



## Colorado Charter Schools Annual Conference

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Denver Marriott Tech Center



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# Supporting Leaders Through Their Career Stages: A Board's Role in Adaptive Support

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Skyview Academy**

Evergreen C  
February 27, 2026 | 8:30 – 9:30 AM  
Board and Governance



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CHARTER SCHOOLS

# Supporting Leaders Through Their Career Stages: A Board's Role in Adaptive Support



# Introductions



**Kim McClelland**

Former District and PK-12 leader, current Executive Director, board trainer, owner of LeadJoy Ed, recent empty nester to 2 adult girls and photographer



**Kia Murray**

Former K-8 school leader, current board president, educational consultant, mom to 2 school-aged girls, enjoys travel and DIY projects



**Lisa Jarvi**

Former PK-12 school leader, current Head of Ops, board trainer, mom to 2 college boys, considering Sommelier classes - any advice?

# Who's in the room?

- School Leaders
- Board Members
- School Staff
- School Supporters
- Other



Your school's leader is a New Leader 1-5 years in leadership

Your school's leader is a Mid-Career Leader 5-10 years in leadership

Your school's leader is a Seasoned Leader 11+ years in leadership

# Objectives

- Identify the evolving needs of school leaders at early, mid, and late stages of their careers.
- Differentiate board support strategies that align with each stage of leadership.
- Apply practical tools and discussion prompts to strengthen board-leader relationships.
- Recognize the role boards play in sustaining leader effectiveness and retention over time.

# One employee.



## Be a great boss!



**THANK YOU FOR  
SERVING!**

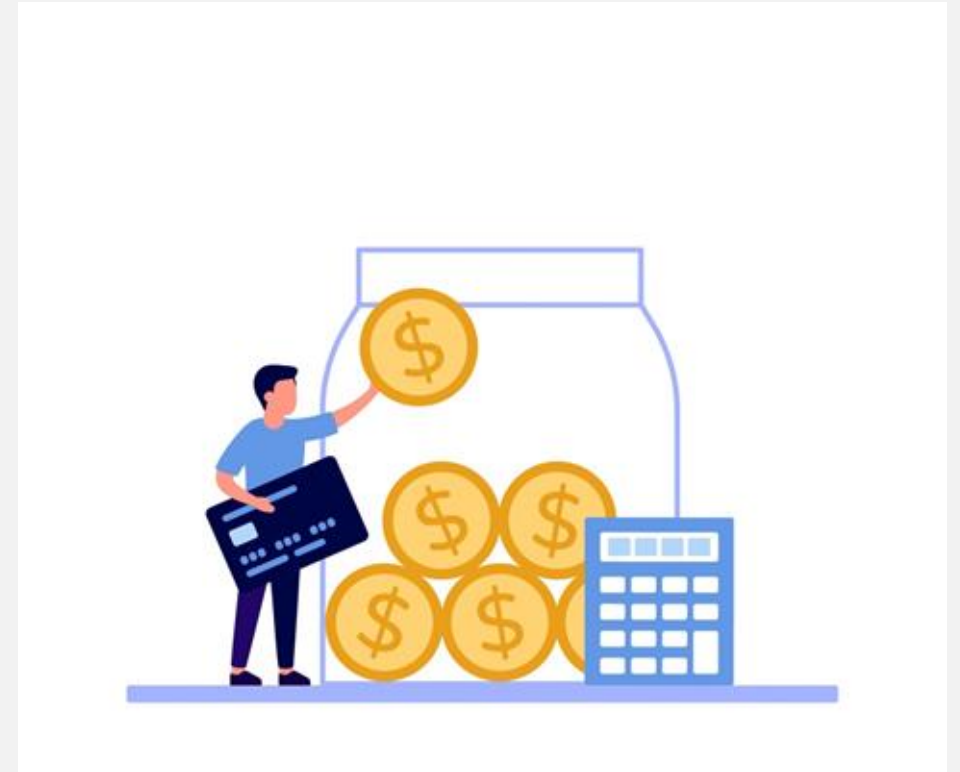
# Supporting the School Leader - Why

- Retention
  - Good leaders are hard to find
  - Leaders who feel supported are better for the organization
- High performance towards goals
  - More likely to be effective
- Professional growth and development
  - Helps the leader
  - Helps the organization
  - Helps the students



# Supporting the School Leader - How

- Be a supportive board
- Prioritize support in the budget
- Specify support in evaluations



# Reflection Activity: Leadership Development



How is your board  
prioritizing  
leadership  
development?

