Subsection B. Strength and Stability of Governing Body

PART 1. GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS

Current Governing Council Members are:
Matthew Fiori, President, acting Treasurer, parent representative. Financial expertise.
Molly Lewis, Secretary. Community at Large member. Educational and organizational expertise.
Richard Byrnes. Community at Large member. Educational expertise. Strong relationships throughout Sedona.
Bevin McCabe. Parent representative.
Gail Olson, Sedona Montessori Board appointee. Educational and small business expertise.
Alice Madar, Sedona Charter School Business Administrator. Business, finance, communications, PR expertise.
Robert Wentsch, Sedona Charter School Principal Educator. Educational and small business expertise.
Marsha Johnson, Sedona Charter School Principal Educator. Educational and organizational expertise.
Jon Anderson, Sedona Charter School Principal Educator. Educational expertise.

PART 2. GOVERNING BODY RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

The business and property of the Corporation is managed by the Governing Council, consisting of not less than 3 nor more than 11 members. School employees who do not report directly to the Governing Council may not serve on the Governing Council. Council makeup and representation is as follows:

- At least 3 members are parents of children enrolled at Sedona Charter School
- Up to 2 members come from the community at large (who are not parents nor affiliated with Sedona Montessori School)
- Up to 3 members are appointed by the Sedona Montessori School (SMS) Board, and who serve as liaisons to SMS
- Remaining positions may be filled by any combination of at-large community members, parents of currently enrolled students, and staff who report directly to the Governing Council.

Recruitment and Selection. When a vacancy becomes apparent or is imminent, the Governing Council Vice President forms a Nominating Committee, an ad hoc committee of the Governing Council. The Nominating Committee follows clearly established policies and procedures that are approved by the Governing Council and included in the school's Policies manual.

The procedures are as follows: There shall be 5 or 7 members of the Nominating Committee. The vice-president shall act as chair, unless the vice president delegates the chair to another committee member. The composition of the committee shall be the current vice-president of the Governing Council, the Parent Partnership chair, and the remaining members should ideally be parents from each classroom of the school, including kindergarten, and at least one member of the teaching staff. The committee shall solicit suggestions for nominations via distribution of flyers home, announcements in the school newsletter, student newspaper, on the sandwich board and school web site.

The committee will submit a news release to the school newsletter advertising an opening on the Governing Council. The committee will ask each Principal Educator for recommendations. The Nominating Committee shall review the recommendations and propose for election to the Governing Council such nominees who are deemed qualified. The Governing Council shall determine when the recommendation for nominees from the Nominating Committee will be due.

Each candidate will be mailed or given a letter inviting him or her to apply for the opening. The letter will state the time of the candidate's interview along with the following:

- A copy of the Charter
- A request for the candidate to submit a "bio" in writing (including education and past work and volunteer experience) and a description of why s/he is interested in the position and what s/he can contribute
- Interview questions
- A fingerprint clearance card and background check form
- Governing Council member job description

Prior to interviewing the candidates:

- The committee calls the candidates to find out if the interview time is satisfactory for each candidate, and makes adjustments to the interviewing schedule.
- The committee members read the candidates' information.
- The committee members meet to discuss the candidate information, and to determine questions for clarification.
- Each committee member is assigned particular questions to ask.
- Committee members are assigned to present information about aspects of our school to the candidates: the charter, Montessori, ITI, how we want to connect with the community, and "job descriptions" of the G.C.

members, including the length of the term (3 years), the time commitment (generally 5 to 8 hours per week), and the requirement of serving in at least one of the four offices for-1 year.

The Nominating Committee members will create a block of times for the individual interviews (scheduled at half-hour intervals) with the understanding that all committee members be present at all the interviews so that comparisons between candidates can be made. Any member that misses an interview will be asked to discontinue their participation in the committee.

The nominating committee members will use a set of existing interview questions for the candidates. Each new committee should review the questions for desired changes before starting the interviews so that all candidates will be asked the same questions. (Note: This recommendation is based on information presented to the first Hiring Committee created by the Design Team, that in order to avoid lawsuits for wrongful hiring practices, interviewing committees should ask all candidates for a position the same general questions, and allow approximately the same amount of time for each interview.)

In case of a conflict of interest, the committee will respond to the candidate in writing stating the conflict and consequently and graciously declining an interview. A conflict of interest would constitute:

- Being a spouse of a paid employee of the school
- Being a family member of any vendor of the school
- Being a family member of a current GC member

The model for this guideline was the balance of power so carefully delineated in the Charter. A parent or staff member whose family receives pay for serving the school in one capacity might have to be excused from many GC decisions to avoid conflict of interest, and their expertise is already accessible to the GC as an employee of, or spouse of someone closely affiliated with, the school.

During the interviews, the same general set of questions is used, although members may tailor follow-up questions to fit the candidates.

After the interviews, the committee meets to select what it considers the best candidate for the position. It forwards its recommendation in writing to the Governing Council, along with the chosen candidate's written information and a brief report on the selection process. The committee will also put a copy of this documentation in the Nominating Committee binder in the office. The written information received from the candidates that were not selected will go into a confidential file in the office. Note: The Nominating Committee must post its meetings in accordance with open meeting law.

Training/Orientation: Prior to joining the Governing Council, a nominee is given a copy of the charter and the Governing Council member job description. These documents are discussed during the interview. Our teaching methodology and governance structure are discussed and outlined during the interview. Governing Council members are expected to read and sign a Code of Conduct.

At the beginning of each Governing Council meeting, the school mission is read, as a means of keeping school philosophy and goals uppermost in our thoughts during the meeting. Governing Council members are included in trainings and workshops on open meeting law, organizational development, and other relevant topics that may arise. Examples include but are not limited to the Microsoft Leadership Institute, a legal presentation on the separation of Church and State, workplace communication, and general board training. Governing Council members also take advantage of trainings offered by the Arizona Charter Schools Association. Council members have open, immediate access to school financial records, by-laws, policies, and other documentation.

A note regarding succession and continuity: Because authority, knowledge and responsibility are shared, corporate knowledge and culture carry on even when key personnel depart, because other key personnel remain behind.

PART 3. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

Please refer to Section I, Organizational Chart and Reporting Structure, and to Section II, Sustainability, Subsection B, Strength and Stability, Part 2., Governing Body Recruitment and Development for information relating to Governance Structure. For more detail on systems, refer to the Sedona Charter School By-Laws. Article 4 of the by-laws contains information relating to Governing Council meetings.

PART 4. GOVERNING BODY MONITORING OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Governing Council expects Sedona Charter School to maintain an Excelling status and to be the highest achieving Sedona school on standardized tests.

Staffmembers give presentations to the Governing Council on the school's academic performance. Governing Council members trained in statistical analysis review and present data on the school's standardized test scores. Governing Council supports staff in accessing workshops and information relating to the analysis, interpretation and application of standardized test scores in academic planning.

The Achieving Excellence Committee monitors the school evaluation process. These evaluations include student, parent, staff, and peer reviews, and a review of standardized testing performance. It also includes an annual evaluation by an outside, trained Montessori consultant. At the beginning of each year, staffmembers are asked to set goals for the year. Progress toward those goals is reviewed periodically at Governing Council meetings.