THE GIFT OF GOOD
GOVERNANCE
A GUIDE FOR THE PRIVATE SCHOOLS COMMUNITY IN DUBAI

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DUBAI
Knowledge المعرفة

This guide was produced with the help, the ideas, the insights, the advice and the love of the following people:

TO ALL SCHOOL GOVERNORS

This guide is dedicated to all school governors in Dubai – for your enthusiasm, your expertise, your energy and your dedication to giving our children the best possible education.

THANK YOU

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The Gift of Good Governance has been created to act as a reference document for:

- Private schools with new or existing boards;

- Investors and operators;

- Board and governance training associations and consultants; and,

- Organisations and individuals interested in supporting schools.

The purpose of this document is to provide schools with an understanding of what constitutes best practices in school governance – it may be used as a resource to help improve school governance and to encourage reflection on current governance culture and processes. It is not the purpose of this guide to prescribe templates or checklists for governing boards to follow.

For investors and operators, this guide answers questions about the requirements of school governance in a Dubai-specific context. It also acts as a resource for boards, governance training associations, consultants and members of the community interested in joining governing boards in Dubai schools.

Each section of this guide concludes with 'Talk Time' - questions designed to help you reflect on your school's governance approach and to encourage further conversations. These questions are best answered collaboratively between school management, board members and other interested parties to ensure a rigorous governance framework aligned with best international practices.

A wide variety of sources has been used to prepare this document. These include 'A Competency Framework for Governance' published by the Department for Education in England and Wales, and the King IV Report on Corporate Governance for South Africa published by the Institute of Directors Southern Africa. Leading local and international experts in school governance have also been consulted.

This document is available on the KHDA website. We welcome your feedback so that we can improve it in future editions. Please email Governors@khda.gov.ae with your suggestions.

I'M A GOVERNOR

CYNTHIA TRENCH

Chair to the Board of Governors for Dubai English Speaking College (DESC) and Dubai English Speaking School (DESS).

" I was previously a legal advisor to DESS. It was a privilege to have been asked to join the board of governors – it takes a little bit of my time that I'm very happy to give. I'm so proud of the growth of the schools – we've progressed from a handful of students to more than 3000 – and that we provide inclusive education and learning support to students. "

WHAT IS GOVERNANCE?

Governance describes the means by which organisations are directed and controlled. In effect, governance describes the work that the governing board does and how it sets the values of the organisation. Good governance is about making sure that the organisation is well-run and governed with purpose, and that management works in accordance with the board's requirements. This involves planning for the future and preserving the organisation's values and reputation. It ensures sound financial planning and effective human resources as well as accountability for the organisation's actions and decisions.

In schools, the key difference between governance and management is the distinct separation between strategic leadership (governance) and the operational running of the school (management). Governance is the role of boards while management is the responsibility of the principal.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A PRIVATE SCHOOL'S GOVERNING BOARD?

Governing boards provide vital leadership to schools. They ensure that schools are well-run by management and that sustainable outcomes are delivered. They act as stewards to ensure a school supports the most promising opportunities for its students. The focus of a school's governing board is to establish the strategy for the principal and school management so as to provide the best education possible for every student at the school.

All governing boards of private schools have four core functions:

    1. Setting strategic direction within the context of a clearly-stated vision and ethos;

    2. Holding the senior leadership team accountable for the achievement of strategy and running of the school;

    3. Overseeing the overall educational performance of the school and suggesting ways for improvement;

    4. Overseeing the financial performance of the school – this includes setting fees, budget oversight, and achieving financial targets.

International research and school inspection results have shown that good school governance has a positive impact on school performance - where governance is good, standards of student attainment are likely to be higher. Conversely, poor governance is often cited as a reason why schools fail. This is reflected in Dubai and throughout all member countries of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

A school governing board acts as a critical friend to the school, challenging the status quo and setting expectations.

WHO CAN BE A SCHOOL GOVERNOR?

The governing board of a school is made up of a body of members with specific roles and responsibilities to oversee its operation. Governing boards are often independent from private school owners or investors, although those with a proprietary interest are nearly always represented. Typically they are initially formed by the school owner or by the board of directors of the holding company. Board members can include investors, school leaders, parents, students and others drawn from the community at large. Members need time, passion, training, clear roles and responsibilities as well as the support of a guiding governance framework.

School governors are often appointed due to their skill sets, attributes or areas of expertise, such as law, finance, or human resources. Though many professionals and their families choose to live and work in Dubai for extended periods, the vast majority do not retire in Dubai. As such, only a small number of retired educators at a leadership level can be called upon to serve as board members. This means that schools boards recruit governors from alternative sources, such as educators from other schools, feeder schools, or other educational institutions, including universities.

Schools can also establish relationships with professional bodies and private organisations to help them source and identify future board members. Collaborating with professional bodies such as charters, institutes, and chambers of commerce may overcome the cost of paying for board members. These groups can advise market rates for paid expertise, and can encourage their members to look upon school governance as a community service that may be done voluntarily or for minimal fees. Inclusion of a teacher, parent or student representative is not necessarily a requirement provided that the board has avenues to effectively consider their views.

