

# The Board Head Partnership

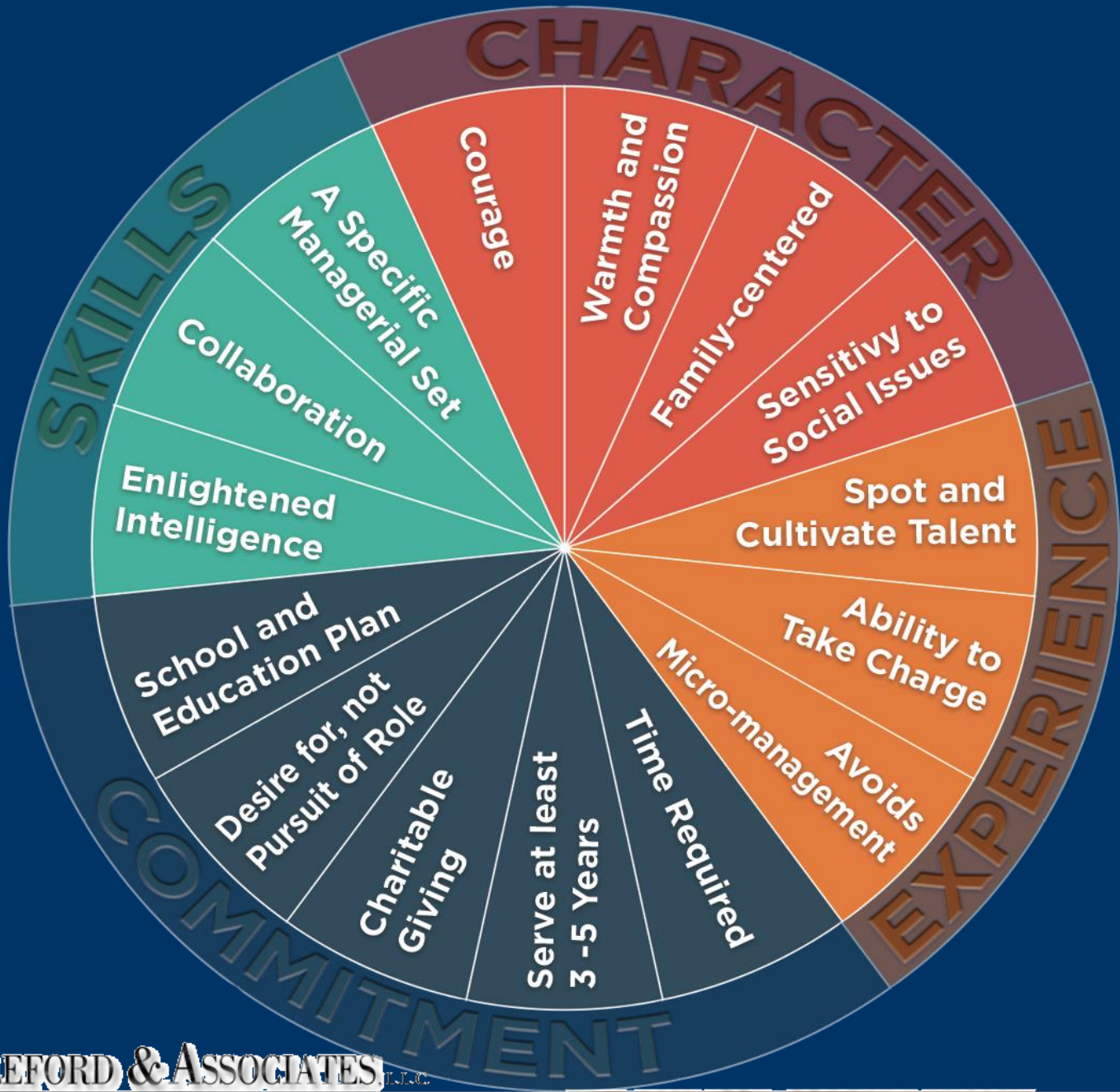
The Keys to Success

# Three Critical Partnerships

- The head of school and the board chair: 80% of governance issues are related to a poor relationship
- The head of school and each board member: The head needs to know and have political capital with each member
- The board chair and each board member: the chair's power to bring the board to support the head is crucial

# It All Starts with the Selection of the Board Chair

- There are 15 qualities that most heads of school seek in a board chair
- The ideal board chair will possess most of these traits and both the head and the rest of the board will agree upon the selection of this individual



# Building Connections (and no surprises)

## BOARD AND HEAD

- Chair has face to face meetings with the head
- Weekly
- One hour

## HEAD AND BOARD

- Meets 2 times/year
- Asks three questions:  
How am I doing?  
How are you feeling about your role as a board member?  
How are your children doing?

# Governance Rules

## BOARD

- Commits to an annual board governance workshop
- Requires attendance- no excuses

## HEAD

- Sends out a written update 10 days prior to each board meeting
- Gives a 10-15 minute report at each board meeting
- Reports on good news, bad news and probable issues

# Board Committees

## BOARD

- Limits Subcommittees to  
Executive  
Finance  
COT  
Buildings and Grounds  
Strategic Planning  
Development
- NO Education, Personnel

## HEAD

- Serves on the COT
- Participates in screening potential trustees
- Has a voice in chair selection

# Evaluation of the Head

## BOARD

- Evaluates head through ad hoc Head Support Committee
- Reviews head's contract and compensation package annually before January 1
- Types of evaluation methods to avoid!

## HEAD

- Responsive to board's questions about teacher compensation, evaluation and accountability: not defensive
- Responsive to board's questions about finances without allowing them to "get in the weeds"



# Input and Communications

## BOARD

- Does not wear the “parent hat”
- Does not breach confidentiality
- Does not micromanage
- Does not talk outside of the board room

## HEAD

- Allows for limited board input in selection of senior administrators
- Responsive appropriately to parents, the clients

# Boundaries and Channels

## BOARD

- Does not communicate directly with staff without going to head first
- Acts as one with no one trustee having authority in his/her own right

## HEAD

- Avoids showing favorites
- Avoids evaluating his/her spouse or partner
- Remembers that education or disciplinary issues may arise over his/her own children
- Avoids vacations or recruitment trips without the chair's approval

# Problematic Issues

- Executive sessions: Why not? Exceptions?
- Town Meetings: Why are they dangerous?
- Social media: How to, and who responds to negativity
- 360 Evaluation: Why is it inappropriate and risky in a school context?

# Landmines vs. Great Minds

- Landmines: 2 keys to Failure
  - The Star Trekker – to boldly go where no one has gone before
  - The Master Micro Manager – lovin' the details

# Landmines vs. Great Minds

- Great Minds: 2 keys to Success
  - Hats On – once a board member/head; always a board member/head (the hat never comes off)
  - Mutual Admiration Society Members – head and board members support one another (cheerleader not owner mentality)

# *Global Issues - Local Solutions*

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