

Roles and Responsibilities in Vermont School Systems

A guidance document created by the Agency of Education

With [Act 46 of 2015](#), Vermont school districts have a unique opportunity to rethink district governance to ensure that systems are organized to support goals of quality and equity in student learning, and that district resources are used in the most effective way to support those goals. As part of forming a new district with the preferred structure, leadership should begin by reviewing roles and responsibilities of different members at different levels of the system. Below are examples drawn from best practice for use by Supervisory Boards.

Position:	Purpose:	Sample Indicators of Success:
School Board	<p>Governance. The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages the community to establish the mission and vision for the district. Uses the mission to guide decision-making. Sets performance goals for the district. Establishes local policies aligned across the Supervisory Union/District consistent with the minimum standards established by the State Board of Education. Employs and supervises the Superintendent (sole direct employee of the Board). Holds the Superintendent accountable for developing a strategy and education work plan to achieve District or SU goals. Negotiates contracts with employees. <p>School boards are accountable to voters, and subject to the laws and regulations of the state.</p>	<p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approves and monitors implementation of the district education plan and relevant performance indicators; Approves proposed budget and submit to voters; Monitors operations against the budget; Reviews and updates policies on a routine basis to reflect changing statutory and regulatory context, and evolving system's priorities; Determines capital project priorities; Reviews and provides feedback to Superintendent on an annual basis; Maintains a strong focus on outcomes and indicators of performance, as evidenced in meeting agendas and minutes; Approves school continuous improvement plans, and reviews regular performance reports as provided by Superintendent; and Meetings are typically well organized and efficiently run. Frequency should be based on the work the board needs to accomplish. Boards should set annual goals for themselves and all meetings should have an agenda built around those goals.

Position:	Purpose:	Sample Indicators of success:
Superintendent	<p>Operations. The Superintendent is the CEO of the system and responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational oversight of the school district. • Maintaining focus on the Board’s mission, and developing an education work plan to achieve the mission. • Ensuring quality of education and equity of opportunities within the system. • Management of services, programs and resources, for the quality of learning and for the implementation of the school board's annual district education plan and budget. • Making day-to-day decisions consistent with the policies set by the school board, and within statute and state regulations. • Employing all non-licensed staff, and recommends one licensed candidate to the Board for review and approval for other openings. • The creation of a robust comprehensive local assessment system, implemented system-wide, that assesses student progress toward proficiency-based graduation and captures evidence of learning with respect to all seven education goals outlined in the Education Quality Standards and standards adopted by the State Board of Education. • Preparation of reports, such as the district strategic plan, district budget and district fiscal and student learning performance reports that enable the School Board to evaluate implementation of their mission and progress towards their goals. <p>The Superintendent is accountable to the school board and to the state for operating within statute and regulations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions are made on behalf of and in service of school board policies and mission. • Superintendent engages in intentional leadership development within the system. • Superintendent supports conversations about students and outcomes through SU level staff and building leaders. • Meeting minutes reflect appropriate roles. • Faculty and staff can articulate mission/vision and focus on students, as well as what they are doing to advance learning and systems consistency across and within building(s). • Both students and educators engaged in continuous learning. • Leadership teams have clear expectations and accountability. • The District has a clear focus on professionalism and shared leadership.

Position:	Purpose:	Sample Indicators of success:
Principal	<p>Instructional Leadership. Principals are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serving as instructional leaders. • Maintaining a strong, safe and supportive school climate that is conducive to learning. • Lead day-to-day operations within the school. • Maintain fidelity to the supervisory union action plan, and make decisions with consideration for system priorities and initiatives. • Provide supervision and evaluation of staff, for the purpose of improving teaching and learning. • Use data to inform decision-making based upon what is best for students (as opposed to adults). • Articulates progress and the well-being of school and students to the school community. • Develop building specific policies and practices that support the educational mission of the school and district. <p>Principals are accountable to the Superintendent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistency across the school with respect to instruction, use of data, and expectations. • Intentional development of teacher leadership/leveraging of teaching expertise to improve instruction. • All educators receive timely, high quality feedback and support. • Climate indicators suggest strong positive school climate, and where data suggests needs, principal directs improvement efforts related to those needs. • Evidence of support for professional learning and collaboration, including use of meeting time for focus on improving teaching. • Principals invested in staying in their schools to engage in continuous improvement over time (low levels of turnover). • The school feels orderly and welcoming.

Position:	Purpose:	Sample Indicators of success:
Teachers	<p>Instructional development and delivery. Teachers are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining a strong, safe and supportive classroom climate that is conducive to learning. • Knowing expectations for student learning, and developing and implementing high-quality opportunities to learn that engage learners and move all students systematically towards ambitious goals. • Maintain fidelity to supervisory union action plan, and make decisions with consideration for system goals. • Use data to inform teaching and to make teaching responsive to individual needs (personalization); based upon what is best for students (as opposed to adults). <p>Teachers are accountable to the Superintendent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student survey data indicates students feel teachers are invested in their safety and learning. • Students indicate they feel challenged. • Student outcomes suggest continuous improvement and progress towards goals. • Teachers play a leadership role within schools and across schools, sharing expertise and providing mentoring in service of systems goals. • Teachers engage in ongoing professional collaboration around improving teaching and learning, both within schools and across schools in the system, and within grade levels and across grade levels. • Teachers are invested in staying in the school and working to make it strong.

Position:	Purpose:	Sample Indicators of success:
Local councils or advisory committees	<p>Building based councils or teams operate in an advisory capacity to the principal. They:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice to the principal regarding school policies. • Suggest, develop and support strategies for partnerships within the community. • Provide advice on ways to improve or maintain a positive climate within the school. • Serve as liaisons between the community and the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and community members have structured opportunities to provide feedback to the principal on a range of issues, including school climate and improvement initiatives. • Local council meets on a regular, scheduled basis with building leaders, as evident in minutes. • There are strong partnerships between the school and the surrounding community. • Community members attend school events.