

W3 Collaboration Resource Guide

(DeForest #2)

A process or activity that has contributed to the effectiveness of our collaborative efforts is one we refer to as: Behave as a Principled System, emphasizing integrity, engagement and long term relationships.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS: *A brief description of the steps involved in describing what took place.*

- Commit to Principled Behavior:
 - Board engages in training with Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People
 - District structures its own Masters Program including the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People course to encourage all employees to go through the training
 - District trains several internal facilitators to continue the work
 - District puts all administrators through Covey's Four Roles of Leadership training

- Commit to Board/Administration Integrity:
 - Board engages in training with Policy Governance operating model and incorporates the practices.
 - Board focuses its work on policy development and monitoring of articulated preferred outcomes rather than addressing operational means of the administration.
 - Board derives its preferred outcomes and district priorities from the large scale public engagement in the Future Search process.
 - Board directs administration to ensure all district activities and practices are aligned and supportive of the board policies and articulated preferred outcomes.

- Commit to Engagement Processes throughout System:
 - Train all parties engaged in collective bargaining process in consensus bargaining and utilize this method to develop all successor contracts.
 - Utilize a Future Search process to engage the broader community in establishing a common vision for schools, a mutual set of values, and shared priorities.
 - Train individuals – including all administrators – in group process and facilitation skills to impact the effectiveness with which the District engages stakeholders for particular purposes.

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND: *What was the context or situation that prompted this to occur? How long has it been occurring?*

Broad scale change both inside and outside the District fueled unrest and dysfunction in the District at the Governance level, leaving the District vulnerable to limited progress, irregular conduct based on prevailing special interests and lack of continuity in practices. The Board made a conscious decision to take a more deliberate role in focusing the District's energy and behaving in more credible, predictable and accountable ways. Training in the 7 Habits at the Board level and throughout the district began nearly 12 years ago and continues today. The Board adopted Policy Governance, a coherent system of

governance practices based upon principles and clear systems and processes of operation, over 10 years ago and continues in that model today. All Administrators were provided a year long course entitled, *The Leadership Development Series*, which included specific training in group facilitation and group problem solving skill development. It is broadly accepted that significant initiatives and change processes require active engagement from a broad representation of stakeholders through the system. It has become our “culture”.

HOW WAS THIS INITIATED? *Who got it started?*

Initially, formal training was provided by outside consultants in the areas of interest. Over the years the District has invested in a “train the trainer” model in order to build internal capacity and sustain initiatives valued by the system. The District currently has its own trained facilitators in areas including: 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, 4 Roles of Leadership, 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, Policy Governance, and Consensus Bargaining.

WHO WAS INVOLVED *(positions or titles, no names please)? Has this changed over time?*

The Board as a whole has been visibly involved. Several district trainers come from the Board.

DESIRED OUTCOME: *What did you hope to accomplish?*

The intention was to establish a more coherent, principle driven system in which all stakeholders felt engaged and personally accountable.

ACTUAL OUTCOME: *Did this meet your expectation? Exceed? Fall Short?*

Yes. The continuity of both the district administration and the Board of Education has been evident. The clarity of the Board’s priorities and the credibility that flows from these having been derived through a highly engaging process with the public is a benefit to administration and staff in designing their work.

SUSTAINABILITY: *To what degree have you been able to keep this practice active and useful? How have you done this?*

The Board has been steadfast in its commitment of both staff time and budget resources to implement and sustain these initiatives.

HELPFUL HINTS: *What are some lessons learned, do's and don'ts that might be of assistance to those who wish to do this?*

- Be clear about the “end in mind” (e.g. How do we want people here to behave and interact? How do we want the Board to function?)
- Build the internal capacity to sustain initiatives
- Train people at all levels throughout the district
- Get the Board directly involved
- Commit the necessary resources
- Don't “force” people to take any particular training, give them inducements

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: *Written materials, references and individuals who could serve as a resource to this process?*

Principle-Centered Leadership, Covey, Stephen R., New York, Simon and Schuster, 1991.

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Covey, Stephen R., New York, Free Press, 2004.

Board's that Make a Difference, Carver, John, Jossey Bass, 1999.

Reinventing Your Board: A Step-by-Step Guide to Implementing Policy Governance, Carver, John and Carver, Miriam. Jossey Bass, 2002.

WHO COULD BE CONTACTED IF OTHERS WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS? *Name and contact information*

Jon Bales, Superintendent, DeForest Area School District Ph: (608) 842-6577

Jan Berg, Board President, DeForest Area School District Board of Education Ph: (608) 842-6582