There are many personal and professional benefits to becoming a school governor: community service, networking and providing and gaining expertise are but a few. Governors also have an opportunity to improve the wellbeing of a school's students as well as enhance its commercial viability.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT GOVERNANCE IN DUBAI'S PRIVATE SCHOOLS?

Dubai's private education landscape is unique in its diversity of curricula and cultures – a feature understood and appreciated by good governing boards across Dubai.

Private schools can be either for-profit or not-for-profit (including community, charitable and embassy-supported schools), and represent a range of price points. The majority of schools are large, proprietary,

international, for-profit institutions. In most schools, the language of instruction is English, which is often not the native language of the administrators, teachers, parents, students or community served by the school. While providing students with a rich learning experience, the diversity of cultures and nationalities can lead to differing parental expectations of education and a school's role in delivering it.

School boards are encouraged to understand and reflect the full diversity of their school in the Dubai context. Effective school boards develop and implement policies and practices that suit their specific operating context. These may include the recruitment and retention of staff, resource management, size of the school and the cultural background of its students. Effective boards also maintain sufficient flexibility to enable innovation and entrepreneurship in balance with risk mitigation. These reflections will keep the board relevant to its school and position in society.

TALK TIME
How does your school's board of governors set the improvement strategy for the school?
How does your school source its governors to ensure a balance of skills, experience and professional backgrounds?
How does your governing board reflect the diversity of Dubai, your school, and its operating context?

I'M A GOVERNOR

TAREK ALAMI

Chair to the Board of Governors, Jebel Ali School

"I became a school governor to contribute to my community in a meaningful way, and to show my children the importance of volunteering. My background is in strategic management – being a school governor is a great way to use my skills to make sure that we give our children the best possible opportunities in life. "

KEY FEATURES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

The following is a list of key features of effective governance for school boards in Dubai. These features are general in nature so that individual schools can adapt them to their own contexts.

1. LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE

- Acts individually and collectively as a good member of society
- Understands that the board has rights and responsibilities with obligations to the wider society
- Enables students to be productive members of society

2. CLARITY OF PURPOSE

- Develops a clear purpose and strategy to achieve the purpose
- Does not deviate from the purpose
- Defines the core values of the school, and its mission and vision
- Applies school values in policy and practice
- Understands the links between purpose, risks, opportunities, strategy, performance, the business model and the sustainable development of the school

3. ACCOUNTABILITY

- Holds senior management accountable for the achievement of educational and financial performance outcomes in accordance with the agreed purpose and strategy
- Serves as the focal point and custodian of governance in the school
- Ensures that the evaluation of the board's own performance and that of its committees, its chair and its members supports continued improvement
- Ensures good stewardship of the discretionary budget
- Governs risk, information and technology in a way that supports the school and achieving strategic objectives
- Ensures optimal school performance through data analysis and reporting to develop strategies for improvement

4. DIVERSITY AND INDEPENDENCE

- Includes capable board members with a diverse mix of skills, experience, qualities and capabilities to think critically and make effective decisions
- Has independence that enables it to discharge its governance roles and responsibilities objectively and effectively
- Features positive group dynamics and teamwork amongst its members

5. EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

- Creates standing and ad hoc structures such as sub- or special project committees to delegate work to promote independent judgment and assist with balance of power and the effective discharge of duties

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Has the authority to hire and terminate the employment of the school principal
- Has the authority to request any information from the principal and senior management. This information will aid the board's understanding so it can exercise its authority and responsibilities most effectively. Examples include explaining the matrix used to assess student progress and attainment in different subjects

7. COMPLIANCE

- Ensures all relevant statutory and contractual requirements are satisfied
- Ensures compliance with applicable laws
- Adopts non-binding rules, codes and standards ethically and helps the school achieve its mission and purpose

8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Adopts a stakeholder-inclusive approach that balances the needs, interests and expectations of important stakeholders in the best interests of the school over time

LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE

Good corporate citizenship is about the board acting collectively as an effective leader, and good governing boards lead by example. The board is part of wider society, with rights as well as responsibilities and obligations. It is accountable for its members' ethical and effective leadership. They assume responsibility for setting policy direction and upholding the way in which ethics are approached and addressed by the school. Examples of these include making best use of its resources, teachers, finances, and facilities to produce positive outcomes for its students, and developing sustainable policies that meet the school's and the community's needs.

Individually and collectively, good governing boards behave with integrity, competence, responsibility, accountability, fairness and transparency. Positive personal attributes of board members include selflessness, courage, curiosity, independence, honesty, humility, tact, and the ability to listen and forge relationships.

This also extends to the code of conduct to which governors adhere, and how the board manages the performance of each of its members. A governing board's code of conduct must feature high levels of integrity and responsibility, and reflect the culture, value and character of the school. Socialising and networking beyond the official settings of board meetings improve relationships between governors.

Governing boards set targets, formulate school policy and plan for future development. They create a framework to ensure a school is running effectively and that the budget is spent appropriately. In addition to their four core functions (see "What is the role of a private school's governing board?" described on page 9), good governing boards ensure that their schools' ethos aligns with Dubai Vision 2021 and UAE law, promotes mutual respect and tolerance, and that these are reflected and implemented in both policy and practice.

