

May 1, 2023

Thank you for your interest in potentially becoming a member of the Teaneck Community Charter School (TCCS) Board of Trustees! **Applications must be submitted by May 19, 2023**, so please review the following carefully to ensure your application is complete.

What is Required for the Application?

The application consists of the following, all of which must be submitted by **May 19, 2023**:

- Completed [Candidate Questionnaire](#)
- Resume
- Letter of Reference from a co-worker, friend or other person who knows you well, expressing their view on why you are a good candidate for the TCCS Board

How to Submit Your Application

All documents are due by midnight **May 19, 2023** and can be submitted:

- Online using [Candidate Questionnaire](#) for the Candidate Questionnaire and emailing your resume and letter of recommendation to **Board@TCCSNJ.ORG**

Background Information

Informed candidates are the best candidates. Accordingly, we have provided information to help guide your decision. Included with this document are the following resources:

- Top 10 Things a TCCS Board Member Should Know
- Duties and Responsibilities of Trustees: What do Charter School Board Members Do?
- Mission of Teaneck Community Charter School (TCCS)

Election Process Overview and Key Dates

- May 19** **Applications due from interested candidates.** The Nominating Committee will reach out to schedule applicant interviews.
- May 22 - 25** **Interviews held (Virtual / Zoom).**
- Note: Applicants must **submit Position Paper** at or before interview. The Position Paper is the document that will go out to the community explaining why you would be a good choice for the TCCS Board.
 - Candidates should review [this document](#) prior to interview to get a sense of the questions that may be asked.
 - If unavailable in this date range, arrangements will be made.
- May 26** **Candidates will be announced** and position papers will be distributed.
- May 30** **Candidates' Forum**
- June 12** **Election Day.** Votes will be tallied and validated and winners announced.

Thank you for your interest in the TCCS Board. We wish you the best of luck.

Top 10 Things a Prospective TCCS Board Member Should Know

1. Board Members have distinct, clearly defined responsibilities to:

- Set policy (ongoing)
- Annually evaluate the Lead Person
- Monitor district operations: ensure fiscal operations
- Approve Curriculum, and District Goals
- Ensure continuous improvement of student achievement for all students
- Ensure a strong academic & co-curricular program
- Negotiate contracts

2. There is Mandatory Board Training.

- Members are required to complete courses on Board Governance I, II, III and IV during their first 4 years of service.
- The school BA must register members for the training. It is recommended that these be completed during the first two months of each year. These may be completed online or on site.
- Whenever possible, Board members should attend the annual NJSBA Conference in Atlantic City in October and/ or the New Jersey Charter Schools Association Conference.

3. Confidentiality Must be Preserved.

- A quorum of board members communicating via email can result in the communication becoming a matter of public record.
- All matters discussed during closed session, regarding personnel and/or between board members are confidential.

4. NJSBA Field Representatives & the NJSBA website provide guidance.

5. Self- Evaluation is completed by all Board members annually.

Annually, the Board will develop/ select and complete a self-evaluation based on its goals and responsibility.

6. Commitment is required.

Board members must be committed to full participation barring unforeseen events, illnesses or other excused absences. Participation includes monthly board meetings, monthly committee meetings, mandatory board training, two annual retreats, and attending as many school wide events as possible.

7. TCCS is dedicated to fulfilling its Mission & Vision

It is the mission of the Teaneck Community Charter School (TCCS) to provide a nurturing environment in which students realize their full intellectual potential and become self-directed learners, who make both pragmatic and creative use of basic skills and who understand and appreciate the cultural diversity of our society. The faculty, staff, parents, extended family, and other members of a child's support network are committed to creating and operating a student-centered "learning community" which promotes and supports a child's natural curiosity and enthusiasm for acquiring knowledge. This learning community will follow a "living curriculum" -- an experiential, interdisciplinary study that encompasses literacy, critical thinking, and responsible social interaction while empowering each child to demonstrate his/her unique interests and abilities.

TCCS will strive to achieve seven major goals. Students will:

1. Solve real problems, reason effectively and demonstrate understanding of the inter-connection between disciplines.
2. Demonstrate independent and creative thinking, and openly exchange ideas.
3. Develop critical thinking and communication skills.
4. Understand and demonstrate democratic citizenship.
5. Achieve proficiency in basic skills.
6. Develop as whole persons -not only cognitively, but physically, socially, and artistically.
7. Develop and demonstrate an understanding and appreciation for cultural diversity and the perspectives of others.

8. Enhancing the TCCS Public Image is important.

Board members are the primary link to the community and the media. Board members should be able to clearly articulate TCCS's mission, accomplishments, and goals to the public. This includes developing a comprehensive public relations strategy.

9. The Board Must Ensure Effective Management of Resources

The Board approves the annual budget and ensures proper financial controls are in place. As a result, Board members are responsible for understanding TCCS financials – fiscal sustainability, budget, salary guides, etc.

10. The Board's main responsibility is STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The Board is responsible for understanding measures of student performance; providing district resources to promote student achievement; and monitoring the effectiveness of curricular programs.

November 2013

Duties and Responsibilities of Trustees: What do Charter School Board Members Do?

To get a sense of the duties and responsibilities of Board Members, please review [The Role of the Board](#) (link goes to the TCCS-specific information) as well as the below, which is taken from <http://njcharters.org/start-a-charter-school/board-readiness-for-new-schools/>.

