



PHILADELPHIA SUBURBAN SCHOOL STUDY COUNCIL, GROUP B

REFERENDUM POLITICS: PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES

**Mr. James Bathurst, Collingswood Public Schools
Dr. Mark Raivetz, Haddon Township Public Schools
Dr. Jamie Savedoff, Lower Merion School District
Ms. Beth Winters, Director of Legislative Services, PSBA**
September 21, 2006

- I. Beth Winters:
 - A. Broad brush presentation on Act 1
 1. Tax reform is tax shift – no reform about it – form property taxes to EIT and PIT
 2. There is no rebate, but a Homestead Act exemption.
 - B. Tax commissions:
 1. How they operate
 - a. Five seven or nine members
 - b. Within 90 days give a non-binding rec to board
 - c. Limited to rec on whether to do an EIT or PIT and rate.
 - d. Board either accepts or rejects
 - e. Must be a public hearing within that process
 - f. PSBA recommending Tax commission meetings be open to public
 2. PIT cannot be passed until PIT regulations are in place. Hope that will go to legislation by Nov.
 3. If Tax Commission recommends a PIT before regulations are in place, Board cannot adopt it.
 - a. Recommend informing the Tax Study Commission that if they make a recommendation for a PIT before the regulations are passed, then advise TC that the Board cannot approve that.
 - b. While local Tax Study Commission must make its recommendations by 12/13, Board does not have to act on that recommendation until it is time to go to referendum.

4. Local Tax Study Commission
 5. What do we do with their recs?
 6. Referendum in Spring:
 - a. Either institute EIT/increase EIT, institute PIT/increase PIT
 - b. Front end referendum is about EIT/PIT.
 - i. Interpretive statement for election is developed by election board, which can work with the school district/board for wording that referendum question.
 7. What to do if the district also collects for municipality. Must make that clear in the interpretive statement.
 8. If voters do not pass the EIT/PIT, tax structure stays the same.
 9. Conversion of taxes to EIT/PIT cannot happen until 2009.
 10. Can have another EIT/PIT front end referendum in 2009, but not required if don't go with in now.
 11. If tax commission does not recommend an EIT/PIT and board does not want it, you must still put a question on the referendum.
 - a. All info from Tax Study Commission and Board deliberations and public hearings are public documents. [this is an opportunity for civic engagement]
 12. Recommendation of the Tax Study Commission is completely non-binding.
- C. Back end referendum:
1. Comes into place only if you want to go above the inflationary index.
 2. Exception process is through PDE and the courts.
 - a. Detailed process.
 - b. Timing is everything.
 - c. There are exceptions for PSERS, Special education, growth?????
- D. Only other referendum will be gambling referendum.
1. Once that money is rolling in, Board will make determination of whether to accept gaming moneys.
 2. If board decides not to accept gaming allocations, must go to referendum.
- E. "Consciousness clauses" in prior versions to allow districts greater authority are absent here.
- F. Certification if you want to stay under the index.
1. Act 72 had a preliminary budget process – 102 days prior to vote
 2. Still accelerated process in January
 3. Or traditional budget process must pass a resolution in January that indicates the district will not go above the index and that you will abide by all other school budgeting process.
 - a. Must go to PDE within 5 days of its passage.
 - b. Then you are not eligible to any back-end exceptions.
 - c. Since most of the factors that go into the traditional process must be determined earlier, and you can certainly apply for traditional process earlier.
- G. What is time frame for submitting exceptions to PDE?
1. There are 6 criteria for an exception for construction
- H. Index:
1. Last year index was 3.9% and this year is 3.4%. But with cost of living going up to 4-4.5.

- I. If PDE and court reject exceptions, you have 5 days to develop your back end referendum. What if it takes PDE longer? Key in getting exception passed is making sure you do the forms and process correctly.
- J. Gaming monies are *not* tied to having an EIT or PIT.
- K. Only relief depends upon voters accepting either EIT or PIT or gaming funds.
- L. “Senior citizen kicker” – supplemental senior citizen relief.
- M. Connecting gaming to front end referendum. If Tax Study Commission recommends an increase in EIT/PIT and gets gaming monies, it is possible to go over the constitutionally allowed limit.
- N. We must do all of this before we know the state subsidy – either regular ed or special ed.
- O. If you stay below index, based on conservative state subsidy (say level funding), and state comes in lower than expected, what can you do?
 - 1. In NJ, districts reallocate within the funds they get from state. They reexamine and reallocate and “make changes on the fly.”
- P. Question/Discussion:
 - 1. Tax Study Commission is just shifting resources. Can we consider gaming resources are “free money” or additional money going to tax payers? That is, relief for residents that is not funded internally, but comes externally.
 - a. Gaming revenue comes even if voters reject EIT or PIT.
 - b. Issue is that gaming monies *must* go to reduce property taxes
 - 2. Why say no to gaming money other than moral objections?
 - a. The moral objection is the only objection.
 - b. There are no other strings tied to the gaming money.
 - c. Gaming money only comes from those who fill out Homestead Inclusion Form.
 - 3. Safe bet for Tax Study Commission is to do the minimum and hope it gets voted down and then hope that gaming money equals or exceeds the projections.
 - a. The best case scenarios are a larger pot of such “free” money.
 - 4. Renters are big losers because they will receive no property tax relief and can be socked with EIT or PIT.
 - 5. Because we are capping increase in taxes, with exceptions. If there were no political pressure to raising taxes, we would be foolish not to limit taxes to one tick under the index. The exceptions can allow us to increase property taxes over the index.
 - a. This law caps tax increases not spending.
 - i. In NJ cap is on spending, not taxes
 - b. Thus, the danger is not in staying under cap, but in going to cap which along with exceptions may allow us to increase taxes more without referendum. This may result in additional political pressure.
- Q. Installment payments:
 - 1. Must adopt resolution re allowing installment payments for certain taxpayers.
 - 2. Must give notice to taxpayers re up to due date.
- R. What is the tax force on school cost reduction?
 - 1. Was a response to complaints about unfunded mandates?
 - 2. One year after organizational meeting, they must give a report to House and Senate Education Committees.
 - 3. Report is non-binding.

4. Given who has been appointed to-date, it seems they will focus more on building, etc. that education costs.
5. PSBA is trying to encourage them to have public meetings so SD can participate and discuss their school costs, what they are and their impact.

II. Tactics and Strategies – the NJ experience

A. Mark:

1. Going from one side of the river to the other is like going from Brazil to Argentina: the language sounds similar, but means very different things.
2. We've come up with some ideas that don't work, that work okay and are working to improve and those that work well.
3. How law works in NJ...
 - a. We are allowed to raise our budgets the average CPI between NY and Phila. Law says we can raise 2.5% or CPI, whichever is higher.
 - b. In NJ funding formula has never been fully-funded.
 - i. Abbott districts must be funded first and rest of money goes to other districts.
 - ii. You have the ability to raise your budget by certain percentage (the CAP), but state money does not increase that much.
 - iii. In most districts the amount of budget covered by state has steadily decreased.
 - iv. State also caps our "fund balance" to 2% which decreases our ability to reallocate monies.
 - c. There is also an administrative cap – 2.5% last year and 0% this year. Cannot raise administrative costs above that cap.

B. Jamie:

1. One of the draws to bring me from NJ to PA was there was no referendum on budget.
2. Our lives in PA will change significantly because of the referendum.
3. Decision to go above CAP:
 - a. In NJ if budget goes down, there is an appeal process to local officials (municipality) who can cut, okay as is, or increase.
 - b. Can also appeal to Commissioner.
4. Strategy re override:
 - a. Must know your community – some will accept going over.
 - i. But it takes work – education and other work.
5. Strategies:
 - a. Start with the board. They must buy into it and sell it.
 - i. Build passion with the board for what they have and whether they want to sacrifice what they have.
 - ii. Tell them what it looks like now and what it will look like in 5 years if we have to cut.
 - iii. Need board to become strongest supporters to where you want to go.
 - b. Translate that passion to the parents and the community.
 - c. Don't go under the index – go as close to it as you can.
 - i. Even thought it is an expenditure cap.
 - ii. As you budget under the cap, you lower your base which limits what you can raise in subsequent years for increases in population, in program needs, etc.
 - iii. Staying under can come back to haunt you.

