

Austin Peace Academy

School Board Charter

Article 1.	APA Mission and Vision Statements.....	3
Article 2.	APA Belief Statements	3
Article 3.	School Board Goals and Objectives	4
Article 4.	School Board Structure	5
Article 5.	School Board Term	8
Article 6.	Qualification of the SB Members:	8
Article 7.	Code of Ethics.....	9
Article 8.	Conflict of Interest	10
Article 9.	Roles and Responsibilities:	10
Article 10.	School Board Operations	12
Article 11.	APA Staff Hiring, Evaluation, and Termination:	13
Article 12.	School Finances	14
Article 13.	Communication and Reporting.....	15
Article 14.	Dispute Escalation Procedure	18
Article 15.	Charter Amendment Procedure.....	19
Appendix I.	Sample APA School Board Master Schedule.....	20
Appendix II.	APA Principal Expectations and Performance Evaluation.....	21

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Introduction

The ICGA Board of Trustees has established the governing document for the Austin Peace Academy (APA) and its School Board (SB) to ensure successful operation of the school. This document describes the goals, objectives, structure, roles, responsibilities, hiring, finance, reporting, and dispute resolution procedures for the SB. This governing document must be implemented and followed by all parties involved.

The APA School Board is the governing body responsible for ensuring that APA provides a high quality education for all of APA students, in accordance with its mission and vision. The SB is not an administrative or day to day operations body but instead governs by establishing policies, guidelines, and objectives to guide the principal in the administration and operation of the schools. This is achieved by monitoring progress toward achieving direct goals and by engaging the parent and broader community in planning for and supporting APA. Individual board members work with the board as a whole and collaboratively with the Principal to accomplish the school's mission.

Article 1. APA Mission and Vision Statements

Prepare our students for success in this life and the Hereafter by providing them with exemplary education based on Islamic morals, values, and the highest academic standards.

Vision Statement

APA will be recognized among the top educational institutions of its kind providing exemplary education based on Islamic morals and the highest academic standards. This vision will be embodied in each APA graduate who will have acquired strong Islamic beliefs and practices, demonstrating model behavior and character.

Graduates will have the academic grounding, confidence, and the skills to meet life's challenges and relate to others with respect, tolerance, and understanding. They will be knowledgeable enough to be critical and creative thinkers. APA graduates will be ambitious and influential enough to become productive citizens and leaders within their communities, demonstrating their Muslim-American identity.

Article 2. APA Belief Statements

- 2.1. The Quran and Sunnah provide the best possible guidance for the proper raising, character building, and educating of students.
- 2.2. Cultivating strong Islamic values and identity in students prepares them to be constructive participants in American society.
- 2.3. The teaching of religious tolerance and cultural equality leads to an improved society.
- 2.4. Cultural diversity increases students' understanding of different peoples and cultures.

- 2.5. Character development is an essential aspect of the overall development of students.
- 2.6. Schools are most successful when student learning takes priority over all decisions impacting the school.
- 2.7. A school's mission is best achieved when the responsibility for advancing it is shared by teachers, administrators, parents and the community.
- 2.8. A shared commitment to continuous improvement will enable students to become confident, self-directed lifelong learners.
- 2.9. All students can learn and reach their potential when provided with best possible learning services.
- 2.10. Students achieve more when challenged with high expectations.
- 2.11. Problem-solving and critical thinking skills are essential for the success of students.
- 2.12. Students are most successful when they are provided with a variety of opportunities to demonstrate their academic achievements.
- 2.13. Students learn in different ways and the use of a variety of instructional approaches is needed to address different learning styles.
- 2.14. Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, spiritual, social, intellectual, and emotional needs.
- 2.15. A student's self-esteem is enhanced by positive relationships and mutual respect between students and staff.
- 2.16. A safe and comfortable environment promotes student learning.

Article 3. School Board Goals and Objectives

The Board of Trustees (BT) of Islamic Center of Greater Austin (ICGA) has set the following goals and objectives for the SB:

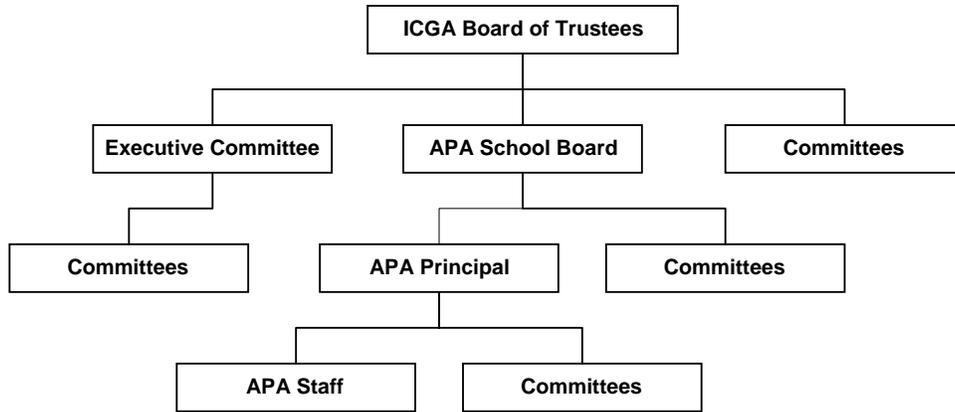
- 3.1. Focus on policy making, planning, monitoring, and evaluation to further the school's mission, vision, core values, and strategic objectives, rather than on day to day operations.
- 3.2. Plan yearly budgets and raise funds to meet school's operational and growth needs.
- 3.3. Set explicit priorities as a board for the school administration and make sure that the parents are aware of these priorities.
- 3.4. Hire an outstanding educational leader as the Principal of the school, hold that person accountable for high student learning and for the efficient operation of the school system .

