



# **Boards' Leadership Functions and Responsibilities**

Mike M. Lekic, PhD

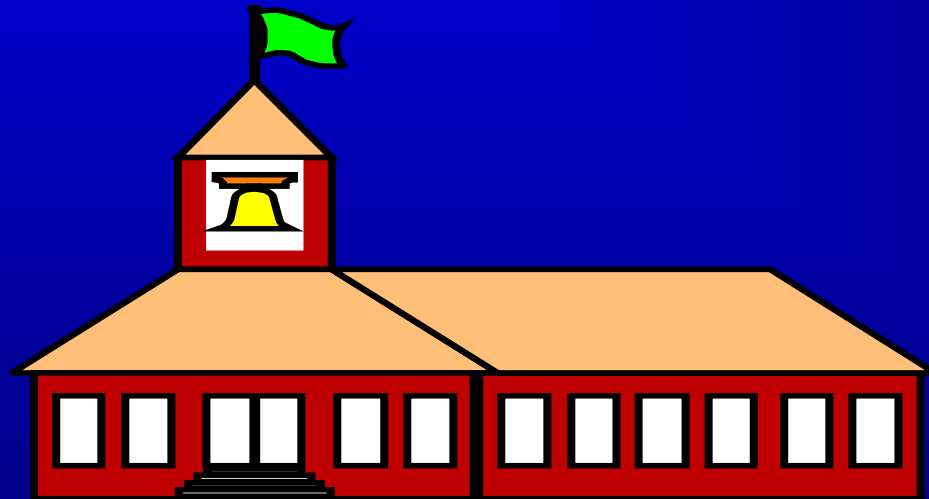
Associate Director of Education

General Conference

[lekicm@gc.adventist.org](mailto:lekicm@gc.adventist.org)

# Boardsmanship

- **Boardsmanship** is a term for the processes that effective boards use to govern a school.



# Governance and Administration

- ❑ In many countries, governance is confused with administration.
- ❑ Many people join a school board with the firm conviction that their primary responsibility is to administer.



# Board Member Orientation

- ❑ It is extremely important for all board members to receive adequate orientation, regarding the role of the trustees.
- ❑ When members of a governing board are unclear about their responsibilities, the built up frustration can cause them to loose interest and commitment to the task.



# Why Boardsmanship Training is Essential

- ☑ Effective leadership by the board and president inspires the school staff to give their best.
- ☑ Quality boards elicit support from the constituency.
- ☑ Effective boards ensure accountability.
- ☑ Quality boardsmanship is vital because our school system is essential to the church.



# Effective Boardsmanship

□ The following four roles are generally accepted as essential for effective boardsmanship.



□ Establish a vision (mission)



□ Establish and maintain an organizational structure that supports the vision.



□ Assess progress and ensure accountability to the constituency.



□ Be an advocate for students and Adventist education.



# Board Member Expectation

- ❑ You have been elected with the expectations that as a board member you will protect, nurture and enrich both the human and physical assets of the school.
- ❑ You are part of a select group who have the power to help shape the educational program of your school.



# Board Members' Mission

- Board members are entrusted with the mission and the delivery of Adventist Education. They must be guardians, dreamers, salesmen, recruiters, encouragers, marketers, innovators, and Christian professionals.



# Are Boards Leading or Managing

- When boards govern, are they leading or managing?
- Management has to do with “handling things,” while leadership means “going places.”



# Boards Should Avoid Extremes

- ❑ The boards should avoid the extremes of appearing too strong and thus becoming a watchdog, or being too weak, and thus becoming irrelevant.



# Successful Boards

- Best practices, research, and the literature agree that successful boards perform several critical roles: They must establish vision, find resources to support that vision, value accountability as they assess progress toward their vision, and be a credible advocate for the school they serve.



# 5 TO 10 YEARS PLAN

- If a college/university/school president/principal functions mainly by concentrating on managerial tasks, then the board must “take the lead” and assist him or her through visioning sessions, to establish a 5-10 year plan for the institution.



