AITKEN COLLEGE

Information for Prospective Board and Board Committee Members

aitken
COLLEGE
In Mind and Spirit

CONTENTS

Introduction

Vision, Mission, Aims, Values

Aitken College Board Governance

Skills and Experience

Benefits for Board and Board Committee Members

Pathways to Board and Board Committees

Further Information

Appendix A: Expression of Interest Form

INTRODUCTION

Aitken College is an open entry, co-educational, independent school in Greenvale, Victoria.

Associated with the Uniting Church in Australia, Aitken College promotes and supports students to achieve their personal best with a focus on learning, good citizenship, wellbeing, problem solving and critical thinking. The College prides itself in providing students with a set of values to become responsible members of our global world.

College values include Compassion, Excellence, Honesty, Kindness, and Respect, which are embodied in all aspects of College life.

Aitken College supports and promotes the principles and practices of Australian democracy including a commitment to elected government, the right of law, equal rights for all before the law, freedom of religion, freedom of speech and association and values of openness and acceptance.

Students are encouraged to develop a love of learning, and every effort is made to ensure that they possess the skills, resources and motivation which will lead to a lifetime of learning. The aim of the school is to embrace a broad curriculum that is academically rigorous, and which fosters personal, moral, spiritual awareness and understanding. A breadth of life skills balancing essential knowledge with a choice of pathways is developed in the final years of schooling, including VCE VM, and VET studies.

Students are particularly encouraged to develop a sense of service to others, especially to those less fortunate in the community. For this reason, they are encouraged to develop community relationships where individuals will interact in such a way that it will lead to a deeper understanding of human needs and a desire to actively engage in meeting those needs.

All students are encouraged to examine the faith and teaching of the Christian Church in the light of their own belief system, and those of others, to develop spiritual understanding of themselves and others. They are encouraged to develop a set of values and code of ethics which is Christian based so that they will make valued contributions in the community in which they live.

Every person involved in the College has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

COLLEGE VISION, MISSION, AIMS AND VALUES

The Vision, Mission and Aims statements of the College underpin the school's philosophy and core principles.

Vision

Aitken College sees a future where young people are inspired to do their personal best in service to themselves and others, in association with the Uniting Church in Australia.

Mission

Aitken College will develop students' self-esteem and confidence; expand their skills and intellect; and encourage them to become vital and compassionate members of the local and global community.

Aims

- Make the Christian faith relevant through an understanding of its major teachings and by encouraging a personal faith journey.
- Inspire and challenge students to realise their academic, social and emotional potential.
- Promote and develop creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, perseverance, and self-improvement.
- Encourage individuals and the community to be respectful, take responsibility and to act accordingly.
- Empower students to act with service, sustainability and in reconciliation.
- Cultivate an adaptive, innovative, and continuously improving school.

Values

The school's values guide behaviour that builds strong character and promotes the highest standards. Students are empowered to embrace the values needed to achieve their personal best in all aspects of their lives, including learning, service, citizenship, and wellbeing.

Compassion	Genuine Concern and support for those in need
Excellence	Achieving our personal best
Honesty	Behaving and acting truthfully and in good faith when engaging with others
Kindness	Consideration of others by treating them with empathy and generosity
Respect	Accepting and appreciating ourselves, others and our environment

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VALUES

Compassion
We display genuine concern and support those in need.

Excellence
We strive to achieve our personal best.

Honesty
We behave and act truthfully and in good faith when engaging with others.

Kindness
We are considerate of others and treat them with empathy and generosity.

Respect
We accept and appreciate ourselves, others and our environment.

BOARD GOVERNANCE

Aitken College is a company limited by guarantee, whose Directors form the Aitken College Board. Its Constitution is available upon request.

They act as the Board of Directors of the company and appoint the Principal who, as CEO, is responsible for the day-to-day management of the College. Aitken College is a not-for-profit organisation. Its accounts are independently audited by the appointed auditors.

