



Elm City Montessori School  
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes  
September 2, 2021

Attendees: Alayna Stone, Michael Van Leesten, Hacı Catalbasoglu, Jose Cuapio, Eliza Halsey, Susan Clark, Julia Webb, Adriana Joseph, Keith Krolak, Amelia Sherwood, Mira Debs, David Low

Meeting was called to order at 5:46 pm

**I. Meeting Minutes**

- A. The approval of the July 2021 meeting minutes were postponed to our next meeting.

**II. Public Participation**

- A. No members of the public were present.

**III. Principal's Report**

**Staffing**

- All Positions filled
- Working on substitutes and positions for extended day

**Building Teams and Leadership**

- [Coaching Plan 2021-2022:](#)
  - All instructional and SEL staff assigned a coach
  - Focus on more regular cycles of observations and coaching meetings (biweekly)
  - Connection between school wide learning and individual goals
  - Time to review classroom data and next steps
- [Professional Learning Plan 2021-2022:](#)
  - Focused on our strategic priorities: ABAR Community, SEL & Family Partnership, Academics as a Montessori school
  - Differentiated learning for guides, assistants, SEL team
  - Planning and collaboration for guides, SPED, intervention
  - Connection to regular use of data for SEL, Academics, ABAR rubric
  - Facilitation and leadership for Level Team Facilitators

**Start of School**

- Family Partnership: Family Gatherings, Classroom Visits
- Core Training: ABAR Community, Focus on Montessori Independence, Cosmic Education, Reading and Writing, and Portfolios

**School Improvement Planning & Goal Setting**

- School Improvement Planning (SIP) Timeline:
  - End of September: Leadership Team will complete draft of Organizational Plan (includes SIP)
  - October 2nd: Staff reviews SIP and sets schoolwide goals
  - November 15th: Staff set individual goals based on school wide goals
  - November: Board updates on goals and progress

### **Academic Data: SBA**

- **Trends:**
  - Schoolwide ELA proficiency increased
    - 2019: 33% proficient < 2021: 51% proficient
  - Schoolwide Math proficiency increased
    - 2019: 22% proficient < 2021: 36% proficient
  - Growth in older grades:
    - 6th Graders
      - ELA 2019: 53% < 2021: 66%
      - Math 2019: 26% < 2021: 34%
    - 5th Graders
      - ELA 2019: 18% (0% at Level 4) < 2021: 47% proficient (29% at Level 4)
      - Math 2019: 18% (0% at Level 4) < 2021: 18% proficient (18% at Level 4)

## **V. Executive Director’s Report**

### **Finances/Fundraising**

- *Budget Contingency plan:* In July 2021, NHPS proposed adding a new \$207,000 administrative fee to our budget for the first time. This will be a central item for discussion in the meeting with Dr. Tracey. In the event that this fee is finalized, our contingency plan is to cut this funding from planned renovations. This will have significant implications for the FY23 school year.
- Action items: to find the statute governing the proposed administrative fee and reach out to Dr. Jackson-McArthur.

### **Facilities/Operations**

- *Facilities Purchase:* The purchase of 495 Blake Street has not yet been finalized. The initial plan with the owner’s was for them to provide a \$1,125,000 seller’s note. Negotiations regarding the subordination agreement have held up the deal for 2 months. Recently, New Haven Bank as the lead lender agreed to pursue other lending options in order to remove the seller’s note. We expect to have an update by September 10th on the new lender. Attorney Tiernan has negotiated a new deal with the owners: \$5,275,000 purchase price with no seller’s note.
- *Enrollment:* ECMS currently has 272 students enrolled for the 2021-22 school year (including 31 students in PK3) and expects to enroll at least 11 additional students.

## **VI. Committee Updates**

- A. Governance: Plan on meeting in-person once a quarter. Stay tuned for an email regarding the yearly retreat.

## **VII. Action Items**

The Board unanimously voted to:

- A. Approve Eli Sabin, Ward 1 Alder, to the ECMS Board of Trustees ([resume here](#))
- B. Authorize the Board President to exercise the option to purchase 495 Blake St. based on the terms of the [Option for Purchase and Sale](#).
- C. Authorize the Board President to execute the option to purchase 495 Blake St. with the terms outlined in the purchase option document.

Meeting adjourned at 6:37 PM

END OF MEETING NOTES

Meeting Minutes respectfully submitted by Hacibey Catalbasoglu.