Governing boards regularly monitor the school's activities and outputs against internal or external standards (determined through policy set by the board, through codes of conduct by school groups, or through existing laws and regulations by government). These standards may cover areas such as workplace safety, health, dignity and development of employees, consumer protection, community development and protection of human rights, and the environment.

Graduates from Dubai's private schools form part of the national and global workforce. Governing boards play a role in helping to shape the future of these students by providing them with the skills, knowledge and advice to become productive members of society. The ability to nurture and promote student wellbeing, happiness and tolerance through examples of good global citizenship is a responsibility that can be upheld by good governance.

TALK TIME
Which different character strengths are important for your board members to display?
How do board members uphold ethical leadership and act as good social citizens?
How does the board ensure your school's activities and outputs align with UAE Vision 2021?
How does the governing board promote the wellbeing of all students and adults in the school?

I'M A GOVERNOR

DR OMAR MOHAMMED SHAMS

Governor to the Board of Governors, Jumeirah English
Speaking School (JESS)

"My children all went to JESS and the school contributed tremendously towards their wellbeing - I felt that it was only fair and appropriate for me to give back to the school. As an Emirati who has lived through the transition from old Dubai to the UAE that we know and love today, I also have a good perspective on Dubai. The board works very well as a team and the consequence of this team effort is a world-class school. The contribution towards one of the best learning institutions in the country is a privilege that none of us on the board take lightly. How can this be anything but enjoyable and fulfilling?"

CLARITY OF PURPOSE

It is important to articulate a school's values clearly – that is, why the school exists rather than what it does. Having a clear set of values helps to ensure that the medium- and long-term priorities of the school are always taken into consideration. Good governing boards understand that these values reflect the ongoing vision and legacy of the school, and must be carried forward by each current and prospective governor.

One of the first steps that owners, investors, and executive leaders of a new school can take (using consultants and trainers where applicable) is to appoint a board that will help define the vision and core values of the school. For boards of existing schools, the current vision and values may be revisited and redefined to suit the changing context and strategic direction of the school.

A 'governance framework', 'charter', 'mandate', 'constitution' or 'terms of reference' will help the board and others understand the breadth and depth of its responsibilities, expectations and processes.[1] The governance framework document, along with the school's values, provides the clarity required for boards to govern effectively. Governing boards can make their governance frameworks visible to the community by posting them on their school website.

Frequently described as a critical friend to the school, the board challenges the status quo and sets high expectations. This includes focusing on the provision of the best learning environment for all children in which happiness, tolerance and wellbeing are prominent.

TALK TIME
Which features of your school's governance framework enable board members to govern effectively?
What is your school's purpose or vision? How clearly is this expressed?
What are the short-, medium- and long-term priorities for your school?

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[1] For the purpose of this guide, we use the terms 'charter' and 'framework' interchangeably.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The governing board serves as the focal point and custodian of governance in the school. Boards hold senior management accountable for both the educational and the financial performance of the school. The board is accountable for monitoring and verifying the performance of the school in accordance with its agreed purpose and strategy, with a view towards improving the quality and impact of educational outcomes. It is the board's role to provide constructive feedback to senior management of the school, assuming the role of a guardian rather than a police officer. The board listens and learns from education professionals in order to impart relevant advice and ask challenging and usefully provocative questions.

It is important to emphasise that school governors are not responsible for the running of a school - their role is to question but not to involve themselves in school operations. Governing boards work alongside the school's senior management team. They work most effectively when there is a positive partnership with the executive team that includes effective and regular communication. The delegation and limits of responsibilities should be clearly communicated to ensure that the demarcation between governance and management is crystal clear (see also Roles and Responsibilities section on page 29).

As the head of the senior management team of the school, the principal is accountable to and reports to the governing board.

EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The governing board ensures accountability for the school's educational performance through effective data analysis and reporting. It is the board's responsibility to use all information available to improve school performance, including the use of internal school reporting, school inspection reports, TIMSS and PISA results, data from the Dubai Student Wellbeing Census and feedback from parents.

The board sets the direction for reporting from the principal and subcommittees. This includes the frameworks and standards to be used and financial, inspection and accreditation reports. The board uses these reports to establish the effectiveness of its strategy and to review them as necessary.

The governing board investigates risk, information and technology in a way that supports the school to set and achieve its strategic objectives. Boards are accountable for governing information and technology including data use, protection, data integrity and social media in a way that supports the school.

Independent analysis of school performance by bodies like the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau and accreditation organisations promotes an objective view of the school and highlights areas for improvement. By actively engaging with accreditation bodies and the inspections process, governors can gain first-hand knowledge and advice about school performance from external experts. Consultants and training institutes can also serve as a resource in this area.

STEWARDSHIP OF THE DISCRETIONARY BUDGET

As part of its oversight of school performance, the governing board manages the discretionary budget of the school through transparent policies and procedures. This assures the school's stakeholders that all students are receiving the best value the school can give and that resources are being spent responsibly. This may include oversight of the performance of employees and the framework for their pay and conditions of service.

