

Pataula Charter Academy, Inc.

Standard Operating Policy for Committees of the Governing Board

Committees are essential to the effective operation of an organization. Strong committee leadership and dedicated committee members are necessary for the organization to be successful.

The relationship between the board of trustees and its committees and between the committees and the staff require a delicate balance and constant communication. Committees perform the work of the board and report to the board. Staff, particularly the Superintendent and CFO, serve as primary resources to committees during all committee deliberations. Staff also use committees to help in decision-making and planning.

Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

The bylaws establish standing committees of the Governing Board. The PCA Inc. by-laws include the following committees: Academic, Finance, and Governance. The Board Chair appoints ad hoc committees, or “taskforces,” as needed.

Establishment of Committees

1. Each committee is chaired by a member of the Governing Board. Committee members may include non-board members as well as board members.
2. All board members are expected to serve on one committee.
3. The Chair of the Governing Board, in consultation with the Superintendent and/or CFO, appoints all committee chairs and assigns other members to committees. Board members can request certain committees and to be chair, and the Chair will consider those requests. Board members will remain on their assigned committee for the duration of their Board term, unless a Board member requests a committee change.
4. Committee chairs are responsible to recruit their own committee members, in consultation with the chair and Superintendent and/or CFO.
5. The Board Chair is an ex-officio member of all committees.
6. It is recommended that the chair and Superintendent/CFO meet annually with each committee chair after board elections, in order to review the committee responsibilities and direction for the new year. Committees may have tasks remaining from the previous year; critical issues may have surfaced during annual planning.
7. If the board, staff and/or committees identify new initiatives, prior approval by the board of trustees is required before the committee begins developing plans.

Operations of Committees

1. Committees report to the board of trustees. Regular reports, presented by the committee chair, should be presented at each board meeting.
2. The chair of the board monitors activities of the committees and ensures task completion. The chair maintains regular (i.e., at least monthly) contact with committee chairs. Committee chairs should report to the board chair on a regular basis, at least monthly. It is recommended that the board chair share this task with the vice chair. Committee monitoring can be divided between the chair and vice chair.
3. The committee chair and Superintendent and/or CFO coordinate committee meeting dates.
4. The committee chair and Superintendent and/or CFO establish the agenda of each committee meeting.

5. Each committee must take its own minutes and, reproduce and distribute its materials to committee members, the board chair, and Superintendent and/or CFO.

Relationship of Staff and Committees

1. Committee and staff responsibilities are a delicate balance. The Superintendent and/or CFO and committees may develop some activities together. At other times, staff may pursue activities, within budget and strategic plan, without committee participation. This requires careful judgment on the part of the Superintendent and/or CFO and constant communication between Superintendent and/or CFO, board chair, and committee chairs.
2. The Superintendent and/or CFO (or his or her staff designee) serves as staff to all committees.
3. The staff person assigned to a committee serves as the primary resource to all committee deliberations.
4. Activities and materials require approval by the staff person assigned. While this cooperative process rarely encounters conflict, sometimes disagreement between staff and committee may occur. At that time, the Superintendent and/or CFO and committee chair should convene a meeting with the chair so that the situation can be resolved.

Responsibilities of Committee Members

1. Know and understand the committee's purpose, scope, and authority.
2. Attend meetings and participate in discussion.
3. Participate in group decision making.
4. Put aside personal agendas for the larger purpose.
5. Carry out specific task assignments by the due date, and report back to the committee.
6. Use the staff as a key resource and guide.

Responsibilities of Committee Chairs

1. Together with the Superintendent and/or CFO (or other staff person assigned to support the committee), schedule committee meetings, and identify the purpose and agenda of each meeting.
2. Together with the Superintendent and/or CFO, ensure that proper information is provided to the committee.
3. Define tasks to be accomplished and select appropriate committee members to do each job and report back to the committee.
4. Monitor activities of each committee member. If the assigned individual does not accomplish his or her tasks, assign the work to another individual.
5. Maintain minutes of the committee meetings as needed. (Depending upon size of staff, this may be a staff function.)
6. Maintain proper records and files of projects and activities.
7. Report progress, at least monthly, to the board chair and Superintendent and/or CFO.
8. Notify the board chair and Superintendent and/or CFO if the committee requires any action to be taken at the board meeting.
9. Make reports at board meetings as necessary.

Responsibilities of the Superintendent and/or CFO (or staff assigned to support the committee)

1. Work with the board chair to identify committee chairs.

2. Work with the board chair to ensure effective committee operations.
3. Work with the board chair to determine what/when issues should be referred to committees.
4. Together with the committee chair, schedule committee meetings, and establish the purpose and agenda for each meeting.
5. Attend all committee meetings.
6. Provide information and guidance to committees.
7. Ensure that the committee has the necessary information for decision-making.
8. Alert the board chair if there is any difficulty within committee operations.
9. Work with the committee chair to ensure smooth committee operations.

Task Forces

1. Ad hoc task forces are convened to address a specific issue and then dissolve.
2. Task forces allow board members to participate in diverse experiences during the course of the year.