

**May 20, 2024**

**8:45 – 9:45 AM via MS Teams and in the TALI Theater**

**1. APG Activities (Katharine Pike)**

- Athletics:
  - o Recognized the efforts of team parents in attending games and providing snacks, procuring coach gifts
  - o Team parents don't have to attend every game; they can organize other parents to attend / bring snacks
  - o Special thanks to Leela Rao, our Athletics coordinator on the APG
- Arts:
  - o Fantastic 2 years since we kicked off APG support of the Arts
  - o Addams Family musical was incredible! Our students are so talented!
  - o Big thanks to the families who supported the performers (snacks, lunches, banquette)
  - o Fantastic cast boards posted in the lobby featuring performers
  - o Special thanks to Tami and Shairose for leading the volunteer effort
- Faculty & Staff Appreciation:
  - o Spring is annual (national) Teacher Appreciation week
  - o Our rhythm is to provide Faculty and Staff flowers on Mon, snacks on Wed and Trophy cupcakes on Friday
  - o Families were so generous to drop off flowers in the car lines; APG and volunteers assembled bouquets
  - o Special thanks to Tani, Michelle, Diane and Sukriti for leading volunteer efforts
- Spring Family Socials / Class Rep Coordinators:
  - o 5<sup>th</sup> grade went above and beyond (Jeannie Kleinpeter) by inviting new families to the hike along with the existing kids
  - o We have a few upcoming socials (5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> on 5/30 in AM and PM), 9<sup>th</sup> on 5/31 and 11<sup>th</sup> on 5/29. 10<sup>th</sup> was yesterday.
  - o EOY Class Rep meeting held with outgoing, incoming and returning Class Reps – huge group of volunteers!
- Key Dates through EOY:

- Date	Time	Event
5/23	5:00 – 6:00 PM	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Social
5/23	6:30 – 8:30 PM	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Social
5/24 - 5/27	All Day	Memorial Day Holiday: No School
5/29	6:00 – 8:00 PM	Upper School Sports Banquet
6/1	7:30 – 10:30 PM	Prom
6/4	11:15 – 11:45 AM	Senior Thesis Presentations
6/4	3:30 – 7:00 PM	Arts Fest
6/5 – 6/6	All Day	Upper School Reading Days: No School
6/4 – 6/6	All Day	Middle School Finals
6/5	Half-Day	Upper School Field Day

6/7	Half-Day	Last day of MS / Field Day
6/7, 6/10-11	All Day	Upper School Finals
6/11	1:00 – 4:00 PM	Directing Projects
6/11-12	TBD	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Retreat
6/12	6:00 – 8:00 PM	Senior Reception
6/13	TBD	Continuation
6/13	12:30 – 2:30	Senior Lunch and Rehearsal
6/14	1:30 PM	Graduation

**2. APG Exec Team Roster Vote (Vickie Baldwin)**

- The APG Exec team nominees were voted in
- President: Bengu Bostanci
- Secretary: Kristen Boeckmann
- Athletics: Ayesha Affan
- Arts: Tami Cheung and Brenda Brown
- Class Reps: Julia Owens and Adam Milam
- Hospitality: Sukriti Singhal, Tani Bhutani and Melissa Stone
- Faculty and Staff Appreciation: Leela Rao, Ruchi Bhutani and Michelle Peyree

**3. Head of School (Sam Uzwick)**

- Volunteer Recognition:
  - o Thank you to all of our incredible volunteers! We feel so supported. We want families to be equally engaged in our community as our students are.
  - o Alice Strong Award Recipients: Highest award given to the volunteers in our community who provide leadership. The winners are:
    1. Joe Belfiore: Incredible photographer of athletics and arts events
    2. Shairose Gulamani: 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary committee, Hospitality committee, Support of Arts programs, Admissions support helping to prototype interview process
    3. Katharine Pike: Leaving her post as APG President after three years.
- We want to emphasize collaborative learning
- We don't have standard school structures here like Valedictorians, AP/Honors courses, class rankings
- Students feel connected to the community and supported
- We are investing in expanding and staffing our Independent Curriculum program
- We also want to harness the amazing expertise that exists within our parent and guardian community (current and alum). Vickie is working to build a database of resources. We are working hard to deepen and grow this community connection.

