

## **ELEMENT 4 – GOVERNANCE**

*“The governance structure of the charter school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the charter school to ensure parental involvement” Education Code § 47605(b)(5)(D).*

The governance structure of Elevate Elementary is organized to meet the educational needs of all students enrolled. Each level of governance has been designed to support and advance the mission, vision, and stated goals of this charter. Elevate School’s administration and Elevate School’s Board of Directors have the backgrounds, experience and capacity needed to sustain an excellent high-performing school, especially in the areas of: curriculum, instruction, and assessment; finance; business/nonprofit management; human resources; facilities; fundraising; marketing/public relations; board development; governance; and school administration.

### **A. NON-PROFIT PUBLIC BENEFIT CORPORATION**

Elevate School is a directly funded independent charter school operated by a California nonprofit public benefit corporation, Elevate School, pursuant to California law.

The Charter School operates autonomously from the District, with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute and other contracted services as may be negotiated between the District and the Charter School. Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(d), the District shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of the Charter School, operated by a California non-profit public benefit corporation, or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the Charter School, as long as the District has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

Attached, as Appendices C, D, and E, please find the Elevate School’s Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Conflict of Interest Code, respectively.

### **B. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Charter School is governed by a corporate Board of Directors (“Board”) in accordance with its adopted bylaws, which shall be consistent with the terms of this charter. The Board is the ultimate policy-making entity and oversees the leadership of the Charter School. The Board delegates the day-to-day management decisions for the Charter School, such as hiring teachers and Charter School staff, in strict adherence to school policy, to the Executive Director.

The Board of Directors consists of no less than five (5) and up to eleven (11) directors. The term of office for members of the Board of Directors shall be three years. In order to create staggered terms of office, no more than one-third of the existing members may be replaced annually. Each Board member will be allowed a maximum total of two terms of service to the Board.

## 1. The Role of the Board of Directors

The primary responsibility of the Board of Directors is to oversee the affairs of Elevate School for the ultimate benefit of the students and community. The Board agrees that day-to-day management of Elevate School is the responsibility of the Charter School leadership and that the role of the Board is to oversee the Charter School's strategic direction, and leadership performance of that function.

### Long range strategy and goal development

The Board believes that long-range goal development, goal assessment, and strategic issues should be discussed as a matter of course at regular Board meetings.

### Review of academic program, internal operations, and financial status

While the Executive Director oversees the day-to-day operations of the Charter School, he/she must also have a close working relationship with the Board. The Executive Director reports to the Board at each meeting, providing reports regarding the Charter School's academic and financial status. The Board reviews all current and past academic performance at Elevate School, adopts and revises the annual operating budget, and guides specific goals throughout each school year. At each Board meeting, the Board also reviews operational feedback from staff, parents, and students; reviews/approves all recent expenditures, expected revenues, and any upcoming expenditure to assure that all financial operations are in line with the mission of Elevate School, the charter, and in compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations as applicable to charter schools.

### Assure an ethical school environment

The Board believes that the long-term success of Elevate School is dependent upon the maintenance of an ethical operational environment that focuses on adherence to both the letter and the spirit of regulatory and legal mandates.

Board and committee agendas and materials are created with strict adherence to the Brown Act and board-adopted policies and procedures. The Board expects that Charter School leadership will conduct operations in the ethical manner that is directed upon to them.

### Performance evaluation of Executive Director

The Board believes that the Executive Director's performance should be evaluated annually and as a regular part of any decision with respect to compensation. The Board will review and approve annual and long-term performance goals for the Executive Director and evaluate the Executive Director's performance against such goals. The Board will meet annually with the Executive Director to assess performance of the Charter School, staff reviews, and to receive recommendations concerning such goals and to discuss performance against the prior year's goals.

## 2. Qualifications of Board of Directors

Elevate School is well-served when the Board of Directors bring to the Charter School a variety of perspectives and skills derived from high quality education, business, community, and professional experience.

Directors should possess the highest personal and professional ethics, integrity and values, and be committed to representing the best interests of the Charter School. They must also have an inquisitive and objective perspective and mature judgment.