- 3.5. Provide adequate support and resources to the school Principal and empower him/her to execute the school's annual campus plan and day-to-day operations. Recognize and respect the Principal's responsibility to manage the school and to direct employees in school matters.
- 3.6. Hold the Principal accountable for performance and results in the areas of academics, curriculum, Islamic and character education, staffing, operational, and fiscal effectiveness, school enrollment, student safety and well-being, and parental and staff satisfaction.
- 3.7. Maintain regular and open communication with parents and community members to keep them informed in matters related to school performance, goals, and plans.
- 3.8.
- 3.9. Take responsibility and steps to maintain school's accreditation with AdvancEd. Ensure that Principal implements a continuous improvement process. Periodically review school mission, vision, and core beliefs for improvements and updates.
- 3.10. Encourage an active Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) that contributes to the success of the school.
- 3.11. Establish communications with the Muslim community in Austin and close working relationships with local Islamic Centers in order to promote the school's vision, build broad base community support and participation for the school.
- 3.12. In cooperation with the BT formulate a strategic plan to make the school financially self-sufficient and ensure its long term success and stability.
- 3.13. Ensures that the school complies with the State of Texas Child Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS) rules and requirements.
- 3.14. Conduct an annual written performance review of the Principal.
- 3.15. Evaluates its own performance and periodically take part in workshops aimed at strengthening their collaborative leadership for high student achievement.

Article 4. School Board Structure

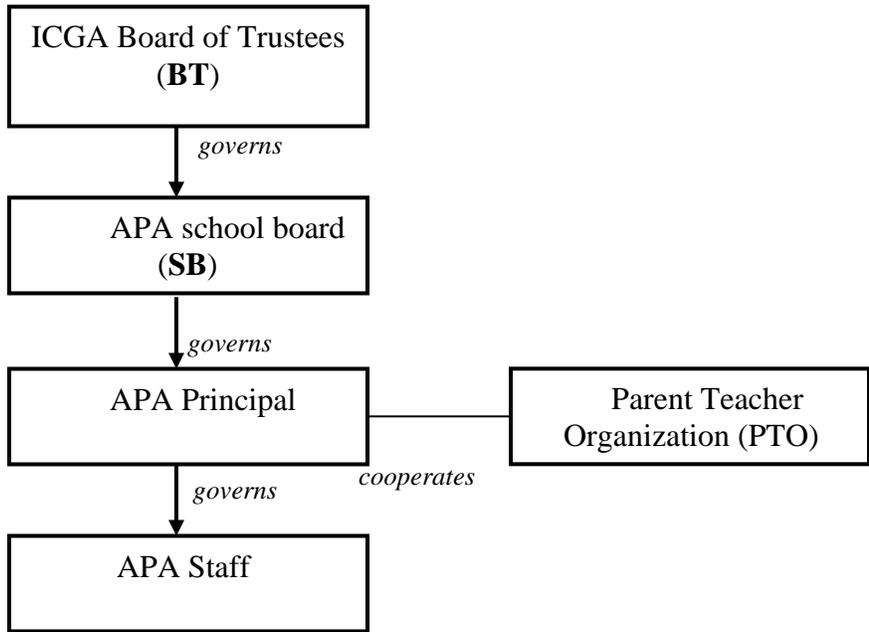
- 4.1. The Islamic Center of Greater Austin (ICGA) is a non-profit organization registered with the state of Texas and the US government. It is governed by the ICGA Constitution and Bylaws. Austin Peace Academy is an independent non-profit IRS 501(c)(3) organization, registered as a non-profit association with the State of Texas. APA conducts its business in accordance with the APA Charter (this document).

The following chart depicts the organizational structure of ICGA.



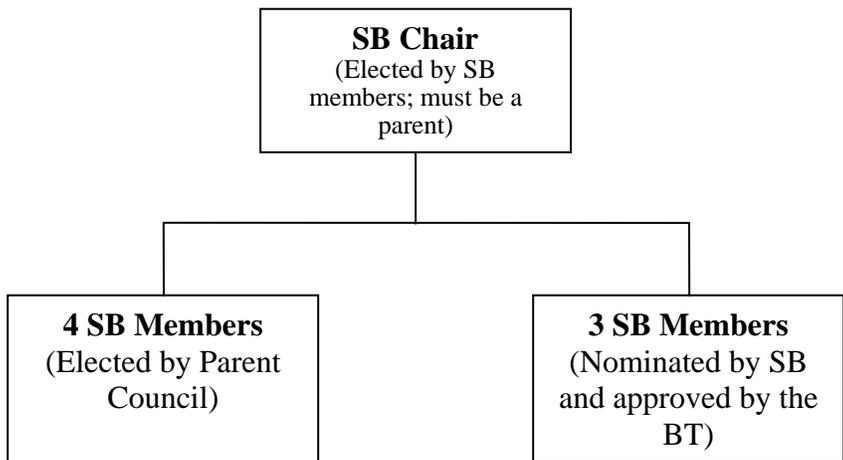
- 4.2. APA parents have the right to actively participate in school decision-making. This participation shall include, but not be limited to, electing four School Board members and having the right to review the school budget and provide input into how funds should be spent. All parents of enrolled students are automatically members of the APA Parent Council (PC) and have the right to attend the Spring and Fall Parent Council (PC) meeting in which they can provide any input or make any recommendations to the School Board and administration concerning the School Improvement Plan and any other school policy or procedure. The APA SB serves as parent’s representative body and works to further their interests.
- 4.3. ICGA Board of Trustees (BT) is the highest governing authority of APA. The APA School Board (SB) reports to the BT and provides direction to the Principal. The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) coordinates its activities with the APA Principal.

