

# Ensuring Superintendents are Ready to Meet Today's Challenges



Presentation to  
CABE/CAPSS Convention  
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# Presenters

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  - Superintendent of Schools, Vernon CT

*Please ask questions at  
anytime during the presentation*



# Introductions...

- Name
- District
- Position
- Why did you choose this session?



# Presentation Agenda

- Executive Leadership Skillsets
- District Context & Communications
- Board-Superintendent Relations
- Challenges facing districts today
- Superintendent Preparation Program



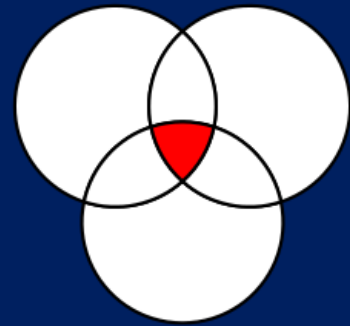
# Quiz Time!

1. How many Superintendent Openings occurred in the 2022-2023 school year?
2. What is the average tenure (number of years) of a School Superintendent in Connecticut?
3. What is one challenge facing Boards of Education today in Connecticut?



# Executive Leadership Skillsets

- Superintendents need leadership skills sets in the following areas:
  - Instructional Leadership
  - Managerial Leadership
  - Political Leadership
- There needs to be a balance of the three depending on the district context...
- Each decision area needs the other two...



*Adapted from Larry Cuban*

# Board-Superintendent Relations

“The school leadership team – school board and superintendent – is critical to the success of public education. Great things can happen when the elected and executive leadership of a school system are in agreement about goals and expectations. That requires candor and collaboration, and a shared commitment to the mission of ensuring that all children have access to a great education.”

-Thomas Gentzel, Executive Director, National School Board Association, and Daniel Domenech, Executive Director, American Association of School Administrators, 2014

# Board-Superintendent Relations

- Use the CAFE-CAPSS Governance Model as the foundation for Super-BOE Relations

[Final Copy 2016 of Governance Statement .pdf \(cabe.org\)](#)

- Build on the Governance Model by:
  - Engaging in Strategic Planning
  - Conducting Superintendent Evaluation
  - Completing Board Self-Evaluation

# Educational Leadership

*Findings from 2006 McREL Meta-Analysis –  
School District Leadership that Works  
(Waters and Marzano)*

- Finding 1: District-level leadership matters  
Found a statistically significant relationship (a positive correlation of .24) between district leadership and student achievement.

# Educational Leadership

- Finding 2: Effective superintendents focus their efforts on creating goal- oriented districts
  - 1. Collaborative goal-setting
  - 2. Non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction
  - 3. Board alignment and support of district goals
  - 4. Monitoring goals for achievement and instruction
  - 5. Use of resources to support achievement and instruction goals

# Educational Leadership

- Finding 3: Superintendent tenure is positively correlated with student achievement
  - Length of superintendent tenure in a district positively correlates to student achievement with positive effects seen as early as year two
- Defined Autonomy:

Superintendents set clear, non-negotiable goals for learning and instruction, yet provide school leadership teams with the responsibility and authority for determining how to meet those goals.

# Turn & Talk

- Which of these findings came as a surprise to you?



# District Challenges Today

- Recruiting & retaining good teachers
- Staffing shortages in all areas
- Strong, stable & supportive administrators
- Post-pandemic A-S-E student losses
- Unfunded mandates and initiatives
- Community support for schools
- Managing 'polarizing' societal issues
- Fiscal budget – Investing in our students

