Avoid marathon board meetings.** To be efficient and effective, long board meetings must be avoided. Points are to be made in as few words as possible; speeches at board meetings will be minimal. If a board member believes s/he doesn’t have enough information or has questions, either the superintendent or board chair is to be called before the meeting.

12. **Practice efficient decision-making.** Board meetings are for decision-making, action and votes, not endless discussion. We agree to move to the question when discussion is repetitive.

13. **Speak to agenda issues.** The board will not play to the audience. We agree to speak to the issues on the agenda and attend to our fellow board members. Facts and information needed from the administration will be referred to the superintendent.

14. **Executive/closed sessions** will be held only for appropriate subjects. Executive sessions will be held only when specific needs arise. Board members will be extremely sensitive to the legal ramifications of their meetings and comments.

15. **Children’s interests come first.** The board will represent the needs and interests of all the children in our district.

Date:
## Communication Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEMPERAMENT</th>
<th>DRIVER COMMUNICATING WITH...</th>
<th>EXPRESSIVE COMMUNICATING WITH...</th>
<th>AMIABLE COMMUNICATING WITH...</th>
<th>ANALYTICAL COMMUNICATING WITH...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DRIVER</td>
<td>Use your natural style</td>
<td>Be open and friendly</td>
<td>Slow down – give support and assurances</td>
<td>Answer questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t let egos clash</td>
<td>Take time to socialise</td>
<td>Don’t stress variables or alternatives</td>
<td>Provide more facts than you may want to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be prepared for a tough contest to win another Driver to your side</td>
<td>Show personal benefits and recognition to persuade the Expressive</td>
<td>To bring communication to a conclusion, make decision easy for Amiable and reassure that decision</td>
<td>Encourage evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Be patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPRESSIVE</td>
<td>Be formal and to the point</td>
<td>Don’t compete for recognition</td>
<td>Earn their trust</td>
<td>To close, be firm, polite and decisive after presenting facts allowing adequate evaluation time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Keep your distance; no touching</td>
<td>Stick to business</td>
<td>Don’t overly socialise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t joke or waste time</td>
<td>Be sure to focus on a commitment to action</td>
<td>Give plenty of support material</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Let Driver feel important</td>
<td></td>
<td>Give assurances and testimonials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoid being apologetic</td>
<td></td>
<td>Be polite and reassuring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t feel rejected by the possible bluntness of the Driver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t compete for recognition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stick to business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be sure to focus on a commitment to action</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMIABLE</td>
<td>Be yourself, but confident</td>
<td>Accept the openness and friendliness of Expressives</td>
<td>Will relate well with other Amiables</td>
<td>Answer questions confidently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognise and accept the Driver’s aggressive style</td>
<td>Be friendly but don’t let them waste a lot of your time</td>
<td>Be assureing with them, but also confident and assertive</td>
<td>Give the facts they want</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refuse to be intimidated</td>
<td>Don’t bog them down with details</td>
<td>Don’t wait for them to be totally comfortable to press for decision – just provide assurances that it is the right one</td>
<td>Refuse to let their perpetual scepticism discourage you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be confident and get to the point sooner and more forcefully than you feel comfortable with</td>
<td>Conclude by appealing to the personal ego – do it more quickly than you like to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANALYTICAL</td>
<td>Don’t try to be impressive with excessive facts and figures; give bottom line answers</td>
<td>Try to be friendly and fun</td>
<td>Be friendly; earn Amiable’s trust</td>
<td>Keep control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concentrate on high points</td>
<td>Be excited about new ideas</td>
<td>Slow down on the facts; allow Amiables to digest them</td>
<td>Be friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Get excited about new ideas</td>
<td>Sell to the person not the features</td>
<td>Don’t bog them down with details</td>
<td>Present both sides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appeal to the individual’s ego, not on the merits of the proposal, product, or service – difficult for Analyticals</td>
<td>Close before you feel all the necessary facts are disclosed</td>
<td>Avoid getting too detailed</td>
<td>Close earlier than you feel comfortable doing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conclude with assurances</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Public Comment Script

Public comment should be just that, and NOT a discussion with the board. The board should not answer questions on the spot unless they are very simple obvious ones regarding well established agreed on facts, but should refer questions to the administration or board chair for answer at a later time. If an initial answer by the board chair causes a follow up question then the chair should definitely refer the speaker to the superintendent for further answers - the answer wasn't quite so obvious as seemed, or the speaker's intention is just to get the chair involved in a discussion.

