

## **Ivy Board Retreat Suggestions**

*November 2022*

I've devoted some time to reviewing the draft board retreat agenda and wish to offer these items and suggestions:

1. Board self assessment and analysis: The governing board is the one Ivy entity that has not completed any form of feedback or evaluation. There was a time when the SCSC had someone observe board and committee of the whole meetings. Although those feedback reports of meetings were largely ignored, board members understood that there were principles and standards of effective board meetings at work. About two years ago I facilitated a board training wherein we used an electronic version of that board meeting feedback form. I asked the board to observe and critique a brief recording of a board meeting. The video I showed was actually a recording of an Ivy meeting. Once people got beyond how they looked and sounded on the recording, they were able to have a thoughtful conversation about strengths and opportunities for growth. Devoting some time to self assessment would align with the practice in place for staff and vendors (this gap in feedback, evaluation, and self assessment is similar to the gap in background checks for board members). 45 minutes
2. Strategic plan development: during the last two or three board meetings the head of school has referenced a need for a new strategic plan. Such a document is essential to the effective functioning of Ivy as an educational entity. 120 minutes.
3. Resource development and institutional advancement (RDIA) subcommittee: This former committee was presented to the SCSC as a chief means of addressing long range fundraising and ultimately working on various tasks to eliminate the multimillion dollar bond. This time could be devoted to determining board level tasks, identifying a chair and developing a work plan similar to what exists for other committees. 60 minutes.
4. You may have already shared the draft retreat agenda with the head of school and CFO; historically they provide input, feedback, and insight based on their work on day-to-day operations of the school. There have been times when they have presented at the retreat or facilitated a component of the retreat.
5. Committee Members: I think it may be helpful to have committee members who are not board members attend the retreat or select portions of the retreat if possible.

Accomplishing this expanded agenda would require returning to Ivy's past practice of a full day retreat. I know that Ivy has struggled with getting and retaining board members because of time commitments. My recommendation is that the board expand the upcoming retreat to a full day experience of five to six hours to avoid the possibility of either rushing through or tabling critical and strategic matters.

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