



This bulletin, produced by TASB Leadership Team Services, examines research and shares philosophies to inform and promote exceptional governance within school boards across Texas.

Leadership Commitments

by Phil Gore, PhD, Division Director of Leadership Team Services

In *The 15 Commitments of Conscious Leadership: A New Paradigm for Sustainable Success*, the authors promote personal awareness and accountability for success. Personal awareness and accountability are prerequisites of eXceptional Governance. Our commitments reflect our values and determine our actions. Personal commitments are important for leaders. More important, the collective commitments of your board of trustees determine the performance and success of your students.

The first of the 15 Commitments is "I commit to taking full responsibility for the circumstances of my life, and my physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual wellbeing." This means we quit blaming (or crediting) others for our situation. A leader can't reasonably claim, "I procrastinate because my father was a procrastinator." Nor can we claim that we have an attention problem because our parents didn't feed us enough spinach. The world needs leaders that boldly proclaim, "The buck stops here!"

One of the Commitments is candor: "I commit to saying what is true for me. I commit to being a person to whom others can express themselves with candor." In her book *Radical Candor*, Kim Scott insists that candor is not something to be scheduled for a specific place and time. Instead, it is an in-the-moment expression of authenticity.

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She does not promote being rude, mean, or abusive. Rather, she promotes caring about those around us enough to be honest with them and ourselves in the moment. Candor reduces drama and confusion and provides clarity. Radical candor among the board and superintendent is essential for eXceptional Governance.

Another one of the Commitments is "I commit to seeing that the opposite of my story is as true or truer than my original story." A requirement of eXceptional Governance is to explore all sides of an issue. Intelligent people sometimes change their minds. Belligerent people rarely do. Our students desperately need us to explore possibilities and remain curious about the potential for what could be. Curiosity is a foundational principle of eXceptional Governance.

We know that leaders are learners. Leaders and learners are also readers. This is our best hope for achieving lifelong success and effectiveness. Reading books like *The 15 Commitments of Conscious Leadership* together as a governance team serves as a gateway toward improved student success. Look for more from TASB on opportunities to learn together as a governance team through reading.

Leaders are Readers