# Effective Leader

- An effective leader needs vision, the ability to motivate people, empathy, the willingness to listen, a strong moral compass, the ability to collaborate to achieve shared goals, and the determination to earn the respect of the team.

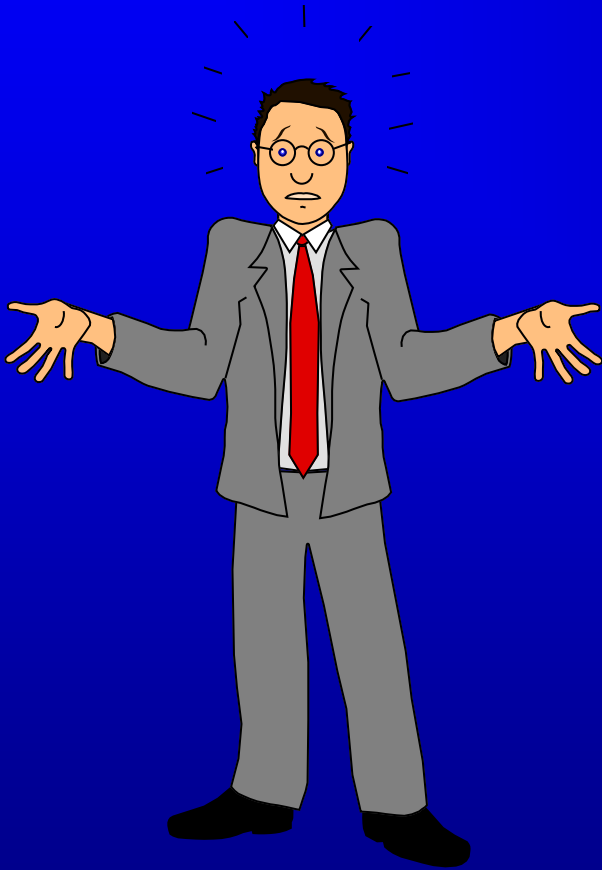


# Board Members!

- You are part of a select group who have the power and responsibility of shaping the educational program of your school.



# Board Service Not Always Easy



- Board Service can be both frustrating and rewarding.
- Frustrating for the long, unpaid hours searching for solutions.



# Rewarding Because Of---

- ❑ The satisfaction of watching students grow.
- ❑ Rejoicing in their achievements.
- ❑ Satisfaction knowing that you have been a part of making it happen.



# What Does a School Board Do?



- Implements policies and plans of the division/union/conference offices of education



# What Does a School Board Do?



- Develops policies of local concern
  - Use of school property
  - Purchasing procedures
  - Tuition and fees
  - Facilities, equipment, and maintenance
  - Dress code
  - Social behavior
  - Master planning



# What Does a School Board Do?



- Supports the school, administration, and teachers
  - Reviews teacher load to keep within policy
  - Encourages the staff in the development of a program to meet the needs of the students
  - Works with staff to implement school board policies



# What Does a School Board Do?



- Serves as the final authority in the dismissal of students, unless delegated to ADCOM
  - Meeting in executive session



# What Does a School Board Do?



- Maintains *official* minutes of all board meetings or sub-committees
  - A copy should be sent to the union and division offices regularly



