



# The Sacred Trust

The Philosophy of The Board of Trustees of Greenwood Christian Academy exists to establish, protect and evaluate the overall mission, vision and strategic ends of the school. The board is composed of volunteer members who seek to use their talents, and resources, to the glory of God, to further the school's mission and to represent the school to the broader community. The roles and responsibilities of the board as the "Moral Owners," is vital to the continued success of the school and its programs. The trustees of Greenwood Christian Academy make all decisions under the authority of Holy Scripture and act in a way that reflects a Christian understanding of life.

## The Roles of Trustees

*Board members fulfill five significant roles in their leadership of the school:*

1. **Servants** - when volunteering their time, talent and resources for the educational care and growth of students, teachers and families.
2. **Governors** - when legally assembled to debate, vote, draft policies, set goals, and plan for the future.
3. **Supporters**- when contributing to the school and soliciting financial support for the school.
4. **Ambassadors** - when promoting the school publicly, interpreting the mission, expounding the school's virtues, and defending the school when it is under attack.
5. **Advisors** - when bringing their gifts, talents and professional expertise while casting a vision for the future.

## Responsibilities of Trustees

*Board members are charged with responsibilities integral to the long-term success of the school:*

### 1. Determine and Communicate the Organization's Mission and Purposes

The Board is responsible for developing and maintaining a current written mission statement. It should regularly review the adequacy, accuracy, and validity of the mission. It should use the mission and objectives as a guide to organizational planning, decision-making, volunteer initiatives, and setting priorities and measuring program activities.

### 2. Select the Head of School

The Board is responsible to take great care in hiring the HOS. Although the search should be shared with other stakeholders, ultimately the final decision rests with the board. When hiring the HOS it is important that the board clarify the functions of the board as distinct from those of the HOS and staff.

### 3. Support and Assess the Head of School

The Board is responsible for providing moral and substantive support to the HOS and conducting formal, periodic, and comprehensive reviews of his or her work.



#### **4. Ensure Effective Organizational Planning**

The board must be involved in the strategic planning process to ensure progress and completion of the school's mission, vision and strategic initiatives. The members should formally and enthusiastically approve the strategic plan. Once the plan has been approved its implementation should be left to the professional staff.

#### **5. Ensure Adequate Resources**

While the HOS and director of advancement should be seen as chief fundraisers, the board is responsible for setting fundraising goals, influencing large donors, and monitoring fundraising activities. Board members should be involved in soliciting individual, corporate and foundation gifts and should leverage their personal and professional connections to do so. All board members should make annual gifts in line with their ability and means.

#### **6. Manage Resources Effectively**

The board should help develop and approve the annual budget. Accurate quarterly financial statements should be provided for all board members to review. The board should insist on an annual audit or review by an independent accounting firm. The board is also responsible for monitoring the school's investments, including endowment funds, and should seek external investment advice when needed.

#### **7. Determine, Monitor, and Strengthen the Organization's Ends Policies**

The board should question whether the current policies meet the mission and purpose of the school and whether programs and services are of quality and cost-effective. To ensure the implementation of all programs and services the board should be supplied with Clear job descriptions.

#### **8. Enhance the Organization's Public Standing**

Board members are the organization's primary ambassadors, advocates, and community representatives. No board member should approach the press, speak in a public manner or legally represent the school without official board approval.

#### **9. Ensure Legal and Ethical Integrity and Maintain Accountability**

The board is responsible for establishing effective policies regarding personnel, and laws governing nonprofits. It must also adhere to the organization's by-laws and articles of incorporation.

#### **10. Recruit and Orient New Board Members and Assess Board Performance**

The board is responsible for making clear their needs in terms of member experience, skills, influence, and demographics. It should take the time to orient new members and also assess the collective and individual board performance.



## Responsibilities of Trustees

*The board of trustees speaks with one voice as it establishes the policies that direct and lead the school organization. When it meets as a full board the process must include three different types of discussion.*

1. **Fiduciary** - The board must establish, monitor, and evaluate the schools fiduciary goals. This includes policies, financial information, academic credentials and progress, recruitment, retention and major discipline issues.
2. **Strategic** - The board also works to establish and evaluate the strategic goals of the school.
3. **Generative** - A strong board of trustees must not only discuss fiduciary and strategic goals but it must also discuss the "What if" scenarios. The board must take the time to cast a vision for the future; discuss possible threats to the organization and think within different paradigms.

Indeed, because the board's leadership is so critical, it is best to delegate everything that can be delegated in order not to dilute the few unique contributions that can be made only by the board. (John Carver; Miriam Carver. *CarverGuide, Your Roles and Responsibilities as a Board Member: Kindle Location 84-85*)

## A Board Member's Approach to the Job

1. Be prepared to participate responsibly
2. Remember your identity is with the ownership not the staff
3. Represent the ownership not a single constituency
4. Be responsible for group behavior and productivity
5. Be a proactive board member
6. Honor divergent opinions without being intimidated
7. Use specialized expertise to inform your colleagues' opinions
8. Orient to the whole not the parts
9. Think upward and outward rather than downward and inward
10. Tolerate issues that cannot be easily settled
11. Do not tolerate putting off big issues forever
12. Support the board's final choice
13. Don't mistake form for substance
14. Obsess about "Ends"
15. Agendas should not be based on personal interest

