

Typical International School Board Retreat

Overview

1. Purpose: To build on the capacity and commitment of the School Board of Directors to function effectively in accordance with "proven practices" of international schools.
2. Model: The facilitator will lead the Board in activities and discussions to illustrate and explore concepts and practices characterizing effective international school boards. Pre-readings will serve to "set the stage;" analyzing case studies will give us an opportunity to explore some of the challenges that school boards face; presentations will offer alternative perspectives; targeted activities will enable the Board to develop and agree on protocols for some specific tasks; and throughout, Board members will contribute their perceptions, experience, and wisdom to the mix. Objectives of the Retreat include developing explicit knowledge and understandings of topics as elaborated upon in the Outcomes as well as building a team commitment to working together throughout the year.
3. Participants: All School Board members, including the Head of School
4. Schedule:
 - Friday, 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. (followed by dinner)
 - Saturday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
5. Venue: On campus in the Conference Room
6. Topics:
 - a. Good governance; roles and responsibilities of the Board
 - b. Policy governance
 - c. The Strategic Board
 - d. Communicating with the community
 - e. Utilizing committees effectively
 - f. Developing the Board
 - g. Strengthening the relationships; Board-Board Chair-HoS
 - h. Board Culture; essential agreements on how we will work together
5. Strategies
 - a. Pre-readings (~ 1 hour of article review, etc.)
 - b. Discussions based on prompts and participants' questions and comments
 - c. Activities
 - d. Case study analyses
 - e. Forging of agreements

6. Outcomes

1. The Board (including Director) will grow as a team in a "climate of trust," ...
 - a. embracing new members quickly;
 - b. understanding each other's perspective, expectations;
 - c. committing to effective team characteristics;
 - d. producing results while maintaining working capacity;
 - e. achieving goals through consensus.
2. Board members will understand the roles, responsibilities, and relationships of the various school stakeholders.
 - a. Review governance guidelines as presented in school policy, National Association of Independent Schools Principles of Good Governance, and Council of International Schools Accreditation standards.
 - b. Clarify the structure and function of policy in good governance.
 - c. Understand and commit to employ the three modes of governance; Fiduciary, Strategic, and Generative
 - d. Explore strategic thinking and change management strategies
 - e. Develop common understanding of various roles
 - i. the board as a whole
 - ii. individual board members
 - iii. the chair and other board officers
 - iv. the Director
 - v. committees and task forces
3. The Board will explore principles of good governance as related to the "culture" of the Board and develop and commit itself to adhering to "Essential Agreements" in regards to how it will operate (Board member behavior in and out of meetings, Agenda, minutes, meeting protocol, handling complaints, confidentiality, etc.).
4. The Board will identify, prioritize, and frame how it will address Board goals for the school year.

*R Detwiler
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