



Ohio School Boards Association Capital Conference and Trade Show

November 11 – 14, 2012

Greater Columbus Convention Center
Columbus, Ohio

Real advice from veteran board members

Board development

Monday, November 12, 2012

9:00 a.m.

C 120–122

Cheryl Ryan, deputy director of school board services, OSBA

Board Leadership Institute

OSBA's Board Leadership Institute (BLI) is a two-day intensive conference specifically designed for and by board members. The conference features multiple learning tracks covering current, important educational topics presented by nationally renowned speakers and education experts.

The 2013 BLI will take place on April 26-27 at the Hilton Polaris in Columbus. Twenty points will be awarded for attendance and completion of the institute, which may be applied toward receiving OSBA's Award of Achievement and Master Board Member Award.

Contact Rob Delane at (614) 540-4000 or (800) 589-OSBA for further information.


Please complete an online conference evaluation either during or after the event at
www.surveymonkey.com/s/CC12Evaluation

OSBA Mission

OSBA leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio's public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service and creative solutions.

Ohio School Boards Association

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**Real Advice from
Veteran Board Members**

2012 Ohio Capital Conference

**Cheryl W. Ryan
Deputy Director, Board Services
OSBA**


OSBA leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio's public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service and creative solutions.



It's a "fact"!

Fact #1: Failing to plan does in fact look a lot like planning to fail.

Fact #2: Board service isn't thankless, it just sometimes feels like it.



It's a "fact"!

Fact #3: It takes all kinds... including board of education members.	Fact #4: The best board members keep learning and discovering.
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It's a "fact"!

Fact #5: The more things change, the more they stay the same.

Fact #6: The more things change, the crabbier some board members become.

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It's a "fact"!

Fact #7: A weak link doesn't help much, but stronger links sure can compensate.

Fact #8: It can be hard – really hard – to take the high road.

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It's a "fact"!

Fact #9: This isn't your father's board of education anymore.

Fact #10: A great leadership team is worth its weight in gold.

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Fact #1:
Failing to plan does in fact look a lot like planning to fail

"I take a lot of time in preparing for board meetings. As BP, I call each other member individually to talk about the agenda and their questions ahead of time. I also visit before each meeting with the SU and TR, as well as between meetings."

"This summer we got wild and crazy and had a board retreat to set some goals and make definite plans for the coming year. It's made a huge difference."

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The SU/BO Board
member




Fact #1:
Failing to plan does in fact look a lot like planning to fail

"Our board wanted to implement a badging system for safety and security in our district. We did a lot of research on cost and liability, etc. before moving forward."

"I spend some time every year looking at population trends in our county. I think it's helped in understanding how best to use our staff capacity."

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The SU/BO Board
member



Fact #1:
Failing to plan does in fact look a lot like planning to fail

"Focus on the students and on student achievement and your priorities will sort themselves out."

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The SU/BO Board
member



**Fact #2:
Board service isn't thankless, it just
sometimes feels like it**

"I live in a small town and everyone knows I'm a board member. Everywhere I go someone will stop me to complain about something, but hardly anyone ever stops me to comment when something great happens."

"When we attend Capital Conference there are a few people who grumble about our "vacation". This is really one of the best – but hardest – things we do all year!"

A Property of the
New York State
Board of Regents



**Fact #2:
Board service isn't thankless, it just
sometimes feels like it**

"Sometimes it feels like there's no time to talk about things that aren't on the agenda but are still important, and you can't just go into executive session for any reason. I sometimes get frustrated by these things."

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New York State
Board of Regents



**Fact #3:
It takes all kinds...including
board of education members**

"We had a board member once who had no idea about his responsibilities but he sure had a lot of strong opinions. He thought he knew everything, but could never find the time to attend a committee meeting or talk with a staff member about how things actually get done around here. He hated that we chose to govern by policy rather than by the seat of our pants."

A Property of the
New York State
Board of Regents



**Fact #3:
It takes all kinds...including
board of education members**

"There's a board member in our neighbor district who has memorized the (Ohio) Revised Code and he's happy to recite it to anyone who will listen. But he's the biggest micro-manager anyone's ever seen."

"One of our board members wants to be board president every year. There's occasionally someone else who wouldn't mind that opportunity."

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Association



**Fact #4:
The best board members keep learning
and discovering**

"The best things a potential board member can do is attend board meetings before being sworn in."

"Read articles regularly about education."

"Invest in professional development and encourage other board members to do so."

A Property of the
Ohio School Boards
Association



**Fact #4:
The best board members keep learning
and discovering**

"The secret to board collaboration is understanding that all five of you have a different perspective and learning to value their position even if you don't agree."

"I like the fact that we meet in a different school building every meeting instead of a stuffy board room. It helps us stay connected to the reason we're here."