The following chart depicts the organizational structure of APA.



- 4.4. The SB shall consist of seven members. Four SB members shall be elected by the Parent Council for a three year term. The PC elected SB members shall nominate three or more candidates (from APA parents and/or the community) to the BT for approval to serve as SB members for three year terms. The chairman shall be elected by the School Board from among themselves (no BT approval is required).
- 4.5. BT must ensure that a fully functional SB is in place at all times and may appoint new SB members to fill in any vacancies that is not filled within one month.

The following chart depicts the organizational structure of the SB:



Article 5. School Board Term

- 5.1. The term of the SB members shall be for three years, starting on October 1st.
- 5.2. The SB shall establish clear election guidelines and procedures to elect, recall, impeach, or replace the School Board members, and shall document them in the APA Parent Handbook. The SB shall be responsible for calling and conducting Parent Council (PC) meeting as per APA Parent Handbook and APA School Board Master Schedule.
- 5.3. The SB shall establish policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the SB members.
- 5.4. SB shall have the authority to remove any of its fellow members due to non performance or other serious issues affecting the SB's ability to meet its goals and responsibilities. A 2/3rd majority vote of the other SB members shall be required to remove an SB member with approval from the BT.
- 5.5. Due, fair, and transparent process must be followed that clearly documents reasons and justification for any termination action.
- 5.6. In case of voluntary resignation, the SB member shall submit a written notice of resignation one month prior to leaving the office.
- 5.7. A vacant SB position shall be filled by SB appointment and BT approval within 4 weeks, until the next PC meeting, where Parent Council shall elect a new SB member.
- 5.8. Any change to the SB team membership must be communicated to the community within four weeks.

Article 6. Qualification of the SB Members:

- 6.1. The minimum requirements for anyone to become a member of APA school board are:
 - 6.1.1. He/she must be a believing and practicing Muslim.
 - 6.1.2. Must be willing to commit time and energy required to execute his/her duties as SB member, including regular attendance at the board meetings.
 - 6.1.3. Must believe unequivocally in the value of Islamic education, agree to abide by the APA school board charter, ICGA constitution and bylaws, and go through new SB member orientation.
 - 6.1.4. Must fulfill work assignments and deliver on commitment to make APA a successful Islamic school.
 - 6.1.5. Must be a college graduate. Its highly desirable to have an educational background in school functions.

- 6.1.6. Strive sincerely to build better relationships and work as a team with other SB members and the Principal.
- 6.2. It is highly desirable that SB member has prior background in running Islamic schools, educational process, and has professional experience and attitude.
- 6.3. SB members serve as ambassadors, advocates, and representatives of the school, and as such shall conduct themselves accordingly.
- 6.4. SB Chairman shall be an APA parent in good standing and shall not be a BT member. SB Chairman must have previously served in the SB for at least one year. SB chairperson shall demonstrate essential leadership qualities to preside at board meetings, work closely with the Principal, and be an articulate spokesperson for the board. The person the board elects as its chairperson is key to what the board accomplishes and to the nature of the relationship between the Principal and board members.
- 6.5. It is understood that the SB members shall work at no cost to APA or ICGA or the community and purely on voluntary basis. The SB members shall conduct their work in an organized, objective, and professional manner.
- 6.6. SB members can not hold board or executive positions in any other organization. Spouse of an APA staff cannot serve on the APA school board, unless approved in writing by the ICGA BT.

Article 7. Code of Ethics

- 7.1. A school board member has no legal powers or authority unless acting at a school board meeting or acting for the school board after it formally grants power to act on its behalf.
- 7.2. SB members shall perform their duties in a manner consistent with this Code of Ethics
 - 7.2.1. Attend all regularly scheduled board meetings, insofar as possible and review study materials about the issues to be considered on each agenda.
 - 7.2.2. Set goals for the school system and establish policies to direct its administration.
 - 7.2.3. Maintain confidentiality of discussion conducted in executive session and of other privileged information.
 - 7.2.4. Abide by board decisions regardless of how individuals voted.
 - 7.2.5. Act only as a member of the board and do not assume authority as an individual in school matters when the board is not in session.
 - 7.2.6. Do not discuss school matters outside of board meetings.

- 7.2.7. Be familiar with and observe Texas education laws, and all other applicable local, state, and federal laws and statutes.
- 7.2.8. Listen to legal counsel and constructive criticism to protect the board and the school system from liability.

Article 8. Conflict of Interest

- 8.1. Neither the BT/SB collectively, nor any member of BT/SB shall
 - 8.1.1. Solicit or accept money, or anything else of value, for services performed within the scope of his or her official SB duties.
 - 8.1.2. Offer or accept any money or anything else of value for or in consideration of the use of his/her board position to obtain a contract for any person or business with the school.
 - 8.1.3. Use for his or her own economic benefit, or anyone else's, confidential information gained by reason of his or her office, and which is not available to the public.
 - 8.1.4. Recognize conflicts of interest and avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest in hiring, letting bids, approving contracts and other financial affairs of the school system.
- 8.2. BT/SB members who are parents of APA students shall take steps to ensure they do not use their position as board members, intentionally or unintentionally, directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, to intercede on behalf of their children or demand/expect any special favors from teachers or the Principal for their children.
- 8.3. BT/SB members who are spouses of APA staff shall take steps to ensure they do not use their position as board members, intentionally or unintentionally, directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, to intercede on behalf of their spouse or demand/expect any special favors from the Principal for their spouse.
- 8.4. No BT/SB members shall bring any issue related to their spouse (who is APA staff) or their children (who are APA students) to any board meeting for discussion or deliberations.
- 8.5. The SB shall ensure that APA administration and staff functions in an environment free of any intimidation, and are able to treat all students equally and fairly, without any fear of reprisal from any BT/SB member.

