

A photograph of a modern conference room. In the center is a long, white, rectangular conference table. Surrounding the table are several black leather office chairs with chrome frames. The room has large windows in the background, letting in bright light. The floor is a light-colored, reflective material. A blue banner is overlaid at the top of the image, and another blue banner is overlaid at the bottom right.

Best Practices for Board Governance

**Florida Charter School Conference
Thursday, October 19, 2023**

Introductions



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Objectives For Today

- **Review key elements and importance of the Board**
- **Board Composition**
- **Committee Structure**
- **Operating Effective Meetings**
- **Managing Board Dynamics**
- **Board Governance Program**
- **Governance Training**
- **Questions & Answers**



Strong Board Governance is the Foundation

The Governing Board is ultimately responsible for the entire charter school operations.

“Research consistently has found that creating and sustaining high-quality boards is one of the most formidable challenges facing charter schools.”

“Charter schools don’t typically fail because of their academic program. It’s because their business and their oversight [are] not adequate. So having the right governing board in place ... is absolutely critical.”



The Role of the Governing Board

To oversee the operations of the school
Generally the main responsibilities of a board are:

- Overseeing the financials and managing the budget
- Establishing policies
- Establishing the strategic plan
- Hiring and evaluating administrators
- Ensure charter compliance
- Preserve mission & vision of the school
- Be familiar with all applicable laws

Is what you're discussing governance or administrative?

Board Composition



Transitioning from Founding Board to Operating Board

Common Issues Boards May Face:

- Original board composition maintained
- Board too small
- Lack of experience
- Too dependent on school founder
- Lack of understanding of charter, roles and responsibilities

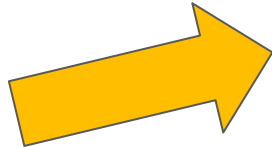
Key is to have strong, independent board dedicated to the mission of the school.

Composition of the Board

Boards that function effectively, typically are composed of a diverse members with a variety of skill sets

Consider Desired Skills

- Identify which skills you deem as important to have on the board.
- Assess the levels or expertise in those areas.
- **Use areas that are lower to target potential new board members.**



GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER PROFILE INFORMATION

Governing Board Member Information

School Name	Date Voted on Board	Date Term Expires
	Click or tap to enter a date.	Click or tap to enter a date.
Governing Board Member Name	Position	

Key Areas of Professional Expertise

Select Your Level of Expertise in the following areas:	Beginner	Proficient	Expert
Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Relations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Committee(s)	Position		
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.		

Using Committees



Committee Structures

- Committee use allows boards to share the load & for board meetings to be focused on critical issues, financial planning & overall policy development
- Allows for inclusion of non-board members to gain additional expertise and increase outreach
- Gives board members the opportunity to discuss topics in depth
- Committees have limited decision-making authority

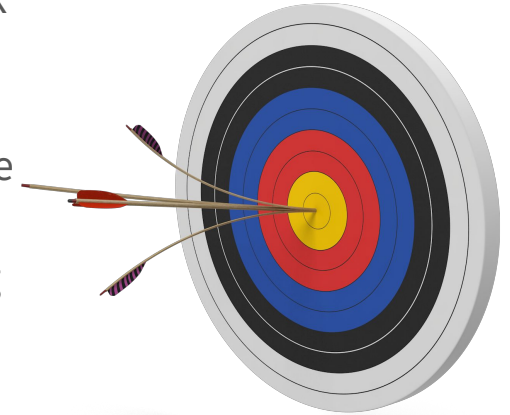


Types of Committees



Committee Work Best Practices

- Each committee should have a job description & a set of prioritized goals; what does accountability to the board look like?
- Committees should work in-between board meetings
- Committees should meet as often as needed; may not be the same for each committee
- Follow requirements of the Sunshine Law including keeping accurate meeting minutes
- Establish a strong committee chair to steer the committee's work and tying the work back with the rest of the board



Operating Effective Board Meetings



There is no “I” in Board

“The Board” versus individual board members



Notice & Meeting Agenda

- All meetings must be noticed and posted in a conspicuous place at the school and on the school's website
- Be sure the date, time and location of meeting is listed
- Post required documents on school website
- Agendas should be specific enough to advise the public of the matters expected to come before the board
- Well planned agendas lead to more strategic, efficient & compliant meetings
- Clear agendas helps avoid personal agendas



