



ECS Board Agenda

December 19, 2018 - 6:30pm - 8:30pm

The Environmental Charter School

829 Milton Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15218

412-247-7970

Upper School – Cafe

- I. **Call to Order (Roll Call)..... Molly Bennett**  
Meeting started at 6:31pm. See attendance at end.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance.....ALL**
- III. **Recognition of Guests..... Molly Bennett**
- V. **Consent Agenda**
- IV. **Public Comment**

- **Financial Reports - as of October 2018**
- **Board Meeting Minutes - November 2018**

November minutes approved unanimously.

**Resolution 2018-12-1996: be it resolved by the Board of Trustees of the School, that the Consent Agenda for November, 2018 be approved.**

**VI. Board Education**

- **Labor Relations**
  - Union vote in favor of unionization (39-34) - 100% voter turnout.

- Molly open to questions about Union process during past month:

Kate: What is next?

Molly: I don't know yet. We can move forward with expansion and other plans in place, as if nothing has happened until the new unit comes to us

Michael: [union process] should not delay any other projects

Jon: AFT is likely to have a process - they do this all the time. Brian (lawyer) was adamant that things stay status quo.

Molly: misconception that Board slashed people from the union - not true. Brian (lawyer) appreciated that we didn't want to union-bust.

Sarah: I think we want to be mindful of retention. 1st-3rd year teachers tend to struggle. Let's consider the balance of teachers in our buildings and make sure they feel heard

Molly: Let's consider how we can move forward in the best way for ECS within these new constraints as an administrative team and do our best to be collaborative despite "adversarial process" (according to Brian). I am available if anybody has questions or wants to talk about this. Thank you to Joe Burke.

Jillian: Is there anything Jon or Nikole need before tomorrow?

Jon: That offer is enough. A big thank you to you all, and let's switch into neutral as we take this (winter) break.

#### • Enrollment Update (Nikole)

Nikole: My attention these last 5 weeks has not been entirely on enrollment. There are some concerns, but also some great news. Last year we had 688 applications: 60% White, 20% African-American, 4% Asian, 12 % Multi-race, 3.2% Hispanic. 33 total open spots for Kindergarten. 31% of those for F&R lunch.

Economic stability depends on demand - marketing matters for acquiring loans. Goal to increase applications by 25%. Not a good job of onboarding new families. Marketing budget was \$30k - includes printing, signage, not just straight ad campaign.

October: 262 applications. Now: 545 (last year this time was 387). Room for 26 kids. 7th and 8th grade struggle- anticipated with not including 9th. We have to decide about staffing ( 1 per grade), whether to bring on 9th grade staff. There is a staffing implication to enrollment.

Demographics are trending okay. Strong Caucasian, Hispanic and Multi-racial increase - statistically relevant. More students from Penn Hills, Woodland Hills, and Wilkinsburg. Enrollment goal for next year w/ 9th: 910, which is 312 new. Includes spread to 4 classes per grade. 78 new Kindergarten. 52 new 1st. 26 new 2-8. Nearly 100% who come to open houses end up applying.

Concerted effort to push out to Wilkinsburg, especially non-PPS. Families seem to love the (School Mint) app.

Ability to expand depends on ability to enroll depends on ability to reach families. Hold on to families who are looking elsewhere - let them know this is a stable place. No distrust of leadership - a perceived threat to enrollment.

Bob: Question about application waiting list - students on waiting list, do they have to reapply next year?

Nikole: Yes, but it is very easy. We invite them to reapply.

Sarah: What's the yield?

Nikole: It differs by grade.

Ben: Why 25%

Nikole: Based on available slots and maintaining same waiting list proportion to applicant pool.

Lisa: Aside from mail drops, is there more face-to-face interaction with potential applicants?

Nikole: We haven't been able to do as much as we hoped. We did go to daycare centers and phone-call with follow up. It's a hard market of busy people, often understaffed.

Jillian: St. Raphael's K-8 school in morningside, 5 blocks from new school, announced will be closing. Magnet deadline passed, parents upset and trying to keep school open.