Article 9. Roles and Responsibilities:

- 9.1. The ICGA Board of Trustees

- 9.1.1. BT is responsible for setting the long-term strategic direction for the school, consistent with APA mission and vision, and making the strategy document available to the community, parents, and the school board.
 - 9.1.2. BT is responsible for approval of annual goals, performance measures, and targets submitted by the SB. They shall be consistent with the APA strategy and submitted by the SB each year in a timely manner, according to the APA School Board Master Schedule.
 - 9.1.3. BT shall approve the APA annual budget according to the APA School Board Master Schedule.
 - 9.1.4. BT delegates the responsibility and authority of school operation to the SB.
 - 9.1.5. BT holds SB accountable for successes and failures of APA. The BT is responsible for evaluating the SB chair performance relative to overall APA and SB performance. The SB chair is responsible for insuring that each SB member's performance is satisfactory and shall take actions necessary to rectify any problems or shortcomings.
- 9.2. The APA School Board
- 9.2.1. SB is responsible for carrying out its duties as outlined in its goals and objectives in section III of this charter.
 - 9.2.2. SB is responsible for maintaining operational oversight of the school and ensuring that APA is executing its annual and strategic plan successfully.
 - 9.2.3. SB shall establish policies and procedures that recognize and preserve the executive, administrative, and leadership prerogatives of the APA principal.
 - 9.2.4. SB shall not interfere with the day-to-day operations of the school. However, SB shall ensure that APA administration is performing its duties and is carrying out its responsibilities in accordance to school's vision, mission, and core values.
 - 9.2.5. SB is responsible for approval of goals, performance measures, targets, and reporting plans submitted by the school principal, and shall hold the principal accountable for the results.
 - 9.2.6. SB is responsible for submitting financial reports, progress reports and results to BT according to the APA School Board Master Schedule and the annual goals, measures, and targets approved by the BT.
 - 9.2.7. SB is responsible for preparing APA annual budget, working closely with APA principal, and submitting it for approval to BT according to the APA SB Master Schedule.

Article 10. School Board Operations

- 10.1.1. The SB Chair's role is to create a smooth communication channel between the BT and SB. SB members shall strive sincerely to build better relationships and work as a team with one another and the Principal.
- 10.1.2. The chair is the team leader of SB and is responsible for its direction, leadership, harmony, and close cooperation among all team members. As the team lead, SB chair shall treat all members with respect and fairness, motivate and lead them to deliver on SB commitments.
- 10.1.3. SB shall establish means and shall take all measures necessary to communicate with parents and community members, and to provide timely information and updates.
- 10.1.4. APA (school board and administration) shall operate with a transparent and an open records policy. APA shall make any and all records or information available within 15 working days of a written request from the BT. Except for confidential, personal, or sensitive records and information, APA (school board and administration) shall also respond, in a timely manner, to any reasonable request for information made by parents or community members.
- 10.1.5. SB shall make itself accessible to any parent, staff, or community member and respond to their requests in a timely and professional manner.
- 10.1.6. Each SB member shall be given a clear set of responsibilities by the SB Chair and be empowered to deliver on his/her assignments.
- 10.1.7. SB members shall retain independent judgment and voice opinions responsibly, professionally and in a fair manner. SB members shall maintain good relations with other board members, respect other board members' rights and opinions, and make no disparaging remarks, in or out of the board meeting, about other board members or the school. SB members shall make decision based on policies, procedures, facts, and data, and not respond or react to rumors, gossiping, or innuendo.
- 10.1.8. The SB shall develop and adopt "APA School Board Policy Handbook", which shall include policies and procedures that promote the effective operation of the school including clearly defined lines of authority, relationships, and accountability. The SB secretary shall be responsible for maintaining and updating the policy handbook.
- 10.1.9. The SB shall meet at least once a month. SB must keep minutes of its meetings and may conduct its proceedings as it considers appropriate . The board may allow members to take part in meetings by telephone or another form of communication. Decisions of the school board shall be recorded by the secretary in the meeting minutes.
- 10.1.10. Within itself, the SB shall conduct its affairs by decision-making procedures that employ the principle of Islamic Shura (consultation and consensus

building). In the event SB cannot reach consensus, the matter should be decided with a simple majority vote.

- 10.1.11. SB members shall support decisions of the SB, after honoring the right of individual members to express opposing viewpoints and vote their convictions.
- 10.1.12. The SB may choose to use the help of other members from the community in order to fulfill its mission.
- 10.1.13. SB shall not share any confidential, personnel, or otherwise sensitive data or information with anyone outside the ICGA board of trustees, school board or school administration.
- 10.1.14. The SB may also create temporary or standing committees to lead specific tasks, in accordance with SB goals and objectives. Each committee shall be given a clear charter by the SB and assigned a SB member as the sponsor of the committee.
- 10.1.15. The SB Secretary shall be responsible for scheduling the SB meetings, setting the agenda in consultation with all SB members, tracking SB action items, documenting and archiving meeting minutes, and all SB records and communication.
- 10.1.16. The SB secretary should also maintain the annual APA School Board Master Schedule and must ensure that all SB tasks are executed in a timely manner. The secretary must ensure that all communication to and from BT are conducted according to the Master Schedule and are documented in SB records.

