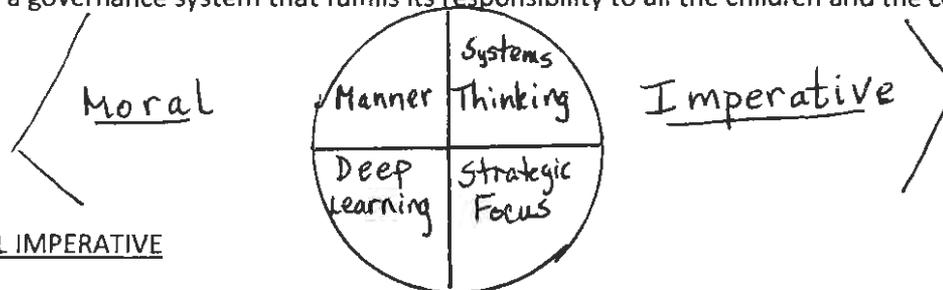


Overview of The Governance Core by Davis Campbell & Michael Fullan

“Our vision is of a governance system, school board and superintendent working together as a cohesive, unified team with a common vision driven by shared moral imperative. This is a dynamic, powerful role for school boards. It assumes that governance is a basic function of the district, an integral part of the system, setting the direction of the district, assuring the achievement of strategic goals and the moral imperative, holding the district accountable, and providing leadership to the community. Most important, it is a governance system that fulfills its responsibility to all the children and the community it serves.” P.2



The underlined section below is the MORAL IMPERATIVE we created to use in making policy decisions as we set the direction of the district.

Our Unity of Purpose

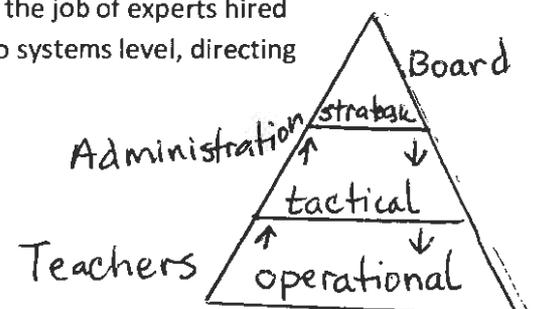
We work as a cohesive Governance Team through discussions, actions and decisions that are thoughtful, respectful and sensitive. We support one another in and away from the Board Room through active listening, vulnerability and honesty. We make policy decisions that ensure equitable support to increase student achievement and foster social, emotional and physical well-being for all students.

“A shared moral imperative- a relentless commitment to the learning of all students, no exceptions- must drive the work of the board and in individual and collective action...it is geared to real, concrete educational goals for children. It is not so much a philosophical belief as it is a commitment to shared fundamental actions...” p. 18, 19

Q: How do we, as a board, consciously implement moral imperative into our decision-making?

2) SYSTEMS THINKING

“Governance is a systems job. High-performing trustees with a governance mindset are first and foremost systems thinkers. ...trustees need to be in the helicopter making system decisions, not on the line fighting fires. (Putting out fires) is not the job of governance: that is the job of experts hired specifically to handle the problem. (Trustees must) operate at the macro systems level, directing resources...”



“A systems thinker understands that everything is connected to everything else. The goal of systems thinking is to take those actions that will most positively influence the system as a whole.” p.34, 35

“ ...The only way you can gain both a clearer view of reality and some perspective on the bigger picture is by distancing yourself from the fray” (Heifetz & Linsky ,2002)

Q: As a board of trustees, how do we maintain context and perspective in our governance work?

3) STRATEGIC FOCUS

“ Governance is a strategic job. Highly effective trustees have a strategic focus. They understand that governance requires a broad, systemic view of the district, focusing on the impact of long term strategic goals, the moral imperative, and organizational and fiscal health. Understanding this different context of issues, strategic vs. operational or tactical is an extremely important dimension of governance.

Governance is where the moral imperative and strategic goals live.

Focus, focus, focus! It is essential that each trustee understand that the value of the board is strategic oversight and support the board provides. Questions of implementation should be limited to scheduled oversight reviews or essential discussions, lest administrative issues dominate the board and push out the strategic work of the board....keeping the organization on track for achieving its strategic goals.”
p.38, 39

Q:What are our strategic goals and how, when implemented, will they embody our moral imperative?

4) DEEP LEARNING

“Governance is a job that requires a deep understanding of the issues underlying the moral imperative, system wide coherence, and strategic goals. Trustees with a governance mindset are committed to making decisions based on quality information, evidence and data.

Part of the challenge for a trustee is that no one can know everything. The answer lies in strategic focus. Deep learning should focus on the few, maybe three or four major strategic goals tied to the moral imperative. And for those priorities, the superintendent and trustees should be locked into an ongoing review and reporting system, so both governance and administration are on the same track. Being informed, focused and engaged is a mutual endeavor of trustees and superintendents. (This focus on a few strategic goals in which the governance team are actively engaged, gives the trustees a deep learning and understanding to share in the community.)

For trustees with a governance mindset, their greatest strength is their deep understanding of the purpose and work of the district.”p.41 - 46

Q: On which three or four major goals will we strategically focus upon with deep learning and engagement?

5) MANNER

“One of the most important and often least appreciated traits of highly effective trustees is management of their public behavior. Trustees with a governance mindset mind their manner. They understand that working toward common ground and strategic goals with other elected or appointed trustees in a collaborative setting requires patience, understanding, respect, common courtesy, and, most important, a sense of humor. Above all, they are very conscious of modeling the behavior they want the children in the district to emulate.

Trustees with a governance mindset tend to be very self-aware of their own manner and personal style of communication. They understand that the only behavior they can control is their own.

...the importance of empathic listening...listening with intent to understand. I mean seeking first to understand, to really understand.” P. 46 – 52

Q: How am I perceived in my trustee role? Am I an empathic listener?

If the board continually reminds the public of its overall strategic vision and ties each decision to its vision, it will eliminate widespread discontent. (unknown)