Sample Agenda & Meeting Protocol

Organizations generally follow a fixed order of business:

- Call to order
- Roll call of members present (larger organizations)
- Reading and acceptance of minutes from last meeting
- Officer reports
- Committee reports
- Special orders (important business designation for consideration at this meeting)
- Unfinished business
- New business
- Announcements
- Public Comment
- Adjournment




Time Management Best Practices

- **Meet Regularly:** Set dates in advance & stick to them!
- Start and end on time
- Assign time estimates to agenda items
- Track the use of board meeting time
- Use a consent agenda for routine items
 - Items can be removed by a board member for discussion



Meeting Minutes

- 
- Must be kept for all meetings
 - Include: who was present, motions, and a record of votes
 - Post approved meeting minutes to school's website

Use Board Packets

- Effective boards use board packets to help board members prepare and to maximize board meeting time
- Includes all documents related to agenda items
- Sent to board members at least a week prior to the board meeting
- Examples Include:
 - Budget, financial reports: balance sheet, budget versus actual
 - Principal/School Report
 - Committee Reports
 - Board meeting minutes from previous meeting

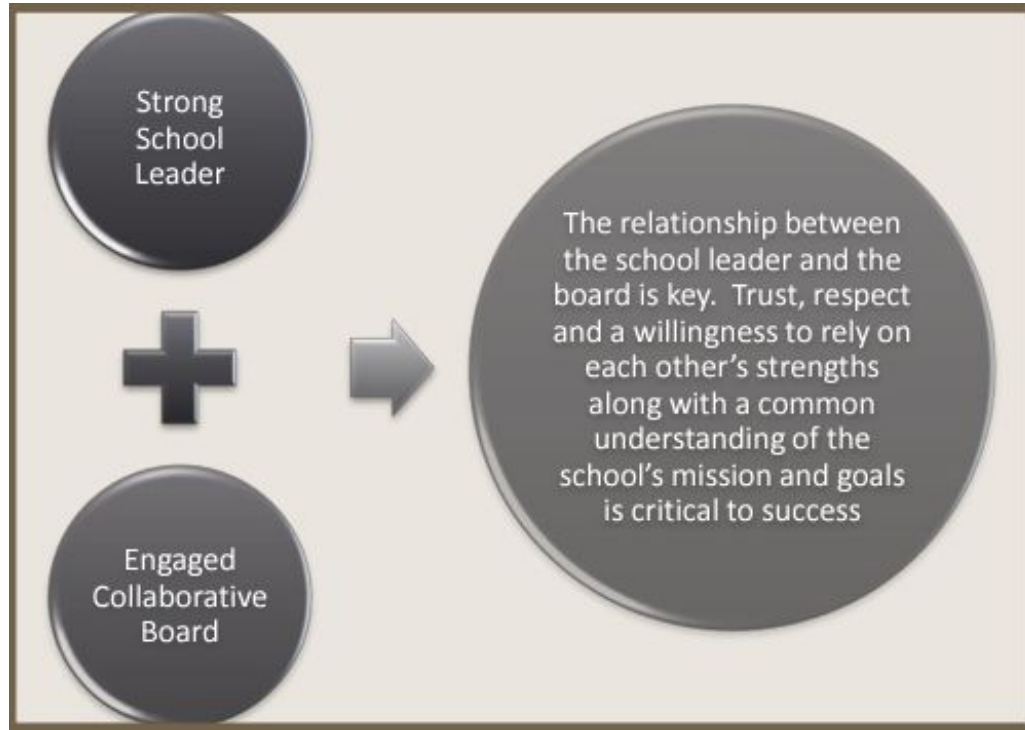


PRINCIPAL'S
OFFICE

ENTER

Governance & Management
Managing Board Dynamics

Governance & Management: Complementary Forces



Governance & Management: Clear Roles

Governing Board

Has only 1 employee to supervise: the school leader

Makes strategic decisions as a collective group; majority vote to create policy

Does not provide direct guidance to the principal's staff or employees—focuses on long term

Monitors & strengthens the quality of the program

School Leadership

Hires & supervises all site-based employees

Implements decisions & Policies of the board

Runs the day-to-day operations of the school

Keeps the board informed & educated by supplying clear, honest and comprehensive documentation



