

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE

December 2024 Board Communication

❖ Board of Directors Question Toolbox

Ferris State University CSO is happy to provide you with a few questions to help further your conversations this month. The question focus could come from one or more of our four School Support Pillars: Academics, Fiscal, Operational, and Compliance.

Please note that this is meant as a reference, some items may not apply to all schools, and that there are many questions a board member may choose to ask. If you have questions, please contact the Field Representative or the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office.

We will focus on Pillar #1 Academic:

- How is the school progressing compared to the metrics and measures in its accountability plan and internal yearly strategic plan? Are there any additional resources needed based on student outcomes?
- Have all new ELLs and students with IEPs been identified and are they receiving the proper programming? Have student IEPs been amended to the charter school's settings and services?
- How is the board checking in with the school leader on midyear progress against their performance goals? Does the board have plans and resources in place to support the school leader's development against those goals?
- How is the board ensuring that curriculum and other academic resources are effectively helping leaders and teachers meet academic achievement goals? Does the academic committee and/or school leaders feel that any adjustments to curriculum choices or resources are needed, and if so, what are they and why?

❖ Important Dates

December 3, 2024 – Board Professional Development Zoom Session Board President Interaction
December 12, 2024 - Ferris State University Board of Trustees Meeting

❖ Virtual Board Professional Development Opportunities

The next webinar in our 2024-2025 board professional development series, [*Board Governance Etiquette*](#), will be on December 3rd at 6pm. This will be an interactive Zoom session featuring board presidents. It will bring board presidents together to discuss and exchange thoughts and ideas on how to lead boards effectively. This session is intended to be interactive so bring your best advice to share with your fellow board leadership colleagues. While this session is centered around board presidents, all board members are encouraged to attend.

There will be another webinar on January 7th at 6pm. The topic will be [Bringing Order to Meetings](#). This session will include the importance of Roberts Rules of Order and how using this parliamentary procedure ensures consistency, efficiency and professionalism to your public board meetings.

Board members look for an email invitation from AirWin Educational Services with registration information for both sessions.

In case you missed previous virtual board professional development sessions below are links to the recordings. If you would like a copy of a presentation or handouts, please contact Sharon Hopper at SharonHopper@ferris.edu.

[Navigating Your Role as a New Board Member: Part 1](#)

[Why Can't We All Just Get Along](#)

[Establishing a Positive Board Culture](#)

❖ **Governance Framework**

Hopefully one or more of your board members attended one of the five regional in-person professional development sessions held in October and November. This training opportunity focused on [Governance Framework](#), which is a structured approach to decision-making, oversight and accountability, with the goal of ensuring effective management, transparency and consistency in governance practices and adherence to policies and regulations.

The facilitator, Angie Irwin, provided board members with information as to why a structured process is key to keeping a board focused on its primary role and responsibilities. In addition, Mrs. Irwin walked board members through the steps of planning and developing a governance framework for their respective boards.

Attached are the presentation materials. You'll find sample topics and sample key performance indicators, as well as a governance framework template your board can use to clearly define all elements needed for effective and transparent governance.

Any Questions?

You may contact your FSU Field Representative or Sharon Hopper if you have any questions regarding this Board Communication. Important and/or urgent information that cannot wait until the next Board Communication will be sent to you by email.



