ABHE Annual Meeting: The Board and Accreditation: Role and Responsibilities

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The Seven Essentials of Effective Boards - *Excellence in Board Governance Training*

1. Embrace calling to **steward** the mission and values
2. Grasp **value proposition**
3. Understand the **role & responsibilities** of trustees
4. Communicating **correct and timely information** on institution's status
5. Engage in **strategic thinking & planning** processes
6. Secure and sustain **effective executive leadership**
7. Engage in the **board's** continual **development & improvement**

Overview: As boards serve as guardians of the institutional mission, how does this fiduciary responsibility relate to the institution's accreditation? What should you know and where is the line between board oversight and administrative meddling?

1. Understanding the relationship of accreditation with mission - The WHY of accreditation
    a. To qualify for Title IV funding
    b. To have academic standing
    c. **To be better!**
        i. Value Proposition of accreditation is peer assessment, accountability, and continuous improvement.
        ii. 2024 ABHE Standard 1: **The institution has a written mission statement that is clear and appropriate to biblical higher education supported by clearly defined institutional goals and student learning objectives.**
            1. EE 1: A clearly written mission statement appropriate to biblical higher education.
            2. EE 2: Evidence that the mission statement is developed and periodically reviewed by broad representation from all sectors of the institution and ratified by the governing board.
            3. EE 3: Evidence that the mission statement guides faculty, staff, administration, and the governing board in making decisions related to planning, resource allocation, and program development.
            4. EE 4: Clearly articulated institutional goals that directly relate to the mission statement.
            5. EE 5: Clearly articulated student learning objectives for each educational program that support fulfillment of the mission statement.
            6. EE 6: The mission statement, institutional goals, and student learning objectives are easily located on the institution's website and in its catalog(s).

        iii. Challenge the board to embrace the calling to steward the mission
            1. WHY does your school exist?
            2. The board knows the story of the institution - its history, traditions, and culture;
            3. The board values & cultivates the spiritual vitality of the institution;
            4. The board understands and values the nature of biblical higher education;
            5. The board knows and embraces God's vision for the future of the institution.
        iv. Grasp value proposition - what makes your institution unique?
            1. What does your institution promise to deliver?
            2. Why do students choose your institution?
            3. Why do donors invest in your institution?
2. Knowing the role of the trustees - shared governance through policy
    a. Policy
        i. Board
            1. Mission Statement
            2. Governing Documents
            3. Policy manual
        ii. Administration
            1. Carries out board policies
            2. Provides administrative support for board policymaking
    b. Planning (Shared)
        i. Strategic planning
            1. Board - ensures effective planning
            2. Administration - engages the board in planning and implementation
        ii. Program Evaluation
            1. Administration - monitors quality and reports to board
            2. Board - discerns needs & effectiveness
        iii. Mission Impact
            1. Administration - monitors quality and reports to board
            2. Board - through KPI's discerns mission alignment and budgeting allocations
3. Creating the right metrics on the board dashboard - KPI's
    a. Strategic Intelligence: The board must receive correct and timely information on the status of the institution.
    b. Measure what matters:
        i. **Academics**
            1. Student to faculty ratio
            2. Faculty scholarship recipients
            3. Faculty Demographics
                a. Race/Ethnicity
                b. Sex
                c. Doctoral vs. Master's degrees

        d. Denominational Background
    4. Faculty and adjunct status
    5. Mission Fit Faculty
  ii. **Students**:
    1. Admissions (New applications/recruiting)
    2. Enrollment (Fall & Year students served)
    3. Retention
    4. Student Demographics
        a. Sex
        b. Race/Ethnicity
        c. Age
    5. YTD Churches served (# of churches represented in student body)
    6. Student satisfaction survey results
  iii. **Finance**:
    1. Fiscal YTD Budget vs. Actuals
    2. Cash flow (weekly)
    3. Tuition revenue collected vs. billed
    4. Tuition by program with discount rate
    5. Consumer Financial Responsibility Score
        a. Primary Reserve Ratio
        b. Equity Ratio
        c. Net Income Ratio
    6. Percentage of Tuition revenue to budget
  iv. **Trustees**:
    1. Giving Percentage Report
    2. Gathering contacts/referrals
    3. Guiding Attendance Percentage Report
    4. Sex
    5. Denomination
    6. Ethnicity
    7. Profession
  v. **Development:**
    1. Fiscal YTD # of donors
    2. Fiscal YTD donations
    3. Comparative YTD donations
    4. Capital Campaign progress

4. Watching the line between policy oversight and administrative entanglement
    a. Board sets policy; president through administration enacts policy
    b. Board sets budget; president through administration recommends budget
    c. Board sets fundraising & development goals; president through administration seeks donor participation
    d. Board leads & facilitates board meetings; president through administration ensures board has necessary information and meeting materials
    e. Board ensures strategic board recruitment goals & expectations; president through administration develops strong working relationships with board members.

f. The Board Chair is the manager of the Board, not the staff. The Chair has no more independent authority to set Board policies than any other Board member.
g. The Board Chair does help the CEO interpret Board policy and provides the best communication link between the Board and its CEO.
h. The Board hires one agent, the CEO. The CEO is accountable to the "one voice" (policies) of the full board. The CEO employs other staff.
i. The Board's standing (on-going) policies are the "one voice" of the Board and should be kept in one organized document.