

2023

# Board Meetings and Structure

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Tips to Strengthen your Charter Board Governance



# What We're Going to Cover

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- Framing Thoughts
- Effective Board Structure
- Overview of Board meetings
- Questions & Discussion!

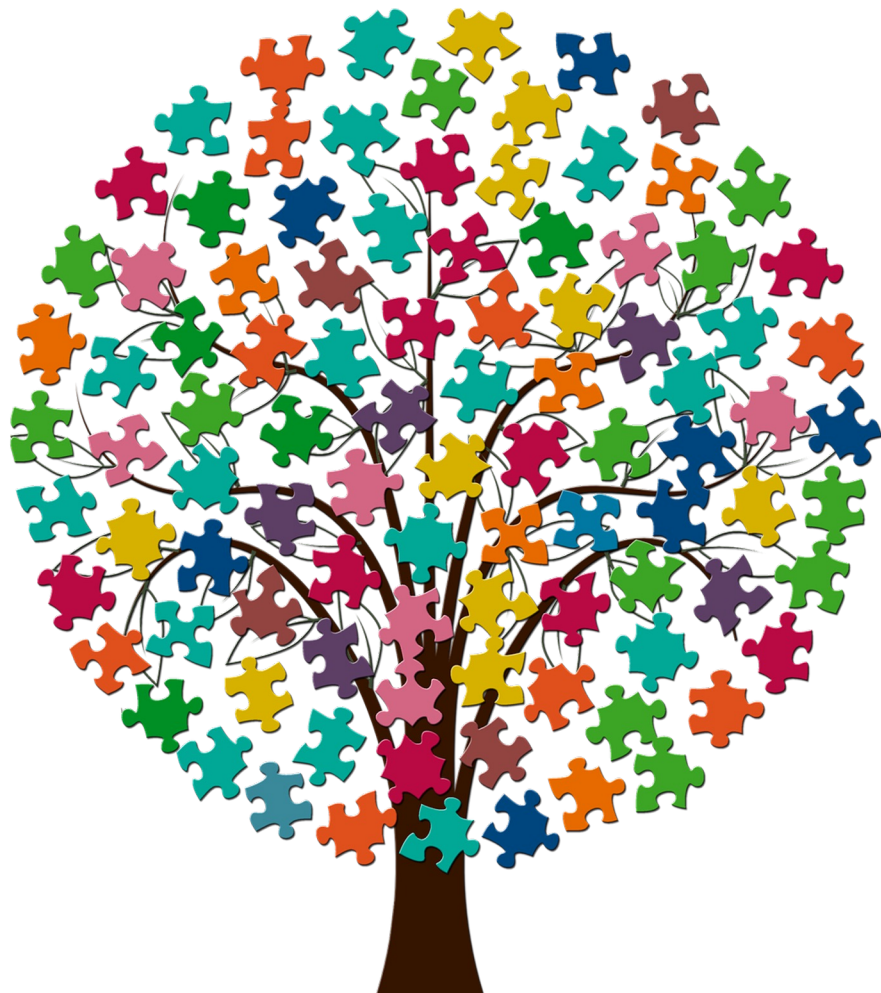
# What is a Charter School Board?

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Your charter school board is more than ***just*** a group of well-meaning volunteers.

## **Rather...**

It's a highly effective team, strategically assembled, to bring the skills, expertise, time and temperament to govern a multimillion-dollar public enterprise.



# Governance Team Structure



**Voting trustees  
& their  
designees**

Includes non-voting committee  
members



**CEO & designees**

Staff who support the board's  
operations or strategic work;  
including the CFO, Chief Academic  
Officer, & Development Director

