

Session 4 Executive Limitations Policies

Executive Limitations Definition:

Establishes the boundaries within which the Superintendent and staff may freely operate. These limiting policies identify all conditions which are unacceptable. They are written in the negative.

Answers the question:

What are we concerned about?

Areas:

- Budgeting
- Financial Condition
- Asset Protection
- Being an informed Board
- Compensation and Benefits
- Emergency Superintendent Succession
- Treatment of Staff
- Treatment of Students, Parents, Community

Notes:

A very few, brief Board policies can govern an extensive amount of detail. This enhances Board accountability because it saves the Board from an impossible task.

Executive Limitations are based on *Board values*, not on the trustworthiness of the Superintendent.

Executive Limitations state clearly what the Board would find unacceptable. They are stated in the negative.

Executive Limitations are written to the level of specificity whereby any reasonable interpretation of the policy is acceptable.

Sample Areas:

Policy Title: General Executive Constraint

The Superintendent shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision or organizational circumstance which is either imprudent, unlawful, or in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics.

1. Treatment of students, parents and community

With respect to interactions with students, parents and community or those applying to be students, parents and community the Superintendent shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions which are unsafe, disrespectful, unduly undignified, unnecessarily intrusive or which fail to provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy.

2. Staff treatment

With respect to treatment of paid staff and volunteers, the Superintendent may not cause or allow conditions which are unfair or undignified.

3. Financial planning and budgeting

Budgeting any fiscal year of the remaining part of any fiscal year shall not deviate materially from board *ends* priorities, risk fiscal jeopardy, or fail to be derived from a multi-year plan.

4. Financial condition and activities

With respect to the actual, ongoing condition of the organization's financial health, the Superintendent may not cause or allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or a material deviation of actual expenditures from board priorities set in *ends* policies.

5. Emergency Superintendent succession

In order to protect the board from sudden loss of Superintendent services, the chief executive may not have fewer than two other executives familiar with board and Superintendent issues and processes.

6. Asset protection

The Superintendent may not allow assets to be unprotected, inadequately maintained nor unnecessarily risked.

7. Compensation and benefits

With respect to employment, compensation, and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers, and volunteers, the Superintendent may not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity or public image.

8. Communication and support to the board

With respect to providing information and counsel to the board, the Superintendent may not permit the board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.