

**January 13, 2026**

8:45 – 9:45 AM via MS Teams with 111 attendees at its peak

## **1. Bengu Bostanci, Association of Parents and Guardians (APG) President**

- **Hospitality** (Chandra Pandey, Tani Bhutani and Sukriti Singhai)
  - o Hosted back-to-school breakfast on 9/18 and our Fall Harvest celebration on 9/26
  - o Adults-only Fall Harvest theme was “Care through Clarity”, held in the LPC and TALI
  - o Photo booth was a huge hit! Delicious food and festive decorations. Bengu showed photos and thanked the many who volunteered.
  - o All-school Picnic (Sat, May 30<sup>th</sup>) will be open to all families past and present
- **Faculty & Staff Appreciation** (Richa Rai, Tamara Reznik, Ruchi Bhutani and Leela Rao)
  - o Thanks to everyone who helped purchase items for the Holiday Baskets!
  - o Preparing these takes two days to open the boxes, organize and sort the inventory and assemble the baskets
  - o Each staff member also received a handwritten note from a volunteer
- **Arts** (Brenda Bown and Jeannie Kleinpeter)
  - o Hosted an after-play reception for the performers of “The Somewhat Tale of Robin Hood”
  - o Jeannie and her husband constructed the photo booth by hand!
  - o Upper School play will be “Our Town”
- **Athletics** (Ayesha Affan)
  - o Identifies team parents for most middle school and upper school athletic teams
  - o Coordinates sports banquets, etc.
- **Class Rep Coordinators** (Adam Milam and Polina Mokshina)
  - o Thank you for organizing coffee socials, breakfasts, dinners, happy hours and walks to bring our community together and instill a sense of belonging. Bengu showcased photos of the grade-level socials.
  - o Kitchen and Market is our favorite place for coffee gatherings
  - o Some reps have hosted events in their homes!
- **Secretary** (Kristen Boeckmann)
  - o Thanks for capturing notes for the APG Exec and General Meetings, and for aggregating Grade-level Parent Meeting notes
  - o Notes are published on the Families page of the EPS site and in the *EPS Weekly*
- **How Can You Help Volunteer?**
  - o Check the *EPS Weekly* every Friday for more details and sign-up links!
  - o If your student is in the Upper School play, please look for an email from Brenda Brown and Jeannie Kleinpeter with info about how you can help
  - o For a full list of volunteer opportunities, visit the EPS website. Log in, click Current Families, then click Parent Association. Scroll down the page to “Click HERE to learn more about a variety of volunteer opportunities.”

## **2. Paul Hagen, Director of Student Well-being**

- This year, we’re hosting 23 **EBC experiences** including Japan, the Dominican and Iceland
- Every experience is led by an EPS faculty member and includes one or more EPS chaperones

- We invest considerable time with our leaders and chaperones to ensure they are prepared
- We had offered 27 experiences initially, but reduced to 23 based on student interest level
- Paul and David Kelly-Hedrick collaborate to ensure every experience is educational and offers students a unique perspective on the world
- **Important EBC Dates:**
  - o 3/17: **EBC Info Night** will be from 6:30 – 7:30 PM on MS Teams for most experiences. Meetings for Grades 5-6 and International Experiences will be in person.
  - o Please mark your calendar as we strive to have full attendance. Prior to this meeting, stay tuned for communications about required forms, itinerary, packing list and other trip prep details.
  - o EBC week is generally 4/6 – 4/10. Note that some trips may depart earlier and arrive later. Best to plan Spring Break travel to begin on Monday, 4/13.
  - o Grade 5 trip will be to Camp Orkila (M – Th)
  - o Grade 6 trip will be to Nature Bridge (M – Th)
- We ask students in Grade 8 and above to provide their top 3 choices and justification for those choices and what they hope to achieve
- All seniors this year were granted their first-choice experience
- Juniors were given either their first or second choice
- We prioritize the seniors and juniors
- Some students may not get their first choice if there was too much or too little demand
- Our sweet spot group size is typically 15 – 24 students
- Mixed grades often work best, and we also strive for gender diversity
- With 545 students total to host, it's a jigsaw puzzle!
- Please make sure your child's passport is current if they are travelling internationally
- Paul invited families to reach out with further questions

