

PCO Meeting: Unionization and Expansion
1/10/19

Steering Committee Members: Paulina, Leslie, Marla, Shaun, Michelle, Kate, Jill

School Representatives: Jon McCann (CEO), Molly Bennett (Board chair), Mandy Cribbs (ECS administration), Mr. Madore (teacher), Miss Hudson (teacher), Mr. Burke (teacher), Michael Aronson (Board member), Jaleah Robinson (US Principal)

Q: Updates?

A: Union voted, Vote passed, working to elect reps, waiting to hear on reps and bargaining unit. Meet next week

A: Things to do – meet with AFT, PA rep, staff membership meeting, draft constitution, electing reps and boards, discussion on how to create ECS union. Need to finalize the systems, survey the staff for the essential issues,

A: Status quo until we meet next week with union (regarding contracts and new hires).

Q: New hires?

A: Still hiring for expansion and normal business.

A: Will wait till after the lottery to see what the needs will be for new hires.

Q: Teacher-Student Ratios?

A: Moving to new model. Take the specialists and re-deploy in a more dynamic way. Maintain 11 to 1 ratio, but use student teachers to support the main teacher.

Q: Same pay for student teacher? For Specialists?

A: K-5 Model: Math & Literacy: Teacher assistant & specialist; 4-5 Model: Special education – specialist will do small group or push in where needed. Specialists wanted flexibility. It is expensive to put 2 FT teachers in a classroom.

Q: Where does that shift come from?

A: We need a new revenue stream to support the 2 teachers.

Q: Are paraprofessionals considered part of the 11 to 1 ratio?

A: They are excluded from the union because there would have to have been 2 questions on ballot – Do you want a union? If professionals, so you want to include paraprofessionals?

A: It would have complicated the vote. We would like to include paraprofessionals, as well as clerical staff. This can be done in clarification of the union.

Q: Who will be counted in the 11 to 1 ratio?

A: Teachers and assistants. Paraprofessionals will not be included. Four classrooms per level will include 4 main teachers, 1 special educator, 1 teaching assistant and 2 paraprofessionals. Environmental Literacy will be taught by all the teachers in each subject. Felt EL was being diluted with the current model.

A: Testing – ECS does well. We are going back to the old model because the older model is better after looking over 10 year data.

Q: What will be the specials?

A: Spanish, Thinking Lab, Music, PE, Edible Schoolyard/Discovery. There will be 1 special every 5 days.

Q: What will the teachers get from the union?

A: Candid comments so administration can make the best decisions. Looking towards the expansion, we hope to prevent the spreading out of teachers and losing our voice.

Q: Is the union going to speak to the teacher model?

A: We will see once organized.

Q: Vote was 53% yes, how work together to make everyone comfortable?

A: Collaborate with each other, coming back together. Retain practices that work and teach our children the best we can.

A: No meeting yet. We are being slow and deliberate. Neither of the teachers here are reps for the union.

A: The process is inherently divisive; the board had to navigate process carefully because of legal reasons. The most difficult part is that ECS isn't black or white, but the process is black and white. We did could not sign in good conscience because we felt that some teachers didn't know what they were signing for the unionization.

Q: Is there a way to make the union less divisive but more ECS and gray?

A: Review our constitution and make a collaborative effort by all 73 people in the bargaining unit.

Q: Flexibility (grayness)? Will that be included?

A: They will try. We have lots of respect for administration. We want to make their lives easier. Also, there are things in our contracts that we don't have yet. It will give us due process.

Q: 50% not joining union must pay dues.

A: No one will be forced to pay dues, but to be a member and vote you will need to pay dues.

A: the division is not a concern. There is strain and they are working it out. It is the beginning of the process. We don't know what to expect either.

Q: Unionization – on the clock or off the clock?

A: The work will get done for students, if teachers need time and professionals to assist, the administration will supply to help.

A: There is no understanding of what is being asked of the parties involved yet.

A: Our focus is enrollment. +300 spaces to fill. Apply. We are continuing community outreach, but need everyone's help. Diversity is BOD's number one priority. Advertising being pushed to diverse communities. Preliminary data says that diversity is increasing.

Q: Strategy to increase diversity for the staff?

A: All schools are having problems hiring a diverse staff

A: We won't successfully grow unless we are diverse. We are recruiting out of state. Slow moving process because being very thoughtful.

Expansion

1/31 –New school delivery milestone. This milestone will determine if we are staying on schedule for delivery in May. After 1/31, they will gather together and start tours.

Q: Middle School drawings, can you please share? Share construction process with community?

A: Yes, if you come to BOD meetings you can see it all.

A: Classroom size will be 26 students. Mold in LS classroom – Rigorous testing 2x per year and the air quality results are published and available for anyone to view. Mold problem bad in whole area (Pittsburgh). They started work to actually fix inside and outside. 1C needs to have new ceiling tiles and flooring. Hopefully, back in by first week of February.

High school – Intend to buy a building - \$10MM. We hope to buy everything in 7 years. High School will be added grade by grade