# Board Size Evolution

Charter Application

**FOUNDING  
BOARD**

- 3 to 5 trustees
- Work is done committee of the whole

Planning & Launch Years

**INITIAL  
GOVERNING  
BOARD**

- 5 to 7 trustees
- Some committee work is being done

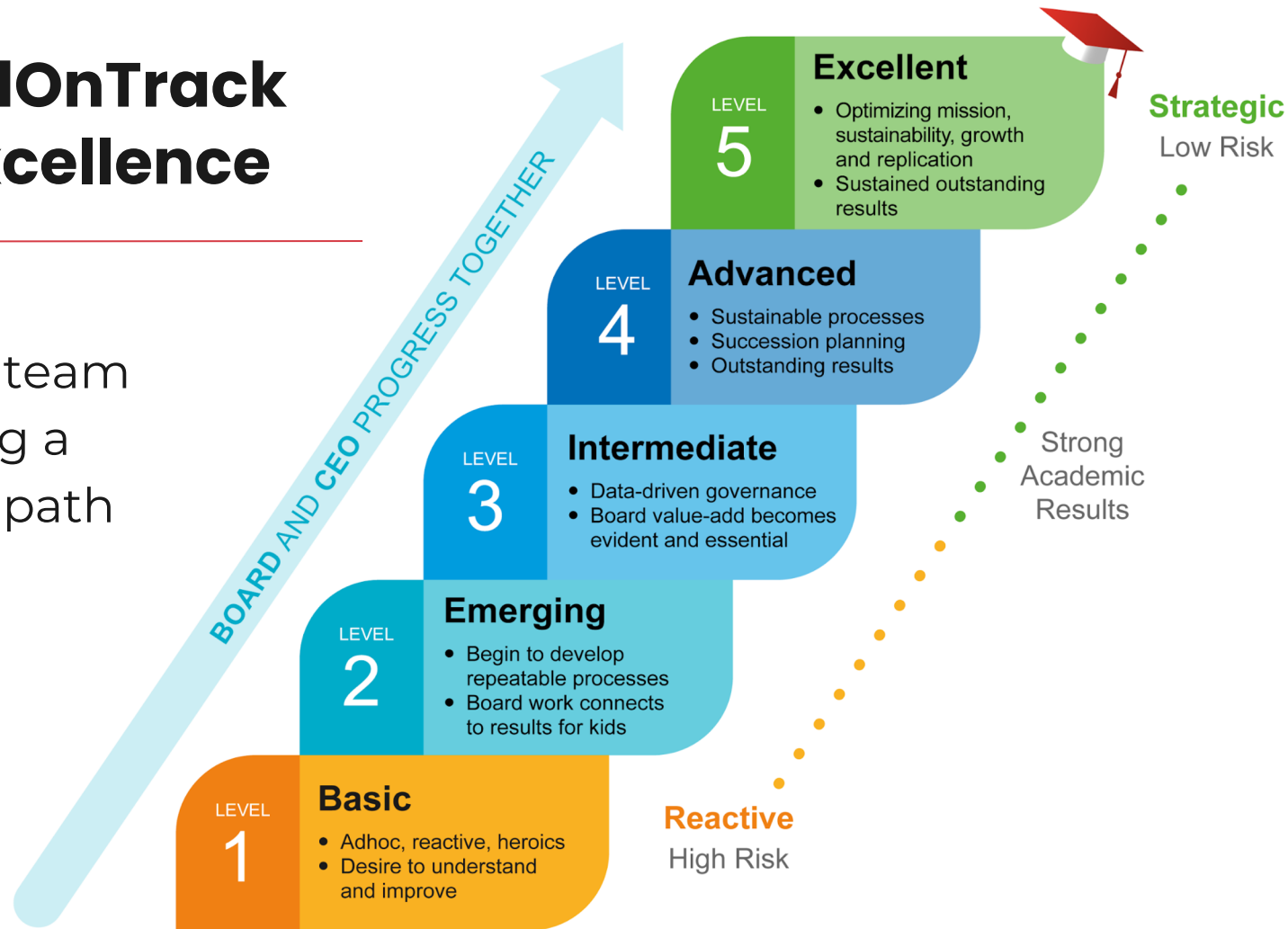
Year 5 and beyond

**SUSTAINABLE  
GOVERNING  
BOARD**

- 7 - 9 trustees
- Full complement of committees

# The BoardOnTrack Path to Excellence

Every governance team evolves along a measurable path



# The Case for Committees

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- Engage in strategic dialog and problem-solving around a particular issue
- Prepare well-informed recommendations for the board
- Support the school leadership in high-stakes decision-making
- Take on significant projects, as needed
- Provide a venue for each board member to be involved in the organization's growth and success



# Which Standing Committees?

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Most Charter School Boards Can't Live Without...