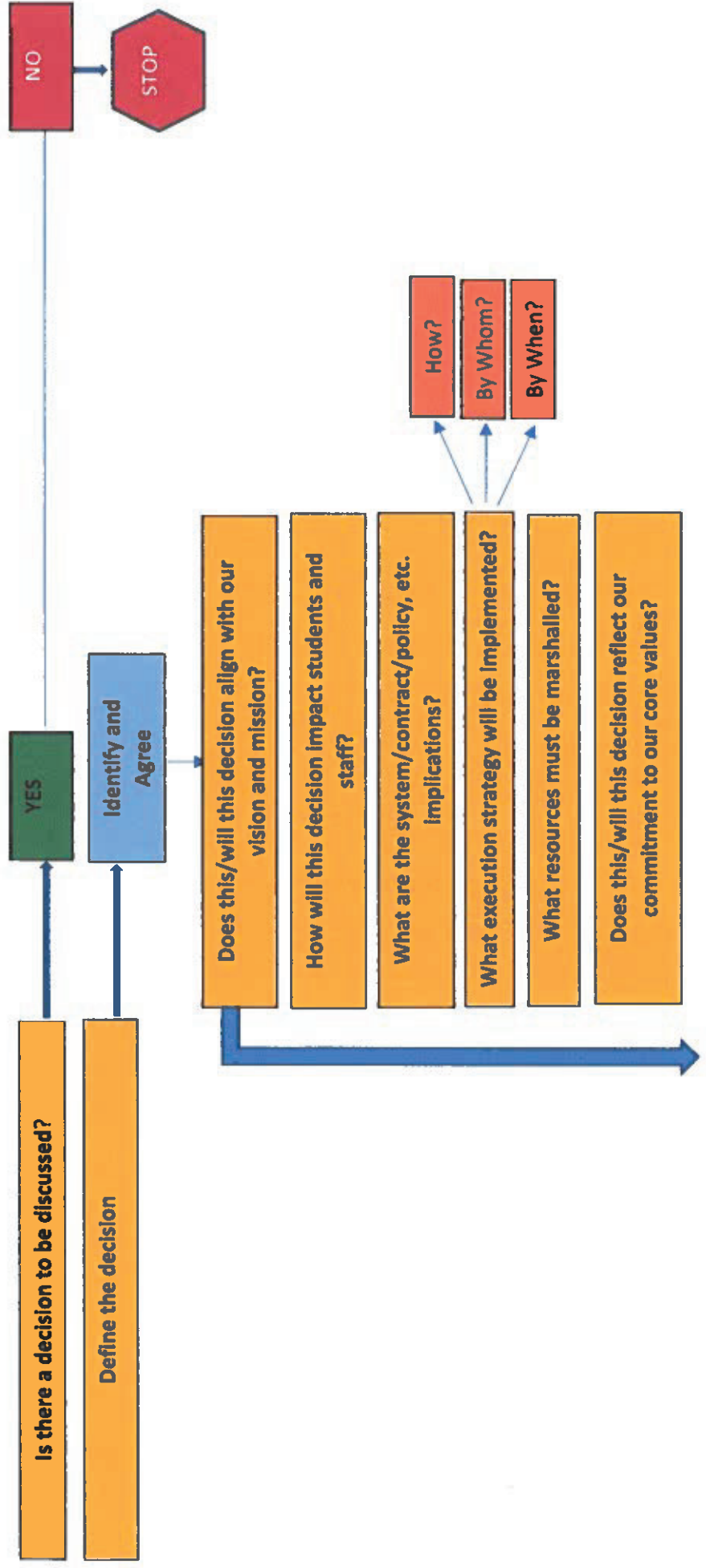
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Creating a Governance Framework

Decision-Making

Professional Development Regional Session(s)

Fall 2024





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Creating a Governance Framework

Professional Development Regional Session(s)

Fall 2024

Governance Framework: A structured approach to decision-making, oversight, and accountability, with the goal of ensuring effective management, transparency, consistency in governance practices and adherence to policies and regulations.

Questions to Consider:

- ✓ Who are the people with authority in our organization?
- ✓ What information do those people need to access, and when?
- ✓ What does the organizational structure look like?
- ✓ How does the structure influence how decisions are made?
- ✓ How does information need to flow?
- ✓ What is the relationship between entities – and does this present any challenges in terms of accountability authority or responsibility?



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Creating a Governance Framework

Professional Development Regional Session(s)

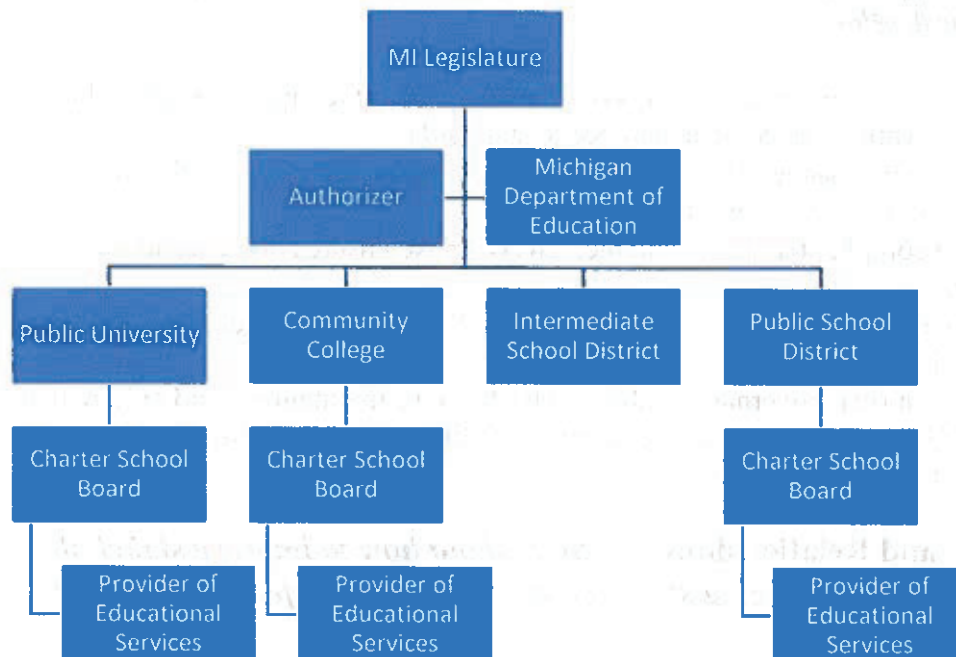
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Governance Framework: A structured approach to decision-making, oversight, and accountability, with the goal of ensuring effective management, transparency, consistency in governance practices and adherence to policies and regulations.

