



دائرة رأس الخيمة للمعرفة
RAS AL KHAIMAH
DEPARTMENT OF KNOWLEDGE

Schools Board of Governance Guidelines RAK Private Schools

2025



Law # 7 of the Executive List for Federal Law no. 28 of the year 1999 for private educational institutes.



English Translation

Article 7:

The license holder, partners, or members of the board of directors may not be permanently present inside the building of the educational or training institution during official working hours. They may not interfere in the administration's work in any way.

Objectives of This Presentation



The objectives of this document are to:

- Provide advise and guidance for how effective school governance across Private schools in the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah;
- Equip private educational institutions with an understanding of what constitutes effective school governance;
- Reinforce the importance of representation of views and feedback from parents, students and the community;
- Serve as a valuable resource to aid in the enhancement of school governance; and
- Stimulate self-analysis regarding present governance culture and procedures.

What is Governance?



- The mechanisms through which schools are directed and regulated are called governance.

Governance delineates the governing body's responsibilities and its role in establishing the school's values.

- This requires future-oriented planning and the protection of the school's reputation and values. In addition to governance over the schools' actions and decisions, it guarantees efficient human resources and sensible financial planning.
- **Core functions of the School Board of Governors**
 1. Set a strategic direction of the school within its vision, purpose, and values.
 2. Hold the school to account for its decisions and actions and for measuring the quality of outcomes.
 3. Oversee and ensure the integrity of the school's self-evaluation processes.
 4. Monitor, track, guide and support the school leadership in implementing the school improvement plan.

General Guidelines



- The school principal is not a member of the board. Rather, the principal, as **ex-officio**, will be required to provide the Board with important updates each meeting. The Board is responsible for holding the school leadership accountable and hence there is an obvious conflict of interest if the principal was also a member of the Board.
- The school **staff or anyone permanently present on school property may not be board members**.

They may be added as representatives.
- The Board must have a **secretary** to circulate the meeting agenda and take the minutes of meetings.
- The board must agree on the frequency of the meetings.

General Guidelines



- At RAK DOK, we suggest a minimum of 3 times per year as a Board, but a minimum of 3 for sub-committees. Some school Boards may meet monthly or quarterly, it all depends on the Board and school owners.
- It is recommended for the school's Board of Governance to consider consolidating sub-committees to enhance efficiency and effectiveness, such as merging HR committee and Executive committee (finance and operations) for streamlined oversight.
- Ideally, all Board members should serve on at least one sub-committee, and these can include:
 - Achievement of students
 - Student well-being and development
 - Curriculum, learning. And assessment
 - Inclusion
 - Quality evaluation against the unified framework
 - Compliance
 - Innovation and community partnerships,
 - Resources
 - Safeguarding
 - Principal assessment/performance appraisal
 - Discretionary budget
 - Complaints resolution
 - HR finance and Finance

Conflict of Interest



- Governors will act in the school's best interests, not as representatives of any group.
- Any information discussed and shared within the School Board of Governors **are confidential and remains the school's intellectual property**.
- During meetings, any member who feels a conflict of interest with any agenda item, for example, a parent governor discussing issues relevant to their child's particular year group, **must declare a conflict of interest at the beginning of the meeting** and, without any prejudice, leave the meeting while the item is being discussed.
- Often it is good practice for the Chairperson to ask the members at the beginning of the Board meeting if there are any conflicts of interest, or for these to be announced at any time throughout the meeting



Core Functions of the Board of Governance

- The creation and execution of **policies** that direct the administration and operation of the school.
- **Strategic Planning**: Choosing long-term goals and targets for the school and creating plans to reach them strategically.
- **Accountability**: Holding the school administration responsible for performance results and making sure that decision-making procedures are transparent are two aspects of accountability and transparency.
- **Financial oversight** includes examining and approving budgets, keeping an eye on financial results, and making sure that school resources are managed responsibly.
- **Recruitment**, selection, and performance evaluation of the headteacher/school principal, along with other important administrative staff members, comprise the hiring and assessment of school leadership.
- Community **Engagement** and Advocacy: Acting as a go-between for the community and the school, promoting the needs and goals of stakeholders, families, and students. Discussing parent feedback gathered through surveys and meetings is important for the Board to consider.
- **Compliance**: Ensuring that the school follows all applicable laws, rules, and moral principles. This includes following the guidelines on matters like inclusion, diversity, and equity.

