



A network^{k¹²}School

insightSM
school
of Oregon

Sources For This Presentation

- United States Charter School Association
- National Charter Schools Institute
- Department of Education and other state departments of education
- National Association of Charter School Authorizers
- Carver Governance Institute (for non-profits)
- Materials prepared by virtual charter school attorneys



Role of Insight School of Oregon – Charter Option (ISOR-CO) Board of Directors



Characteristics of an Effective Charter School Governing Board

- Passionate, unwavering belief in the charter school's mission and core values
- A firm understanding of the charter promises and a clear, consistent way to measure them
- Clarity of collective vision—where the school is and where it wants to be in the future
- Focus on results
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities of the full board, individual trustees and committees
- The right structure in terms of board size, composition, committees and officers
- Board meetings focused on strategic issues, not just reporting
- Clear understanding of the difference between governance and management
- A school leader who has the time to assist in the creation of effective governance
- A strong partnership between the board and the school leader which is built on mutual trust and respect



Source: "Authorizer Issue Brief", National Association of Charter School Authorizers, September 2005

The Role of the Board of Directors

“The governing body of a charter school governs the school, maintains overall control of the school, and is responsible for the operation of the school. The school administrator’s and all other employees and contracts, including educational management organizations, serve under the governing body, and are subject to the rulings of the governing body. The governing body critically evaluates the performance of the school’s administrator and any contractors with the school, and replaces the administrator or contractor if he is not performing duties or providing services in a satisfactory manner.”

Source: Matters of Concern to Nevada Charter School Governing Board Members, Nevada Department of Education Rev. March 27, 2006



What Does it Mean to Govern? - Principles of Policy Governance

- The Board has authority over and accountability Insight School of Oregon – Charter Option
- However, the Board is made up of volunteers
- Hence, the Board hired K12 to advise you through and implement for you the responsibility associated with running a virtual charter school
- The Board's single point of contact will be the head of school, who will receive your instructions and implement your vision
- The Head of School is supported by an experienced network of virtual school professionals, including regional vice president, the local and Herndon-based K12 staff



Role of the Board of Directors

In addition to governing ISOR-CO, the Board:

- Sets policies
- Complies with legal obligations
- Establishes criteria for administrator and ISOR-CO performance
- Monitors administrator and ISOR-CO performance
- Reviews and acts on administrator recommendations
- Provides guidance to administrator as needed
- Hire and terminate teachers
- Creates and monitors long term vision for ISOR-CO; adjust as necessary
- Creates a positive image for ISOR-CO

All Board actions should be consistent with the mission and vision of ISOR-CO



Role of the ISOR-CO Administrator

As part of providing the services listed in the K12 Service Agreement, the Administrator:

- Advises the Board
- Manages the day-to-day activities of ISOR-CO
- Suggests and implements ideas and solutions
- Serves as a Board resource person
- Interviews, recommends for hire, evaluates and trains staff
- Recommends, delegates and oversees staff's efforts
- Monitors and reports progress within guidelines
- Implements policy, writes rules and regulations, makes recommendations
- Creates a positive image for ISOR-CO, directs communications

All Administrator actions should be consistent with the mission and vision of ISOR-CO *and* service agreement



Responsibilities of the ISOR – CO Board of Directors



Areas of Responsibility for Charter Boards and Administrators

- General
- Policy
- Meetings
- Budget/Finance
- Personnel
- Student
- Community Relations

Legal Compliance is Required in All Areas of Responsibility



General Responsibilities

ISOR-CO Administrator

- Education leader of ISOR-CO
- Implement policies & procedures
- Administer ISOR-CO in accordance with Board policy, guidelines & applicable laws
- Coordinate day-to-day operations & programs of ISOR-CO
- Responsible for carrying out Board mandates
- Provide educational leadership to the Board, staff, students & community
- Identify needs of ISOR-CO & report them to the Board
- Continually upgrade his/her professional knowledge & qualifications
- Maintain membership and participate in appropriate professional associations; attend conferences, workshops, etc.

ISOR-CO Board

- Represent public education
- Report to Authorizer
- Liaison between ISOR-CO and community
- Establish rules for governing of the charter and the students (Board Policy Manual)
- Invest the Administrators with those powers it may legally delegate
- Require professional leadership from the Administrator
- Attend educational conferences and workshops
- Participate in activities of appropriate organizations



Policy Responsibilities

ISOR-CO Administrator

- Act as advisor to the Board in areas needed policy development or revision
- Draft policies and provide Board with necessary data and information
- Maintain current, up-to-date manual of Academic policies
- Implement ISOR-CO policies and communicate to staff, students and community the intent and importance of those policies
- Develop and implement rules, regulations and procedures necessary to implement the Board's policies and appropriately manage ISOR-CO
- Assist Board in evaluating policies and recommend revisions, rewrites or repeal of policies as needed

ISOR-CO Board

- Adopt Board policies for the governance of ISOR-CO
- Clearly define for the Administrators the intent of the Board and actions necessary for implementation
- Review, and adopt, administrative procedures, rules, and regulations which implement the Board's policy
- Review and evaluate Board policy



