

**Association for Learning  
Environments (A4LE)  
Board of Directors  
Committee Handbook**

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## **Purpose**

Committees are the segment of an organization, which is the driving force to accomplish the organization's goals and plans. Measurement of the effectiveness of an organization can frequently be a result of effective goal-oriented and driven committees. The committees of the Board of Directors will assist in reducing time at monthly Board meetings, and can be used to suggest and report direction for overall Board of Directors and CEO responsibilities.

The purpose of the committees is to provide support to the Board of Directors and the organization, formulate plans to accomplish strategic goals, develop processes and continue to support the forward progress of A4LE. The committee meetings provide a venue to discuss details of the strategic plan, set committee goals to support the-plan and steps to accomplish goals within deadlines for the organization.

All members of the committees are volunteers and are not monetarily compensated for their time or efforts. Travel reimbursements are available as designated in Travel Reimbursement section of this handbook.

## **Structure**

Committees of the Board of Directors are structured to support the overall vision, mission and goals of the Association. By definition Committees are ongoing working groups addressing the goals of the Association. In addition to committees, Task Force groups may be established to address and solve a specific issue facing the Association and are relatively short-term working groups. For maximum effectiveness, committees and task forces must produce results to remain in being.

Each committee chair must be a member of the Board of Directors. Co-chairs and committee members do not necessarily have to be Board members, but should be drawn from the current active membership of A4LE. The exception being the Audit committee; where all members must be a member of the Board of Directors, but cannot consist of any member of the Executive Committee.

The Board of Directors and the CEO shall review the Committees each year and determine the relevance and necessity of each to the Association. In addition, a full review of the task forces within each committee aids in determining the significance of each to the overall mission of the organization. Each can be amended, altered or adjusted as necessary so that the committee(s) structure continues supporting the strategic plan, mission and goals of A4LE.

## Term of Service

Each member of a committee will complete a minimum three (3) year term of service to that committee from the day they begin service on that committee. The exception is the committee chair position, which must be held by a current member of the Board of Directors. If the term of the Board of Directors is expiring and that person is the committee chair, the Board of Directors must then nominate a replacement committee chairperson. The exiting chair may continue to sit on the committee, provided the member capacity of that committee has not been reached and they continue to meet the requirements for participating on the committee. Task Force members will service until the purpose of the task force is completed.

## Chair/Co-chair Appointment

Recommendations/nominations for the chair of each committee are determined by the Board of Directors (see next section). The appointed chair of each committee must be a current member of the Board of Directors. That chairperson will serve as the chair for the term of three (3) years or until their term on the Board of Directors has expired, whichever is less.

The co-chair position is determined by appointment by the chairperson or as a volunteer from the entire Committee membership, either is acceptable.

## Membership

A4LE Bylaws section 6.4 clause 2 states that the Board of Directors shall appoint membership and the chair of all committees. Qualifications for each Committee/Task Force vary; therefore, positions will be filled according to such qualifications and submitted to/by the Board of Directors for final appointment by the Executive Committee. Each committee must determine whether a need exists for establishment of sub committees in order to accomplish all duties and support the organization to its fullest. To establish a solid committee, the membership should have a reasonable and equitable representation from various regions and chapters, as well as be compiled of various educational field experience and employment backgrounds. Diverse skill sets are essential to the success of each committee.

It is essential that members have a clear view of the committee's goals and how they support the Association and that each member play an active role in the achievement of those goals. When necessary a **Call for Volunteers** will be issued each year and members may apply for committee membership by supplying some basic information, a statement of commitment to perform the work of the committee, and commitment to the time that service on a particular committee will require. From the pool of volunteers, the Executive Committee will appoint the members as vacancies arise. All applications for service on committees must be received at least 60 days prior to the appointment.

## Roles and Expectations

It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee, CEO and/or Chair of the Board of Directors to evaluate the accomplishments, progress and provide direction if needed to the Committees.

