

No amount
of strategy
and planning
can overcome
a lack of trust.



Photo courtesy of Wendi Poole at H. E. Butt Foundation

■ by Ed McDowell

Questions of Trust

Choosing to serve on the board of a Christian camp and conference center is a sacred trust. About 7 million people are expected to put their trust in a CCCA member camp in 2024. The board is ultimately responsible for the integrity of the camp for every person. Every board member should know the answers to the following important questions.

- Does the camp have a board-approved statement of faith that is used as the underlying foundation for decision-making, policy and practice? It is increasingly important that a camp is clear about the faith and beliefs that guide the work. This helps communicate what you believe and gives backing to practices and policies designed to accomplish the camp's mission.
- Does the camp board have a strong culture of trust? No amount of strategy and planning can overcome a lack of trust. Likewise, when trust is strong, there is a greater capacity for creativity and growth. Trust also provides strength to navigate difficult moments.
- Is there a board-approved set of expectations for board members? One of the most common reasons a board member steps down is because there is not a clear understanding of what is expected of them. A clear set of expectations describes the commitment to faith and agreement with the mission, governance, volunteer, participant and giving responsibilities. It is best if this is updated by the board every year, followed by individual commitments from each board member to fulfill these commitments together.
- Is there a clear set of board-approved policies that describe how to handle new opportunities, minimize risk and safeguard relationships? Good policy provides direction and boundaries for effective ministry over a long time. Is the camp in compliance with these board-approved policies?
- Does the board have a responsible strategy for sustainable ministry over time? The long-term health and viability of the camp rests with the board. Taking time to develop a thoughtful plan for organizational health creates capacity for health, growth and increased mission impact.

If you have clear and solid answers to the five questions above, you are well on your way to being part of a thriving board.

If you aren't sure of the answer to the questions above, look at what CCCA's Thriving Boards initiative has to offer:

- Free Excellence in Training Webinars and RoundTable conversations
- A free board assessment with the option of a one-hour review with a Thriving Boards coach
- Other free resources on important board topics

For in-depth board training and coaching, consider registering for the Thriving Boards Cohort Nov 8–9, 2024. Space is limited for this training, so sign up early. Get all the details and access free resources at www.ccca.org/go/board2. ■



Ed McDowell is the CEO of Warm Beach Camp Ministries (Stanwood, Washington). He also coaches and consults in the areas of board leadership and development with the goal of bringing fresh perspective to perplexing situations. He leads the Thriving Board strategic initiative for CCCA, with the goal of helping every board understand they are a spiritual community called by God to steward/govern a piece of God's kingdom work on earth. He and his wife, Bev, live on Camano Island, Washington, where they live out their life mission statement: To give our lives away for the cause of Jesus Christ to as many people as possible. You can email him at emcdowell@warmbeach.com.