Rebecca: That's a great opportunity

Nikole: Remember enrollment is really important. Please get out the word.

Molly: is there anything we can do specifically?

Nikole: If there are any events in the next few weeks, especially evening events, taking a 1-on-1 helps families trust/recommend the school.

Molly: Let us know of any evening events or opportunities.

Rebecca: Have parents been able to help with these events?

Nikole: Not really. We've asked and had help at Open House, but not at volunteer events.

Rebecca: That's a shame; happy parents could make a huge difference.

Nikole: Parents are busy, and it's okay. It's really about showing up and talking, which is less measurable but equally important. I'll send another update in January.

Bernardine: Is it possible to get alum to show up? Talking to current students has been personally helpful, and I know parents who would love to meet students and alumni.

Nikole: That's a great idea.

Karen: Let's keep out information at libraries and community centers. I'm willing to help.

## **VII. Business (Committee Reports)**

### **• Governance.....Molly Bennett (10min)**

- Molly: We cancelled the meeting with Bayer (Center for Nonprofit Talent), but plan to reschedule for January.

### **• Finance and Facility.....Ben Witsberger/Dan Kiefer (10min)**

Ben: Two big things are revising pro forma (impacts of union?) and financing - should have decision soon, as early as this week, but probably January.

Rebecca: Is Kate officially gone?

Ben: She's on as a volunteer for the rest of the calendar year.

Jon: Facilities report - pictures are up, and Dan couldn't make it. White box delivery (Dan to elaborate next month). Please encourage everyone to join next tour in January (Friday, 1/11). White box on 31st.

Kate: PCO was assured they would have storage space. Is that true?

Mandy: Yes, there is a room that will also be shared with social worker who will be handing out resources to parents. There should be space for PCO in Upper School.

Jon: PCO should come on a tour - would be terrific. We're not hurting for space.

## 1. Finance Committee Update

## 2. Facilities Update

## 3. Expansion Updates

### • Education .....Sarah Scott Frank (10min)

- Sarah: Nothing to report.

### • CEO Support Committee.....Michael Aronson (10min)

- Michael: Molly and I met with Freida to review employee evaluation template.

### • PCO Update .....Kate Brennan (10min)

- Kate: 4 applications approved for mini grants. Photobook project for 8th. Purchasing hats and gloves for Bike ECS - to be laundered. Equipment/supplies for Robotics Club competition (5-8). Pending more info from applicant: literary magazine for Upper students.

Group of PCO reps met with Brian Wolfe to establish new expectations for building use and how to leave spaces. Point of contention: PCO will be charged for space use. Brian suggested probably 1 free event per month. Otherwise, \$25 per hour. Hoping to look at calendar to assess potential cost to PCO. Storage space currently used is being cleaned out and relocated - not enough room for PCO storage needs. PCO allowed to take on current lease for \$225/month - not feasible. Looking at alternate rental space, but ideally securing space in ECS buildings.

- January 10th meeting: health fair. Would feel disingenuous with all that's been going on, so considering opportunity for parents to get info about union.

- Molly: Jon and I are willing and wanting to do that (instead of health fair)

- Rebecca: Should we have a union rep at Jan 10th meeting?

- Kate: Yes, good idea.

- Nikole: It's hard to staff events on evenings/weekends

- Kate: Fair Trade Market made \$4200 this year

**• Equity and Diversity.....Bernardine Dias (10min)**

- Bernardine: Nothing to report

**VIII. Other Business**

**X. Executive Session**

Motion to move into executive session @ 7:30.

**Labor Relations and Expansion - Next Steps**

**XI. Adjournment of Trustee Meeting**

Attended	Attended Remotely	Attended via Proxy	Did Not Attend
Michael Aronson Molly Bennett Kate Brennan Amanda Cribbs M. Bernardine Dias Lisa Elliott Karen Howard Robert Jones Rebecca King Dwight Laufman Jon McCann Charlie Orr Scott Roller Jillian Riley Sarah Scott Nikole Sheaffer Ben Witsberger			Kate Dattilo Dan Kiefer