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# Template for Advisory Board Agenda

In Chapter 1, you learned that having a strong advisory board to provide guidance and support for your program can be helpful. It is a good idea to create a process for each meeting, complete with a set of goals and key decision points to help focus the meeting.

**Directions:** Customize the template below and use it for each advisory board meeting. Having a consistent format to the agenda will help you keep your advisory group on track and increase your efficiency as a group.

## Tips for a Successful Meeting

* Start and end on time.
* Have a clear agenda and stick to it. Try not to get off on tangents or allow discussion to wander too far from the intended goals.
* Provide some kind of refreshments, even if they are just water or coffee. Food and beverages help people feel respected for their time commitment.
* Try to identify a nice meeting space. If your program has one, great. If not, see if a local business, a college or university, a partner non-profit, or a local foundation has a nice room you can use.
* Mix up the format during the meeting—have some presentations, some large group discussion, and some small group discussion.
* Keep the meeting under two hours. Anything longer and people lose focus.
* Pick meeting times that are agreeable to everyone. If you have families and youth on your board, be sure your meetings are after school, in the evening, or on weekends.
* If your members are from a variety of local organizations, they may want time to network at the beginning or end of the meeting. Consider offering food or coffee for 20–30 minutes at the beginning or end of the meeting.

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| [Program Name] Advisory Board Meeting |
| Agenda |
| [Date] – [Time] |
| **Meeting Goals*** Include three or four goals for the meeting. Any more will feel overwhelming and fewer may make the meeting feel unnecessary.
* Goals should be broad things you want to cover in the meeting. They might include things you want to inform your board about or key decisions that need to be made.
* Sample goals:
1. Share new discipline policy and get reactions/edits before disseminating to families
2. Determine date for spring gala fundraising event
3. Come to agreement on decision to expand program by an hour next school year
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| **[Start time]** | Introductions and Agenda Description*Everyone should introduce themselves, their role, and their organization at the first meeting. If you have revolving membership or guests who attend, it may be a good idea to do this every time. Consider some kind of icebreaker or opening activity each time. When you review the agenda, invite others to suggest additional topics that they would like to discuss.* |
| **[Start + 10 min]** | Meeting NormsEstablish or reiterate the rules for the meeting and group discussion.  |
| **[Time]** | Agenda Item 1Suggested advisory board topics include program development activities (such as visioning, creating a logic model), fundraising, partnership planning, and developing plans for continuous improvement. If you have specific stakeholder advisory boards (e.g., a family board), select topics in which they may have a particular interest or expertise to share.  |
| **[Time]** | Agenda Item 2Try to vary the format. Don’t simply have three large group discussions. You might break attendees into pairs to review the discipline policy and then come back together to discuss. Or you might have a short presentation on why you want to expand the program and then break into small group table discussions before coming together again to make a decision.  |
| **[Time]** | Additional Agenda Items  |
| **[Time]** | Closing and Next Steps Be sure to end the meeting on time and have some kind of closing activity—whether it is reviewing the final decisions that were made, talking about next steps, or simply asking everyone to reflect on the group process. Closure and reflection are important to any successful meeting. Be sure to use this time to confirm the time and location of the next meeting.  |
| **[End time]** | Adjourn |