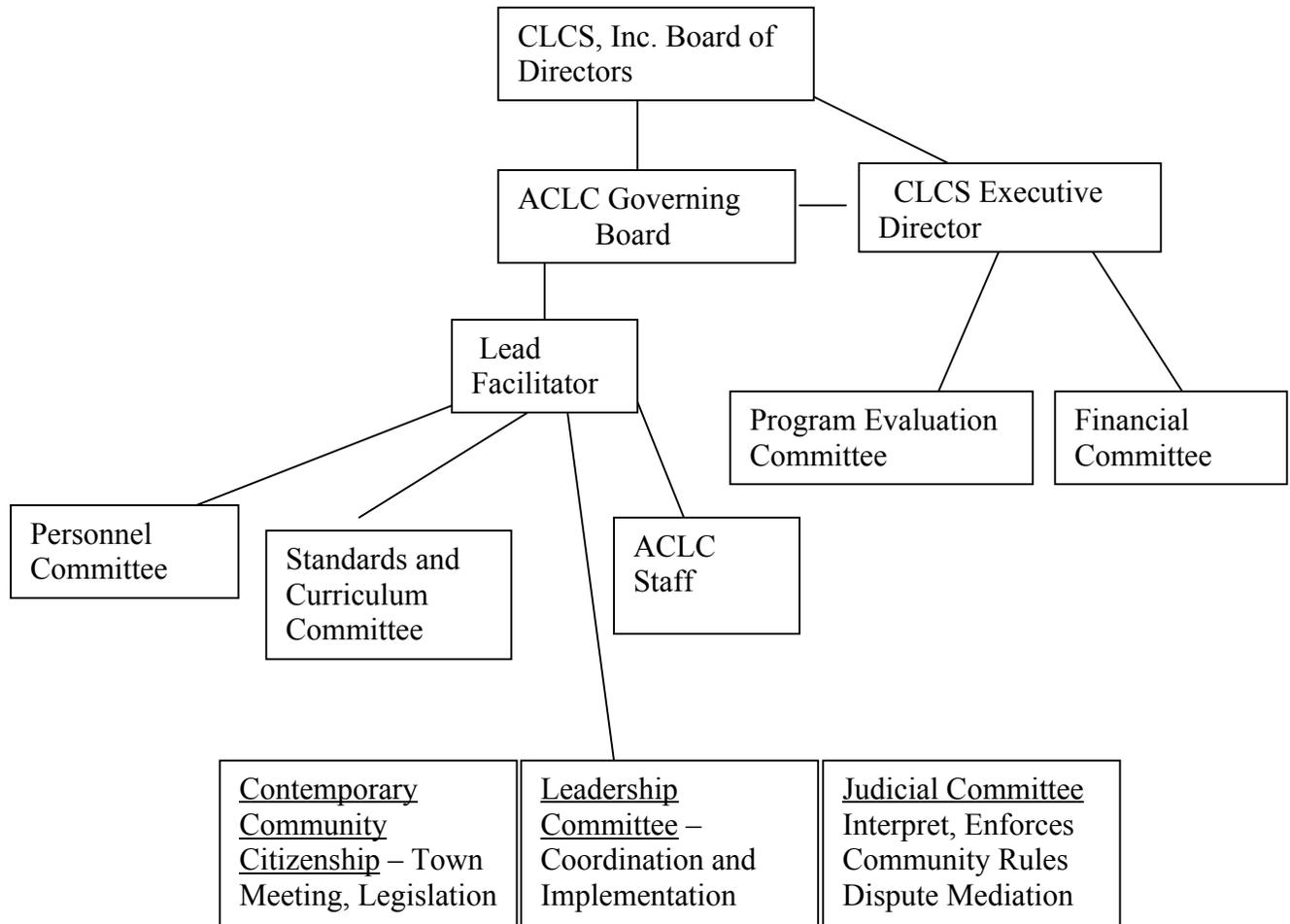


ACLCS Charter School Governance Structure



The ACLC charter school's method of governance substantially incorporates the learners, families and facilitators in a broad array of organizational functions – legislative, judicial and executive. This approach is totally congruent with the ACLC philosophy that the learning is experiential and incorporates not only the content but the process of the learning environment.

