

ECS PCO General Meeting Agenda
 February 3, 2020
 6:00 – 8:00 PM
 ECS Intermediate School Café

Recording Secretary: Paulina Liang

6:00-6:30 Arrive, have pizza, get kids settled with the on-site babysitter, socialize

Agenda Item	Person Reporting/ Facilitating	Time allotment
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1. Welcome and introduction to the meeting	Anna Scheid, PCO Chairperson	5 Minutes
2. Primary School Principal's Report	Ashley Bergman	5-10
3. Intermediate School Principal's Report	Laura Williams	5-10
4. CEO's report	Jon McCann	15
5. Q and A with the principals and CEO	Anna facilitating	25
6. Budget report	Jill Farrington, Treasurer	5
7. Blooming Bash update	Beth Jones and Lauren Thompson, Fundraising Committee Co-chairs	5
8. Open discussion, raising general questions, new issues and ideas, etc.	Anna facilitating	15
9. Concluding remarks and adjournment	Anna	5

Minutes:

1. Introduction of the PCO – Parent Community Organization. “C” was specifically used for the PCO to signal inclusion of the whole community – parents, teachers, administration, everyone.
2. Primary School Report: Primary school's vision is to work hard, play hard, focus on the whole child. “ME Time” has been revised to “My Excellence Time” for the students. Administration is working on communication and revising newsletters. In class, there is focus on building classroom community. There are now focused school-wide lessons that have helped streamline things for all teachers. Relaxation stations for students have been revamped. Playful learning is being reinforced in

lessons taught in class (ex. making cookies and counting ingredients reinforces learning to count numbers).

3. Intermediate School Report: Vision is to value every member of the school community (students, parents, guardians, staff, etc.) and encourage all members to contribute to community. Students are asked reflection questions (what did you contribute to the learning community today/how did you contribute?). There are many support systems for students (counselors, mindfulness groups, zones of regulations, ME time, meditation, and relaxation stations). Staff has ongoing professional development sessions. Highlights include making sure we hear and value student's voices, as well as connecting with parents and building community partnerships.
4. Jon is the founding principal of ECS. His job now is to make sure current principals connect with parents and faculty. His office is in the new Middle School. Current things being worked on at ECS:
 - Fixing transportation issues. The cost of transportation is the responsibility of the districts that students come from. The districts get tax money and set up busing, but it is not working out this year. ECS is trying to get the money from the districts so that we can set the busing ourselves – contract bus company and set up bus routes. ECS has started legal procedures/contacted lawyers/etc. Also working on trying to get busses for Wilkinsburgh and Woodland Hills (districts that don't bus students). Also in conversation with PAT to build safe transportation for kids long term in the future. When they know more, will write to families to update.
 - High School. Committed to East End corridor. In final negotiations for price. Had an angel investor donate \$20 million for the new school, so don't need to get a bank loan. ECS now has the money to build an extraordinary building. Shooting to introduce building site at next board meeting for approval.
 - Teacher's Union. Currently managing the collective bargaining agreement (73 of 160 staff included in union). However, there is going to be a vote for decertification coming up.
5. Questions/discussions:
 - Book list - where to drop off? Donate books wrapped up in bag with Lisa Anselmo's name on it, then drop off in main office. There is a spreadsheet of the book list and will be distributed in newsletter.
 - Looping - will same class looping continue in both years? Principals have been talking about changing looping and it's in the works. Current looping is classes A & B together all the time, classes C&D together. There is not much crossover (A with C or D, etc), so kids aren't getting to see friends in the other loops. 4th grade currently does a crossover every Friday of the classes during lunch/recess. Seems to work and will see if it can be implemented in other grades.
 - After school activities - will there be more? Aware that there is lack of activities and will try to get more, but will need to incentivize teachers with a stipend. Teachers are in the middle of the collective bargaining agreement for the union,

so have to finalize that first. Will need to clean up stipend issues to incentivize faculty to run the clubs.

- Reading logs – Why is it used? Why is not standardized across grades? Will ask Lisa and come up with standardized method. Perhaps instead of simply writing down that students read, writing about reactions to what they read would be more beneficial.
 - Do kids need coats/gloves for hikes/recess, and if so, is there a place to store donations of these items? Will talk to counselors who have a good grasp of who needs it. We can make the ask for donations, but still need to figure out the infrastructure for storage.
 - Calendar – is next year’s school calendar finalized yet? Pittsburgh Public is still working on theirs, and ECS is keeping track to try to align days with their calendar.
 - Classroom volunteers – parents not being asked to come in to help as much this year, but parents want to. Will start with principals to make sure there are asks. It’s likely the lower asks this year are due to the new structure of teaching (ex. EL teachers are new, so they are still figuring out what they need) compared to teachers who knew every year exactly what they needed.
 - Grade reps – we need them. Mr. Tutulo is happy to discuss re-establishing grade reps.
6. Budget: Box tops earned 102% of what was projected - \$684. Fair trade market earned \$4481. Poinsettia sale also did well – earned \$409. Bake Sales earned \$2100 (Included in the total - Election Day Bake Sale: \$155, Fall Festival: \$1276.37 and Game Night: \$161).
We have spent \$500 for the helping hands fund. We sponsored the middle school Snow Ball (spent \$250). Mini grants spent \$5600. Teacher book fund used \$300. Only 14% of the specialist fund has been spent. There is currently \$34k in the bank and we have \$9,800 in working capital. The entire budget is on the website because we value complete transparency.
7. Blooming Bash – NEED VOLUNTEERS! Could use graphic designers/ day of help for decorations / help getting sponsors for the event. Blooming Bash will be held March 21 at the Union Project. Tickets on sale now.
8. Jaleah Robinson, the middle school principal was unable to attend, but emailed an update about the school. They are ready to celebrate black history month. She also answered a few questions she had received from parents:
- High school is on schedule. Location is still TBD. It will just have 10th to start and additional grades will open as students move through.
 - Cell phones are not permitted to be used during the school day. We have had some students order Grubhub and snacks to be delivered during lunch...but for the most part, the cell phone policy is working fine.
 - Too few/too short parent conferences: We feel all of those things about parent conferences too. We'll bring up the issue to our school culture committee and see how we can make this time more productive for parents. Time slots work until a discussion runs long or parent is running a bit late and then every conference

after is thrown off track. If any parents have an idea for how to improve, please send them my way!!

- As for Eureka math, every curriculum has its pros and cons. A few pros: aligned to Common Core standards, rigorous, builds conceptual and procedural knowledge through the use of models and manipulatives. A con: it's aligned to Common Core which can be difficult for folks who weren't taught in a similar way to assist their students with homework.

Helpful PCO contacts:

Our website: www.ecspco.org

Our organization's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/ecsparentcommunityorganization/>

Our Facebook Transportation Connections page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ecstransportation/>

Anna Scheid, PCO Chairperson: parents@ecspco.org

Michelle Landau, Primary School Vice Chairperson:

primaryvicechair@ecspco.org

Latasha Washington, Intermediate School Vice Chairperson:

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Gina Mannion, Middle School Vice Chairperson:

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Beth Lott, Volunteer Coordinator:

volunteer@ecspco.org