# What Does a School Board Do?

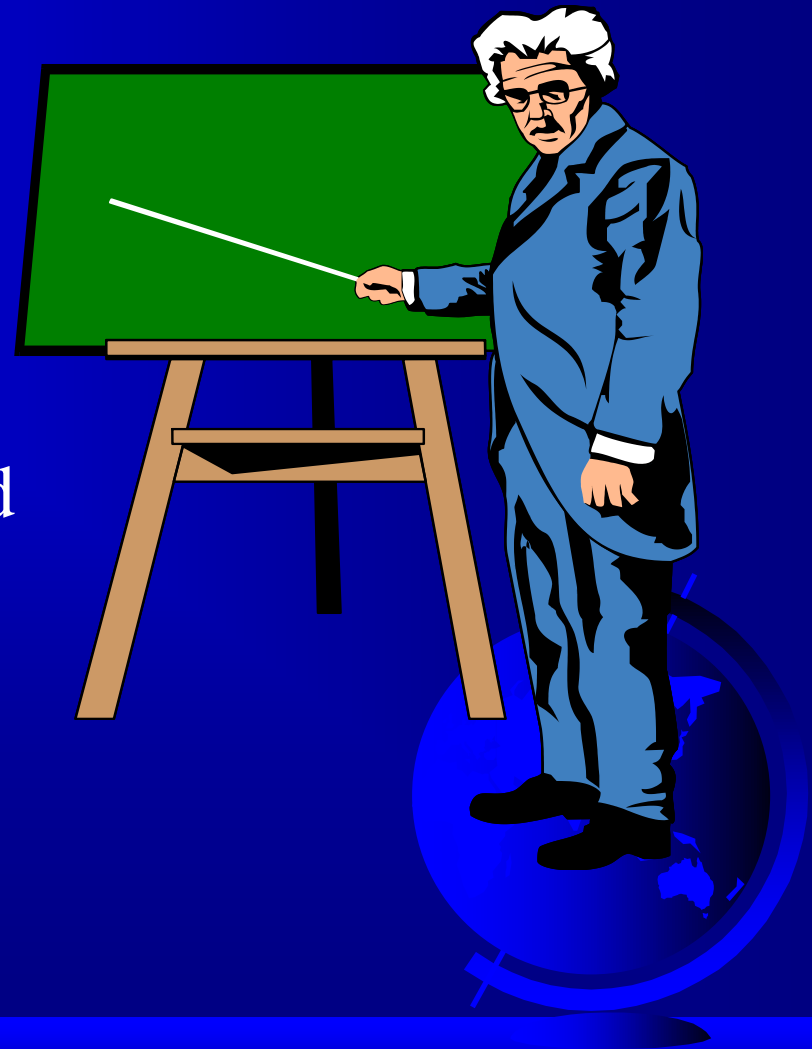


- Assumes responsibility for planning and adequately funding the school's budget
  - subsidy
  - tuition
  - donations
- Plans and funds school's capital projects



# What Does a School Board Do?

- ❑ Implements the adopted curricula based upon the Division Education Policy
- ❑ Participates in the preparation for the AAA and other evaluations



# What Does a Board Chair Do?



- ❑ Calls and presides over board meetings
- ❑ Assists the president in developing the agenda
- ❑ Follows parliamentary procedures
- ❑ Encourages discussion on the agenda
- ❑ Moves the board toward consensus votes



# What Does a Board Chair Do?



- ❑ Confers with the president/principal on the operation of the college/school
- ❑ Encourages board members to become acquainted with the school program, and
- ❑ To communicate with their constituents

# What Do Board Members *NOT* Do?

- ❑ Do not act or speak for the board without authorization
- ❑ Do not supervise the staff
- ❑ Do not talk about confidential board business outside of the board meeting



