

**Thomas Edison Charter Schools
Governing Board Meeting
September 6, 2017
5:30 pm**

In attendance: Kyle Hancock, Emily Buckley, Audra Parent, Adam Burris, Chris Johnnie
Excused: Denae Pruden

Welcome/Conducting: Adam Burris
Pledge: Audra Parent
Charter Highlight: Chris Johnnie - Parental involvement
Adoption of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda: Adam Burris
Second: Audra Parent
Yes: Kyle Hancock, Emily Buckley, Audra Parent, Adam Burris, Chris Johnnie

Public Comment:

David Burris is a parent of 5 current students and one who has been through the system. He asked that administration look at the amount of homework required. He understands the purpose of homework, but would like to see less of it.

Approval of Minutes – Adam: Tabled

9th Grade Financial Data - Audra Parent:

Audra showed revenue, known expenses and other variable expenses. There are expenses for 30 students, even if not that many are registered. This includes salaries, benefits and accreditation.

Shem pointed out that it is not just teacher salaries, but a counselor is required for 9th grade. The figures do not include materials.

Many of the non-accelerated students opt out of biology, so there is the cost of a teacher or aide to run a study hall for them. Teachers teaching 9th grade have to have a high school certification to teach just one period of a high school class.

There are costs for paper, supplies and extra Chromebooks, etc. Without 9th grade, classrooms could be opened up for other classes.

Adam asked if some of the 9th grade money could be used to help with students in lower grades. Audra explained that the costs are even or might be greater than the funds received.

Emily Buckley asked if other costs going to go away? Audra said they could be redirected.

9th Grade Social Aspects – Emily Buckley:

She surveyed both principals and four faculty members who have had 9th graders go through the program.

The biggest con is a lack of electives. Because of accelerated classes, struggling students have to have a study hall.

Adam wanted to know the impact on students for scholarships, such as the Regents scholarship. Is there a difference if they attend Edison South instead of one of the high schools for 9th grade?

Shem gave some background on why 9th grade was added. TECS wanted to put students on a faster track for college. The other 9th grade option was not offering the classes students needed. Edison South was an advantage when looking at the Regents scholarship at that time.

Audra has one student who stayed at TECS and one who did not. She doesn't feel the one who stayed is at a disadvantage. They went in with more credits, so don't have as many requirements now and are able to take the classes they want to help with scholarships and college.

Public Hearing on 9th grade option at Edison South:

Pamela Budge – She chose the school for very specific reasons and wants to keep her children in as long as possible. She asked about adding 10th grade.

Jennifer Payne – was impressed with what she saw. Children were actually learning, teachers teaching and the students were respectful. The program is of remarkable quality. She asked that more recruiting be done to keep the 9th grade. She also suggested a bus for those competing in sports at the high schools.

David Burris – thinks TECS is a great school with a super culture. It is inevitable that students have to integrate back into the non-charter school system. He feels it is best to do it after 8th grade since the district schools are now 9-12. It made sense to have 9th grade until the district reconfiguration.

Miriam Sagers – Her oldest just went into 9th grade. They have been in since kindergarten and love the program. She also spoke for Eleny Topham who said that TECS prepared her students for college better than district high school has. Her children did not have a problem integrating after 9th grade.

Benjamin Mikesell - He has been planning to go to 9th grade since he was in 6th grade. He likes that students at TECS earn more credits and are able to take AP and college courses after meeting graduation requirements in December of their senior year. It puts you ahead and prepares you for college.

Cynthia Mikesell – Her oldest son is in 10th grade and is glad he stayed at TECS through 9th grade. He had the best year of his school career in 9th grade. He made leaps and bounds with writing skills. Teachers are familiar with where they are and can really challenge them to raise the bar.

Arriane Spahr – Her boys have been through the whole TECS education. She asked her 8th grader if they should move because of education. He said he wanted to stay. He loved the teachers. Both of her boys love to go to school every day and would like to keep 9th grade. They do not have a problem with dress code. It has been an incredible thing for her boys. All are on even ground and want to learn.

