**EVALUATION of HEAD and BOARD**

ISACS recommends that annually an independent school board evaluate itself and its head of school. With regards to the evaluation of the head, ISACS recommends a handful of guiding principles:

- The head of school is the board's employee (and only employee): it is the board's responsibility to evaluate the head, not any one else's. (On this point, remarks by Fred Calder, Executive Director of NYSAIS, are germane: "...[Heads] should be evaluated by the employer, not the employees. He [or she] is not an elected official. Though generally accountable to the whole community, [the head] is specifically accountable only to the owners of the school, i.e., the trustees who appoint the head. Every [other] employee of the school has a narrower focus, mostly much narrower, than the head....Bulletin #217, April 1997.)

- The entire board, and not just the Executive Committee, should be involved in the formal evaluation of the school head: typically this is accomplished through the distribution and completion of a head-evaluation form. (ISACS models, below).

- This process should occur on an annual basis, typically in June (after the dust has settled from the current year).

- The evaluation criteria should be linked to the strategic plan of the school, the mission points of the school, and/or the specific goals set for the year: i.e., the head should be evaluated in global terms of leadership and institutional performance and not in terms of the crisis of the moment or intangibles (how well he is she is liked, this week, by this or that constituency).

- Typically, a board selects a small group of its members as the head's evaluation committee (3-5, sometimes the Executive Committee) to assemble, distill, and discuss the evaluation results.

- The results and recommendations of the committee are then shared by the board president and vice-president or president-elect, in Executive Session, with the entire board and, in private, with the school head.

- Objective goals (a small, manageable number of them) for the coming year should be set for the school, the head, and the board.
Attached, please find the following documents to consider for facilitating the evaluation process:

- Sample "Head of School Evaluation Instrument" (on the ISACS website, under Monographs/Evaluation) and "Trustee Evaluation Instrument," Versions I and II (on the website, and below). Also available, from NAIS: NAIS' "Principles of Good Practice" for Heads, Trustees, Boards: these documents, honed by NAIS committees representing a diversity of schools, are excellent in clarity and specificity. By adding a scoring statement, the "Principles" could be utilized by an individual school as an evaluation instrument for periodic evaluation of the head, individual board members, and the Board en toto.

The commitment to and follow-up from evaluation are far more important than the instrument crafted to undertake the process.

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TRUSTEE EVALUATION INSTRUMENT, I

This form, designed to assist boards of trustees in appraising their effectiveness in school governance, is available for voluntary use at any time: Many school boards incorporate an annual evaluation into their schedule.

Part I. Self-evaluation:

Please rate yourself, on a scale of 1 - 4 (one's being the lowest) in each of the following areas:

a) Personal knowledge of school?

b) Personal interest in school?

c) Knowledge of school personnel?

d) Degree of activity on board?

e) Degree of activity on committees?

f) Attendance at board meetings?

g) Attendance at school activities?
h) Degree of effectiveness in fund-raising?
i) Effectiveness as promoter of school in community?
j) Degree of concern regarding learning about current educational practices and procedures?
k) Knowledge of and interest in financial operations of the school?
l) Assessment of own contribution to board?

Analysis: If you rated yourself "1" or "2" on any of the above, please copy down the letter of that section and explain briefly the reasoning for that rating:

**Part II. Board Evaluation:**

Briefly comment on each of the following:

a) Judging from your own experience, do you feel that the board's practice of information explanation and indoctrination for new members is adequate: If not, what changes would you make?

b) Are you satisfied with the decision-making process of the board? If not, what changes would you make?

c) Do you feel that the philosophy and purposes of the school are sound and well developed? If not, what changes would you make?

d) What do you feel are the greatest strengths of the board? Its chief weaknesses?

e) What do you feel have been your greatest contributions to the board?

f) Are you satisfied with the board's policy of dealing with members who have rotated off the board? Are ex-members adequately informed of school affairs? Are ex-members kept involved, in some way, with the school? Can you think of a way in which they might more effectively be utilized for the good of the school?

g) Are the lines of responsibility for board and administration clearly delineated and followed?

h) Do you feel that communication among board members, and between board and administration, is satisfactory: If not, how might it be improved?
i) Are Board members discreet and careful in their handling of complaints that may possibly come to them from constituents?

j) To what extent is the board successful in showing leadership in contributing to the school? Annual giving leadership? Capital giving leadership?

k) Are there any ways in which you think the Board might be doing a more effective job, based on your understanding of board purposes and structure?

**Part III: Goals**

Grade and comment on the board’s achieving the goals for the board of the school as agreed upon last summer:

- Goal 1: The board will in the coming school year…etc.
- Goal 2: The board will in the coming school year…etc.
- Goal 3: The board will in the coming school year…etc.
- Goal 4: The board will in the coming school year…etc.
- Goal 5: The board will in the coming school year…etc.

**TRUSTEE EVALUATION INSTRUMENT, II**

Instructions to the Board: The "job description" of the board can be entirely encapsulated in the following six elements of an independent school board's governance province: Please "grade" (A/B/C/D/F) (and add comments, as appropriate) on the extent to which you feel the board is effective in the following areas:

The board...

1. Holds the school "in trust" (by valuing, protecting, & manifesting the school's mission):

2. Sets policy (by focusing on broad policy issues rather than micro-managing operations)

3. Finances the school (by setting appropriate tuition and leading in fund-raising)

4. Hires & supports the head (by public support of head and administrative decisions)

5. Plans strategically for the future (by formal planning process, with yearly goal-setting)

6. Evaluates the performance of school, head, board (by defining performance indicators and annually reviewing the success of school, head, and board in achieving them)