TALK TIME
What procedures and strategies are in place to ensure a positive relationship between the board and school management?
How does the board provide constructive feedback to the school principal?
How does the board evaluate its own performance?
How well does your board use data analysis and reporting to monitor the performance of the school?
What procedures are in place to ensure that the school's financial and human resources are used effectively?

I'M A GOVERNOR

SREEVIDYA HARIKRISHNAN

Governor to the Governing Council, Ambassador School

"I became a school governor because I was attracted to the idea of innovation in education and keeping pace with changing expectations – as a board we are accountable to making sure that all students are catered for and their education is meeting 21st century needs. Creating a balance between the demands of all stakeholders is challenging - the board brings together all its members' professional skills and expertise to make strategic decisions that improve the learning and the future prospects of children at our school. Being a governor has empowered me as an individual, and has empowered the governing board as a team."

DIVERSITY AND INDEPENDENCE

High-performing governing boards have a diverse mix of skills, experience and capabilities that enable them to think critically and make effective decisions. The diversity of board members can be represented by differing ethnicities, ages and backgrounds. This discourages 'group think' and enables new ideas to germinate and be considered. It also illuminates ambiguity, encourages creativity and innovation, and drives healthy debate that leads to more robust and positive change.

There are a number of factors to consider when determining how many members to appoint to a governing board. Typically, this depends on the number of governors needed to:

- ensure the board has an appropriate mix of knowledge, skills, backgrounds and experience (including business, financial and education experience);

- make effective decisions for the school and reach consensus

The nomination, election and appointment of board members needs to follow a set process. This may determine which specific skills (such as finance or HR) should always be represented on the board. Governors need to dedicate adequate time in their role to be informed and reliable. As many board members are in full-time employment, their involvement in 'too many' boards would be unfeasible. For example, if a school group chooses to have one board overseeing multiple schools, it is important to consider the time needed to dedicate to each school with its individual starting point and goals. In corporate governance, it is recommended that governors sit on no more than four boards at the same time.

Good governing boards consider the minimum term of office of their board members to maximise knowledge retention and transfer. Similarly, they have guidelines for maximum tenure to ensure that membership is sufficiently refreshed.

Proactive governing boards also have succession planning and training policies in place to help them stay effective and agile. New board members require induction and training, for which part of the discretionary budget can be used. Ongoing training, mentorship and knowledge sharing activities will help to develop further capacity.

Individual board members need to have the confidence to challenge any other member (including the chair) or access a mechanism to help them do so. Conflict between board members, or a real or perceived imbalance of power, can lead to board paralysis or poor decision-making. Regular, scheduled evaluation of board members and/or limited tenures are structural tools which can be used to remove members who may be ineffective or detrimental to the board. Training and mentoring can also prevent or reverse such complications should they arise.

School governors must be independent and free from conflicts of interest. They have a duty to act with independence in the best interests of the school. They understand their role, and all interests are declared as they arise.

TALK TIME
How is your board diverse in its representation and perspectives?
What mechanisms are in place to help the board manage conflict?
How does the governing board manage knowledge transfer over time and ensure continuity?
What training and mentorship do new and existing board members receive?
What skill sets does your board need? How will you fill the gaps?

EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

FRAMEWORK AND CHARTER

A clear and concise governance charter is essential to enable the effective functioning of a school. Within such a framework, school operators can build their intellectual, social, spiritual and financial capital and align it with their vision. This capital enables investor success and supports KHDA's vision of quality education for students in Dubai.

The many benefits of adopting a framework include:

• improving leadership, decision-making and strategic vision;

• judging the effectiveness of a board's processes;

• enacting policies on diversity, terms of office, expected roles;

• providing checks and balances for the entire governance structure;

• improving mechanisms to monitor and manage risks;

• increasing confidence of internal and external stakeholders including learners, educators, parents, and local communities; and,

• ensuring alignment with KHDA and Dubai's position on quality education, including the wellbeing, health and happiness of students, teachers and the school community

The charter includes protocols on requesting information and reporting, setting up meetings and attendance requirements, defining roles and responsibilities, and measuring the board's performance. It is reviewed regularly and formalises existing practices that support continuity and stability.

Policies and practices are scaled and in proportion with considerations specific to the school, such as the size and turnover of staff, resources and students. Relationships within a group of schools require a governance framework that does not cause conflict with any other related policies within the group.

School governing boards must be able to apply and explain their reasoning when implementing, or not implementing, the key features as set out in their charter. This transparency can also include the process for selection of board members to encourage potential members to apply for positions.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Well-functioning governing boards include subcommittees to delegate appropriate responsibilities, promote independent judgement, assist with the balance of power and contribute to the board's overall effectiveness. Effective governing board structures result from placing authority at the appropriate level.

