



Frederick Classical Charter School

Charter Governance Panel
March 25, 2021



Introductions

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Innovation & Choice

- ✓ Available through lottery to all students
- ✓ Unique curriculum
- ✓ Charter legally binds FCCS, Inc and FCPS
- ✓ The purpose of MD charter schools are to establish alternative means within the existing public school system in order to provide innovative learning opportunities and creative educational approaches to improve the education of students.

Classical Education

The school's unique focus is delivering a classical liberal arts education through instructional programs with track records of success for a wide variety of students

FCCS maintains its focus on classical content:

- ✓ scientifically-based reading instruction grounded in systematic phonics (Foundations and Wit & Wisdom)
- ✓ a world-class math program (Singapore Math)
- ✓ chronological treatment of history that serves as the organizing structure for science and the humanities
- ✓ exposure to rich cultural and literary content from around the world
- ✓ the study of Spanish and Latin beginning in elementary school
- ✓ virtues integrated into lessons

FCCS emphasizes excellent teaching practices and data-driven, high-quality, integrated lesson planning.

Parent Run

A Parent Board is elected by parents and staff to represent them in ensuring the classical mission and vision

- ✓ Membership organization
- ✓ Elected leadership
- ✓ Engaged parents and informed parents
- ✓ Grow!

Parent Board

FCPS Staff

“The Board of Trustees shall perform or cause to be performed all functions necessary to the operation of a public charter school”

Defines the mission and vision

Manage budget and facility

Review and authorize curriculum recommendations

Provide input to the principal's evaluation

Review and authorize staffing recommendations

Upholds the mission and vision

Daily operation - delivers Board/Charter approved curriculum

Participate in task forces to recommend curriculum changes

Staff not evaluated by Board

Recommend staff positions

Members

- Not representatives of the organization - can't bind
- Elect the board - can serve
- Dissolution of the school
- Charter amendment
- Debt assumption (new building)
- Annual statement, policies, and minutes of membership meetings

Board

- Authority to conduct business of the organization
- Elected by and from the membership
- Charter compliance and amendment
- Verify funding under Md. law
- Oversee FCCS financial management
- Approve and monitor curricular materials
- Approve staffing levels and position descriptions

Governance Overview

- **Duty of Care**: The duty of care describes the level of competence that is expected of a board member, and is commonly expressed as the duty of “care that an ordinarily prudent person would exercise in a like position and under similar circumstances.” This means that a board member owes the duty to exercise reasonable care when he/she makes a decision as a steward of the organization.
- **Duty of Loyalty**: The duty of loyalty is a standard of faithfulness; a board member must give undivided allegiance when making decisions affecting the organization. This means that a board member can never use information obtained as a member for personal gain, but must act in the best interests of the organization.
- **Duty of Obedience**: The duty of obedience requires board members to be faithful to the organization’s mission. They are not permitted to act in a way that is inconsistent with the central goals of the organization. A basis for this rule lies in the public’s trust that the organization will manage donated funds to fulfill the organization’s mission.

Governance Overview Con't

- **Priority Functions of Charter School Boards**

- Select, support and evaluate the school leader
- Support the mission of the school and monitor progress towards fulfilling the mission
- Develop and monitor organizational/strategic planning
- Ensure adequate resources and financial viability
- Recruit new board members and assess board performance

- **Areas of Administration for Charter School Boards**

- Academic - What data do we have? What does it mean? What is our plan to improve?
- Financial - Is the budget aligned with the mission? Are there policies/checks and balances in place? Is there a structured Finance Committee? What reports do we receive/when?
- Operational - Are critical documents aligned? Does our board function well?

Signs of Proper Governance

Minutes publicly available?

- ✓ FCCS exceeds normal charter school practice by publishing minutes to its website

Financials available?

- ✓ FCCS exceeds normal charter school practice and all legal requirement by publishing monthly financials to its website

Board structure?

- ✓ Parent control through election is unusual. If teachers are included, the best practice is to be non-voting and not included in HR & related discussions. ED is also non-voting, but attends all meetings/provides reports.

Signs of Proper Governance Con't

Investment in Board Training?

- ✓ Training is essential to good governance and an appropriate use of school system funding

Legal & professional guidance?

- ✓ FCCS obtains legal and expert guidance when necessary. Also an appropriate use of per pupil funds and other funding sources

Financial management

- ✓ Clean audits from our independent auditor who performs audits for ten other charter schools in Maryland, likely more than any other firm.

FCPS "NDA"

FCCS, Inc Confidentiality



Attachment 1
FCPS Regulation 400-86

Frederick County Public Schools

Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

I understand that the work I do is of great benefit and service to the staff and students at Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS).

As part of my volunteerism, I may see, hear, or be in the vicinity of confidential information regarding students and staff. I agree that I will preserve confidentiality of all information seen or heard during the course of my volunteer hours.

I also acknowledge that I have participated in the Volunteer Orientation at school or on a FCPS website.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Return signed form to your school's front office. Attention to Volunteer Coordinator.



Frederick Classical Confidentiality Agreement

Dear <Name>:

This letter pertains to your engagement as a <engagement type> by the Board of Trustees of the Frederick Classical Charter School, Inc. Please be advised that the Board considers your reports to the Board and all other written materials relating to your work for the Board (including without limitation Board questionnaires and notes from meetings or interviews) to be confidential, and we expect you to maintain the confidentiality of these documents and the information contained therein. These materials include confidential and sensitive information, including personnel information, intended solely for the Board's use in its internal deliberations and decision-making regarding Board <description of purpose>. The Board reserves all rights for any unauthorized disclosure of this information to any third party.

The Board would like to thank you for your anticipated cooperation and for your continued service. If you have any questions, please contact the Board President.

Signature & Date:

FCCS, Inc. President

<Name>

Bylaws

Election and Vote on Articles II, III, IV
May 12th 7 PM

- Reiterate roles already required under the charter contract
- Greater parent control of who is on the board
- Increases frequency of elections to foster greater community engagement and stagger board member turnover
- Makes quorum easier to achieve
- Formalizes teacher role on board
- Indemnification formalized

Thinking in the Future: Executive Director & Additional Funding

- ✓ Champion of mission and vision - Employed by the charter school operator
- ✓ Participates in the school's daily operation and decision making - Fidelity to charter
- ✓ Direct report to the Board of Trustees - Evaluated regularly by that entity
- ✓ Provides direction and support to the principal - Often included (along with the Board) in the feedback of the principal to the district
- ✓ Direct liaison between FCPS and school community and FCCPS, Inc. - Often works to ensure charter school inclusion and insight in district policy and decision making
- ✓ Champions fundraising and other efforts by the school/operator - Budget Management

THANK

YOU