**4. Independent Curriculum (Matt Delaney: Director of Academic Design)**

- We started this program 20 years ago
- Affords students a way in which to distinguish themselves on a transcript and show their academic journey at EPS (akin to advanced learning). We want colleges to see how our students have pursued what they love. We do not offer generic one-size-fits-all Honors programs.
- Independent Curriculum is available to all students. Students opt-in and become deeply invested.
- This is about freedom of choice and is inquiry-based

- Early years of the upper school: We worked to accommodate our students' individual interests. Over the past seven years, independent study, independent project and senior thesis have become goals of the learning experience at EPS
- To what degree can a student construct and self-direct their own learning? If students construct their own independent study, they have authorship and agency not typically afforded to students in high school. It's both an academic expression and a practical opportunity for them to take initiative and ownership. This is evidenced by a high level of engagement by our students and graduates.
- "Deliberate Design College Career and Life" seminar: based on Designing Your Life book (Stanford). Talks about how learning is iterative and non-linear. Many faculty have had non-linear career paths.
- 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders have access to this. Serves as a scaffold to independent studies.
- Spring of junior year, students can design their own 10-week course and identify a mentor
- Independent Study: 70% is about research and 30% is about creating a synthesis of that effort
- Independent Project: Opposite of IS. 70% is about building with 30% research.
- 12<sup>th</sup> Grade: 20 week-long senior thesis (e.g. 20-25 pp paper). Can be inter-disciplinary.
- We have 63 upper school students who applied for and built an independent experience
- Next year: We're bolstering independent study, independent project and senior thesis with more faculty support. We have onboarded two Independent Curriculum facilitators (Dr. Duffy and Mr. Ho) who will connect with students in cohorts. We want to focus more on networking students with members of the EPS community (including alums) who have domain expertise.
- Impact Projects: Next step from independent projects. These are collaborative. Gives 12<sup>th</sup> graders an opportunity to research and build with their peers.
- **Question:** What does the Independent Curriculum selection process look like?
  - o We ask students to express interest through course sign-up in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. We do not expect sophomores to know exactly what they want to do as seniors. This is an opportunity for them to express early interest and to experiment without risk.
  - o Proposal process happens every term prior to the next term
  - o Juniors: We offer a prep course to lead them through the proposal process. Juniors build out proposals with consultation from faculty members. They start in winter in preparation for proposals in spring.
- **Question:** How does a student identify a mentor for an area of independent study?
  - o Dr. Duffy and Mr. Ho are our independent study and independent project mentors. They will host cohorts. Students will then connect to faculty on campus or individuals outside of EPS in relevant industries. Vickie is building a DB of resources.
- **Question:** How are students made aware of other independent studies and projects, past and present?
  - o At the close of every academic term, there are independent study and independent project presentations (symposium format). These are available to all students, but not parents/guardians.
  - o We have an assembly experience for senior thesis. Students present in 3 areas of TALI. We may move to a symposium format in the future.
  - o Students receive an independent study resource page with a list of each completed in the past 20 years
- **Question:** Can every student participate in independent study?
  - o Yes! There is one student taking 7 year-long courses who cannot take an 8<sup>th</sup> course (due to schedule conflicts), but otherwise every student has access.

- **Question:** What do you need to do before you apply for a senior thesis? How do we measure a student's progress?
  - Requirement is 1-2 independent studies of "exceptional quality"
  - Students receive ongoing faculty feedback regarding the quality level of their work
  - Students either earn credit (Pass) for the independent study, or it falls off of their transcript. There is no risk because if the student does not complete the study or project, there is no record of it.
  - Senior Theses are graded
- **Question:** How do we encourage student participation in Independent Curriculum if it isn't required? Not all students have the organizational skills to self-direct.
  - A very high percentage of our faculty have been mentors or have hosted a seminar in the Independent Curriculum realm
  - All of our students are in different places developmentally. We recognize that. We want to give them the resources and exposure to make their own choices rather than to mandate it so they are invested.
- **Question:** Summer requirements for students?
  - Every student will have some form of required summer reading
  - We've moved away from summer picnics for new families
  - Compassionate Leaders Camp: Learn the art of leadership and what it means to be a leader
  - Conferences and picnics will start after Labor Day
  - Make sure your forms are filled out!
  - Things will fire up in mid- to late August
- **Question:** Is there a plan to incorporate other world languages besides Spanish into our academic curriculum?
  - Not at this time. We're trying to partner with sister schools in Spanish-speaking countries.
  - If there is interest in participating in other languages, students can do so, but not for course credit
- **Question:** Have any decisions been made about what to do with Buildings 1, 2, 10 and 12?
  - Our ultimate goal is to acquire the entire office park
  - We have priorities defined as well as prelim drawings, but are not ready to begin construction until we have the complete vision
  - We need a field for kids to play on, more parking, a bigger LPC cafeteria, Student Life Activity space, Environmental Studies space, etc.
  - We may lease in the interim to generate passive income for the school
  - May use the spaces for Impact and Independent projects
- **Question:** Is there a plan to grow our student population?
  - No, we have no plans to grow our school. We will never have 1,000 students like Lakeside or SaaS.
  - We are extremely efficient with low debt, so there is no monetary need to expand at this time
  - As we build within the park, we will need to factor those operating expenses into our budget and plan accordingly