

**Charter School Board**

**Governance Award**

**Criteria & Application**

**2015 Application Deadlines**

**June 30, 2015**

**October 30, 2015**

The Charter School Governance Award was established to recognize charter school boards that have put into place the basic documents, policies, practices, and procedures that provide the foundation for effective governance of charter school nonprofit corporations.

The award criteria provide a baseline of board transparency, public accountability, and effective board governance performance. **The award will be based on six criteria areas:**

1. *Foundational Documents*
2. *Board Operational Policies, Procedures, and Practices*
3. *Policy Development, Implementation, and Evaluation*
4. *Financial Oversight and Administrator & Program Evaluations*
5. *Transparency and Accountability*
6. *Community Engagement and Advocacy*

**Eligible Boards:**

A board of directors of a charter school that is a current member of the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools, and which has been operating as a charter school for at least two years.

**Applicant:**

The applicant for the award is the school’s board of directors.

**Application Materials:**

The application consists of Forms I & II and all attachments enumerated on the Checklist. All application materials must be submitted together and in the order listed on the checklist.

**Note: All required documents must have the date the board enacted the statement, policy, process, or procedure.**

**Application Deadline:**

2015 Application Deadlines:

* **12:00 P.M. (noon), Tuesday, June 30, 2015**
* **12:00 P.M. (noon), Friday, October 30, 2015**

**Notification and Award Presentation:**

The award presentation will take place at a board meeting of the charter school board of directors.



*2015 Criteria*

The MN Association of Charter Schools Board Governance Award is designed to recognize charter school boards that have put into place basic documents, policies, practices, and procedures that provide a foundation for effective governance of the nonprofit corporation of a charter school.

The award criteria provide a baseline of board transparency and public accountability, and a framework for effective board performance.

There are **six criteria areas**:

1. Foundational Documents
2. Board Operational Policies, Procedures, and Practices
3. Policy Development, Implementation, and Evaluation
4. Financial Oversight and Administrator & Program Evaluations
5. Transparency and Accountability
6. Community Engagement and Advocacy

**1] Foundational Documents**

The board has developed and adopted the following:

* A written clear and meaningful school mission statement the reflects the purpose, values, and people served
* A written vision statement that communicates ‘future direction’ and desired outcomes for the school
* A multiyear strategic plan with achievable goals and measureable outcomes
* Articles of Incorporation and up-to-date By-laws that are aligned and legally conform to current law.

**2] Board Operational Policies, Procedures, and Practices**

The board has developed, adopted, and implemented the following:

* Nomination process for board positions that is open and transparent
* Written board election policies and procedures
* Defined expectations for board members
* Job descriptions for board officers
* A policy regarding ongoing board training expectations and requirements, and an annual budget for board training
* A Conflict of Interest policy that, at minimum, meets state legal requirements and that board members annually sign a statement of acknowledgement that they have been provided and read the policy
* Written charges to all committees that outline their purpose, membership, etc. *[MACS Sample Committee Charge*]

The board conducts:

* Background checks on all board members and excludes convicted felons from serving on the board
* A formal swearing in ceremony of board members [*MACS Board Oath*]
* An orientation program for new board members prior to the individuals being seated on the board
* An annual board retreat
* An annual assessment/evaluation of its own performance *[MACS Board Performance Assessment Tool*]

*2015 Documentation Portfolio*

**1] FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS**

*To fulfill the requirements of Criteria 1, attach a copy of the following Documents in the following order:*

1. School Mission Statement
2. School Vision Statement
3. Multi –year Strategic Plan
4. Articles of Incorporation
5. Bylaws

**2] BOARD OPERATIONAL POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND PRACTICES**

*To fulfill the requirements of Criteria 2, attach a copy of the following documents in the following order:*

1. Board Recruitment/Nomination Process
2. Electronic Notice Sent to Parents, Guardians, and Staff
3. Board Elections Policies and Procedures
4. Expectations for Board Members
5. Board Officers Job Descriptions
6. Board Policy on Board Training Requirements
7. Conflict of Interest Policy & the Form Signed by Members
8. The Written Charges for Board Committees
9. Board Retreat Agenda Held in the Last 12 months
10. Copy of the Board Member’s Oath of Office
11. Copy of the Tool(s) Used for Evaluation of Board Performance