Membership of a School Board of Governors



- **Chairman:** The elected or appointed leader of a board of directors or trustees that oversees school board governance and provides strategic direction.
- **Board Trustees/members :** People in charge of the school's management and strategic planning, making sure it complies with all the regulatory rules and academic requirements.
- **Parent Representatives:** People chosen or appointed to speak for parents' and families' interests within the school community.
- **School Administrators representative:** Important members of the school's administration, including the headmaster or principal, may be **ex-officio members** of the board and provide knowledge and perspectives on how schools are run.
- **Student Representatives:** Students nominated or elected to represent their peers' interests and viewpoints on the board and participate in decision-making procedures.
**Alternatively, student representatives could prepare and send student council decisions/suggestions to a Governor instead of being physically present.
- **Teacher Representatives:** Teachers chosen or elected to speak for the needs of staff members and teachers inside the school.
- Additionally, the school may include a **Health & Safety Representative** and an **Inclusion representative** to the board.
- **Board Secretary.**
- It is preferred that representatives change periodically.

How effective Governance is embedded within Performance Standard 6 from the Framework ...1/2



United Arab Emirates School Inspection Framework

6.4 Governance

Elements

6.4.1 Involvement of parents and other stakeholders and impact on decision-making

6.4.2 Ensuring accountability for the school's actions and outcomes

6.4.3 Influence on and responsibility for the school's performance

Brief descriptors

| Outstanding | Very Good | Good | Acceptable | Weak | Very Weak |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|
| 6.4.1 Involvement of parents and other stakeholders and impact on decision-making | | | | | |
| Governance includes wide representation from all stakeholders. The Governing Board, which includes the school's owner(s)*, consistently seeks and thoughtfully considers stakeholders' views and, consequently, gains comprehensive and accurate knowledge about the school. | Governance includes representation from almost all stakeholders. The Governing Board, which includes the school's owner(s)*, consistently seeks and considers stakeholders' views and, consequently, gains in-depth knowledge about the school. | Governance includes representation from most stakeholders. The Governing Board, which includes the school's owner(s)*, regularly seeks and considers stakeholders' views and, consequently, gains detailed knowledge about the school. | Governance includes representation from the majority of stakeholders. The Governing Board, which includes the school's owner(s)*, occasionally seeks stakeholders' views but gains only limited knowledge about the school. | Governance does not include representation from the majority of stakeholders. The Governing Board, which includes the school's owner(s)*, pays insufficient attention to the views of stakeholders, and, consequently, has insecure knowledge about the school. | Governance has very limited representation from stakeholders and rarely seeks their views or responds to concerns and suggestions. The Governing Board, including the owner(s)*, has a highly inaccurate view of the school's performance. |

How effective Governance is embedded within Performance Standard 6 from the Framework ...2/2



| Outstanding | Very Good | Good | Acceptable | Weak | Very Weak |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|
| 6.4.2 Ensuring accountability for the school's actions and outcomes | | | | | |
| The Governing Board systematically and very effectively monitors the school's actions and holds senior leaders fully accountable for the quality of the school's performance, the achievements and personal development of all students. It acts as a highly effective and constructive critic for the school. | The Governing Board systematically monitors the school's actions and holds senior leaders accountable for the quality of the school's performance, including the achievements and personal development of all students. It acts as a very effective constructive critic for the school. | The Governing Board regularly monitors the school's actions and holds senior leaders accountable for the quality of the school's performance, including the achievements and personal development of all students. | The Governing Board periodically monitors the school's actions and holds senior leaders accountable for the quality of the school's performance, including the achievements and personal development of all students. | The Governing Board does not hold senior leaders sufficiently accountable for the quality of the school's performance, including the achievements and personal development of all students. | The Governing Board fails to hold senior leaders to account for the quality of the school's performance, including the achievements and personal development of all students. |
| 6.4.3 Influence on and responsibility for the school's performance | | | | | |
| The Governing Board makes a significant contribution to the school's leadership and direction, based on ethical principles. The board ensures that the school is well staffed and very well resourced and that all statutory requirements are met. The Governing Board makes a significant and effective contribution to the overall performance of the school. | The Governing Board exerts a very positive influence on the school's leadership and direction, based on ethical principles. The Governing Board ensures that good staffing and resources are readily available to address weaknesses and that all statutory requirements are met. The Governing Board has a positive impact on the overall performance of the school. | The Governing Board exerts a positive influence on the school's leadership and direction, based on ethical principles. The Governing Board ensures that appropriate staffing and resources are available to address weaknesses and that all statutory requirements are met. The Governing Board has a direct impact on the overall performance of the school. | The Governing Board exerts some influence on the school's leadership and direction. The Governing Board ensures that resources are available to address key weaknesses and that all statutory requirements are met. The Governing Board has some impact on the overall performance of the school. | The Governing Board provides limited support to guide the school's leadership and direction. The Governing Board does not ensure that suitable staffing and resources are available to address weaknesses and not all statutory requirements are met. The school does not benefit from effective governance. | The Governing Board creates or fails to remove barriers that limit the development of the school. A significant number of statutory requirements are not met. |

