CHARTER GOVERNANCE BOARD/COUNCIL
Training and Development Resources

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Dear Colleague,

I have consulted in over 1,000 Governance meetings and continue to work with governance boards/councils several times each month. Over time I have found certain threads of excellence that seem to occur again and again with strong boards/councils. The resources contained here can be shaped as you see best, different needs = different resource. With your download I am available to discuss and support your work without any fee to you. Send me an email and let's talk.

James Lewicki

Four Tasks for a Successful Retreat
By James Lewicki, M.E.P.D., M.S., B.S., A.A.

Governance Board/Council Retreat Goal:
Develop a productive infrastructure to sustain the school's vision/mission.

Four Retreat Tasks:

1. **Define Governance Board/Council strategic goals to be posted and activated at each and every meeting.**
    a. Each member write down 3 essential goals
    b. Share with group – patterns – affinity tagging
    c. List 'em, keeping it to 3-5 on agenda.

2. **Define your committee structures and scope/role of each.**
    a. Agree upon committee structure?
    b. Executive Committee: Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary
    c. Finance: Resources, Capacity Building, and Facility
    d. Curriculum: Leadership, Accountability, and Measurement
    e. Communication/Marketing/Enrollment: Alignment, Access, and Active
    f. Community/Parents: Partnership and Resourcing (long-term)

3. **Agree upon communication and meeting protocols to sustain leadership/work processes?**
    a. How will protocols allow you to sustain varied leadership and work processes?
        i. Template for Board Agenda
        ii. Role of Facilitator/Role of each member
        iii. Robert's Rules
        iv. Parent involvement/access to decisions
    b. Big 3 for Productivity:
        i. Meeting Productivity: What works well and why?
        ii. Committee Meetings: Follow established delegation from Board
        iii. Work Sessions: Internal leadership around issue/topic/skill-capacity

4. **Identify key partnerships to develop and activate -- to accomplish the TAMS mission -- initially as a start-up school – later as a Montessori exemplary model for others to learn from.**
    a. What key partnerships will you need to develop, activate, and sustain to accomplish the school's mission/goals and the associated School District goals?
        i. School Board
        ii. Community Groups identify
        iii. Communication 'Leads' (They should always know first)
        iv. Teaching and Learning places and people and organizations
        v. Sustaining Resourcing and capacity building

Charter Governance Executive Roles

The general duties of the officers of a nonprofit organization are very similar to those in a for-profit corporation. If you decide to use the accepted offices, you will find that the responsibilities for each can apply to almost any organization. It is a good idea for the initial Charter Governance Council to adopt clear definitions of the officers' roles so they become the organization's standard. You can refine the roles to suit your needs, and the responsibilities of each position should be spelled out in the by-laws document.

Chair
The Council president or chair is responsible for facilitating, or assigning facilitation, for the meetings of the board of directors. In a charter school the governance council chair is often the lead contact and public face of the organization. She will also be a primary partner who can meet with the District Superintendent and other administrative professionals to assure smooth operations and implementation.

Vice Chair
The official role of a vice chair is to be available when the chair is temporarily unable to fulfill his or her responsibilities or to be readily available as a permanent replacement should the president need to step down. On a charter governance council, the responsibilities go much further. S/He needs to be aware of everything that goes on in the organization, from knowing what the committees are working on to being familiar with the status of any programming. S/He must be able to step in and work in partnership with the president when needed. The vice chair also needs to be available to take on special projects such as chairing a task force on short notice.

Secretary
The internal role, often referred to as a recording secretary, involves generating and filing all of the group's documents, minutes of meetings, general mailing lists, and databases in a safe place. The role of the secretary can be done by district professional staff; in terms of taking accurate minutes during meetings and collecting minutes from the committee meetings. The external secretary role is more strategic with communications of the many charter and community that are part of the school vision.

