

EPS PA General Meeting

September 15th, 2021

Katharine Pike – PA President

Katharine started the meeting by greeting the more than 130 parents attending the first virtual PA meeting of the new school year. Katharine introduced the members of the PA Executive Committee who are as follows:

Past PA President – Claudia Bayer

Secretary – Patti Saunty

Athletics Volunteer Coordinator – Jenni Heuberger

Volunteer Coordinators – Roomi Sharma and Ruchi Bhutani

Hospitality Team – Shairose Gulamani, Xixi Shakes, Cindy Goetzman and Bengu Bostanci

Faculty/Staff Appreciation Team – Joumana Hoballah, Dorian Bell and Diane Melling

She highlighted the work that the PA does throughout the school year such as the 120 gourmet food baskets put together last year with the generous donations of the parent community, the new family picnics, the back-to-school picnics and the upcoming Fall Harvest event.

Sam Uzwick – Associate Head of School for Middle School and Student Support Services

Sam began by saying how glad he is to be back at school and in-person. His biggest job this year is to continue to build the EPS community and to ensure that after the last year of being remote that EPS succeed at teaching the new students just what EPS is and what it is to be a part of this community. They will be (and already are) using the Advisory program to do this and he feels that students are already further on than expected this year.

Dr. John Stegeman – Upper School Head

John also emphasized community and how they are not making assumptions about the state of the community after a year in remote school. They will be working really hard with students to ensure there is understanding in the community about what it means to be a student in the EPS community.

Dr. Kelly Moore

Kelly is offering her Parent Care Course this year with the help of trained facilitators. This will ensure that any parent who wants to take the course will have the opportunity to do so. It will be offered as a 10-week social/emotional course that includes videos from Kelly and discussion in groups led by the trained facilitators. The Parent Care Open House will be held virtually on September 28th at 10:45AM.

Dr. Terry Macaluso – Head of School

Terry answered parent questions:

1. One parent asked about the decision to go to 85 students per class in high school and what prompted the change. Terry said that a bigger class is much easier socially for the students, but special care will be taken to ensure that the EPS culture remains despite the enrollment growth.
2. There was a question about any academic catch-up and how it was being addressed. Terry stated that teachers don't feel the students are in need of any catch-up and seem to be on grade-level target.
3. Will EPS offer a hybrid model if COVID worsens? Terry said that the teachers do not like hybrid at all because it doesn't work well and Terry supports them in that so there won't be hybrid schooling this year. There is a possibility of a return to full remote depending on the COVID situation.
4. One parent wondered about students physical and mental endurance – Terry said that the school day is one hour shorter now to deal with just that and to help students get more sleep.
5. Another parent asked if there was a target they were looking at to move to remote schooling and Terry said it depends more on what is happening at our school than at the state or county level. Classes will be broadcast (listen only – no interaction) for students who aren't feeling well and should stay home (with pre-approval from the Division Head). They are less likely to get behind in their schoolwork if they can at least see what was taught that day. More information about the broadcasting of classes is forthcoming.
6. When do the 5th/6th grade students begin random covid testing? The school nurse is working on this right now
7. Why are there multiple times for the upper school parent meeting listed? This year there will be one virtual meeting for everyone and then the following week a couple of opportunities to meet in person in smaller groups. You will need to RSVP for the on-campus meetings.
8. Students have complained about smaller lunch portions and Terry has alerted the kitchen staff of the complaints and expects it will be remedied soon.

Meeting adjourned 9:46AM