The Effective Board Member

The board member who works best is one who knows what the job is. In describing the role of the effective board member, at least the following should be considered:

1. The board member gives primary allegiance to the children and to providing for all students to achieve through establishing an effective educational program— and exhibits that allegiance by focusing the majority of time and effort on the establishment and oversight of DISTRICT goals.

2. The board member is elected to represent all the people of the school district—avoiding special interest representation and personal agendas.

3. The board member recognizes that only the corporate board has authority and that board action is corporate action. Once a decision has been made, it becomes the board’s decision, and individual action against the decision is not only inappropriate, but also damaging to the forward movement of the district and the board’s credibility.

4. The board member knows the value of thoughtfully conceived written policies for district operation.

5. The board member leaves the execution of policy to the superintendent and views the superintendent as a professional adviser on all matters affecting the district.

6. The board member insists upon having a community that is fully informed about its schools and its school board.

7. The board member uses established channels of communication, and promotes those channels in conversation with the public.

8. The board member utilizes facts in deciding between alternative courses of action.

9. The board member recognizes that certain decisions are the prerogative of the professional staff and sustains decisions made by the professional in such instances.

10. The board member recognizes that staff members and students (of appropriate age) should have an opportunity to give input to the full board concerning policies and programs that affect them.