Governing boards can choose to delegate particular roles and responsibilities to individual members or create standing or informal committees. Agreed policy determines the membership of the subcommittees as well as the extent of their authority. Possible examples of this include a human resources subcommittee comprising the chair, principal and those board members with HR experience; or a temporary special project committee to oversee a building extension comprising members with a finance and/or property background. Committees collaborate to avoid duplication or fragmentation of roles and responsibilities. Other common examples of subcommittees of school governing boards may include:

- Safeguarding

- Learning and curriculum

- Resources

- Principal performance review

- Discretionary budget

- Complaints resolution

TALK TIME
How well does your school's governance charter enable the school to function effectively?
How often does your school's charter need to be reviewed to ensure maximum effectiveness?
What sort of subcommittee structure and delegation is needed in your school?
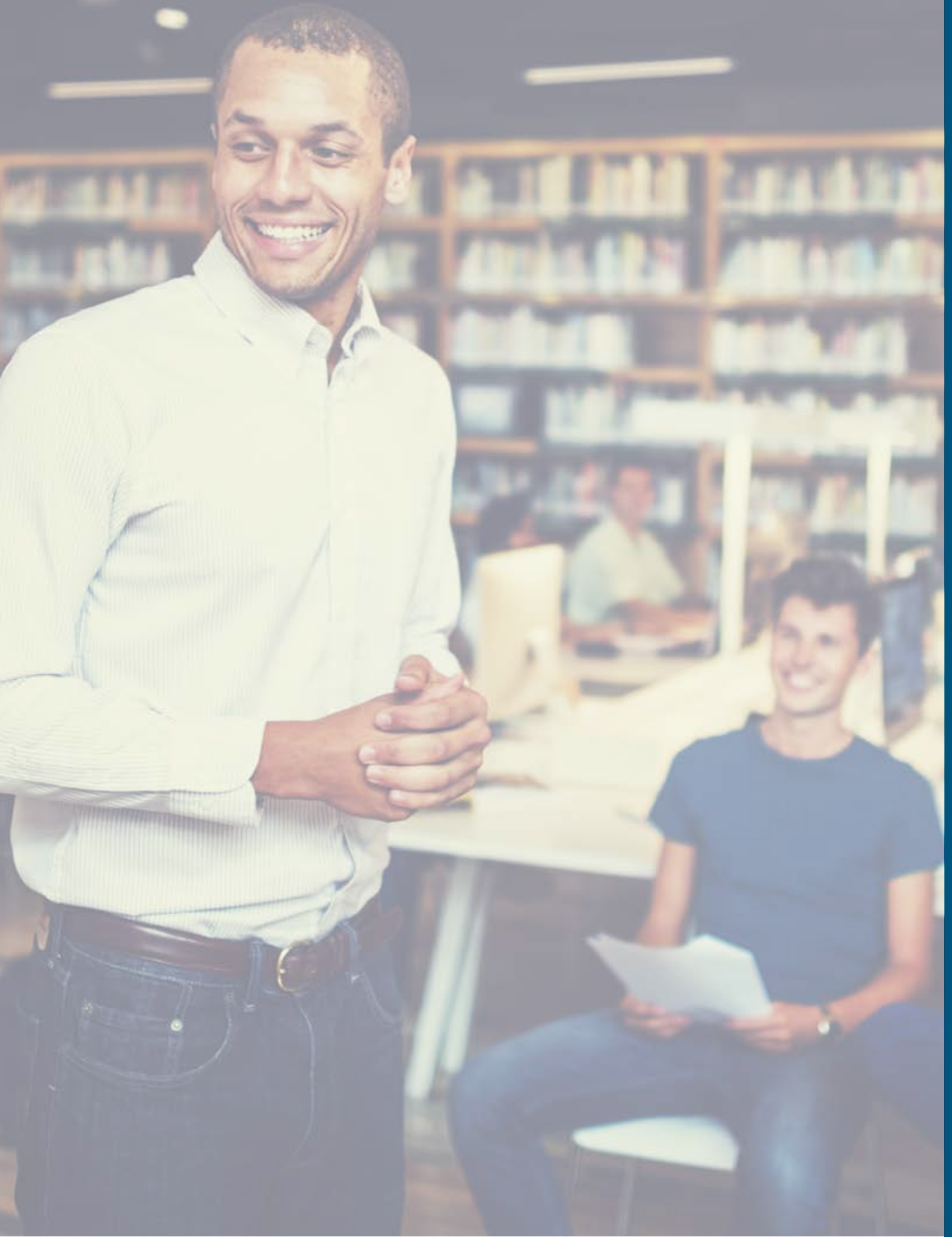
I'M A GOVERNOR

AMR ALBIALY

Chair to the Board of Governors, GEMS Dubai American Academy

"Being a governor is a wonderful opportunity to give something back to a great school like DAA and to help the children at an important time in their lives. It also gives me the opportunity to use the skills I've developed in my own working life to benefit children. I very much enjoy being part of a diverse team of professionals whose main purpose is focused on the best outcomes for children. "

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governing boards provide vital leadership to schools. They are integral to ensuring schools are well-managed and that sustainable outcomes are delivered. Boards exercise their leadership role through the following primary responsibilities:

- steering the school and setting its strategic direction;

- monitoring the school's and the principal's performance;

- managing the discretionary budgets;

- planning and approving policies;

- overseeing the implementation of policies;

- self-evaluation and improvement; and

- succession planning

Governors are responsible for creating a school improvement plan that will become a practical tool for facilitating its core business. This involves all reporting from the principal and subcommittees, and includes the frameworks and standards that determine the effectiveness of the improvement plan. Having processes and indicators to monitor and review progress against agreed strategic goals allows governing boards to refresh the school's vision and goals according to specific needs, such as key growth stages or to maintain quality of school performance.

