

Professional Development Activity on Roles and Responsibilities

This activity helps team members clarify their roles and responsibilities. It uses open-ended questions to encourage an honest and open discussion about who does what among team members.

Time Frame

This activity should take approximately sixty minutes.

Materials

The team needs a facilitator, a recorder, the list of questions, pens or pencils and paper, and a whiteboard and whiteboard markers (or easel, chart paper, and markers).

Process

After identifying a facilitator and a recorder—someone who will list responses on the whiteboard—the team should do the following.

1. As a team, review the following three questions.
 - ♦ What issues should the superintendent address without consulting the school board for its opinion or approval?
 - ♦ What issues or decisions should the school board entertain without the superintendent's input?
 - ♦ What issues require collaboration between the board and superintendent before any action is pursued?
2. Individually, each member should take ten minutes to respond to each question, noting responses he or she is comfortable sharing with the entire team.
3. Next, the facilitator should encourage members to share their responses with two to three neighboring team members. Members can ask questions to clarify but must not judge the other team members' responses as right or wrong.
4. The facilitator should then bring the team back together and invite responses to the first question. The recorder should list responses to the question so that the collection of responses is viewable by all.
5. The facilitator then leads a discussion on key points of commonality and disagreement. The team continues discussion until it finds a level of consensus. If key points of disagreement remain, plan additional discussion for another time until the team reaches consensus regarding the question and disagreement.
6. The facilitator then addresses the second and third questions individually, using a similar format for sharing and clarifying responses among team members. Again, the recorder should list responses to the second and third questions so that the collection of responses is viewable by all.

7. The facilitator concludes the activity by asking if there is anything else to discuss about the overall questions and responses that team members did not have the opportunity to share.
8. The recorder, at his or her earliest convenience, formalizes the final agreements by typing them into a document and distributing them to team members. This will serve as an important reminder of the agreements, which the team can easily utilize as needed.

Results

Participation in this activity encourages honest and open discussion and consensus about school board–superintendent team members’ varying roles and responsibilities.