- d. Be careful how you appropriate surplus.
 - i. If you use it up, you cannot use it in lean years.
- e. How does our life change as superintendent:
 - i. Budget process becomes year round, not a spring only process.
 - ii. Every board meeting you have:
 - Bring kids out.
 - Always talk about school district programs and kid excellence.
 - Senior citizen groups.
 - Talk with business groups.
 - On the road all the time talking about the schools
 - iii. Goal is to get them to see schools as central to their lives.
 - Talk about schools as investment in real estate values. Real estate agents must support the role that strong schools play in building strong property values.
 - Use everything that is at your disposal:
 - Cable TV – people do watch it
 - Newspapers
 - Before every back to school night, concert, play, etc. superintendent uses 5 minutes to talk about the budget election coming up, referring to web site.
 - Senior citizens are toughest group:
 - Lower Merion looking for an electoral debt election for the new high school. If it passes, it will exempt that money from Act 1. There will always be a separate tax for that debt service and no included in school tax computation for Act 1 purposes.

C. Jim:

- 1. Spending to cap/index:
 - a. In NJ we have spending growth limitations.
 - b. Important to go for every limit you can... to increase your base which is crucial for the future.
- 2. Strategies:
 - a. We can get depressed about this stuff.
 - b. I always prided myself on how we have handled our finances.
 - i. Always approach the community from a proactive point of view.
 - c. Look at referendum as an opportunity to sell program, to increase parent and taxpayer awareness of program and student success.
 - i. We have developed budget process that makes it as transparent as possible:
 - ii. Use laymen terms of what your dollar is buying in Collingswood.
 - iii. A lot of staff live in our town. We take them for granted. But they may not vote. Must get them to the polls.
 - iv. We use community access channel to focus on an expenditure-side presentation.
 - v. Each budget manager makes a short presentation that outlines what taxpayers get from that part of the budget.
 - Focus on what we are doing and how that benefits people.
 - Mark does this as well, but differently.
 - Superintendent becomes the number one teacher in the school district.

- The budget process is never done.
 - Every single line of the budget is now linked to an educational outcome.
 - Also equate the School District budget to a household budget.
 - E.g., this is what we have to pay first before we can go out for pizza.
 - Use lots of charts, graphs, etc. For example, show them a chart of how much the district can go up and what the fixed costs are.
 - Discuss return of investment. E.g., yes property taxes up 50% over 5 years.
 - Link to what they value as a community.
 - Create a list of what they value and ask what they are willing to give up. Then, if not able or willing to give it up, they need to pay.
- vi. This educates the board and the public.
 - vii. Do professional production qualities: quality video, edited, with music, etc.
- d. Importance of employee piece, both pro and con.
 - i. Driving around district one day saw a “vote no” on the budget sign on the budget. It was an employee’s house.
 - ii. Employees don’t always get the connection between the budget and their salaries.
 - iii. Thus you need to educate them on the budget.
 - iv. Meet with my staff to tell them that they are public information officers.
 - v. Best sale for the district and budget is a happy kid. Teachers must send home happy kids.
 - vi. Cultivate you relationship with your education associations and unions.
 - vii. Our associations call their members the night before election to get them to come out to vote to pass the budget.
 - e. Important to get voice and face-to-face contact.
 - f. Our budgeting process has become incredibly open.
 - i. You want to make the budget easy to understand for lay person, in ordinary language.
 - g. Also see where you can cooperate with local government. We have cooperative buying agreements for paper, gas, etc. with town.
 - i. Make a list of all the things you do cooperatively with the local government. And make that public.
 - ii. We own all of the fields in town, though the town and local clubs use them as well.
 - iii. Everything has a cost and can be talked about in terms of that cost and community benefits.
 - h. Your community groups that support or don’t support the schools work all year round.
 - i. Ask senior citizens, “You have lived here all of your lives, what do you want your legacy to be?”
 - i. That changes the tone of their conversation.
3. We are under attack for what we do and spend a lot of time defending what we do and showing what we do well.
 4. In Collingswood, PTA/PTO spends time contacting parents on budget.

- a. When parents sign their kid up for school, have a check-off box if we can share phone numbers and email addresses with PTA/PTO. Most parents of K kids okay that. So we can sign it. And we call and email them in days prior to election.
 - b. Focus on elementary parents because they are there over long term.
 - c. PTAs get voting lists and see who is and is not registered to vote. We have voter registration at all school events – people who attend there are more likely to vote yes.
5. Talking with community groups.
- a. Realtors are key allies. They see people all the time. And they sell houses in your communities, but in other communities as well. They can bad mouth one in favor of the other.
 - b. They are a hard group to tap... There are so many in our community. Send out 500-600 invites to real estate meeting, but it is hard to get them to come out.
 - i. We go to them, to their offices and to their periodic meetings and make presentations there.
 - ii. To meetings of local boards of realtors.
 - iii. They don't want to listen to you. But if you send them information – calendars, sport team listings, school profiles (test scores, student success stories), summary sheets with URLs,
6. In PA, if back end referendum fails and you find some additional money (e.g., staff resignations for positions you don't have to replace) what would you (NJ) folks recommend we do.
- a. Legally, you can put back the things you said you would have to cut.
 - b. This is a community relations issue:
 - i. I would recommend that if we go for an index override, we explain it in terms of what's not mandated but are key to community values.
 - ii. That will spark community discussion.
 - iii. Keep the budget open and transparent. If you are doing things that you don't want to talk about, perhaps you shouldn't be spending it. Don't apologize for what you are doing that you believe in.
 - iv. It's all about credibility and how you explain what you are doing.
 - v. If you have new money come it (e.g., from a grant), then by all means go back and add what you want.
 - vi. If money comes free from staff resignations, be careful. Someone can always ask why you needed that staff in the first place.
7. Question re front end referendum.
- a. We can be strategic in the way that the Local tax commission put this out. What has NJ experience been on who comes out, etc?
 - i. We keep records on how many voters we need to come out to pass the referendum.
 - ii. E.g., we know we can anticipate # no votes from this group, so we need ## to come out so we can pass the budget.
 - iii. PTA wants to be able to tell people what will be eliminate if the budget does not pass.
8. GOTV – get out the vote:
- a. Good news is that the no votes are fewer than the potential yes votes.

- b. Bad news is that the no votes are more motivated.
 - c. NOTE:
 - i. A significant % of potential yes votes are not registered.
 - ii. The number of core no votes is larger than the core yes votes.
 - iii. There are some people in the core no votes are highly influential. If you can win some of them over, you can neutralize some of the no votes.
 - d. Do not under estimate the power of those who work for the district and live there.
 - e. A shockingly high percentage of those who work in the district either don't vote or have folks in the district who don't vote.
 - f. We must encourage people to come out and vote.
 - i. Schools can run voter registration campaigns.
 - ii. High school students are powerful voting blocks as well. So are recent high school graduates who can use absentee ballots if necessary.
 - iii. Melissa when in Reading SD had busses to take kids to vote. It is a responsibility of citizenship and a valid school trip.
9. Budget process procedure schedule.
- a. When do you run your high school schedule so you can predict staffing needs?
 - b. In NJ, we start preliminary scheduling as soon as college application time is done... complete it by January... put course schedule out before winter break.



PHILADELPHIA SUBURBAN SCHOOL STUDY COUNCIL, GROUP B

Rethinking Leadership in an Era of Accountability

Dr. James Lytle, Practice Professor, Penn GSE

November 16, 2006

- I. Focus will be on what does it mean to lead and how do we teach leadership in our work.
 - A. Some things about Dr. Lytle:
 1. In addition to being Practice Professor of Education at Penn, he is a consultant to Wallace Readership Foundation and its work on educational leadership. That work is, in part, in response to a perception of the shortage of principals and superintendents.
 - a. The program involves 25 states and school districts within each state.
 - b. Dr. Lytle's involvement began when he was superintendent in Trenton and Trenton was selected as one of 12 city districts to receive a \$1 million grant to focus on leadership development – with teachers, principals, senior leadership, board.
 - c. One premise was that most University programs on leadership are inadequate – most leaders said they learned leadership on the job, not in a graduate program.
 - d. Idea is to reinvent the ways in which leadership development happens.
 - i. Instead of giving money to universities, they gave support to school districts which were encourage to invent leadership development models that would work best for their districts – most of which were urban/city districts.
 - ii. Examples:
 - Fairfax VA developed a partnership with the Center for Creative Leadership and developed its own leadership development center.
 - Springfield, MA developed its own principal certification program – including internship and supervision. They argue they can do this better than the area colleges and universities.
 - e. As a consultant, it has been interesting and educative to participate and watch.
 - f. Part of this work involved a two-year seminar with Ron Heifetz at the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard (Kennedy School of Government).

