

**The Independent School  
Statement of Roles and Responsibilities:  
Board of Trustees, Head of School and Parent Associations**

The Board of Trustees, Head of School and Parent Associations work in collaboration to advance the mission of The Independent School. Each has a distinct and important function critical to the success of the school. The purpose of this document is to identify the roles and responsibilities of each group or individual.

**A. Board of Trustees**

The role of the Board of Trustees is one of governance. Governance areas where the Board exercises oversight and responsibility, include:

- **The Mission of the School:** One of the Board's fundamental responsibilities is to establish the mission of the school, review the mission periodically and revise when necessary.
- **Establishment of the School's Direction and Major Goals:** Periodically, the Board engages in a formal strategic planning process, setting goals for what the school will seek to accomplish.
- **Approving and Monitoring the School's Programs and Services:** The Board is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and quality of programs to ensure that they support the mission of the school. Monitoring keeps track of progress toward goals established through strategic, annual planning. Evaluation measures the effectiveness and quality of the school's programs.
- **Ensuring Adequate Financial Resources:** The Board is actively involved in raising funds through various forms of solicitations and grant requests. Organizational responsibility is delegated to the Head of School but the Board is involved both in developing fundraising strategy and its implementation.
- **Providing Effective Fiscal Oversight:** The Board is responsible for preserving the school's resources and assets and ensuring that income is managed wisely. The Board establishes budget guidelines and approves an annual operating budget, then monitors the school's adherence to the budget throughout the year. The Board requires a yearly audit by an independent accountant to verify that the school is accurately reporting the sources and uses of its funds. The Board also ensures that the school funds are responsibly invested in order to safeguard the school's future.
- **Ensuring Sound Risk-Management Policies:** To reduce the liability risk of the school, the Board ensures the proper kinds and levels of insurance are secured to offer protection to the school and that adequate crisis management plans and other appropriate school policies are in place.
- **Selecting and Supporting the Head of School:** The Head of School is the Board's sole employee. The Board supports the Head of School by providing frequent and constructive feedback, and by conducting an annual evaluation to help the Head of School strengthen his/her performance. The Board is responsible for drafting a clear job description that outlines the duties of the Head of School, and will undertake a carefully planned search

process whenever the position is available.

- **Enhancing the School's Public Image:** Together with the Head of School, Board members act as ambassadors for the school in the greater community. The Board helps to develop a school's image by ensuring the development of marketing and public relations strategy.
- **Selection and Orientation of New Board Members:** The Board has a plan to identify and recruit new board members based on the school's needs pertaining to identified skills, experience, perspective, wisdom, time and other resources. The Board provides a thorough orientation for new trustees, including a review of this document, expectations of conduct and confidentiality, focus on broad, long-range issues, and the Board mission to hold the school in trust for future generations.
- **Maintaining Board Structure:** The Board ensures productive board meetings that address relevant issues and needs of the school supported by appropriate materials and current bylaws. The Board is responsible for all major school policies. The Board operates effectively through committees and task forces, supported by written statements of purpose and concise goals. The Board also assesses its own performance on an annual basis, setting goals and measuring progress, both individually and as a whole.

Given this role of governance, the Board of Trustees does not play the role of "final arbiter" in conflict resolution for faculty, staff, students or parents. If a member of the school community seeks the aid of a particular Trustee, the Trustee will clearly state either that (1) the individual seeking help should share the concern directly with the appropriate faculty member, staff member, administrator or Head of School, or (2) the Trustee will share the matter with the Head of School and/or the Board Chair, but will not take up the individual's cause. The preferred contact is the Head of School, but if the concern is about the Head, the Board Chair should be the **only** one contacted. The role of any Trustee in this kind of problem-solving process is to bring it to the attention of the Head or the Board Chair and not to deal with the situation individually.

Parents are worthy of the utmost respect. Parents are critical supporters of the school's mission, entrust their child(ren) to the school, spend considerable amounts of their time and financial resources in support of the school and care deeply about the school's ability to serve their individual child(ren). Nevertheless, it is not the role of the Board or of individual Trustees to become involved in the issues or concerns of individual parents or students, and Trustees must not represent any individual constituency of the school.