Effective governing boards regularly evaluate their own performance and that of its committees, its chair, its individual members and school managers to support continued improvement in its own performance and effectiveness, and that of the school as a whole.

The board will strive to continuously and constructively challenge its own strategy with reference to:

- short-, medium- and long-term timelines;

- risks and opportunities;

- the legitimate and reasonable needs and interests and expectations of stakeholders;

- impact on the discretionary budget that may result from the execution of the new proposals; and

- the interconnection and interdependence of the above points.

DEMARCATION OF AUTHORITY

A clear demarcation between the roles and responsibilities of board members and a school's leadership team must be set out in governance documents. Governors are not responsible for the operational running of a school; they question and advise but do not get involved in day-to-day operations. All policies for employment, termination, evaluation, succession planning and KPI adherence are set by

the board for the principal, board members and all other staff. The governing board also protects relationships between the principal and the rest of the school by taking responsibility for tough management decisions.

Governing boards have the authority to hire and terminate the employment of the principal.[2] In such cases, external evaluation of the principal's performance may help in maintaining a positive and productive relationship between the board and the principal.

The board assumes responsibility for policies to balance risk mitigation with entrepreneurship and innovation. As an example, a board may allow an alternative subject delivery method to be trialled for a period and reviewed before approving full implementation across the school.

The board further ensures that formal mechanisms are established to engage and communicate with stakeholders, including a set of dispute resolution mechanisms and associated processes.[3] If needed, boards can act as mediators when disputes arise between the school and its stakeholders.

Principals are responsible for running the school as well as implementing and executing the approved strategy of the board. They are the key link between the operational management of the school and the governing body, and are accountable to the board. Principals cooperate with investigations, challenges and questions from the board and provide all data and information requested.

A good relationship between the principal and the board – enabled by regular and well-managed communication and founded on a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities - is essential to school success.

THE CHAIR

The chair of the board is proposed, nominated, elected or appointed through due process. The chair has a uniquely vital role in the success of the board, and in managing its effectiveness in areas such as:

- managing discussions to ensure all voices are heard;

- resolving conflicts;

- developing a culture to support good governance; and

- enabling a positive working relationship between the principal and board members

TALK TIME
How does your board distinguish its and the principal's roles and responsibilities and those of the principal?
How does the school ensure effective communications between the board and the principal?
How does the governance charter enable governors to take risks and make tough decisions?

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[2] Principals must comply with KHDA conditions and regulations before gaining final approval to take up their post

[3] Disputes taken to the board should be as a last resort having failed to be resolved at school level through current policies

COMPLIANCE

Governing boards have oversight of their schools' compliance requirements, and stay updated of any changes to these requirements. This involves a thorough understanding of how applicable laws and non-binding rules, codes and standards relate to one another, paying particular attention to the protection and wellbeing of children.

Consultants and trainers may act as a knowledge base and resource repository for governing boards. While applicable legislation sets minimum standards for compliance, boards should strive to achieve the highest aspirations for the benefit of the school and its pupils.

The governing board assumes responsibility for the school's social citizenship by setting the direction for how it is approached and addressed by the school. It includes compliance with the law, setting standards, and adherence to its own codes of conduct and policies.

TALK TIME
How does your board ensure it keeps updated with all UAE and Dubai regulations affecting education?

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

School boards are encouraged to engage with and listen to the needs of the school's stakeholders, and to put in place formal mechanisms that enable them to do so. Governing boards which actively engage with their communities – both formally and informally - are more likely to help their schools meet their goals and ensure their future financial viability. School governors benefit greatly from networking with each other and the school community at all levels. These activities can range from a school prize-giving ceremony to a governors' social evening.

TALK TIME
What strategies are in place for your board to listen to the views of your school community?
In which ways are governors interacting with each other and the school community outside of board meetings?
How do governors represent your school in the broader community?

I'M A GOVERNOR

ANDREW SCHAEFER

Governor to the Board of Governors, Safa Community School

"I have a finance background, but I am first and foremost a parent – my children were part of the first intake into the new school. My contribution to the board is from the perspective of the school family with particular interest in the welfare and happiness of the children and staff. I found the school owners and leaders truly sincere in their vision of creating something better than has been seen or experienced before, and I wanted to contribute to that vision however I could. I feel I've gained so much for the little I've given as a school governor, and I'm very grateful to have this opportunity."

COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

We hope this guide has been helpful to you and your school. The educators, school leaders and school governors we spoke with to compile this document had one fundamental attribute in common: a commitment to make positive change in the world by serving their communities. We thank you for reading this guide and for your commitment to serve your community.
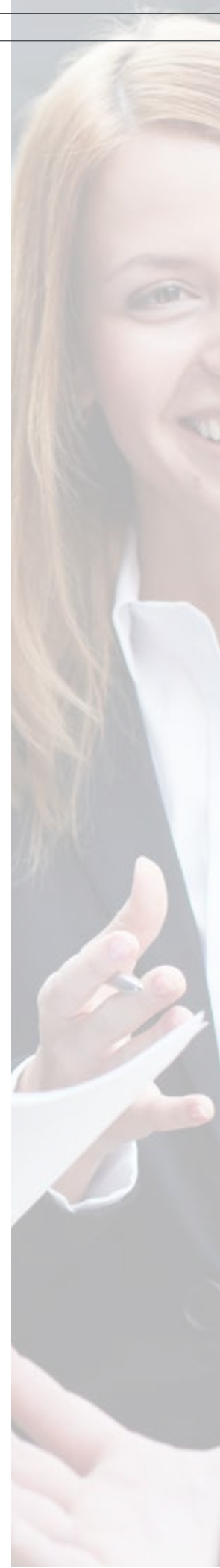
This is a living document and will be updated regularly – please let us know your feedback and suggestions on how it can be improved.

Please send your questions or comments to: governors@khda.gov.ae

4. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accountability	The obligation to answer for the execution of responsibilities. Responsibility can be delegated; accountability cannot
Board	Board of directors, members of the governing body
Capital	Financial, intellectual and social resources owned by a person or organisation
Conflict of interest	A conflict of interest occurs when the interests of the member are directly or indirectly at odds, either in reality or in perception, with the school.
Corporate citizenship	The recognition that the school is an integral part of the broader society in which it operates, affording it standing as a legal person in that society with rights but also responsibilities and obligations. It is also the recognition that the broader society is the licensor of the school
Corporate governance	The exercise of ethical and effective leadership collectively by a governing body. 'Corporate' refers to organisations that are mostly incorporated to form legal entities separate from their founders and therefore applies to all forms of incorporation whether as company, voluntary association, retirement fund trust, legislated entity or others. In school governance, governing boards are not necessarily incorporated but work collectively as a single body
Collective social citizenship	Defined as Corporate Citizenship with the same expectations as for responsibilities and obligations to the broader society, but without being termed as a 'legal person'
Culture	In an organisational context, culture is 'the way in which members of an organisation relate to each other, their work and the outside world in comparison to other organisations.'[4] It is generally described as 'the way we do things, even when no one is watching'
Diversity	The varied perspectives and approaches offered by members of different identity groups. It includes diversity in terms of fields of knowledge, skills and experience as well as age, culture, race and gender
Ethics	Considering what is good and right for the self and others. 'Ethics' can be expressed in terms of the golden rule - to treat others as you would like to be treated. In organisations, ethics refers to the ethical values applied to decision-making conduct and the relationship between the organisation, its stakeholders and the broader community

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[4] https://www.hofstede-insights.com/models/organisational-culture/

Governance outcomes	The positive effects or benefits of good corporate governance for what is measured in terms of good performance (academic, financial) and reputation (performance and values)
Governing body	The governing body is the structure that has the primary accountability for the governance and performance of the organisation
Independence	Independence generally means the exercise of objective, unfettered judgment
Integrity	In the context of governance and ethics, integrity is the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles. It encompasses consistency between stated moral and ethical standards and actual conduct
Principal	Head teacher, head, school superintendent
Responsibility	Taking ownership of a duty, obligation or liability
Stakeholders	Those groups or individuals who can be reasonably be expected to be significantly affected by an organisation's business activities, outputs or outcomes, or whose actions can reasonably be expected to significantly affect the ability of the organisation to create value over time
Stakeholder inclusivity	An approach in which the governing body takes into account the legitimate and reasonable needs, interests and expectation of all stakeholders in the execution of its duties
Sustainable development	In general, this is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs"[5]
Transparency	The unambiguous and truthful exercise of accountability that ensures decision-making processes and business activities (output and outcomes, both positive and negative) are easily able to be discerned and compared with ethical standards

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[5] http://www.un-documents.net/our-common-future.pdf

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

We hope you find the resources and links below helpful. This list is by no means exhaustive, and their publication here is not an endorsement by KHDA.

UAE & Dubai – Legislation and regulations

KHDA Laws & Regulations	*https://www.khda.gov.ae/en/regulations?i=2*
UAE Ministry of Justice Legislation Portal	*http://www.elaws.gov.ae/EnLegislations.aspx*
UAE law on Child Rights – Law #3 of 2016 (Wadeema's Law)	*http://ejustice.gov.ae/downloads/latest_laws2016/ union_law_3_2016_children_rights_En.pdf*
Community Development Authority, Government of Dubai, Laws & Legislation	*https://www.cda.gov.ae/en/aboutus/Pages/ LawsAndLegislation.aspx*