# 70-20-10 Rule for Leadership Development

## 10% - Formal Training

Have your leader attend workshops and conferences from organizations like the Colorado League of Charter Schools, CDE, PEBC, or CASE.

## 70% - On-the-Job Experience

Ensure your leader is reflecting on the day-to-day challenges and successes.

## 20% - Other People

Hire a mentor or coach for your leader.



McCauley, C. (2022). *The 70-20-10 rule for leadership development*. Center for Creative Leadership.

Resource Folder Link: <https://bit.ly/supportingleaders>

**Application:**

The Leader I support is:

- A new leader (1-5 years)
- A mid-career leader (5-10 years)
- A seasoned leader (11+ years)
- New to leading a charter school
- New to Colorado

Characteristics	Challenges	Ideas for Support

# New Leaders

## Resource Folder Tools:

1. Development Plan Template
2. List of Orgs the provide leadership training & Exec Coaches
3. Monthly meeting agenda that includes connection

## Characteristics

- Fresh energy
- Potential
- Enthusiastic
- More reactionary/less strategic decision-making
- Has strengths based on previous experience, but also gaps - often in operations, governance, budgeting...



## Challenges

- Lack of experience -> Poor Decision Making
- Burnout from Overconfidence
- Navigating day-to-day leadership challenges
- Balancing responsibilities in a team context



## Ideas for Support

- Clear development and support plan that identifies strengths and areas for growth
- Mentorship and coaching
- Leverage the broader leadership team
- Formal workshops from CLCS, CDE, local BOCES, PEBC...
- Board/leader meetings that build connection and support

Resource Folder Link: <https://bit.ly/supportingleaders>

# Mid-Career Leaders

## Characteristics

- Established foundational skills
- Seeking deeper impact and growth
- Focused on sustainability and expanding influence



## Challenges

- Avoiding stagnation or plateaus
- Managing increased complexity in roles
- Balancing personal sustainability with organizational demands



## Ideas for Support

- Offer leaders stretch opportunities like new projects or roles
- Develop sustainability strategies such as wellness plans or workload adjustments to prevent burnout and enhance retention
- Participate in peer cohorts
- School Quality Review to get fresh perspective

# Seasoned Leaders

**Resource Folder Tools:**  
1. Sample Succession Plan  
2. Sample Staff Survey Data Report

## Characteristics

- Extensive expertise & proven track record
- Focused on long-term impact & organizational legacy
- May be experienced in governance, operations, and academics/data-based decision making



## Challenges

- Preparing for transitions without disrupting stability
- Maintaining motivation in familiar roles especially if they have a high need for change
- Potential resistance to change



## Ideas for Support

- Succession Planning
- Identifying and grooming new leaders
- Staff Survey
- Supporting legacy work
- Serving as a mentor or coach
- Presenting at conferences

# Seasoned Leader BUT New to Charter Schools

## Resource Folder Tools:

1. League's Board Governance Playbook

## Characteristics

- Experience in other school settings
- Strong leadership practices
- Operational knowledge from centralized systems



## Challenges

- Lack of Central Office support
- Unfamiliar with charter processes (i.e., charter contract, waivers, renewal, authorizer relationships, non-unionized teaching staff, board governance, facilities & operations)



## Ideas for Support

- Charter-specific resources from CLCS, CDE Schools of Choice, and National Alliance for Public Charter Schools
- Pair with a seasoned charter leader for mentorship
- Targeted guidance on board-director dynamics and compliance areas

# Seasoned Leader BUT New to Colorado

## Characteristics

- Charter school leader experience
- Familiar with charter school operations, but not CO context
- Many transferable skills



## Challenges

- Lacks expertise in CO systems (i.e., state assessments, accountability model, funding model, teacher licensure/alternative pathways, special education, GT, ELL)



## Ideas for Support

- Ensure connections to Colorado League of Charter Schools and CDE Schools of Choice
- Pair with a Colorado-based charter leader for mentorship and insights
- Offer resources for quick upskilling on state-specific policies

## Case Study:



**Scenario:** After a thorough search, the board hires Mr. Diaz as the next school leader. He is a dynamic former assistant principal with a strong instructional background and deep ties to the local community. While his potential is clear, the board knows he lacks experience with facilities, budget management, and charter compliance. The board is excited but aware that Mr. Diaz will need significant support to succeed in his new role.

# Final Reflection



How will you/your board apply this training? Make at least one commitment.

Who is going to hold you accountable and how?

What additional training or resources might you need to continue your development?

**“  
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feedback  
helps us all  
move forward  
together**



**Colorado League of  
Charter Schools**



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