

Charter System Foundation



Implementing Local School Governance
July 15, 2015

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Agenda Topics

What is Governance?

What is Governance?

A charter system must

- maximize school level governance and the involvement of parents, teachers, and community members in such governance
- grant decision-making authority in personnel decisions, financial decisions, curriculum and instruction, resource allocation, establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals, and school operations

per O.C.G.A. 20-2-2062 and 20-2-2063

What is Governance?

*The definition of governance comes from the Greek word, "kebernon," which means to steer and to influence from a position of authority. The governance team **directs the school towards achieving their mission and makes sure the school's efforts and resources are properly focused towards that goal.***

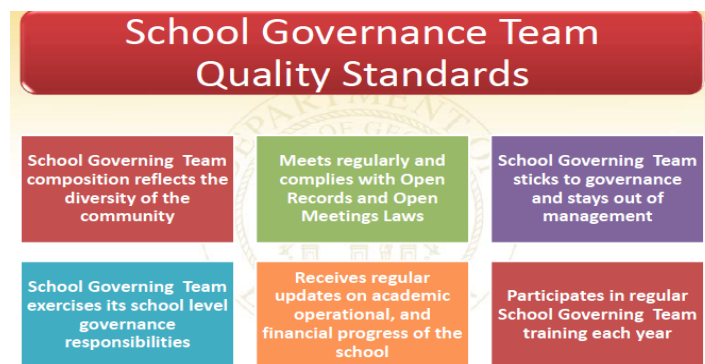
Adapted from the Georgia Center for Nonprofits

What is Governance?

To govern means to **represent the public trust** by ensuring that an organization carries out the purposes for which it was established and as expressed in its mission statement.

Lahey, B.M. (2010). *Board Fundamentals: Understanding Roles in Nonprofit Governance*

Quality School Governance in a Charter System - GaDOE



Source: Georgia Department of Education

Appropriate Conduct

- ▣ Respect chain of command
- ▣ Do not provide direction to staff or influence staffing decisions, with the exception of the principal
- ▣ Represent **all** students
- ▣ Be informed about matters before the Governance Team
 - ▣ Focus on facts related to student achievement
- ▣ Communicate community issues to the principal
- ▣ Participate in training and attend meetings
- ▣ Work collaboratively with others
- ▣ Speak with one voice
- ▣ Mandatory child abuse reporter



Confidentiality of Individual Information

- ▣ Any information regarding economic status, academic program or service participation, achievement or behavior of **individual students** is federally protected, deemed confidential and under no circumstances is such student information accessible to any Governance Team member.
- ▣ Any information regarding **individual employee** performance or personnel action is considered confidential and under no circumstances is such personnel information accessible to any Governance Team member.*

* Except for the principal as deemed necessary by the superintendent



Governance Team Scope

- Consider matters that:
 - Align with the school improvement plan
 - Align with resource allocation decisions
 - Affect students overall, not individual student issues
 - Represent trends or have a long-term impact, not one-time incidents
 - Do not provide direction to staff members other than the principal



Agenda Topics

Composition and Formation

Composition and Formation

Factors to Consider: Size

Diversity	• More heterogeneous more members
Quorum	• 50% can take action



Best Practices

- An uneven number
- 7 is a good starting point
- Allow for local school flexibility with justification and approval

Composition and Formation

Factors to Consider: Membership

Representation	• Structure to represent YOUR community
Role of principal	• Voting or non-voting • De facto chair or may not chair
Parents	• Should represent student body
Teachers and other staff	• Positions exclusively for classroom teachers • Positions for other types of staff members
Role of students	• Common at high school and sometimes middle • Generally non-voting
Community Members	• External partners in civic or business community



Composition and Formation

Membership Best Practices

- Principal votes but does not chair
- Parents are not also staff members at the school
- Non-teaching staff can be represented
- Students do not vote
- Community/business partners are not also parents at the school
- Individuals cannot serve on more than one LSGT
- Multiple family members cannot serve on the same LSGT
- LBOE members may not serve on LSGT
- Overall membership does not result in any one type of member (staff, parent or community representatives) making up a majority of the LSGT



Composition and Formation

Factors to Consider: Terms

Rotation	• Number of years each member serves
Length of time in the school	• Allow for representation of multiple grade levels
Staggered terms	• Consider varying lengths in first year so everyone does not rotate off at once in the future
Term limits	• Number of consecutive terms or total terms an individual can serve



Terms Best Practices

- 2 year terms following initial staggered terms of 1 and 2 years
- Maximum of 2 consecutive terms