- b. Three aspects of principal's job:
 - i. Develop a deep understanding of how to support teachers.
 - ii. Manage the curriculum in ways that promote student learning.
 - iii. Develop the ability to transform schools into more effective organizations that foster powerful teaching and learning for all students.
 - This seems to be more likely if the principal has actual instructional expertise and if the job is designed to allow them/enable them to transform their school.
 - It also requires that the central office provide them with support and space in which to do this – so the central office gets out of the way.
 - It also requires cutting edge professional development work on how to do this (which requires each person engage in continuous learning).
 - Without such professional development principals are unlikely to directly participate in curriculum design and implementation, support and promote effective instructional and student assessment practices, recognize individual and school accomplishments; and adapt their leadership to address the context-specific needs of teachers, students and other stakeholders.
2. Seven “School Critical Functions and Action”
- a. Instructional leadership.
 - b. Cultural leadership.
 - c. Managerial leadership.
 - d. Human resource leadership.
 - e. Strategic leadership.
 - f. External development leadership.
 - g. Micro political leadership.
 - h. Note: Group decided that IL, HRL and SL are the most important.
3. Wallace Foundation “Leaders Count Initiative.”
- <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/WF/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/EducationLeadership/>
- a. On-line moderated discussions on “The Changing Role of the Principal and Other School Leaders in and Around the School.”
 - b. Six critical leadership topics frame the discussion:
 - i. Using data effectively.
 - ii. Allocating current and new resources (money, people and time).
 - iii. Redefining roles and responsibilities of school leaders.
 - iv. Transforming high school leadership.
 - v. Assessing leadership behavior.
 - vi. Redefining roles and responsibilities of school boards and improving district governance.
 - c. Organizing question:
 - i. From your perspective what are the implications for the role of the principal and other school leaders?
 - Discussion is starting to divide into three sources of comments: district level people, state level people and building level people.
 - d. A schemata of a coherent leadership system.
 - i. The way they expect principals to achieve results by leading a team is very demanding and may be unreal.

- e. Van Cleve Morris et al, studied principals in Chicago (published in 1984) and went in and observed principal and tracked what the principal was doing every moment in the school – interaction patterns, where interactions took place.
 - i. Elementary:
 - Only 33% of time was spent in schools.
 - Less than 10% of time in classrooms,
 - What we don't see at that time is time spent in team meetings focusing on C&I and student related issues.
 - ii. High School:
 - 32 % of time was spent in schools.
 - Only 7% of time in classrooms.
 - Spend more time with teachers than with students.
- f. How much of this depends upon whether the principal conceives of role as an instructional leader or as a manager.
 - i. The split in this on-line discussion is between principals and others.
 - Others say it is important to do instructional eldership.
 - Principals agree but argue that they must first support the conditions for teaching – managerial leadership (there is a teacher in the classroom, etc.).
 - ii. Discussion:
 - Principals need to hear from the central office that they are expected (and will be evaluated) on their IL work and how they delegate the managerial leadership to others.
 - Central office must set standards for number of formal evaluations and when they are to be done.
 - Superintendent must, then, be the head teacher and model this behavior for principals and others.
 - E.g. from superintendents in the Study Council:
 - I spend a morning per week in schools (7-noon or so) and then send an email to the entire district of what I saw in that school.
 - Principals come with me and observe what I observe and we talk about what we each saw that morning. Also meet with Director Of Instruction who talks about what we saw and progress of new teachers.
 - While there yesterday sat in a science class and wrote up what I saw there in some detail – the lesson I saw and how it went.
 - Superintendent, department chairs, supervisors sit together and discuss the data sets from observations of specific criteria.
 - Spent a lot of time first in training about what to look for and how to “calibrate” it so we all agree.
 - Then we sit and talk about what we saw and how it was rated and what to do about it.
 - Principal said that it takes a focus and self-discipline to focus on instructional leadership, when there is so much other pressure to focus on managerial leadership.

- Also takes support from other people to do some of the managerial leadership (including physical renovation work) so you can focus on instructional leadership.
 - Pressures can arise that take you away from the instructional leadership role, but it takes discipline to get back to it.
 - Part of the discipline is not taking “the monkey” from others who are not doing things to your standards.
 - At different times in your career or in the cycle of the school, the balance between instructional leadership and managerial leadership changes.
 - One challenge is to “keep your eye on the target” in spite of the immediate demands that come your way.
 - This requires holding others accountable and supporting them when they are not doing what needs to be done.
 - Also requires that others don’t automatically go to the principal when things are not going right.
 - And the principal needs to be responsive to parental concerns (e.g., construction or ventilation levels at times).
 - Speed of the job and number of interactions (more than 250 interpersonal interactions) can be addictive. But it can also get in the way of going into a classroom to observe a lesson, or to sit and talk at length with others.
4. Contrast with Tichy *The Cycle of Leadership*: job of CEO is to be the head teacher.
- a. Particularly in your first superintendency, learning to manage your board is important, but so is training the board on what your priorities are, how you will use your time, etc. and what the board’s priorities should be.
 - b. Jack Welch at GE created a leadership development academy for all executives in the company – and every new hire came to the leadership academy to learn “how we think at GE” and how to argue with him.
 - i. It is essential to be clear on what we are about and how we make this clear to others.
 - ii. “Teaching point of view” is at the core of this.
 - iii. Each person has to develop a “teaching point of view”.
 - You publish this teaching point of view in which you have to explain how you see yourself as teacher and how you teach others around you. Includes
 - Your ideology of teaching and
 - How you view yourself as teacher.
 - This evolves over time as your understanding changes and as outside events change what you and your staff need to do, etc.
 - iv. Argument is that we learn how to be the lead teacher in my part of the organization by talking about how we understand teaching and how we explain that to others in our organization.

- III. How does one learn to lead? How do you teach other people to lead?
- A. Start with premise that we are each lead teachers in our job.
 - B. Asked people to go down the list of the attached “leadership tools/dispositions” (for want of a better term) and check off, first, whether each was taught this.
 - 1. Dr. Lytle indicated that this list is something he is developing and this is the first “road test.”
 - a. This list is ambiguous and difficult to use.
 - b. For example, “coaching/mentoring” is shorthand for “Have you had a formal mentor in your current role (even if in a prior place)?”
 - i. Even those who said yes to this – they have a mentor – but it is mostly someone they meet monthly with for lunch.
 - ii. That is vastly different than someone who talks with you regularly, observes you in board meeting, etc.
 - iii. If you have a mentor, then are you modeling that mode of learning in your role as lead teacher.
 - iv. On the other hand, we may have been mentored by many folks along the way, and sometimes learn as much or more from “toxic” mentors (whom we may have disliked earlier in time).
 - 2. One challenge in this list, and in thinking about superintendents (and principals) as lead teachers (with a teaching point of view in their role), is that the way we learned these things may well be different from the ways current people/emerging people are learning them.
 - 3. Look at the category “using/helping the person access his/her prior (and current) leadership experience; raising consciousness; surfacing mental models”
 - a. This is the area that Heifetz focuses on.
 - i. He argues that the reasons for failure in the superintendency are most likely to be personal – avoiding the things that need to be dealt with but that we don’t want to do.
 - ii. This is supported by the work of Robert Kagan – who focuses on what it is in our personal history that causes each of us to avoid certain things and that because we avoid certain things, different situations don’t get resolved in the way they need to be resolved.
 - iii. First step is to admit to yourself what you avoid, why you avoid it, and what you will do about it in the future.
 - iv. This is true of all of us – administrators and teachers.
 - v. Heifetz argues that leadership is/can be risky/dangerous and that risk is both personal and professional.
 - b. Where do we go to learn this sort of thing – to learn to access ourselves and how we operate/work and when we are and are not effective?
 - i. Part of the argument is that the higher you are in the organization, the vaguer more complex the work, the more others look to you for definition and answers, etc.
 - And this can be uncomfortable – and the question is where do you deal with the uncomfortable stuff.

- And this may involve determining where you are strongest and how to work with the parts that are not your strengths and have around you those who are better at X than I am.
4. As we think about the work of leadership and leadership preparation, these are the kinds of things we need to make sure we include.
 5. But we also need to think about how to make that we include in the preparation program... where we respond to the emerging needs of superintendents and of those in training.
 - a. People bring to us cases of where they are struggling and we work together with them.
 - b. We can, that is, learn best from each others failures. But we need to create an environment where we can discuss and work on those failures.
- C. This list is missing, or only alludes to, the needs of the superintendent in the next 10 years – and what skill sets and knowledge will be necessary for the next 10 years.
1. This may require that we “break the mold” –not just of leadership, but of our “business model.”
 - a. E.g., is the bricks and mortar vision of schools likely to serve us well into the future?
 2. The argument is that the real growth is not in learning how to do the current stuff better (which may be important), but the *real* growth is in rethinking how we might do it very differently – to change the shape of schooling in the community.



