

Developing Ethical Standards for your Charter School Board

Resources

- 1) [Code of Ethics for Idaho Professional Educators](#)
- 2) [Idaho Ethics in Government Manual](#)
- 3) [Georgia School Boards Association – School Board Ethics](#) (highly recommended for review)
- 4) [SmartStart Guide: Charter Schools Board Governance](#) by Susan D. Hollins, PhD (pages 44-45)
- 5) [Colorado Nonprofit Association Code of Ethics](#)
- 6) [Michigan Nonprofit Association Code of Ethics](#)
- 7) ISBA (if school / petitioners have chosen to be members)

Elements of a Strong Charter Board Ethics Document

The following outline represents key topics that charter boards may consider including in their ethical standards document. We encourage you to review some or all of the resources provided above to establish a document that aligns to your school's mission and vision and your board's philosophical beliefs. Charter school boards are encouraged to include additional sections or items at their discretion.

Introduction / Purpose

Commitments to Appropriate Governance Practices

- Respecting that board authority is with the board as a whole and not individual members
- Respecting the autonomy of the administrator in making daily operational decisions

Policy Development Expectations

- Board decisions on policies affecting the school will be made only after full discussion and opportunity for public comment at publicly held board meetings
- Board will periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of policies based on the impact on school operations and performance and alignment with applicable laws, rules and regulations

Financial Responsibility and Oversight Expectations

- Board shall be responsible for the financial health of the school
- Board will manage the school's funds responsibly and prudently and will prioritize spending with consideration given to the school's mission, vision, and educational program goals
- Board will participate in fundraising activities as deemed necessary and appropriate by the board
- Board members will make an effort to establish financial practices and reporting that result in accuracy and transparency
- Board members will put the interests of the school first and will refrain from using the position of board member for personal or partisan gain

Board Member Conduct and/or Board Meetings

- Board business conducted at board meetings per bylaws and applicable laws
- Policy regarding acceptance of gifts (which can be outlined in the ethical standards document or separate and referenced)
- Commitment to respect whistleblower policy (which can be outlined in the ethical standards document or separate and referenced)
- Confidentiality of legally protected documents and information

Conflicts of Interest

- Written conflict of interest policy with annual disclosures (which can be outlined in the ethical standards document or separate and referenced)