Composition and Formation

Factors to Consider: Selection

Election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peers elect a representative
Appointment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSGT appoints a member to represent a membership category
De Facto representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSGT member by virtue of another position
Replacing members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow original method or LSGT appoints Complete original term



Selection Best Practices

- Parents and teachers elected by peers
- Some staff and community representatives appointed
- Principal is de facto voting member
- Students appointed or de facto by virtue of other position
- Members who exit are replaced through LSGT appointment to complete the unexpired term

Composition and Formation

Factors to Consider: Structure

Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair Vice chair Secretary
Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As needed to manage work efficiently



Structure Best Practices

- Principal is not the chair
- Secretary ensures required notice and minutes, but a non-LSGT staff member records the minutes during the meeting
- Budget committee to review and recommend annual budget
- Committees formed to study areas of significant impact (such as new school construction, major curricular changes, schedule changes)

Composition and Formation

Factors to Consider: Removal

Changing roles	• No longer in role for which elected or appointed
Lack of attendance	• Define attendance requirements for training and meetings
Conflict of Interest	• Avoid favors to self or others
Code of Conduct violations	• Defined in by-laws • Avoid interfering with school management as it relates to employees or students
Processes	• Determine in advance how members can be removed



Removal Best Practices

- Lack of attendance and violation of Code of Conduct are causes for removal
- Code of Conduct is signed by all LSGT members upon election/appointment
- Removal of a member is by majority vote of LSGT

Agenda Topics

Implementation

Implementation

Factors to Consider: By laws

What	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline the LSGT structure, processes and timelines for operation Include Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest
When	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed during or immediately after submission of the application Should be in place before LSGT elections



By-laws Best Practices

- In place prior to initial elections
- Common by-laws across all schools
- Modified as needed for LSGT flexibility, with LBOE approval

Implementation

Factors to Consider: Training

Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSGT members Principals LBOE members Central office staff Superintendent
When	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before first year of implementation Ongoing as needed for new members Ongoing as need for new information for all members



Training Best Practices

- Train initial teams in the summer or early fall of the first year on basic procedures
- Include key central office staff (instruction, finance, principal supervisors)
- Separate, specific training for LSGT chairs
- Provide training on a just-in-time basis for school improvement planning, student assessment, budget and principal selection/feedback
- Ensure all new members are trained on an annual basis

Implementation

Factors to Consider: Training Content

Training Content Best Practices

- Initial Training includes:
 - Roles and Responsibilities
 - Code of Conduct
 - Effective Meetings
 - Roberts Rules of Order
 - Open Meetings/Open Records
 - Student Assessment 101
 - School Finance 101
 - Immediate Next Steps



Implementation

Factors to Consider: Meeting Schedule and Process

Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least six times a year
Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define acceptable number of absences • Create an agenda • Manage attendees



Meeting Schedule and Process Best Practices

- Meet monthly, with exceptions for summer
- Meetings of 60-90 minutes
- Use basic Roberts Rules of Order for voting
- Up to 2 absences allowed
- Alternate mornings/afternoons to encourage attendance
- Allocate times and indicate voting items on the published agenda
- Create LSGT ground rules
- Create a process and rules for public comments

Implementation

Factors to Consider: Meeting Notice and Minutes

Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Follow Georgia Open Meetings and Open Records laws
Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Physically post/maintain in the school officeElectronically post on the school website

[Click here for Meeting Minutes](#)

