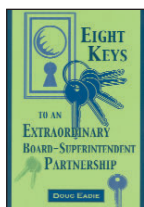


Eight Keys to an Extraordinary Board-Superintendent Partnership

Reviewed by Marc Space

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At a time when superintendent tenure seems to be shortening and fewer school administrators are willing to make the quantum leap to the superintendency, Doug Eadie's book, *Eight Keys to an Extraordinary Board-Superintendent Partnership*, serves as a guide for new and emerging superintendents to succeed in the volatile era.

The key, as revealed in the book's title, is partnership.

Eadie, a veteran consultant, points to the days when a superintendent could control the board of education and limit its members to policymaking and budget approval. Those days are history. With this shift in the board's role, Eadie proposes the superintendent move from a role of adviser to that of partner.

The primary focus of his work is on the structure of governance. As the knowledgeable partner to the board of education, the superintendent's main role in relationship to the board is in developing a governing design. Citing a vision statement as an example, the author explains that the work of governance would examine not only the traditional act of adopting a statement but exploring the process of how it will be applied. The same principle could be applied to the district's budget and any policy areas that all too often require simple board approval.

Eadie further advocates that board members be empowered by serving on standing committees. Such experience can broaden the knowledge of board members and give them ownership in the direction of the district.

While aspects and examples in Eadie's book seem to be based on large district dynamics, the overall features of this work are relevant even for superintendents who have experienced an unsuccessful tenure and are seeking a second chance in the superintendency.

(*Eight Keys to an Extraordinary Board-Superintendent Partnership* by Doug Eadie, Scarecrow Press, Lanham, Md., 2003, 73 pp., \$21.95 softcover)