Allison Sanders – attended 4th- 9th grades at TECS. She loved it. All her experiences all the positives.

Heather Knight – is a teacher at TECS. She teaches geography and world civilizations to the 9th graders. She is happy either way. She loves teaching 9th grade, but has seen a shift in the students coming into it. A higher percentage of the students are struggling. In the past it has been run as an honors program,

but this year 2/3 of the students struggle. If 9th grade continues there will have to be a change to the curriculum. Teachers are happy to work with the struggling students, but won't be able to keep the same level of curriculum.

Michelle Loveland's children have attended for almost 12 years and she has her second child in the 9th grade program. They are not stellar students, but even with struggling with the curriculum, it still put them at a total advantage in high school. One is in the 9th grade color guard at Ridgeline. She was given the choice to stay at TECS or go to Ridgeline and chose to stay at TECS. Michelle would like the option for all of her children. She understands what Heather is saying about different dynamics of the students, but thinks if we recruit 8th graders there will be more students.

Jennifer South – is supportive of keeping 9th grade. Two of her children have gone through it. One struggled, but is now bored at Ridgeline. She would like to see the academic push ease a little, but not as much as at Ridgeline. She would like to keep 9th grade and in the future add up to 12th grade.

Ashley Sanders – was a 9th grade student here and loved it. The experiences she had at 9th grade were amazing and she wants her siblings to have those.

Sarah Sanders - graduated last year. Attending 9th grade at TECS gave her an advantage because of the skills she learned here.

Kellianne Brown email – Kellianne feels it is time to drop 9th grade. It was started because of South Cache and that no longer applies. Students have more electives and other opportunities at the high school. As a parent she would not support her child staying at TECS through 9th grade.

Shem Smith – Shem was hired because of the requirement that 9th grade have a counselor. He liked the 9th grade, but it has been changing. It used to be students in 9th grade were 100% proficient in SAGE biology, it went to 60% and now 40%. There are twice the state average of students with significant needs. When Latin was dropped, parents wanted other languages. Some students took the classes online, but did poor and never earned credits. Every TECS student is individually asked to come back for 9th grade.

Audra Parent – as a parent had one student go through 9th grade at TECS and two not go through. She thinks 9th grade has a lot of value and can see how much further the one who went through at TECS is. He has so few high school requirements left and is able to take college classes. The other two do not have the same options available to them. The English/literature is amazing. The other two did not learn as much in two years as the TECS student did in one year.

Kyle Hancock – The average 9th grade class is 2/3 the size of others. It seems as if we are running two programs.

Melani Kirk feels that in the past, 9th grade was absolutely amazing. Students received a top quality education. Since the reconfiguration of the schools it has changed completely. No Edison North students have attended Edison South for 9th grade. The program has lost so many students, those who are staying are not staying for rigorous and challenging academics. The teachers no longer have the opportunity to teach the advanced curriculum they have in the past.

Megan Holm – teaches 9th grade English/Literature. (This class has been called close to an AP class.) In the last span of years it has been an amazing opportunity to teach a challenging curriculum to students. With the change in configuration, there is a change to why students are staying. She loves the 9th grade, but is now teaching students who are staying, not for the challenging curriculum, but for the environment. Even with many accommodations, they are drowning. SAGE scores in 9th grade ELA have been at 62% 9th, next 68% and 73% proficient. Last year the score was 45%, even with her spending

more time with accommodations for the students. If the amazing curriculum has to change, are we still offering the amazing program people loved?

Melani Kirk – feels the school did a really good job of recruiting this year. The counselor goes over the advantages of staying in the program. 99% of 8th graders met with the counselor last year. He goes over the pros and reasons we want them to stay.

