



A Community Collaborative for Safe Children and Strong Families

CHARTER

Introduction

We recognize that too many families are facing challenging conditions that can lead to stress and circumstances that put them at risk for child abuse and neglect. We know not all families have what they need to thrive. We recognize racial and gender injustice exists at every level of our society from our individual biases to our policies and institutions. We understand that child abuse and neglect is often rooted in oppression, and that poverty, inaccessibility, and lack of resources are major barriers for families to succeed. We recognize to build a strong community, we must support families through a holistic, preventative approach to ensure all families thrive and have the opportunities they need to raise healthy and safe children free from neglect and abuse.

Article I: Our Mission

The mission of the Collaborative is to support families through a prevention network of connected community resources to ensure all families have the opportunities they need to raise healthy and thriving children.

Article II: The Purpose of This Charter

The Charter serves as an internal guidebook establishing procedures on how the Lancaster Connected collaborative intends to operate moving forward. Changes to the Charter can be made as needed by a vote of 70% of the members present or voting electronically. Notice regarding any proposed changes to the Charter should be sent out via email at least ten (10) business days prior to any vote.

Article III: The Governance Board

Section 1: General Powers

Lancaster Connected does not currently exist as an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, but rather is created as a community collaborative serving in an advisory capacity to United Way of Lincoln and Lancaster County who serves as the fiscal agent. In that capacity, United Way of Lincoln and Lancaster County will prepare, monitor and manage the annual budget, disburse funds as approved, sign any contracts, grant applications and awards, and other documents as necessary.

Section 2: Roles and Responsibilities of the Governance Board

- To support the vision and mission of the collaborative;
- To offer expertise to help ensure the success of the collaborative in meeting our mission;
- To provide overall direction to the collaborative;
- To ensure partner agencies, funders, business leaders, schools, faith-based communities and people with lived experience have a seat at the table and a voice in decision making;
- To share data and important information required for the design of sustainable services;
- To identify resources and funding to support the growth of the collaborative;
- To communicate the vision and mission of the collaborative and promote awareness of our efforts throughout the community; and
- To be passionate about prevention and actively engage in the work of the collaborative in order to foster and facilitate meaningful change in our community.

Section 3: Number, Tenure, Attendance Requirements and Qualifications

The Governance Board shall consist of no less than 15 nor more than 25 members including the following officers – the Chair, the Vice-Chair, and the Secretary.

The members of the Governance Board shall be approved by a majority vote of the members present or voting electronically at the annual meeting to be held in January. Newly elected members to the Governance Board who have not served before shall serve an initial one-year term. At the conclusion of the initial one-year term, members of the Governance Board may serve an additional three year term. Their terms shall be staggered so that at the time of each annual meeting, the terms of approximately one-third of all members of the Governance Board shall expire. Members who have actively served for three years on the Governance

Board may elect to extend their term for an additional three-years as approved by a majority vote of the members present or voting electronically.

Each member of the Governance Board shall attend and actively participate in at least two-thirds or 66% of the bimonthly meetings per calendar year. For example, attending and actively participating in four (4) of the scheduled six (6) meetings currently scheduled. The calendar year is defined as January to December.

Lancaster Connected values the voice of parents, caregivers and youth as we work together to build a prevention network of community services that will have real impact for families, children and youth. To that end, at least 20% of the Governance Board members shall be people with lived experience. A person with lived experience is defined as someone who has lived (or is currently living) with the issues the collaborative is focusing on and who have insight to offer about the system as it is experienced by consumers. They will have:

- Expertise that doesn't come from training or formal education;
- Knowledge from an experience with an issue or challenge;
- Direct experience with a system, process or issue, or trying to engage with a resource; and
- Awareness of what works, what doesn't work and what resources (formal or informal) are available in the community.

Lancaster Connected believes people with lived experience deserve the opportunity to be heard and to actively contribute to all decisions of the collaborative as we move forward together. There is no expectation that people with lived experience openly share their history with the Governance Board, but instead inform the coordinator for the collaborative that they are speaking and representing through a lens of lived experience, and only share what they are comfortable in sharing. The Governance Board will continually recruit, onboard, and support people with lived experience, as well as train all members on the value of their voice.