- Finance
- Academic Excellence
- Governance / Executive

Add as needed...

- Development (Fundraising)
- *CEO Support & Evaluation*
- *Facilities*

# Finance Committee

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- Works with ED/Team to develop annual budget that prioritizes and enables vision of excellence
- Monitors the organization's financial health and elevating strategic issues to full board
- Educates the full board to conduct proper oversight of the financial health of the organization

# Academic Excellence Committee

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- Works with ED/CAO to develop organizational goals and priorities to achieving vision of Academic Excellence
- Educates the full board to conduct proper oversight of the academic program
- Tracks academic performance throughout the year and elevating strategic issues to full board

# Governance Committee

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- Responsible for the overall health of the board
- Board education, annual evaluation, retreats, etc.
- Finding, recruiting, nominating, and orienting trustees
- Succession planning for officers and trustees

# Development Committee

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- Works with ED/team to develop a realistic fundraising plan
- Assists fellow trustees with completing essential board-level fundraising tasks
- Promotes organization's interest to the larger community

# CEO Support & Evaluation Committee

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- Gives and receive feedback against stated goals throughout the year
- Manages end-of-the-year ED Evaluation
- Partners with the ED to document ED Evaluation and next year's goals

# Committee Operations

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## → How are committees established?

*Standing committees and process for appointment are typically listed in your bylaws; ad hoc committees can be established by the board as needed*

## → How do committee meetings operate?

*Each committee must take its own minutes and, if possible, reproduce and distribute its materials to committee members, the board chair, and the CEO  
(super fast and easy in BoardOnTrack)*

## → How often should committees report on progress?

*Regular reports, presented by the committee chair, should be presented at each board meeting. (This is as easy as attaching committee meeting minutes to the Board meeting agenda in BOT)*

# How to Plan your Committee Work

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- Step 1: Agree on where you're headed
- Step 2: What are the board's priorities?
- Step 3: Structure your board for success
- Step 4: Committees draft goals
- Step 5: Discuss and approve goals
- Step 6: Hold each other accountable



# Committee Composition

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- Always chaired by a board member
- Add members because they bring a skill you need
- Staffed and supported by a member of the senior leadership
- Add non-board members strategically
- Minimum of 3 people on a committee
- Trustees serve on only 1 committee
- BUT, what if we don't have enough people????
- Key to effective governance is a level of **objectivity**

# Board Meeting Best Practices

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This is where the rubber meets the road!

# Meeting Logistics

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- Quorum
- Agendas & Packets
- Calling meeting to order
- Votes
- Minutes & Minute Approval
- Adjourning the meeting

# What leads to ineffective meetings?

- Unclear takeaways and who is responsible for what
- Unrealistic expectations
- Poor time management during meetings
- Reactive vs Strategic
- Preparation and Meeting led by one person

# Keys to Effective Meetings

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## → Preparation

- ◆ Agendas and packets are provided and reviewed in advance
- ◆ Annual board calendar established

## → Presentation

- ◆ Discussion is timely, organized, and productive
- ◆ Proactive vs strategic
- ◆ Facilitated by relevant roles

## → Strategy

- ◆ Meetings focus on advancing the board's goals and priorities, rather than only reacting to the latest challenges
- ◆ Concrete next steps decided

# What Does Success Look Like?

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- Everyone knows who's responsible for what
- Collaboration of the board, committees, task forces, CEO/CMO, and leadership team feels like a well-oiled machine
- Collective ownership and participation at meetings
- Board tackles difficult topics
- Focus is forward-looking and strategic, not just reactive or reporting on the past

# Questions?

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We're here to help.



**Schedule** a call with your Governance Coach.



**Chat** with us live in BoardOnTrack.



**Learn** with on-demand resources and webinars.