**Questions related to Criteria 2 –** *[Include the following information on Form 2]*

* Total board training budget expenditures for current fiscal year - $ amount
* Average expenditure per board member - $ amount
* Please describe the scope of background checks undertaken relative to board members. *(e.g. State or federal, who pays, when conducted – before election, after being elected).*
* Does the board conduct a formal swearing in of new board members? Describe the ceremony.
* Describe the orientation new board members receive from the board and the school administration.

**3] POLICY DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUATION**

*To fulfill the requirements for Criteria 3, attach a copy of the following documents in the following order.*

1. A List of Board Adopted Policies
2. Calendar or Schedule for Reviewing Board Adopted Policies
3. Policy & Procedures Used to Enact or Revise a Policy
4. Table of Contents of the Board Member’s Handbook

**4] FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND ADMINISTRATOR & PROGRAM EVALUATIONS**

*To fulfill the requirements for Criteria 4, attach a copy of the following documents in the following order.*

1. The Qualifications for the Administrator(s) that Report Directly to the Board
2. Evaluation Policy and Procedures for Employees that Report Directly to the Board
3. Policy and Procedures for Awarding Contracts to Vendors, Consultants and Independent Contractors
4. Policy and Procedures the Board Uses to Assess School Programs
5. Policy and Procedures the Board Uses to Assess Student Performance
6. Policy and Procedures the Board Uses to Hire Auditor
7. Policy and Procedures the Board Uses to Review and Respond to the Annual Audit Report

**Question Related to Criteria 4 –** *[Include the following information on Form 2]*

* Describe the ongoing communication process the Board has with the Authorizer Representative.

**5] TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

*To fulfill the requirements for Criteria 5, attach a copy of the following documents in the following order:*

1. Document Retention and Destruction Policy
2. Policy and Procedures for Responding to Data Practices Requests

*Provide* ***Links to the Specific Pages*** *on School Website on Form 2 for each of the following:*

* IRS Form 990
* Current Monthly Financial Statement
* Annual Audit for Current Fiscal Year
* Biographies, Term of Office, and Contact Information of Board Members
* Authorizer Contact Information

**6] COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY**

*To fulfill the requirements for Criteria 6, attach a copy of the following documents in the following order:*

1. Policy and Procedures for Public Comment Period at Board Meeting
2. Copy of Annual Satisfaction **Surveys** utilized with Parents, Staff, and Students for current school year.

**Questions Related to Criteria 6 –** *[Include the following information on Form 2]*

* Describe what the Board does to inform parents and others that there is an opportunity to share their concerns, ideas, and suggestions at Board meetings.
* Describe what the Board and school has done during the past 12 months to create and/or sustain relationships with local and state elected officeholders.
* Describe what Board members (as individuals and as a group) have done in the past 12 months in terms of legislative advocacy.

*Form I - Basic Information Sheet*

1. School: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Number of Board Members *(Total)*: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_ Teachers

# \_\_\_\_ Parents/Legal Guardians

# \_\_\_\_ Community Members

1. Board Structure

Parent Majority

Teacher Majority

Community Member Majority

Non-Majority

1. Length of Board Terms

1 Year

2 Years

3 Years

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Number of Terms an Individual May Serve Consecutively: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Month of Board Elections: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Month Term of Office Begins: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. Election Voting Methods *(check all that you use)*

Board Election at Parent Meeting Election at Board Meeting

Election at Other School Event Mail Voting (US mail)

Electronic Voting Ballot Send/Returned via Student

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Number of Total Eligible Voters *(staff, parents, and legal guardians)*: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Number of Voters that Participated in Last Board Election: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Voter Participation Rate: \_\_\_\_%
4. Does the Board Have a Plan to Increase Voter Participation Rate:

Yes

No *(More questions on reverse side.)*

1. Election Notice

State law requires eligible voters to be notified of elections in writing 30 days before the election is conducted.

