



Arkansas Environmental Education Association

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF BEFORE APPLYING FOR THE AEEA BOARD

AEEA is a small organization with a working Board of Directors. Board service is a commitment of your time, energy, and expertise. Board members must be members of AEEA and believe in the mission of the organization, but Board members do not have to be practitioners of environmental education. Board members can bring a variety of other skills and expertise to the organization.

Key qualities of an engaged and successful Board member:

~ Ability to: listen, analyze, think clearly and creatively, work well with people individually and in a group.

~ Willingness to: prepare for and attend board and committee meetings, ask questions, take responsibility and follow through on a given assignment, contribute personal resources in a generous way according to circumstances, open doors in the community, evaluate oneself.

~ Skills and experience to: cultivate and solicit funds, cultivate and recruit board members and other volunteers, read and understand financial statements, and learn more about the programs of AEEA.

~ Possession of: honesty; sensitivity to and tolerance for differing views; a friendly, responsive, and patient approach; community-building skills; personal integrity; a developed sense of values; concern for AEEA's organizational development; and a sense of humor.

Is AEEA the right cause and organization for me?

Approach this decision as if you were planning to make a major donation: you would probably begin by thinking of areas where you have strong feelings—perhaps care for the elderly, or civil rights, or the environment. After settling on a subject area, ask yourself whether you truly feel strongly about the type of work that the organization does and the people it serves.

Can I work with the AEEA Board at this particular stage in its development?

As an organization grows and changes, board service looks different at different times. AEEA is embarking on updates to its strategic plan and policies and procedures. This will be a time of growth and change. Is this the right time for you to serve in our organization ?

What can I, and what will I contribute to AEEA?

What skills, contacts, and perspectives do I have that will be useful to this organization? Consider first what you bring to the table, and then, whether you are willing to give that to the organization. Ask yourself: do I believe in this organization enough to introduce my colleagues to it? Can I make a commitment to attending at least 75% of the meetings? Can I volunteer with other board members on occasional Saturdays, if needed? Would I feel comfortable having my name on their letterhead or on their brochure?

What do I want to gain from serving on the AEEA Board?

The final question is one that potential candidates should ask themselves and one that active Board members should periodically re-examine during their Board service. A good match between an individual and a board can benefit both the person and the organization. Board members who plan and ask for what they want in the board will contribute more as well as gain more.