

2010-2011 Planning Year Training:

Employees

(Board/Administrator Relationship)

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Laying a Foundation for an Effective Relationship - 1

* What are Characteristics of an Effective Governing Board?

- **Passionate, unwavering belief** in the charter school's mission and core values
- A **firm understanding** of the charter promises and a clear, consistent way to measure them
- **Clarity of collective vision**—where the school is and where it wants to be in the future
- **Focus on results**
- **Clarity of roles and responsibilities** of the full board, individual trustees and committees
- The **right structure** in terms of board size, composition, committees and officers
- Board **meetings focused** on strategic issues, not just reporting
- **Clear understanding** of the difference between governance and management
- **A school leader who has the time to assist in the creation of effective governance**
- **A strong partnership between the board and the school leader which is built on mutual trust and respect**

Laying a Foundation for an Effective Relationship - 2

* What are Characteristics of a Quality Leader?

- **Focuses decisions** on what is best for students
- Knows how to **disaggregate data** to make decisions about curricular adjustments and teacher training
- **Communicates** well with parents, students, faculty, board, and staff
- **Recognizes a variety of needs** by staff, faculty and students and is willing to find ways to meet their needs
- **Incorporates input** from stakeholders to provide shared ownership in decision making
- Knows how to **effectively delegate** tasks and responsibilities
- **Leads by example** by being highly motivated, accountable, and willing to actively pursue growth opportunities
- **Communicates** the vision in school staff, faculty, community members, authorizer, and students
- **Stays current on educational research** and is willing to try new things to meet the needs of students and staff
- Has **demonstrated expertise** in teaching and learning
- **Knows how to inspire** and create an effective professional learning community
- Is an **excellent manager** of people, time, resources, and budgets
- Has **experience in and appreciation for** the school model/philosophy

Common Problems In The Relationship



**Conflicts over who is responsible for what

**From the perspective of board, the perception that the charter school administrator is over-stepping his or her authority or not providing the board with sufficient information (*overpowering or too autonomous*)

**From the perspective of the administrator, the perception that the board is not doing enough, or that the board is taking action in areas that are the administrator's responsibilities (*passive or micromanagement*)

Tools for Strengthening the Board/Administrator Relationship

1. Hiring
2. Job description
3. Clear definition of how the relationship between the board and administrator works
4. Communication plan that provides information
5. Involvement of board and staff in strategic planning
6. Maintain healthy and mutually supportive relationship between the board chair and charter school administrator
7. Maintain ongoing clarity regarding board policy and oversight functions

Tools

1. Hiring
 - a. Effective relationship has roots in administrator selection
 - b. Instructional and business leader
 - c. Asking the right questions
 - i. Utah Charter School Samples
 - ii. [Elbert County Charter School Sample](#)
 - iii. [General Administrator Interview Questions Sample](#)
 - iv. [Improved Principal Hiring](#)
 - v. [Sturgis Public Charter School](#)
 - d. Instructional and business leader
 - e. Describe to the candidate:
 - a. How the board defines its roles and responsibilities
 - b. How the board defines the roles and responsibilities of the administrator
 - c. How the board views the working relationship between itself and the administrator
 - f. Note: If a candidate has been terminated by another school, the board should presume the situation had two sides and ask questions of several individuals involved if felt necessary.



Tools

2. Job Description

- a) Detailed
- b) Minimum professional qualifications
- c) Job duties
- d) Periodic review

3. Clear definition of how the relationship between the board and administrator works

- a) Written description of roles by topic
- b) 3 column chart



Tools

4. Communication plan that provides information
 - a) “Doctrine of No Surprises”
 - b) Balance
 - i. How much
 - ii. Methods
 - iii. General effective communication
5. Involvement of board and staff in strategic planning
 - a) Strongest organizational practice
 - b) Deep discussion of major issues and challenges
 - c) Define mission, core values, vision, goals, and strategies for plan
 - d) Share differing viewpoints
 - e) Explore range of options
 - f) Avoid decisions in isolation



Tools

4. Maintain healthy and mutually supportive relationship between the board chair and charter school administrator
 - a) Effective communication is one of the keys to maintaining vital working relationship
 - b) Meet regularly with ample time
 - c) Strategic plan
5. Maintain ongoing clarity regarding board policy and oversight functions
 5. Where vs. How

Prevention vs. Intervention

The Board – Administrator
relationship is like a
pair of socks:
You gotta have two
and
they've gotta match.