***Note:*** *Check all methods used by your school to notify eligible voters about the election.*

Email Website

School Newsletter Letter to Eligible Voters

Public Notice *(local newspaper)* Staff Letter

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Board Officers *(names)*

President: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Vice President: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Board Officer Submitting Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Form II – Questions (expand form as needed)*

**Criteria #2: Board Operational Policies, Procedures, and Practices**

1. Total board training budget expenditures for current fiscal year: $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Average expenditure per board member: $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Please describe the scope of background checks undertaken relative to board members. *(e.g. State or federal? Who pays? Conducted before election or after being elected?).*

1. Does the board conduct a formal swearing in of new board members? Briefly describe the ceremony.
2. Describe the orientation new board members receive from the board and the school administration.
3. Describe the board’s plan to increase voter participation.

**Criteria #4: Financial Oversight and Administrator & Program Evaluations**

1. Describe the ongoing communication process the Board has with the Authorizer Representative.

*(More questions on reverse side.)*

**Criteria #5: Transparency and Accountability**

*Provide* ***Links to the Specific Pages*** *on School Website for each of the following:*

1. IRS Form 990: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Current Monthly Financial Statement: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Annual Audit for Current Fiscal Year: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. Biographies, Term of Office, and Contact Information for Board:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. Authorizer Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Criteria #6: Community Engagement and Advocacy**

1. Describe what the Board does to inform parents and others that there is an opportunity to share their concerns, ideas, and suggestions at Board meetings.
2. Describe what the Board and school has done during the last 12 months to create and/or sustain a relationship with local and state elected officeholders.
3. Describe what Board members (as individuals and as a group) have done in the last 12 months in terms of legislative advocacy.

*2015 Checklist*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Foundational Documents** |  |
| 1. School Mission Statement (Attachment) |  |
| 1. School Vision Statement (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Multi-year Strategic Plan (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Articles of Incorporation – *Conforming to Current Law* (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Bylaws – *Conforming to Current Law* (Attachment) |  |
| 1. **Board Operational Policies, Procedures, and Practices** |  |
| 1. Board Recruitment/Nomination Process (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Board Elections Policies and Procedures (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Electronic Notice Sent to Parents and Legal Guardians (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Expectations for Board Members (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Board Officers Job Descriptions (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Board Policy on Board Training Requirements (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Conflict of Interest Policy & Form Signed by Board Members (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Written Charges for Board Committees (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Board Retreat Agenda – Last Retreat (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Copy of the Board Members’ Oath of Office (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Copy of the Tool(s) Used for Board Evaluation and Performance (Attachment) |  |
| ***(Form II Questions)*** |  |
| 1. **Policy Development, Implementation, and Evaluation** |  |
| 1. A List of Board-Adopted Policies (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Calendar or Schedule for Reviewing Board Adopted Policies (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Policy and Procedure Used to Enact or Revise a Policy (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Table of Contents for the Board Member’s Handbook (Attachment) |  |
| 1. **Financial Oversight, Administrator, and Program Evaluations** |  |
| 1. Qualifications for the Administrator(s) that Report Directly to the Board (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Evaluation Policy and Procedures for Employees that Report Directly to the Board (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Policy and Procedures for Awarding Contracts to Vendors, Consultants, and Independent Contractors (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Policy and Procedures the Board Uses to Assess School Programs (Attachment) |  |
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| 1. Policy and Procedures the Board Uses to Hire Auditor (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Policy and Procedures the Board Uses to Review and Respond to the Annual Audit Report (Attachment) |  |
| ***(Form II Questions)*** |  |
| 1. **Transparency and Accountability** |  |
| 1. Document Retention and Destruction Policy (Attachment) |  |
| 1. Policy and Procedures for Responding to Data Practices Requests (Attachment) |  |
| ***(Form II Questions)*** |  |
| 1. **Community Engagement and Advocacy** |  |
| 1. Policy and Procedures for Public Comment Period at Board Meeting |  |
| 1. Copy of Annual Satisfaction **Surveys** Utilized with Parents, Staff, and Students for Last School Year |  |
| ***(Form II Questions)*** |  |