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February 22, 2021

Doug Scott
Board Chair
Community Strategies, Inc.
1900 NW Expressway, Floor R3
50 Penn Place
Oklahoma City, OK 73118

Dear Doug,

Thank you for your interest in partnering with [Education Board Partners](#) (EBP) to provide governance support to the board of Community Strategies. Based on our recent conversation, I have drafted a proposed scope of work for you to consider and share with your board.

I know the Community Strategies board has invested tremendous time and energy in governing this rapidly growing organization. We respect the board's commitment to strengthening its governance, exercising tighter oversight of the organization's financial health, ensuring strong oversight of the school operator, including regularly evaluating the chief executive, monitoring student performance, ensuring a fair and reasonable management contract is in place at all times, and insisting on sound operational oversight. As we discussed, it is now time for this organization to put in place an independently recruited governing board to ensure that the interests of students, families, and the public are front and center in all decisions. While many nonprofit organizations begin with a "friends and family" board, that construct is no longer relevant for this organization, and has created an untenable level of concern about the ability of the board to exercise strong oversight.

We are well-positioned to provide support, resources, and advice for strengthening your board. Our experience with hundreds of boards in the education space will enable us to provide customized, targeted, and relevant support that will help you reboot the way this board governs, establish strong norms of engagement that will elevate the board's culture and effectiveness, and provide the leadership and support this organization needs.

Our work is strongly grounded in equity and accountability. We are a team of former educators who believe strongly that every family deserves good choices for where to send their children to school, and every child needs access to a great school. We appreciate Community Strategies' work to provide that for thousands of Oklahoma students and families. We would welcome the opportunity to work with the board to ensure that the

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governing board of this organization is focused on accountability, transparency, school quality, equitable access to education, and upholding the public's trust in its public schools. I hope to have the chance to help you strengthen the governing board Community Strategies needs to continue to succeed, grow, and thrive for many years to come.

Best,

Carrie Irvin
CEO and Co-Founder

Proposed Scope of Work

Board Assessment

EBP will administer a diagnostic survey to the full board that will assess strengths, opportunities for growth, and areas for improvement. EBP's diagnostic assessment is aligned with governance best practices based on our research and experience working with nonprofit boards across the country. This process will include:

- Online survey completed by all board members and organization leader
- Interviews with board members and the authorizer
- Preparation of report on current governance strengths and challenges, and recommendations for improvements

Proposed Outcomes:

- The board has a clear understanding of its strengths and challenges to date.
- The board votes to approve EBP-recommended changes.

Recruitment Support

EBP will provide strategic recruitment support to the board, with the goal of adding new members with relevant skills and experience, moving this organization beyond the "friends and family" board stage common to young organizations and bringing in independently recruited board members.

We will begin by assessing current board composition, reviewing board assessment data, and developing a strategic board composition matrix to guide recruiting of new members. At the same time, we will establish a statewide Recruiting Advisory Council to nominate

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potential board members with relevant skills and experience during this time of board transition and rebuilding. This Council, the members of which will be appointed by EBP after consulting with the authorizers, state education officials, charter support organizations, the current board chair, and key stakeholders, will have sole authority to nominate board members.

New board members must be voted onto the board by a majority of the current board. The board retains authority to select new board members, all of whom will come from the pool of candidates nominated by the Council, as of the date of this contract. Current board members will need to be renominated by the Council to continue serving on the board.

We will provide support in the following ways:

- Develop a strategic board composition matrix that includes recruiting priorities and criteria for nominating and selecting new members
- Working with the Recruiting Advisory Council, develop and execute a broad and robust recruiting outreach strategy with clear recruiting goals; the Council will develop a list of at least 25 prospective board members.
- Oversee outreach to board candidates who match strategic board needs, providing the board with background information (including candidate bio and resume), and pitching this board opportunity to each candidate
- Facilitating board-candidate introduction process
- Providing guidance and tools on an effective selection and onboarding process for new members

Proposed Outcomes:

- The board adds **up to 7** new board members with high priority skills, relevant experience, diverse backgrounds, and mission-aligned perspectives.
- All board members (current and new) sign a Board Member Agreement (BMA) each year. The board chair determines each year whether each board member has fulfilled the expectations in the BMA.

