

## Chapter III Superintendents

*SECTION A. - Board-Superintendent Relationship* The strength of the school program lies in the superintendent's skill and the trust and understanding that exists between the superintendent and the school board. Harmonious relations are enhanced by a clear understanding concerning the functions of the superintendent and the board. As the school board makes policies and the superintendent implements them, communications between these two must be thorough.

Harmony establishes an atmosphere in which free discussions are encouraged, and the adoption of defensive positions, difficult to abandon, is discouraged. Honest differences of opinion, however, must be openly acknowledged and constant efforts should be made to conduct the business of the district in ways that will not emphasize those differences or lead to antagonism. Both the superintendent and the board need to give credit where credit is due and, when necessary, to admit errors.

### *SECTION B. - Expectations Placed on the Superintendent*

It is equally important in a successful board-superintendent relationship for both parties to know what is expected of the superintendent. It is then fair that a board would expect that the superintendent will:

1. Operate in a fair, open, and ethical manner at all times.
2. Work with board members on an equal basis and not show undue preference to individual members of the board.
3. Strictly enforce the policies set forth by the board and operate within the established procedure.
4. Keep the board fully informed on all matters of its concern.
5. Interpret accurately to the public the needs of the school system.
6. Work toward the improvement of the instructional program and staff relations.
7. At board meetings, avoid unexpected or surprise issues, topics, and areas of action so the board can have adequate time to respond after being fully advised of all the facts.
8. Operate the system in a fiscally sound manner.
9. Support board decisions at all times.
10. Evaluate the staff on a regular basis and in a fair and objective manner.
11. Keep the board advised of changes, innovations, and trends in education that might be applicable to the system.
12. Function as the board's chief executive officer.

### *SECTION C. - Critical Period in Board-Superintendent Relationship*

The first few weeks following the February school board election usually is a critical period in the board-superintendent relationship. The superintendent is placed in a position of providing orientation and training for the newly elected member(s). It is a delicate matter for the superintendent to define roles for these new members. Also, this time of the year is hectic, to say the least, as far as the operation of the school district is concerned. This is the time that staff relations can be somewhat strained with personnel evaluations and disagreements over budgetary matters.

Immediately following an election can be a frustrating time for the newly elected board member as well. Normally, new candidates do not know a great deal about the operation of the school district. Most successful candidates feel that they have received some kind of mandate, via the election, from the school patrons. In attempting to zero in on problems, they are often bombarded with reasons why certain things cannot be done. . They are often unfamiliar with the manner in which the board operates and if they demand deviation from that mode of operation problems will be inevitable. Thus, the members of the board, both new and returning, are encouraged to meet frequently with the superintendent during this period to assure open communication and continued efficient operation.