



# Board Accountability For Student Achievement

## POWERS & DUTIES

**Title 53A Chapter 3 Section 301**  
 Superintendent of schools -- Appointment --  
 Qualifications -- Term -- Compensation

- (1) Subject to Subsection (8), a local school board shall appoint a district superintendent of schools who serves as the local school board's chief executive officer.
- (2) A local school board shall appoint the superintendent on the basis of outstanding professional qualifications.
- (3) (a) A superintendent's term of office is for two years and until, subject to Subsection (8), a successor is appointed and qualified.
- (b) A local school board that appoints a superintendent in accordance with this section may not, on or after May 10, 2011, enter into an employment contract that contains an automatic renewal provision with the superintendent.

**Title 53A Chapter 3 Section 402**  
 Powers and duties generally

- (1) Each local school board shall:
  - (a) implement the core curriculum utilizing instructional materials that best correlate to the core curriculum and graduation requirements;
  - (b) administer tests, required by the State Board of Education, which measure the progress of each student, and coordinate with the state superintendent and State Board of Education to assess results and create plans to improve the student's progress which shall be submitted to the State Office of Education for approval;
  - (c) use progress-based assessments as part of a plan to identify schools, teachers, and students that need remediation and determine the type and amount of federal, state, and local resources to implement remediation;
  - (d) develop early warning systems for students or classes failing to make progress.

## Power

School Boards have the power to change the face of education in their communities through positive and appropriate policymaking, **equitable resource allocation, and transparent accountability to schools and the surrounding community.**

Its power to govern is enforced through policies that have the force of law. These policies shape the **quality of education** that a community offers its students.

In other words, the **quality of education** is a reflection of the understanding, commitment, and dedication that a school board has towards excellence and equity.

School Boards cannot be underestimated; they are at the root of an educational system founded upon democratic principles and promote the tenets of democracy and self-government.

*“School boards must wake up and assume their leadership roles more assertively and with greater dedication as guardians of educational excellence and equity”*

## Effective School Boards

- Focus on student achievement as the number one job
- Allocate resources to support students based upon their differing characteristics and needs
- Monitor return on investment and report to the communities they serve with transparency and accountability
- Use good data to inform policymaking to support student success
- Engage the communities they serve in providing real opportunities to give input into policymaking process *(Ward & Griffin 2006)*



JUDGE VALDEZ ADMINISTERING THE OATH OF OFFICE TO NEWLY ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS –JANUARY 8, 2013

## A CALL TO ACTION!

For the most part, school boards underestimate their contributions as citizens and elected representatives of the general public in school reform efforts.

**School boards must wake up and assume their leadership roles more assertively and with greater dedication as guardians of educational excellence and equity.**

The role of school board members in creating systemic changes in our schools cannot be underestimated.

As school board members we need to take a pro-active stance in fulfilling our governance duty to the communities we serve.

We have a legal responsibility to protect the interests and educational welfare of our community's children.

**It is time for school boards to demonstrate leadership in what happens in the schools that have been entrusted to us and to become accountable for exerting the necessary leadership to achieve educational success of each and every student.**

There is no doubt that ownership of school reform efforts by a school board can result in greater community support and acceptance, stronger collaboration among schools in a school district, and increased participation of the surrounding community.

**Building community consensus and support for school transformations based on research and data are powerful methods.**

As a board, we cannot rely solely on firing and hiring superintendents before we can take any other pro-active action to fend off mediocrity. The time to act is now!

## Equity of Learning Outcomes for All Children

Boards in high achieving school districts focused on policies supporting changes in the conditions and the environment, i.e., the context of practice.

**In other words, these boards used their authority, power and decision making capacity to promulgate policy that led to a transformation of the culture of schooling that ultimately improved achievement for all students.**

This research describes an example of high equity context. The lens for increased student achievement reflects a push for the sustained implementation of systemic equity where the Goals of Educational Equity are used to impact policy, administrative action, instructional practice, **professional and human development**, community and parent engagement and involvement, accountability by all stakeholders, and continual monitoring toward improvement to support high achievement for all diverse students.

Boards must consistently express the belief that all students can learn and that schools can teach all students. This “no excuses” belief system results in high standards for students and an ongoing dedication to improvement. (IASB 1998).

***“In the Salt Lake School District, students in Title I schools have a five times higher chance of being with a marginal or ineffective teacher”***

## Teacher Quality and Student Achievement

**How can attention to teacher quality close achievement gaps—the tendency for some groups of students to achieve less academically than others?**

Poor and minority students are the least likely group to be taught by teachers with experience, knowledge, and credentials, the elements of teacher quality that research demonstrates are strongly associated with high student achievement.

States and districts can explore **value-added methods for monitoring teacher effectiveness**, such as those used in Texas, North Carolina, and other states.

**They can use this data to inform decisions about where to assign teachers, how to staff schools, and what supports and professional development are needed to maximize the benefits of having good teachers. Teachers can use value-added data themselves to reflect on their own practices and to assess students' individual needs.**

Community engagement is also crucial to initiating and sustaining efforts to raise teacher quality in the neediest schools. Although districts must recognize that efforts to assign and retain teachers in more challenging schools may be difficult, they must be willing—over the long term—to commit necessary resources to address this challenge in a comprehensive manner.

*(Center for Public Education 2007)*

JANUARY 2013 FACT SHEET