Treasurer
The treasurer is the lead person of a committee that has two functions: operational/grant budgets and fund capacity development. The Business Office of the district will do the actual accounting pieces. A charter finance committee is often reviewing major expenditures and making recommendations to the Council on those reviews; it is also working in partnership with the Administration Business office and TAMS principal in crafting and shaping budgets for the school; and finally there is often a fund development tasking inherent in a finance committee.

Robert's Rules Resources

- **Good site with Frequently Asked Questions:**
http://www.robertsrules.com/faq.html

- **Motions:**
http://www.robertsrules.org/motionsprint.htm

- **Fun example of chairing a meeting:**
http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/roberts-rules-for-dummies-cheat-sheet.html

- **Very nice simplified version:**
http://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/meetings/RobertsRulesSimplified.pdf

- **Nice sequence of a meeting:**
http://www.asce.org/pplcontent.aspx?id=2147489901

1. Schools work because of the following three cultural conditions

HARD WORK, ATTENTION TO DETAIL, CANDOR
Institutions -- unless well led and governed -- will always slide towards self-interest and narrow, parochial outcomes. Too often a school will be cast adrift rather than plunging headfirst -- all hands on deck -- into the challenges of a vibrant and compelling curriculum.

2. Governance is leadership and leaders EARN integrity, respect, and influence

Vigorous leadership = productive governance and this productivity is correlated with the degree that each member demonstrates a SYMPATHETIC understanding with all elements of the school community.

3. Leadership matters

"To be a highly successful leader four things are essential, assuming that you have good common sense and you have studied your profession."[1]

- > Marked energy to the details of curriculum execution. Engage the learning AS a learner. What matters? How is it working? Why is it important?

- > When conditions are difficult remain cheerful and optimistically resourceful.

- > Extreme loyalty to the educators and students curriculum and policy implementation. Direct your energy to accomplishments.

- > Relentless determination must be your attitude.

4. Set Strategic objectives

Curriculum is planned, conducted, and sustained to achieve strategic objectives.

5. Be there: MBWA (Management By Walking Around)
MBWA: Eisenhower: Collaboration + investment of time + at the point of implementation = Operational Artist. In the four months before D-Day, Eisenhower visited twenty-six divisions, twenty-four airfields, and five ships of war. Why? The single most powerful query during MBWA is, "What do you think must be done?"

6. Videos - Big IDEAS that matter for Charter School Governance and Leadership
Tony Wagner Change Leadership: Transforming Education for the 21st Century
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4DTaTd8_nE
"What the world cares about is what you can do with what you know?"

How to Truly Listen Evelyn Glennie
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IU3V6zNER4g
The heart of leadership is always deep listening.

Malcolm Gladwell Explains Why Human Potential Is Being Squandered
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kspphGOjApk
We can change the achievement of youth by engaging those things we can change.

- ✓ Do I have small number of core priorities?
  - ○ And they are...
    - ▪ 1.)
    - ▪ 2.)
    - ▪ 3.)
    - ▪ 4.)

- ✓ What am I doing to communicate the goals, the actions, the results, and the process?
  - ○ Goals
  - ○ Actions
  - ○ Results
  - ○ Process

- ✓ Am I supporting an open climate where people can speak up and there are safe opportunities to do so – frequently?
  - ○ When?
  - ○ What worked?
  - ○ What did not work?

- ✓ Are we gathering data each month that is simple, ongoing, and provides feedback for continuous improvement and shared development?
  - ○ Example 1
  - ○ Example 2

- ✓ Are we meeting periodically to discuss progress and problem-solve?
  - ○ Last meeting was _____
    - ▪ Progress example
    - ▪ Problem solved

- ✓ How do I stop and practice reflective learning that creates meaning?
  - ○ Practice #1
  - ○ Practice #2

Change Leader
- ✓ Be Resolute
- ✓ Motivate
- ✓ Collaborate
- ✓ Learn
- ✓ Know your impact
- ✓ Sustain Simplexity

Flow Tool for Governance:
What works and what works well for Governance Boards/Councils?

