



NSNO BOARD GOVERNANCE GRANT PROTOCOL
Updated March 2009

Purpose

New Schools for New Orleans (NSNO) believes that effective charter school governance is essential for school success. While charter school leaders may come and go, it is the board that holds the charter in perpetuity. The dynamic environment of New Orleans requires that strong governance be maintained from the very beginning of a school's existence and be continued with each school year. To that end, NSNO recommends that all charter school boards actively engage in governance training.

NSNO provides full and partial sponsorships of board retreats (**Board Governance Grants**) in an effort to fulfill our vision: *Excellent public schools for every child in New Orleans*. NSNO seeks to help charter board members understand their vital roles in guiding their schools to close the achievement gap and reach academic excellence.

NSNO Board Governance Grant Requirements and Process

Charter boards wishing to apply for a NSNO Board Governance Grant to fund their board retreat should apply via the following process:

- The charter board chair will fill out a NSNO Board Governance Grant application at the following link: <http://nsnola.wufoo.com/forms/nsno-board-governance-grant-application/>.
- The application includes a Board Self Assessment, the results of which NSNO will use to make recommendations as to the feasibility of a board retreat. The assessment will be for internal use only and will remain confidential.
- As part of the application process, a NSNO staff member may attend/observe one or more meetings of the charter board prior to the retreat.
- After carefully reviewing the application and Board Self Assessment, NSNO will take one of the following courses:
 - Grant the application for full sponsorship;
 - Grant the application for partial sponsorship; or,
 - Not grant any sponsorship.
- If sponsorship is granted, NSNO will prepare a Board Governance Grant Letter of Agreement which will outline all terms and conditions of the grant and serve as a contract between NSNO and the charter school board.
- Board Governance Grants generally will cover the costs of retreat facilitators, space rental and refreshments only.
- If a grant applicant has not chosen a facilitator, NSNO will find an appropriate individual from our pool of governance consultants to facilitate the retreat.



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To maintain the integrity and transparency of the NSNO Board Governance Grant application process, NSNO notes the following:

- Board Governance Grants will range in amount.
- Board Governance Grants will sponsor retreats that focus on Academic Excellence.
- Schools may only apply for 1 (one) governance grant for 2008/2009 school year.

NSNO will use the following criteria as the basis for awarding Board Governance Grants:

1. Alignment with NSNO's vision of excellent public schools for every child in New Orleans.
2. Accuracy and depth of Board Self Assessment.
3. Effective planning of Board retreat goals focused on the Board's role in academic excellence.
4. Demonstrated need.
5. Board willingness to engage in activities to strengthen the board.

Please note: deadline to apply for a NSNO Board Governance Grant is June 1, 2009.