

7CsThrive BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Sec.1. PREAMBLE

The Governing Board of **7CsThrive**, the prospective Charter Holder for the open-enrollment charter school, defines the policies. The official name of the Charter School is **7Cs Academy** PreK-8 Public Charter School, which may be referred to throughout this Board Operating Procedure as “7Cs Academy.” The goals of 7CsThrive and 7Cs Academy shall reflect the district’s advocacy for all students. All students mean all – including students with disabilities, English language learners, and gifted students (per policies PG-2.1-2.22 on the Board Policy Manual).

The policies set by the Board on the 7CsThrive Board Policy Manual will ensure the district’s vision, mission, and student outcome goals are achieved. A responsibility of the Board is to hire a Superintendent/CEO, who then implements the policies and student outcome goals adopted by the Board. The Board shall evaluate the Superintendent/CEO’s job performance exclusively on the results and progress toward achieving the student outcomes goals and constraints.

These operating procedures will be reviewed no later than June 30 every year by the Governing Board of 7sThrive and shall reflect their “thinking like an engineer” mindset on governance and leadership to continuously improve the District’s academic and financial performance.

A district (Charter Holder) is only as strong as the Superintendent/Board relationship, also referred to as the “Team of Six.” We will support each other in becoming better leaders by nurturing each other’s wisdom. The Superintendent is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the organization. The Board shall, acting as a body corporate in meetings posted in compliance with Government Code, Chapter 551, oversee the management of all 7CsThrive charter schools.

The Board must give the Superintendent/CEO leeway to accomplish the directives provided by the Board without getting involved in the day-to-day operations of the district and campuses.

An effective Board of Director communicates with the Superintendent/CEO about a concern. It is the Superintendent/CEO’s job to address concerns. Board of Directors should not violate the chain of command. Doing so causes disrespect and unclear expectations between 7Cs personnel, the Superintendent/CEO, and the Governing Board.

Sec.2. BOARD PROTOCOL

In accordance with the 7CsThrive charter application on file with the Texas Education Agency, 7Cs Academy is seeking to be authorized to serve students who reside within the geographical boundaries of the 13 independent school districts in the primary attendance boundary and 26 additional independent school districts outside the primary attendance boundary, once all eligible students who reside in the primary attendance boundary have been recruited/admitted.

Related Policy: PG-1.1

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Sec. 3. ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

Newly elected or appointed directors to the Board shall participate in a local orientation session to familiarize the new Board of Director with the 7CsThrive organization, the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Board policies, and relevant portions of the Texas Education Code and the Texas Administrative Code related to governance of an open-enrollment charter school.

Related Policy: PG-1.4

Sec. 4. COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

a) *Quarterly Statement of Disclosure and Compliance*

To demonstrate our commitment to Budgets and the Theory of Action – Quality Improvement in Policy PG-2.1, the Governing Board of 7CsThrive will hold ourselves to a higher standard than what is required by law with an Annual Statement of Disclosure. Board of Directors will provide a Quarterly Statement of Disclosure and Compliance. The Quarterly Statement of Disclosure and Compliance shall be filed one week before the Quarterly Board Self-Evaluations.

b) *Professional Conduct at Meetings*

The Governing Board of 7CsThrive is committed to spending 50 percent or more of the total quarterly minutes in Board authorized public meetings to be invested in improving student outcomes according to the *Time Use Tracker* adopted on December 17, 2020. Consequently, the Board shall not exceed listed times for Agenda Items at Regular Meetings. See rules of engagement for Guest Speakers.

c) *Guest Speakers*

The Secretary of the Board will remind the Guest Speaker(s) about the 7CsThrive Board's rules of engagement prior to their presentation.

- Guest Speaker(s) will have no more than 5-10 minutes of uninterrupted time for their presentation to the Board, unless determined otherwise by the Board President.
- The Secretary of the Board will give a one-minute reminder before the expiry of the speaker's time.
- The Board may choose to engage with the guest speaker(s) to ask questions for no more than 10 minutes, following the presentation.