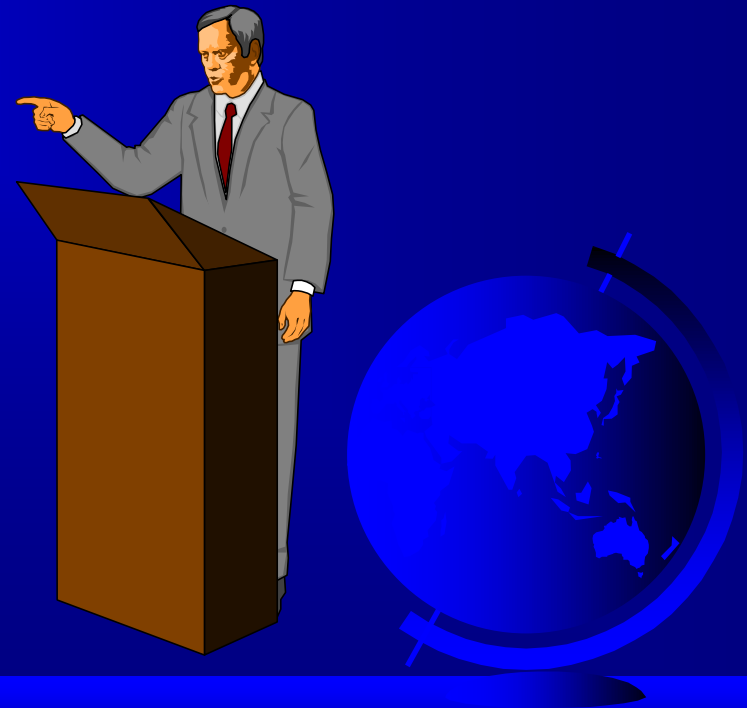
# Do NOT do—continued

- ❑ Do NOT manage day-to-day school operations.
- ❑ Do NOT forget to be considerate and diplomatic as well as guided by established policy in dealing with personnel issues.
- ❑ Do NOT vocalize conclusions or positions without first hearing all of the facts.



# Keys for a Successful Meeting

- Start on time
- End on time
- Move through the agenda efficiently
- Be a good listener
- Don't criticize the speaker - disagree with ideas.
- Remember that “the walls have ears”



# Discussion Question

- What is the name of the collection of all the education policies?
  - *The Book Nobody Sees*
  - *The Book Nobody Reads*
  - *The Book We Sometimes Wish We Had*
  - *The Union/Division Education Policy*



# Discussion Question

- ❑ Whenever there is discussion on a motion, two or three individuals dominate the conversation. **What should the chair do?**
  - ❑ Review parliamentary procedures with the entire board
  - ❑ Talk with them privately to ask for their cooperation
  - ❑ Become more assertive
  - ❑ Possibly, all of the above



# Discussion Question

You have had executive sessions the last two board meetings. Three days after each meeting someone not on the board has called you to talk about something discussed during the session. The information they volunteer is accurate.

**What should you do??**



# What To Do?

□ To the caller:

- Listen, but don't say anything. Do not verify or deny the information.
- Inform the caller that the information in executive session is confidential, therefore, he/she should not know about the matter and you are not free to discuss it with him/her.

□ To the board:

- Handle the matter privately if possible. Otherwise, discuss the breach of ethical principle in board meeting.
- Board members should be reminded that they could be personally liable for revealing confidential information outside the board room.



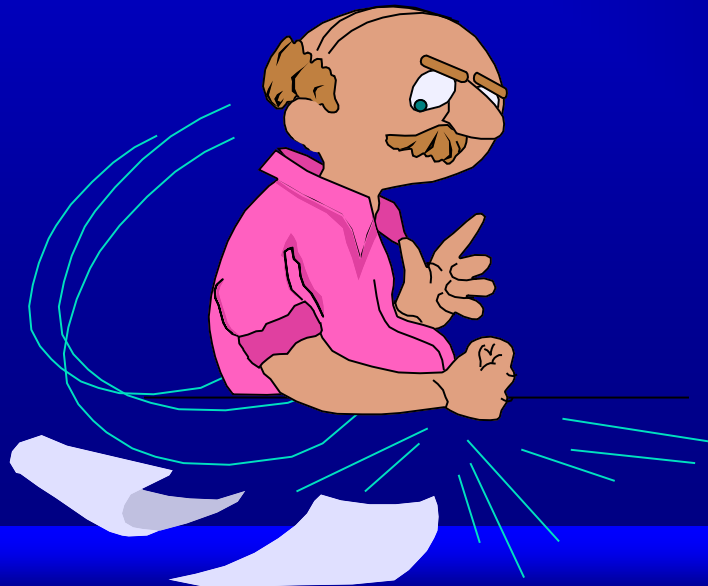
# Discussion Question

- Which of the following leadership styles would you like to be exhibited in board meetings?