**Chair:** The chair is responsible for guiding the committee to accomplish their objectives and plans for the organization as it relates to the overall strategic direction. Meetings will be conducted in accordance to Robert's Rules of Order and/or A4LE policy. The committee chair sets the character for the committee, ensures the members have the necessary information and tools to accomplish the goals at hand and meets deadlines for accomplishments. Activities for the chair include assisting in the selection of committee members, creating the meeting agenda, encouraging participation of all members, enlisting the assistance of headquarter staff when necessary, delivering minutes to all members and delivering quarterly reports to the Board of Directors. Additionally, the chair will be responsible for assigning a member of the committee the duty of keeping minutes of all meetings. Minutes will include actions taken and assignments made, not "what was said" in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. Notes of conversation are the responsibility of each individual, as meetings will not be recorded.

**Co-chair:** This position is responsible to assist the chairperson in fulfilling duties of that position, act as chair in the absence of the chairperson and provide direction, support and assistance to the committee membership as needed.

**Committee Members:** Each committee member is responsible for engaging in conference call meetings, contributing to the objectives and progress of the duties of the committee. It is the policy of the Board of Directors to remove committee members who fail to perform the expected duties. A committee member may be removed from the committee because of: Negligence of committee duties and responsibilities; Failure to attend committee meetings regularly; Illegal activity as a committee member; Acting in any manner detrimental to A4LE. A committee member may be removed only by a 2/3-majority vote of all current Board of Director members, and the motion to remove will clearly state the cause for removal.

**Committee Member Participation Requirements-** It is the policy of the Board of Directors that committee members must regularly participate in conference call meetings in order to contribute to the work of the committee and keep a line of communication open to their respective region. If a committee member will be absent from all or part of any meeting/conference call, the committee member is expected to contact the Committee Chair or a member of A4LE staff (preferably the staff assigned to that committee or the region manager for the member's respective region) as soon as the need to be absent is known. If a committee member is absent from three conference calls within a calendar year, the Committee Chair may recommend the removal of the member from the committee to the Executive Committee. Upon removal of the member by the Executive Committee, the Region President/Chair will be contacted and asked to notify the member of their removal and the Region will appoint a replacement to fill the remainder of that committee member's term. When a committee member is absent from any conference call, the Committee Chair will contact the member and remind them of this meeting attendance policy.

**Designated Staff:** A designated staff contact will be responsible for assisting the committee chair and co-chair for scheduling of meetings/conference calls.

## **Conference Calls/Meetings**

In order to accomplish the mission, goals and objectives of the organization, committees need to communicate consistently. Committees shall meet at least once a month, more if necessary, to accomplish the objectives of the committee. The designated method of committee meetings is conference calling, due to the widespread demographics of the membership. Conference calls should be limited to one (1) hour if possible. Each committee will also have an established social media platform on which discussions, exchanges of ideas and information sharing can occur, thus reducing the need for formal meetings other than once a month.

Headquarters has arranged for conference calling capability for each of the committees. A designated A4LE staff member will coordinate with the chairperson scheduling of conference calls and the invitation of all members of the committee.

## **Committee Reports**

The chair of each committee will be responsible for reports describing the activities and accomplishments of the committee. Each committee will designate a member to take the minutes, and disseminate completed minutes each month to members of the committee, Chair of the Board and the CEO as well as any designated A4LE staff members.

Reports should be brief, but detailed to show what was discussed, the action items expected and the overall accomplishments of the committee. The minutes of all committees should reflect the members in attendance, members not in attendance, a brief description of discussion content, any action items to be completed with deadlines. Each committee will use a standard form of reporting minutes to headquarters and the Board of Directors.

Each committee chair will provide a quarterly report to the Board of Directors to ensure all Directors are aware of the efforts and progress of each committee.

## **Travel Reimbursement**

This section is adapted from the Board Travel section of the Board Policy. Please refer to Administration, Travel and Per Diem section of the Board Policy.