PHILADELPHIA SUBURBAN SCHOOL STUDY COUNCIL GROUP B

High School of the Future

Shirley Grover, Chief Learner, High School of the Future
Roz Chivis, Executive Director, Office of Secondary Education,
School District of Philadelphia

January 18, 2007

Dr. Chivis introduced the district:

- This school was built solely with district funds – the Microsoft contribution was in planning and other processes, including a hiring process.
- Moving from large high schools – some as large as 3000 – to smaller high schools of approximately 400 students.
- Currently 61 high schools (80 including charter high schools), and expanding quickly in number.
- In midst of a huge high school reform – white paper will be released shortly.
- Scan ID into scanner as a way of checking in
- At 9:00 a.m. start with tai chi for all students – all staff, students and chief learner (principal) do tai chi led by instructor
- Then each student is given their first period schedule by advisory – which are divided by continent. Once in first period, they can access the internet portal and get the rest of their schedule for the day.
 - The schedule can change day-to-day based on a variety of factors, including a discussion among teachers of what their instructional needs are for the day.
 - All learning is project based learning, with subjects rolled into the projects.
 - The design team, which was charged to “think out of the box”.
- After lunch have reading projects.

Shirley Grover – chief learner (principal)

- Student projects include service learning projects that connect the school to the surrounding community.
 - Example: set up tours of the school by the community, which included studying the demographics of the community, how to arrange tours, what to do with children needing day care, scheduling tour guides, developing and creating an information packet about the school and its relation to the community, training as tour guides.

- Example: recently adopted by the Belmont Mansion and students are developing a museum for the mansion, including researching the history of the Mansion and developing materials, researching museum store.
- Example: designing school uniforms. Involved studying uniforms across time and cultures, what clothing says about the wearers, how clothing is designed, where to put buttons, etc. Every student developed a sketch which was critiqued for improvement by Drexel U. design students.
 - Students are divided into continents – 24 students per continent and students in each continent had to decide which uniform they wanted for their continent
 - They learned SWOT analysis, decision making tree, to use to make their decision.
- Students formed close identities with their continents – strong sense of community – but now only meet as continents twice a week, spending most of their time in project teams that are not continents.
- Trying to get away from being time-driven.
 - E.g., Graduation is about passing PSSA at proficient level, presenting research publicly, community service. Students can petition to leave after 11th grade if they have met all state standards.
 - School is taking the standards and weaving them back into integrated topics for inquiry.
 - This is like the International Baccalaureate program where standards are woven into integrated learning projects.
 - This will allow students to show proficiency through their project learning.
 - Look at the Met school in Rhode Island as another way of doing this.
 - Are thinking about doing away with grade levels, so each new grade of students may decide to add something.
- Do not give grades.
 - Students must do at least basic on the state test.
- Not a special admit school – admission by lottery without other requirements.
 - We try to find ways of addressing the needs for whichever students “win” that lottery.
 - Some come in with learning problems, with bad experiences in school.
 - Surprise was that students “took” to computers really fast – some for video, for music, etc.
 - Kids who are not able to manage the computer system and the program management system had to learn how to do it.
 - We are trying to have function determine form, not the other way around. So the structure (e.g., schedule) will vary as needed for instructional needs.
 - Microsoft has developed new software that can individualize by student.
- Challenge is to build capacity within each child.
- Use Microsoft “wheel of competency” (see Microsoft web site) as central for the hiring process.
 - Had to have dual certification (or agree to become that).
 - Selected 16 competencies they had to meet – e.g., dealing with ambiguity – from that wheel.
 - First round process included web-based tasks that applicants had to do that drilled down into specific competencies.

- Second round interviews were focused on competencies. Included bringing groups in and give them group tasks that allowed us to assess their ability to work on team, interpersonal skills, etc.
- First round 80 applicants for 11 positions (“educators for school for the future” with dual certification in any of a set of areas). Of the 80, 70 met the criteria, and only 29 were willing to do the on-line tasks.
- Staff participated in programs to help them learn better how to teach for understanding.
- Question: how do you, as chief learner, have to think differently for this work?
 - Went to Catholic Schools in Maine.
 - Father had 15 siblings all of whom married out of faith and international. Mother’s family was French Canadian.
 - Father’s family had different politics, different work, different perspectives. Always asked questions.
 - I don’t believe there is only one right answer, but that everything we know is socially constructed.
 - Believe that people are good and that if you give them information and work together, you will get better results than if you tell people the answer.
 - Also get better buy-in.
 - Microsoft didn’t tell us how to run the school. They brought us together with a set of tools to develop and implement a dream.
 - You must believe in the kids – that they can succeed.
 - We started 9th grade with issues of identity and how identities are formed.
 - This led to issues of borders and how borders work in their lives (neighborhood to neighborhood) and then into national borders.
 - Using electronic teleconferencing with other countries allowed them to explore those issues more deeply and experientially.
- Questions of kids re: laptops:
 - How does that work for you? How do you use it at home?
 - Siblings want to use it at home.
 - Parents caution me to keep it safe.
 - Administration was concerned about safety and whether student would be targeted.
 - It has been safe.
 - District has an insurance policy with family names.
 - Kids have two batteries and one is always being charged by the service center.
 - Laptop is theirs to use and take it home. Computers will stay with the kids, at least through high school.
- School opens at 7:00 a.m. and closes at 10:00 p.m. but classes are 9:30 to 4:15.
 - Some kids come at 7:00 to use exercise equipment, work, etc.
- How does size of district and union affect your work?
 - Union has been cooperative – gave us site selection.
 - I am part of principal’s union and those meetings are frustrating because they are about trivial issues that don’t move us forward.
 - District is "command and perform" organization that does not believe strongly in individual initiative. People feel powerless to create change.
- Question of students – how is this different than other schools, middle schools?

- Computers are different.
- Surprised by amount of freedom we have.
 - In old school could be suspended for being in hallways.
- Learning is different:
 - Teachers take time with us and kind of expect more of us.
 - Treat us with more respect which makes it easier for us to learn from them and for us to teach them (e.g., about the technology).
- It doesn't seem like work, we get more help and we can learn more and better.
- Laptops allow us to communicate more with teachers and other students.
 - We can email teachers about work we may have missed or questions we have.
 - And can email other students about the work.
 - Teachers do respond to our questions.
- We have a new portal which allows teachers and students to set up appointments with the teachers.
- While we have some filters on the internet, we help the students make decisions about what is and is not appropriate to access on the web.
- We know that kids will wander – IM, Myspace, work on other things – if they are not engaged.
 - So we try to keep them highly engaged – e.g., working with UPenn engineering students on robotics projects.
- District does not yet provide Internet at home for students. Kids that don't have it at home, are encouraged to use local library, etc.
 - City WIFI is coming to our area shortly, for \$10/month for families at low income levels.
- Expectation is that all students will apply to college. What are you doing to help facilitate this?
 - Kids wear college shirts.
 - Have more engagement with college students throughout school lives – tutors from Villanova, projects lead by Penn students, etc.
 - Kids all have taken Myers-Briggs indicator – and we talk about how to use their styles.
 - Their mentors are encouraged to talk with them about their future, how to plan for it, etc.
- We have an incredibly advanced infrastructure, every kid with a laptop, but no technology teacher.
 - Have support from Drexel and people from central office who can troubleshoot on-line.
 - Students are very helpful.
 - Have one teacher with a computer science degree and others are computer literate.
 - If something goes wrong with infrastructure, we have to call out. Servers are at Drexel.
- Diverse teaching staff:
 - Good proportion had careers before teaching.
 - 50% taught elsewhere.
- Paperless school – even text books are on computer.
 - Problem when the infrastructure fails – there is no paper back-up.

- Faculty must demonstrate 16 competencies to get in and have to have on-going learning plan.
- Kids to graduate have to demonstrate 11 adult competencies in order to graduate.
- What kind of training?
 - *Teaching For Understanding With Technology* – on-line course.
 - Have Promethean boards and related tools.
 - Teachers were getting overwhelmed with tools and wanted training that would be more focused on the projects they were doing. And they want to work with a colleague, so they can talk about how it works.
- E-books allow the school to move away from text books and work with primary sources and help students learn how to use primary sources and interpret and compare them.
- School is a green building.
 - Capture rainwater to use the toilets.
 - Lights go on and off automatically.
 - Suppose to be balanced for heating and cooling – working on this.
 - Photovoltaic glass.
 - Green roof – that has grass growing on it.

ROZ

- Microsoft support was in terms of the planning and development *process*.
- Six “I” process.
 - Introspection :
 - Examining the structure of education.
 - Thought it important to start with SWOT – looking at strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities it created and what the threats would be.
 - Key threat: contract and contractual issues.
 - Because this was a brand new school – they were able to hire their own staff. Don’t have the same type of staffing issues.
 - Investigation:
 - Team of 12 central office employees from various offices – C&I, technology, others to look at a design process, write the belief statements.
 - Later on brought in the students.
 - Parts of the group would look at schools in US and elsewhere to understand the range of things that were possible.
 - We learned to be comfortable with not knowing and with going out to learn.
 - It’s easy to grow when you know that you don’t know and have a way to learn it.
 - Inclusion:
 - Gathered more than 50 people from various sectors – including the immediate community.
 - 75% of the students came from the immediate catchment area (25% from other parts of the system) – all by lottery.
 - Innovation:
 - Focuses first on C&I, so technology and the building would not drive education.
 - We began to dream and imagine.
 - Implementation:
 - How to realize the dream, the vision.