### 3. Sam Uzwack, Head of School

- **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Update:**
  - o Occupancy was targeted for December, but may be closer to February
  - o Currently working to complete construction of the rooms, fence, gate, etc.
  - o For over a year, we've been partnering closely with the City of Kirkland, King County and Plymouth Housing operator. We've also led neighborhood meetings to plan for the PSH opening.
  - o We continue to maintain a strong leadership position and an influential seat at the table in these discussions
  - o Last of the monthly meetings concluded in November; we're now moving to a quarterly cadence
  - o We continue to coordinate with the city about details such as our fencing, their fencing, proper traffic and pedestrian flow and other logistical items
  - o We've turned the corner in one aspect: we received a few project ideas from Plymouth Housing about how we can partner with them (e.g. welcome baskets for residents). Our students cannot volunteer in the facility as the requirement is age 18 and older.
  - o The move-in process of residents will be gradual by design. They will start small, build culture and grow from there. A small group of residents will occupy in Feb, another small group in March and full occupancy is slated for June during our summer break.

- **Disciplinary Incident Update:**

- In the wake of this incident, parents and students expressed concerns to Sam and other faculty about our culture and the safety of our students
- Sam first received an email on Thursday from a concerned individual
- Due to privacy and confidentiality issues, Sam is unable to provide any details. Trust that we are investigating this incident fully and there will be consequences, although we will not announce what those consequences will be
- The care that our students and parents/guardians have shown about our community is remarkable. Our greatest strength is our care for one another and for our community.
- Sam addressed this at the Eagle Con meeting with students this week. He told the students he is very proud of them for how they've reacted to the situation.
- Trust is earned and is bi-directional
- One major take-away Sam has is that many have questions about our Code of Conduct and what our disciplinary process is. Sam is going to think about how to make our Student Handbook more transparent.
- Sam's door is always open. Please don't hesitate to reach out via email or phone.

**4. Q&A**

- **Question:** How do we access the Fall Harvest photo booth pictures?
- **Answer:** Vickie will follow up about how to share a link.
- **Question:** Could links to the online events be included in the EPS calendar?
- **Answer:** Vickie will follow up about this.
- **Question:** Curious about the thinking behind offering a "mystery trip" in EBC. Do students on this trip now know where they are going?
- **Answer:** We are piloting this approach for the first time. It was the brainchild of David Kelly-Hedrick and some of our teachers. Students won't know where they are going until they arrive. This will be a domestic experience, not international.

It was interesting to read why students chose the mystery trip. This is an opportunity to lean into the unknown and break out of the predictability of their daily lives. We want students to learn how to deal with ambiguity and not be anxious about it. Jeff Bendel is leading this trip. Each day, there will be surprises for the students!

- **Question:** Will there be a packing list for the EBC mystery trip?
- **Answer:** There will be pre-meetings about this experience with the students where they will receive packing lists and other important preparation info. The packing list may provide some clues!
- **Question:** Will there be notarization on March 17<sup>th</sup> for the international EBC trips?
- **Answer:** Yes.

- **Question:** Has the EPS PSH team been following the Bellevue City Council presentations and community comments about the Eastgate campus operated by Plymouth Housing? Connecting with BPD activities and their engagement with the Bellevue campus?  
**Answer:** Yes, we have been following the progress of the Eastgate PSH site. Note that the Eastgate site is not an apples-to-apples comparison to our neighbor. For example, at Eastgate, the PSH has no background checks and the site also includes an emergency shelter. Limited support services.
  - **Question:** For student safety, what are the plans for lighting on the side of the fence? It's very dark for our basketball players. Also, it would be better if we had more screening between the PSH and our campus to prevent residents from watching our students.  
**Answer:** Yes, we will look at how to enhance our lighting. We have security personnel on campus until 11 PM in case students need assistance walking to their vehicles.
  - **Question:** How would a student get security support if needed? Would they look for a security guard or will we have a text/phone number to contact similar to college campuses?  
**Answer:** Please share our campus security number with your children to add to their phones: **425-625-6761**. We publish this from time to time.
  - **Question:** What else are we planning to do besides fencing to beef up our security as occupancy increases?  
**Answer:** We have been working on campus security for quite some time. We continue to battle pedestrian traffic through our campus. We brought our security in house in part for this reason. We have contingency plans in place as well in case we need to bolster our efforts. We will be watching this like a hawk and have additional options at the ready that we could implement if need be. Our security team will meet with Plymouth's to discuss how to work together.
- Regarding fencing, we've discussed steel fencing vs. closed concrete fencing. We learned that closed concrete fencing can lead to more negative behavior because there's less visibility. We've been working to create more screening on our side through vegetation. We are not taking a reactive "wait and see" approach. We will keep families posted as to our progress with fencing, screening and lighting.
- **Question:** Is it possible to add stricter screening standards for residents?
  - **Answer:** This site will have some of the strictest screening standards in the state due to our heavy involvement. Every resident must have a full background check. This will deter some residents because they can choose sites that don't require background checks. Anyone precluded from living near a school will be screened out immediately. 60-75% of residents are currently living on the eastside and have established case managers. Plymouth Housing will work with applicants' case managers to determine which residents are a fit and have the best chance of success.
  - **Question:** Will onsite staff monitor for drug and gun possession?
  - **Answer:** The PSH's Code of Conduct bans illegal drugs and weapons. We asked for strengthened language for residents to have their lease terminated if they are in violation of the Code of Conduct. The facility will have onsite staff 24x7 to monitor for negative behavior as well.
  - **Question:** Is Plymouth required to inform EPS of behavioral or criminal issues they encounter?