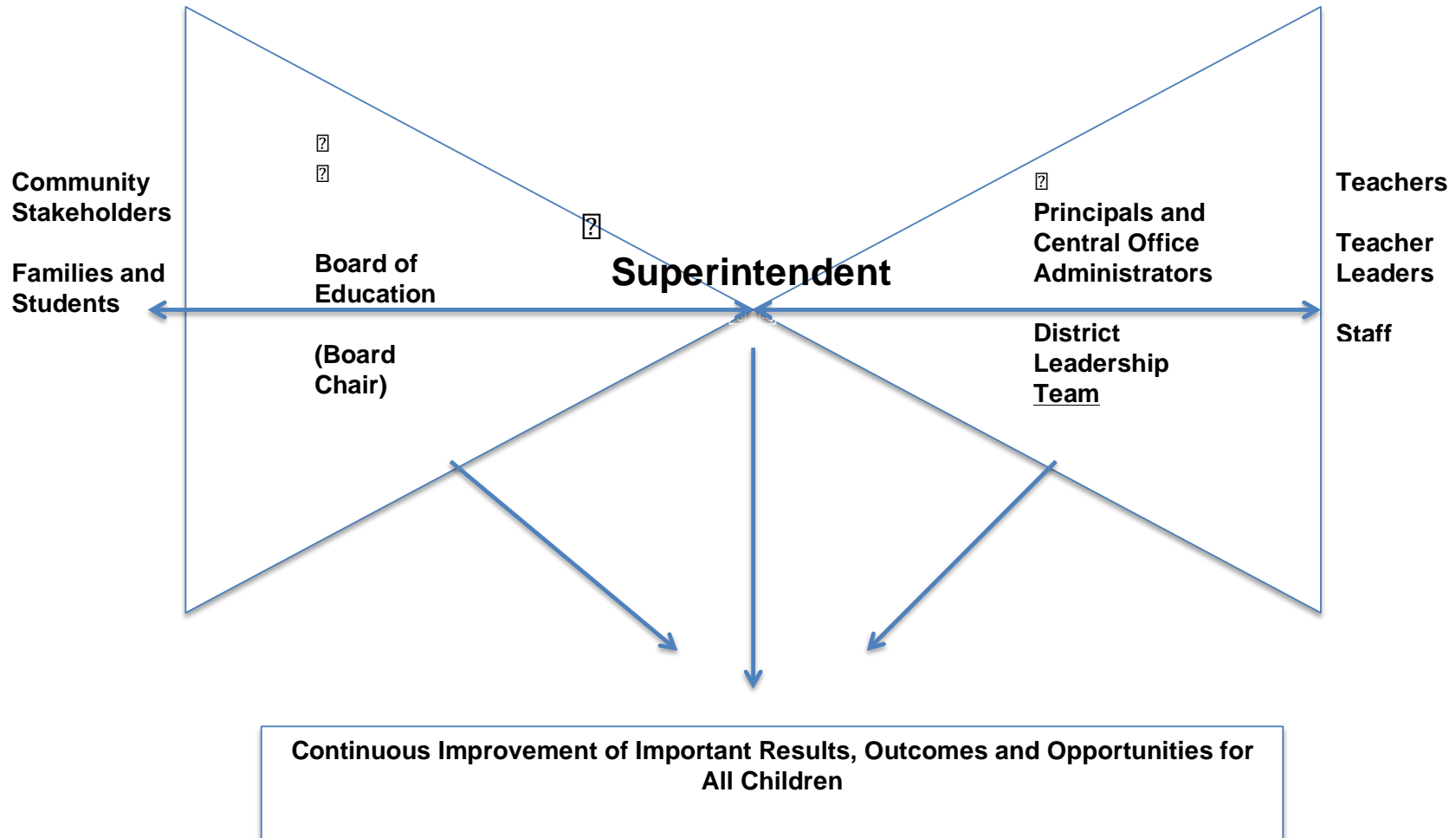
# Educational Leadership

- Effective superintendents create goal-oriented districts, define the conditions within which leaders and teachers can thrive, and develop systems that foster coherence.

*Source: <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/principal-perspective>*



# District Challenges Today



# Superintendent Preparation

## National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) District Leadership Standards 2018

- Standard 1: Mission, Vision and Improvement
- Standard 2: Ethics and Professional Norms
- Standard 3: Equity, Inclusiveness and Cultural Responsiveness
- Standard 4: Learning and Instruction
- Standard 5: Community and External Leadership
- Standard 6: Operations and Management
- Standard 7: Policy, Governance and Advocacy
- Standard 8: Internship

# Superintendent Preparation

- Internship in the Superintendency (partnership with CAPSS) – Full Year
- Pedagogy: Case studies, applied learning through the internship, best practices, research-based, based on national and state leadership standards.



# Superintendent Preparation

## Program Courses

- School District Leadership
- School District Policy, Politics, and Governance
- Data-Driven Decision Making for School District Improvement and Policy Development
- Financial and Human Resource Management in Education

# Turn & Talk

- What are qualities you are looking for in an effective Superintendent?



# Presentation Take-aways

- Use the CAFE-CAPSS Governance Model as a foundation of Board-Super Relationship
- Think: Strategic Planning to move the district forward in a purposeful way
- Effective Communications Plan for all stakeholders – students, teachers, staff, administrators, board, community
- Hire Superintendents who are well prepared and demonstrate effective Leadership

# Questions?

