

PURPOSE

The governing body of a public charter school is responsible for ensuring the success of the school and its students. While the school leadership and staff manage the day-to-day responsibilities of operating the school, the governing body is ultimately accountable to the charter school sponsor for academic achievement of students, effective organizational practices, and strong stewardship of public funds.

These *Governance Standards*, developed in alignment with Section 3 of Assembly Bill 419 from the 81st Session of the Nevada Legislature, now codified as NRS 388A.224, describe the standards by which the State Public Charter School Authority defines strong charter school governance. Public charter schools sponsored by the State Public Charter School Authority should use these standards as a north star for evaluating board effectiveness and guiding board member development.

STANDARDS

1 Focus on Student Growth, Achievement, and Social and Emotional Wellbeing

- Understand academic performance expectations established by the State of Nevada and State Public Charter School Authority
- Commit to the academic, behavioral, social, and emotional success of all enrolled students and the overall academic success of the school
- Set ambitious and attainable goals for student academic growth and achievement that aim to ensure the success of all students
- Establish objectives for student social and emotional wellbeing that aim to ensure an inclusive, positive, and supportive environment for all students
- Regularly monitor progress toward internal goals and objectives as well as statewide performance expectations
- Analyze student growth, achievement, and wellbeing data by student group (race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, etc.) in order to identify and act on disparities in student performance and experience
- Use data to inform decisions

2 Ensure an Effective and Well-Run Organization

- Understand organizational performance expectations established by the State Public Charter School Authority
- Uphold the legal and ethical duties of the school's board; ensure that the board meets all compliance and reporting requirements
- Uphold legal requirements for charter schools under state and federal laws and regulations and comply with the terms of the charter contract.
- Regularly monitor operational data to ensure the organizational health of the school and to monitor progress towards the State Public Charter School Authority's organizational performance expectations
- Establish and uphold school and board policies that protect the organization, its students, and employees
- Ensure the school has strong operational plans for facilities, food services, transportation, security, and emergency preparedness
- Ensure all board meetings are conducted in accordance with Nevada's Open Meeting Law and that the board operates in accordance with the school's bylaws

3 Manage Financial Resources Responsibly

- Understand financial performance expectations established by the State Public Charter School Authority
- Annually establish and manage to a budget that allocates resources in alignment with the school’s goals and strategic plan
- Regularly review financial data and adjust the school’s budget or operations as appropriate
- Establish and uphold financial policies and procedures that protect the school’s resources
- Regularly monitor financial performance to ensure the short- and long-term financial health of the school and to monitor progress towards the State Public Charter School Authority’s performance expectations

4 Commit to Long-Term Success

- Oversee the development and implementation of the school’s strategic plan, which aims to bring to fruition the school’s mission and vision
- Understand the State Public Charter School Authority’s strategic plan and priorities and work to create alignment between the Authority’s goals and the school’s goals
- Establish board committees to further the strategic plan and school goals
- Regularly assess the board’s effectiveness in meeting these *Governance Standards* and achieving strategic goals
- Engage in meaningful board training conducted by independent individuals/organizations
- Maintain an engaged board, ensuring compliance with all bylaws and statutory requirements for board members
- Proactively plan for potential board member transitions and ensure effective onboarding for new board members

5 Ensure Strong Leadership and Effective Partnerships

- Hire school leadership that is committed to the school’s model and mission and is capable of leading staff and students to achieve strong results and meet established goals
- Commit to uphold the boundary between governing the school and leading the daily school operations
- Hold school leadership accountable for the operations and performance of the school, addressing challenges proactively
- Regularly evaluate school leader performance based on established expectations; encourage and support their professional development
- Proactively plan for the development of future leaders and for succession
- Establish clear, specific contracts with key partners, including Educational Management Organizations, Charter Management Organizations, and back-office service providers, that set clear expectations for expirations, termination, performance, and outcomes
- Hold partners accountable for their services and performance, addressing challenges proactively
- Regularly evaluate partnerships based on established expectations for performance and outcomes

6 Operate in Service of your School Community

- Ensure that the school’s board meetings and its members are accessible to the school community, including parents, teachers, and students
- Develop and consider school policies and critical decisions transparently and in collaboration with the school community
- Establish effective communication systems and proactively seek robust input and feedback from the school community
- Collaborate with stakeholders to address concerns and challenges
- Seek to achieve and maintain board members and school staff that are representative of the school