# Authoritarian Style

- ❑ Leader dominates the discussion
- ❑ Gives orders as if the boss
- ❑ Many personal remarks
- ❑ Often tells the board what they ought to do



# Democratic Style

- ❑ Encourages discussion from all of the members
- ❑ Suggests alternatives to consider
- ❑ Encourages consensus within the group
- ❑ Moves the **group** toward a final decision



# Laissez Faire Style

- ❑ Minimal participation with others often “taking over” the meeting
- ❑ No suggestions for alternatives
- ❑ Usually does not use parliamentary procedures



# Review of Styles



☐ Authoritarian

☒ Democratic

☐ Laissez Faire



# Some Thoughts to Remember

- The school/college/university board is one of the most important components in providing a quality program
- Don't be afraid to ask for help from the Union/Division/ GC Education Departments
- Remember why we serve in the first place. It is to help youth find a personal relationship with their Savior, Jesus Christ



# Lets Review Some Basics

## A Board Member Should—

- ❑ Understand that the board sets the standards for the school through policy.
- ❑ Understand that board members do not manage the school on a day-to-day basis.
- ❑ Understand that the board makes decisions as a team and that individual members may not commit the board to any action.



# Review of the Basics—continued

## A Board Member should--

- Respect the right of other board members to have opinions and ideas that differ from yours.
- Recognize that decisions are made by a majority vote and should be supported by all board members.
- Make decisions only after all the facts are presented and discussed.