Support Establishing Strong Governance Practices, Structures, and Processes

Through coaching, tools/templates, and training, EBP will support the Community Strategies board with the following work to ensure strong governance moving forward:

- Onboarding new members
- Training all boards members on roles and responsibilities

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- Setting up committee structure
- Setting clear goals (6 month and one year) with metrics to measure progress to those goals
- Putting in place a system to monitor progress to goals monthly
- Putting in place a dashboard that shows academic, financial, and operational health of the organization

Proposed Outcomes:

- **75%** of the recommendations in the board diagnostic report will be accomplished as a result of the coaching
- Board members report clear understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Authorizer reports clear and proactive communication from board about financial and academic health of the organization
- 6 month goals are achieved; annual goals set
- The board has a functioning committee structure, a board officer succession plan, and an annual calendar.

Support with Conducting a Review of Organizational Structure

Through coaching and facilitation, EBP will help the Community Strategies board clarify and articulate the management and accountability structure of the organization, including:

- Initiating an independent review of the management contract with Epic Charter Schools and making any recommended changes or revisions, including instituting clear performance benchmarks for academic, financial, and operational health of the organization
- Discussing the structure of the current charters held by the board
- Reviewing the relationship with the two authorizers
- Establishing clear accountability structures between and roles and responsibilities of:
 - The Community Strategies, Inc. board
 - The superintendent
 - The management company leadership
 - The Statewide Virtual Charter School Board
 - Rose State College

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Consulting with the Authorizing Board

EBP will consult at least quarterly with the authorizers to ensure clear alignment around performance of the Community Strategies board and the organization moving forward.

Duration

We propose a **two-year** contract beginning on **March 1, 2021**.

Expectations

Quarterly Monitoring

- Each quarter, we will have a formal check-in with the board chair to review progress towards program outcomes. At the end of the first month of work, we will provide a template for these check-ins.
- If at any of these quarterly check-ins, we determine that the board is not acting in accordance with the terms in this agreement, EBP has the right to terminate the contract.

Communications

- Given the high profile of the issues facing this board, and the record of media attention, EBP must approve any communications, press releases, statements, or other messages about this work.
- If incorrect information about this work or EBP appears in the media in any way, Community Strategies will issue a retraction or otherwise correct the public record.

Values

- EBP's values are deeply important to us. We respectfully request that the members of the board review our values and agree that we will operate in accordance with these values, and that if the board requests us to take any actions or participate in any work that is not aligned with these values, we will terminate the contract.

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Our Core Values



Achieve Impact / Our work is only worth doing if it measurably improves quality and equity in public education. We see ourselves as part of a vibrant ecosystem working to close the opportunity gap.



Create Community / People are the core of our work. We build deep, authentic relationships, grounded in trust, that enable learning and change. We help people see and solve problems, work together, and make schools great for all students.



Deepen Expertise / We are students and we are teachers. We reflect on and learn from our failures and successes. Our lived experience influences our work. We strive to get better and leverage learning and opportunities to do better.



Be Courageous / We act boldly and speak truth, even when difficult, because the future of students depends on it. We acknowledge and strive to see our blind spots and those of others and call them out.



Embrace Humanity / In everyone, we recognize and embrace diverse perspectives, talents, experiences, and boundaries. We anchor our actions in respect, understanding, empathy and affirmation.

Cost

The cost of this scope of work over two years will be \$125,000.

Payment Schedule:

March 15, 2021	\$75,000
July 15, 2021	\$25,000
January 15, 2022	\$15,000
September 15, 2022	\$10,000