

Questions on Governance for Accreditation Consideration

Governance is a particularly complex area in independent schools, with struggles around best practices often resulting in more challenging circumstances down the road. The visiting team leaders and the leaders of the school engaging in accreditation should use these questions as an opportunity to explore how the board functioning relative to understood best practices in the industry and what steps might be taken to help the board remain consistent with best practices.

- Do board members maintain strict confidentiality of all board discussions?
- Are trustees are asked to complete a conflict of interest disclosure each year?
- Does the board hear appeals from families dissatisfied by the head of school's decision?
- Does the board have a clear sense of the difference between governance and operations?
- Outside of the boardroom, do board members speak with one voice?
- Does the board actively engage in strategic planning?
- Does the board regularly evaluate itself?
- Does the board develop policies consistent with the school's mission?
- Is the board involved in any hiring decisions, other than hiring the head of school?
- Does any other school employee directly report to the board?
- Does the board review its bylaws and policies on a regular basis?
- Do board members serve as advocates for the school in the larger community?
- Does the board feel responsible for the success of the head of school?
- Do individual trustees make personal requests of the head of school?
- Do board members ask to see specific information on individual employees?