1. Vision and Mission

- **Vision Statement:** Placeholder for your clear and inspiring long-term vision for education in your context (e.g., improving student outcomes, fostering lifelong learning).
- **Mission Statement:** Placeholder for your mission that describes your reason for being (e.g., providing accessible, high-quality education for all students).

2. Governance Structure



3. Board Structure

- Composition (i.e. number of board members and their qualifications)
- Officer roles and responsibilities

4. Policy and Practice (WHAT we do . . .)

- Set policy and goals
- Approve and adopt budget and engage in financial oversight
- Evaluate ourselves and management/school leader
- Oversee curriculum and instruction
- Engage with community/stakeholders
- Oversee policy implementation
- Engage in long-term planning
- Build an effective board team

5. Operations and Procedures (HOW we do it. . .)

Operations: Ongoing functions necessary for governance functioning.

Procedures: Specific, detailed instructions or steps designed to achieve a particular outcome – often formalized and documented.

How do we . . . (operations and procedures currently in place or operations and procedures that need to be developed)

- Govern over academics: HOW do we ensure student learning through policy and practice while overseeing adherence to standards?
- Govern over finance: HOW do we ensure equitable and effective distribution of educational resources and funding?
- Remain compliant and accountable: HOW do we ensure adherence to standards and regulations?
- Govern over school culture and climate: HOW do we ensure culture and climate are conducive to learning?
- Ensure our own governance culture: HOW do we maintain a board culture that, INTENTIONALLY, guides behavior and influences relationships between board members and stakeholders?

6. Planning and Relationships . . . think about how to improve stakeholder relationships while engaging stakeholders in significant planning exercises

Questions to Consider:

Relationships:

- Identify/define “stakeholders” – who are they?
- How do we currently interact with them?
- How would we like to interact with them?
- How can we better engage our stakeholders in planning and significant decision-making?
- How do we engage them now in significant planning and decision-making?

Planning:

- With more planning time, our board would capitalize on _____
 - Ideas:
 - Strategic Goals
 - Trends’ Analysis
 - Benchmarking
 - Engaging with stakeholders more intentionally to gather input and build support for future initiatives
 - Implementing ongoing channels for stakeholders to provide feedback and suggestions
 - Ensuring curriculum instruction is preparing our students well and that we are innovating to maintain the interest of our students
 - Evaluating current facilities and anticipate future needs
 - Considering sustainable practices and infrastructure that will reduce long-term costs and environmental impact
 - Developing longer-term financial plans
 - Ensuring alignment between strategic goals and resources
 - Ensuring support of professional development for Board, staff, school leaders, etc.
 - Anticipating potential risks and challenges, such as funding cuts, demographic shifts or public health crises
 - Developing contingency plans for managing and mitigating potential risks
 - Ensuring technology supports our students and better anticipate future needs
 - Staying better informed about legal and policy considerations and better prepare for policy adaptations
 - Developing/implementing a more effective monitoring and evaluation system (of all things)



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Creating a Governance Framework

Professional Development Regional Session(s)

Fall 2024

Board Governance (SAMPLE) Topics

Over the course of the past several years, AES has had the privilege of hosting several webinars and in-person professional development session/workshops. As you consider creating your governance framework, below is a sample list (not exhaustive) of a few topics we have discussed, historically. Please use these topics as a guide or reminder of the “how” and “planning and relationships” of your framework.

- Board recruitment
- Board compliance – reporting and transparency
- Decision-making
- Board succession planning
- Managing your finances
- Managing your budget
- Student learning
- Orderly and efficient meetings
- Roles of officers
- Board policy
- Meeting minutes
- Safety and welfare of students
- Parent/community complaints
- Self-assessment
- Management assessment
- Governing over the unexpected
- Suspension and expulsion of students
- Information overload
- The role of the board
- Governance vs. management
- Effective use of committees
- Board culture
- Old and new business
- Communication
- Preparing, reviewing and managing the agenda
- Managing your management relationship
- Assessing board and academy health
- Relationship with school leader, management, each other, etc.
- Governing beyond the school year
- Strategic/future planning
- Three-legged stool



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Creating a Governance Framework

Professional Development Regional Session(s)

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KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (SAMPLES)

Academic Health (Teaching and Learning): *Ensure positive, quality, effective, results-oriented teaching and learning is occurring at the school. To help determine how well students and teachers are doing in the category of teaching and learning, a school may want to track the following data and key performance indicators:*

