



Recruitment and Retention of Board Members

ICF Early Education Institute™

Our Favorite Ideas

- Distribute a Board information and volunteer form to families during the enrollment process. Invite parent participation on committees, special events and the Board.
- Establish a center-wide parent participation policy. Include volunteer opportunities such as Board or committee involvement.
- Develop a Board packet to hand out to interested community members or parents. Let children decorate the envelope or include a cover letter – “Why my center is special...”
- Establish a “Who’s Who” bulletin Board with photos of Board members and their contact information.
- Develop special nametags and years of service pins for Board members.

Our Favorite Ideas

- Host quarterly “Get to Know the Board” coffees for current families and sponsoring organization employees.
- Include news from the Board in regular center newsletters.
- Place Board of Director ads in local newspapers, church bulletin Boards, adult communities and appropriate websites – especially target retired community members and associations (AARP, Retired Teachers Association, United Way).
- Plan a luncheon and ask each Board member to bring a friend or coworker.

Our Favorite Ideas

- Contact local clubs, service groups and associations for possible members and offer to be their breakfast or lunch time speaker and share about the center's good work (i.e. Kiwanis have a focus on children).
- Visit local churches and synagogues
- Place an ad in a local newspaper
- Post ad on local community board website such as Craigslist
- Speak at local service club meeting (i.e. Kiwanis, Civitans etc)

Our Favorite Ideas

- Join or volunteer to speak at the Better Business Bureau or Chamber of Commerce
- Contact the local American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) or the American Association of University Women (AAUW)
- Contact a local sorority or fraternity chapter

Our Favorite Ideas

- Post flyers at the locations for adult education or continuing education classes including community colleges
- Attend United Way leadership trainings, breakfasts or events
- Research community leadership training in your area

For Employer-Sponsored Programs

- Work with organization supervisors and request official time off for Board meetings and special projects.
- Ask supervisors or managers for a list of possible Board members.
- Develop a regular volunteer program that targets organization employees. Encourage them to volunteer an hour each week or month reading to a child, sharing a hobby or assisting a Teacher.
- Plan regular chat sessions or coffees at the center for parents and organization employees to discuss possible Board membership.
- Invite supervisors of employees who serve on the board to volunteer recognition ceremonies/lunches.

Recruitment and Retention of Board Members Is More Than A List of Ideas

Let's Take A Closer Look.....

ICF Early Education Institute™

Selecting the Right People For the Job

- Not selecting the right people results in low performance
- Unqualified or disinterested board members are often very passive
- The following types of decisions are costly for the early childhood program--
 - Financial;
 - Human resource; and
 - Legal

Marketing Your Board

- Do not simply advertise for board members
- Develop a marketing plan that includes the following:
 - Information about the program (its mission, vision, values, etc.);
 - The board's role;
 - What would happen if the board's services were not provided;
 - Minimum qualification for board members;
 - Time commitment;
 - Nomination process;
 - Training and support provided; and
 - Benefits of joining the board

Recruitment and Retention Plans

- Ensure that interested people meet the minimum standards as defined by job descriptions
- Assess the skill sets of candidates through the following:
 - Applications;
 - Board member skills and interest forms; and
 - Board skill inventory sheets
- Target and focus search efforts

Board Size

- When boards are too large, members may not:
 - Feel valued or engaged;
 - Know each other well enough to work as a cohesive team;
 - Attend meetings regularly because they feel no one will notice; and
 - Be able to reach a consensus on important issues
- When boards are too small:
 - Members may become overworked;
 - Members may avoid coming to meetings in fear of being assigned too much work;
 - It becomes difficult to retain good members; and
 - Your program does not benefit from a balanced, diverse point of view

Dambach, C. F., & Gale, R. L. (2009). *Structures and practices of nonprofit boards* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: Boardsource.

Job Descriptions

- Help to define the scope of work
- Should define every board members' role—not just officers
- Should be reviewed by board members at the end of their terms
- Other ways to clarify job descriptions:
 - Require candidates to observe board proceedings; and
 - Require active membership in the organization for a given period of time

Board Diversity

- The board should be:
 - Reflective of the larger group it serves;
 - Include persons internal and external to the organization;
 - Designed to breed a balanced viewpoint; and
 - Include a voice of the sponsoring agency

Employees as Board Members

- Employees provide a valuable perspective to board's decision making
- Employees serve as a liaisons between the board and other staff members
- Employees require a confidentiality agreement (i.e., a statement of understanding and job description)
- Decide if they will have voting rights and define this in the board's bylaws
- Carefully select these people

Recruiting Professionals

- All boards can benefit from the expertise of professionals, such as:
 - Attorneys;
 - Certified public accounts; and
 - Human resources specialists
- Clearly define your expectations
- Do not ask them to provide pro bono services and serve as board members

Program Directors as Board Members

- The same rules apply as with other employees
- A director provides a key voice that should always be included in the board's discussions

Terms of Services

- These should be defined in the board's bylaws
- Term limits allows the board to grow and evolve
- Extended terms of services breeds longevity, but it can cause the board to grow stagnate
- Do not allow members to become keepers of all power and knowledge

Before Putting Members to Work

- Ask members to sign:
 - Letters of commitment; and
 - Conflict of interest statements
- Invite them to an orientation
- Assign buddies and develop a check-in system

Orientation

- Investing the time in orientation eliminates many long-term problems
- This orientation should include:
 - A review of the annual board report
 - An overview of a board member's manual

Annual Board Report

The following are all components of an annual report:

- Annual staff work environment survey results (submitted by the director);
- Annual parent satisfaction survey results (submitted by the director);
- Sponsoring organization input;
- Summary results from the most recent inspections (submitted by the director);
- Summary of the past year's policy changes (submitted by the secretary);
- The previous year's strategic plan and progress report (submitted by the president);
- A financial status report (submitted by the treasurer); and
- Summary reports from all ECE program committees (submitted by the committee chairs)

Board Member Manual

The following are all components of a board member manual:

- Bylaws;
- Articles of incorporation;
- Mission, vision, and values;
- Annual board report;
- Organization chart;
- Strategic plan;
- Governing regulations for child care programs;
- Policies;
- Memorandum of agreement;
- Contracts;
- Calendar (meeting dates, dates important to the program, etc.);
- Financial data; and
- Contact directory

Electing Officers

- **President:**
 - Prepares for and chairs board meetings;
 - Appoints committee chairs; and
 - Represents organization before local, **State**, and **Federal** governments
- **Vice president:**
 - Fulfills duties of president in his/her absence; and
 - Assists president as requested
- **Secretary:**
 - Keeps accurate record of board meetings; and
 - Develops meeting agenda in coordination with president
- **Treasurer:**
 - Manages fiscal affairs of the corporation;
 - Serves as custodian of funds;
 - Ensures official audit of all financial records; and
 - Publishes financial records

Electing Officers

- A well-defined job description is key
- Officers should have experience and training
- Officers should have at least 1 year of board service

Say Thank You

- This is the most valuable recruitment and retention tool
- Consider the following thank you gestures:
 - Framed children's artwork;
 - Letters of recognition to employers;
 - Thank you messages appearing in newspapers or other media;
 - Letters of appreciation;
 - Engraved gifts;
 - Board appreciation day;
 - Photographs on a board hall of fame;
 - Child care discounts;
 - Reserved parking spaces for board use only;
 - Presidential volunteer service awards of interest; and
 - Birthday cards to board members and staff

Thank You!

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