EDU 5103, Dr. Mc.Guire

<u>Reflections Regarding Systems Thinking, (chapter 1)</u>

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This chapter review is attempting to develop a "framework" to drive

school boards. In attempting to accomplish such an endeavor one must take a

global approach as the issues are multi-dimensional as each area of concern

indirectly or directly impact another. The eight main areas addressed in this

chapter include the following:

- Vision
- Standards
- Assessment
- Accountability
- Alignment
- Climate
- Collaborative Relationships
- Continuous Improvement

To attempt to accomplish this it is imperative that a school board create a

clear "mission" of what their intentions are to effectively communicate these

ideas and core values to all stakeholders. A board cannot achieve success when

there are no lucid goals. School boards need to focus in measurable benchmarks

and specific criteria that include among others things instructional strategies

related to curriculum. Once set into place it is also essential that there be

regularly scheduled follow-up review and evaluation to determine what is

working, what is not and what may need to be tweaked, if necessary. Teachers

are of course essential contributors in this process and must be made available

to provide for feedback throughout the process through their administrative ranks, (I.e.) principle. As education revolves around student achievement, schools need not only take responsibility for student success and remediating failing performance but also to prepare students for an ever changing society. This cannot be accomplished in any meaningful way without an atmosphere that is supportive and remaining true to the adage of "the best interest of the child" and to remain focused and perform their duties with that foremost in mind.

Students are a product of their environment and that includes the home life. Thus, one cannot be a successful functioning school board without family as well as community involvement. The board in this case must be proactive in *reaching out* to parent's families and community members, as well as have a real plan in specific ways these, very often untapped resources can provide valuable input and support. These collaborative relationships are essential for continued success. In such an endeavor it is of utmost importance to not remain complacent even in success. The process must be constantly evaluated and appropriate adjustments made along the way. Only when these areas work in tandem in a cooperative engagement of all involved can one hope to expect to achieve any measure of accomplishment.