- **Answer:** They are required to report to the City of Kirkland and our recurring working meetings will also include this as a discussion point.

### 5. Calendar of Upcoming Events

Date	Time	Event	Location
1/13	6:00 – 8:00 PM	Senior Parent/Guardian Reception	LPC
1/15	Ravenna Deadline	Sibling Admissions Apps Due	Ravenna site
1/15	3:15 – 9:30 PM	Ski Bus	Snoqualmie Pass
1/16 – 1/19	All Day	Closed for PDD, MLK Holiday	Enjoy!
1/21	7:00 – 8:30 PM	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade College Counseling Night for Parents/Guardians	EPS Campus
1/23	3:30 – 5:30 PM: MS 4, 5 and 7: Hoopfest 8:30 – 10:00 PM: US	Winterfest Social, Hoopfest Triple Header Basketball Showdown	Hoopfest in the Gym Socials in LPC
1/24	8:45 – 2:30 PM	EPS Venture: Open to Grades 7 - 12	Washington State History Museum in Tacoma  Meet in front of TALI at 8:45 AM to catch the shuttle
1/27	10:00 – 11:00 AM	9 <sup>th</sup> /10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Guardian Meeting	Virtual on MS Teams – Stay tuned for the link to register
1/28	8:30 – 9:30 AM	5 <sup>th</sup> /6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Guardian Meeting	Virtual on MS Teams – See <i>EPS Weekly</i>
1/29	8:30 – 9:30 AM	11 <sup>th</sup> /12 <sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Guardian Meeting	Virtual on MS Teams – Stay tuned for the link to register
1/30	End of Day	Applications due for EPS Venture: The Power and Allure of Alaska  Open to Grades 8 - 11	See EPS Weekly or Contact Gaylynn Lynch, Steve Fassino or David Kelly-Hedrick
2/3	8:30 – 9:30 AM	9 <sup>th</sup> /10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Coffee Meeting	In person – TBA
2/3	2:00 – 3:00 PM	11 <sup>th</sup> /12 <sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Coffee Meeting	In person – TBA
2/4	8:30 – 9:30 AM	7 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Coffee Meeting	Virtual on MS Teams – See <i>EPS Weekly</i>
2/5	2:00 – 3:00 PM	9 <sup>th</sup> /10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Coffee Meeting	In person – TBA
2/5	7:00 – 8:30 PM	Upper School Play: “Our Town”	TALI Theater

# EPS APG GENERAL MEETING

Date	Time	Event	Location
2/6	7:00 – 8:30 PM		
2/7	2:00 – 3:30 PM 7:00 – 8:30 PM		
2/6	8:30 – 9:30 AM	11 <sup>th</sup> /12 <sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Coffee Meeting	In person – TBA
2/6	TBA	Re-enrollment contracts due	Online
2/7	TBA	Snow Shoeing Trip	TBA
2/10	6:00 – 8:00 PM	Culture Night	LPC  See the <i>EPS Weekly</i> to complete the participant form due Jan 26
2/13- 2/22	All Day	Closed for Mid-Winter Break	Enjoy!
2/23- 2/26	3:30 – 5:30 PM	All School Musical Auditions	TALI