- Included a hiring process and professional develop plan for teachers.
- Hiring process is the same as the Microsoft process.
- Introspection
 - Make sure people reflect on activities in an on-going basis and continue to debrief on what is and is not working.
 - To make sure people were comfortable with no knowing, and working to come to know, comfortable with making mistakes and learning how to correct them.
- All of this work and the process tools are available on the Microsoft web site. (www.Microsoft.com/education/sof)
 - Key Microsoft goal is that we disseminate what we learn.
 - See Microsoft as a process manager, remover of obstacles; support us in doing the work.
 - They share with us the tools that made and continue to make them great – hiring process, problem solving processes.
 - Microsoft involvement gave us courage to think and behave differently.
- School has developed as a community.
 - Expect the current 9th graders to mentor those who come in next year – to introduce them to the norms and culture of the school and to support their entry.
- “All students going to college” is part of the culture of this school.
 - Other schools have that expectation, but the chief learner has instituted it here, and built it into graduation expectation that you must apply to college.
 - The mindset is that you should have a plan for what you will do when you finish the School of the Future; what your next steps will be.

**PHILADELPHIA SUBURBAN SCHOOL STUDY COUNCIL
GROUP B**

Rethinking Educational Futures

Art Shostak, Professor Emeritus, Drexel University

March 15, 2007

- I. Art began with some overview remarks:
 - A. All forecasting is probabilistic. There is no “knowing” the future, but we do have tools we can use to “know” the future probabilistically.
 1. We make the future in the present.
 - B. We will talk today about high impact, high risk phenomena.
 - C. Demographics is a key to any forecasting.
 - D. Futurists put 1980 as a breakpoint in human history.
 1. Two types of people:
 - a. Digital immigrants – born before 1980
 - i. Digital immigrants have all the problems of the immigrant – learning the language, learning the “code” and the subtleties of the culture.
 - b. Digital natives – born since 1980
 - i. Digital native have never been anywhere that was not digitally *informed*.
 - ii. They have high instant messaging skills.
 - iii. They are not the children we were – their experiences and anxieties are all different.
 - iv. This carries both strengths and problems.
 - c. One challenge is that each world has a set of lenses built into it, and ways of thinking
 2. This is an oversimplification but still helps us understand the gulf between generations.
 - E. Context:
 1. Ninth graders in the fall, have an average life expectancy out to 2067 (average male life expectancy is age 75) to 2073 (average female life expectancy is 81).
 2. How do we help youngsters prepare for their lives over the next 60 or more years?
 3. The top job titles by 2020:
 - a. Anti-Terrorism Technician.
 - b. Climate Change Impact Responder
 - c. Customer Knowledge Mining Specialist (data mining)
 - d. Holographic Game Designer
 - e. Hydrogen Marketing Manager
 - f. Nano Manufacturing Agent

- g. Neuro-Marketing Manager
 - 4. Question: This list talks a lot about “responders,” “managers,” etc. Does that mean software will be doing more of the work?
 - a. Discussion:
 - i. If the content of a job does not change much over the years, we can write software to do that job.
 - ii. Any job that is open for “rule ordered software” (is patternable, with minimal fuzziness) has a Sword of Damocles hanging over it.
 - iii. As software gets more sophisticated, it will be able to do even those jobs for which the content changes rapidly so long as it meets criteria in (ii).
 - 5. This kind of a list, mulled over by the curriculum folks, can lead them to think about curriculum.
 - F. There is no orthodoxy in futurism, no single line agreed upon future.
 - 1. Still, there seems to be agreement that “smart automation” will be commonplace by 2030.
 - a. Smart automation is automation that has “self reflexivity” that “thinks” about itself.
 - i. Contains “neural net software”
 - Never makes the same mistake twice.
 - Has insatiable appetite for “learning.”
 - ii. Contrast ATM which is “dumb” automation.
 - An ATM with smart automation, would offer you advice, attend to how different markets performed, etc.
 - b. This means equipment that can self-correct.
 - c. This has interesting implications for the question “What are we preparing children for?”
 - 2. Anticipate that we are creating a world of “pull” learning not “push” learning.
 - a. Now we push learning at students, we drive it.
 - b. New software is increasingly making it a world of “pull” – interactive and learner driven.
- II. Curriculum:
- A. The *arts* may gain strategic importance.
 - 1. Why?
 - a. Because they help augment our human distinctiveness from “smart” machines, our unique edge in the endless competition and race with artificial intelligence.
 - b. Because they are an invaluable source of:

Creativity	Empathy
Fantasy	Fun
Imagination	Ingenuity
Inventiveness	Zaniness
 - c. Because they help us secure team-building skills.
 - d. Because they promote cross-cultural appreciation and understanding.
 - B. Ray Kurtzeil – inventor of the moog synthesizer – challenges us all with a very controversial vision – “singularity” – and when will it come?
 - 1. Singularity is when the equipment becomes smarter than us.
 - 2. He argues that it will come in 2035.

- a. Moore's law: "discovered" in 1963 and argues that computer chips become twice as powerful and half as expensive every 18 to 24 months. It is exponential growth in computer capacity.
 - b. By 2020, computers will have the brain power of a small group of people.
 - c. By 2025, computers will have the brain power of 1000s of people.
 - d. By 2030, computers will have the brain power of ??? of people.
3. Even if he is off by 15 years and it happens in 2050, that's still in the lives of your current high school and middle school students.
- C. Discussion:
- 1. Current state initiative is to put laptops on desk of every student in schools.
 - a. Students love it, but teachers are troubled.
 - b. National program in which children get certified as "digitally proficient" and they are matched, personality-wise, with a digital immigrant and the student mentors the immigrant.
 - i. The program that links students as mentors to teachers as mentees is called Generation Y. Created in 1996, it can be reached at www.GENYES.org
 - 2. Social frameworks: can democracy and capitalism work in a digital world?
 - a. Art argued that we will have an expansion of a risk society.
 - i. A broad trend is underway in industrialized societies that are struggling to remain price-competitive with emerging societies (e.g., the 40 countries that have nuclear capabilities, industrialized societies, the 25 EU countries plus Asian tigers) – a trend critics warn could result in a race-to-the bottom.
 - Smaller ratio of well-paying jobs to all jobs.
 - Increasing loss of jobs to automation, disintermediation, overseas competition, etc.
 - Loss of pension security.
 - Spread of two-tier arrangements (entry-level, physically challenged, undocumented, etc.)
 - Erosion of union bargaining power.
 - Dismantling or weakening of the government protections, e.g., workplace safety inspections, etc.
 - Dismantling or weakening of the state Safety Net.
 - Entrenchment of women and minorities at the economic margin.
 - Intensification of income polarization ("CEO Capitalism")
 - Xenophobic hostility to new job seekers.
 - Overall—ever-greater individualization of risk.
 - b. As a futurist it is fascinating to watch the change of culture of the new Democratic leadership and its 100 day agenda.
 - i. Not clear how much of it will be deep seated and lasting, even if the Democratic leadership is strengthened in the next election.
 - c. Need to be preparing them for collaborative work – so they can work with others.
 - d. Need to be preparing them for self-knowledge – to be able to identify when asked five strengths, five weaknesses, five accomplishments over the last X years, five areas in which they want to learn over the next X years and how to do it.

