When Good Boards Go Bad

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Presented by

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Outline

- The “Ill” Board Member
  - Symptoms
  - Impacts
  - Causes
  - Cure
There's no hyphen in "micromanager."
Symptoms

- Micromanaging
- Single Issue Obsession
- Illegal practices
- Lack of civility
- Lack of boundaries
- Mired in details
Impact

- Lack of trust
- Inefficiency
- Acrimony
- Gridlock
- Loss of public confidence
- Poor role model
Causes

- Failure to understand respective roles
- Personality clashes
- Partisanship
- Weak leadership
  - Chair
  - Superintendent
Causes (cont.)

- Lack of board...
  - Standards
  - Measures
  - Outcomes
- Accountability (lack thereof)
- Agenda control (too rigid or too loose)
Remedies

- Preventative Care:
  - Education about roles
  - Leadership selection
  - Standards, measures, and outcomes
  - Code of ethics
2. Treatment:

- Board manages the issue
- Containment, not isolation
- Re-education
- Progressive measures
Authority of Board members

“Members of the board have authority only when acting as a board legally in session. The board shall not be bound in any way by any action or statement on the part of any individual board member except when such statement or action is authorized by specific instructions of the board” (20-A MRSA § 1001).
## Role of the Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Board (20–A M.R.S.A. §1001)</th>
<th>Superintendent (20–A M.R.S.A. §1055)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Adoption of policy</td>
<td>- Employ and supervise teachers, principals, all staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Selection of superintendent</td>
<td>- Implementation and enforcement of board policy</td>
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<td>- Student suspension/expulsion</td>
<td>- Business management of school district</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Adjudication/Investigation</td>
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<td>- Management of school property</td>
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Role of the Board

- Instances where school board members are closely involved
  - Student discipline
  - Employee Grievances
  - Some complaint procedures—investigation/adjudication

- Inappropriate involvement in other matters can compromise these highly important roles later on.