

LFNO Board of Directors Retreat
March 4, 2023

Standards, Expectations, & Norms for
Engagement between LFNO Stakeholder
Community and Board of Directors

*Dana Henry, General Counsel
LFNO Board of Directors*

Presentation Agenda/Overview

- ▶ Context/Background
 - New Board will be onboarded throughout 2023
 - Establish collaborative space for effective communication between Board & LFNO community moving forward
- ▶ Board of Directors Roles & Responsibilities
 - General Responsibilities
 - Governance
 - Responsibility Matrix
- ▶ Standards, Expectations, & Norms for Engagement
 - LFNO Stakeholder Community
- ▶ Questions/Comments

Context/Background

- ▶ Dr. McLaurin has been CEO since Summer 2022 with multiple Board transitions
- ▶ Board has engaged LFNO stakeholders in a strained space for several months based on critical finance decisions
- ▶ Elevate from atmosphere of fear, mis-trust, and bad faith assumptions to good-faith presumptions by all
- ▶ To maximize opportunities for Board & LFNO stakeholders to support Dr. McLaurin, establish norms for communication between Board & stakeholders focusing on:
 - Courtesy
 - Professionalism
 - Collaboration
 - Board and staff safety
 - Best interest of LFNO scholars

Board of Directors Roles & Responsibilities (General)

- ▶ LFNO Board is required to act in good faith and to exert the same level of **diligence, care, judgment, and skill** that an ordinarily prudent person would exercise under similar circumstances and in like positions.
- ▶ Board Members have three basic fiduciary duties:
 - Duty of Care: exercising sound, legal, and ethical board best practices and acting on an informed basis means:
 - Being an active Board Member and participant.
 - Participating in risk assessment and strategic planning discussions.
 - Routinely evaluating the schools, CEO, and Board to assess the organization's performance.
 - Implementing and enforcing any policies that safeguard the financial and operational integrity of the school.
 - Purchasing all necessary board and school liability insurance as required by your Authorizer.

Board of Directors Roles & Responsibilities (General-cont'd)

- ▶ Duty of Loyalty: giving undivided allegiance when making decisions affecting LFNO:
 - Avoiding conflicts of interests/abiding by conflicts of interests policies.
 - Never using school/board information for personal gain.
 - Being strong promoters and advocates for LFNO.
- ▶ Duty of Obedience: acting in furtherance of the law and the school's goals and mission:
 - Complying with all applicable state and federal laws governing charter schools, including laws applicable to Louisiana public bodies.
 - Acting in congruence with the Board's purpose, articles of incorporation and bylaws, and Charter Contract.
 - Being mission-aligned so that Board actions are consistent with the school's goals, vision, and mission.

Source: La. R.S. 12:226(A); 28 La. Adm. Code, Bulletin 126, §§ 2101-2107.

Board of Directors Roles & Responsibilities (Governance Duties)

- ▶ Charter School Board is specifically charged with analyzing the school's performance.
- ▶ While the Board's overall purpose is to govern, LFNO Board is not tasked with running the school's daily operations - that duty belongs to Dr. McLaurin.
- ▶ LFNO Board's direct and indirect duties, as well as its primary and secondary responsibilities:
- ▶ **Academic Performance**
 - Board indirectly governs the school's academic success through its oversight and evaluation of Dr. McLaurin.
- ▶ **Financial Performance**
 - Board directly governs the school's finances by developing and maintaining a balanced budget and ensuring adequate resources.
- ▶ **Legal Compliance**
 - Board is directly responsible for its ability to comply with the various laws applicable to Louisiana public bodies.
 - Board is indirectly responsible for the school's ability to comply with the various laws applicable to public schools through its creation and enforcement of school, student, and employee policies.

Board of Directors Roles & Responsibilities (Governance Responsibilities)

- ▶ Primary
 - Hire, support, and evaluate Dr. McLaurin.
 - Strategically plan for LFNO's future through policy.
 - Maintain legal and ethical integrity and provide financial oversight.
 - Develop and maintain an effective and competent Board.
- ▶ Secondary
 - Secure adequate resources for the school (fundraising).
 - LFNO Board may solicit, accept, and administer donations or any other financial assistance (not prohibited by law) for educational purposes on behalf of LFNO.
 - Serve as LFNO's ambassador to the community and greater public.
 - Uphold the promises made in the Charter Contract.
- ▶ CEO serves as the school's manager and implements the Board's policies and carries out the school's academic and operational programs daily.
- ▶ **Board assesses “what” needs to get done, while the CEO is entrusted with “how” to do it.**

Board of Directors Roles & Responsibilities (Responsibility Matrix)

Responsibility	Board	School Leader
Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approves annual budget • Reviews periodic financial reports • Ensures proper internal controls are in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares annual budget with input from Board/finance committee • Oversees preparation of periodic financial reports • Implements proper financial controls
Academic Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures academic benchmarks: examines whether <i>the what</i> are being met or on target to be met • Offers oversight of academic program through academic committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers academic program aligned with Charter Contract's specifications • Determines <i>how</i> the instructional program is delivered
Compliances and Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes personnel policies that adhere to state, federal, & local requirements • Approves salary scale & benefits packages offered by school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determines qualifications & hires staff • Conducts performance evaluations of staff • Responsible for management of school personnel

Standards, Expectations, & Norms for Engagement

- ▶ Professional
 - Engagement should be conducted consistent with personal jobs or business
 - LFNO Email for Board members should be used for communication
- ▶ Courteous
 - Refrain from personal accusations that aren't relevant to LFNO Board service
- ▶ Collaborative
 - Solution focused communications assuming that all parties are working in good faith
- ▶ Best interest of LFNO Scholars
 - ▶ Engagement should be scholar focused with positive education outcomes as the LFNO "North Star"

Standards, Expectations, & Norms for Engagement

- ▶ Concerns with a Principal or staff should begin with the Grievance Process or CEO.
- ▶ Unless concern involves CEO, staff should not communicate directly with Board members and should be routed to CEO to trigger grievance process.
- ▶ Parent members of Board provide unique insight/perspective and have same fiduciary duties to LFNO.
 - Not a lobbyist for parents only.
- ▶ Parent concerns related to scholars should be directed to LFNO Executive leadership *first*.
- ▶ Communications from staff, scholars, and parents should be streamlined through LFNO Executive leadership first so LFNO Board does not micromanage or usurp authority of CEO to manage the daily affairs of campuses.

Questions/Comments?





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**Engage with LAPCS if
interested in serving as
Board member**