Article 11. APA Staff Hiring, Evaluation, and Termination:

- 11.1. The SB shall be responsible for hiring, evaluation, and termination of the APA Principal. Hiring and termination of the APA Principal must be approved by the BT. Principal hiring and termination letter must be signed by SB chair and BT chair. The principal hiring committee shall be formed jointly by SB and BT.
- 11.2. APA School Board shall evaluate APA Principal performance in accordance with the job responsibilities and performance standards set in appendix II of this document. Except for standard #2 – Academic Learning and Excellence, APA SB shall be responsible for both objective and subjective evaluation of all other performance standards. For standard #2 – Academic Learning and Excellence, APA SB may hire an outside consultant with the right expertise to provide input to SB to help it perform effective and meaningful evaluation of the Principal as APA’s educational leader. In addition, SB shall use additional information such as Principal’s progress reports, student scores on standardized tests, stakeholder surveys, and any other relevant data made available to the board.

- 11.3. APA SB shall plan and conduct online surveys of APA stakeholders (including APA parents, staff, students, and community at large) to collect data on school performance and stakeholder satisfaction. The survey shall be conducted at least once a year in an anonymous manner and shall be based on surveys recommended by AdvancEd and/or SACS-CASI. SB shall take input and feedback from the Principal in survey design and questions. The data collected from the survey shall be made available to the Principal and may be used for school improvement and for Principal performance evaluation. Summary of the survey results shall be shared with APA stakeholders.
- 11.4. The principal shall be responsible for hiring, evaluation, and termination of the APA staff. All staff hiring and termination letters must be signed by the principal (or designee) and SB chair (or designee). Principal shall abide by staff handbook policies in all staffing matters. In case of involuntary or voluntary separation, APA SB may conduct exit interviews when teachers or staff leave school.
- 11.5. SB shall ensure that written policies and procedures are in place for such actions and that they are properly followed in each case. Refer to “APA Staff Handbook” for details related to hiring, performance evaluation, and termination of APA staff members.
- 11.6. The annual staff hiring committee shall be chaired by the principal or his/her designee. The hiring committee shall be empowered to execute the staff hiring plan.
- 11.7. If the principal is not available for any reason, the SB shall be responsible for all APA staff hiring, evaluation, and termination activities in a timely manner.
- 11.8. APA shall not provide financial and/or legal assistance for any immigration related matter, including but not limited to, work visas, labor authorization, permanent residence, or U.S. citizenship applications.

Article 12. School Finances

- 12.1. The school board shall have its own financial officer who reports to the SB. Duties of the SB financial officer shall include, but not limited to: preparing and managing the school budget, planning and executing fund raising events and activities, paying staff salaries, IRS payroll tax payments, and all other school expenses in a timely manner, maintaining all financial records and artifacts in an accurate and secure manner. The SB financial officer shall communicate with the ICGA financial officer in all financial audit matters.
- 12.2. The SB financial officer shall be responsible for submitting the school’s financial records for annual audit by a professional CPA, filing of quarterly and annual income tax forms, submitting quarterly reports to APA SB, and preparing and submitting an annual written report to SB.
- 12.3. APA SB shall adopt financial plans and strategies that will ensure adequate resources to meet the educational objectives as defined in APA mission and vision

- 12.4. The income from all regular sources shall be sufficient to support all regular school expenditures and SB shall ensure the continuity and stability of educational services.
- 12.5. The ICGA BT shall maintain adequate property and liability insurance or equivalent resources to protect its financial stability and administrative operations from protracted proceedings and claims for damage.
- 12.6. SB shall manage school finances within the annual budget approved by the BT. SB shall have the freedom to adjust income and expense categories so long as they do not increase the overall spending limit approved by the BT and do not add new spending categories or remove any of the approved spending categories. Any such adjustments to the budget shall be reported to the BT in the SB quarterly financial report.
- 12.7. Any changes to the BT approved budget that increase the overall spending limit approved by the BT, remove any of the approved spending categories, or add new spending categories, shall be presented to BT in writing and written approval shall be obtained before any such changes may be implemented. BT shall make its decision within 10 working days after receiving such written request from the SB.
- 12.8. The SB financial officer shall provide monthly income and expense report to SB and APA Principal, a quarterly financial report to the SB and Principal and an annual written financial report to the BT, SB, and APA Principal.
- 12.9. The accounts of the school shall be maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and shall be reviewed annually by an independent licensed accountant. The report of the annual review shall be kept in the school records.
- 12.10. SB financial officer shall have signature authority on all APA bank accounts, all online accounts, and full access privileges to any credit card machines or other financial instruments. In the absence of SB financial officer, the ICGA financial officer shall act as the SB backup financial officer.
- 12.11. The APA annual financial planning should start on July 1st of each year. APA fiscal year is calendar year.

Article 13. Communication and Reporting

- 13.1. In order to have a functional school system, the Board of Trustees (BT), the School Board (SB) and the school administrators shall work together and form a better system of cooperation and communication. Each body is required by this charter to focus on its primary responsibility, respect the authority and prerogative of others, and refrain from interfering with each other's areas of responsibility.
- 13.2. The reporting schedule among these bodies is outlined in the annual APA School Board Master Schedule (a sample schedule is proposed in appendix I). The APA School Board Master Schedule shall be agreed upon between SB and Principal before the end of the prior APA academic year and shall be followed strictly by all parties. Changes to the schedule shall be agreed to in advance and documented by the SB secretary.