Brad Larsen – Kyle asked why are students are leaving. At the end of year a straw poll is taken of who is returning. It is always higher than those who actually come back. Brad interprets this as the students wearing down their parents during the summer so they can attend with their friends. It seems as if it is for social reasons student go to other schools, not necessarily an academic one. At the end of last year 40 students planned on attending 9th grade.

Jamie Lewis – Jamie referred to Emily's handout regarding the cost of the program, the 3rd bullet, foreign language, etc. The state has made changes to the digital studies class. There are now many choices available. She is worried about getting a teacher qualified to teach it, then pick only one of six offerings for all students to take. The state keeps tightening up what they expect.

Michelle Loveland - mentioned that her husband met with one of the superintendents for the county and he was already talking about getting rid of 9th grade again.

Cynthia Mikesell – wondered if not having 9th grade affected funding for the counselor. Shem Smith said it removes the requirement for a counselor, but does not take away the need.

Adam Burris said that the board would not make a decision until later.

Achievement Report – Kyle Hancock:

Angela presented information on SRI and SMI and how students are compared to students nationwide. These are computer adaptive, criterion referenced assessments. SRI is reported as a Lexile measure which goes from a beginning reader at a score of less than 100 to a high of 1500. It allows educators to match students with appropriately leveled texts. SRI recommends books at or above the student's Lexile level. SRI and SMI are done three times per year.

SMI uses the same interface, is criterion referenced, but measured in quantiles with 5 strands. It raised the bar of what is proficient. It is not timed and usually takes 35-40 minutes.

Adam asked if the school is making the scale available to parents so they can see what the scores mean.

The scaled will be put on the website.

Finance Report – Jim Peterson: it almost looks like each campus is going in the opposite direction.

Edison North had some of its big expenses last month and Edison South had them in July. Both schools are well in black. There will be updates to the budget, especially enrollment. It will not affect this year's budget, but will affect next year's.

Personnel Requests – Shem/Melani:

All requests were replacements, except a 6 hour middle school study hall aide.

Adams asked why a study hall was added. Melani thought a teacher was going to do it, but that did not work out.

Motion to approve personnel requests: Adam Burris

Second: Audra Parent

Yes: Kyle Hancock, Emily Buckley, Audra Parent, Adam Burris, Chris Johnnie

Vendor Approvals – Shem/Melani:

Shem Smith – Edison North is switching from Mt. Alarm in Ogden to Cache Valley Fire Extinguisher. They will have a lower monthly rate.

Motion to approve Cache Valley Fire Extinguisher as the vendor for the alarm system at Edison North: Audra Parent

Second: Chris Johnnie

Yes: Kyle Hancock, Emily Buckley, Audra Parent, Adam Burris, Chris Johnnie

Principal Reports – Melani/Shem:

Melani Kirk:

- The school has been trying to reach out to Nibley City. Because of participation in a Nibley activity, Edison South won the Gaga ball pit for a week.
- Adam asked if parents are still coming in to ask about enrolling in the school. Melani has parent interviews almost every day and will for next several weeks. Some of the CCID students have come over already.
- Adam will schedule a closing to purchase the land east of school. Once the final boundary line is determined they will send Mr. Nielsen the wording.

Shem Smith:

- There are still a few openings for enrollment. He still has parent interviews and waiting lists in some of the classes.
- They will do t-shirts for the autumn activity instead of field day. That way students will have opportunities to wear their shirts other times during the year.

Adam is concerned about the kindergarten enrollment since kindergarten fills the rest of the school. The marketing has not really engaged yet since it takes a few weeks to get a campaign up and running. He asked Audra to email the executive committee

Fee Waiver Policy – Adam Burris:

There is no change to the policy, it needs to be reviewed annually.

Motion to approve the school fees policy as constituted: Adam Burris

Second: Audra Parent

Yes: Kyle Hancock, Emily Buckley, Audra Parent, Adam Burris, Chris Johnnie

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn: Adam Burris