

2019

# Governance Academy

A series of trainings designed to prepare new and veteran board members on compliance topics, board development and configuration, and more.



CHARTER SCHOOLS  
DEVELOPMENT CENTER



# Governance Academy

Designed specifically with governing board members in mind, but useful for the entire leadership team, CSDC's Governance Academy is a series of short instructional tutorials that discuss everything from the Ralph M. Brown Act, to the roles and responsibilities of board members and school administrators, to the alphabet soup of acronyms that make up the common vernacular of education policy, and much more. The Governance Academy is a self-paced instructional online course that can be done individually at home or viewed as part of a collective board training.

**The Charter Schools Development Center's Governance Academy (GA) is a new feature accessible only to active CSDC members.**

# Instructors

## Caitlin O'Halloran

*Charter School Governance and Policy Specialist*

Caitlin O'Halloran is the Governance and Policy Specialist at CSDC. Caitlin leads the development and delivery of CSDC's Governance offering, including our Online Governance Academy, and is CSDC's main point of contact for matters relating to governance, advocacy, policy, and other charter school leadership topics. Caitlin began her career working for legislators in the California State Assembly and later in the Senate. She also served as a committee consultant and a lobbyist during the more than two decades she helped craft public policy. Additionally, during her career in public service, she worked on behalf of county governments and the California Department of Education. Caitlin staffed bills related to education and human services, including AB 602 (1997), a landmark special education funding reform bill.

In 2004, Caitlin co-founded the Dixon Montessori Charter School (DMCS). In 2013, she was appointed to and continues to serve on the Dixon Unified School District Governing Board which authorizes DMCS. She also served one term on the Advisory Commission on Charter Schools. Caitlin has been a workshop presenter at statewide educational conferences, a commentator on public radio, and was the Woman of the Year for Senate District 03 in 2016. Caitlin holds a BA in Government with a minor in History from Mills College.





## **Eric Premack**

*Executive Director & Founder*

Eric Premack is the founding Director of CSDC. For over 25 years, Eric has played a leading role in the development and spread of chartered schools, including helping to draft and implement chartered schools policy in over two dozen states, at the federal level, and overseas. He has developed groundbreaking charter school policy, planning, implementation, oversight, and leadership development practices that have been emulated throughout the US and internationally.

Eric was a co-founder of the Charter Friends National Network, a founding board member of the California Network of Educational Charters (CANEC), serves on the Advisory Board to the National Charter School Resource Center, served on the California State Superintendent's Charter School Advisory Committee, serves as vice chair of the board of Civicorps Schools and served as vice chair of the board of St. HOPE Public Schools. He has twice received the Hart Vision Award for outstanding service to California's chartered schools and the California Charter Schools Association's Legacy Award for 20 years of outstanding service to California charter schools. Prior to founding CSDC, Eric provided consulting services for dozens of California school districts at School Services of California, Inc. and previously worked in California's non-partisan Office of the Legislative Analyst where he advised the Legislature on major K-12 education fiscal policy matters. Eric holds a BA and MA in Public Policy from the University of Chicago.



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# Structure & Format

CSDC's Governance Academy is delivered mostly through online, self-paced videos and quizzes that allow charter school board members to learn at their own pace. These courses can be augmented with CSDC's Board Member Training, an intensive 1-day in-person workshop allowing board members, new and experienced, to work together, be briefed on governance-related concerns, and to have the opportunity to do more hands-on learning with CSDC's staff.

Members who participate also receive access to CSDC's unique charter schools resource directory,

which includes invaluable sample policies and materials for governing boards to consider amending and adopting.

Governance Academy participants are also encouraged to attend the Charter Schools Leadership Update Conference, which takes place every fall. Each conference offers an extensive variety of workshops and breakout sessions that can help to augment and update a board member's understanding of their roles as charter leaders, their understanding of the Brown Act, while providing a preview to new California laws.

# Modules

## On Being a Board Member

This module covers all the basics, from the best practices in board member on-boarding to a basic understanding of the "power" a governing board has in charter school leadership.

## Speaking the Language

The education community speaks its own language and often talks in acronyms. This module provides a basic translation for the most commonly used education vernacular.



## ◆ **Laws, Lobbying, and the Legislature**

Charter schools were created by the California Legislature and are subject to new laws and changes every year. In this module, board members will gain an understanding of the role of the Legislature in governing charter schools and of how charter leaders play a part in impacting the Legislature.

## ◆ **Governing Board Roles and Responsibilities**

A difficult part of governing a charter school can be understanding the difference between governance and management. This module walks board members through traditional divisions of duties and clarifies some best practices.

## ◆ **Human Resources**

The majority of a charter school's budget is spent on personnel costs – both salary and benefits. Governing board members need to have a basic understanding of issues like PERS, STRS, and labor negotiations in order to make educated decisions. This module provides a framework for those discussions.

## ◆ **California Charter Basic**

Have you ever wondered how California charter schools came to be? This module gives a basic understanding of the past 25 years of charter school history and asks some important questions about the future of chartered schools in California.

## About Us

The Charter Schools Development Center (CSDC) provides experienced and expert technical assistance and resources to charter school developers, operators, charter-granting agencies, and policymakers, primarily in California. We support all charter schools, in California and beyond, with our knowledge and expertise in the areas of charter school leadership, finance, operations, governance, accountability, advocacy and development.

## Our Mission

Our mission is to help public education change from a highly regulated, process-based system to one that allows and encourages schools to be more creative, performance-based centers of effective teaching and learning. We aim to achieve this by providing technical assistance to the charter school reform movement in California, nationally, and internationally.

Learn more about these efforts at [chartercenter.org/advocacy](http://chartercenter.org/advocacy).

## Join Us – become a member!

If you share our vision, we urge you to join with the hundreds of charter schools that have become members of our organization. For more on CSDC Membership and its benefits, please visit [chartercenter.org/membership](http://chartercenter.org/membership).