

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE

March 2023 Board Communication

❖ Quorum Outside of a Board Meeting

We all know what constitutes a quorum at a public meeting. For instance, if your board consists of five board member positions, then three board members present are a quorum and if your board consists of seven board member positions, then four board members present are a quorum. But can a quorum of the board gather outside an open meeting without violating the Open Meetings Act?

Yes, a quorum of board members may assemble together, without a public meeting, under the following circumstances:

- **Social Gathering**
 - A quorum or more may attend the same social or community event.
 - No discussion of Academy/Board business may occur and no decisions made.
 - For example, a quorum or more are at a local festival. This would be an event that the board members are attending as community members, but are not “wearing their board member hat.”
- **Educational Session or Conference**
 - A quorum or more may attend an instructional session or professional conference where other people are also attending to learn about or obtain information about a topic.
 - No discussion of Academy/Board business or issues specific to their Academy/Board can be discussed and no decisions made.
 - For example, a quorum or more may attend a professional conference or any other training or informational sessions of use to board members, in general. However, training provided to a specific board must be presented in a public meeting.
- **Attending a Meeting or Presentation of a Civic Organization**
 - A quorum or more may attend.
 - No discussion of Academy/Board business may occur and no decisions made.
 - For example, a quorum or more attend a presentation facilitated by the local Rotary Club.
- **Attending a Public Meeting of Another Public Body**
 - A quorum or more may attend.
 - No discussion of Academy/Board business may occur and no decisions made.
 - For example, a quorum or more attend a city council meeting.
- **Chance Gathering**
 - For example, a quorum or more run into each other at a restaurant or grocery store, and no discussion of Academy/Board business may occur and no decisions made.

❖ Important Epicenter Deadline

March 31, 2023 – Board of Directors Application (for May 5, 2023 FSU BOT meeting)
April 2, 2023 – Student Count

❖ Important Dates

March 3, 2023 – CSO 21st Annual Spring Briefing & 25th Anniversary Celebration
April 4, 2023 – Board Member 2023 Reappointment Deadline

❖ Board Meeting Attendance and Participation

The board, as a whole, is responsible for the governance of a multi-million dollar public organization, as well as making critical decisions that affect the education of the children in their community. Since public board meetings are the only forum during which the board can discuss and vote on major school policies and decisions, it is important to remember that individual board member attendance and meeting preparation are critical to good governance.

The number of meetings scheduled, cancelled and held, along with overall board member attendance percentage are compiled and reported in the academy's annual Contract Performance Report.

With the input of each board member and others, the board determines its annual calendar at their yearly organizational meeting. Therefore, it is expected that board members are fully committed to attend every scheduled meeting, unless an emergency situation arises. The business of the school can only take place at a public meeting and board members must be there to fulfill their fiduciary duties.

Admittedly, to have strategic discussions at board meetings, board members must read relevant materials and come to meetings prepared to engage in discussions and ask relevant questions in order to make well-informed decisions. This can only happen if board members review the board packet in advance of the meeting.

Too much valuable board meeting time is often wasted when board members are reading the board packet for the first time during the meeting. Unprepared board members hinder meaningful discussions that lead to fact-based, data-driven board decisions.

We truly appreciate your genuine desire to serve your community and have an impact on the education of current and future generations. Your commitment to thoughtful, sincere and intentional governance can influence the school's fiscal health, establish a rigorous culture of learning and create an expectation of high academic standards for all students.

❖ CSO Quarterly Board Development and Networking Meeting

Mark your calendar for the next Zoom convening on **April 18, 2023 6pm – 7pm**. An email will be sent to all board members from Andrea Ruggles, CSO Secretary, with a registration link. The topic, **School Finances**, will be facilitated by Dr. Chris White, CSO Associate Director.

Each board member that attends a CSO quarterly board development and networking convening can earn one professional development credit for their respective board. To earn the credit the board member will share their 2-3 takeaways about it at a board meeting. Boards are required to complete three credits per academic year by two or more board members.

❖ Board Professional Development Webinars

Mark your calendar for the final live webinar in our 2022-2023 board professional development series, [*The Art of Intentional Governance: Creating A Governance Model that Ensures the Right Focus at the Right Time*](#). It is scheduled for Wednesday April 19, 2023 6:00pm – 6:30pm. Board members look for an email invitation from AirWin Educational Services with registration information. This session, [*Governing Beyond the School Year*](#), will focus on how effective and efficient boards use the summer months to prepare for the upcoming school year.

In case you missed previous live webinars or haven't had an opportunity to watch the other recorded on-demand webinars below are the links. Each board member that watches a recorded or live webinar is an opportunity to earn professional development credits for their respective board.

[Are you Informed Yet? How to Manage Information Overload in Your Governance Role](#)

[Suspension and Expulsion: The Appropriate Role of the Board](#)

[Recruitment 101: The Role of the Board, Mission and Culture](#)

[The Finance and Academic Alignment: Painting and Seeing the Big Picture](#)

[What's New in 2022](#)

[What's to be in 2023](#)

[Assessing Your Governance Work](#)

[Planning the Work & Working the Plan - A Crash Course in Strategic Planning](#)

❖ Board Professional Development Activity Credits

While we routinely promote FSU CSO sponsored board professional development opportunities, we want to make sure board members have a variety of ways to seek learning and board governance growth. The below table summarizes what boards and individual board members may want to consider when seeking continuous learning and development opportunities.

Board Professional Development Activity	Description/Example	Number of Activity Credits Awarded
Full Board Activity	Board Retreat Strategic Planning Meeting Book Study	Two activity credits
Individual Board Member Watches FSU CSO Training Video	Video Topics: Educational Goals Freedom of Information Act Open Meetings Act Charter Contract Finances	.25 activity credits per board member per video
Individual Board Member Attends FSU CSO Sponsored Opportunity	Webinars Spring Briefing Quarterly Convenings	One activity credit per board member per session
Individual Board Member Attends Meeting of Another Public Governing Board	Neighboring School Board Meeting City, County or State public meeting, where you are not a member of the board or required/requested to attend by employer	One activity credit per board member per meeting
Individual Board Member Attends Educational Workshop/Conference/Webinar	Any workshop, conference or webinar related to board governance, charter schools or education sponsored by MAPSA, NCSI, MDE, MASB or NACSA	One activity credit per board member per workshop/conference/webinar

❖ **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.