

2017 Report on National School Board Association Conference

Denver (March 24 -27)

David Wilkie

Wilkie's Itinerary

Friday March 24th:

- 9:00AM Pre-Conference No. 2 – Crawl, Walk, or Run – Becoming a Highly Effective School Board
- 1:30PM Pre-Conference No. 16 – New School Board Member Boot Camp: Ethics, Board Meetings, and the Role of a School Board Member

Saturday March 25th:

- 8:30AM First general Session – Captain Scott Kelly
- 10:30AM The School Board President-Superintendent Partnership: Achieving Excellence
- 1:30PM Five Strategies to Build a More Effective Governance Team
- 3:45PM Lead, Develop, and Achieve: Assessing and Enhancing Your Leadership Skills in and out of School

Sunday March 26th:

- 8:30AM Creating Change in Turbulent Times
- 10:00AM Second general Session – Arianna Huffington
- 1:30PM “Please Press 1 for the Superintendent” – How to Help You and Your Superintendent go from Good to Great
- 3:45PM Pathway to Progress: Effective Communications Through the Superintendent Evaluation Process

Monday March 27th:

- 8:30AM Supporting and Retaining New Teachers

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Pre-Conference No. 2 – Crawl, Walk, or Run – Becoming a Highly Effective School Board

The emphasis of the training was on becoming a highly effective board by utilizing the strategic plan for decision making, doing effective superintendent evaluations and board self-evaluations.

Take-away:

- Need to become more familiar with the strategic plan
- Utilize the Superintendent Evaluation and Self-Evaluation more effectively

Pre-Conference No. 16 – New School Board Member Boot Camp: Ethics, Board Meetings, and the Role of a School Board Member

This training dealt with ethical and appropriate behavior for school board members. The training began with a representation of a “school board meeting gone wrong”. Those attending spoke about the misconduct and errors made by the school board members. The discussion was followed-up by a school board meeting conducted correctly. The same subject matter was covered in both meetings, but the efficiency of the second meeting showed how effective a school board meeting can be when conducted properly.

The School Board President-Superintendent Partnership: Achieving Excellence

This training was presented by the Mt. Lebanon School District. The subject matter dealt with the Mt. Lebanon School District’s successful relationship between the School Board and the Superintendent and what they have been able to achieve together.

Take Away:

- The relationship between the superintendent and the school board has an impact on the entire district
- School Board/Superintendent need to understand their individual roles and the role of the other

Five Strategies to Build a More Effective Governance Team

This session addressed the School Board – Superintendent relationship and offered five specific strategies to enhance the relationship

Take Away:

- I achieved a better understanding of the School Board/Superintendent individual roles
- Trust and Communication are key to maintaining a healthy relationship

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Lead, Develop, and Achieve: Assessing and Enhancing Your Leadership Skills in and out of School

This training was conducted by members of the US Army. They spoke about the building blocks of leadership and how to develop effective and efficient leaders.

Take Away:

- Purchased ADRP 6-22 (Army Leadership Manual)

Creating Change in Turbulent Times

This training focused on making changes to the district during challenging times, ie. economic downturn, budgetary deficits, staffing issues, etc. The speakers covered subjects which included, roadblocks to change, why changes need to be made and measuring the effect of change.

Take Away:

- To make change, there needs to be a strong relationship built on trust between the Superintendent and the School board
- All change needs to be measured for effectiveness. If it does not prove to be a good change, don't be afraid to start over.
- Getting public support for change makes change easier to accomplish and forms stronger relationships with stakeholders.
- Any changes made need aligned goals to make successful

"Please Press 1 for the Superintendent" – How to Help You and Your Superintendent go from Good to Great

This session dealt with the qualities that make a great Superintendent. After determining what a great Superintendent is, a great School Board definition was developed. The speaker emphasized the roles of the Superintendent and the School Board and how over-reaching on either side can negatively affect the relationship.

Take Away:

- The role of the school board was re-emphasized
- Respect is key to a School Board/Superintendent relationship that will benefit the district
- No one likes surprises, in the board room or in public

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Pathway to Progress: Effective Communications through the Superintendent Evaluation Process

This training dealt with Superintendent evaluations and how they can clarify School Board expectations and lead to dialogs that drive open and honest communications.

Take Away:

- The evaluation process is an important tool used to identify issues so they can be addressed
- The evaluation requires communication between the Superintendent and the School Board
- The evaluation process allows for discussion/update on progress of goals

Supporting and Retaining New Teachers

This training explained how a school district implemented a new teacher mentoring and coaching system to assist new teachers during their first year.

Take Away:

- The coaching and mentoring program addresses and eliminates a majority of the reasons new teachers leave the district after the first year
- Valuing teachers gains support for Superintendent and School Board from the community and stake holders.

I wish to thank the district for allowing me to go to this seminar. I found it very informative and I am confident it will make me a better School Board member. I'm very excited about the direction this district is heading and I feel optimistic that we, as a board, can make a positive impact on the future of our children.