The Aitken College Board determines the College Vision, Mission and Strategy and approves the policies by which the College operates.

The Aitken College Compliance program enables it to meet its legal and regulatory, organisational policy, and contractual obligations. The school understands that its ability to effectively achieve its strategic goals and objectives is reliant upon its ability and the quality of its work in meeting those obligations, partnered with its commitment to the strength of its culture. To this end, Aitken College is committed to maintaining a high level of compliance with relevant and applicable Acts, Guidelines and Standards, including those of the VRQA. The College maintains a suite of policies, facilitates staff training, and undertakes thorough risks assessments periodically to ensure high standards of corporate governance are always met.

Aitken College has a zero tolerance for child abuse and is committed to acting in children's best interests and keeping them safe from harm. The College regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance and as such, is committed to providing the necessary resources to promote a child safe culture.

The Board identifies strategic needs and puts in place the framework to achieve the most desirable outcomes. Regular Board Meetings, Board Committee Meetings and the Annual General Meeting are held each year. Board Meetings take place approximately 9 times per year, including 1 Strategy Day, which takes place on a Saturday in June.

Regular reviews ensure that issues of risk are well managed, that financial accountabilities are met, and that legal obligations are fulfilled.

Various responsibilities are delegated to Board Committees which undertake detailed examination of their portfolio and report back to the Board of Directors. All Committee recommendations are brought to the Board for consideration, ratification and implementation as appropriate. Board Committee Charters are available upon request.

- Finance Committee (meets approximately once per month)
- Governance and Risk Management Committee (meets approximately once per month)
- Planning Committee (meets approximately 6 times per year)
- Nominations Committee (meets approximately 4 times per year)
- Community Engagement and Marketing Committee (meets approximately 4 times per year)

Chaired by a current Director, each Board Committee delivers advice to the Board of Directors in the form of recommendations to be approved.

The Board's focus on governance aligns with the strategy of the school. It sets clear directions based on a solid understanding of the environmental framework in which Aitken operates. Under this framework the Board manages the strategy and direction of the school so that school management can flourish under the direction and guidance of the Board.

While out-of-pocket expenditure incurred by Board Directors or Board Committee Members may be reimbursed, Board and Board Committee Members are not remunerated for any service rendered.

Board and Board Committee appointments are made based on required skills and attributes. The Board believes that this process of inviting expressions of interest within the Aitken community will build on the skills and experience required for good governance.

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

All members of the Board and Board Committees need knowledge and experience in Corporate Governance structures, policies and processes, including an ability to synthesise complex matters.

They need to act ethically with the ability to maintain the confidentiality of their deliberations and declare conflicts of interest. Each member is encouraged to contribute freely to discussions to enhance the strength of the group as a collective.

The Board is seeking Board and Board Committee Members with desired skills and experience in the following areas:

Professional skills and experience:

Governance	Experience in best practice governance structures
Strategy	Ability to think strategically and have experience in identifying and critically assessing strategic opportunities and threats
Financial Experience	Professional experience in analysis and assessment of financial statements, budgets and financial viability.
Knowledge of Education Sector	Direct experience (practitioner and/or Board level) in the education sector, with a strong understanding of current opportunities, challenges and trends
Marketing and Communication	Ability to communicate with diverse stakeholders
Compliance and Risk Management	Ability to identify key risks in a wide range of areas, including legal and regulatory frameworks, and to actively monitor compliance systems
Property Development / Project Management	Experience in the conception and development of major property projects
People and Culture	A contemporary understanding of effective strategies and processes for attracting, retaining and developing an appropriately skilled workforce
Cyber	Ability to identify and monitor key cyber risks to the school and contribute to cyber management planning and compliance
Faith Commitment	Part of a Church community and ability to contribute to faith development of the College.

While these skills are building blocks in the capability of our Board and Board Committees, we also look for people skills that reflect the diversity of cultures and backgrounds in the Aitken community.

