

Edgewood Campus Parent Association General Meeting Minutes January 10, 2011

School Staff in Attendance:

Mr. Doyle Smiens, Campus Director
Mrs. Sheryl Reynolds, Admissions director

Guest Speaker:

Rob Chandler, CEO Fairmont Private Schools

ECPA Board members in Attendance:

Mr. Gus Toubia, President
Darryl Sheetz, Treasurer
Mrs. Nazanin Emami-Hosseinzadeh, Secretary

In Attendance:

Edgewood Campus proud parents!

- Gus Toubia introduced the board members: Darryl as Treasurer, and Nazanin as Secretary.
- Gus mentioned that over the holidays the teachers each received a \$100 donation for their classrooms. This money was taken out of the general account which was funded thanks to the parent's generous donations during the fund raising event.
- Mr. Toubia also mentioned the purchase of nooks, which are electronic book readers from Barnes & Nobles.
- He also stated that Darryl Sheetz donated another \$5,000.00 to the 501C account. The funds from this account may only be spent on the arts, literary programs, math, and science. Gus finished by thanking the parents for being her and turned the floor over to Mr. Doyle Smiens.

- Mr. Smiens started by wishing everyone a happy new year and thanking the parents for their attendance. He mentioned that the parents are the ones who made the purchase of the Nooks possible and thanked them for it.
- He mentioned that the re-enrollment period is coming out and packets will be received shortly. He stated that this is a partnership between the parents, students, himself, and the school. He also said that he is available and here to listen and address the parents' concerns.
- Gus Toubia at this point apologized that Mr. David Jackson was not able to make the meeting due to a family emergency and introduced Mr. Rob Chandler in his place instead.
- Mr. Chandler started by stating that he was under the impression that they would experience a flat year this academic year. He mentioned that two years ago the school started with 90 less students than the previous year, and that last year they started the year with 160 less students than the previous year. He was surprised that this year they started the year with 80 more students than last year. Fairmont now has 532 new students and is hoping to grow incrementally next year. He stated that this growth will allow them to re-invest in education and the campuses.
- He mentioned that last year they increased tuition by 4% across the board. Next year the increase will be 3.5% across the board. Students going through different grade levels will experience larger gaps.
- Mr. Chandler stated that cost increases every year, and that they are not in a position where they don't experience an increase in their expenses. They are trying to be sensitive to this matter.
- He mentioned that they are a for profit business. Rob stated that the difference between Fairmont and other private schools is that as a not-for-profit business they have another accounting system and, here at Fairmont we have a profit and loss statement. He stated that other schools are in your pocket all the time for operating cost, more frequent fund raising, and so forth. Mr. Chandler said that last year the school lost money on a net profit basis.

- Rob Chandler stated that this year they have made a nominal profit and that Cap X spending comes from this profit. He further mentioned that 8% is a very high profit margin for a school. There are parochial and non-sectarian schools. Some examples he mentioned were Harbor Day, Sage, St. Margaret's, and Pegasus.
- He also mentioned that another difference between our school and the above mentioned schools are the fact that we don't have 30 people sitting on the board of trustees. This fact enables quick decision making for the school. He stated that the owner of Fairmont Private Schools is very passionate about school and not so passionate about fiscal matters.
- In regards to Cap X spending, Mr. Chandler mentioned that Mr. Chad Jackson comes out every year and meets with the each campus director, as well as with Ms. Sandy Cosgrove, our director of education, along with the teachers and the IT department. They talk about a wish list. They then finalize matters and work usually gets done during summer. They do preventive maintenance as well as Cap X.
- Rob Chandler then discussed the class sizes. He said that Sandy Cosgrove, Director of Education, will be presenting the academic outcomes relating to class size in 30-45 days.
- He disclosed the following guidelines for classroom sizes:
 - K-6th grade up to 25 students/class.
 - K-2nd grade a guideline of 20 students/class. Campus Director has discretion to increase this number.
- Mr. Chandler discussed the CTP4 tests and the mastery tests. He stated that the CTP4 measures against other elite independent schools and that we score around 98%. Mastery tests are internal, and they measure how well the students are doing at the beginning of the year versus the end of the year. He also mentioned that college acceptance rate from the Prep Academy is higher than other high schools.

- Parents raised more questions regarding class size. Mr. Chandler insisted that academic outcome is always the best measurement of student performance. He mentioned that research has been done by Fairmont and results have been excellent regardless of the class size.
- Parents expressed their belief that a smaller class size produces better and stronger students and prepares them for a brighter future.
- Mr. Chandler replied that in order to offset the increase in class size, teacher aides were hired.
- Mr. Chandler repeated that for 60 years, the class size guideline has been set at 25. He also thought that the variations from year to year is due to economic factors as well as dropout rates.
- One parent asked about the plan for the near future, and Mr. Chandler responded that numbers are hard to predict.
- Parents felt that there were verbal promises that the class size was to top out at 25, and yet changes were created which brought about a major trust issue with the school. Some parents even suggested that 16 students per class was the ideal number.
- Mr. Chandler advised the parents to continue monitoring their children's progress with the teachers, and he promises that there will never be more than 25 students per class.
- A parent complained that little children get bullied sometimes in the yard, and asked how the school was dealing with it. Mr. Smiens, the school director, answered by saying he will immediately address it and instruct the staff to pay extra attention to the issue.
- The lack of cleanliness of the bathrooms was brought up again by the parents, and they were advised that the bathrooms would be cleaned more often and new plumbing would be installed.
- Many parents mentioned that the Edgewood Campus feels like a second child when compared to the Anaheim Hills Campus. Mr

Chandler replied that each campus has its own capital expenditure set based on its needs.

- The conversation ended with a discussion on the curriculum for next year, and Mr. Chandler said Ms. Sandy Cosgrove would be the best person to answer that question.
- Mr. Toubia suggested that it would be a good plan to have her as a guest speaker at the next meeting.
- Meeting was adjourned.