



THE GOVERNOR JOHN ENGLER
**CENTER FOR
CHARTER
SCHOOLS**
CENTRAL MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY



BOARD GEAR: BOARD MEETINGS

Charter public school board members have the responsibility to make sure that the school they govern is fulfilling its mission, using public resources wisely, and providing positive results for students. To fulfill these responsibilities, the board schedules regular, monthly meetings.

It's essential that all board members understand how meetings are conducted. As public officials, board members are held to a high standard of conduct. And, as a public body, they are required to conduct business in public meetings as set forth in Michigan's Open Meetings Act.

PREPARATION

As a board member it is important to be prepared. The board president, staff and committee chairs take time to plan thoughtful agendas and reports. Board members then receive this packet of information at least seven days before each meeting. This provides time to read this packet and make notes so all of your questions, comments and decisions are informed. Since the president, staff and committee chairs have put time into this material—so should board members.

When boards meet, they should dress, act and conduct business in a way that is reflective of their role as public officials. This includes how you set up your board meeting room and how you structure the meeting. The school's management and staff look to you, so be sure to set a good example.

DELIBERATION

As a public body, state law requires that board meetings are open to the public and in a place where the public can observe deliberations, or the process of decision-making. Boards are also required to set time for the public to provide comments on items that are on the agenda, or things that are of concern to them. The board's decisions are required to be recorded in minutes that are available to the public as well. It's the board's job to ensure that laws governing public meetings are followed.

DECISIONS

Meetings are not only the chance for boards to deliberate on, or debate, key items but they are also the forum for the board to make decisions or take action on those items. It's where budgets are adopted, policies are set and plans for the school's future are approved.

Once a vote is cast, the decision is made and the board moves forward together. So, it is important to ask questions and bring forward information to help make the best decision possible.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- » Are meeting materials prepared in a timely way according to the direction we have provided as a board?
- » Which step – preparation, deliberation or decisions - is a strength of our board? Which step could to be strengthened?

Board Gear is a comprehensive governance curriculum focused on charter public school board members and the role governance plays in driving school performance. To view the complete library of videos and resources, visit www.TheCenterforCharters.org/BoardGear.

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