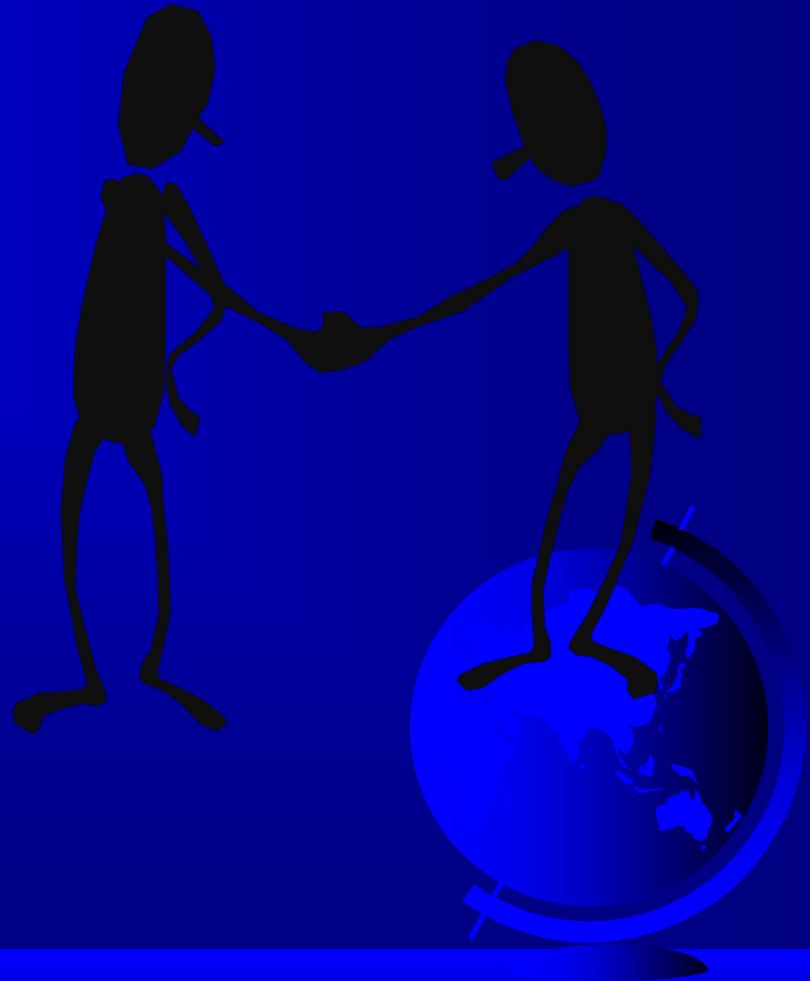
# A Board Member Should—

- ❑ Understand the proper chain of command and refer problems or complaints to the proper individuals.
- ❑ Recognize that the board only has authority to make decisions at official board meetings.
- ❑ Insist that all board and school business is ethical and honest.

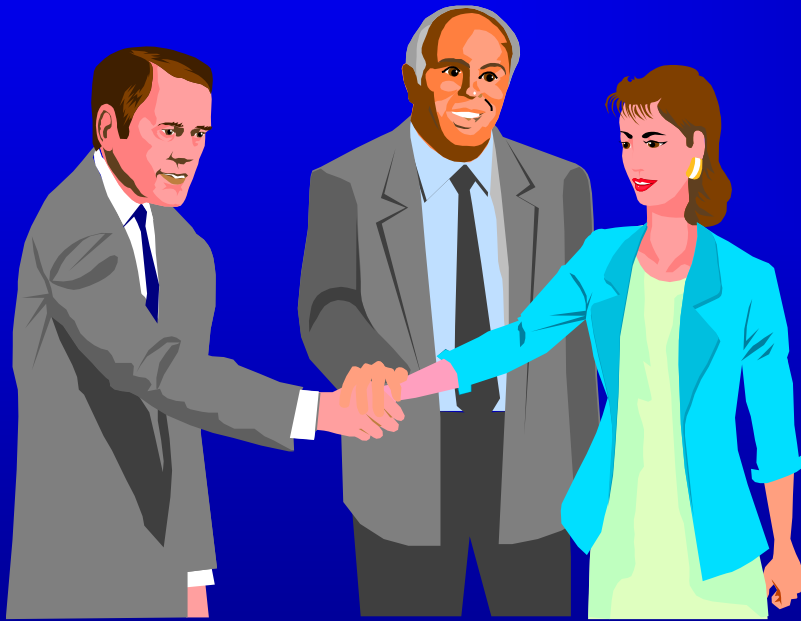


# A Board Member Should—

- ❑ Be open, fair and honest—no hidden agendas.
- ❑ Understand that you will receive information that is confidential and cannot be shared outside the board room.



# A Board Member Should—



- Recognize that the school's administrator and his/her team are the board's prime advisors.
- Refuse to use one's position for personal or family advantage or special privileges.



# A Board Member Should—

- ❑ Present personal criticism of university operations to the president, not to the university staff.
- ❑ Respect the right of constituent members to be informed about school's decisions and its operations.



# And Finally

## A Board Members Should--

- Give the school's administration, faculty and staff the respect and consideration due as skilled, professional employees.



# Suggestions for Conflict Avoidance

- Board meetings have the potential for being places where people often disagree. To help yours go smoothly the following suggestions by Attorney-Mediator Peter S. Chantilis.



# For Conflict Avoidance

- ❑ Learn to disagree without being disagreeable. It's alright to be assertive, but not aggressive, abusive, or abrasive.
- ❑ When someone says something with which you disagree, try not to be judgmental.



# Conflict Avoidance (continued)

- ❑ Be kind and courteous to everyone.
- ❑ Remember that civility is a sign of strength, not weakness.
- ❑ Speak in normal tones (People tune out loud, angry voices.)



# Conflict Avoidance (continued)

- Your attitude is more important than your aptitude.
- Mutual Respect is the key to avoiding conflict.
- Give the other person a chance to be heard without interrupting.
- .....and lastly



“The Shortest Distance Between  
Two People is a ---SMILE!

