



**Elm City Montessori School
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
7 June 2018**

Attendees: Mira Debs, Mike Nast, Julia Webb, Eliza Halsey, Susan Clark. and Fernando Muniz. David Low, Keith Krolak, Rise Nelson and Alayna Stone, joined by phone at 5:35 PM.

Meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm.

I. May Meeting Minutes

The May 2018 meeting minutes were approved.

II. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

III. Principal Updates

- 1) ECMS Strategic Goals 2017 data for June, 2018 was presented
 - a) Stronger Community
 - a) Staff attendance remained at 87% for May with a goal of 93
 - b) Student chronic absenteeism was 15% for April. This exceeds the 20% goal.
 - c) Staff working for NHPS will have their final TEVAL conferences/evaluations before the end of school.
 - d) Staff on the ECMS side will also meet with Julia to discuss areas of growth strengths. From the meetings so far, she reports that the feedback has been that the year has felt more organized. People are looking for more training for assistants and a closer look at the guide/assistant relationships.
 - e) There are no non-renewals at this point
 - f) Two staff members are leaving and there will be some staff transitions.
 - b) Safe and Productive Classrooms
 - a) Removals from classrooms decreased to 23.7 per week in April.
 - b) The ECMS goal for June, 2018 is to have fewer than 20 removals per week.
 - c) Academic Growth
 - a) June data shows the current reading goals for the entire ECMS student population are currently short of year-end goals, but students have made considerable progress since the beginning of the current school year.
 - b) Current data shows 18.52% of first graders are at grade level (year-end goal of 60%), 67% of second graders (exceeding year-end goal of 60%) are at grade level, and 68% of third graders (year-end goal of 75%) are at grade level.
 - c) The focused reading work will continue next year as will the social/emotional help.
 - d) Strategic Planning Document
 - i) The 3 objectives remain: strong community, safe and productive communities, and academic growth.
 - ii) In addition, there will be efforts to strengthen our community through
 - our ABAR work.
 - through the implementation of consistent policies and procedures
 - and a family partnership program that is more focused and deliberate.
 - iii) The staff will continue to participate in conscious discipline work.
 - iv) Emphasis will be placed on implementing Montessori school-wide.

IV. Executive Director Updates

1) Finances/Fundraising

- a) The Board reviewed the financials outlined in the Executive Director's report and got updates on the final district per pupil funding.
- b) Received third FY18 quarterly payment from NHPS in May 2018. Awaiting fourth FY18 quarterly payment from NHPS (\$90,000). The fourth FY18 quarterly NHPS payment has been approved by the NHPS BOE Finance Committee and is scheduled for NHPS BOE approval on in June 11, 2018.
- c) ECMS has received no updates on the NHPS budget process since our April meeting with NHPS Budget Adviser, Darrell Hill, and others from the NHPS team. Executive Director has been actively working to schedule an FY19 budget meeting with NHPS since early May and has contacted Superintendent Birks to request a meeting to discuss the FY19 budget and charter renewal. We have not received a response to date.

2) Grants

- a) We received an anonymous \$5,000 donation through RSF Social Finance in May 2018.
- b) We received a total of \$19,723.18 including matching funds from the Community Foundation's Great Give on May 25th.
- c) We did not receive the Community Foundation's responsive grant to support our Integrated Learning Program at ECMS, but we have been invited to apply for a \$7,500 project grant which we plan to submit in July.

3) Operations & Partnerships

- a) *Student Recruitment/Enrollment:* To date, 56 students have accepted seats to ECMS. We expect 7 more to accept seats by next week. The breakdown of new seats by grade is: 41 for PK students, 5 for Kindergarten, 8 for 1st grade, 3 for 2nd grade, 4 for 4th grade.
- b) *Contracts:* Henry, Raymond & Thompson, LLC has provided ECMS with audit and tax filing services for the past 3 years. We seek board approval of the FY19 contract with Henry, Raymond, Thompson for \$14,550 (\$13,000 for audit, \$1,550 for filing form 990).
- c) *Partnerships:* Board reviewed updates on partnerships outlined in the Executive Director's report, including work with Friends Center for Children, New Haven ChILD, New Haven Early Childhood Council, The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond and ProBono Partnership.

4) Capital Planning

- a) *Lease:* We are in final negotiations of the terms of the Blake St. lease and have secured a pro bono lawyer, Mike Lipp from Wiggin & Dana, to review our Blake St. lease. We expect to sign the lease by the end of June 2018.

VI. Strategic Planning Update

- 1) A meeting was held on May 30th. Board reviewed the SWOT analysis from the parent focus group and outlined additional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- 2) The Board discussed the upcoming charter renewal process and requested more information on the pros and cons of state charter vs local charter in order to inform the school's strategic direction. Executive Director agreed to get more information on key aspects of being a state charter and on the process/possibility of converting from a local charter to a state charter or becoming a district magnet school.
- 3) Some of our concerns with NH District include: the bureaucracy, the difficulties with communication and budgeting concerns.

V. Committee Updates

There were no committee updates

VI. Action Items

- 1) The board voted unanimously to approve the FY19 Henry, Raymond, Thompson contract for \$14,550 to provide audit and tax filing services
- 2) The board voted unanimously to approve the preliminary FY19 budget.

Meeting adjourned at 6:58 PM

End of Meeting Minutes