Why can one school's Governance Council be hit with enormous challenges and then overcome them and thrive?

Why does another school's Governance Council with so much potential -- a 22nd century vision --well-connected GC members – struggle to build itself as a functioning unit?

How to create an X/Y flow to the effectiveness of a GC?

<u>X = Challenge</u>

1. Hold the innovation accountable

2. Develop multiple connections that embrace the vision

3. Sustain the fiscal capacity

<u>Y = Ability</u>

1. Deliberate with clarity and move towards consensus

2. Bring all members talents and expertise to fruition

3. Learn from mistakes, take risks, recognize success

Governance Council Questions
'True North'

Governance Strategic Management
- Diagnose your strategic management -- then propose courses of action -- then assess efficacy of actions on <u>strategic objectives</u>.
- Curriculum is planned, conducted, and sustained to achieve <u>strategic objectives</u>.
- Systems and Value are sustained for continuous improvement that continuously impact strategic objectives.

Capacity (Operations Management)
Is the faculty capacity and teaching efficacy effective?

Is assessment accurate and measuring growth?

Is the culture conducive for Learning?

Is the facility working well?

Value (Mission Management)
Is the purpose clear to everyone?

Are strategic objectives guiding implementation?

Is the accountability plan working for continuous improvement?

Is the value system integrated into actions?

Support (Stakeholder Management)
Is the educator collaborative a collaborative?

Are the campus/district/peers supportive?

Is the community supportive?

Are the students/families/friends of school united and supportive?

Adapted from Bruno Manno
Annie E. Casey Foundation

Checking on the FLOW
Quality Observing - Linking Practice and Results
By James Lewicki, M.E.P.D., M.S., B.S., A.A.
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Being accountable -- for change leaders – is first and foremost about being connected to the FLOW of learning. Below are seven considerations to stay connected, thereby becoming a school leader that is in touch. And being 'in touch' with the learning flow -- for an Authorizer, Governance Council Member, or School Leader – is essential. After observing ask yourself, "Is there a dynamis at play?" (from Gk. dynamis ″power, might, strength)

* Listen to the students...how often are they talking to EACH OTHER with conversation related to learning? What are they asking each other? Is there an ongoing tasking occurring? What are the levels (Blooms) of thinking and inquiry being expressed?

* Listen to the teachers... how often are they talking to EACH OTHER with conversation related to learning? What are they asking each other? Is there an ongoing tasking occurring? What are the levels (Blooms) of thinking and inquiry being expressed?

* Watch the students...do they 'move to the learning'? Is there a kinetic interplay between the individual and environment? If the furnishings are mobile how are they being arranged, changed, adjusted for the learning at hand? What are they doing? If differentiated, is it truly customized are simply personalized? Are there varying stages of development if projects have been disaggregated?

* Watch the teachers...do they 'move to the learning'? Is there a kinetic interplay between the individual and environment? If the furnishings are mobile how are they being arranged, changed, adjusted for the learning at hand? Are they attending to the student as distinctive LEARNERS as well as distinctive PEOPLE? (customized result vs. personalized approach)

* Be an anthropologist...if you came from another culture what artifacts speak to the story of learning? Do the students and teachers 'own' the artifacts, in terms of a sense of accomplishment – whether process or product. What other evidence speaks to the vision and mission of the school?

* Be a project manager...what system is evident to sustain the myriad project quality processes? Are there tasking visuals, time tables, evidence of early research, final presentation artifacts, multi-media disaggregated to students like a working newsroom, tools and equipment disaggregated to students like an inventors lab? Are roles for getting things done operational? How?

* Be a psychologist...what is the evidence of healthy group work? Are the protocols, places, and people a positive 'current' for effective process consultation – each helping the other to achieve? Are there community agreements or class ground rules that speak with integrity through daily implementation?

Overall – after reflecting upon your time with the students and teachers; what is your sense of the place?