- i. They also need to have a zesty sense of social accomplishment (not their own, but in their society).
 - ii. They should have a sense of social inventions – the things people have invented to deal with adversity.
 - E.g., AA (“Bill”) is a social invention – community that helps people overcome adversity.
 - Social inventions help people overcome the coldness of a digital computer-driven environment.
 - New use of virtual social communities – to make dates with humans in the non-digital world.
 - e. Computer and internet also allows our students, classes, schools to connect with students, classes, schools in other countries with whom they can learn together, and about each other.
 - i. E.g., students in CT had relationship with students in Sarajevo during the war there and talked about it and increased understanding.
 - ii. Because it was done in class, or connected to the classroom, the teacher can be around to help them process it.
 - f. All of this places additional responsibilities on adults to help young people understand both the strengths and challenges of living in a digital world.
 - i. For example, it is easy to use the Internet to destroy someone’s reputation, so we have to help students learn not to do that.
3. In making predictions, where do we factor in the possibility that a new smart technology will be buried because some major corporation or government believes it is not in their interest to release it.
 - a. In the past, we have played major games with technology – GM bought up all of the trolley lines and we have no more trolleys.
 - b. Some don’t come on line fast enough – e.g., hybrid cars, solar power (or solar aided buildings).
 - c. How much longer can you afford the diesel fuel for your buses? Extrapolate out 10 years and it grows and grows at a faster rate than most budgets.
 4. Peak spending period in people’s life cycle – ages 40-55.
 - a. Partly because that’s when their children are home and are voracious users of income.
 - b. Look at cohort of baby boomers – peak at 2010-2011 in ages 40-55.
 5. Implications: post 2010-2011 cutbacks in spending in this country – massive reduction in the spending stream.
 - a. Implies a shrinking economy. Golden age of shopping mall, of “mall rat” may end and move into a very different economy.
 6. Stressors in the first decade of the 21st Century:
 - a. Escalation in fuel/oil process – hurt family budget, straining on school district budget, etc.
 - i. What are contingency plans? Do you have projections for school bus costs for next five years?
 - ii. What are contingencies if those costs go sky-high because of changes in politics of Middle East?
 - b. Deepening of public divide over presence of American Troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.

- c. Rise in inflation – by-product of oil costs.
 - d. Sharp decline in house prices/rise in rental cost (uneven across the country).
 - e. Fear of Iran/North Korea nuclear gains.
 - f. Accelerated climate change costs.
 - g. Job market volatility.
 - h. Anxiety over conservative high court – issue of how we understand human rights.
 - i. Anxiety over turmoil in West Bank, etc.
 - j. Nagging dread of second 9/11.
 - k. Are we using school buses for educational purposes?
 - i. E.g., do we have educational videos – news, etc. – in every school bus?
 - l. The last thing we want is for youngsters to detect that we are “baffled” or behind the curve in using technology, addressing energy problems, etc.
 - i. How green are our buildings? -- Painted roofs white? Roof-top gardens? Solar power on roofs? Wind mill to power?
- D. Academic majors – 21st Century
- 1. Academic Majors -21St Century
 - a. Artificial Intelligence Applications
 - b. Alternative Technologies
 - c. Biotechnology
 - d. Computer Modeling
 - e. Computer Sciences
 - f. Cybernetics
 - g. Data Analysis; Mining
 - h. E-Commerce
 - i. Environmental Sciences
 - j. Ethics; Medical, *etc.*
 - k. Eugenics Counseling
 - l. Futuristics
 - m. GIs (Geographic information Sciences)
 - n. Global Organizations
 - o. “Green” Economics
 - p. Health Care Management
 - q. Holistic Health Care
 - r. Intelligent Agent Engineering
 - s. Mechatronics
 - t. Nanotechnology
 - u. Neurosciences
 - v. Organizational Learning
 - w. Space; Industry, Law, settlements; etc.
 - x. Systems Analysis
 - y. Tourism
 - z. Utopias
 - aa. Virtual Reality Applications
 - bb. Wellness Counseling

2. In a competitive market, we want to focus on what is our “niche” – what is it that sets us apart as Homo sapiens, that sets us apart in the “singularity” we discussed earlier.
 - a. Things that machines are unlikely to be able to do in the foreseeable future:
 - i. Ethics – medical and other.
 - ii. Eugenic counseling – a machine can use data mining to make things knowable – but cannot help with counseling of what we “ought” to do.
 3. How can we use this list as part of our curricular and counseling issues in schools?
- E. K-12 Schooling issues for the early 21st Century – a very partial list.
 1. NOTE: There is no simple extension of the status quo – “the sands will continue to shift under our feet” (*Death of a Salesman*)
 2. Issues:
 - a. *Accelerated Climate Change* – no longer “global warming” now “global heating” that is accelerating. (Stern Report released in February 07)
 - i. Forecast: within 50 years the United Kingdom will resemble Siberia in climate – which helps explain why Tony Blair is focusing on “green” policies and technology.
 - ii. We need “Rubik’s Cube” thinkers – people who see challenges and imagine ways of using those challenges as opportunities, who see that moving one square affects them all.
 - iii. Florida cities are trying to be certified as “elderly ready” (which carries with it tax incentives).
 - Change signage – street sign fonts must be larger
 - Municipal buses when an older person using a walker is observed by a bus driver walking toward the bus stop, the driver must wait.
 - iv. AGE (Americans for Generational Equity) – arguing for rights of people ages 20-35; is often in conflict with AARP.
 - b. *Energy stewardship*.
 - i. This is a distinctive challenge to all of us. It goes beyond most other issues. Current issue of *The Economist* has “The Greening of America” on the cover – and it is a trend that will get bigger.
 - Energy use, recycling, etc.
 - c. “*Smart house*”
 - i. E.g., on your way home to a smart house, your smart car would give you information on what food is in the house, possibilities for dinner, heat (what rooms need to be warmed).
 - ii. Current smart houses need to be told at what temperature we want different rooms. Newer technologies will not need this, and will be able to ask questions and do more.
 - iii. Look at “Smart House Automation” magazine.
 - iv. Design for smart house includes a sophisticated home learning center, in which it identifies you by voice and will take direction and respond with learning geared to your learning styles and interests.
 - Computer may be designed around Gardner’s modalities of learning which it has assessed you on.
 - This is what we want teachers to do: assess child’s learning style and interests, know the child’s background and learning resources at home, etc.

- This may be difficult, if possible, for a teacher to do for 18-20-25 etc. students.
 - Current technology can help, but will grow more and more capable as it develops.
- v. One challenge is that only some will have such home learning centers and add a divide.
 - vi. Recommended reading *The Child Buyer* by John Hersey, argues that school superintendents in the foreseeable future will be visited by a representative from major global corporations, offering legal gifts (new computer lab, etc.) for information about the children who are doing exceptionally well for the purposes of “buying” the child from the parents.
- d. *Wireless info technology*
 - e. *Intelligent agents*
 - i. Cell phones on steroids are the home of our intelligent agent.
 - ii. An intelligent agent is the synergy possible from bringing together information seeking, processing and using facilities in one place, which is likely to be in your cell phone.
 - iii. An intelligent agent is your electronic alter ego.
 - E.g., while you have been sitting here, your intelligent agent is taking care of business while you are not here.
 - It knows you better than your spouse.
 - iv. It is always busy dealing with the intelligent agents of other people and will bring you up to date when you ask.
 - v. For the learner, the intelligent agent will open up worlds of possibility.
 - Can ask the intelligent agent questions and get answers in real time.
 - f. *Wellness promotion*
 - i. What we serve in cafeterias and vending machines.
 - Somoclonal foods – anti-cancer foods: potatoes, tomatoes.
 - Other foods are linked to the distinctiveness of each child.
 - ii. Focus on preventative issues.
 - g. *New job possibilities*
 - h. *New roles for women*
 - i. Androgyny – both male and female.
 - ii. To date, since 1800s, bureaucracy has emphasized male characteristics.
 - iii. Bureaucracies are driven by fear, what their super ordinate thinks of him or her in real time. Men get off on fear and run bureaucracies on that model.
 - Women do not get off on fear.
 - Forecast is that the post-bureaucratic organization will achieve a new balance of male and female characteristics.
 - iv. We want organizations that attract and retain talent – their magnetism will distinguish them.
 - This magnetism – which revolves around emotional intelligence – is more of a female than a male characteristic.
 - i. *Graying of America*
 - j. *Browning of America*

- k. *Biotech frontiers*
 - l. *Nanotechnology*
 - m. *Space frontiers*
 - n. *War and weaponry (cyber, bio, etc.)*
 - o. *Artificial intelligence gains*
- F. Question: top 25% in China are equal in number to all of the students in the US.
- 1. Shanghai is like the city of tomorrow – so modernistic.
 - 2. China does not want “smart automation” – they have 1.8 billion people who need jobs.
 - 3. They understand singularity and smart automation, but this economic reality is crucial.
 - 4. Chinese leaders are caught – they have so many people needing jobs, but they know the future is in smart automation and so they want to outsource a lot.
- G. Art suggested that schools start a “futures club” for students.
- 1. What would it do? A lot of what we discussed here today.

