



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



BOARD GEAR: BOARD OFFICER ROLES

Each officer of a charter public school board has an important, yet distinct role. Knowing the role of each officer and how they work in harmony helps ensure that the board governs effectively and the school gets results for students.

The four officers of the board are the president, vice president, treasurer and secretary. Details of each officer's roles are located in your school's bylaws within your charter contract. To get a better understanding of these specific roles, let's explore each one in more detail.

BOARD PRESIDENT

The president of the board's job is to focus and guide the full board in its actions. They set the agenda for each meeting in partnership with management. It is also the president's job to make sure that the school's mission is always put first, and that the board stays focused on what matters most.

The president must be an effective communicator as they act as a bridge between the board and management. They are the person that connects the board's vision to everyone and ensures they are aligned and working together for students.

Most importantly, the president presides over each board meeting. It is the president's job to create an environment that allows all board members to effectively contribute. This means that they should make sure draft agendas are circulated for input, board materials are sent out at least seven days in advance of each meeting, and meetings are run openly and efficiently.

VICE PRESIDENT

The vice president acts in place of the president when the president cannot fulfill his or her duties. Because of this, the vice president should have an awareness of top priorities of the school.

The vice president may also take on special tasks for the president. These could be projects like leading workgroups or heading up long-term initiatives that require special time and attention.

TREASURER

The treasurer plays a key role ensuring that structures are in place to provide evidence that the school is using taxpayer dollars wisely and in alignment with the mission and key priorities. The treasurer also serves as the voice of the board by providing fiscal leadership through communication of the board's policies and priorities.

The treasurer should be future-oriented in working with the school management to ensure that appropriate reserves are in place to protect against unplanned expenses while also paying for long term priorities.

Lastly, the treasurer plays a role in monitoring to ensure expenditures are in alignment with the budget and mission. They also ensure timely reports are sent to the board, authorizer and state including monthly budget updates, quarterly financial statements and an annual audit. It is expected that these functions will be accomplished in conjunction with school management, with the treasurer and the board providing oversight to the process.

SECRETARY

The board secretary ensures that the school's corporate records are captured and maintained. They should also work with management to ensure maintenance of the legal documents that govern the school. This includes everything in your charter contract, board policies and any additional contracts the school may have.

The secretary also ensures that the school's board meeting minutes are captured in a quality way. This is accomplished by working with a recording secretary who takes meeting minutes on behalf of the board. The secretary should ensure board meeting minutes are available for public inspection and maintained as required by state law.

It is also required by state law that public bodies operate in an open and transparent way. It is the secretary's job to work with management to make sure that meetings are open to the public by ensuring notices are properly posted, and that copies of the agenda and the board packet are publicly available.

Remember, school staff perform many of the functions previously identified and the board secretary's role is providing oversight to these functions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- » Has the board reviewed and discussed expectations of board officers as outlined in the bylaws?
- » Were there any expectations that surprised you about the officer roles as written in your bylaws? How can the Center best assist you in carrying out your role as a board officer?