

DEVELOPING THE BOARD

ENSURING
TALENT, WISDOM AND
STABILITY

Committee on Trustees or Nominating Committee

- The most important Board subcommittee but often nonexistent or inactive
- Recruits develops and trains wise board members
- Evaluates the board's performance and corrects inappropriate behaviors
- Preserves institutional memory by minimizing trustee and chair turnover (to the extent this is possible in international schools)

The First Three Responsibilities of the Committee on Trustees

1. CULTIVATE

2. SCREEN

3. INVITE

The Most Desirable Traits in a Board Member

- Passion for and a commitment to the School's mission
- Wisdom NOT knowledge or skills for hire in the marketplace
- The ability to think and act strategically rather than micromanage
- Public and private support of the Head
- Financial resources MAY be important

Traits to Avoid in a Board Candidate

- The inability to take off the “parent hat” or other constituent “hat”
- Conflicts of interest or the potential for a conflict
- A tendency to engage in “boundary crossing”
- Any showing of lack of support for the Head
- “Cowboy” behavior

The Proper “Mix”

Continually assess the current mix of talent and wisdom on the board including the balance of current parents, past parents and non-parents.

The Next Three Responsibilities of the Committee on Trustees

4. ORIENT

5. TRAIN

6. EVALUATE

Orienting and Training

- Orientation to the NAIS and regional principles of good practice even for those who serve on other non-profit boards
- ALL board members (even experienced ones) benefit from annual training

Board Self Evaluation

- Effectiveness of the Chair
- Openness of board meetings including time management
- The number, preparedness and effectiveness of board subcommittees
- Support for the head
- Financial support

Board Self-Evaluation II

- Attendance patterns
- Understanding and acting in accordance with healthy board governance
- Succession planning
- Decorum, civility and professional tone of all exchanges among trustees
- Presence of factions within the board
- Individual trustee self-evaluation

The Final Responsibilities of the Committee on Trustees

- WARN OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS
- REMOVE TRUSTEES, IF NECESSARY

Preserving Institutional Memory

Boards need to minimize turnover of trustees who remember the mission of the school and why the current head was hired

Term Limits

- Bylaws should allow for three terms of either three or four years each
- Assumes annual effective evaluation of each trustee
- Chair terms of three to five years: Most heads do not survive their fourth board chair.
- No term limit is possible if the Committee on Trustees is effective

***Global Issues - Local
Solutions***



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