The ACLC Governing Board

The ACLC Governing Board will operate under the authority granted to it by the CLCS Board of Directors. Parents, learners and facilitators are all empowered at every level of ACLC governance as members of the governing board and all of the major committees (Finance, Personnel, Curriculum and Standards, and Program Evaluation). This is a truly unique governance structure for a charter school and has been in successful operation for twelve years at the ACLC.

ACLC Governing Board

Voting Members

2 Alameda Community Members

1 Lead Facilitator

2 Facilitators

2 Learners

2 Parents

The ACLC Governing Board acts as a governing body of the ACLC Charter School and is composed of nine voting members. It is charged with development and oversight of policy, budget, organizational development, strategic planning, standards and curriculum, program evaluation, and maintaining the vision of the ACLC Charter. All of this is reviewed and subject to CLCS Board of Directors approval. The Governing Board is comprised of three facilitators (the Lead Facilitator and two other facilitators determined by the ACLC facilitator staff), two elected learners from the whole body of learners (serving one year terms), two parents appointed by the learners and facilitators who are elected to the next year's board (serving alternating two year terms), and two members from the community appointed by the learners and facilitators who are elected to the next year's board. The CLCS Executive Director attends the ACLC Governing Board meetings and acts as the communications link between the CLCS Board of Directors, the ACLC Governing Board, and the chartering agency. All decisions of the Governing Board shall be made by a majority vote of its members unless otherwise specified by this Charter or in Bylaws adopted by CLCS. The CLCS Board of Directors and the ACLC Governing Board shall conduct its business in compliance with the Brown Act, Public Records Act, and both will have a standard Conflict of Interest Policy in their bylaws. No learner board members will be in attendance at closed session meetings where personal or confidential information is discussed related to school personnel or other learners.

The ACLC Governing Board is carefully designed to empower all stakeholders, parents, learners, facilitators, and community members, but the distribution of voting members is such that no individual group can create policy for the school without other groups supporting the policy. Facilitator members (paid staff) have only 3/9 of the votes. The ACLC Governing Board will restrict facilitators from voting on any issues related to their compensation or working conditions. This governance system has been in place at the ACLC for over nine years and has worked very well.

The ACLC Governing Board will have the knowledge and success in organizational leadership and public education, including professional experience relevant to the focus and mission of the educational program of the school to be successful. The ACLC will promote effective communication between parents and facilitators, the Lead Facilitator, and counselors by involving parents at all levels of the schools governance. Two parent representatives will serve on the ACLC Governing Board which is responsible for all major policy decisions related to the school. Parents will serve on the Financial, Program Evaluation, Curriculum and Standards, and Personnel Committees.

Selection of ACLC Governing Board Members

Each year the ACLC Lead Facilitator shall convene the ACLC facilitators (in the spring) and have them vote for the facilitator representatives on the governing board. There are no term-limits, facilitators may serve on the board as long as they have the support of the facilitators.

Each year the ACLC Leadership Facilitator along with the Leadership Class shall convene the ACLC learners (in the spring) and have them vote for the learner representatives on the governing board. The elected learners shall serve one- year terms. .

Once the facilitator and learner representatives are elected, the Lead Facilitator shall convene them and interview candidates and select the new parent representative and 2 community member representatives if there is a vacancy. There are no term limits for community members; they may serve on the board as long as they have the support of the board. Parents shall serve staggered 2 year terms.

Governing Board Scope of Authority and Responsibility

The ACLC Governing Board meets monthly or more often as needed and is charged with overall policy-making affecting all areas of the ACLC Charter School. The CLCS Board delegates the Governing Board with deciding these issues:

- Graduation Standards, as long as they meet minimum chartering agency standards
- Budget proposals subject to CLCS approval
- Strategic planning for ACLC academic program subject to CLCS approval
- Day to day facilities issues

Parents, facilitators, learners and community members all play a role in representing their stakeholders on major school policies, but they are also required by law to always vote in the best interest of the school. The Governing Board will use school data to establish, evaluate, and improve the education program and school policies. Data will include, but is not limited to, test scores and parent, learner, and facilitator satisfaction surveys.

The Lead Facilitator works with the Leadership Committee Facilitator to oversee the three learner bodies that are charged with the primary functions of governance: legislation (Contemporary Community Citizenship); judicial (Judicial Committee); and executive

(Leadership). These bodies are vested with authority and provide the venue for youth empowerment and leadership within the school.

