

**Westside Community Schools  
Board of Education / Senior Leadership Workshop**

**August 18-19, 2016  
Lied Lodge - NE City**

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The following document outlines our discussions at our recent retreat in Nebraska City. I want to capture our dialogue, interactions, and how we plan to move forward together as a team of ten. It will serve as the minutes of the retreat.

Blane McCann, Superintendent  
Westside Community Schools

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**Attendance at the Board of Education / Senior Leadership Workshop:** Blane McCann, Mark Weichel, Enid Schonewise, Bob Zagozda, Brandi Petersen, David Williams, Beth Morrissette, Dana Blakely, Kris Karnes, Adam Yale.

**Board/Senior Leadership Beliefs:** The BOE and administrative staff discussed our common beliefs with the following beliefs emerging from the discussion.

- Belief One: All students can learn by embracing individual needs and maximizing the unique potential of each student.
- Belief Two: The role and specific tasks of the BOE and senior leadership are to create the conditions and to implement structures where student achievement and performance are priorities, reducing extraneous noise that creates distraction for the system.
- Belief Three: By holding the superintendent accountable, the BOE creates an environment where he may focus on student achievement because the BOE quiets the noise and creates an environment for success of all students and staff.
- Belief Four: Trust is critical to the day-to-day work of the BOE and senior leadership. It is achieved by presuming good intentions by all, aligning our thinking that lead to consensus, and must extend outside of work.

The group agreed that all ten Superintendent / Board Operating Protocols must be followed to build and maintain trust between and among team members. "No surprises" and "Direct communication" were most important. Other communication strategies and tools that were discussed and are being (or are already) implemented include:

- Master District calendar
- 3 on 3 BOE meetings
- 2 on 2 meetings with Superintendent
- Quarterly talking points
- Key communicator advisory boards
- Quarterly big idea meetings
- Social media presence

Discussed different roles for Board members and Superintendent to ensure the following:

- On-going professional learning that is focused on collaborative inquiry into teaching and learning
- An infrastructure within the school and district that supports collaboration, innovation, and research
- Strong leadership at all levels of the system to guide and protect the work
- Clear district goals to improve student learning
- High levels of engagement with parents and community
- Extensive use of data to inform and monitor improvement efforts.

### **BOE Protocols**

People agreed that all protocols were very important to the success of the BOE and Superintendent relationship and, ultimately, the success of the district. We examined BOE actions and behaviors and what protocols led to positive interactions and assisted in building trust between and among BOE members and the superintendent, including:

- Communication
- Governance
- Trust
- Leadership
- Student Achievement

We discussed that we must always presume good intentions of our colleagues, demonstrate mutual understanding (inquiry & advocacy) leading to BOE consensus as to the direction and goals of the district, be present at BOE meetings, school activities and community events. The group was in agreement that the following would be reviewed quarterly to help maintain trust, stability, compassion and hope for our group of 10:

- Accountable to protocols
- Proactive actions to follow protocols
- BOE President's role as spokesperson
- In the moment / Be present in your work
- Personal conversation with colleagues



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Kris Karnes, Board Secretary