Resources, Tools, Reading and References by country of origin

UAE

UAE Vision	*https://www.vision2021.ae/en*
UAE Vision National Priority Areas	*https://www.vision2021.ae/en/national-priority-areas*
Dubai Plan	*http://www.dubaiplan2021.ae/dubai-plan-2021/*
The Pearl Initiative	*http://www.pearlinitiative.org/en/index.php*
The Dubai Chamber of Commerce	*http://www.dubaichamber.com/*
UAE Inspection Framework and Dubai inspections supplements	*http://www.khda.gov.ae/en/publications*
Dubai International Financial Centre: Corporate Governance Thematic Review	*https://www.dfsa.ae/Documents/Corporate%20 Governance%20Thematic%20Review%202013/ Corporate%20Governance%20Report%20English%20 Final%20Aug%2011%202014.pdf*
International Corporate Governance Certificate – CCL Academy (training)	*https://www.cclacademy.com/courses/17/internation-al-corporate-governance-certificate/*

UK

UK School Governing board legislation	*https://www.gov.uk/education/school-governance*
Department for Education	*Governance Handbook 2017* *A Competency Framework for Governance* *Keeping Children Safe in Education*
National Governance Association: resources	*https://www.nga.org.uk/Guidance.aspx*

ICSA , the Governance Institute	https://www.icsa.org.uk/knowledge/governance-and-compliance
Council of British International Schools: Code of Good Governance	https://www.cobis.org.uk/uploaded/COBIS_-_About_Us/COBIS_-_Code_of_Good_Governance_(August_2015).pdf
University of Bath & Business in the Community: Governing our Schools	http://www.educationandemployers.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/School-Governance-Study-Bath-university.pdf
Governors for Schools - free online training courses	https://www.governorsforschools.org.uk/e-learning/
The Key –paid subscription to governance assistance	https://schoolgovernors.thekeysupport.com/
RSA Academics: The Art of International School Headship:	http://www.rsacademics.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/AOISH-24.08.16.pdf
Education Development Trust: Successful school leadership	https://www.educationdevelopmenttrust.com/~/media/EDT/Reports/Research/2015/r-successful-school-leadership.pdf
National College for Teaching and Leadership: Governance structures	http://apps.nationalcollege.org.uk/resources/modules/academies/academies-online-resource/ac-s4/ac-s4-t4.html
The National Foundation for Educational Research: Governance Models in Schools	https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/LGMS01
Chris James & Paul Sheppard (2014) The governing of international schools: the implications of ownership and profit motive, School Leadership & Management, 34:1, 2-20,	http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2013.813457
Bob Tricker (2010) Twenty practical steps to better corporate governance	http://www.bobtricker.co.uk/assets/bob-tricker-%E2%80%93-20-practical-steps-to-better-corporate-governance.pdf
University of Cambridge, Judge Business School: Further corporate governance reports	http://cadbury.cjbs.archios.info/report/further-reports
The Educational Collaborative for International Schools: paid training	https://www.ecis.org/learning/governance-foundations
The Governor: skills audits & resources	http://www.thegovernor.org.uk/downloads.shtml#sa
Governors' Toolkit: paid compliance tool	www.governorstoolkit.com

North America

National School Boards Association USA	*https://www.nsba.org/*
New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC): Standards and Indicators	*https://cis.neasc.org/standards-policies/standards-indicators/standard-2-governance*
National Association of Independent Schools: Governance Models	*https://www.nais.org/articles/pages/governance-models.aspx*
Ontario Public School Boards Association	*http://ontarioschooltrustees.org/* *A Guide for Trustees, School Boards, Directors of Education and Communities* *Good Governance for School Boards: Trustee Professional Development Program*
Alberta School Boards Association	*http://www.asba.ab.ca/*

India

Indian School Education System - An Overview	*https://www.britishcouncil.in/sites/default/files/indian_school_education_system_-_an_overview_1.pdf*

Australasia

Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)	*https://rd.acer.org/*
CIRCLE - The Centre for Innovation, Research, Creativity and Leadership in Education: Improving School Board Effectiveness	*http://www.stephencodrington.com/Hub/Media_files/School_Board_Effectiveness.pdf*
School Governance Australia: resources	*http://www.schoolgovernance.net.au/resources/*
Specialist Schools & Academies Trust: Breakthrough in governance	*http://educationaltransformations.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Breakthrough+in+Governance.pdf*
Crow, P. R. (2016). Understanding corporate governance, strategic management and firm performance: . (Ph.D thesis)	*http://www.petercrow.com/uploads/8/6/4/1/8641405/thesis_phd_pr_crow_published.pdf*

Hong Kong

The Government of Hong Kong, Education Bureau: School-based Management and School-based Management Governance Framework	*http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/sbm/gov-framework/index.html*

Africa

Institute of Directors of Southern Africa: Guidance Notes and King IV report	*http://www.iodsa.co.za/page/KingIVReport* *http://www.iodsa.co.za/?page=Guidancenotes*

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Improving School Leadership: Policy and Practice	*https://www.oecd.org/edu/school/44374889.pdf*
Improving School Leadership: The Toolkit	*https://www.oecd.org/edu/school/44339174.pdf*
PISA 2015 Results (Volume II): Policies and Practices for Successful Schools **School governance, assessment and accountability**	*http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264267510-8-en*

International

International Corporate Governance Network: Global Governance Principles	*http://icgn.flpbks.com/icgn_global_governance_principles/#p=1*

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