

School boards should clearly define how they govern the superintendent to ensure a healthy working relationship.

Training Focus: Developing a Framework for Collaboration and Oversight .

 Reference: *The Best Practice Handbook for Student Achievement in Public Education (Pages 16-18)*
Office of the Legislative Auditor General

The Governance Partnership

Effective Boards + Effective Superintendent = Student Success

The Board

- Defines the strategic **“what”** the district should achieve.
- Sets clear community-aligned expectations and priorities.
- Rigorously measures organizational results and progress.

The Superintendent

- Determines the tactical **“how”** to accomplish established goals.
- Provides executive leadership over district people and systems.
- Executes strategy, daily administration, and operations.



Boundary Dilemma

"This division of labor sounds simple on paper, but in practice, I sometimes find myself confused about where the boundary is—or how I should go about getting information."






The Real-World Friction: When board members need information to make decisions, it's easy to inadvertently slip from constructive oversight into hands-on micromanagement.

To stay in our respective lanes, we must establish explicit, mutually agreed-upon systems for managing information requests.






Navigating Information Flow

How to balance professional board oversight with respect for operational boundaries

Questions for Board Reflection

-  When is it appropriate to request more information from the administration?
-  How can board members ask questions efficiently and respectfully?
-  What specific information must come directly through the superintendent?
-  How do we successfully balance rigorous oversight with mutual professional trust?
-  Are there formal systems we can create to streamline board requests?

Recommended Best Practices

-  **Route Requests through Board Leadership:** Send informational requests to board leadership first to see if they can answer your question or get the information for you
-  **Consolidate Board Questions:** Group similar questions together to respect administrative capacity and reduce communication clutter.
-  **Leverage Study Sessions:** Use pre-scheduled board meetings and public study sessions strategically to gather depth on complex issues.
-  **Need-to-Know vs. Nice-to-Know:** Actively distinguish between regulatory compliance information and purely curiosity-driven data.
-  **Maintain Strategic Focus:** Keep questions targeted squarely on governance, established policy, finance, and student outcomes.