Meetings Responsibilities

ISOR-CO Administrator

- Act as advisor to the Board
- Provide Board, in advance of the meeting, with sufficient and timely information and data for decision making
- Carry out Board's decisions and instructions. Notifies staff and students (if applicable) of Board's action
- Develops plans to follow up on items of concern
- Assure that the scheduling and holding of Board meeting meets legal requirements
- Ensure that public record of the meeting is kept
- Refrain from scheduling inappropriate actions in executive sessions or introducing inappropriate subjects while in executive sessions

ISOR-CO Board

- Meet to transact all ISOR-CO business
- Establish, through policy, the operational procedures for Board meetings
- The Board chairman, in consultation with the Administrator, develops the meeting agenda
- Identify for the Administrator the amount of information expected for a good decision making and the amount of time necessary, prior to the meeting, for appropriate review of the materials
- Identify the process and activities necessary to implement the Board's decisions
- Comply with the Open Public Meeting Laws



Budget/Finance Responsibilities

ISOR-CO Administrator

- Serve as ISOR-CO budget officer
- Prepare a detailed budget based on Board's priorities and parameters
- Present a budget for Board consideration and approval
- Administer the budget and assure expenditures of ISOR-CO's funds are within budget and legal limits
- Establish a control system for financial accounting and reporting in accordance with Board policy and state law
- Assist the auditor by collecting appropriate records and assuring that staff and appropriate information are available upon request
- Act as a resource to the Board
- Present audit to the Board and arrange for a meeting between the Board and its auditor

ISOR-CO Board

- Establish priorities for the management of ISOR-CO, programs offered and services provided
- Approve, amend and adopt an annual budget
- Co-signatory of checks
- Utilize an auditor who is directly responsible to the Board
- Receive the audit report from an INDEPENDENT auditor
- Monitor the financial control system established
- Present audit to authorizer



Instructional Program Responsibilities

ISOR-CO Administrator

- Advise the Board on the educational needs of students, and the requirements of the State Department of Education
- Provide leadership to the staff in the continuous development, implementation and evaluation of the educational program
- Recommend appropriate graduation standards and methods to measure their attainment based upon state guidelines
- Regularly schedule presentations and reports by staff and K12 on various segments of the educational program
- Submit all state required reports to State Department of Education
- Present state required reports to Board for evaluation of educational program

ISOR-CO Board

- Establish an educational philosophy, with measurable goals and objectives for ISOR-CO educational program
- Evaluate the educational program consistent with Board policies and state expectations
- Adopt changes as necessary or as recommended by the Administration
- Report to the community on the status of education
- Approve testing programs
- Identify and adopt graduation requirements consistent with state standards and local community needs
- Receive and evaluate reports of the professional staff regarding the educational program
- Adopt policies on the selection of textbooks and other instructional materials and equipment



Personnel Responsibilities

ISOR-CO Administrator

- Develop job descriptions for Board approval
- Follow Board and State procedures on recruiting and hiring teachers, including background checks
- Recommend the hiring of all teachers
- Supervise the work of all ISOR-CO employees
- Serve as the Board's liaison with staff
- Notify personnel of the Board's actions
- Maintain good working relationships with staff and maintain lines of communication with individual staff members and employee organizations
- Assure that evaluation procedures comply with all legal requirements and reflect principles of good personnel management
- Document recommendations for retention or dismissal, identify corrective actions

ISOR-CO Board

- Review and adopt job descriptions
- Adopt personnel management policies
- Establish hiring criteria
- Hire and fire teachers based on the recommendation of the Administrator
- Review all employee work assignments and recommendations of the Administrator
- Promote good working relations with staff
- Adopt policy on the evaluation of teachers and approve evaluation procedures
- Receive recommendations and take appropriate actions based on personnel evaluations, including terminations
- Evaluate the Administrator



Student Services Responsibilities

ISOR-CO Administrator

- Recommend appropriate policies and rules to maintain adequate services and appropriate control of students
- Implement Board adopted student policies
- Direct and supervises all student activities, both instructional and custodial

ISOR-CO Board

- Adopt policies for provision of student services including enrollment, attendance, activities, rights and responsibilities, discipline and welfare
- Adopt policies necessary to cover student special needs and problems
- Adopt policies necessary to assure appropriate safety and health needs of students



Community Relations Responsibilities

ISOR-CO Administrator

- Inform the community about ISOR-CO
- Recommend community relations activities
- Work with parent groups and other organizations. Promote the programs and activities of ISOR-CO to community groups
- Establish a working relationship with the news media. Meets with representatives of the media to provide appropriate information. Issues news releases as required
- Serve as liaison with the community to resolve complaints or grievances, make recommendations to the Board for resolution of complaints that cannot be solved at the administrative level

