

School Accountability Committees in Charter Schools

May 9, 2014

Board Continuing Development



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The Role of the Board in Academic Oversight

- Provide adequate oversight of the academic program
 - school administration is responsible for the day-to-day operations
 - board has to “own” the ultimate performance outcomes.
- Establish clear expectations in academic performance
 - partnership with school administration
 - board members do not need to be experts in education
- Monitor progress towards goals and targets
 - contract with the authorizer
 - school performance framework
 - Unified Improvement Plan
 - mission specific goals
 - use of a data dashboard
- Establish a School Accountability Committee to support board work in this area



The Statute: Composition

22-11-401. School accountability committee - creation - qualifications - elections.

(1) (a) Each district public school and each institute charter school shall establish a school accountability committee. Each school accountability committee shall consist of at least seven members as follows:

- (I) The principal of the school or the principal's designee;
- (II) At least one teacher who provides instruction at the school;
- (III) At least three parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in the school;
- (IV) At least one adult member of an organization of parents, teachers, and students recognized by the school; and
- (V) At least one person from the community.

(b) The local school board or the institute shall determine the actual number of persons on the school accountability committee and the method for selecting the members of the school accountability committee. If the local school board or the institute chooses to increase the number of persons on the school accountability committee, it shall ensure that the number of parents, as described in subparagraph (III) of paragraph (a) of this subsection (1), on the committee exceeds the number of representatives from the group with the next highest representation.

The Statute: Powers and Duties

22-11-402. School accountability committee - powers and duties - meetings

(1) Each school accountability committee shall have the following powers and duties:

(a) To **recommend to the principal of its school priorities for spending school moneys**. The principal shall consider the school accountability committee's recommendations regarding spending state, federal, local, or private grants and any other discretionary moneys and take them into account in formulating budget requests for presentation to the local school board, if the school is a district public school, other than a charter school, or in creating the school budget if the school is a district or institute charter school. The school accountability committee for a district public school shall send a copy of its recommended spending priorities to the school district accountability committee and to the local school board.

(b) To advise the principal of the public school and, in the case of a district public school, the superintendent of the school district concerning the preparation of a school performance or improvement plan, if either is required pursuant to section 22-11-210, and to **submit recommendations to the principal, and superintendent if applicable, concerning the contents of the performance or improvement plan**;

(c) To advise the local school board or the institute concerning the preparation of a school priority improvement or turnaround plan, if either is required pursuant to section 22-11-210, and to **submit recommendations to the local school board or the institute concerning the contents of the priority improvement or turnaround plan**;

(d) To **meet at least quarterly to discuss whether school leadership, personnel, and infrastructure are advancing or impeding implementation of the public school's performance, improvement, priority improvement, or turnaround plan**, whichever is applicable, or other progress pertinent to the public school's accreditation contract with the local school board or the institute;

(e) To provide input and recommendations on an advisory basis to district accountability committees and district administration concerning:

(I) Principal development plans for their principal pursuant to section 22-9-106; and

(II) Principal evaluations conducted pursuant to section 22-9-106.

Applying the Statute to Charters

CDE has guidance for authorizers and charters specifically to charter schools related to the School Accountability Committee statutes – Appendix J (page 72):

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/District%20Accountability%20Handbook2013v4.pdf>



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What is the relationship between a charter school's governing board and its SAC?

1. Charter schools are administered and governed by a governing body in a manner agreed to and set forth in the charter contract. Charter schools may choose to have one or two members of their governing body serve on the School Accountability Committee in order to complete any of the required duties of the SAC.
2. Alternatively, governing boards may establish both a SAC and Finance Committee that report to the governing board on all tasks that are delegated to them, including making recommendations for the school's improvement plan and making recommendations on school spending priorities.



Establishing a SAC

- Clear charge for committee composition, role and reporting
 - Establishing a policy or resolution with those elements can help
- Consider additional tasks the SAC can do to support the board
 - Family survey development and implementation
 - Other tasks that have been delegated to SACs?



SAC Activities

There are a number of activities either in the rules or otherwise that the SAC at charter schools frequently conduct and advise the board on:

- Survey development, implementation and analysis (parent, staff, student satisfaction)
- Review of academic results and school improvement planning
- Development of academic performance results section of annual report
- Recommendations on the expenditures of all school grants
- Safety issues related to the school environment
- Program evaluation

SAC's Role in the UIP

- The UIP needs a root cause analysis
 - The SAC cannot see student level data that informs the root cause analysis- means that the SAC can review school level trends only
 - Root cause analysis is in process before the SAC's first meeting (open SAC seats often are not filled until Sept. or October).
- SAC reviews the end result of the root cause analysis and the plan that results from it
 - the SAC will no longer provide recommendation to the Board on improvement goals regarding academics. Instead, the SAC will focus on the climate and culture that help to facilitate the achievement of the academic goals.
 - SAC cannot override the leaderships decision, based on a root cause analysis.



Sample Agenda

FREE HORIZON MONTESSORI



The FHM Mission: Through the Montessori philosophy, we inspire every child to learn and grow as a responsible global citizen in a collaborative, peaceful, and safe environment.

The FHM Vision: We seek to transform our community by developing students who pursue their full potential, understand their global responsibilities, and respect others, self, and the environment.

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE Meeting Agenda

Date: Wednesday, February 26, 2014
Time: 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm
Location: Free Horizon Montessori, 581 Conference Place, Golden, Colorado 80401
Handouts: Staff Survey Results

AGENDA ITEMS

Topic	Duration	Responsibility	Comments
FHM Mission and Vision	1 minute	Kresta Vuolo	Read FHM Mission and Vision
Review of Agenda	4 minutes	Amy Soden	
Community Comment Period	5 minutes	FHM Community Members	FHM community members provided opportunity to address SAC.
Review Minutes	5 minutes	Amy Soden	
Make Your Voice Heard (MYVH) survey	5 minutes	Kresta Vuolo	Did all students complete survey? Do we have data yet?
Staff Survey	20 minutes	Diane Fox	Survey Results SAC Response
MAP Data	5 minutes	Diane Fox	Any data analysis Have all students completed winter MAP tests?
Annual Meeting	5 minutes	Kresta Vuolo	Progress report
Meeting Dates	10 Minutes	Diane Fox	March 19 April 7-Annual Meeting Prep April 16-Village Night-Annual Meeting April 23 May 26-Field Day-Is this a good day?
Board Meeting Update	5 minutes	Eric Smith	BoD Updates as they relate to SAC.
Wrap up & next meeting	5 minutes	Amy Soden	

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 19, 2014



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Self-Assess on Academic Oversight

Question	+/-
Does the board monitor academic performance regularly?	
Does the board approve academic goals and targets?	
Does the board review and approve the school's Unified Improvement Plan? You can see prior year plans at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/performance	
Has the board established a School Accountability Committee aligned with statute?	
Does this committee make recommendations to the board related to academic performance at the school?	



Thoughts on Board Improvement

- What do you think the board can do to strengthen academic oversight and SAC function?



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