

Boards Policy Manual A

Performance Expectations of the Board of Trustees

Policy #: A-1

Approved: May 9, 2002

Amended: March 22, 2005

At the first Board of Trustees meeting of each school year the Board will set for itself goals for the upcoming year.

The Board will evaluate whether or not these goals have been met prior to the first Board of Trustees meeting of the subsequent school year.

Advisory Committees to the Board of Trustees

Policy #: A-2

Approved: March 22, 2005

The following policies govern the appointment and functioning of advisory committees to the Board of Trustees:

- Advisory committees may be created by the Board to serve as task forces for special purposes or to provide continuing consultation in a particular area of activity. The board development, personnel policies, resource development and finance committees will be the standing advisory committees to the Board;
- The composition of task forces and any other advisory committees will be broadly representative of the school and community and take into consideration the specific tasks assigned to the committee. Members of the professional staff may be appointed to the committee as members or consultants as found desirable;
- The chair of each committee will be chosen by the President of the Board. Appointments to such committees will be made by the chair of the committee. Appointment of staff members to such committees will be made by the chair of the committee upon recommendation of the Executive Director;
- Tenure of committee members will be one year only unless the member is re-appointed;
- Each committee will be clearly instructed as to:
 - a) The length of time each member is being asked to serve;
 - b) The assignment the Board wishes the committee to fulfill and the extent and limitations of its responsibilities;
 - c) The resources the Board will provide;
 - d) The approximate dates on which the Board wishes to receive major reports;

- e) Board policies governing all committee members;
- f) Responsibilities for the release of information to the press;
- All recommendations of an advisory committee must be submitted to the Board.

The Board of Trustees has the sole power to dissolve any of its advisory committees and reserves the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any committee.

Conduct of Trustees
Policy #: A-3-A
Approved: July 11, 2002
Amended: March 22, 2005

Trustees must attend a majority of Board meetings per year. The President of the Board will have the discretion to dismiss a Trustee for failure to attend the required number of meetings.

Trustees are expected to come prepared to Board meetings. Trustees should be familiar with the agenda and all other documents to be discussed will be prepared and sent by the President of the Board at least one week prior to each meeting.

All Trustees will become familiar with Robert's Rules of Order and the Massachusetts Open Meeting rules.

Agenda Format
Policy #: A-3
Approved: March 22, 2005

The President of the Board of Trustees, conferring with the Executive Director, will arrange the order of items on the agenda for Board meetings so that the Board can accomplish its business as expeditiously as possible. The particular order may vary from meeting to meeting in keeping with the business at hand.

The Board will follow the order of business established by the agenda except as it votes to rearrange the order for the convenience of visitors, individuals appearing before the Board, or to expedite Board business.

Items of business may be suggested by any trustee, staff member, or member of the community. An item to be added to the agenda must be presented to the President at least one week prior to the meeting. A staff member who wishes to have a topic scheduled on the agenda should submit a request through the Executive Director.

The agenda will also provide time for public comment.

The agenda, together with supported materials, will be distributed to Board members at least two days prior to the meeting.

The agenda will be posted.

Roberts Rules of Order will govern the proceedings of the Board, except when those rules conflict with the Board's approved policies and regulations. In accordance with Robert's Rules, the Board may suspend parliamentary rules of order by a two-third's vote.

Board Meeting Minutes
Policy #: A-4
Approved: September 12, 2002
Amended: March 22, 2005

The minutes of the meetings of the Board of Trustees constitute the written record of Board actions. It is legal evidence of those actions. Therefore, the Secretary of the Board or a designate will be responsible for reporting in the minutes all actions taken by the Board.

Minutes will include;

1. A statement on the nature of the meeting, the time, the place and the approval of the last regular and each subsequent special meeting;
2. Names of the members present or absent, annotated as to arrival and departure times, if during the meeting;
3. A complete record of official actions taken by the Board. Resolutions and motions will be given in their exact wording, accompanied by the names of members moving and seconding and a record of the results of the vote. Reports and documents relating to a formal motion may be omitted if they are referred to and identified by title and date;
4. Notation of formal adjournment.

Copies of the minutes will be sent to all Board members at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting at which they are to be approved.