Lancaster Connected further believes that we are best able to do the work of the collaborative effectively and with authenticity when we understand and embrace the importance of:

- Diversity of viewpoints that come from different life experiences and cultural backgrounds that only serve to strengthen our decision-making;
- A culture of inclusion that ensure all members bring their unique perspectives, identity, and life experience to their board service; and
- An awareness of how systemic inequities have affected members of our community for generations that can then enable us to avoid blind spots that

can lead to flawed strategies, while also creating powerful opportunities to deepen our impact and relevance.

Section 4: Regular and Annual Meetings

An annual meeting of the Governance Board shall be held at a time and day in the month of January of each calendar year and at a location designated by the Executive Committee.

Regular meetings of the Governance Board are held bi-monthly (every other month) at a time and day in March, May, July, September, November of each calendar year and at a location designated by the Executive Committee.

Notice of these meetings, including an agenda, shall be sent to all members of the Governance Board via email no less than ten (10) days prior to the meeting date.

Section 5: Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Governance Board may be called by or at the request of the Chair or any two members. The person or persons authorized to call special meetings may fix the time and location for any special meeting. Notice of any special meeting of the Governance Board, including an agenda, shall be given at least three (3) days in advance of the meeting via email.

Section 6: Quorum

The presence, in person of a majority of current members of the Governance Board shall be necessary at any meeting to constitute a quorum to transact business. The act of a majority of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Governance Board, unless that act of a greater number is required by this Charter.

Section 7: Forfeiture

Any member of the Governance Board who fails to meet the attendance requirements as outlined in Section 3 shall automatically forfeit his or her seat. The Secretary shall notify the member in writing that his or her seat has been declared vacant and the Governance Board may proceed to fill the vacancy.

Section 8: Compensation

Members of the Governance Board are not compensated for their service, with the exception of people with lived experience who participate in a Governance Board meeting, or a meeting of a standing committee, ad hoc committee or work group, may be compensated for their time at \$30.00 per hour either through a gift card of their choice or through cash reimbursement not to exceed \$600 annually. An

invoice for reimbursement must be submitted to the coordinator for the Collaborative by the 10th of every month.

Article IV: Officers

Section 1: Roles and Responsibilities

The officers of the Governance Board shall be the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Ex-Officio who serve as the Executive Committee. The officers shall be elected by the Governance Board at the annual meeting held in January and serve for a term not to exceed two (2) years, except the Ex-Officio who serves as a permanent member.

It shall be the duty of the Chair to:

- Work with the United Way Coordinator to establish the agenda for the Governance Board meetings;
- Preside at all meetings of the Governance Board; and
- Facilitate all meetings with neutrality and keep the agenda flowing.

It shall be the duty of the Co-Chair to:

- Perform duties in absence of the Chair;
- Take on assignments as requested by the Chair; and
- Participate in setting the agenda for the Governance Board meetings.

It shall be the duty of the Secretary to:

- Record minutes of the Governance Board meetings;
- Submit the minutes to the Coordinator within ten (10) days of the meeting for distribution;
- Monitor attendance and notify the Executive Committee when a member has forfeited their position on the Governance Board; and
- Participate in setting the agenda for the Governance Board meetings.

If the Secretary is not present for a Governance Board meeting, the Chair or Co-Chair shall designate any member present to act as Secretary.

Section 2: The Role of the Coordinator

It shall be the duty of the Ex-Officio to:

- Serve as Coordinator for the Collaborative;
- Work with the Executive Committee to establish the agenda for the Governance Board meetings;
- Work with the Executive Committee to establish charters for standing committees, ad hoc committees and work groups as needed;

- Attend standing committee, ad hoc committee and work group meetings to facilitate communication and ensure they stay focused on the goals and objectives set forth by the Governance Board;
- Distribute the agenda, minutes and other documents to Governance Board members;
- Represent United Way as fiscal backbone;
- Promote the collaborative through active outreach and ongoing dialogue with community partners;
- Represent the collaborative in various state-wide initiatives;
- Prepare, monitor and manage the annual budget to assist the collaborative in their work; and
- Pursue funding opportunities by preparing and submitting grant applications.

