

Governance Overview

Historical Perspective

In 1965, Walter E. Best and Don Best followed the Lord's direction to start a non-denominational Christian school in northeast Indianapolis, on a plot of land donated by their father Frank E. Best. The vision of these men was to integrate the Christian faith and Biblical truth into an excellent educational experience. At the time of founding, a governance structure was put into place to help prevent institutional drift from the school's founding mission and Christian foundation. This governance model included three "Members of the Corporation" who were empowered with authority to select like-minded individuals who would serve on the Board of Directors. Additionally, the voting rights of the three "Members of the Corporation" were structured such that the one specific member held sufficient votes to decide all matters related to Member responsibilities. This original governance structure was aimed at protecting the school's founding purposes and served the school for over 40 years. Under this structure HCS experienced tremendous growth and development, while maintaining its Christian foundation as desired.

Current Structure

As the school grew and matured over the years, a change in governance was made in 2009. In determining the new structure, Heritage Christian School had the opportunity to consider various governance models and how those models aligned with the needs of the school. Several objective driven questions were asked including:

- 1) What structure and size of a Board of Directors would provide the greatest opportunity to effectively guard the school's Christian core values, Statement of Faith, and mission?
- 2) What structure and size would allow for an effective working relationship between the Board and the employed head of the school?
- 3) In order to achieve the above objectives, what process should be put in place to choose Directors and what should be the length of a Director's term?
- 4) What committees should the Board establish to help accomplish the work of the Board?
- 5) Was there any conflict between the emerging objective driven structure and compliance with Indiana State law regarding corporations?

In seeking to achieve the above objectives, the governance model was changed to its current structure with the following key attributes:

Board of Directors:

- The "Members of the Corporation" ceased to exist and the governance of Heritage Christian School migrated to a single entity, namely, the Board of Directors, with each Director vested with a single vote.

- A Charter of Core Values was adopted to define the enduring core values of the school and ensure ongoing alignment with Biblical truth. Any change to the Charter of Core Values requires a supermajority vote of the Board.
- The Board consists of no less than five and no more than nine Directors.
- The Board Chair is elected by a majority vote of the Board.
- Vacancies are filled through the Nominating Committee process with candidates selected for service by a majority vote of the current Board of Directors.
- Each Director serves a four-year term, with eligibility to serve additional terms if so desired by the individual Director and agreed to by re-election of the remaining Board members.
- Removal of a Director prior to the conclusion of their term requires a supermajority vote of the remaining Directors.
- To allow for stability and continuity, while at the same time realize the benefits of renewal, the terms of each Director are staggered.
- In selecting new Board members, a foundational requirement is agreement with the Charter of Core Values, Statement of Faith, and mission. However, within that unifying context, diverse perspectives and skill sets are sought.
- Additionally, Board members must reflect the leadership qualities noted in scripture, including being respectable, self-controlled, hospitable, kind, forgiving, compassionate, one who loves what is good, disciplined, honest, not quick-tempered, not violent, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money, not given to drunkenness, and not pursuing dishonest gain.
- In summary, the above described governance model was established to guard the school's mission and core values, protect the school from institutional drift, effectively lead and govern the school into the future and establish a Board that benefits from the experience of veteran Directors while welcoming the fresh perspective that new Directors offer.

Committees:

Committees comprised of Board members, faculty, staff and parents working together in a focused and productive manner are tremendous assets to the school and of great value in helping the Board accomplish its work. Current committees include the Nominating, Finance and Human Resource Committees which recommend action to the full Board. Each committee has been carefully chartered with specific roles and tasks aimed at achieving important priorities for the school.

The Nominating Committee is of particular relevance to the governance of the school. This committee consists of faculty, parents and Board members, operating under the direction of a current Board member. The Nominating Committee is tasked with seeking out qualified candidates who meet the qualifications for Board service. A primary directive to the Nominating Committee is to recruit candidates who demonstrate a strong commitment to the Charter of Core Values and Statement of Faith and possess the scriptural based leadership traits as previously noted. Additionally, candidates who possess expertise that complements existing Board expertise are also sought.

Summary

The Board of Directors operates under the school's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Charter of Core Values. In fulfilling its responsibilities, the Board works in cooperation with the head of the school in providing oversight, direction, and accountability for the larger mission driven issues facing the school.

We trust that this perspective on our governance structure is an encouragement to you and helps to communicate our foundational desire to steward HCS in such a way that the school will be an enduring and useful instrument of the Lord in preparing our students to be effective ambassadors for the Gospel of Christ. To this end, we ask that you continue to lift up the school in your prayers as we seek the Lord's blessing. Our desire is to continue to look to Him in a spirit of humility and dependence, understanding that we cannot begin to achieve our mission without His blessing.