

## Advisory Board

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*Design and Architecture Senior High School  
Miami, Florida*

**D**esign and Architecture Senior High recruited approximately 25 business owners, educators, school staff, and specialists in design fields to serve on a school Advisory Board. The board met monthly to enhance the school's programs, bringing them up to date with current design industry standards and providing students with exciting internship opportunities.

At a preliminary meeting, administrators, faculty, and community members discussed how to create an advisory board focused on supporting the school's mission and programs. The board set up committees to support individual school programs. Other committees formed to address issues such as public relations, internships, and fundraising. The school's principal sent out communications about the Advisory Board to teachers, students, parents, and businesses.

The principal and board members reviewed the group's effectiveness at the end of the year. They found that students benefited from the system of networking and internships in their fields of study created by business owners on the board. Community members on the board also aided the school by donating \$500 for school equipment and supplies. Representatives from the school's PTSA attended Advisory Board meetings, and students were invited to discuss issues of importance at the school. As one teacher noticed, "It's great to know that all of us can work together to help the kids." By collaborating to improve the school, all stakeholders felt a sense of accomplishment.

Balancing the independence of the board and the organizational limitations of the

school district proved somewhat challenging. The principal provided strong leadership so that the goals of the Advisory Board aligned with the school's goals.

The board, referred to by the principal as "an essential component to the success of our programs," will continue to meet, and improvements will be made to ensure that all board members have the time and commitment necessary to work effectively toward school improvement.

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