Assessing School Governance through Accreditation

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New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS)

Founded in 1948

- Accreditation
- Professional Development
- Advocacy

With 196 member schools and organizations serving over 82,000 students and families.
The Three Duties of a Trustee

● Duty of Care
  ○ Actively participate in making decisions on behalf of the school.

● Duty of Loyalty
  ○ Trustees must actively set aside personal and professional interests on behalf of the school.

● Duty of Obedience
  ○ Legal responsibility to ensure that the organization is true to its mission and conforms to all relevant laws.
Trustees Should Operate in the . . .

- **Fiduciary Mode**
  - Ensure that the school is faithful to its mission, accountable for performance and complies with laws and regulations.

- **Generative Mode**
  - A partnership between the board and head of school to frame problems and make sense of ambiguous situations in setting policy.

- **Strategic Mode**
  - The board develops strategies, with the head of school, to set the school’s priorities, course and deploy resources accordingly.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage One</td>
<td>Membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Two</td>
<td>Self Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage Three</td>
<td>Visit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage Four</td>
<td>NYSAIS Commission on Accreditation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage Five</td>
<td>NYSAIS Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section Six</td>
<td>Letter of Accreditation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Time Allocation

Writing the Self-Study (18 months)

The Actual Visit (4 days)
The governing body participates in an effective program of board development that includes annual new trustee orientation, ongoing trustee education, evaluation and self-evaluation, and board leadership succession planning.
Members of the governing body focus on the strategic interests and needs of the school in fulfilling their responsibilities.
Board Survey
Self Evaluation

● I read and understand the school’s financial reports.
● I avoid, in fact and perception, conflicts of interest that might jeopardize the school or its governing body.
● I respect the confidentiality of the board’s executive sessions.
Table 3: Student Enrollment Admission and Attrition

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment on opening day</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newly enrolled students</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students added during the school year</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduating students</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who were dismissed or not asked back</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who elected not to return</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students of color who elected not to return</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International students who elected not to return</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NYSAIS Criteria for Accreditation
Section Three - Governance

Baseline Criteria

- The governing body ensures administrative follow up as a result of an outside, annual professional audit and the corresponding management letter.

- The governing body reviews and maintains appropriate by-laws that conform to legal requirements while assuring that the school and governing body operate in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
NYSAIS Criteria for Accreditation
Section Three - Governance

Strategic Criteria

- The governing body provides stability in transitions of leadership for itself and its head of school.
- The governing body ensures that the head of school receives appropriate support, evaluation, and compensation.
- The governing body ensures that financial resources are provided for the school.
- The governing body has appropriate policies to support the creation, review, and approval of an annual operating and capital budget as well as a multi-year financial plan.
~ DISCUSS ~

- How does the board develop strategic initiatives or undertake strategic planning?
  - Provide a recent example of how a strategic initiative was identified, prioritized, and implemented. Assess the process.
Thank you.

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