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Rules of Engagement for Guest Speaker(s)

- Guest Speaker(s) will be notified in writing about the topic, presentation time, and associated etiquette of operations of the 7CsThrive Governing Board, prior to the meeting.
- Guest Speaker(s) may choose to stay and observe the proceedings of meetings in the Open Forum only.
- Guest Speaker(s) are not allowed to interrupt and/or communicate further with the Board and the CEO during the remainder of the meeting.

d) Public

Members of the public may address the Board during regularly scheduled board meetings during the open Public Forum portion (Agenda Item Number IX) at a Regular Meeting. The Governing Board will listen to the comments and consider input from the public before taking any action (Agenda Item Number X). Directors will not engage in a two-way dialog with the speaker(s). The Board is assembled to gather input only. No action may be taken. Protocol for the open Public Forum (Agenda Item Number IX):

- The Board will limit response time to three minutes per speaker.
- The Board President will determine total time allowed for patron input.
- The Board will not accept negative comments on individual students, individual personnel, or directors of the Board.
- The Board shall not tolerate disruption of the meeting by members of the audience. If, after at least one warning from the presiding officer, any person continues to disrupt the meeting by his or her words or actions, the presiding officer may request assistance from law enforcement officials to have the person removed from the meeting.

e) Governing Board Communication with the Community

Board of Directors will communicate with the community through Public Forums, regular Board Meetings, Committee Meetings, Electronic Media, and Regular Publications, as appropriate to the role.

To be most effective, the Governing Board should be fully present and active in the local community. As such, directors are encouraged to participate in community activities as liaisons between the public and the school district. When speaking to members of the community, directors are expected to do the following:

- Listen politely and respectfully.
- Accurately relay information about the district.

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- Refer questions about specific district activities/issues to the appropriate 7Cs Academy personnel or spokesperson when they do not know the answers.
- Clarify Board of Director's limitations, obligations, and responsibilities as a director of the Board.
- Respect Board decisions.
- Relay official action by the Board, if applicable.

Regarding policy, boundaries, finances, or other responsibilities of the Board – Citizens wishing to express themselves should be directed by directors to use one or more of these alternatives: contact appropriate 7Cs Academy personnel, e-mail, telephone or write to the Governing Board, speak at Public Forums, or participate in the monthly, open Public Forum portion of a Regular Meeting of the Board.

f) Board of Director's Concerns about another Board of Director's Performance

How would you handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the school's board were acting unethically or not in the best interest of the school? This is one of the questions in the required TEA's Board Member Biographical Affidavit on our Charter Application.

If a Board of Director has a serious, specific, concern about the performance of another director which appears to be in violation of the 7Cs Thrive Board Operating Procedures or the policies in the 7CsThrive Board Policy Manual, the recommended process for addressing such concerns shall be the following:

- The concerned director shall have a private conversation with the director to work out the differences or resolve the issue(s).
- If the concern(s) remain, the concerned director will meet privately with the Board President and outline the specific issue(s). The Board President and the complainant will meet with the director and attempt to resolve the issue(s). If the concern is with the performance of the Board President, the Vice President will be notified and will meet with the complainant.
- If the issue is still not resolved, the complainant will hold a conference with the Board President (or Vice President with concerns regarding the President) and the Superintendent/CEO (or the Superintendent/CEO's designee) to develop a plan of action to resolve the concerns.
- When a director with concern(s) about another director's performance has gone through the outlined steps above and the issue(s) remain unresolved the concerned director will, through the Board President, request that an item be placed on a regularly scheduled agenda as an executive/closed session item, posted as "Consideration of the Duties of a Public

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Officer." See Board Operating Procedure, Meetings, "Preparation of the Agenda," regarding the steps to follow when placing an item on the agenda.

- Should the Governing Board determine that reprimand or censorship is warranted, such action may only be taken in a duly posted public meeting.
- No action may be taken that would conflict with the **Texas Open Meetings Act**. Nothing in this operating procedure shall be construed to limit a Board of Director's constitutional rights.

g) Censure of a Board of Director

If a Board of Director acts in a manner that is unbecoming of a director and disruptive to the business of the district, the Board can pass a resolution to censure that Board of Director. This would consist of a calmly worded statement identifying the following:

- The inappropriate behavior of the named Board of Director.
- The desired behavior.
- A statement of agreement by a two-thirds vote of the other Directors that the behavior is inappropriate.

Resolutions are non-binding, but they have the effect of publicly disciplining a colleague, since removal from office is rare.