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Ohio School Boards
Association



**Fact #4:
The best board members keep learning
and discovering**

"NSBA's Key Work of School Boards is a must. I'm in my 17th year and I still pull it off the shelf when I need to get a different perspective."

"Take advantage of networking. Getting involved in regional activities really broadened my perspective."

A Member of the
Ohio School Boards
Association



**Fact #5:
The more things change, the more they
stay the same**

"Take an hour to learn something about parliamentary procedure. It's not just mumbo jumbo. It makes your meeting run more smoothly."

"I wasn't prepared for the huge time commitment it takes to be an *effective* board member. Time for meetings, emails, school activities, and learning about the issues important to our district has been tremendous."

A Member of the
Ohio School Boards
Association




**Fact #5:
The more things change, the more they
stay the same**

"People with single issue agendas are the hardest to deal with."

"Board members should always make sure they have all the facts (on both sides) before they come to any conclusion."

A Member of the
Ohio School Boards
Association




Fact #6:
The more things change, the crabbier some board members become

"For a number of reasons, we're on our third superintendent in five years. It's like we're always going back to square one."

"We're taking it from both sides. On one hand, we get less and less money to work with but on the other, the state wants more productivity and achievement. There's got to be an answer to this somewhere."


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Fact #6:
The more things change, the crabbier some board members become

"We have a community member who makes dozens of public records requests of our staff every month and there's nothing we can do to stop him. I'm pretty sure he doesn't even care that much about the documents. He just wants to be a problem for us, and he's sure succeeding."

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Fact #7:
A weak link doesn't help much, but stronger ones can compensate

"Even though I always ask this one board member before our board meeting if she has anything she wants to discuss, she really seems to think that once the gavel drops and the reporter shows up, it must be "showtime!"

"We have a board member whose spouse attends all board meetings and "directs her" with silent hand signals from the audience. I wish she could think for herself."

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A Priority of the Ohio School Boards Association

**Fact #7:
A weak link doesn't help much, but stronger ones can compensate**

"We had a board member who shared everything from executive sessions with a friend/member of the media. It made critical discussions nearly impossible and damaged our credibility with the public."

"We have two former teachers on our board. They bring knowledge, but they can't seem to take on the board perspective instead of the teacher one."



A Priority of the Ohio School Boards Association

**Fact #8:
It can be hard – really hard – to take the high road**

"I was not prepared for the anonymous, negative emails and blogs, as well as newspaper articles, that take things out of context or tell absolute lies. I feel this should be a violation of free speech."

"There have been a few times in public participation where it was really hard keeping my mouth shut."




A Priority of the Ohio School Boards Association

**Fact #8:
It can be hard – really hard – to take the high road**

"I feel like we work really hard to share our story with the community. But last week we got blasted in the paper by someone who said they "never know what's going on in the schools."

"Someone said to me once that it must be really nice to be a board member, "with all the extra pay and perks we must get."




Fact #9:
This isn't your father's board of education anymore

"It took us a year to find consensus on what kind of levy to put on the ballot, and another six months to agree on millage. Since then we've failed the thing twice and are on again November 6. Things aren't looking good."

"Today's board members need to be big picture thinkers, future thinkers, and results driven. It's about the bottom line so they need to be able to be good evaluators too."

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Fact #9:
This isn't your father's board of education anymore

"Those who really don't place public education as a top priority are the biggest obstacle we face. I don't see them as collaborators at all. We need board members who want to build up, not tear down."

"We're responsible for knowing so much about things like OTES, RTT, required policies, and what has to be cut when there's no money. I think it'd be a lot easier to be a township trustee!"

Property of the Michigan State Board of Education




Fact #10:
A good leadership team is worth its weight in gold

"The most challenging thing for me is keeping our board focused on "board business" and not on "administrator business." This is harder when there's any perception that the top administrators aren't doing the job properly."

"Consistent and very clear communication between all of us and our superintendent is mandatory."

Property of the Michigan State Board of Education




Fact #10:
A good leadership team is worth its weight in gold

"Our superintendent made some comments once that most of us on the board didn't agree with. We each met with him privately to discuss it and move on, but we didn't slam him in public or in front of his staff."

"We try to socialize together a couple times each year. I think it increases our investment in each other."


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Fact #10:
A good leadership team is worth its weight in gold

"When our superintendent started we all agreed she was a really hard worker but she was very unorganized and it made a couple of us nuts. We invested in having an expert come in to shadow her for a day or two and then make some suggestions. The change has been significant."

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Fact #10:
A good leadership team is worth its weight in gold

"There's a board in the SW region that always attends meetings and training as a team, along with the SU and TR. They seem to really trust each other which is a great asset for any team."

"Our board sets up in a room each year at our back to school nights and we put meeting us on everyone's schedule. That's been great for outreach."

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Thank you!
Have a great conference

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