



## Colorado Charter Schools Annual Conference

February 25-27, 2026  
Denver Marriott Tech Center



"If you want to go fast, go alone.  
If you want to go far, go together."  
— African proverb



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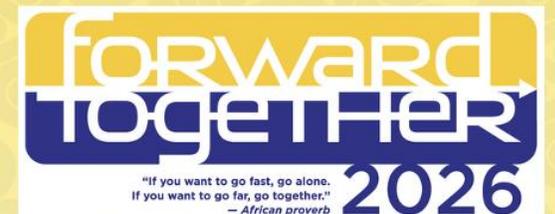
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# Know Your Role: Board Fundamentals – Part 1

**Keri Melmed**

**Keith Ouweneel**

Evergreen B  
February 26, 2026 | 8:30 – 9:30 AM  
Board and Governance



“  
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conference  
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fingertips.



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Annual Conference  
November 11-12, 2025  
Denver, Colorado



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We make it our priority to **advocate** for high-quality public charter schools across Colorado.



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# Charter School Board Training

## Know Your Role: Board Fundamentals

### Part 1



SchoolWorks  
Assessing Quality, Building Capacity

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# Keith Ouweneel

Executive Director, Crown Pointe Academy



# Who's in the room?

## Introductions:

Name

Position on the Board

How long you have served on the board?

1. What part of your role as a board member do you enjoy most?
2. What interested you in joining the board?



# Norms



***Be fully present***



***Make space, take space***



***Engage with curiosity and care***



***Be solution-oriented***



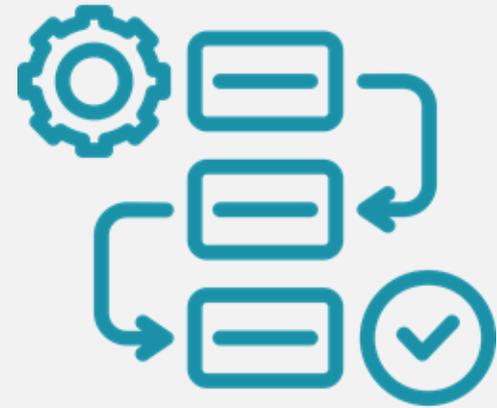
***Keep participating, even in discomfort***



***Center on impact***

# Objectives

- Differentiate between governance and operations.
- Explain the collective and individual responsibilities of a charter school board and its members.



# The Reward



**THANK YOU FOR  
SERVING!**

# The Responsibility



# Roles & Responsibilities



How can we, as a board, effectively fulfill our roles and responsibilities to uphold the school's mission and vision, ensure accountability, and strategically support school leadership—while staying within the boundaries of governance?

# Participant Activity 1: Roles of the ED and Board



## Roles and Responsibilities Card Sort

- 1) In pairs review the duties and discuss
- 2) Sort the cards into two categories:
  - Board
  - Executive Director

# Board v Executive Director Roles and Responsibilities



<b>Board</b>	<b>Executive Director</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Maintains the mission/vision</li><li>● Broad organizational policies</li><li>● Develops the strategic plan</li><li>● Ensures fiscal vitality</li><li>● Supports viable HR &amp; employment conditions</li><li>● Evaluates the Executive Director</li><li>● Ensures bond, rent, facility stability</li><li>● Provides opportunities for professional development for Executive Director</li><li>● Sets educational and programming vision</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Implements the mission/vision on a daily basis</li><li>● Operating process and procedures</li><li>● Implements the strategic plan</li><li>● Makes financial decisions and monitors budget</li><li>● Hires, fires, develops job descriptions, salary offers</li><li>● Evaluates all administrative and instructional staff</li><li>● Manages and oversees facilities</li><li>● Ensures/developments professional development for staff</li><li>● Ensures educational program is effective</li></ul>

# Governance vs. Operations



# Board v Executive Director Roles and Responsibilities



Responsibilities	Time and Attention Graph
<p><b>Governance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mission</li> <li>• Values</li> <li>• Goals</li> <li>• Organizational Health and Viability</li> <li>• Survival</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Board's Decisions</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Administrator Advises</p>
<p><b>Partnership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Planning</li> <li>• School Evaluation</li> <li>• Finance Policies</li> <li>• Enrollment</li> <li>• Employment Terms</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Shared Decisions: Board and Administrator</b></p>
<p><b>Operational</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staffing</li> <li>• Program Management</li> <li>• Internal Systems</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: left;">Board Advises</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Administrator's Decisions</b></p>

# Governance vs. Operations

Board of Directors	School Administration
<p><b>Responsibilities:</b> Establish policies, provide oversight, and ensure the school's long-term sustainability.</p> <p><b>Focus:</b> ENDS/Outcomes</p> <p><b>Key Questions:</b> Why? What? How Much?</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> Monitor, Vote</p>	<p><b>Responsibilities:</b> Execute policies, manage daily operations, and lead the team to achieve strategic goals.</p> <p><b>Focus:</b> MEANS/Methods</p> <p><b>Key Questions:</b> When? Where? Who? How?</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> Implement, Recommend, Report</p>

# Governance vs. Operations - Schuetz

## Board of Directors

**Direct** - Establishes and maintains the strategic “what” of the organization. Defines organizational targets.

**Protect** - The board establishes boundaries, often expressed as policies, that result in the safe operation and long-term success of the organization.