The approved minutes will become permanent records of the Board. Minutes of public meetings and minutes of executive sessions that have been declassified will be in the custody of the clerk who will make them available to interested parties.

Public Participation at Board Meetings

Policy #: A-5

Approved: Jan. 9, 2003

Amended: March 22, 2005

All regular and special meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be open to the public. Executive sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In order that all who wish to be heard have chance, and to insure the ability of the Board to conduct business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. There will be a "public comment" item on each agenda.
 2. At the onset of the public question and comment section, the President will review all correspondence addressed to the Board that is considered relevant to a Board meeting. The President and/or Clerk will be responsible for all Board members receiving all correspondence at least two days prior to the Board meeting.
 3. Improper conduct and remarks will not be allowed. Defamatory or abusive remarks are always out of order. If a speaker persists in improper conduct or remarks, the President of the Board or his/her designate may terminate that individual's privileges of address.
 4. All remarks will be addressed through the President or his/her designate of the meeting.
 5. Speakers may offer comments or objective criticisms of the school operations and programs as concern them, but in public session the Board will not hear personal complaints of school personnel nor against any member of the school community. Under most circumstances, administrative channels are the proper means for disposition of legitimate complaints involving staff members.
 6. Speakers during the public period will be allowed three minutes to present their material. The President of the Board or his/her designate may permit an extension of this time limit. Longer presentations or comments of a personal nature may be presented to the Board through the President or his/her designate at least one week in advance of the meeting for review and consideration at an appropriate time.
 7. The President or his/her designate will respond to all public comments and correspondence in a timely manner.
 8. Videotaping, recording, picture taking, etc. must be performed in a manner that does not interfere with the work of the Board. Location of recording/taping devices must be approved by the chair of the meeting.
 9. The President or his/her designate will have the authority to suspend the above time constraints on public discussion during emergency sessions of the Board.
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Governing Approach
Policy #: A-6
Approved: November 14, 2000
Amended: March 22, 2005

The Board will approach its tasks in a manner that emphasizes proactive, strategic leadership. Operating in all ways mindful of its stewardship obligation to The Sturgis Charter Public School, the Board will:

- Continually question the appropriate level of the Board's activity;
- Utilize the expertise of individual board members to enhance the ability of the Board as a body rather than to substitute individual values for the group's values;
- Develop disciplinary policies for itself in matters such as attendance at Board and committee meetings, policy development, respect of roles and speaking with one voice;
- Be accountable to the general public for competent, conscientious, and effective accomplishment of its obligations as a body;
- Monitor and discuss the Board's own process and performance;
- Ensure the development of existing and new Board members.

Election of Trustees to the Board
Policy #: B-1
Approved: June 14, 2001
Amended: July 11, 2002
Amended: March 22, 2005

A Board Development Committee will be established, and will consist of 3 Trustees. The Committee will recruit and screen prospective candidates for the Board. Nominations can be presented to the Board Development Committee by anyone within the Sturgis community. The Board Development Committee will interview each candidate and present each candidate with a packet containing the Sturgis charter, bylaws, Board policies, and other information the Committee deems pertinent to Sturgis and policy governance issues. Potential applicants may be asked to sit on various Board Committees to learn more about the school. After reading school documents, applicants will be interviewed by the Development Committee.

The election of new Trustees will take place during the June meeting. The term of the Trustee will begin at the July meeting. [The President of the Board may direct the Committee to propose new members when he feels the number of Board members is less than appropriate.]

Trustees will commit to a three-year tenure. The three-year tenure of Trustees will be staggered such that at least three but less than a majority of Trustees will end their term during any one-year.

Officer Responsibilities and Term of Office

Policy #: B-2

Approved: October 10, 2002

Amended: March 22, 2005

Officers of the Board are in the service of the Board. As such they are bound by Board wishes and by the limits of Board authority. The officers may meet as a group with the Executive Director for purposes of preparing agenda and other pre-Board work, but they may not act in place of the Board, except as it specifically delegates. Officers of the Board serve a term of one year, as stated in the bylaws. Officers may be re-elected for additional terms at the Board's discretion.

