ASSOCIATION for the ADVANCEMENT of INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

# THE AAIE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL BOARD DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM

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# Module 1:
# Performing Roles & Fulfilling Responsibilities

| Essential Question: How does the Board perform the role and fulfill the responsibilities of both governance and leadership? | |
|---|---|
| **A. The Full Spectrum of Governance** | Trustees understand the fiduciary and strategic responsibilities of the board, including using generative discussions as a tool for exploring issues. |
| **B. Adherence to Principles of Good Practice** | Trustees understand and abide by the *NAIS Principles of Good Practice* as well as guidelines established by their school's accreditation agency; and ensure their own governance policies and board protocols are aligned with them. |
| **C. Governance and Leadership: Policy-level vs. Operational-level** | Trustees recognize the difference between policy (their responsibility) and operations (the administration's responsibility); and appropriately identify "whose decision it is" when confronted with scenarios. Trustees distinguish between micro-management and rubber-stamping, maintaining balanced board oversight. |
| **D. Policy Development** | The Board employs a process of policy review/development to make sure its policies are current, clearly express the Board's intent, are reflective of the school's mission, vision and values, and are consistent with other foundational documents, (i.e. Articles of Association, Bylaws, etc.)<br>The Board ensures administrative procedures are aligned with board policies. |
| **E. Board Leadership** | Officers of the Board perform their job functions effectively. In particular, the chair exercises strategic leadership of the Board and effectively facilitates meetings. |

# Module 2:
# Meeting Fiduciary Responsibilities

| Essential Question: How does the Board meet its fiduciary obligations and serve as a good steward? | |
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| A. Fiduciary Sustainability | Trustees exercise responsible forward thinking in building a resilient organization, capable of achieving the school's objectives now and in the future. |
| B. Risk Management | Trustees collaborate with the Administration to identify and analyze risk factors and take effective steps to mitigate the school's vulnerability commonly faced by international schools.<br><br>Trustees also recognize the critical attributes of effective crisis preparedness and response and can articulate the Board's role and responsibilities in various crisis situations. The Board reviews the school's crisis response protocols on an annual basis. |
| C. Financial Audits | Trustees engage in interpreting and acting on the annual financial audit. |
| D. Conflict of Interest Policy | Trustees avoid "conflict of interest" and sign a conflict of interest statement on an annual basis. |
| E. Tax and Legal (including contract law) Considerations in Your Host Country | Trustees recognize the complexities of operating in the school's host country and, for schools incorporated in the USA, in accordance with applicable American laws; and identify measures to ensure the school is in compliance with relevant laws and regulations. |
| F. Relationship with Community | Trustees recognize the importance of effective community relations and adopt policies and practices that promote good communication and generate both loyalty and commitment to the school. Trustees are mindful of their appropriate role in communicating with each other, the faculty, the staff, students and the outside community. |
| G. Confidentiality | Trustees maintain confidentiality in regard to Board deliberations and decisions, particularly in matters involving individual students, school personnel, and other sensitive matters (e.g., legal issues or government relations). |
| H. Effective Fiduciary Practices | Trustees adopt practices that help them execute their fiduciary responsibilities, such as employing an annual calendar of administrative reports and board responsibilities; articulating the Board's own operational protocols in a Board protocol handbook; and monitoring and updating mid-range plans, e.g. financial, facilities, strategic. |

# Module 3:
# Growing and Sustaining the Board

| Essential Question: How does the Board build and sustain its own membership? | |
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| **A. Models of International School Boards** | Trustees understand the benefits, limitations, challenges and opportunities inherent in different Board structures for international schools (large, small, elected, appointed, self-perpetuating, hybrid, proprietary, etc.), and affirm that their Board's structure is "best fit" for their school. |
| **B. Recruiting and Orienting Replacements** | Trustees understand the essential importance of recruiting, vetting and orienting new Trustees and have established a process for effective fulfillment of those tasks, ideally through the work of the Governance Committee. |
| **C. Self-evaluation** | Trustees assess their performance as a Board and as individual members, utilizing tools such as the *AAIE Board of Trustees Evaluation Instrument.* |
| **D. Board Professional Development** | As members of a learning community, Trustees participate in formal professional development individually and as a Board, enhancing their effectiveness in serving the school. |
| **E. Ensuring Good Trustee Conduct** | On an annual basis, the Board affirms norms of conduct and commits to operational agreements and to a statement of ethics that is reflective of the *NAIS Principles of Good Practice.* Trustees also recognize their responsibility to model the school's articulated values. |
| **F. Addressing Problematic Trustee Conduct** | The Board has protocols for preventing, intervening in, remediating and learning from incidents of misconduct.<br>The Board has a policy or bylaw governing the removal of a Trustee "for cause". |