ISOR-CO Board

- Liaison between ISOR-CO and community. Maintain an awareness of community attitudes, values, concerns and interests
- Adopt policies for good community relations
- Actively participate in programs which build good community relations
- Represents ISOR-CO at community functions
- Cooperate with news media for dissemination of information about the Board and ISOR-CO, consistent with Board policy and legal requirements
- Adopt policy for the equitable resolution of community complaints or grievances; work through the Administrator to resolve such complaints and grievances



How to Keep ISOR-CO Focused on the Mission:

Set Expectations and Avoid Conflicts



Setting Expectations: What the Board should expect from the ISOR-CO Administrative Team

- Honesty and integrity
- Ability to provide firm, timely and definite recommendations
- Willingness and ability to delegate authority to his/her administrative staff
- Ability to communicate clearly, both verbally and in writing
- High competence in the technical aspects of the position, such as finance, business management, personnel management, and school law
- Willingness to give accurate and honest evaluations of personnel and educational programs
- Ability to be a leader of ISOR-CO
- Understanding the role of the Board in policy making
- Ability to be open minded and to avoid becoming involved in personalities
- Willingness and ability to keep the Board and public accurately informed
- Willingness to bring controversial issues before the Board for evaluation and study
- Faithful implementation of Board decisions and policies even if he/she has opposed the adoption or favored another policy
- Adherence to a code of ethics of a state or national administrative organization
- Ability to withstand a reasonable amount of intense pressure
- An understanding of the pressures to which a volunteer Board is subjected by the community
- Willingness to grow professionally



Setting Expectations: What the ISOR-CO Administrators should expect from the Board

- Willingness to study, be prepared and request information on issues prior to Board meetings
- Willingness to share the successes and failures of ISOR-CO with the Administrator
- Recognition of the Administrators as the educational leaders of ISOR-CO
- An understanding of the relative or complementary roles of the Administrator and the Board in policy making
- Assistance in gaining acceptance and support in the community
- Willingness to abide by its own rules and policies
- Willingness to provide the Administrator with adequate staff and clerical assistance
- Understanding of errors and mistakes which will inevitably arise
- Willingness to acknowledge and follow the chain of command of ISOR-CO
- Avoidance of seeking personal privilege
- An effort to work as a team, fostered in unity and harmony
- Careful consideration of each recommendation made by the Administrator
- Willingness to get the available facts before jumping to conclusions
- A willingness to grow as Board Members by attendance at workshops and seminars on the regional, state and national level
- Care and concern for the education of all students



Avoiding Conflict: How does the ISOR-CO Administrators avoid conflict with the Board

- Treat Board members equally
- Keep the Board members informed of public concerns
- Provide adequate financial data or adequate information
- Be prepared for meetings
- Use strong management practices
- Make public statements only after informing the Board
- Be willing to make unpopular recommendations
- Be open and honest with the Board
- Provide alternatives in an objective manner
- Adjust to the reality of an involved Board
- Support the Board's decisions
- Be loyal
- Notify the Board of topics prior to the meeting; don't surprise the Board
- Avoid hidden agendas



Avoiding Conflict: How the Board avoids conflict with the ISOR-CO Administration

- Govern instead of manage
- Stay focused on ISOR-CO mission, not the “administrivia”
- Act as a unified team, instead of making promises as individual Board members
- Serve the entire student population, not just individuals
- Follow procedures for handling complaints
- Keep executive session information confidential
- Do your “homework” and prepare for meetings
- Act on sensitive issues
- Be open and honest with the Administrator
- Make decisions based on facts, not preconceived notions
- Support the Administrator –be loyal
- Notify the Administrator of issues prior to meetings; avoid “surprises” at meetings
- Avoid hidden agendas



Public Hat vs. Private Hat

- Confidentiality
 - FERPA -Buckley Amendment
 - Can not discuss specific student issues with non-ISOR-CO personnel
 - Recommend limited discussions with ISOR-CO personnel and preserve student confidentiality
 - Personnel Matters
 - Do not discuss anything about an ISOR-CO employee's employment or job performance outside of the Board/ ISOR-CO setting
 - Do not discuss employees with other employees
 - If a concern is raised regarding a specific employee or teacher with a Board member, direct the individual raising the concern to the ISOR-CO administration as a first step



Public Hat vs. Private Hat

- Presentation of position or opinion as a Board Member
 - Speaking on behalf of ISOR-CO at public meetings, legislature, charter commission
 - Presenting understood and recognized position of Board/ ISOR-CO
- Presentation of position or opinion as a private citizen
 - A Board member does not check their citizenship rights at the door
 - If presenting your own opinion
 - State it is own personal opinion
 - Do not include that you are a member of the Board or if you do state such, specifically indicate that you are presenting your own personal opinions and not speaking as a representative of ISOR-CO or the Board
- Conflicts of Interest
 - Abstain from interested party decisions
 - The VA bylaws include a conflict of interest provision



Sources for Charter School Governance

- www.qualitycharters.org
- www.uscharterschools.org
- www.cacharterschools.org/charter.html
- www.nationalcharterschools.org/learning_resources.php
- www.edreform.com
- www.policygovernance.org
- www.publiccharters.org/