1. President:
 - Assures the integrity of Board process including effectiveness of meetings and the Board's adherence to its own rules;
 - Develops the agenda for meetings in concert with the Executive Director, the content of which will be issues that clearly belong to the Board to decide, not the Executive Director;
 - Facilitates Board meetings in a manner that assures deliberations will be fair and open, efficient, timely and orderly;
 - Serves as spokesperson for the Board.

 2. Vice President
 - Substitutes for President when President is not available.

 3. Treasurer
 - Perform duties in connection with finances of the organization as may be required by the Board. Duties of the Treasurer will neither lessen nor add to the Executive Director's accountability to (and only to) Board policies on fiscal conditions and budgeting.

 4. Secretary
 - Attests formally to the legitimacy of Board documents by affixing his/her signature;
 - Reports on and notes any inconsistencies in Board actions to the Board.
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Election of Officers of the Board of Trustees

Policy #: B-3

Approved: June 14, 2001

Amended: March 22, 2005

Officers of the Board of Trustees will serve for a one-year term, and can be re-elected. The President of the Board will appoint 2 trustees to serve as a nominating committee. The nominating committee will develop a list of no more than 2 nominees, who are members of the Board, for each office, and will present this list to all trustees for consideration before the June Board meeting. Trustees will vote for all officers during the June Board meeting. The newly elected officers will begin their terms as of the July Board of Trustees meeting.

Fund Raising

Policy #: C-1

Approved: May 9, 2002

Amended: March 22, 2005

The Sturgis Charter Public School will solicit funds to implement its programs such as;

1. New facilities construction;
2. Renovations to existing facilities;
3. Funds for special school projects;
 - a. class trips
 - b. extra curricular activities
 - c. other projects
4. Build up an "endowment"/safety net;
5. Technology development;
6. Future purchase of building;
7. Student scholarships.

Fund raising can not include any activities which in any way conflict with the charter, are illegal or compromise the reputation of Sturgis Charter Public School.

Executive Limitations Policy: Budgeting

Policy #: C-2

Approved: March 22, 2005

With respect to planning fiscal events (budgeting for all or any remaining part of a fiscal period including current as well as future years), the Executive Director may not jeopardize either the programmatic or fiscal integrity of The Sturgis Charter Public School. Accordingly, he/she may not cause or allow budgeting which:

1. Contains too little detail to enable reasonably accurate projection of revenue and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, cash flow, and subsequent audit trails;
2. Plans the operational expenditures in any fiscal year of more funds than are conservatively projected to be received in that period, not including fund raising in the period.

Board Delegation to Finance Committee
Policy #: C-3
Approved: March 22, 2005

1. To verify financial status of The Sturgis Charter Public School by ensuring that the Executive Director is operating within budget guidelines per the established "Budget" policy.
2. To verify financial status of The Sturgis Charter Public School by ensuring that the Executive Director is operating within the guidelines per the established "Financial Condition" policy.
3. Provide recommendations to Executive Director regarding operational budgets, capital improvements and fund raising.
4. Establish Audit Committee whose responsibilities include:
 - a) Bid process for choice of annual audit.
 - b) Validation that audit guidelines are followed.
 - c) Review annual audit report results and ensure necessary corrective actions are taken and adequate monitoring processes are put in place.

Executive Limitations Policy: Financial Condition
Policy #: C-4
Approved: March 22, 2005

With respect to operating The Sturgis Charter Public School in a sound and prudent fiscal manner, the Executive Director may not jeopardize the long-term financial strength of the School. Accordingly, he/she may not:

1. Cause the program to incur indebtedness other than trade payables incurred in the ordinary course of doing business;
2. Use advances from the cash reserve other than for ordinary operating expenses;
3. Use any Endowments, Reserve Funds, or Donations from any fund raising activities or their earnings for any purpose other than that specified by the Board;
4. Use restricted contributions for any purposes other than those designated by the donor;

5. Use grant funds for any purposes other than that specified by the grant;
6. Settle debts in other than a timely manner unless so designated by the Board;
7. Allow expenditures to deviate materially from Board-stated priorities without Board approval;
8. Incur unanticipated expenditures of more than \$5,000.00 above allocation in any budget account without the prior approval of the Board;
9. To incur any long term financial obligations (financing or lease contracts) without Board approval.

