



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

First Organizational Meeting Checklist

QUICK REFERENCE CARD

- ❑ Provide mailed notice of the meeting to each trustee not less than five nor more than 10 days prior to the meeting unless a trustee has executed a waiver of notice or a waiver containing a different notice in accordance with the by-laws. The corporate Secretary should keep all waivers on file.
- ❑ Provide public notice of the meeting in accordance with the Open Meetings Law. Post the notice conspicuously in a public location and on the school’s website, and provide notice to local news media at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.
- ❑ Ratify the by-laws. A school’s board of trustees must meet and ratify its by-laws within 30 days of the charter being issued by the New York State Board of Regents.
- ❑ Fix the number of trustees. By-laws generally contain a numerical range of trustees but the board must fix the number of trustees to determine number of vacancies and quorum. (Example: if the by-laws state that the board shall consist of between five and 15 members and the board fixes the number at nine, then the “entire board” will be nine, even if members resign later on.) The original number of trustees is usually contained in attachments to the Charter Agreement.
- ❑ Fix the trustee terms of office and number of classes in accordance with the by-laws (if applicable). Terms cannot be longer than five years. If no term is specified in the by-laws, the default is one year.
- ❑ Elect officers. A board should follow its by-laws with what officer positions are required. Many boards have a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and/or Treasurer. Please note that a trustee cannot be both Chair and Secretary by law, and many by-laws prohibit the Chair from being Treasurer.
- ❑ Elect members of committees with authority of the board. Please note that an executive committee of a charter school must have a minimum of five members (and some officer members may be specified in the by-laws). Any other committee with the authority of the board must have at least three trustees. Members must be elected by vote of a majority of the entire board.
- ❑ Set up any other committees in accordance with the by-laws, and delineate the functions and powers of those committees. (Sometimes the Charter Agreement attachments specify additional committees.)
- ❑ Adopt and distribute the Code of Ethics/Conflict of Interest policy and Whistleblower policy to all trustees.
- ❑ Set up a board meeting calendar identifying meeting dates for the year as well as schedule a date for the annual meeting. While meeting dates may be changed, it is helpful to set the dates of future board meetings.
- ❑ Submit a copy of the amended and ratified by-laws to the Charter Schools Institute together with the signed resolution or minutes. (Going forward all board minutes must be submitted to the Institute within 30 days of each board meeting.)