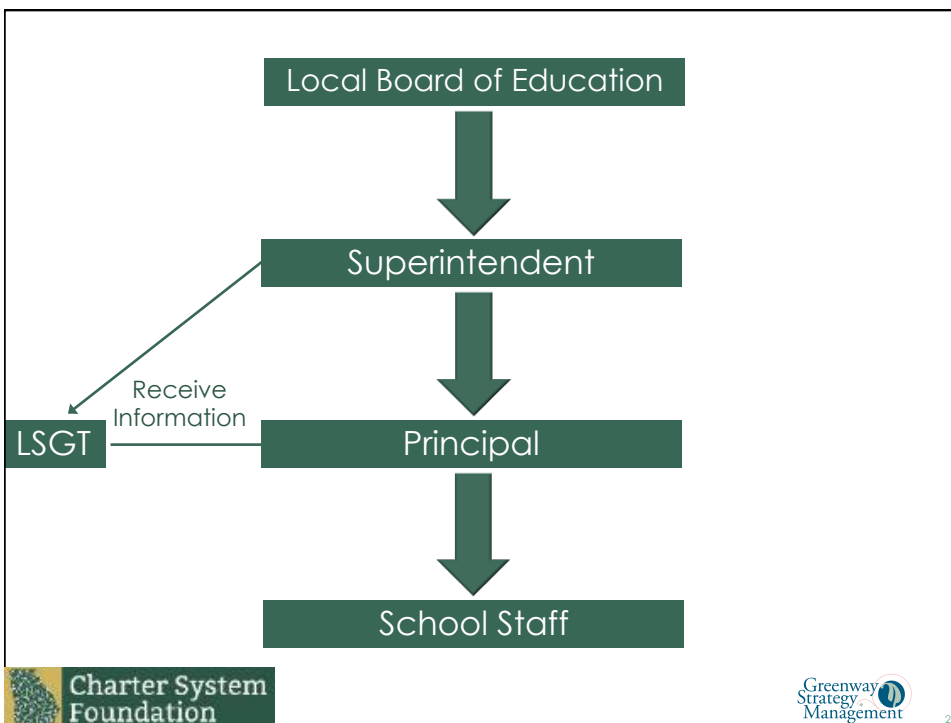
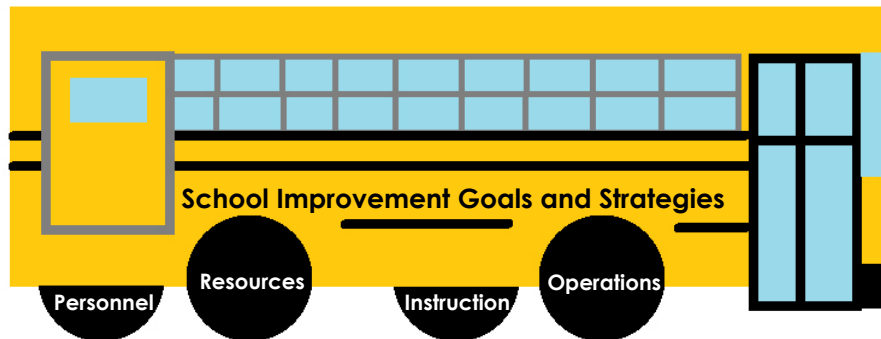
Meeting Notice and Minutes Best Practices