These are key ideas from a MDW Design Conference. Each category was a session and the agreements as bullet points are contained underneath. Very important ideas -- relevant for education.

Characterizing Innovation

- ❖ Defining what innovation means is major step in the process of teaching it. Once we can concretely define the term, we can measure different levels of it and work to improve.
- ❖ Designers use a variety of reflective practices, many of which can be classified as "out-of-action reflection." These do not even appear on our radar, in textbooks, etc, and yet they form a huge percentage of the many reflective practices that lead to new ideas and insights.
- ❖ Trying to step back to a more objective perspective, using metacognition can be a useful critical thinking tool.

Students Seeing Innovation
- ❖ Design teams with a balance of learning styles typically are better able to assess their own progress in the course.
- ❖ Different aspects of personality types can correlate to aptitude in different aspects of projects.
- ❖ Having a personal connection between student and instructor facilitates a more productive learning process.

Improving Innovation Learning
- ❖ Faculty knowledge and culture matter.
- ❖ Apparent either/or conflicts are often resolved by realizing one can choose both.
  (11) However, mapping the various paths will help students choose the applicable one for them.
- ❖ Belief that "I/we can do it" is critical to innovation.
- ❖ There is a distinction between teaching necessary content/skills and teaching learning/ management processes.
- ❖ Peer learning is a very powerful tool in developing strategies to foster innovation.
- ❖ It is important to recognize that it is difficult to ask students to truly innovate when all we do is surround them with structure.
- ❖ Learning teamwork and critical thinking must be an emphasized component of a curriculum progression of courses rather than one single course.

Views from on Top

- ❖ Helping students to understand the social culture and environmental significance is an integral part of teaching problem-solving skills
- ❖ Teaching students to work in teams is a valuable undertaking.
- ❖ There has been a noticeable trend in the growth and success of team-based productivity rather than individual, isolated work, in large part due to the increased complexity of 21st century tasking and problems.

Entrepreneurship
- ❖ Teaching students to become better entrepreneurs can help them become better learners because it adds emphasis to traits such as creativity and persistence.
- ❖ Students can learn from both successful and unsuccessful entrepreneurship. Although, the lessons learned are typically valuable on case-by-case basis.
- ❖ There is a lot of crossover between the values taught for entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship.

The difference often depends on the work environment rather than skill set.

Curriculum Matters

- ❖ There is a need to understand industry practice and needs better as we innovate new school design approaches and shape curricula by, for, and from the students.
- ❖ Need to better understand the teaching and learning relationships and teaching and learning methods to integrate school design with curriculum analysis.
- ❖ How many experiences, applications are enough?

TOP TEN Practices for a Charter Board/Council
By James Lewicki, M.E.P.D., M.S., B.S., A.A.

➢ <u>Engaged board/council members</u>
  - *Connected to the exuberance of learning – student, faculty, family and community members*
  - *Understand how the mission is working towards an ideal vision.*

➢ <u>Know your board/council role. Employ your abilities responsively: 4 C's</u>
  ○ *Contributing*
    - *Officers, Committee, DTF's*
  ○ *Communicating*
    - *Ongoing, affirmative*
  ○ *Consultative:*
    - *Identify, Filter, Resource, Advocate*
  ○ *Courageous:*
    - *TKCF, (The Kids Come First) CAN (We can accomplish this!), Accountable* (Ask the tough questions, expect results)

➢ <u>Come up with and Employ the BIG questions: (examples below)</u>
  - What are we trying to accomplish?
  - How is this learning community a place where inspired ideas thrive, take root, and bring fruition to the aspirations of each student and his or her family?
  - Are we creating the conditions for a pedagogical style and approach that fits the mission and values of the school?
  - How well have we done?

➢ <u>Lead by example, by language, and by showing leadership in all its various skills and capacities.</u>

➢ <u>Charter contract = Strategic Direction</u>
  From the charter contract develop annual plans and EXECUTE them with EVIDENCE. Learn and move forward unified on the next step(s).

