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Governance Committee Charge

Overview

In some ways, the governance committee is the most influential committee on the board as it is responsible for maintaining proper board composition and ensuring that the board governs effectively. This committee drives a comprehensive board self-assessment process, fosters the development of new and existing board members, manages board member recruitment, and nominates candidates for officer positions.

The governance committee includes the board chair and at least three other board members, one of whom serves as the committee chair.^[1] The school leader or another staff member also often serves on this committee. This committee meets at least once between every board meeting and submits committee minutes to the full board to communicate progress.

Purpose

The governance committee holds itself accountable for the following:

Monitoring and maintaining board-wide adherence to governance best practices

- Conducts a board self-assessment every one to two years
- Assesses the school's governance needs by periodically reviewing the board's size, strategic composition, and committee structure; and recommends changes as needed^[2]
- In partnership with the school leader and board chair, creates an annual board calendar for approval by the full board
- Reviews and recommends changes to bylaws and board policies every two years

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- Articulates the responsibilities of individual board members by creating a board member agreement that is signed annually by each board member
- Monitors board member performance in relation to the board member agreement, and supports board chair in ensuring all members uphold their board commitments

Onboarding and training new and existing board members

- Orients members to school and board policies, practices, and responsibilities
- Provides ongoing governance training and support
- Creates opportunities for board members to build relationships and interact socially

Guaranteeing steady board leadership

- Identifies, cultivates, and nominates new board members to build a strategically composed board
- Recruits for demographic and skill diversity among board members; including diversity of race, gender, age, skillset, perspective, and experience
- Maintains an officer succession plan that grooms high-performing board members to serve as chair, vice-chair, secretary, and treasurer (or finance committee chair)
- Tracks term expirations and maintains a succession plan for board vacancies
- Recruits non-board members to committees to add value and potentially serve as future board members^[3]

Setting goals

- Supports the board chair in designing and executing an annual board goal-setting process
- Identifies governance committee goals to track committee progress

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[1] Certain requirements may vary by state; review your state's laws to be certain you are in compliance.

[2] Ask whether your board has the right skills and all of the committees needed. Review your bylaws for committee requirements.

[3] Check local regulations about non-voting committee members.