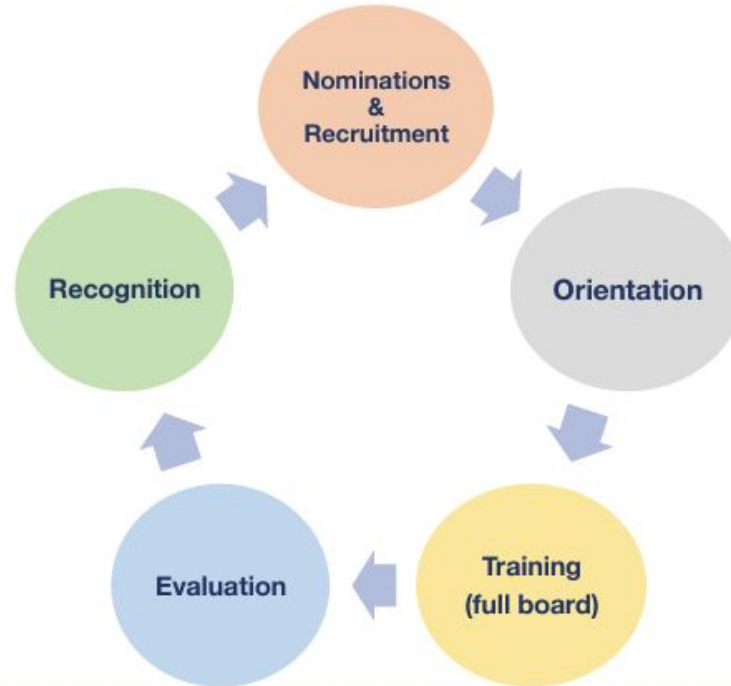
Board Development

Sustaining & Recruiting Board Members

“One major challenge consistently noted across the interviews is the inability of charter school leaders to find qualified people to serve on their school’s governing board.”

“Creating and Sustaining High-Quality Charter School Governing Boards”,
National Resource Center on Charter Schools

Board Development Process



Conducting a Board Analysis

This allows the board to determine areas for improvement and to make adjustments

It should be viewed as a part of the board's commitment to continuous improvement



Board Member Readiness Checklist

School Name
Click or tap here to enter text.

Board Operation Indicators

Yes	No	Option
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bylaws are clear
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Board Policies are in place to execute items in ByLaws
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate notice is created and posted for meetings
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Meeting agenda is available prior to meeting
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Comprehensive minutes created and signed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Website includes are required Governing Board documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budget• Annual Audit• Parent Liaison Information• Board minutes• Management Company information (if applicable)• Custodian of public records
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Location for Board meetings established and posted (included virtual options)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate reports provided (financial, academic, committees)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Meeting appears to operate "In the Sunshine"
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence that all Current Board Members have completed required governance training
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence all Current Board members have cleared background screening
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clear committees in place (optional)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minimum Board membership for quorum
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clear delineation of who is responsible for what tasks
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Meeting runs effectively
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Members are engaged in discussions of school operations
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent liaison attends Board meeting

Build Your Knowledge

- Orient new members
- Required Board Training
- Additional Professional Development:
 - Attend Conferences



Retaining Strong Members

Recognize the contributions of your Board

- Say Thank You!
- Include members in school-based activities
- When members feel valued they are happy to stay and contribute



Additional Supports



Governance Board Program

- Governance Board Program in collaboration with the FLDOE and CSU
- Provides **FREE** support to schools to help build strong governing boards and recruit dynamic members
- Focuses on new schools in years 0-5

**Governance
Board Program**



LEAD - SERVE - INSPIRE

How We Can Help....

Benefits for schools:

- Attend board meeting
- Reviews current Board operations
- Provide support with improving board procedures
- Help recruit new board members from the community
- Assist new board members with completing mandated training
- Provide support throughout 1st year of board membership



Florida Charter School Governance Training



charterschooltraining.com

- Online compliance management tool - never miss a training deadline!
- Train your entire board and school management for three years for one low price
- Courses presented by attorney who has worked with charter schools since 1998
- Print certificates on demand for your audit
- Free CLE credit for attorneys



Questions?

Contact Us to Learn More...



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