The Ex-Officio, who serves as Coordinator for the collaborative, is an employee of United Way of Lincoln and Lancaster County. United Way hires and provides regular supervision and support, conducts performance reviews and determines salary and benefits for the Coordinator and consults with the Governance Board as needed. The Ex-Officio is not a voting member of the Governance Board and serves in an advisory capacity only.

Section 3: Election of Officers

The election of the officers shall be held at the annual meeting in January. Officers elected will serve a term of two years, commencing at the next meeting following the annual meeting.

The Nominating Committee shall submit at the meeting prior to the annual meeting the names of those persons for the respective offices of the Governance Board. Nominations may also be received from the floor after the report of the Nominating Committee.

Section 4: Vacancies

The Nominating Committee shall also be responsible for nominating persons to fill vacancies of which occur between annual meetings, including those of officers. Nominations shall be sent in writing to members of the Governance Board at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which the election will be held. The persons so elected shall hold membership or office for the unexpired term in respect of which such vacancy occurred.

Article V: Committees

Section 1: Committee Formation

Standing Committees

The Governance Board may create standing committees as needed and appoint the committee chair. The committee chair should be a member of the Governance Board. A standing committee is considered to be a permanent part of the collaborative structure. They are charged with performing particular functions that are essential to the operation of the collaborative and are based largely on the identified priority areas. Standing committees are expected to keep records of their activities in the form of minutes shared with the Governance Board. Although members of the standing committees change accordingly, and include individuals who are not part of the Governance Board, the purpose of the committee and its functions and duties generally do not change.

Standing committees for Lancaster Connected include:

- Executive Committee
- Nominating Committee
- Crisis Stabilization and Support
- Early Childhood Supports
- Family Support and Basic Needs
- Trauma Informed Community
- Communication and Marketing

Work Groups

Work Groups as Part of Standing Committee

A standing committee may also have a work group that is appointed by the chair of the standing committee to work on a particular project. For example, the Crisis Stabilization and Support standing committee has a number of different work groups such as crisis response beds, organizational structure, and behavioral health supports. Each work group is tasked with specific targeted outcomes and may or may not be time-limited in nature.

Ad Hoc Groups

Ad hoc groups are created by the Governance Board to perform a specific task(s) and cease to exist when the task(s) is completed and a final report-out is conducted. Examples of Ad hoc groups for Lancaster Connected include:

- Soliciting the opinions of people with lived experience on priority areas for the collaborative
- Revisiting and updating the Strategic Plan
- Creating a campaign strategy for April Child Abuse Awareness Month
- Revising and updating the Charter

Section 2: Expectations and Outcomes

Whenever, a standing committee, work group or ad hoc group is established, the Executive Committee shall create a written document that outlines:

- The purpose;
- The membership;
- Expected results; and
- Timeline for completion and/or reporting

Section 3: Executive Committee

The three officers, and the ex-officio, serve as the members of the Executive Committee. Except for the power to amend the Charter, the Executive Committee shall have all the powers and authority of the Governance Board in the intervals between meetings, and is subject to the direction and control of the full Governance Board.

Section 4: Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee convenes in September to recruit and select new members for the Governance Board, as existing members rotate off. They also put together a slate of officers to be voted on by the Governance Board every two years. The Nominating Committee should advance their recommendations at the annual meeting in January for final vote of the Governance Board. The Nominating Committee may be called upon throughout the year to fill vacancies in board membership, including officers. The Nominating Committee shall consist of at least three (3) and no more than five (5) members of the Governance Board as appointed by the Executive Committee.

Article VI: Conflict of Interest

Any duality of interest or possible conflict on the part of any member of the Governance Board shall be disclosed to the Chair and made a matter of record. Any member having duality or possible conflict of interest shall not vote or use her/his influence on the matter in question. The minutes shall reflect such disclosure and abstention from voting. The foregoing shall not be used to prevent a member from

briefly stating her/his position on a matter, nor from answering pertinent questions from other members.

Article VII: Rules of Order and Voting

All meetings shall follow Roberts Rules of Order and voting on items will occur at the in-person meeting unless quorum is not met, in which case electronic (email) votes will be obtained. A quorum represents one more than half of all Governance Board members. In order for an action to be taken, the motion must be approved by 70% of the members present or voting electronically.

The Governance Board Charter for Lancaster Connected are hereby approved and adopted by the Governance Board effective this 30 day of March 2023.