Cases in Rethinking Leadership in the Current Accountability Framework

Dr. James Lytle
Practice Professor, Graduate School of Education

May 17, 2007

- I. Overall questions for the session:
 - A. How do you lead?
 - B. How do you teach people around you to lead?
 1. Board work
 2. Management functions
 3. Student achievement

- II. Activity: outline a modal (average) board meeting agenda
 - A. Example of a district board meeting agenda:
 1. Roll call and pledge of allegiance
 2. Approval of agenda
 3. Approval of previous meeting's minutes
 4. Commendations and resolutions
 5. Public comment
 6. Superintendent's report
 7. Committee reports: curriculum, human resources, budget and finance, facilities and transportation, and special committee reports
 - B. Variations on this agenda included:
 1. Location of public comment on the agenda.
 - a. Several districts place public comment early in the agenda, while others hold it after superintendent/committee reports. Some districts have public comment twice in the meeting.
 2. Student presentations are a regular feature at one district's meetings, and they occur early in the agenda.
 - a. Students are also in attendance as part of a high school politics class.
 3. A regularly occurring "view from the board" agenda item, in which one board member speaks to an issue, and then that comment is printed verbatim.
 4. Location of the superintendent's report on the agenda.

- a. In one case, the superintendent's report occurs at the close of the meeting.
 - b. In another, the report sets the stage for public comment.
- 5. The Intermediate Unit board agenda
 - a. One notable thing is that some districts have student reports or representation; the IU has no student voices and that is something it would like to change.
- 6. There is no legal requirement that there be public testimony at IU board meetings, but there is a requirement that there be opportunity for comment.
- C. Survey: number of board meetings per month
 - 1. One meeting per month: 3 districts
 - 2. Two meetings per month: 4
 - 3. More than two meetings per month: 1
- D. Discussion: typical board meeting characteristics
 - 1. Supt. 1: It varies, depending on the superintendent report; student-related presentations occur during public comment. Often, many people attend for the student presentations and then depart afterward.
 - 2. Supt. 2: Board meetings are televised, and this may have an impact on public attendance in person.
 - 3. Supt. 3: 100-200 people have consistently been attending because the district is in the midst of building a school.
 - 4. Supt. 4: Typically have 60 attendees at the beginning, but after commendations and public comment, about ten attendees stay.
 - 5. Supt. 5: In this district, the board agenda has the superintendent's report before public comment, to "get a captive audience before they capture you."
- E. Discussion: Views on purpose of board meetings
 - 1. Supt 1: The public meetings are for decision making. Executive session is for intricacies of personnel, contract negotiations, and discussion of our strategic focus and where we are headed.
 - 2. Supt 2: The board usually has an agreement -- no hot questions to the administration without prior knowledge.
 - 3. Supt 3: The best board meeting he had was only 20 minutes long and it was great. But one concern is that board members do not want to be a rubber stamp. Typically, the board has unanimous votes or close to it.
 - 4. Supt 4: It has been policy for about ten years that anyone wanting to speak must submit questions or comments by noon the day of meeting.
 - 5. Supt 5: Meetings each month for committees. And all board members attend. It is not that they are checking up on one another, but they reserve Mondays for board meetings and tend to go to whatever committee meeting is on the schedule.
 - a. So there is a social dimension.
 - b. The board members are still out there talking in the parking lot afterwards. It is that they want to be in touch and aware.
 - 6. Supt 6: We have very few executive sessions. But at end of a finance session, there is invariably a person who comes for the whole thing till the end. In that case, we usually take a few minutes for executive session when someone is not in the room.
- F. Three districts have televised board meetings
 - 1. And meetings are replayed on local stations constantly.

G. Required attendance of principals

1. Four districts require it, and four have the expectation that principals will come.
 - a. If there is an issue of concern to principals, they are invited to attend.
2. Dr. Lytle's experience as superintendent is that half of his principals attended voluntarily, so that they were aware of the issues.

H. Overall, it is clear to Dr. Lytle that much time could be spent in the Study Council session on board management.

1. There is a significant different between being an assistant superintendent and a superintendent. When you are "it," you are ultimately the one who is responsible.

I. Dr. Lytle's examples from his experience as a superintendent:

1. He was involved for a time in his district to develop the board as a policy and governance board. The idea is that there is an agreement that the board would focus on big picture policy issues. He worked with consultant Linda Dawson, president of the Aspen Group, International, Inc. <http://www.aspengroup.org>
 - a. Have an annual agenda, with a focus on a major issue per month – for example, in March it may be facilities, and the superintendent does a report.
 - b. It limits the board; it gives permission to superintendent to make decisions on curriculum, etc.
 - c. In the policy model, the superintendent is viewed as only an employee; the board's job is to make sure the district has policies to get where it needs to be.
2. The board meeting is the ultimate representation of what the district is about. It is the board, and not superintendent, that represents the district. Whether the board is arguing about the building, or the stadium lights, it shows what the board considers to be important.
3. In the manner of a symbolic view of board, the superintendent is the stage manager. You as superintendent manage the meeting.
 - a. You arrange the meeting so that a lot of the time is predetermined; it has a ritual dimension.

J. For consideration: To what degree does the ritual predetermine what the board thinks and talks about, and to what degree have you as superintendent changed the ritual to focus on what you think is right?

- a. Reflecting on formal graduate education for superintendents, and on opportunities for continuing education, very little time or focus is placed on board management -- but it is very important. So how do you learn?

K. Discussion: Conditions under which the superintendent feels authorized to change the way the board is run.

1. Dr. Lytle: This is a key aspect of superintendent leadership. The board's responsibility is to consider the issues, but the superintendent's role is to be a nonvoting member and help them see possibilities.
2. Supt 1: Before becoming a superintendent, I served on a school board for 12 years. I think that when my board hired me they respected that.
 - a. So when I made suggestions to the board, they were very receptive.
 - 1) For example, they had two public comment periods – why were both needed? Legally it is not necessary.
 - 2) I don't think a superintendent should just change it. I think you need to raise and discuss why, and let them decide.

- 3) I observed that having the public comment coming early meant that attendees came for that then left.
- b. Has changed the agenda twice in two years' tenure. Initially, there were five meetings a month. We reorganized committee meetings to double them up on the same date. Then we had a board reorganization, and the new president suggested a change from a committee structure to two meetings per month.
- c. They respected my background, and listened, and now they are thrilled.
- 3. Discussion: Board retreats
 - a. Three districts hold them, typically once a year.
 - b. Supt 1: This year we are going to spend some time on goals, but focus will be more on affective issues.
 - c. Supt 2: In the past, in my previous district, it was an extensive two day retreat. Sometimes it was with an outside facilitator, but usually it was the superintendent. The focus is on goals.
 - d. Supt 3: Introduced idea of annual retreat, but it was a challenge. Held a dinner the evening before then a full day retreat. Had six attend, with two PSBA facilitators. They loved it and reported back.
 - e. Dr. Lytle: Given the amount of money boards manage, it is notable how little it spends on its own development.
- L. Promoting effective change with a board
 - 1. Dr. Lytle has seen superintendents straighten out boards to improve effectiveness. There is now a different tone to interactions with that intervention.
 - a. If a superintendent has experience with one board, he/she is more likely to do that with another. But it's trickier with only one situation of experience.

III. Superintendent's Work Tasks and Functions – Managerial Functions

- A. Activity: (handout) survey on which the paper (pre-reading “Managerial Tasks of Superintendents”) is based. [See Appendix for a copy of the survey.]
 - 1. A superintendent's functions vary according to the size of district they are in.
 - 2. Based on a return of 52% from the total number of superintendents in the country, the mean size of respondents' districts was under 2000 students per district.
 - 3. Part of the question is, who does the job?
 - a. The survey asks you to think through the degree to which you are involved in the task, and who else does it.
 - 4. The basis of the theory is that in smaller districts, superintendents tend to have primary responsibility for more managerial functions.
 - 5. How many of you do things in the Personnel Management section of the survey?
 - a. (Participant responses ranged from “I do it all” to “I do oversight and delegate.”)
 - b. Grievance management came up as one area for superintendents.
 - 1) Several participants do it; others have an HR manager or assistant superintendent do all but the most advanced cases.
 - 2) One can delegate, according to the case.
 - c. Student health (none of the participants manage this function).

- d. Overall, it is difficult to respond to the survey, because it can be different given the time of year or circumstance. I want to give responsibility, but can be situational.
 - 6. In the study, many people did a lot at the “coordination” level (level three).
 - 7. Financial management functions
 - a. An example of inventory/materials management: Deaccessioning of computers; the question arose – can we give these away to students? The answer is no, because they are public property. So the superintendent made the decision to auction them on EBay, which meets the state law; the superintendent had to make that call.
 - 8. Public relations function: superintendents are the primary person responsible for this function
 - a. An example of the reorganization of a PTO group: to efficiently liaise with them, the superintendent established a small group meeting with representatives, which they love and there is good communication. He meets with all Home and School officers every other month, then High School officers in opposite months.
- B. The study argues that the managerial functions of the job are the platform for superintendents.
- 1. The premise is that for superintendents, a lot more time gets spent on managerial functions.
 - a. It is hard to read too much into the analysis, since the data was self-reported.
 - b. But it is likely that whatever your priorities may be, you could probably track your time and realize that you spend a lot on this area.
 - 2. Discussion: legal aspects of communication
 - a. Supt 1: attended national conference on school boards, and there was one presentation on board’s executive sessions.
 - b. It included discussion on the use of email for communication among board members, and the legal implications of that communication.
 - c. Proposal: have a session for next year on legal issues: exec session, email

IV. Research study findings indicate that superintendents can have an impact on student achievement. [Reference: Marzano, R.J. (2003) *What works in schools: Translating research into action*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.]