13.3. School Board communication to the parents and the community

- 13.3.1. SB shall provide regular updates on school's academic and financial performance, plan, and status to parents and community members and post these on APA website.
- 13.3.2. SB shall adopt communications means such as, but not limited to, e-mails, newsletters, web site updates, parent and community meetings, etc.
- 13.3.3. In addition to regularly scheduled updates, SB shall also provide timely communication to the parents and community members about any extraordinary events or incidents.

13.4. Principal and School Board Communications

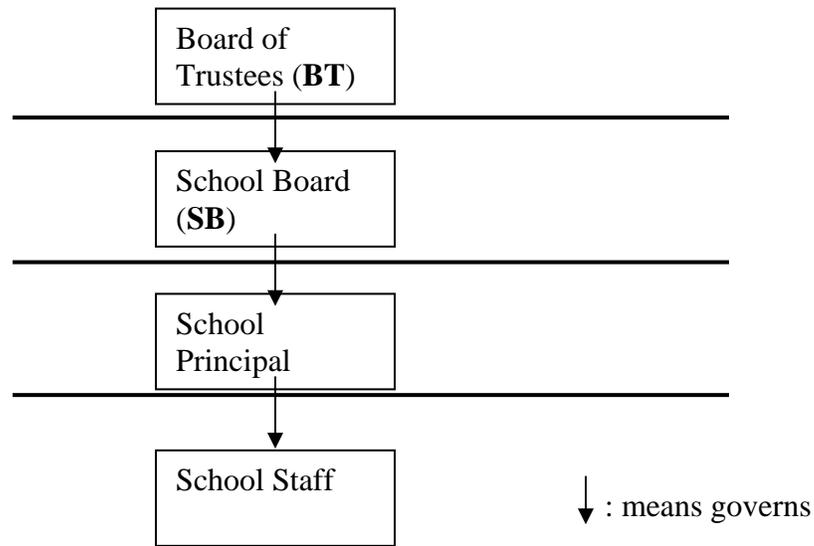
- 13.4.1. SB expects the Principal to keep the school board adequately informed through regular monthly meeting and SB shall hold the Principal accountable through an annual job performance evaluation. SB is responsible for developing school policies (parent/student/staff handbooks, financial policies, etc) while Principal is responsible for school operations based on these policies.
- 13.4.2. Prior to starting the annual campus planning process, the principal shall submit annual goals, objectives, and priorities to the SB for approval. Once approved by the school board, the principal shall form a school improvement team to prepare the annual school plan, a clear set of student performance goals, measures, and targets, and the assessment rubric for each measure. Once approved by the SB, this document shall become the basis for principal's reports, as well as mid-year and annual performance reviews.
- 13.4.3. The SB shall develop and maintain a "Principal Performance Expectations and Evaluation Standards" document for detailed reporting and evaluation criteria. See Appendix II.
- 13.4.4. The APA principal shall provide a brief oral update to SB each month, a written mid-year report, and a comprehensive annual school report in accordance with the APA School Board Master Schedule. SB shall provide constructive and timely feedback to the Principal, based on the written reports submitted to the SB.
- 13.4.5. The APA principal shall submit to the SB an estimated school budget for the next school year, in accordance with the APA Master Schedule. The school budget includes, but is not limited to, staffing plan, enrollment projections, operational expenses, school improvement projects, staff development needs, and any other expenses.

13.5. School Board and the ICGA Board of Trustees

- 13.5.1. The APA SB and ICGA BT shall hold two biannual joint meetings per agreed upon APA School Board Master Schedule.
 - 13.5.2. The SB shall provide mid-year financial report and an annual financial report to BT.
 - 13.5.3. The SB shall submit annual budget requests for BT approval, according to the APA School Board Master Schedule.
 - 13.5.4. The SB shall submit the annual performance report, and an annual plan for the next school year to the BT, according to the APA School Board Master Schedule.
 - 13.5.5. The SB shall submit to the BT its annual plan, a clear set of measurable goals and objectives, performance targets for each goal, and the assessment metric for each. The SB's annual report should provide results on each of these goals and targets. BT shall appraise SB performance based on this document and provide feedback for improvement.
- 13.6. The ICGA Board of Trustees to APA School Board
- 13.6.1. The BT shall provide timely feedback and approvals to SB reports, plans, and budgets, according the APA School Board Master Schedule.
 - 13.6.2. The BT shall provide its long term strategic plan and goals to the SB, parents, and the community. The APA strategic plans and goals shall be posted on ICGA and APA web sites.

Article 14. Dispute Escalation Procedure

14.1. The hierarchical and the institutional authorities shall be honored and respected by all members. Dispute escalation at APA is based on the governing hierarchy of the school as follows. All disputes shall be resolved based on written policies and procedures.



14.2. Based on the entities involved in a dispute¹, we distinguish the following cases:

14.2.1. ***Dispute between a staff member and another staff member:*** The school Principal intervenes to resolve the issue. The dispute should be resolved within a 10 business-day period. The principal's decision is considered final. In the event of escalation to the SB, it remains at the discretion of the SB whether or not to give any further consideration to the case.

14.2.2. ***Dispute between a staff member and the Principal:*** The principal has to resolve the issue within a 10 business-day period. If issue is not resolved, then escalation can be initiated by either party to the SB. The latter resolves the problem within 10 business days. The decision of the SB is considered final.