- Student Growth and Proficiency
- Cohort Data (measurement based on the students that have been with the Academy three or more years, for example)
- Subgroup Data
- College Prep Data/Information
- Mission-Specific Data
- Subject Data
- At-Risk Program Data
- Climate and Culture
- Student Mobility/Attrition
- Teacher Mobility/Attrition
- Leadership Mobility/Attrition
- Facility Safety and Security

Financial Health (Funding and Financial Position): *Ensure a viable and sustainable environment by discussing/measuring the key performance indicators below:*

- Fund Balance
- Grants/Title Monies
- Programs/Strategies
- Instructional/Support Percentages
- Balance Sheet
- Income/Expense Report
- Cash Flow Statement
- Budget versus Actuals

Operational Health: *Ensure leadership and/or management is adding value to the school by bringing relevant and valuable resources (inputs) to the school community and is effectively delivering on those*

resources (outputs), as promised and outlined in the management/leadership agreement. Services that may be discussed/considered, are as follows:

- Technology Services
- Food Services
- General Maintenance Services
- Teacher Effectiveness
- School Leadership Effectiveness
- Marketing/Enrollment
- Exterior Services
- Teacher Mobility/Teacher Attrition

Cultural Health: Ensure an overall effective climate and culture that aligns with the mission of the school and is conducive to teaching and learning. The categories, below, represent what may be considered key performance indicators for climate and culture:

- Chronic Absenteeism
- Student/Staff Parent Engagement
- Suspension/Expulsions
- Social-Emotional Skills
- Special Education
- Respect for Diversity
- School Participation
- Physical Safety
- Physical Environment
- Academic Environment
- Wellness



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A Governance Framework For (NAME OF SCHOOL) Board of Directors

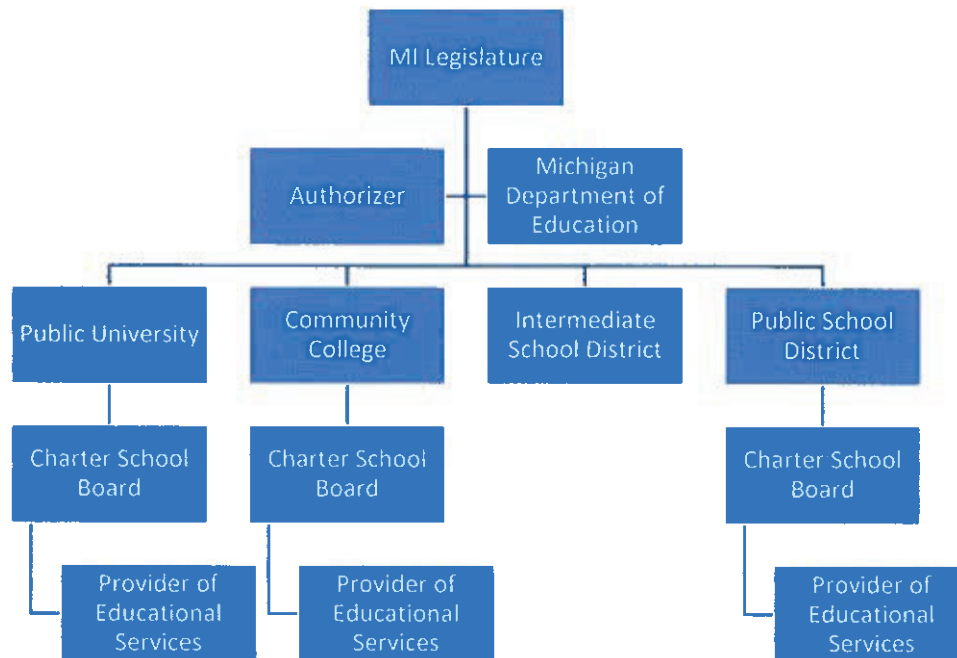
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1. Vision and Mission

- **Vision Statement:**

- **Mission Statement:**

2. Governance Structure



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4. Policy and Practice (WHAT we do . . .)

5. Operations and Procedures (HOW . . . we do it)

Operations: *Ongoing functions necessary for governance functioning.*

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6. Planning and Relationships . . . *think about how to improve stakeholder relationships while engaging stakeholders in significant planning exercises*

This Governance Framework, adopted by the (NAME OF SCHOOL) Board of Directors on _____, establishes the essential guidelines and structures needed for effective and transparent governance. By clearly defining all of the elements incorporated into this framework, it aims to ensure accountability, foster stakeholder engagement, and support the achievement of strategic goals. The commitment to regular review and continuous improvement will help the Board adapt to evolving needs and challenges, ultimately enhancing the educational experience and outcomes for students. As we move forward, adherence to this framework will be pivotal in maintaining integrity, promoting excellence, and fulfilling our mission to provide high-quality education.