Training for ACLC Governing Board Members

ACLC will contract with the California Charter Schools Association (“CCSA”), the Charter Schools Development Center (“CSDC”), the National Charter Schools Institute (“NCSI”), or Middleton Young and Minney, LLC to secure appropriate training related to the Brown Act.

ACLC Committees Overseen by Lead Facilitator and CLCS Executive Director

Each year the CLCS Executive Director shall convene and chair an ACLC Financial Committee whose membership shall be constructed to include parents, facilitators and learners. The committee will work to develop the budget, monitor the budget and monitor other financial activities under the direction of the Executive Director. Each month the Financial Committee shall make a report to the CLCS Board of Directors and ACLC Governing Board and make financial recommendations as necessary. The Executive Director will be responsible for setting up a purchase order system for all purchases with EdTec, ACLC’s business services management organization. Internal financial controls will be established.

Each year the CLCS Executive Director shall consult with the facilitators and appoint another facilitator to chair the ACLC Program Evaluation Committee and supervise their work. The Program Evaluation committee membership shall be constructed so that there are parent, learner, and facilitator representatives. The committee will work to develop the Annual Report, WASC accreditation report, and conduct the annual parent and learner surveys. Each month the Program Evaluation Committee shall make a report to the Governing Board and make recommendations as necessary.

Each year the Lead Facilitator shall convene and chair a Personnel Committee whose membership shall be constructed so that there are parent, learner, and facilitator representatives. The committee shall conduct the annual learner survey to evaluate staff and this information will be considered during yearly facilitator evaluations. Under the direction of the Lead Facilitator, the Personnel Committee shall conduct personnel interviews as directed by CLCS Board policy on hiring. Under the direction of the Lead Facilitator, the Personnel Committee shall carry out the personnel evaluation agreement.

Each year the Lead Facilitator shall consult with the facilitators and appoint another facilitator to chair the Curriculum and Standards Committee and supervise its work. The Curriculum and Standards Committee membership shall be constructed so that there are parent, learner, and facilitator representatives. The committee will collect and document all course outlines for compliance with California State University standards and UC a-g requirements. They will also do appropriate WASC work and evaluate new courses before being submitted to the board for approval. Each month the Curriculum and Standards Committee shall make a report to the Governing Board and make recommendations as necessary.

The Financial Committee, Personnel Committee, Curriculum and Standards Committee, and Program Evaluation Committee all operate under the oversight of the Lead Facilitator and CLCS Executive Director. The committees make recommendations on policy that are reviewed and approved by the ACLC Governing Board.

Day to Day Operational Governance

The ACLC Lead Facilitator is responsible for the day to day operation of the school and makes all necessary decisions to provide a safe and constructive learning environment. As an educational leader, the Lead Facilitator seeks to empower the learners to take control of their educational experience through the Contemporary Community Citizenship class, the Leadership class, and the Judicial Committee.

The governance of the ACLC Charter School is uniquely constituted to maximize the role of the learners in self-management and governance at the 6-12 level. We deeply involve learners in governance because our school is comprised of students who reach that time in their lives when self-determination within a guiding system of law and community relationships is much more important to learn than a system that is devised and imposed by adults – whether they be parents or educators.

However, because no community has full self-determination and must be subjected to the laws of the broader community – whether that be state, national or international law – we make sure that our learners understand that their self-determination, while real, is limited by the regulations and laws that govern the larger community of which we are part of.

Contemporary Community Citizenship (CCC)

The CCC is comprised of the entire community of learners. The CCC elects the two learners to the ACLC Governing Board. Learners at the ACLC are not passive bystanders; they are integrated into the highest levels of decision making.

The ACLC CCC shall meet weekly. This group will meet weekly and will be charged with being the primary communication matrix of the school. This means that the entire group of learners is regularly present and is provided an opportunity to discuss ongoing issues of importance to the school – from issues as mundane as noise levels and cleanliness to issues such as how money is spent in the educational program. In addition to these communication and process issues, the CCC is responsible for legislative action – that is, for making, discussing and voting on formal proposals that relate to the daily operations of the school. This includes the creation and amendment of the Rule Book – that is, the document which clarifies the rules and code of conduct for the entire ACLC Charter School community, including learners, facilitators, parents, and community visitors. Many of these actions may be within the purview of the CCC and will not require any review or approval by the Governing Board. However, issues which reflect a change in basic mission, philosophy, budget and personnel matters will require review and approval by the CLCS Board of Directors before they take effect. It is important to note that, although some actions of the CCC may require the approval of other bodies, the bulk of the decision-making processes related to self-management is in the hands of the community of learners. In this way the learners of ACLC are being empowered to establish the operational rules of their learning community and to make decisions about the use of some resources (e.g.,

purchase of specific equipment, use of funding for field trips, etc.) that are within the purview of the learning community. The CCC also conducts annual surveys that evaluate the facilitators, the academic program, the Leadership Committee and the operation of the school and makes recommendations for change in operational practices. The CCC is the focus for the annual Learner Convention, an opportunity for the entire community to review the operations of the year and make changes to the ACLC Rulebook.

