



Meetinghouse Solutions

“Strong Boards, Strong Schools”

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Sample Job Description and Board Member Agreement:

Charter School Board of Trustees

by Marci Cornell-Feist



SAMPLE

The ABC Charter School Board of Trustees Job Description[©]

General Responsibilities:

Responsible for ensuring that the academic program of ABC Charter School (ABC) is successful, that the school's program and operation are faithful to the terms of its charter, and that the school is a viable organization.

Specific Responsibilities:

1. Determine the mission and purpose of ABC and keep it clearly in focus¹.
 - Create and periodically review the mission statement which:
 - a. Serves as a guide to organizational planning, board and staff decision-making, volunteer initiatives, and setting priorities among competing demands for scarce resources.
 - b. Is used as the vehicle for assessing program activities to ensure that the organization is not drifting away from its original purposes.
 - Understand and support the mission statement.
2. Select the School Leader
 - Reach consensus on the School Leader's job description.
 - Undertake a careful search process to find the most qualified individual.
 - Oversee and approve contract negotiation and renewal.
3. Support and review the performance of the School Leader
 - Provide frequent and constructive feedback.
 - Assist when board members overstep prerogatives or misunderstand their roles.
 - Compliment for exceptional accomplishments.
 - Provide for an annual written performance review with a process agreed upon with the School Leader well in advance.
4. Ensure effective organizational planning
 - Approve an annual organizational plan that includes concrete, measurable goals consistent with the charter and accountability plan.

¹ Note the 10 titles in this description come from the BoardSource “Top Ten Responsibilities of a Nonprofit Board and have been adapted to the charter school context. Thanks to the Hill View Montessori Charter School of Haverhill Massachusetts for their model.



5. Ensure adequate resources
 - Approve fundraising targets and goals.
 - Assist in carrying out development plan.
 - Make an annual gift at a level that is personally meaningful.
6. Manage resources effectively
 - Approve the annual budget.
 - Monitor budget implementation through periodic financial reports.
 - Approve accounting and personnel policies.
 - Provide for an independent annual audit by a qualified CPA.
 - Ensure adequate insurance is in force to cover students, staff, visitors, the board and the assets of the school.
7. Determine, monitor and strengthen the programs and services
 - Assure programs and services are consistent with the mission and the charter.
 - Approve measurable organizational outcomes.
 - Approve annual, attainable board and management level goals.
 - Monitor progress in achieving the outcomes and goals.
 - Assess the quality of the program and services.
8. Enhance ABC's public standing
 - Serve as ambassadors, advocates and community representatives of the school.
 - Ensure that no board member represents her/himself as speaking on behalf of the board unless specifically authorized to do so.
 - Provide for a written annual report and public presentation that details ABC's mission, programs, financial condition, and progress made towards charter promises.
 - Approve goals of an annual public relations program.
9. Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability
 - Establish policies to guide the school's board members and staff.
 - Develop and maintain adequate personnel policies and procedures (including grievance mechanisms).
 - Adhere to the provisions of the school's bylaws and articles of incorporation.
 - Adhere to local, state and federal laws and regulations that apply to the school.
 - Ensure compliance with all federal state and local government regulations.
10. Recruit and orient new board members and assess board performance
 - Define board membership needs in terms of skill, experience and diversity.
 - Cultivate, check the credentials of and recruit prospective nominees.
 - Provide for new board member orientation.
 - Conduct an annual evaluation of the full board and individual trustees.



SAMPLE
ABC Charter School Individual Trustee Performance Expectations[©]

General Responsibilities:

Each trustee is responsible for actively participating in the work of the ABC Board of Trustees and the life of the school. Each trustee is expected to affirm and strive to fulfill the performance expectations outlined below. These expectations are to be clearly articulated prior to nominating any candidate as a board member. The ABC Board will nominate the candidate only after s/he has agreed to fulfill these expectations. In addition to the responsibilities below, individual trustees are expected to help each other fulfill the tasks outlined in the collective Job Description of the Board of Trustees.

Specific Responsibilities:

1. Believe in and be an active advocate and ambassador for the values, mission, and vision of ABC.
2. Work with fellow board members to fulfill the obligations of board membership.
3. Behave in ways that clearly contribute to the effective operations of the Board of Trustees:
 - Focus on the good of the organization and group, not on a personal agenda
 - Support board decisions once they are made
 - Participate in an honest appraisal of one's own performance and that of the board
 - Build awareness of and vigilance towards governance matters rather than management.
4. Regularly attend board and committee meetings in accordance with the absenteeism policy. Prepare for these meetings by reviewing materials and bringing the materials to meetings. If unable to attend, notify the board or committee chair.
5. Be prepared to contribute approximately 8-10 hours per month toward board service which includes:
 - Attending a month board meeting (2 hours)
 - Participating on a board committee (2 hours)
 - Reading materials, preparing for meetings (1 hour)
 - Attending events at the school, assisting with fundraising and other ambassador tasks as needed (1-2 hours)
6. Keep informed about the school and its issues by reviewing materials, participating in discussions, and asking strategic questions.
7. Actively participate in one or more fundraising event(s) annually.
8. Use personal and professional contacts and expertise for the benefit of ABC.
9. Serve as a committee or task force chair or member.
10. Give an annual financial contribution and support capital campaigns at a level that is personally meaningful.
11. Inform the Board of Trustees of ABC of any potential conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived, and abide by the decision of the board related to the situation.



