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School Performance Committee Charge

Overview

Many boards share a common misconception that success or failure of its school's students rests squarely on the shoulders of the school leader. Although the school leader is responsible for *how* students excel, the board hires and oversees the school leader to make sure that students *do* excel. The school exists to provide great educational experiences and outcomes for students, and the school performance committee leads the board in upholding this duty. Through appropriate board oversight, the school performance committee monitors student performance against rigorous academic goals and raises strategic issues for board discussion.

The school performance committee must include the school leader and at least three board members, one of whom will serve as the committee chair.^[1] The committee meets at least once between every board meeting and provides committee minutes to the full board to communicate progress.

It is important to note that this is a committee that can easily overstep its bounds from oversight to management. The board's role is to ask the questions, provide advice, and hold the school leader accountable for results. The board does not make program-level decisions.

Purpose

The school performance committee holds itself accountable for the following:

Partnering with the school leader to set and reach rigorous academic goals

- Defines *excellent school performance* based on the charter school's mission and vision

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- Supports school leader in developing annual academic performance goals for the school, and recommends these academic goals to the board for approval
- Verifies that school administrators are using student performance data to constructively inform decisions
- Monitors the school leader's efforts to improve areas of subpar student performance^[2]
- Upon request, serves as an ongoing resource to administrators for academic issues and programming

Building board-wide understanding of the school's academic performance and progress toward goals

- Supports the school leadership in developing and presenting academic dashboards that measure progress towards annual academic goals
- Updates the board, in partnership with the school leader, on performance data and factors currently impacting student achievement
- Identifies challenges to the academic program before they become urgent issues
- Evaluates the school's student achievement against neighboring schools and national standards^[3]
- Attends authorizer trainings on academic accountability
- Delivers onboarding and supplemental trainings to foster a working knowledge of student performance data and measurements among all board members

Setting committee goals and maintaining a strong committee membership

- Identifies committee goals to track academic committee progress
- Recruits non-board members—if charter school bylaws allow—with particular educational expertise relative to the school's model to advise the committee

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[1] In schools that have a leadership structure including a school leader and principals, the committee may choose to add the principals as committee members as well.

[2] For example, if a school showed low test scores in math, the board should ask the school leader tough questions about why this occurred and what he/she will do to address it. The board *should not* tell the school leader what he/she should do about that result (e.g., suggesting a specific math curriculum or teaching strategy).

[3] Committee members may visit other high-performing schools in the area to learn best practices that inform their work.