Read by the Chair:

"On behalf of fellow Board members, at this time I would like to invite any member of the audience to step to the microphone with comments about items of interest or concern. Please begin by stating your name and address. It would be appreciated if you would limit your comments to (insert time determined by your board policy) minutes so that we can keep the meeting moving in a timely fashion and allow others an opportunity to speak.

Speakers may offer objective criticism of district operations or programs; however, Oregon law prohibits us from discussing specific employees or their job performance.

The Board will not take action at this meeting on non-agenda issues raised during the public comment period. The Board may refer the matter to the superintendent for review, do nothing, or place it on a later agenda.

If you have questions about the district, we would encourage you to contact our superintendent. The board will hear comments but will not answer questions from the audience.

Thank you for your support of our school district."
What Every New Board Member Needs to Know

Basic
- Name of the district/college
- Address
- Main phone number
- Website
- Communities served
- Number of employees (licensed, classified)
- Schools
- Departments

Facts
- School district profile (http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=1722)
- ESD district profile (http://www.ode.state.or.us/sfda/reports/r0074Select.asp)
- Community college basic information (http://data.memberclicks.com/site/occa/Basic%20Info%20Guide%202007.pdf)
- Community College Fact Book (http://data.memberclicks.com/site/occa/CC%20Fact%20Book%202004.pdf)
- Percent of students receiving free or reduced lunch
- Transportation (District or contract operation)
- Languages spoken at home other than English

People and their Contact Information
- Superintendent/President
- Administration team
- Board secretary
- Other board members
- Union representatives
- Standing committees (Budget, etc)

Documents
- Policy manual
- Budget
- Recent audit report
- Mission, vision, and beliefs
- Operating agreement
- Collective bargaining agreements
- District/College calendar
- Plans (strategic, facilities, technology, etc.)
- Recent board minutes

Protocols
- How is the agenda set?
- What is the agenda order of items?
- What is the purpose of the board comment section (if any)?
- What are the rules for the public comment section (if any)?
- When should you expect to receive board meeting materials?
- How should you respond to staff or public complaints?
- What are the rules for communication between board members or with administration and staff; school site visitation; or requests for information?
- When and how does the board conduct the President/Superintendent evaluation?
- When and how does the board conduct the board self-evaluation?
13 Behaviors of High Trust
www.franklincovey.com

1. Talk Straight
2. Demonstrate Respect
3. Create Transparency
4. Right Wrongs
5. Show Loyalty
6. Deliver Results
7. Get Better
8. Confront Reality
9. Clarify Expectation
10. Practice Accountability
11. Listen First
12. Keep Commitments
13. Extend Trust
Suggested Reading

A Beginner's Guide to the Human Brain
Elaine B. Johnson

Blink
Malcolm Gladwell

Contented Cows Give Better Milk
Bill Catlette and Richard Hadden

Contented Cows Still Give Better Milk
Bill Catlette and Richard Hadden

Dealing with People You Can’t Stand
Rick Brinkman and Rick Kirschner

Drive
Daniel H. Pink

Leading Out Loud – A Guide for Engaging Others in
Creating the Future
Terry Pearce

Responding to Community Outrage: Strategies for
Effective Risk Communication
Peter M. Sandman
[www.psandman.com/media/RespondingtoCommunityOutrage.pdf]

Waiting for Your Cat to Bark?
Bryan Eisenberg and Lisa Davis

A Whole New Mind
Daniel H. Pink