**Enable** - Boards advocate for their schools through their personal networks and look for resource development opportunities. When the board sticks to its role, it also enables the organization to succeed.

# Governance vs. Operations - Schuetz

## School Executive

**Lead** - Designs the tactical how to accomplish the strategic “what” Creates organizational plans to complete the work of the organization within the set boundaries.

**Manage** - Manages the day-to-day systems and processes of the organization. Recognizes her own strengths and weaknesses and builds a strong team to support her.

**Accomplish** - Creates tactical plans, operational policies, and procedural guidance to accomplish the goals set by the board. The leader provides the board with the information they need to monitor the organization.

## Participant Guide Activity 2: Case Study: When Governance Slips into Management



You will be working in small groups.

Read the case study for Summit Peaks Charter School.

Discuss your answers with your small group. Jot notes in your Participant Guide.

Whole group share out and reflection.

# Board Responsibilities



# Individual Board Responsibilities – T or F

- Board members are expected to attend all board and committee meetings, as well as important school events, which typically require 8–10 hours per month.
  -  *True*
- It's acceptable for board members to skip reviewing meeting agendas and materials since the chair will summarize key points during the meeting.
  -  *False* – Board members should review all agendas and supporting materials in advance.
- Board members should stay informed about the school's mission, vision, policies, programs, and services.
  -  *True*

# Individual Board Responsibilities – T or F

- **Making a personal financial contribution to the school, in an amount that is meaningful to you, is encouraged as part of board service.**
  -  *True*
- **Board members are not expected to talk about the school publicly or help promote it.**
  -  *False* – They act as ambassadors, informing others about the school.
- **Identifying and recommending qualified potential board nominees is part of an individual member's role.**
  -  *True*
- **Board members don't need to worry about staying updated on new legislation or education policies because staff will handle that.**
  -  *False* – Staying current on education and charter school policy is important.

# Individual Board Responsibilities – T or F

- **Disclosing actual or perceived conflicts of interest and following confidentiality policies is a required part of serving on the board.**
  -  *True*
- **It's okay for board members to directly request work from staff members since they oversee the school.**
  -  *False* – Board members should avoid direct staff requests.
- **Assisting the board with fiduciary duties, including reviewing the school's financial statements, is part of an individual board member's responsibilities.**
  -  *True*

## Best Practices: Do's and Don'ts

Do read all the board materials before the board meeting.

Do listen carefully during public comment.

Do follow the school's protocol when issues arise and always direct back to the school or board chair.

Do know the school's grievance policy and understand the boards role.

Do support the school with your time, connections, and funds.



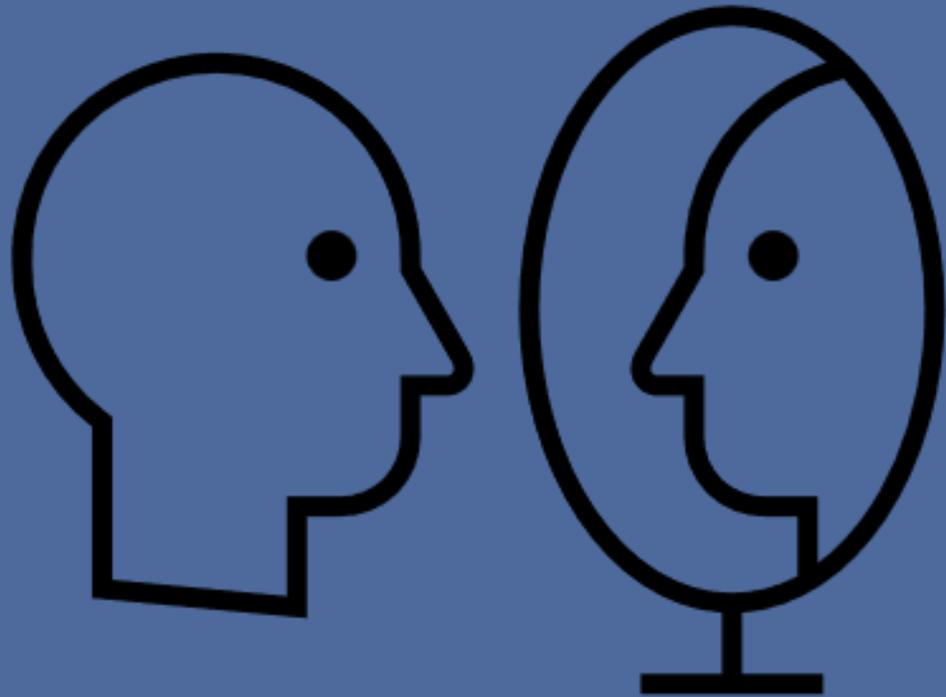
Don't come to the meeting unprepared and unable to engage in board discussion.

