

# Communication / Boardsmanship / Relationship with Superintendent

## **How to Listen (to a parent, community member, or staff member) as a Board Member:** **(things to do during every conversation)**

1. Never make promises. You are only one board member, not the whole Board.
2. Listen without gossiping or criticizing the school.
3. Simultaneously make clear your support for the superintendent.
4. A staff member with a complaint must be directed to use the chain of command.
5. In order to be part of a united team (board-supt.) with strong collaboration and mutual trust, each coming from their respective roles – any conversation about school involving negativity (besides directing the person to the appropriate administrative person) should be followed up by contacting the superintendent about the conversation.

## **Tips when Cornered By the Gossiper....**

“I understand why you’re concerned.”

“Out of respect for all of the people involved. I can't give specifics but everyone is trying their best.”

“We need to get our strategy right before we talk about it in public.

“It's balance between having information and respecting people's privacy.

“How's your kid doing in basketball (or softball, baseball, volleyball, football, forensics, etc.)?”

## **Tips when Somebody Comes To You with a Problem....**

You say, “I'm really sorry. Thank you for calling me.”

“Have you reported it by following our protocols?”

“I know it can come across as being blown off, but reporting it like this is the best way for us.

“You understand the full nature of the problem. If we don't follow through with the process, we won't have a chance of keeping the kid's safe and holding the right people accountable.

“Feel free to check back with me by x date. It's my responsibility to do best.”

## **How the superintendent wants board members to communicate with him....**

-professionally, positively, and respectfully.