

# Governing Board Life Cycle:

Onboarding and Succession Planning

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# Introductions



# Founder Transitions

- o Why do founders and their transitions matter?
- o Why are founder transitions complex and risky for charter schools?
- o Describe a transition you have experienced on your board? What are some lessons learned?
- o How do board composition needs change over time?
- o What should boards consider when it comes time for a major transition?
- o How can you create a culture where transition discussions occur proactively?

# Identifying Gaps

- o How does your board identify skill gaps?
- o What are the most difficult gaps to fill?
- o What are the current gaps your board is trying to fill and how did you establish those priorities?
- o Do these discussions occur at the committee level or as a whole board? Describe your process.

# Recruiting & Vetting

- o Where do you look for individuals to fill vacancies?
- o Who on your board is responsible for these functions?
- o Describe your respective vetting processes?
- o What would you like to improve when it comes to recruiting and vetting new members?
- o How will you transition these functions to new members?

# Orientation

- o What information about your school do you share during the orientation phase (before the prospective member is seated)?
- o Have you surveyed new members to determine improvements needed to this process?

# Onboarding

- o Describe the onboarding processes currently used by your boards?
- o Who is responsible for onboarding new members?
- o Do you have a process for checking to make sure new board members are reviewing institutional documents?
- o How do you build cohesion with new members?
- o Why is this process so critical to long-term board functioning?
- o Do you think there is value in assigning a new board member a mentor? Has your board tried this approach?

# Board Growth & Development

- o Does your board have a written succession plan?
- o What should a succession plan include?
- o How would you advise a board to start the succession planning process?



# The Board's Dilemma: *Why Organizations Struggle*

- o Survival fear / responsibility panic
- o Time and commitment anxiety
- o Authority and power issues
- o Staffing fears and issues
- o Competing values
- o Accountability
- o Unattended organizational weaknesses
- o Fundraising dependence on founder
- o Mission creep and / or static or unfocused direction

# Tips for Success

- o Strategic planning
- o Board self-assessment
- o Understanding the schools current position in all key areas
- o Openly discuss transition
- o Keep a profile on current board members
- o Consider how to manage expectations during the orientation and onboarding phases
- o Assign these processes to a committee and monitor progress

# Resources

- o Founder Transitions: Creating Good Endings and New Beginnings. A Guide for Executive Directors and Boards. The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

# Thank you!

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