

# Board Building

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2018 Annual Conference

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**School Lead**

The Governor John Engler Center for Charter Schools | Central Michigan University



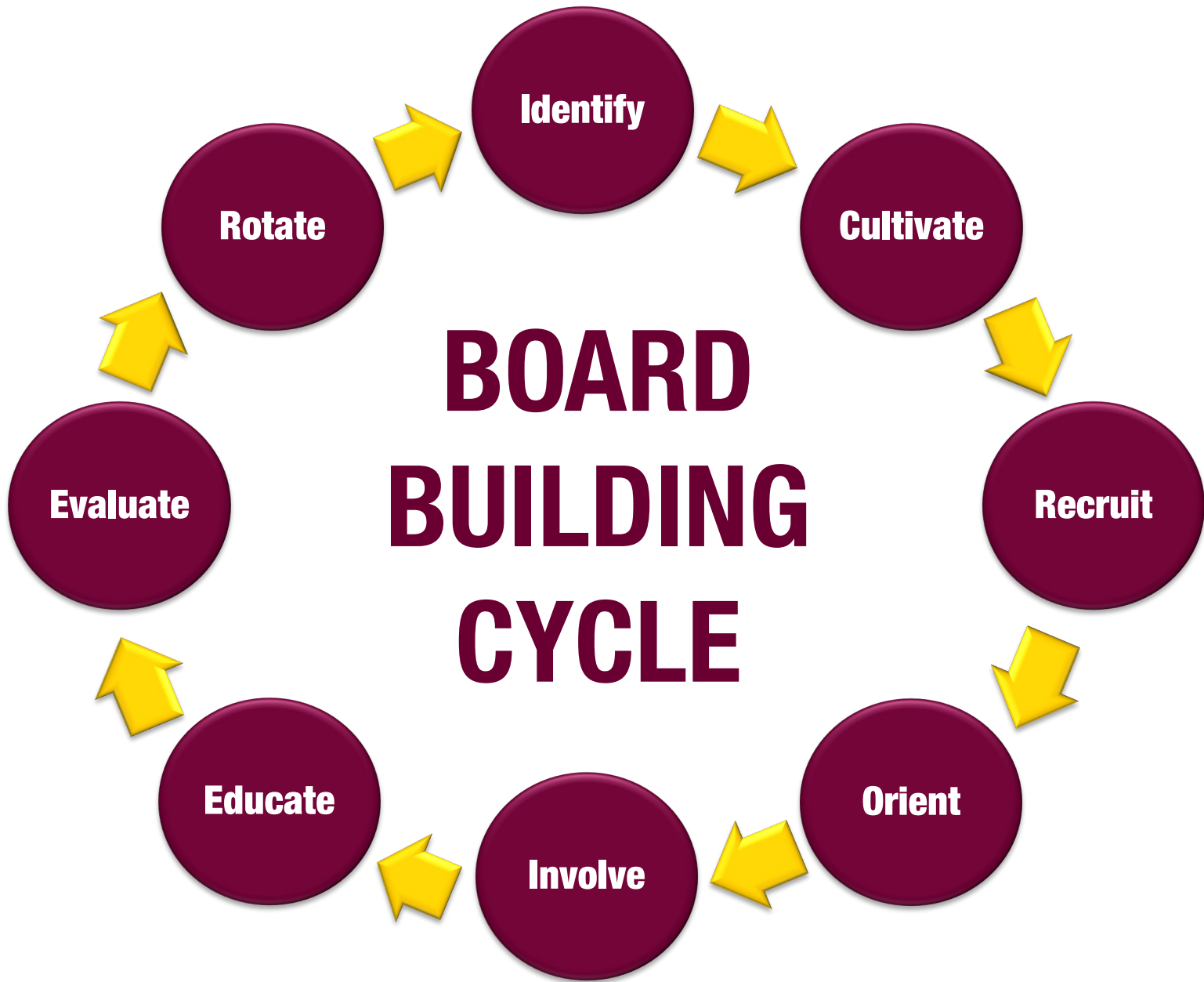
# Agenda

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- Introduction Activity
- Review of the Board Building Cycle
- Exploration of Each Cycle Phase
- Personal Commitments
- Session Reflection



**Who is in the  
room today?**



# BOARD BUILDING CYCLE

# Identify

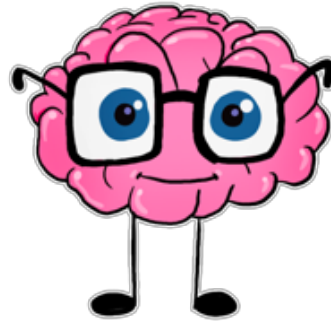
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- Identification of board members is a strategic activity with long term implications.
- To begin the process, the board should identify the skills, knowledge, perspectives, and connections needed to implement the strategic plan.
- The development of a member profile will help the board identify the member they desire.

