

Purpose Driven
Governance
Board – CEO
Relationship

January 25, 2024



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Trustees

Governance as Power

The Board's general effectiveness in governance practice, combined with how the Board of Trustees and the CEO interact, sets the tone for the whole college.

Dr. Dan Phelan, President, Jackson College



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Highly Effective Boards:

- Create a culture of inclusion and partnership
- Uphold basic fiduciary principles
- Operate from a policy and strategy level, not a tactical level
- Cultivate a healthy relationship with the CEO
- Select an effective board chair
- Establish committees with appropriate decision-making authority
- Focus strategically on the future
- Focus on accountability and appropriate oversight
- Become the eyes and ears of the college in the external community
- Assure that college meets the needs of the community it serves

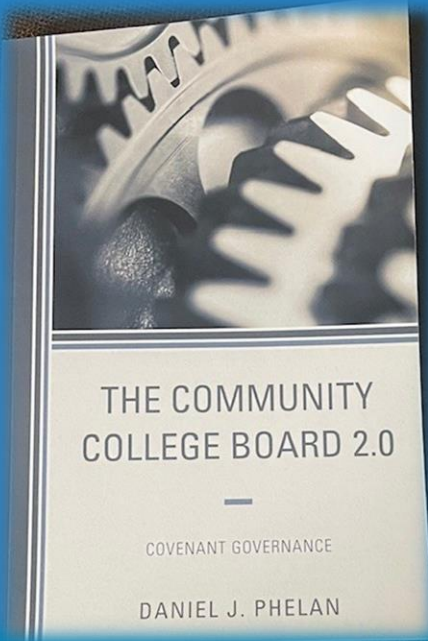
(if board has committees)

Spilde and Burke, Trusteeship in Community Colleges, 2020



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Board/CEO Relationship



The relationship between the board and the CEO is a delicate one that requires ongoing nurturing and development; it needs trust, commitment, and support to be effective.

Phelan, The College Board 2.0, 2021



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Governance and Administrative Responsibilities

BOARD

- Governance
- Policy
- Direction
- Monitoring

CEO

- Administration
- Executive
- Implementation

Spilde, Trusteeship in Community Colleges, 2020



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Board and CEO

- CEO is only board employee.
- Board and CEO partner to establish policy direction and priorities
- The CEO works for the board, and the board works for the public.
- Roles are different, and each should “stay in the correct lanes” of responsibility
- College boards do not “manage” unlike some other boards

Spilde and Burke, Trusteeship in Community Colleges, 2020



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CEO Responsibilities

- The CEO provides day-to-day leadership and translates the community's interest into action to foster student success for students and for the community.
- The CEO partners with the board to enable students for access, completion, and transfer or immediate work toward a successful career. Students need to be able to climb to economic and social mobility.

Spilde and Burke, Trusteeship in Community Colleges, 2020



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High Performing CEOs

- Listen
- Lead
- Respect the board and its role
- Manage the college
- Engage the board in policy-level discussions
- Make recommendations to include analysis and options
- Publically support the board
- Adhere to board policy
- Facilitate trustee involvement in the community and college
- Do not ask the board to make decisions without advance preparation
- Provide all board members with the same information
- Treat all trustees equally
- Respect the time of the board members
- Stay out of board politics
- Keep the board informed of the financial condition of college
- Provide advance notice of adverse situations
- Provide each board member a copy of the CEO's contract and current compensation terms regularly

Spilde and Burke Trusteeship in Community Colleges, 2020



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Advice from Board Chair and CEO

- Communication and transparency between President and board
- College leadership and board understanding and staying in roles
- Keeping board informed—no surprises
- Honest self-evaluation by both
- Confidentiality
- Monitoring what is important



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Questions & Discussion

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McLennan Community College



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