



## **Corlears School Board Of Trustees: Board Member Role Description**

For over 50 years, Corlears School has fostered an inclusive environment that creates a love of learning and promotes service to community, both in and out of the classroom. Through our curriculum and our broader activities, we aim to give students the tools to create the world they want to see. With a unique educational model focused on the youngest learners from age two through 10, Corlears is able to draw exceptional faculty, whose commitment to professional growth and development continues with the school's active support. Each year, we graduate students who know themselves as learners and as people, and who are aware of their place in their community.

We strive to foster change-makers, and our long-standing social justice and identity curriculum is where the work starts. For us, this work is not a reaction to the world around us; it is core to who we are. As children grow, their ability to notice, question, and understand identity, diversity, justice, and action deepens. Corlears's community matches the diversity of New York City, drawing students from every borough. We provide a higher level of financial support than most independent schools.

As we look to the future, we seek ways in which we can further engage with our broader community and neighborhood. Specifically, initiatives beyond our curriculum include attracting more families from all socioeconomic backgrounds, and amplifying our faculty expertise in the wider world. Corlears has always been an innovator in education and will continue to be so in the future.

### **The Board of Trustees**

The Corlears Board of Trustees (Board) actively leads the organization towards fulfilling its vision of building a vibrant diverse school that graduates students who will make a positive difference in the world, and creating a community that works toward that positive difference *today*. The Board vets and approves Corlears's strategic direction, manages risks, cultivates financial and other support, and selects and evaluates the Head of School. Board members are expected to give both time and financial resources (there is no minimum requirement) and to help generate support from their networks. Members are also responsible for helping to identify and recruit new Board members.

Ideal Qualities of Corlears Trustees:

- Actively promote the schools values and mission
- Dedicate time and energy to develop the school's strategy
- Provide functional expertise towards the effective operation of the school
- Participate in Board conversations honestly and constructively

- Value the school's mission to support students who are economically, racially, and ethnically diverse, as well as those coming from diverse family structures
- Possess a high level of cultural competency that adds to the board's ability to view issues through multiple perspectives
- Solicit financial and volunteer support to promote advancement of the school
- Are good listeners
- Maintain confidentiality and separate the Board role from any other role in the community (e.g., parent)

*General Responsibilities and Powers of the Board of Trustees:*

- Support Corlears's mission and vision: Understand and demonstrate a commitment to Corlears's mission and vision. Promote Corlears among families, friends, business associates, and clients, as well as funders, government agencies, and the public.
- Protect and support Corlears's financial interests: Secure funding for Corlears and cultivate benefactors. Review and approve the annual budget. Exercise financial diligence. Review significant third party agreements, including any debt obligations of the school. Oversee the annual audit. Invest personally in Corlears.
- Support the Head of School, Administrative Team, and Faculty: Hire and guide the Head of School. Support and be knowledgeable of the Head's activities in carrying out Corlears programs and work. Through Board and committee engagement, establish priorities and policies related to Corlears's strategic direction and finances.
- Support governance: Develop and continually renew the Board through cultivating, recruiting, orienting, and mentoring new Board members and engaging new partners and community members.

*Additional Details*

- Terms: Renewable three-year term
- Pledge or give to the annual fund before Dec. 31
- Attend and participate in as many Board meetings (approximately seven) as possible
- Actively participate in at least one Committee
- Attend all board and community Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion events

## **Corlears School Board Of Trustees: Committee Descriptions**

### ***Executive Committee***

The Executive Committee consists of the Chair, the Vice-Chair, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Head of School and up to three additional Trustees that shall have been designated by the Chair and approved by the Board.

### ***Governance Committee***

The Governance Committee oversees governance policies and practices. Additionally it identifies, cultivates, and nominates prospective Trustees. It is also responsible for the annual Head of the School evaluation.

Attributes of a Governance Committee member:

- Strong sense of propriety and appreciation of a Board's fiduciary duty
- Broad knowledge of the community for purposes of recruiting new trustees
- Familiarity with legal requirements for Boards is a plus
- Some background in review processes is also a plus

### ***Advancement Committee***

The Advancement Committee is responsible for considering and recommending school-wide policies and practices concerning fundraising initiatives, enrollment management, and internal and external communications.

Attributes of an Advancement Committee member:

- An active community member who is willing to engage other parents and stakeholders
- Comfortable asking other community members to join them in giving
- Willing to engage their peers on the Board
- Has a vision for an overarching communications strategy
- Can be a strategic advisor to a broad range of staff
- Marketing, development, or PR experience is a plus

### ***Finance Committee***

The Finance Committee monitors and supervises the financial affairs of the Corporation and consults with the Head of School in preparation of the annual budget. It is also responsible for reviewing the liability insurance covering the school, its Trustees, officers, employees and volunteers.

Attributes of a Finance Committee member:

- General comfort with numbers
- Practical, commercial instincts
- Ability to balance the school's financial needs with one's own interests
- Supporting financial strategies that aid in retention and admissions
- Familiarity with financing structures and ability to interact with the bank are pluses
- Understanding of non-profit financing is also a plus

***Audit Committee***

The Audit Committee is responsible for overseeing the accounting and financial reporting processes of the corporation and the audit of its financial statements. The committee meets with the auditor independent of school management.

***Partnership for Equity and Inclusion Task Force***

The Partnership for Equity and Inclusion Task Force reviews school policies and governance to further the School's mission as relates to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). It also works across the other committees to assure all Board work has a DEI lens.

Attributes of a Partnership for Equity and Inclusion Task Force member:

- Strong commitment to social justice
- Comfortable talking about topics that can often make others uncomfortable
- Willingness to question fellow Board members about DEI topics in committee work
- Open to pursuing additional DEI training beyond what Board members receive or is available to the broader Corlears community
- Experience implementing DEI approaches in other organizations is a plus