A. The Balanced Leadership framework identifies 21 superintendent behaviors that are correlated to student achievement

- 1. In theory, the study tries to pull out the intervening factors.
- 2. The article is a meta analysis.
- 3. A reader’s question: to what degree were various studies based on self-reported responses? But the main factors are the following:
- 4. Goal setting.
- 5. Research-based goals adopted.
- 6. Board support for aligned goals maintained.
 - a. Several participants mentioned that board meetings include reports on data.
 - b. When Dr. Lytle looks at alignment, maintenance, and monitoring, the assumption is that districts have a school-based assessment program.

- c. Hypothetically, central office can monitor on an ongoing basis.
- 7. Superintendent monitors progress in goals for achievement/instruction.
- 8. Resources are dedicated to professional development for teachers and principals.
 - a. Whatever professional development is being done is tied back to goals.
 - b. We are sure that we have allocated adequate resources to do that.
- B. There are two “case” superintendents in the article: one does all of these things, all do everything but grant school autonomy.
- C. School autonomy within aligned goals
 - 1. In the less autonomous and more successful district, the autonomy is restricted to the implementation of district goals.
 - 2. Student achievement is defined in article as meeting state test scores.
 - 3. Concept of AYP is not addressed in the article.
 - a. For the most part, I am going to assume that most schools in your districts are meeting AYP.
 - b. So the goals are more about setting our standards for improvement, and at what level.
- D. So this study lays out a tightly coupled set of factors that lead to success.
- E. Dr. Lytle’s question: What does the superintendent do? Does this describe the universe in which superintendents operate?
 - 1. The superintendent runs a whole organization. There are operational issues, and we have also talked about the board: what does board care about? And there is the symbolic dimension of board behavior.
 - 2. To what degree is the goal-setting and management process in place within your district?
 - a. Is this where your board directs its attention? If it doesn’t, what does that mean for students, teachers, families in district?
 - b. How do you convince the board that if what matters is student achievement, this is what you’d want to do?
 - 3. Discussion: Roles of the superintendent, board, and principals
 - a. Supt. 1: Would prefer to have the board support the instructional side, but not intervene directly in making decisions about textbooks
 - 1) It is a fine equation – how to balance and have autonomy.
 - b. Dr. Lytle: As long as board has sense that things are moving in the right direction, and the trust, they can give you this autonomy.
 - c. Supt. 2: In 14 years in a district, I have come around. I used to think my job was to keep board out of the education side. I now think we have more control than we thought we did over student achievement. For me, it has been a journey away from the visioning with the board, to a more focused approach where you meet regularly with board and with principals to connect policy to instruction.
 - d. Dr. Lytle: So the superintendent is the link between the board and principals
 - e. Supt 3: It is more lively and interactive at the superintendent-principals level, because you have a common knowledge base. And with board, they come from different backgrounds. It is a challenge to not just have a conversation with 2-3 board members.

- f. Supt 4: Tries to guide board on instructional goals through their evaluation of superintendent, because they all want to evaluate him.
 - g. Supt 5: Found that it is effective to use the strategic plan to remind the board and keep them focused.
 - 1) The plan sets expectations and then we can follow through with monitoring.
 - 2) In all that work with the board, we have to be doing that. The work of the district is framed within that plan.
 - h. Supt 6: Tried to get board to do a retreat, but couldn't get agreement. So took the administrators on a retreat. We came back and presented the educational goals to the board. They discussed them and were very happy with them. Would prefer that they are part of the goal setting, rather than receiving them, but since they didn't take it on...
 - i. Dr. Lytle: The process you used was managing up. It is the responsibility of the board to set educational goals, but since they didn't want to do that, then you set the draft for them.
4. Discussion: Goal setting and state/federal mandates (AYP)
- a. Dr. Lytle: To what degree does the board see themselves as responsible for setting goals, or has the district's autonomy been eroded by external mandates?
 - 1) Some groups/districts are suing or arguing to change; this is an emerging coalition of left and right.
 - b. Supt. 1: In high-achieving district, when I came on board two years ago, there was no discussion. It was taxes, facilities. It was not until a new board member has come on and started asking about trend of dropping SAT scores.
 - 1) Board is just now touching it. The board has never set board goals, now they are battling behind the scenes about what the goals should be.
 - 2) It is beginning to relate the board goals to what the community's concern is. It suggests that in the past, the board has seen itself as responsible for finance, not educational goals.
 - c. The premise of the article is that the last factor, the autonomy of schools in relation to goals, is the key.
5. Single loop vs. double loop learning
- a. In single-loop learning, individuals, groups, or organizations modify their actions according to the difference between expected and obtained outcomes. In double-loop learning, the entities (individuals, groups or organization) question the values, assumptions and policies that led to the actions in the first place; if they are able to view and modify those, then second-order or double-loop learning has taken place. Double loop learning is the learning about single-loop learning. Argyris, C. and Schon, D. (1978). *Organizational Learning: A theory of action perspective*, Addison-Wesley, Reading MA, 1978. Referenced on Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organizational_learning
 - b. When we use a single loop model, the evaluation (last step) loops back to the first, and we continuously revise goals from what we learn.
 - 1) The argument against it is that it is a closed system; you do not learn a lot from this.

- 2) A metaphor is a thermostat; it will regulate, but it will not evaluate whether the right heating system is in place.
- c. The notions of empowered learning (critical thinking) and critique do not have much of a place in this model.
- d. The danger of being locked into state assessment systems is that it sets aside thinking about what it really means to educate the whole child.

V. Leadership in conflict situations

A. Dr. Lytle distributed two articles:

- 1. Kegan, R. & L.L. Lahey (November 2001) The real reason people won't change. *Harvard Business Review*, R0110E.
- 2. Sparks, D. (Summer 2002). Inner conflicts, inner strengths. *Journal of Staff Development*, pp. 66-71.

B. Why organizations don't change, and why people in organizations don't change (Robert Kagen)

- 1. One of Kagen's arguments is that the reason organizations do not make much progress is that people often have unexamined psychological commitments that get in the way of their behaving the way they know they should behave.
 - a. Dr. Lytle provided a personal example – self-censorship based on previous problems with expressing anger.
 - b. An extrapolation: why don't principals go in and observe teachers?
 - 1) In truth, when evaluating a teacher, I am evaluating myself. If I can not observe and provide genuinely useful feedback to the teacher, I am not doing my job.
 - c. We must always ask: What do I avoid that is actually part of the work I am supposed to be doing?
 - d. An example of case: three special education teachers who are not performing.
 - e. The point is not what the teachers are doing or not, but rather what the leader (principal) is not doing in relation to them.
- 2. The deep question about teaching people to lead is at the heart of this.
 - a. Thinking about what we avoid is the window into how we grow personally.

**APPENDIX D
Superintendent Work Tasks and Functions Survey**

Instructions: Please mark each one of the Work Tasks and Functions below with an "X" that best describes your level of involvement with each one. Please complete both the front and back of the survey. Please refer to the levels below for the percentage of involvement.

- Level 1 – Supervise The superintendent has only 25% direct involvement.
- Level 2 – Coordinate The superintendent has 50% direct involvement.
- Level 3 – Coordinate The superintendent has 75% direct involvement.
- Level 4 – Do It All The superintendent performs the entire task at 100%.

Superintendent Managerial Grid for the Average District				
Work Tasks / Functions	Level 1 Supervise 25%	Level 2 Coordinate 50%	Level 3 Coordinate 75%	Level 4 Do All 100%
Financial Management				
1. Fiscal Planning				
2. Fiscal Management				
3. Budgeting/Forecasting/Demographics				
4. Accounting/Cash Management				
5. Purchasing/Contracts				
6. Inventory Management				
7. Materials Distribution				
8. Risk Management				
9. Salary/Wage Management				
10. Worker's Compensation				
Facility Management				
11. Replacement				
12. Maintenance				
13. Retrofit				
14. Technology				
15. Equipment				
Personnel Management				
16. Needs Assessment				
17. Recruitment				
18. Evaluation				
19. Induction				
20. Staff Development				
21. Record Keeping				
22. Payroll				
23. Fringe Benefits				
24. Safety/Environment				
25. Negotiations/Contract Management				
26. Grievance Management				

Please Continue On Back