Personal Attributes

The Board seeks the following desired personal attributes in its governance structure:

Commitment to school values	Demonstrates a strong commitment to the school's values by actively embodying respect, responsibility, and integrity in daily actions and interactions.
Constructive questioner	Challenges with a curious mindset, asking thoughtful and constructive questions to foster deeper understanding and drive positive solutions.
Contributor and team player	Always ready to contribute ideas, support peers, and collaborate effectively to achieve shared goals
Critical and innovative thinker	Consistently demonstrates the ability to think critically and innovatively, approaching problems with creativity and offering fresh, effective solutions.
Diplomacy and tact	Consistently demonstrates diplomacy and tact, handling sensitive situations with professionalism, respect, and an ability to navigate complex interpersonal dynamics with ease.
Effective listener and communicator	Effective listener and communicator, ensuring clear, empathetic understanding and delivering messages thoughtfully in both individual and group settings.

Influencer and negotiator	Influential individual and skilled negotiator, using persuasive communication and strong interpersonal skills to guide decisions and reach mutually beneficial outcomes.
Longstanding connection to the College	Longstanding connection to the College, demonstrating continued dedication and loyalty through active involvement and a deep understanding of the institution's culture and values.

BENEFITS FOR BOARD AND BOARD COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Governance experience is a great opportunity to develop leadership skills. Members of our Governance groups are eligible for professional development and training opportunities through Independent Schools Victoria (ISV).

Candidates may initially be invited to spend some time on Committees as Committee Members. This offers a key opportunity to develop experience and share expertise. It also provides a good indication of the time and commitment required.

PATHWAY TO BOARD & BOARD COMMITTEES

The first step is to submit a competed version of the Expression of Interest Form, together with your Resume or Curriculum Vitae (CV), which will be reviewed by the Board Nominations Committee.

Once approved, each Board and Board Committee Member is required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement, which will cover the full duration of their service period with the school. Aitken is committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment. In line with the Child Safety Standards all Board and Board Committee Members must complete the Aitken Registration process, provide Working with Children Clearance details, and undertake annual Child Safe Standard training.

Accordingly, upon offer of Board and/or Board Committee position, successful candidates must complete the following steps prior to beginning their term of service:

1. Aitken College Registration process
2. Annually complete the Child Safety Standards online training module
3. Complete and return the following:
    A) New Committee Member Registration
    B) Confidentiality Agreement
    C) Conflict of Interest Declaration
    D) Schools Fit and Proper Declaration
    E) Working with Children Clearance
    F) Police Check

Along with other independent schools, Aitken holds shared expectations across all governance roles for confidentiality and conduct standards.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Should you require further information, please contact the Aitken College Company Secretary, Mr Petar Gajic, by phone at (03)9333 9100 or via email admin@aitkencollege.edu.au marked to his attention.

If you are interested in supporting the school through a role on the Board or on one of our Board Committees, please complete the attached Expression of Interest Form and email it to the attention of the Principal via admin@aitkencollege.edu.au.

Thank you for your interest!

APPENDIX A
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORM
AITKEN COLLEGE BOARD AND BOARD COMMITTEE ROLES

1. Personal information:
   NAME
   DATE
   EMAIL
   MOBILE
   OCCUPATION
   QUALIFICATIONS

   Please note: All personal information held by the school will be managed in accordance with Aitken's Privacy Policy.

2. What attracts you to serve on the Board or on a Board Committee at Aitken College?

3. Please list any connection or history to Aitken College (eg, past student, local community links)

4. Children at the school (past or current):

5. What are you passionate about?

6. What are your areas of interest?

7. Relevant Offices held / Governance roles:

8. Please provide a summary or dot point list of your professional skills and experience relevant to the areas mentioned in the section on Skills and Experience.

9. Please provide a summary or dot point list of your personal attributes as they relate to the areas listed in the section on Skills and Experience.

Thank you for your interest in Aitken College. Please send this completed form together with your CV or Resume to the attention of the Principal via email to: admin@aitkencollege.edu.au.

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