**Inspectors of public schools should use this performance indicator to evaluate the effectiveness of any school body (for example, a School Management Council) that may influence decision-making and contribute to development planning.*

What does outstanding Governance look like in a school according to the UAE Inspection Framework?



- The school has a Governing Board, which includes the owner(s)* and is fully representative of the school community and the context in which it operates.
- There are effective processes in place to ensure that governance in the school reflects and responds sensitively to the views of all stakeholders.
- The Governing Board meets regularly to review the school's work.
- The meetings are fully minuted, and relevant information is distributed to stakeholders.
- Feedback from stakeholders, including parents, staff, and students, is a fundamental part of school decision-making. This leads to informed and responsive decision-making, helping to direct change and manage school resources efficiently.

Sample Board Agenda Meeting



1. Welcome, apologies, declaration of any Conflicts of Interest (Chair)
2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Chair)
3. Progress made against the actions from the previous quality evaluation (School inspection) (Principal)
4. School Improvement Update:
 - a. Review post-quality evaluation action plan and review of the school improvement plan targets - where are we on the recommendations against the last inspection?
 - b. How is the school improving the quality of learning and teaching? (Principal)
5. Student achievement data analysis update – including internal and external data (Principal)
6. Health and Safety/Safeguarding Update (Sub-committee chair or Principal)
7. Financial Review (Treasurer or Board Assigned Finance Representative)
8. Preparation for upcoming quality evaluation (Principal)
9. Support needed (Link improvement to learning) / Inclusion
10. Any other business

Date of next meeting (Secretary)

* The above agenda is not set, the school may add or remove any agenda items depending on the school priorities.

Sample Code of Conduct (To be signed by all Board members)



This code of conduct sets out the expectations and commitment required from all School Board of Governors (SGB) members for the SGB to properly carry out its role and responsibilities.

Commitment

- I acknowledge that accepting office as a member of the SGB involves the commitment of time and energy.
- I will make full efforts to attend all meetings but, where we cannot attend, explain why we are unable to when submitting apologies to the secretary.
- I will get to know the school very well and respond to opportunities to get involved in school-based activities where appropriate.
- I will identify individual and collective needs for training and development in the role of SGB governor and will undertake relevant training as appropriate.
- I accept that, in the interests of open sharing of information, our names will be published on the school's website and in the minutes of meetings, which will be made public to interested groups and individuals.

Confidentiality

- I will maintain our integrity when matters are deemed confidential, ensuring matters are not discussed anywhere other than in SGB meetings.
- I will not disclose confidential information we may become aware of whilst serving as SGB member.
- I will not seek to influence any SGB member outside of meetings to attempt to steer a decision in a particular direction.

Conflicts of interest

- I will always act in the best interests of the school, and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the SGB.
- Any information discussed and shared within the SGB remains the intellectual property of the school. Members, when they leave the SGB, will give any data, resources or information they have pertaining to the SGB to the Chair.
- During meetings any member who feels a conflict of interest with any agenda item, for example a parent governor discussing issues relevant to their child's particular year group, may declare a conflict of interest at the beginning of the meeting and, without any prejudice, leave the meeting whilst the item is being discussed.

Declaration

☐ I have read, understood, and agree to the SGB code of conduct, and to my role as SGB

SIGNED:

PRINT NAME:

DATE: