

**EPS PA General Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 5, 2012
Levinger-Poole Commons, 6pm**

Desiree Eden, Parent Association President, welcomed members of the EPS community to the first PA evening meeting. Desiree introduced Jen Cross, Tech Specialist at EPS, who walked attendees through the features of the EPS website. Desiree then introduced Jeff Adair, Dean of Students, who spoke on Education Beyond the Classroom (EBC) and the spring trips that are part of that program at Eastside Prep. Below are highlights of responses by Jeff to questions from parents:

A parent asked about students being allowed to sign up for their top three choices, and what would happen if one 9th grader signs up for a trip filled with 12th graders?

Given the December 5th deadline, the school will have plenty of time to look at the make-up of each trip and make sure the student choices will result in a successful trip.

Several parents asked if returning paperwork early would result in a better likelihood that their child would receive their first trip choice.

Jeff replied that he already has 41 responses in his office and that they have no priority over paperwork that is submitted on the deadline of December 5th. However, everything received on or before December 5th will have priority over paperwork submitted after the deadline.

A parent asked if the age ranges set out in the offerings is hard and fast or if his 7th grade student might be able to go on a trip designated for 8th grade and above.

The age ranges are hard and fast because EPS hopes to sustain this structure for trips and wants students to have something to look forward to for future years.

A parent asked about the trips for 5th and 6th grade.

Students in 5th grade will go to Camp Orkila and 6th graders will go to Natures Bridge, which was formerly OPI.

A parent stated that they had heard that one the camps included work with bows and arrows and was concerned about safety.

Students will have the opportunity to use bows and arrows at one of the camps but that the camp provides guides to supervise the activity and it is very safe. Jeff also reported that the school has a chaperone ratio of 8 to 1 and that chaperones are always faculty members rather than parents.

A parent stated that their student already has a conflict on the week of the trips.

The school considers this week to be a regular week of school but understand that some families have conflicts which are dealt with individually.

A parent asked if, when choosing a trip for their student, they should take into consideration what trips might be offered again in the summer.

Jeff stated that he coordinates both the spring and summer trips and that he works to ensure that even if the same destination is offered for both (such as Costa Rica), the experience is different enough to separate the two trips.

A parent asked about the maximum size on the Ashland trip since she felt that would be very popular.

The maximum size for that trip is between 30 and 40. He also stated that the Ashland trip is extremely fun and that students will see 5 plays and spend time at a local university with actors.

A parent asked about the summer programs at EPS and how many students from outside EPS attend those programs.

78 students were involved in summer programs last year and 17 of them were from outside EPS. Jeff also stated that some students have enrolled in EPS because of their introduction to the school from the summer programs.

A parent asked if the core chaperones had been chosen for each trip.

The school is purposefully not releasing that information so that students make their choices based on the trip rather than the chaperones. This seemed for students as well as faculty, who might feel that they need to try to “sell” their trips to students in order to increase participation.

A parent asked if the Costa Rica trip would be Spanish immersion for the entire trip.

Students will be spending time in a home stay, working in a womens center and taking a Spanish surf lesson, so those parts would be immersion. The students will be doing their home stay in groups of 3.

A parent asked if their student could go on the cycling trip if he is fit but not an avid cyclist.

Jeff stated that he will need to check and would get back to the parent. He also stated that the trip will be on road bikes with some slopes and that the tour group will be providing bikes.

A parent asked how much the trip offerings change from year to year.

There has been a tremendous change from what was offered last year because the school listened to feedback from parents.

A parent asked if the top three selection process allowed for strategic manipulation by students.

Jeff reported that he did not expect this to be a concern.

A parent asked if there will still be project week.

Seniors will still have a project week, but other students will not.

A parent asked how different this experience would be from summer camp.

Jeff responded that he hoped the trips would include some of the best experiences from summer camp but would be better because these trips are being taken as a community and the students will be taking the EPS vision to the experience.