### **Head of School-Board Partnership**

The Head of School and the Board work together as partners in a collaborative relationship. Each arm of leadership draws upon its own unique strengths and abilities. The Head of School and the Board have joint responsibility for developing and maintaining a strong and open working relationship and a system for sharing information. The Head of School supports a clearly defined working relationship between the Board and staff with a goal of addressing organizational issues in a spirit of strong and open collaboration.

## **B. Head of School**

The primary responsibility of the Head of School (HOS) is to carry out the school's stated mission. The Head of School serves as the school's first and most respected voice and notable presence with the school's community and the community at large. The HOS has accountability and responsibility for all operations of the school. Therefore, in virtually all instances, the Head of School has responsibility to hear issues and discuss them appropriately with parents and has the ultimate authority regarding resolution.

The Head of School is responsible for:

- **Strategic and Operational Components of Vision, Mission and Strategies:** Working with the Board, the Head of School develops a shared vision for the future of the school, builds understanding around the current mission, and develops appropriate goals and strategies to advance that mission.
- **Accomplishment of Management Goals:** Working with the Board, the Head of School establishes annual operational goals that support the strategic plan. The Head of School is responsible for leading staff in the implementation of the strategic plan and any annual operating plan.
- **Program Management:** The Head of School demonstrates oversight of specific programs and services through appropriate delegation of responsibilities, which requires a thorough knowledge of the school's mission areas as well as an understanding of technical, operational, and ethical issues. Specific areas include academic curriculum and co-curricular programs, admissions, financial aid, student code of conduct, discipline and grading systems. The Head of School oversees the selection, development and evaluation of school personnel.
- **Effectiveness in Fundraising and Resource Development:** The Head of School provides leadership by clearly articulating the school's needs. The Head of School and the Board use their combined strengths, knowledge, and relationships to help the school achieve its objectives.
- **Fiscal Management:** The Head of School ensures that solid planning and budgeting systems are in place, based on the school's goals and strategic plan and that qualified staff are hired to accurately monitor, assess, and manage the financial health of the school.
- **Operations Management:** The Head of School is responsible for day-to-day management of the school, working with staff to develop, maintain, and use the systems and resources that facilitate the effective operation of the school (administrative procedures, maintenance of physical plant, information systems, staffing, compensation, etc.) The Head of School is also responsible for timely and appropriate delegation of responsibilities, as well as annual performance review for all key personnel.
- **Constituent Relations and Public Image:** The Head of School and the Board work to establish and maintain positive relationships with the many constituencies that support the work of the school. The Head of School serves as the school's chief spokesperson and public ambassador.

### **C. The Independent School Parent Associations: Parent Group, Friends of Fine Arts, Booster Club**

Parent Group, Friends of Fine Arts (FOFA) and Booster Club are three organizations of parent volunteers who work to support the mission of the school while fostering a positive and welcoming climate for all parents. The organizations are coordinated by the Parent Executive Committee (PEC), comprised of leadership from each organization and representatives from each school division, including a President appointed by the Head of School, and an elected Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The TIS Parent Associations are governed by the TIS Parent Association Bylaws.

#### **Parent Group:**

The Parent Group supports numerous activities intended to enrich the school experience for students, faculty, staff and families at The Independent School. These include:

- Social activities: festivals, luncheons, parent and child events and dances
- Special projects: fundraising activities, teacher appreciation activities, classroom support, and organization of class parties or events
- Sponsors visiting speakers in support of faculty development, community awareness and child development

#### **Friends of Fine Arts (FOFA):**

The Friends of Fine Arts support numerous activities intended to increase awareness of and attendance at all visual and performing arts events and activities at The Independent School. These include:

- Support for the Arts “production teams” for all plays and “curators” who change the artwork displays/mounting exhibitions
- Sponsorship of arts related fundraising activities
- Providing refreshments/hosting receptions for music and band programs

#### **Booster Club:**

The Booster Club supports numerous activities intended to promote athletics at The Independent School. These include:

- Game day cookouts (at-home football games)
- Concession stand and merchandise sales
- Fundraising through membership promotion
- Providing financial support to the athletic department assisting with athletic equipment, supplies and facility improvements

***Approved by the Board of Trustees July 2011***