Members of the Board of Directors will possess one or more of the following:

- Background in elementary **and/or middle** school education, curriculum, or assessment
- Experience with the inner workings of nonprofit corporations
- Experience with nonprofit finance, preferable with educational finances
- Proven track record of successful business dealings
- ~~Experience with nonprofit fundraising~~
- Experience in community outreach and/or public relations
- Legal experience
- ~~Success in business/finance sector~~
- **Experience in the Military**
- **Experience in Real Estate, Facilities, or Construction**
- **Prior Board Experience**
- **Experience in Governance, Leadership, or Strategic Planning**
- **Experience in Human Resources**
- **Experience in Communications/Marketing**
- **Representation of our Student Demographics**

~~The Board recognizes the value of parent voice and shall endeavor to appoint parent Directors who are representative of our student demographics and have skills vital to the success of the Board. The Board shall have two (2) parent representatives elected amongst the parent body (one vote per family); and two (2) community representatives appointed by the Board existing at the time of the vacancy.~~ As the authorizing entity, San Diego Unified School District is entitled to a single representative on the Board of Directors pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(c). If the District chooses to do so, the Board shall appoint **another community member an additional Director** to ensure that the Board is maintained with an odd number of Directors.

## 3. Board Professional Development

Elevate School believes that the best governing boards are not appointed, but rather developed. Elevate School annually facilitates a Board Development Retreat to assure that each board member:

- Fully understands the mission and goals of Elevate School;

- Has a thorough understanding of Elevate School’s charter, including its academic program, educational goals, potential educational challenges, and strategies for success;
- Has a thorough understanding of the annual operating budget and the state fund disbursement calendar; and
- Is familiar with the facility and programs that are offered.

Additional opportunities for the professional development of the Board are employed throughout the year. Trainings offered by the California Charter Schools Association, the Charter School Development Center, San Diego County Office of Education, and other entities are attended whenever possible and cover at a minimum the Brown Act and conflicts of interest.

#### **4. Board Legal Requirements and Commitments**

In an effort to remain a publicly transparent and ethically responsible entity, Elevate School assures that all applicable legal obligations are followed with strict adherence.

##### **Compliance with Charter School Laws**

Elevate School complies with the Brown Act, the Public Records Act, and the Political Reform Act. All meetings are held at the site of Elevate School, and in a room that allows for public attendance and participation. Meeting agendas are posted in accordance with the requirements of the Brown Act.

##### **Conflicts of Interest**

Elevate School requires that all board members and staff members adhere to the requirements of the Political Reform Act and Government Code Section 1090, as set forth in Education Code Section 47604.1, effective January 1, 2020. The Conflict of Interest Code has been submitted to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, the Charter School’s code-reviewing body, for approval as required under the Political Reform Act.

##### **Board of Director Meetings and Minutes**

In order to conduct the business of Elevate School and to effectively oversee the operation of Elevate School, the Board of Directors will have no less than six (6) regular meetings per year to be held at the site of Elevate School, within San Diego Unified School District’s jurisdictional boundary. Special meetings may be held in accordance with the Brown Act. To ensure participation by all Board Members, any director who misses three successive board meetings will be removed from the Board in accordance with provisions set forth in Elevate School’s Bylaws.

All Board meetings shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act and are governed by Robert’s Rules of Order.

##### **Current Board of Directors Members**

The current Board of Directors consists of the following individuals:

**Carol Leighty, Ed. D.** (Board Chair, Community Member; Term expires 2019)

Dr. Leighty served 40 years in public education, retiring as a school district superintendent. As Superintendent of the Temecula Valley Unified School District, Dr. Leighty worked with various stakeholders to ensure that the needs of military students were met.

**Freda Callahan, Ed. D.** (Board Vice-Chair, Community Member; Term expires 2019)

Dr. Callahan served 34 years as an educator in SDUSD. Her roles included teacher, principal, and central office administrator. Prior to joining the Elevate Founding Team and Board, Dr. Callahan lent her expertise in education, coaching, and program development to the University of San Diego, Point Loma Nazarene University, and the San Diego County Office of Education. She