# If you could design the ideal board member, what characteristics would they possess?

## Intellectual Skillset



## Professional Attributes



## Social/Emotional Traits



## Work Ethic



# Cultivate

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- Cultivation is creating a pool of candidates and developing sustainable relationships.
- Board members should examine their personal and professional network for individuals with a desire to serve on a board. Members can also connect with local community members that would appreciate the opportunity to serve on a board that benefits the local community.
- Once prospects have been identified, the distribution of an informational sheet or brochure which includes school data, testimonials, photos, favorable press, etc. will give the potential candidate insight to the school.
- Invite prospective board members to participate with the school community during an event or arrange a school tour with administration.

# Who are the people in my network???





# Recruit

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Recruitment begins with an agreed upon process which includes:

- Forming a committee to identify and present viable information about each candidate to the board.
- Interviewing the candidates to gage their commitment to the mission.
- Exploring the interest of the candidate through conversation or by encouraging them to participate in organizational activities.
- Evaluating to ensure they are the right fit for the organization.



# Orient

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- New board members should receive a handbook on school governance, history of the school and the charter movement.
- It is best to conduct an orientation immediately after appointment, and schedule additional support sessions throughout the first year.
- Current board members can prepare new board members for active participation by communicating the following:
  - Information regarding the culture of the board
  - Formality of meetings
  - Attire for meetings
  - Expectations for participation in school events
- Encourage new members to attend CMU orientation events.

**WON'T YOU  
BE MY  
MENTOR?**



# Involve

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- Focus on strategically important issues that will have the greatest impact on the school.
- Structure board meetings to be effective so board members' time together is productive.
- Make information easily available to the board either in print or electronically.
- Create opportunities for social interaction, sharing of experience, and exploration of ideas through retreats or fundraisers.

# Involvement During Board Meetings

Effective board meetings have:

- Clearly stated objectives
- Agendas focusing on strategic issues rather than administration
- Consent agendas for routine decisions versus extensive verbal reports
- Designated time for questions and discussion on proposal and information received during the meeting
- Learning opportunities to support the mission or board development
- Focused conversations with thoughtful and creative participation



# Educate

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- Continuous learning is a key characteristic of high performing boards.
- Information should be readily available to board members through e-mail or on a password protected website.
- Education on external issues that might affect the school's mission, organizational structure, or board functions is essential.
- Activities that allow board members to be involved and learn outside of the regular boardroom context will heighten personal development.

# Evaluate

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- Conduct a board assessment every two to three years.
- To promote continuous growth and improvement, take time to reflect on the board's performance collectively and each member individually.
- Establish the criteria for what the board considers to be an effective meeting and then regularly evaluate meetings based on this criteria.





# Rotate

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- Be very intentional about the process for board members to be re-nominated.
- Bring new members onto the board to ensure fresh insights and ideas.
- Balance the need for new members with the need for institutional memory and retention of valuable resources.
- Assign board members to different committees over time and provide opportunities for leadership roles to keep board members interested.



- Each group has a scenario relating to board member rotation and must role-play the critical conversation that needs to take place to address this issue.
- As a group determine who will serve in the following roles:
  - Board member delivering the message
  - Board member receiving the message
  - Observer who will offer feedback after the conversation
  - Group spokesperson

# Celebrate

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- Celebrations deepen relationships and allows individuals to better understand other's perspectives and find creative solutions to difficult problems.
- Board members should find ways to acknowledge the achievements of students, staff and each other.
- It is important to create opportunities for recognizing good news including personal and professional accomplishments.



**What are you committed to do to enhance board building on your school board?**

*Commit*

# Resources

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- BoardSource. *The Source 12: Twelve Principles of Governance That Power Exceptional Boards*. BoardSource.
- Cornell Feist, Marci. *Board Meetings: A Guide for Charter Schools*. The High Bar.
- Ingram, Richard T. *Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards*. BoardSource.
- Lakey, Berit M. *The Board Building Cycle: Nine Steps to Finding, Recruiting, and Engaging Nonprofit Board Members*. BoardSource.
- The Governor John Engler Center for Charter Schools. *Board Essentials*.

**Thank you for participating  
in today's session!**

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