Generally, Board members will not incur expenses as a result of committee commitments. The travel commitments associated with some of the Standing Committees allow member reimbursements according to the reimbursement policy. Expenses incurred by members of the Board of Directors while conducting committee duties shall be reimbursed when authorized in advance by the CEO or the chair of the association, or at the express direction of the Board of Directors. The association will pay for reasonable

and substantiated expenses for travel, lodging and incidentals incurred in conjunction with travel requirements of a standing committee. No travel shall be conducted by any members of the standing committees without prior Board resolution and budget approval.

All approved reimbursements for travel are required to be submitted to headquarters within thirty (30) days of completion of any A4LE related travel. Claims submitted after that date, will not be reimbursed. In the event a member of the committee has a question regarding the reimbursable expenses, or how to treat an expense, he/she should speak with the CEO for clarification.

## **Board of Directors**

### **Committee & Descriptions**

Charter:

- a. Reasonable and equitable representation for all committees
- b. Rules of engagement- establish criteria and guidelines
- c. Committee chairs to be determined by the Executive Committee from nominations of the board
- d. All committee member terms are a minimum of three (3) years
- e. Responsible for meeting time, task and budget expectations for any project which requires financial or other resources

#### **1. Membership Committee**

In addition to other strategies for membership retention and growth, the Emerging Professional Initiative is to be treated by the Membership Committee as their top priority for 2016. The primary focus will be to develop a series of strategies to attract and retain members into the association that represent an emerging professional workforce in our industry.

#### **2. Innovation Committee**

Identify emerging industry trends, and serve as a “think tank” for the Board of Directors. The findings of the committee will contribute to the strategic direction of the association, as well as identify critical subject areas in which content can be developed and delivered to the industry, providing an added value to the membership.

#### **3. Content Steering Committee**

Guide and contribute to the educational content of the Association’s professional development. It will identify topics and issues that are at the forefront of the industry and recommend available resources that will contribute to the development of original association professional development

programs. This committee will work in tandem with other association committees focused on industry issues and professional development programs.

**4. SchoolsNEXT Committee**

Plan and execute the current SchoolsNEXT program in its current form for 2016. A work plan with complete timelines will be developed and submitted to the Board of Directors. The current design competition offers an opportunity to illustrate the kind of creativity that students bring to the planning and design process. The competition highlights the importance of well-planned, healthy, safe, sustainable and resilient schools that foster student and teacher achievement and enhance community vitality. The competition, currently open to middle school students, challenges student teams to design their learning environments to enhance learning, conserve resources, be environmentally responsive and engage the surrounding community.

**5. SchoolsNEXT Task Force**

Examine the feasibility of expanding the current SchoolsNEXT program beyond its current form. The expansion of the program would initially include a model for secondary level students. Strategic visioning would anticipate collegiate and primary programs in the distant future. The task force is to render a recommendation/plan to the Board of Directors.

**6. Global Organization Structure Task Force**

To address expanding the association's reach, globally. Presently the association operates as a predominately North America organization with two affiliates that serve in equal capacity on its governing board. In order to push past this limitation, the association needs to explore a governance model that leaves intact, the organization that operates in North America, yet embraces new horizons. Examine the feasibility and potential liabilities of being a broader global organization, versus maintaining the model in its current form.

**7. Guide Task Force**

Create a plan and process for replacing the current "Guide". Identify the form/media in which this content will be created, establish the association's core areas of content, identify the new product, identify a process to create the new content, and create a plan for continual updating of content.

**8. Annual Event Strategic Planning Task Force**

Conduct a comprehensive overview of our existing LearningSCAPES and other association programs, making recommendations for how these programs will function in the future (3-6 years) particularly on a global scale. Areas of examination and solution should include, but not be limited to: annual event, symposia/virtual programs, event throughout the organization, competition (both internal and external), and financial stakes.