



**Elm City Montessori School
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
1 March 2018**

Attendees: Mira Debs, Fernando Muniz, Mike Nast, Keith Krolak, Julia Webb, Eliza Halsey, Susan Clark, Alayna Stone and David Low joined by phone.

Meeting was called to order at 5:40 pm.

I. November Meeting Minutes

- 1) The February meeting minutes were approved

II. Principal Updates

- 1) A representative from NAEYC visited ECMS on Tuesday, 27 February 2018.
 - a) ECMS process of handling children was reviewed
 - b) ECMS portfolio was completed and submitted
 - c) NAEYC accreditation is anticipated within three months of the school visit
- 2) School Improvement Plan data was presented.
 - a) Stronger Community
 - i) Staff attendance remains at 87% for February with a goal of 93 %. It was explained that this unit of measurement means that there was 100% staff attendance for 87% of February school days.
 - ii) Student chronic absenteeism was 13% for February. This exceeds the 20% goal.
 - b) Safe and Productive Classrooms
 - i) Removals from classrooms decreased to 28 per week in February.
 - ii) The ECMS goal for March is fewer than 25 removals per week.
 - c) Academic Growth
 - i) February data shows the current reading goals for the entire ECMS student population are currently short of year-end goals, but students continue to make considerable progress since the beginning of the current school year.
 - ii) Students at the higher elementary levels are increasingly accessing their other learning materials because of their advancements in reading and comprehension.

III. Executive Director Updates

- 1) Finances/Fundraising
 - a) Expenses in January 2017 were \$87,000 which is higher than the \$63,000 monthly average.
 - b) Cash flow is currently \$215,000 on hand.
 - c) ECMS has received quarterly payments from the State of Connecticut on schedule.
 - d) Receiving payments on schedule from the City of New Haven continues to be a challenge. A payment due in January 2018 has not been received. It is now expected to occur in March.
 - e) MOU specifics are scheduled to be discussed next week with New Haven Public Schools Chief Operating Officer Will Clark.
 - f) The Governor's proposed FY19 budget reduces local charter (ECMS) funding by \$48,000. Executive Director testified before the State of Connecticut Appropriations Committee on February 22nd to advocate against proposed cuts to the local charter budget. Executive Director is exploring opportunities to work with Pro Bono Partnership to provide pro bono legal assistance for facilities acquisition and financing.
 - g) ECMS seeks board approval to apply for a Community Foundation Grant of \$35,000.

- 2) Student/Staff Recruitment
 - a) a) ECMS continues to work closely with the School District on student recruitment; EMCS participated in 4 NHPS recruitment events this year; (Susan Clark attended a LULAC/Head Start event on behalf of ECMS). There have been 412 applications to ECMS from New Haven families to date for approximately 45 available slots. We anticipate additional New Haven applications before the March 4th NHPS deadline.
 - b) We also expect Open Choice applications from families living outside of New Haven to be similar to past years.
 - c) ECMS will continue school tours to prospective applicants on Thursdays in March of 2018
- 3) Partnership
 - a) An “Undoing Racism” session is scheduled for April 2018. Details will be shared as they are finalized. Board members are encouraged to attend.
 - b) Executive Director has joined the Advisory Board of the New Haven Children’s Ideal Learning District (NHChILD) to help advance a community-wide plan for expanding access to and improving quality in early childhood programs in New Haven.
 - c) Executive Director continues to position ECMS as a leader in high-quality early childhood education in our community through her work as the co-chair of the early childhood working group of the City Transformation Plan and as an appointed member of the New Haven Early Childhood Council.

IV. Committee Updates

- 1) Governance Committee
 - a) Board Training: Two board training sessions will be offered by PCLB in March and April; several ECMS board members are scheduled to attend the sessions.
 - b) Board Development: ED is working to schedule a meeting with prospective new board member Rise Nelson, Director of the Afro-American Cultural Center and Assistant Dean of Yale College.
 - c) There continues to be an active search for new board members – especially those with experience in fundraising.
- 2) Capital Planning Committee
 - a) Capital Planning next steps timeline was reviewed.
 - b) Tours of the Blake Street property have been attended by board members during February.
 - c) Work continues towards a move by ECMS to the Blake Street property by July 2018.
- 3) Finance Committee
 - a) Finance Committee is working to schedule a new monthly meeting time.
 - b) No updates to report, beyond financials shared in ED report.

V. Action Items

- 1) The board voted to approve the grant proposal to the Community Foundation of Greater New Haven for \$35,000 to support enrichment programs at ECMS.
- 2) The board voted to approve a proposal to increase enrollment for the 2018-19 school year for up to 220 students contingent upon a move to a school building with more space than the current ECMS school building.
- 3) The board voted to approve opening additional Open Choice seats as needed at the discretion of the Principal and the Executive Director.

Meeting adjourned at 7:14 PM

End of Meeting Minutes