Judicial Committee (Learner Disciplinary Policies)

The Judicial Committee (JC) for students in grades 6-12 is comprised of five learners who are elected by the learners and one facilitator elected by his/her peers. They meet four times each week to consider issues related to infringement of rules codified in the Rule Book. The Rule Book has been developed by the ACLC's CCC during the past fourteen years and will serve as the foundation document for ACLC, to be revised and updated on a regular basis by the ACLC CCC (base document, ACLC rulebook, included in Appendix D).

The Judicial Committee is responsible for enforcing the rules of the school by hearing cases submitted by learners and facilitators and deciding on appropriate consequences to specific actions. The JC also mediates disputes and assists parties who are engaged in some type of conflict to find common ground so that they can move forward in a cooperative manner. This role is particularly important since, generally, after some form of dispute the parties will remain in the same learning community and will interact regularly in some way.

The JC is a particularly important part of the governance of the school since it places the responsibility for self-management clearly with the learners.

Leadership Committee

The Leadership Committee is a class in which students in grades 6-12 may enroll that takes on the executive functions of the community of learners. The ACLC will seek to have 25-40 of our learners involved in the Leadership Committee.

This group will meet three times each week and work very closely with the leadership facilitator who is appointed by the ACLC Lead Facilitator. Leadership is primarily charged with implementing proposals passed by the CCC. This may include codifying recommended changes in the Rule Book, promulgating and enforcing rules in the community, coordinating center activities, supporting the smooth operation of day-to-day affairs of the community, and coordinating and facilitating the annual Learner Convention. Many functions such as coordinating field trips, CCC meetings, notification of scheduling changes, and other facilitative and communication roles are best accomplished by Leadership because they provide opportunities for students to engage in self-management and organization of their own learning community.

Leadership in many ways gives learners extensive experience in management and facilitation of operations and mitigates the necessity of hiring support staff to perform these functions. This maintains operations of the school on a cost-effective basis and provides meaningful roles and experience for learners. This is one of the many ways in which ACLC Charter will use its resources to better accomplish learning objectives and to empower learners.

Decision-making Process

The ACLC Charter School will work to achieve consensus in making decisions. However, if consensus is not possible in a reasonable timeframe, the various decision-making groups will vote and a simple majority will rule unless otherwise specified by this Charter or through Bylaws adopted by the CLCS Governing Board. This procedure can be modified in the future as determined by the CLCS Governing Board.

Parent Participation

The ACLC will promote effective communication between parents and facilitators, the Lead Facilitator, and counselors by involving parents in two parent driven organizations, the Creative Community Education Foundation and the Parent Asset Committee. Parent involvement will be crucial to the operation of ACLC. In 2001, the ACLC parent community created a 501(c)(3), the Creative Community Education Foundation (CCEF), to support the vision of ACLC. The CCEF will welcome parents from ACLC and work to support and fundraise for ACLC. Also, parents will serve on the school's Governing Board, governing committees, the CCEF Board of Directors, and the Parent Asset Committee (PAC). A new PAC will be formed specifically for ACLC to organize the parents to provide leadership for lunch programs, new parent mentoring, volunteer tutoring, planning the graduation event, support for sports teams and other extra curricular activities and field trip programs. Parents will also serve on the WASC Focus on Learning Committees.

Additionally, the school will hold an annual Parent Convention to solicit parent voice and input. Families of experienced learners at ACLC will offer mentoring to new learner families and a variety of parent taught or sponsored courses and workshops will be offered after school, such as UC college application workshops, art enrichment programs, etc. Parents will also assist in lunchtime supervision so that the ACLC community room may remain open throughout the day. Parents will convene regularly in both formal and informal meetings to share information and discuss their learners' progress toward achieving the ACLC vision.