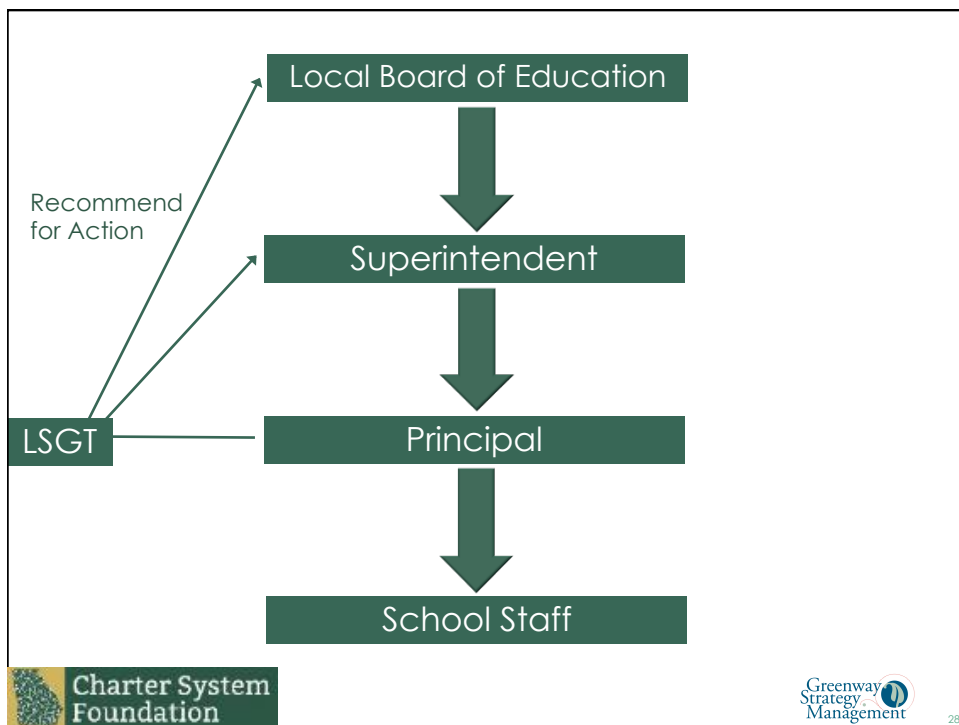
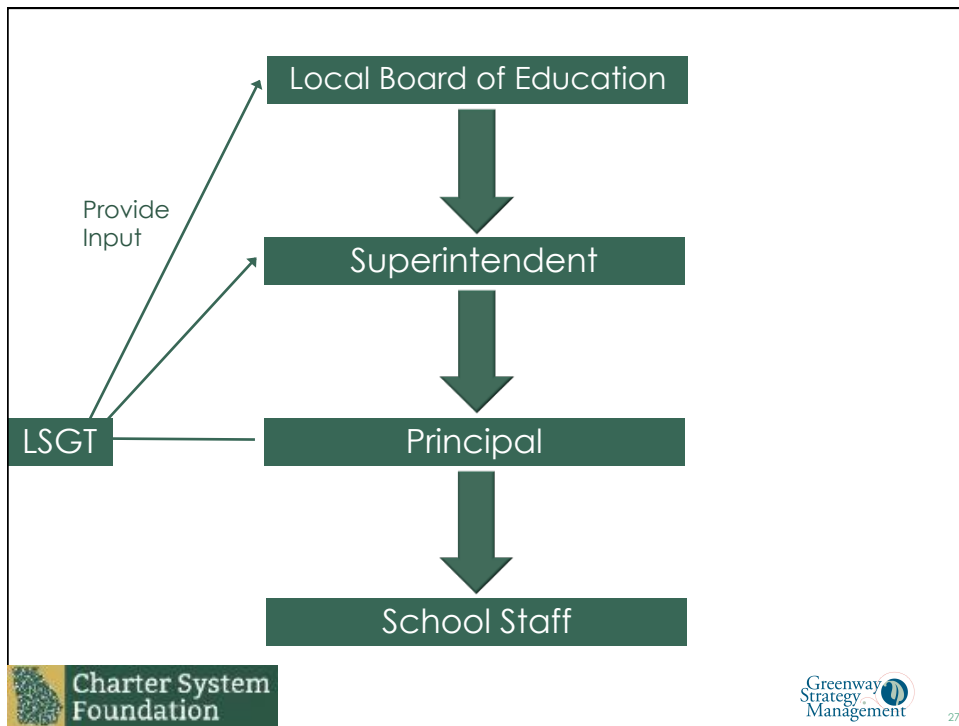
- Create a common section of each school website for LSGT business to include members, meeting information, agendas, summaries of actions, and minutes
- Use the Board of Education electronic meeting system to manage agendas and minutes