14.2.3. ***Dispute involves a school staff (including the Principal) and an outside entity (e.g., a parent).*** The involved staff is responsible to immediately

¹ By definition all disputes of concern here are those that involve school matters only. Disputes that have no direct or indirect impact on the school are out of scope of this procedure. Examples of disputes that can be considered related to school may include, but are not limited to, the following: school financials, curriculum, staff and students conducts, and day-to-day operations.

notify the Principal (in the event the Principal is not a party in the dispute). Resolution follows case 1.

- 14.2.4. ***Dispute involves the Principal and one or more SB members:*** The SB has 10 business days to resolve the issue. Its decision is final. In the event of escalation to the BT, it remains at the discretion of the BT whether or not to give any further consideration to the case.
 - 14.2.5. ***Dispute involves any entity (including school staff as well as from outside the school) and one or more SB members:*** This follows the escalation path as in the case #4.
 - 14.2.6. ***Dispute involves two or more SB members:*** The SB chair intervenes to resolve the issue. The dispute should be resolved within a 10 business-day period. The chair's decision is considered final. In the event of escalation to the BT, it remains at the discretion of the BT whether or not to give any further consideration to the case. In the event BT considers the dispute, their decision shall be considered final.
 - 14.2.7. ***Dispute involves one or more SB member and one or more BT members:*** The SB and BT collectively shall reconcile according to the Islamic principles of conflict resolution, e.g., mediation. If no resolution is reached, the BT members shall reach a decision on a proposed resolution based on a majority vote. However, the BT member(s) involved in the dispute are excluded from this voting process.
- 14.3. The entity responsible for resolving a dispute should hear from and interview all the parties involved. Problem resolution should be based on the guidelines defined by the relevant policy handbook or manual when applicable to the situation.

Article 15. Charter Amendment Procedure

- 15.1. The BT has the right to change, modify, and update this charter as it sees appropriate at anytime.
- 15.2. BT shall consult and seek input from SB and community; however BT reserves the right to make any changes it sees fit in the best interest of the school.
- 15.3. The BT shall hold charter review meeting during the fourth quarter of the APA academic calendar to discuss amendment requests and approve or disapprove the amendments no later than the start of the following school academic year.
- 15.4. The BT shall publish approved changes and post them on school's bulletin board and website within two weeks of document amendment.
- 15.5. This document shall be maintained and updates by the BT secretary and all approved changes shall be recorded in the "Document Change Record" section.

Appendix I. Sample APA School Board Master Schedule

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>January</u></p> <p>W2: Principal submits next year budget request, hiring and next year plan to SB</p> <p>W3: Principal submits 2Q report</p> <p>W4: SB submits midyear school report & Q2 financial report to BT</p> <p>W4: Second PC meeting</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>February</u></p> <p>W2: SB submits preliminary budget and next year plan to BT</p> <p>W2: Joint BT-SB meeting; review midyear report, next year budget, next year plan & BT goals</p> <p>W4: BT provides feedback on budget and plan to SB</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>March</u></p> <p>W2: SB-BT joint meeting to finalize budget, the hiring plan, and next year plan</p> <p>W4: Principal forms the hiring committee, gets SB approval of the committee, and starts the advertising</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>April</u></p> <p>W2: SB submits Q3 financial report to BT</p> <p>W2: Principal submits 3Q report to SB</p> <p>W3: SB conducts 1:1 parent meetings for each grade</p> <p>W4: SB conducts 1:1 staff meetings</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>May</u></p> <p>W1: Principal submits the staff annual performance appraisal to SB</p> <p>W2: SB reviews and finalizes staff appraisals and salary plan for next year</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>June</u></p> <p>W1: SB completes annual parents and staff satisfaction survey</p> <p>W4: Principal submits annual report to SB</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>July</u></p> <p>W2: SB completes the annual performance appraisal of the principal</p> <p>W4: SB submits Q4 and annual financial report, school annual report, annual performance appraisal of the principal, and next year Master Schedule to BT</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>August</u></p> <p>W2: Joint BT-SB meeting; review annual reports; agree on next year Master Schedule</p> <p>W4: BT releases the SB annual report for public distribution</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>September</u></p> <p>W2: First PC meeting and SB elections</p> <p>W4: SB meets with all SB committees and PTO officers to review their charters, goals, and plans</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>October</u></p> <p>W2: SB submits Q1 financial report to BT</p> <p>W2: BT provides annual goals and measures to SB</p> <p>W4: SB hosts staff appreciation lunch</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>November</u></p> <p>W1: Principal submits 1Q report to SB</p> <p>W2: SB conducts 1:1 parent meetings for each grade</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>December</u></p> <p>W1: Principal completes mid-year staff performance appraisals and submits report to SB</p> <p>W2: SB conducts 1:1 staff meetings</p> <p>W3: SB completes mid-year performance appraisal of the principal</p>

Appendix II. APA Principal Expectations and Performance Evaluation

Introduction

Establishing clear expectations and goals for the principal and performance evaluation process is a very important tool in the entire improvement effort of Austin Peace Academy. It defines expectations, enhances communication, prioritizes school goals and encourages the school board and board of trustees to focus their attention on the principal's role in improving achievement for all students at APA.

An objective, constructive, multi-modal measurements driven approach to principal performance review is particularly in order in these times of increased accountability and higher expectations. A process as important as this one should be guided by a set of ethics, values, and beliefs that support the work so both the principal and governing boards can operate with integrity. The following principles are offered as an ethical compass to guide this important work.