Charter school boards must fulfill several key governance tasks:

- Ensure that the charter school fulfills its mission and serves its students and families well.
- Ensure that the charter school functions in a prudent and ethical manner and complies with applicable laws and regulations.
- Develop the necessary plans to keep the charter school viable and relevant in the community.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the charter school leader in managing all of the above.
- It is easy, especially in a new charter school, for trustees to go beyond governance and become involved in school operations. While this may be unavoidable initially, the loss of boundaries between board and administrative roles can undermine the effectiveness of the school leader and lead to confusion.

Tasks of the Board

Ensure that the Charter School Fulfills its Mission and Serves its Students and Families Well

The first and most important task of the board is to state clearly why the charter school exists and what it is to achieve over time. A clear mission statement will frame this discussion and guide future decisions about the organization. The board ensures that the charter school starts out and stays mission focused. It is the board's job to ensure that there are real criteria in place to evaluate new initiatives and resource opportunities and to stay clear of those that take you off mission. It is also the job of the board to regularly review whether the charter school is achieving success. The board sets and maintains clear standards for success and then regularly asks for information about ongoing progress against these standards.

Ensure that the Charter School Functions in a Prudent and Ethical Manner and Complies with Applicable Laws and Regulations

The board holds the charter school "in trust" for the citizens of your state. Board members act as trustees on behalf of the students and the larger community and must ensure that the school functions in a safe and prudent manner. Developing strong ethical standards in the form of policies is important

work of the board. Board members do not represent their own self-interest on a board—they represent the interests of the whole community. This includes responsibility to future students, as well responsibility to current students.

Effective policy development and implementation ensures that the charter school is institutionalizing the values, procedures, and practices that bind it to its mission. It brings professionalism and transparency to the school's fulfillment of responsibilities in the areas of finance, personnel, treatment of students, security and safety of facilities, asset management, and so on. The board must state policies clearly and then monitor the charter school's adherence.

Develop the Necessary Plans to Keep The Charter School Viable and Relevant in the Community

Boards can get bogged down in the daily operations of the charter school. This is especially true of young charter schools where operational procedures are still evolving. A strong board will resist the temptation to micro-manage and will instead hold the staff accountable to both the mission statement and the stated policies. While the adoption of policies is the board's concern, the procedures to carry them out is the work of the staff.

Since the board does not engage in day-to-day operations, it has the time and responsibility to look into the future. Where should the organization be in three years? How is the community changing and what must we do to adapt to the change? What will our students need in the future that is not available now? The board's job is to routinely assess its internal and external environment, and to set strategic priorities for the future. The board sets goals and then monitors progress and helps remove obstacles that get in the way. This will require that the board stays informed about the needs of students and families, aware of changing regulatory requirements and alert to changing needs of a community. It also requires that the board stay focused on just a few future priorities and encourages staff to set aside time to work on tomorrow's needs in addition to today's challenges.

Evaluate the Effectiveness of the School Leader

Regardless of what the title is – headmaster, principal, executive director – there is only one staff member that reports directly to the board. This person is hired by the board, reports to the board as a whole (not individual members), and is accountable for the operations of the charter school. The relationship between the board and the school leader is critical to the success of the charter school. There must also be clear accountability and role differentiation between the board and school leader.

For this reason—as well as to comply with the regulations of most states—it is best for the school leader to have a voice but no vote on board matters; that is, to serve as an ex officio member.

Establishing clear roles is difficult for newly established charter schools, especially if the school leader is one of the founders. But such differentiation is essential; future conflicts are unavoidable if clarity is not achieved. To properly evaluate the effectiveness of the school leader, the board must first do its own job establishing policy and setting strategic priorities for the school leader in accordance with the mission. It is only by doing its own job that it is able to evaluate the school leader using the relevant criteria.

Evaluating the school leader is one of the most important responsibilities of the board. They must establish well considered policies and procedures to do this from the outset. Nothing is more critical to the life of the school; a weak, unskilled or disorganized school leader must be dealt with quickly either through professional development or replacement. Most boards wait too long to identify these problems and do not establish the clear standards by which the school leader is evaluated.

Do not try to invent the school leader evaluation process from scratch. Reach out to established schools and search online for best practices and then adapt them to your needs. Any process that includes 360-degree feedback, is well aligned with the school's mission, goals, and objectives, and is handled in a clear and professional manner would be a good starting point.

Source: <http://njcharters.org/start-a-charter-school/board-readiness-for-new-schools/>.

Mission of Teaneck Community Charter School

(as articulated in the [Strategic Plan for 2022-2027](#))

Teaneck Community Charter School has the goal of producing an educated workforce that is fully prepared for the challenges of the 21st Century.

Educational Philosophy:

- Students work in diverse, cooperative teams to produce tangible results.
- Students use computers and technology in all aspects of their education from Kindergarten until graduation.
- Small group instruction ensures that all students meet high standards of literacy and numeracy.
- Students are empowered to utilize higher order thinking skills, to take responsibility for their actions, and to solve problems independently and creatively.
- Real-world, hands-on projects encourage students to apply the skills they gain in the classroom.
- Parents are full partners in their children's education. Families work together to improve the physical environment, enrich education and participate in governance.

Key Initiatives:

- Involve parents and community in building a new model of education.
- Create a successful model that can be replicated.
- Foster a partnership with the private sector in providing innovative instructional systems.
- Offer a fresh approach that sets a new norm of success in public education.
- Demonstrate fiscal accountability while pushing the envelope of public education.