➢ <u>Management of risk</u>
  Innovation by its very nature is risk assuming; and systems -- to sustain themselves -- tend to conserve resources and avoid risk; this given management tension needs the collaborative insight of the Governance team to make the right call at the right time.

➢ <u>Management of time</u>
  Time is the resource that either be facilitating or restrictive. The Governance team has three considerations with the management of time. First, always use its own limited time well; second, ask others in the organization to do the same; and third provide the resourcing as needed for time to be used well.

- ➢ Management of resourcing
  Each governance team is unique in how they distinguish their complementary skills and capacities. What is exemplary for strong Governance is that major aspects of resourcing – leadership, fiscal, facility, program, and partnership – are evident in the makeup of the Governance Board/Council, its extended committee and task force structure, and those critical 'friends of the school'.

- ➢ Active engagement with stakeholders
  - ○ Continuous connection to the 'learning life' of the school
  - ○ Who does what when and why?

- ➢ Monitoring and evaluation of school performance
  - ○ Broad thinking on what is important, what is necessary, and what is truly innovative (the innovative 5% = 33% of the Story.
  - ○ Again, asking the right questions
  - ○ Think Tank + Researcher + School Designer =
    - ▪ Effective Monitoring and Evaluation

Three board/council reflective seminars to assure good work:

1. Tear up the Mission Seminar (1 hour)
Act as if you are building another school off the work of this one...starting with a mission...build it...take a breath...go have a meal together and then come back and compare the two missions. Are there gaps? Is the new one a logical extension of the school's current mission, or does it take a turn down other pathways? Compare the power language evident in each, what does it tell you? What is your instinct on a current mission; the original, the new one, or a blended version?

2. Ideas Matter Seminar (30 minutes)
Ideas are the hallmark of a learning community. And creating the right conditions for those ideas to matter is the heart of all Governance investment of time and resourcing. Discuss in small group for 10 minutes and then back to large group for 20 minutes the ideas that compel practice and results for this school?

3. Case Study a Learning Experience: (20 minutes)
Develop a case study around student learning. Have people read it ahead of time and then take 5 minutes for an oral overview of it. Follow with 15-minute discussion on how this learning is living (or not) the mission, and what ideas are embedded within its practice.

Excellent Charter Board/Council Links and Resources
www.reachthehighbar.com/
www.charterschoolcenter.org/
http://www.coloradoleague.org/membership-and-services/professional-services/index.php

Boards of Education as Authorizers and Charter School Governance Boards
Lewicki Education Consulting Lecture Notes

1. BOE: Sustaining Innovative System
What is the role of innovation in the school district?
Activities: An essential question to constantly revisit.

2. Charter School Board: Managing Innovative Implementation
Together: Being accountable to each other, being advocates for each other, being architects for the teaching and learning of the district.
Activities: Values and Partnering – a philosophy for collaboration and partnering.

3. Cognitive Proximity
Charter innovation means that we collectively search for new knowledge in close proximity to our collective knowledge-base. Innovative design – new knowledge – can only be absorbed by an organization if the cognitive gap is not too large.
Activities: Retreats, think tank notes, research

4. Organizational Capacity
What is the distinctive and complementary role of the School District's Board of Education and the Charter Governance Board? How can each entity assure a level of autonomy that is conducive to district innovation, reducing uncertainty in the transfer and exchange of knowledge, while maintaining a level of charter autonomy?
Activities: Shared minutes, Liaison to each meeting, School leader communication.

5. Social Alignment
What means will assure productive social proximity characterized by high trust; which will in turn sustain a high degree of district alignment and knowledge co-generation?
Activities: October Dinner, January retreat, June celebration

Institutional Directives.
District strategic goals can dovetail with charter strategic goals. If so, then curriculum quality is both assured, adequately resourced, and sustained. This higher level of institutional accountability comes are 3 distinctive times...
Activities: August approval of Charter Accountability Plan, February Check-in, July Annual Report.