

Minnetonka Public Schools School Board Training Session  
Saturday, January 8, 2022

Background

This session will draw on materials prepared for Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) New School Board Members Training; content drawn from my work teaching graduate school and preparing and mentoring educational leaders through the University of Minnesota and University of St. Thomas; and concepts and principles developed and used for school board training by *Lovett Leadership LLC*.

Materials:

Attached are:

- Agenda and objectives
- Brief bio of facilitator
- “*Levels of authority affecting public preschool, elementary and secondary schools*”
- “*Building a strong school board/superintendent relationship*”

Other materials:

- Information on Minnesota laws pertaining to data practices and the open meeting law will be provided at the training session, after final review by attorney Greg Madsen.

Objectives for board session on January 8, 2022

- Understand the importance of organization mission and individual purpose.
- Understand the role of a school board and school board members under different levels of authority.
- Distinguish between board member roles as *Trustees vs. Delegates*, and develop a framework for respectful board discussions and decisions.
- Build communication skills and establish trust for Board/Superintendent work and performance
- Gain understanding to assure compliance with *Minnesota Open Meeting Law* and *Minnesota Data Practices Act*

## Outline of Training

### **Topic 1: Role and Purpose**

- Understand the importance of organization mission and individual purpose.

Beginning with reflections on **why** you are serving, we will consider the **role of the school board through two frameworks.**

For all board members, we will ask you to reflect and share:

- Why did you decide to serve on the school board?
- What do you think you have to offer that will help the board successfully serve students and the community?

Especially for experienced board members:

- What do you believe your board has been doing well?
- What are specific areas where you see opportunities as a board to learn and improve?

### **Topic 2: Levels of Authority (see attached document; please read in advance)**

- Understand the role of a school board and school board members under different levels of authority.

Source: Lovett, Michael J. and Martin, James K, (2022) “Levels of authority affecting public preschool, elementary and secondary schools”

### **Topic 3: Trustee or Delegate**

- Distinguish between board member roles as *Trustees vs. Delegates* and develop a framework for respectful board discussions and decisions.

**Delegate** board member: A board member who behaves politically in an effort to satisfy personal or pressure group interests.

**Trustee** Board member: normative role characterization that is the antithesis of a delegate board member; prescribes that board members act objectively and rationally serving broad public interest.

Source: Kowalski, T. (2013).” *The School Superintendent: Theory, Practice and Cases*”(3rd ed.)

**Topic 4: The Six C's (see attached document; please read in advance)**

- Build communication skills and establish trust for Board/Superintendent work and performance

Cohesiveness

Communication

Community

Conduct

Compliance

Compassion

*Source: Lovett, Michael and Kimball, George (2017) "Building a strong school board/superintendent relationship," Minnesota School Board Association.*

**Topic 5: Key provisions of Minnesota Law**

- Gain understanding to assure compliance with Minnesota Open Meeting Law and the Minnesota Data Practices Act

This topic will be cooperatively addressed with BWP and Associates.

Summary and Next Steps

## Facilitator Biography

### **Bio for Dr. Michael J. Lovett**

*(updated January 2022)*

From 2008 through 2017, **Dr. Lovett** was superintendent of the White Bear Lake Public Schools in Minnesota, after serving as assistant superintendent with the Minnetonka Public Schools from 1988 to 2008. Between 1970 and 1988, he was a public school teacher in New York, an administrator at school site and district levels in Minnesota, and in a leadership role at the Minnesota Department of Education.

For more than 40 years, he has taught graduate level courses as an adjunct faculty in educational leadership and policy at Minnesota universities. Areas of teaching experience include human resources; school finance; strategic planning; research design, analysis and critique; and superintendency.

During nearly five decades he has presented on a educational topics to Minnesota and National conferences; traveled internationally to Asia, Africa, and Europe for education and nonprofit partnerships; is the author of journal articles on educational finance and law; published a book and video series on teacher retention; an essay for an international text on leadership and administrative support of inclusion; and since 1999 has been a regular and extensive contributor to national publications on education.

Since his retirement from full time work in 2017 he has expanded teaching at the graduate level, currently serving as adjunct faculty at both the University of Minnesota and University of St. Thomas; provides both pro-bono and fee-based strategic leadership mentoring and management consulting to educational and nonprofit leaders through *Lovett Leadership LLC*; and is active on several nonprofit boards.

Dr. Lovett earned his B.A. in History from Carleton College, Northfield, MN, in 1970, also attending Doshisha University in Japan in 1969; and M.A. (1973) and Ph.D. (1979) degrees in Educational Leadership and Policy from the University of Minnesota.

For more detail please see <https://www.linkedin.com/in/michael-lovett-phd/>