# Module 4:
# Hiring and Sustaining the Head of School

| **Essential Question: How does the Board build and sustain the school's leadership?** | |
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| **A. Supporting the Head of School** | Trustees understand the role and operational authority of the Head of School, and-nurture and support him/her as the Board's chief executive officer and the Board's sole employee. |
| **B. Head of School Evaluation** | The Board recognizes the importance of a well-designed Head of School evaluation process. The Head's evaluation is based on his/her job description and Board-approved annual goals and viewed as a way to help him/her grow professionally. |
| **C. Relationship Between Chair/Board and Head of School** | The Board recognizes the interdependent relationship among the Board chair, the Board, and the Head of School, identifying practices that make this relationship serve the best interests of the Board, the Head and school. Special attention is paid to fostering and maintaining a close, positive and productive relationship between the Board chair and the Head of School |
| **D. Head of School Search** | Trustees engage in succession planning, recognizing the complexity of the head search process, ensuring "best-practice" protocols, and incorporating a formal transition plan. |

# Module 5:
# Optimizing Board Operations

| Essential Question: How does the Board conduct its business? | |
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| **A. Common Board Practices** | The Board institutionalizes protocols and practices that maximize efficiency and effectiveness in conducting its work. |
| **B. Structure and Function of Committees and Task Forces** | Trustees understand the difference between committees and task forces. The Board has a limited number of standing committees and uses task forces appropriately. Each committee and task force operates in accordance with Board approved "terms of reference." |
| **C. Between-meeting Conduct** | Trustees understand that they have no authority outside of a meeting setting and cannot, as individual trustees, speak for the Board. They respond appropriately to inquiries and requests from community members.<br>The Board has established protocols for communication and if required, decision-making, outside the formal meeting structure, including virtual meeting guidelines. |
| **D. Decision Making** | The Board focuses its work on issues related to governance, (the Board's work), not operations (the Head's work) and makes decisions in a thoughtful, collegial, strategic and constructive way. |

# Module 6:
# Being Strategic

| Essential Question: How does the Board establish and sustain a strategic direction for the school? | |
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| **A. Clarifying and Affirming Mission, Vision, Values and Objectives** | Trustees articulate the school's mission, vision and values and annually reflect on the appropriateness, incisiveness and clarity of these guiding documents. |
| **B. Strategic Planning** | Trustees employ and monitor progress on a multi-year plan that is focused on strategic priorities and serves the school's mission, vision and values. |
| **C. Financial Planning** | Trustees utilize financial planning integrated with the school's overall strategic intent. |
| **D. Facilities Planning** | Trustees have approved and updated a comprehensive facilities master plan. |
| **E. Being Strategic** | The Board focuses on strategic issues, as reflected in meeting agendas, deliberations, and decision making.<br>Trustees employ strategic thinking and, as appropriate, generative discussions, in addressing issues. |

# Module 7:
# Being Accountable and Assessing Success

| Essential Question: How does the Board monitor progress and success in regards to fulfilling the school's mission, vision, values, educational objectives, and strategic intent? | |
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| **A. Measuring the School's Performance** | Trustees have identified, in collaboration with the Head of School, what the board should be monitoring and evaluating regarding the school's performance over time and agree on how this should be done. The indicators used to evaluate school progress and success are firmly grounded in the school's mission, vision and values. |
| **B. Using Information to Inform Action** | Trustees base decision making on relevant information, including trend data, analyses and reports from staff, resource materials, and concrete evidence. |