Under extreme conditions the Board may agree to ask the offending Board of Director to resign. However, a Board of Director may only be removed from office for incompetency, official misconduct, intoxication, or conviction of a felony.

Related Policies: PG-1.2, PG-1.3, PG-1.5, PG-1.6, PG-1.7, PG-1.9, PG-1.10, PG-2.1

Sec. 5. PREPARATION OF THE AGENDA

Agendas are drafted by the Superintendent/CEO in consultation with the Board President, but final approval for the agenda is the sole authority of the Board President.

At least two directors may request that a subject be included on the agenda for a meeting, and the Superintendent/CEO shall include on the preliminary agenda of the meeting all Board of Directors-requested topics that have been submitted in a timely manner. The deadline for submitting items for inclusion on the agenda is at least three weeks before Regular Meetings.

Requests for agenda topics will be forwarded to the Board President and Superintendent/CEO. The Board President will ensure that any topics the Board or individual directors request be addressed

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either on the agenda or scheduled for workshop discussion at an appropriate time soon. The Board President will not have authority to remove from the agenda a subject requested by a Board of Director without that director's specific authorization.

No item can be placed on a Board Meeting agenda by the Superintendent/CEO less than 72 hours in advance of the meeting unless an emergency or urgent public necessity exists.

The dates, times, and locations of all Board Meetings and Board Workshops will be published on the Board approved meeting calendar, which may be found on the website <https://7CsAcademy.org/meetings-agendas-and-minutes>.

Related Policy: PG-1.7

Sec. 6. BOARD OF DIRECTOR PREPARATION FOR, AND PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS

Board of Directors will read and study the Board Agenda Binder prior to every meeting to help continuously improve the District's academic and financial performance. As a Governing Board, directors are trusted with the responsibility of ensuring that the district is well managed and fiscally sound. Fiduciary duties fall into three categories:

a) Duty of care

The duty of care requires directors to be reasonably aware of what is occurring at the school so that they can make informed decisions. We are constantly curious. As part of the duty of care, directors should be prepared for meetings, actively participate in planning and decision-making, and make informed judgments.

b) Duty of loyalty

The duty of loyalty requires directors to always put the best interests of the school above any personal or professional interests. We do not pitch for business. Directors should not serve on the Board for financial, or other gain for themselves or their families. Fulfilling this duty requires directors to be free of real conflict of interest, be free of perceived conflicts of interests, and not engage in related party transactions.

c) Duty of obedience

The duty of obedience requires directors to ensure that the school complies with all applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations. It also requires directors to ensure that the school is acting in good faith to fulfill the terms of its charter contract and other policies established by the authorizing body (Texas Education Agency). When making decisions, directors should only make decisions that are in the best interests of students. The Board should also ensure that the school is obeying the policies that the Board has adopted.

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Every director is expected to conduct themselves professionally and ethically during all meetings and Public Forums. Board etiquette requires directors to *be present* and restricts them from using any devices during meetings/Public Forums. During posted meetings, every director will conduct themselves according to the Newly Revised Roberts Rules of Order. If, during a meeting or public forum, any director conducts themselves in a manner that is intolerable or prevents the accomplishment of goals, the Board President may adjourn or recess the meeting. We challenge our own assumptions. We welcome peer feedback. Differences of opinion, if respectfully submitted, are not to be construed as unacceptable behavior but rather as alternate views on a subject. We seek to connect not convince.

Board of Directors will receive no compensation for service on the Governing Board. Remember you are a public servant. A director may be entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred in performing board member duties, as provided by subchapter D, chapter 12 of the Education Code and other applicable law.

Related Policy: PG-1.2, PG-1.3, PG-1.4, PG-1.5, PG-1.6, PG-1.7

Sec. 7. BOARD HEARINGS OF GRIEVANCES

In this Board Operating Procedure, the terms “complaint” and “grievance” shall have the same meaning. The presiding officer or designee shall determine whether a person addressing the Board has attempted to solve a matter administratively through resolution channels established by policy. If not, the person shall be referred to the appropriate policy.

Related Policies: PG-1.7, PG-1.8

REFERENCES

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College of St George Windsor Castle. (2019). *Guiding Principles for Leadership Conversations*.

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