Policy Regarding Procurement
Policy #: C-5
Approved: Jan. 9, 2003
Amended: April 2004
Amended: March 22, 2005

It shall be the policy of Sturgis Charter Public School to purchase competitively, without bias and to seek maximum educational value for every dollar expended. Sturgis Charter Public School shall use sound business practices and reasonable procurement policies that shall include the following:

1. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for the development and implementation of a system of internal controls, including generally accepted accounting principles that insure that funds are appropriately received, expended and accounted for.
2. A procurement process that provides for the greatest amount of competition, gives potential bidders sufficient information upon which to place their bid, and employs a process of evaluating bidders responses that enables Sturgis Charter Public School to determine the best value proposal.
3. A procurement process that is consistent with and based upon the internal control system of the school itself and provides sufficient documentation for audit purposes.
Sound business practice and reasonable procurement policy shall coincide with those regulated by MGL30B procurement laws.

Financial Support of IB Programme
Policy #: C-6
Approved: April 2003
Amended: March 22, 2005

In order to support the implementation of the International Baccalaureate Programme, the Sturgis Charter Public School will adjust its annual budget to provide payment of the registration fee and the “per capita” fee for all juniors to register in the I.B. Diploma Programme, and provide allowance to pay for two examination fees for every student.

Executive Director Board Relationship
Policy #: D-1
Approved: March 22, 2005

All Board authority delegated to staff is delegated through the Executive Director, so that all authority and accountability of staff, as the Board is concerned, is considered to be the authority and accountability of the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall use this delegated authority to administer the organization successfully, provide leadership to the program, staff and volunteers, and keep the Board informed of changes in the larger environment that may have an impact on the purpose of the program.

1. Only decisions of the Board acting as a body are binding upon the Executive Director.
2. Decisions or instructions of individual Board members, officers, or committees are not binding on the Executive Director except in rare circumstances when the Board has specifically authorized such exercise of authority.
3. In the case of Board members or committees requesting information or assistance without Board authorization, the Executive Director can refuse such requests that require, in the Executive Director’s judgment, a material amount of staff time or that he/she finds disruptive.

Executive Director Evaluation
Policy #: D-2
Approved: March 22, 2005

A primary function of the Board of Trustees is to employ and oversee the Executive Director. To that end, the Board shall evaluate the Executive Director at the end of each school year in the following manner:

1. At the beginning of each school year, performance expectations for the Executive Director for the upcoming school year will be developed by the Executive Director with assistance of

the President of the Board. These performance goals will be presented to the Board for approval.

2. An interim, mid year evaluation of the Executive Director's performance will be reviewed by the President and Vice President, and then presented to the Board.
3. At the end of each school year, a complete evaluation of the Executive Director will be conducted by the President and Vice President of the Board. Evaluation criteria shall include:
 - a. Educational leadership;
 - b. Relationship with the community;
 - c. Relationship with the Board;
 - d. Review of performance expectations;
 - e. Fulfillment of other roles and responsibilities as defined in the Executive Director's job description.

Evaluation data will be garnered from evaluation surveys from students, staff, parents, and Board members that are returned directly to the President of the Board. The Executive Director and the Board President will each submit a list of students, staff, and parents, and the evaluation surveys will be sent to all of the constituents on each list. All Board members will receive the evaluation survey. Although each survey will require a signature, the results will be tabulated and summarized before they are shown to the Executive Director in order to ensure anonymity.

The President and Vice President shall discuss their report and the results of the surveys with the Executive Director. The final report shall be presented to the Board at the end of the school year.

The following statement is designed to replace the paragraph below 3e on Policy D-2 Executive Director Evaluation. The current statement starts with "This information are shown to the Executive Director."

The new statement should be written as follows:

Evaluation data will be garnered from evaluation surveys from students, staff, parents, and Board members that are returned directly to the President of the Board. The Executive Director and the Board President will each submit a list of students, staff, and parents, and the evaluation surveys will be sent to all of the constituents on each list. All Board members will receive the evaluation survey. Although each survey will require a signature, the results will be tabulated and summarized before they are shown to the Executive Director in order to ensure anonymity.

Note: Also please change the word questionnaires to surveys in the first sentence of the last paragraph on the page for D-2.



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