

Letter from the Grade Level Representatives

Dear ECS Families and Faculty,

We wanted to let you know about a collaborative initiative amongst the school administration and Parent Community of ECS - the Grade Representatives Committee. This committee is comprised of school principals and volunteer representatives from each grade level.

The purpose of the Grade Reps program is to *collect trending concerns and feedback from each grade to share with the administration with an eye toward problem solving when needed*. We welcome your questions and concerns and look forward to addressing them during these monthly meetings. Feedback / notes will be shared through the room parents and can also be found online: <http://ecspco.org/volunteer/grade-representatives/>.

If you have a comment or concern to be presented, please feel free to reach out to one of the grade representatives below:

First Name	Last Name	Grade	Email
Wesley	Waldrup	K, 3 and 5	wwaldrup@gmail.com
Maria	Zibert	2,3	mzibert@verizon.net
Julie	Paris	1 and 2	julieparis6@gmail.com
Leslie	Aronson	1	lesliedara@gmail.com
Ellen	Ayoob	3 and 6	fudgebelly@gmail.com
Kate	Tunney	1 and 4	Ketunney@gmail.com
Carolyn	Hare	3 and 5	carolynkhare@gmail.com
Olivia	Wells	3 and 6	wells.oliviac@gmail.com
Jennifer	Balog	3, 5 and 6	jennifer@6nop.com
Marla	Ferreny	4 and 8	marla@ferreny.com
Sonia	Rathelot	5 and 8	sonia.rathelot@yahoo.com
Stacie	Parente	7	me@stacieleigh.com
Elena	Hilf	8	hilf@verizon.net

Notes from Friday, May 5, 2017

Celebrations:

- Peer mediation is happening at the Upper School and students love it!
- Great feedback from our lower school guidance activities.
- Amazing teacher appreciation week! Thanks for the deliveries of treats to Home Office, too!
- Day of Service for students is a great opportunity for building culture between buildings and the vision of the school.

Asks from our Administration to the Parent Community:

Notes:

- [Leslie Aaronson](#) will be the point person for picking some playground meet up days for the summer. New families and returning families are encouraged to attend. Dates will be pushed out through the ECS Facebook page and SchoolMint. [Christine Adams](#), Enrollment Coordinator, will follow up to distribute dates to families.
- Nikole - Reach out to 7th grade team and Stacie (7th grade rep) to do a low level fundraiser for the Regent Square Yard Sale for the 8th grade field trip. *Response - too late this year, we will try for next!*
- **Summer mailing will be electronic this year!** Most forms will be available via parent/guardian Schoolmint accounts. Look for a letter from your building leaders about teacher/room assignments in August.
- Ms. Robinson will reach out Jennifer Balog about specific parent concern in 5th grade

Q: We've been hearing about peer mediation. Can you tell us more about it?

- A. Great to hear! We have ~15 Upper School Peer Mediators who have completed their 8 session training in conflict resolution and problem-solving techniques. These students in grades 5-8 are ready to help students peacefully and confidentially resolve their conflicts. Students from any grade level can request a peer mediation by going to counselors or principals. Parents may also refer to peer mediation by emailing counselors -[Andrea Szolna](#) or [Laura Davidson](#). We have had several successful mediations so far!

Q: You may have seen about the logo! What does it mean? Why did you change it?

- A. The logo refresh is part of an ongoing effort to clarify our work, revisit our mission and vision, and prepare for our ten year anniversary. This work builds on the efforts we have adopted to building consistent communications to families this year, and supports our organizational efforts to demonstrate our vision and mission to the greater community. Like any "cleaning house" effort, we had to look at all of our materials (the good, the bad, and the worse), and pair down to what is we really want

to communicate. For a long time, we were trying to communicate *too much, in too many forms, to too many audiences*. This led to confusion to our faculty (especially new faculty and new families), to our families, and to our organizational philosophy.

Our logo refresh makes our **mission and vision front and center in all we do**. We open doors, we connect to the natural environment, and we prioritize relationships -- it is a refined way to see how we define "environment": intersection of the **built**, the **natural**, and the **social** worlds.

To continue our brand refresh and prepare for our **10 Year Anniversary Celebration**, we will continue to build our communication systems with the following goals in mind over the next year:

- We will continue to clarify our internal and external messages and communication systems so that our parents, community, and stakeholders understand what we do and why we do it.
- We will develop consistent organizational logos, templates for our staff, and infrastructure to be used everywhere from newsletters to presentation templates to images for social media
- Create a unified communications and outreach strategy that clearly expresses the mission and vision of ECS

Our tenth anniversary logo refresh helps us celebrate what we do--and what makes ECS unique. This is yet another step in solidifying what we do as an organization. Systematizing grade level newsletters, providing content for social media feeds, and conveying important information in a school-wide system helped to reset our communications strategies and support proactive conversations with families. ECS, as a collective group of humans, make up this organization, and we are all accountable to bringing about the change we wish to see.

Q: Can we get a sense of the school's position on student data and privacy, in regards to the recent articles regarding google articles. Regarding the following articles [here](#) and [here](#)).

A: ECS takes student privacy very seriously and the IT department is constantly reviewing emerging trends and best practices to keep student data safe and secure. A recent EFF article highlights many complex issues related to student privacy. Parents can expect to see a revised privacy policy coming home this summer that details our commitment to COPPA, FERPA, CIPA, and HIPAA. A communication is also forthcoming that will share the student applications and devices that are used by students at ECS along with the data collection policies for each. It is important to note that the IT department reviews network security and account security on a 24/7 basis and is quick to respond to any issues that arise. While we strive to work with companies that adhere to industry standards regarding COPPA, FERPA, CIPA, and HIPAA we take further action by adjusting security settings within application

administrative settings. Our Google accounts, for example, contain only first name and last name of students with no other identifiable information such as address or age. Students have access to only a limited number of Google Applications and no student has access to features such as email. We appreciate the attention that parents bring to this important issue and look forward to continuing this conversation.

Q: Can Upper School administration create an exit 8th grade survey for students about their experience? Questions like: Does this class hold your attention? What is the overall experience like? Can the administration create an exit 8th grade survey for parents?

A: We will work with our 8th grade team to develop a feedback form for students to provide insight into their experience at ECS. Thank you for this insight on the importance of gathering critical information from our graduating students.

Q: Can we create a parent survey for K-3 experience? 4-5 and for 6-8?

A: We will work to create a brief survey at the end of the year for parents/guardians to provide some feedback on their current experience at ECS. Thank you for this feedback on our programming to your family.

Q. Can we ask teachers to include photos in the newsletters? And can this be considered as an additional feature for inclusion in next year's newsletters?

A. Teachers will be moving to a google template for newsletters next year, and pictures will be included as an additional feature in weekly newsletters. Thank you for this feedback in our communications to you!

Notes: Planning for next year.

- The meetings will still continue to be the first Friday of the month.
- PCO will communicate calendar days to building leaders by the end of the school year for review;
- Call for photos for the calendar for 2017-2018; *Can building leaders ask grade levels to share out photos from the year before in a google folder on the end of year checklist?*