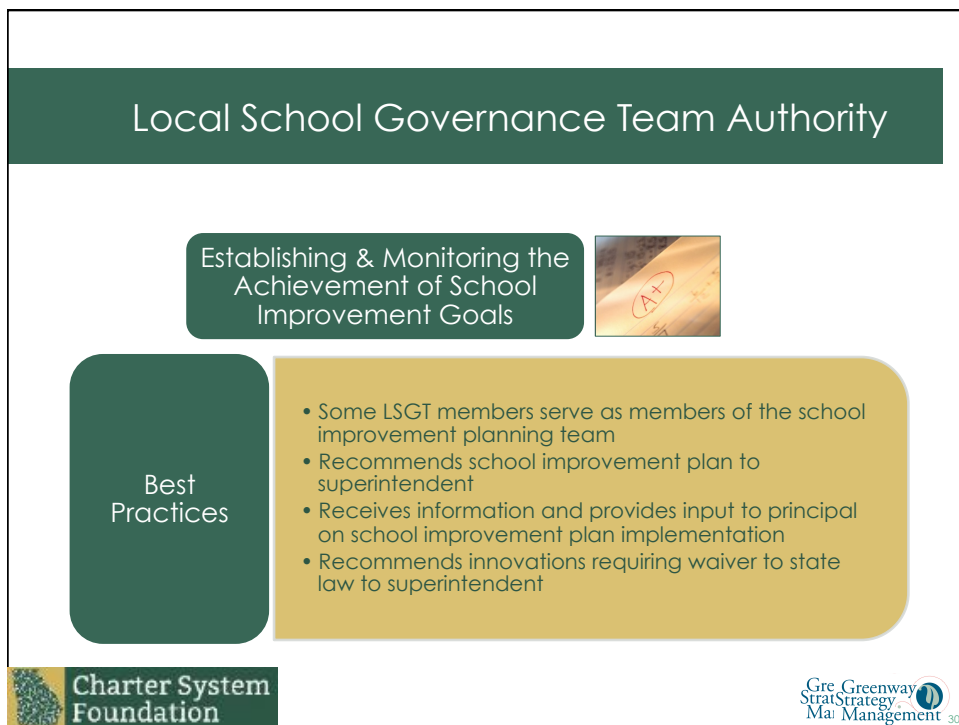
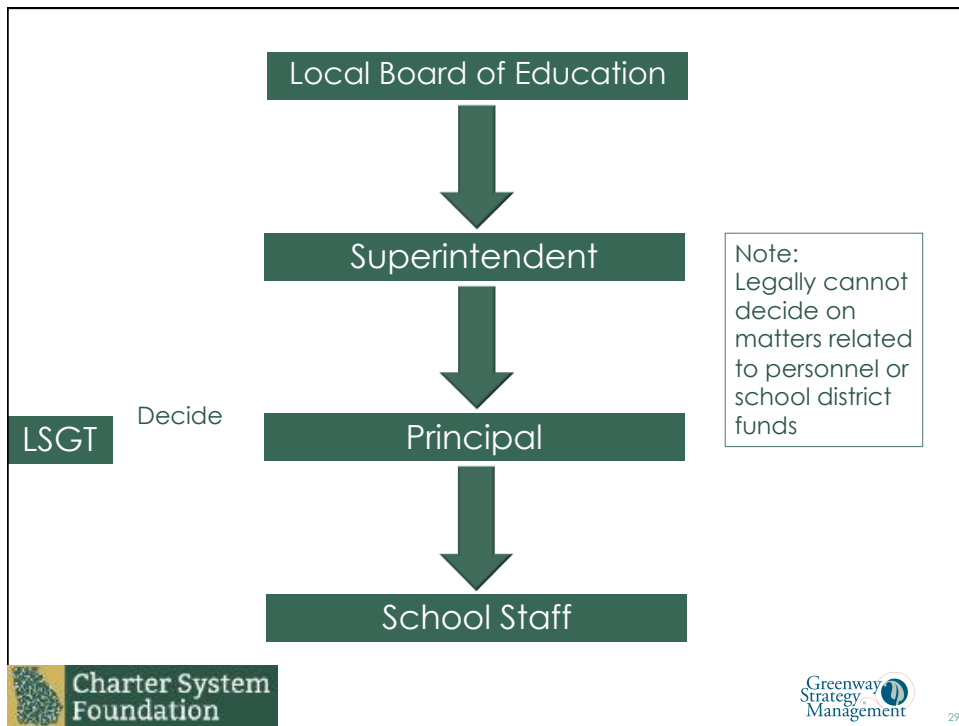
Agenda Topics

Authority

Areas of Local School Governance Team Authority







Local School Governance Team Authority

Personnel Decisions



Best Practices

- Recommends principal candidate to superintendent in the case of vacancy
- Provides input to superintendent on principal performance via a structured questionnaire
- Provides input to principal on desired characteristics for new or vacant non-teaching positions or innovative new teaching positions
- LSGT representatives provide input on **administrative** hires via participation in candidate screening and/or interview panels

Local School Governance Team Authority

Financial Decisions and Resource Allocation



Best Practices

- Recommends school general fund budget aligned with the school improvement plan to the superintendent
- Recommends use of SPLOST technology funds
- Decides use of Charter System funds allocated to the school, aligned with school improvement plan
- Provides Input to principal on use of Title 1 budget, and may endorse with a vote
- Decides use of school-generated funds
- Collaborative process to provide input to related-organizations regarding use of funds (Foundations, PTAs, Boosters)

Local School Governance Team Authority

Curriculum & Instruction



Best Practices

- Recommends new courses and subjects to the superintendent
- Provides input to the principal regarding instructional resources aligned with the school improvement plan
- Provides input to the principal regarding instructional delivery models not requiring waivers
- Recommends innovations requiring waiver or state laws or rules to the superintendent
- Recommends class sizes other than the district standard to the superintendent
- Recommends changes in allocation of instructional time to the superintendent

Local School Governance Team Authority

School Operations



Examples of Authority

- Decides student dress code
- Provides input to principal on student code of conduct, and may endorse with a vote
- Provides input on school safety plan to principal or superintendent, and may endorse with a vote
- Recommends changes to school calendar or start/end times to the superintendent
- Provides input into parent involvement strategies
- Decides on community partners offering programs in the school
- Provides input to superintendent on facility improvements
- Recommends a school technology plan to the superintendent
- Provides input on other operational matters aligned with the school improvement plan

Agenda Topics

Remaining Questions or Concerns