Don't engage or respond to public comment.

Don't try to solve a question, issue, or concern on your own when a parent, staff member, student or community member comes to you for help.

Don't serve on the board and only attend the board meetings.

# Reflection: Board Responsibilities



Considering both individual and full board responsibilities, what are the responsibilities where you feel your board is strongest?

What are the responsibilities where you think your board most needs improvement?

How might you address the areas of improvement?

## Participant Activity 3: Six Responsibilities



To fulfill a board's mission, it must uphold the following six key responsibilities:

- Vision and Mission
- Financial Oversight
- Leadership Oversight
- Compliance and Accountability
- External Relations
- Board Function

What are some of the duties or tasks your board must fulfill in each of these responsibility categories?

Work with your group to brainstorm duties or tasks in your assigned category/categories.

# How do your answers compare?

- **Vision and Mission**

- Periodically review the school's vision and mission statements
- Ensure effective organizational planning, both yearly and long-term
- Enhance the school's public standing
- Develop policies in alignment with the school's mission

- **Financial Oversight**

- Approve annual budgets
- Monitor periodic financial reports
- Approve financial policies
- Ensure adequate resources are available to meet the school's mission

- **Leadership Oversight**

- Hire the school's executive leader
- Evaluate the school's executive leader
- Support the school's executive leader

- **Compliance and Accountability**

- Adhere to authorizer requirements
- Adhere to local, state, and federal laws and regulations
- Assess the quality of the school's program
- Monitor academic performance

# How do your answers compare?

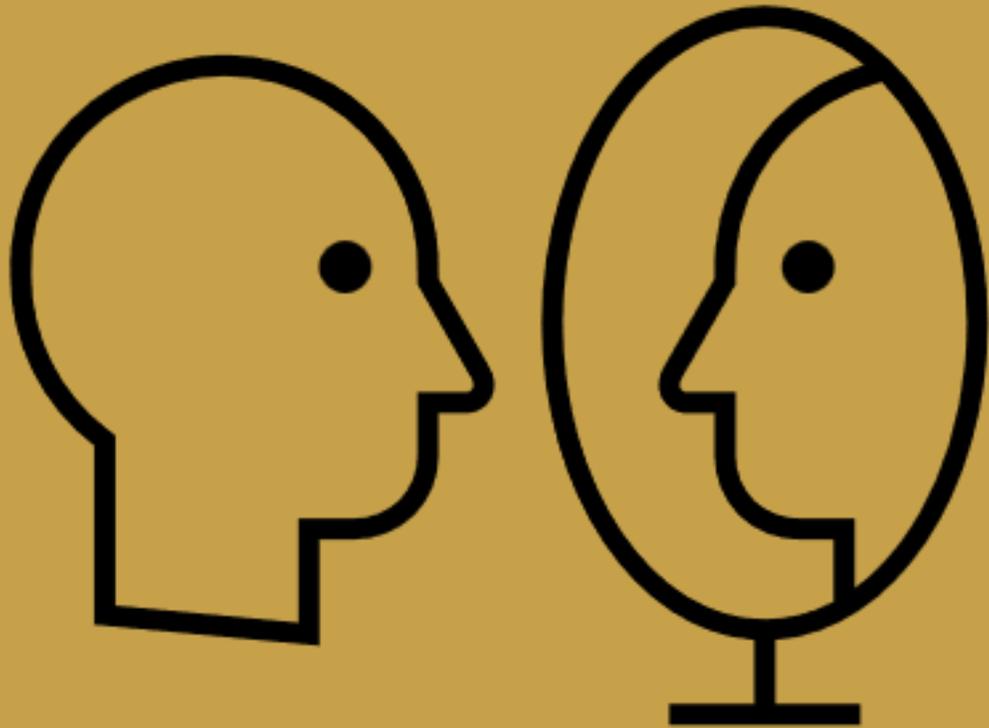
## • External Relations

- Describe the school's mission and key programs
- Maintain visibility at the school and school events
- Raise awareness of the school in the broader community
- Create policies and plans for communication

## • Board Function

- Adhere to the organization's bylaws and articles of incorporation
- Recruit new members based on membership needs
- Provide new member orientation and continuous development
- Assess board performance annually
- Adopt board policies governing individual board member responsibilities

# Final Individual Reflection



Reflect on your learning today.

**How has your thinking about board responsibilities shifted?**

Use the following prompts:  
I used to think...  
Now I think...

**THANK YOU!**

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**Please take our survey.  
We value your feedback!**



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feedback  
helps us all  
move forward  
together**



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