



Building and Maintaining a Strong Board Culture

- Develop and maintain a shared clarity of the school's mission.
- Spend as much of time on new board member selection as on any other activity.
- Take orientation of new trustees very seriously. The board should take the lead rather than having the “employee” deliver any critical messages.
- Set and maintain high expectations for trustee attendance and conduct.
- Honor and protect the separation of powers between governance and operations.
- Develop a strong committee structure. Have committee chairs (in concert with the board chair and HOS) develop agendas/goals and schedules.
- Coordinate and share all schedules.
- Emphasize strategic planning (process, goals, evaluation).
- Take the lead in advancement. If the board doesn't, who will?
- Ensure that every trustee has meaningful work to do and is thanked for it.
- Provide regular professional development for trustees about key trends as well as school operations.
- Use the executive committee sparingly (exceptions: board agenda approval and HOS evaluation and salary discussion).
- Support the board chair as he/she attempts to keep the board focused and on track.
- Develop succession plans. Succession planning is not just about the next HOS or board chair; it is about creating sustainable systems that are not overly dependent on a single individual (e.g., churches that rise and fall with the pastor); avoid "personality cults" regardless of how wonderful the personality.
- Develop a good board policy manual. Don't rely on any one individual for matters of trustee institutional memory.
- Honor the past; celebrate the present; and focus on the future.