An effective performance review process is predicated on a spirit of providing feedback for growth, not on finding evidence of shortcomings. The purpose of this process is to improve performance, not prove incompetence.

APA Principal – General Expectations

This section describes the general expectations from the Austin Peace Academy's principal, set by the APA School Board. An effective APA principal is a model of Islamic ethics and behavior, strong educator, anchoring his/her work on central issues of Islamic Aqeeda and practice, learning, teaching, character development, and continuous school improvement. The combination of three concepts constitutes the foundation for positive improvement results:

1. Clear and measurable goals for student learning and Islamic character development
2. Regular collection, analysis, and reporting of performance and perception data
3. Meaningful teamwork and communication with all stake holders, partners, and all governing bodies

APA principal must lead APA through a goal-setting process in which student achievement data is collected and analyzed, improvement areas are identified, actions for change are initiated, results are measured and communicated to all stake holders and governing boards.

This process involves working collaboratively with staff, parents, and the governing boards (school board and board of trustees) to identify discrepancies between current and desired outcomes, to set and prioritize goals to help close the gap, to develop improvement and monitoring strategies aimed at accomplishing the goals, and to communicate goals and change efforts to the entire school community. APA principal must also ensure that staff development needs are identified in alignment with school improvement priorities and that these needs are addressed with appropriate professional learning opportunities.

Leadership

Five performance areas have been identified as the critical leadership skills APA principal need to effectively lead APA in improving student achievement.

1. Promoting collaborative problem solving, team building, and open communications
2. Collecting, analyzing, and using data to identify school needs
3. Using data to identify and plan for needed changes in the instructional program
4. Implementing and monitoring the school improvement plan
5. Using effective management and planning techniques to establish a clear focus on attaining student learning goals

These five areas must be demonstrated continuously throughout the school improvement process. The end product of this process is the school improvement plan, whereas the end goal for the process is improved student learning.

Core Beliefs

There are a number of critical beliefs which underlie APA principal's effectiveness in leading the process of improving student achievement. The APA principal must believe in, value, and be committed to:

- APA mission, beliefs, and vision of Islamic education, character development, and academic excellence
- Student Islamic character development and academic excellence as the fundamental purpose of APA education
- The proposition that all students can achieve high standards of learning
- Collaborative problem solving with staff, parents, and governing boards
- Ongoing collection and analysis of data
- Data-driven, objective, and policy based decision making
- Focus and alignment to achieve high standards and goals
- Doing the work required for high levels of personal and organization performance
- Team work and loyalty to the organizational structure

Knowledge

In order to demonstrate effective leadership in student's Islamic education and character development, it is highly desirable that the principal have knowledge and understanding of:

- Islamic values, character traits, morals, and manners expected from a young Muslim
- Behavior management skills
- Character development techniques
- Factors that influence shaping of a student's character
- Discipline techniques and developing responsible behavior in children
- Parent's and teacher's role in child's character development
- Establishing the right Islamic environment and expectations at the school campus
- Understanding of the environment and challenges that surround Muslim children in the US
- Understanding of needs and ways to develop a positive and constructive Muslim-American identity among students
- Best practices from established and successful Islamic schools in the US

In order to demonstrate effective leadership in improving student achievement and academic performance, the principal must have knowledge and understanding of:

- The relationship of assessment to improving student outcomes and strengthening instruction
- Information sources, data collection, and data analysis strategies
- The school improvement planning process
- TEKS standards, core learning goals, and curriculum guidelines
- Evaluation and assessment strategies
- Strategies for classroom teachers to monitor student understanding and progress
- Research-based and field tested best practices
- Collaborative problem solving and consensus-building
- Staff development standards
- Effective planning and management techniques
- Effective communication strategies
- Technology as a tool in organizing and analyzing data and in monitoring progress

APA Principal – Job Responsibilities and Performance Standards

The performance standards and indicators outlined here are intended to provide clarity and specificity about the skills, actions, and results a principal needs to demonstrate effective leadership in improving student achievement at Austin Peace Academy. The standards are listed in order of importance and priority but are all important to success of the school.

STANDARD #1 – Islamic Values and Character Development

APA principal is the role model and leader of the school who promotes, develops, articulates, and implements a vision of Islamic education, moral values, and strong character development that is aligned with and is consistent with the APA mission, vision, and core beliefs.

STANDARD #2 – Academic Learning and Excellence

APA principal is the educational leader of the school who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning, academic excellence, and social development.

STANDARD #3 – Continuous School Improvement

APA principal is an education leader who promotes the success of all students by leading the school through a goal-setting process in which student achievement data is collected and analyzed, improvement areas are identified, actions for change are initiated, results are measured and communicated to all stake holders.

STANDARD #4 – Effective Management and Staff Development

APA principal is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by providing effective management and planning of the school operations and resources for a safe, efficient and effective learning environment. APA principal formulates staff hiring, evaluation, and professional development plans, school policies and procedures in support of APA mission, vision, and beliefs and implements them in a consistent manner.

STANDARD #5 – Ethics, Integrity, and Respect for Organization

APA principal is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner. He/she collaborates with all ICGA governing bodies, promotes meaningful teaming, and demonstrates respect for decision making and loyalty to the organization.

STANDARD #6 – Stakeholder Relations, Communications, and Partnership

APA principal is an education leader who promotes the success of all students by communicating, teaming, and collaborating with parents, staff, community members, the school board, and the ICGA board of trustees; responding to diverse stake holder interests and needs; involves all stake holders in an open and collaborative manner in developing the annual campus plans.