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Harry Laub, Ph.D., Director

Elysian Charter School Weekly Newsletter

January 3, 2012 Vol. 7 Issue 16

Please note that the school newsletter is sent out on Mondays. When Monday is a holiday, the newsletter is sent the following day. If you have news, please send it tolynneshapiro@rocketmail.com by 3:00 PM on Mondays.

Harry's Corner

Today's piece is written by Dr. Ann Murphy, a parent of a kindergarten student and the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies and an Associate Professor of Management at the Wesley J. Howe School of Technology Management at Stevens Institute of Technology. Dr. Murphy is leading our Strategic Planning effort, a process designed to create a five year plan for the school that takes into account the needs of our children as we move through the 21st Century.

Dear Fellow Parents,

Welcome back from your holiday break, and Happy New Year! My name is Ann Murphy, and I am a new parent at ECS. Harry Laub kindly gave me the opportunity to take over "Harry's Corner" this week to tell you about an exciting process beginning at ECS.

Starting in October, a committee of staff, board members and parents (myself included) began a strategic planning effort. I am a strategy professor at Stevens Institute of Technology and we are following an approach I use with other organizations—including businesses and non-profits. In short, our ECS strategic planning effort will:

- 1. Articulate the ECS values and set a 5-year vision;
- 2. Perform an in-depth review of our current situation (strengths; areas needing

improvement);

3. Identify bold yet realistic 5-year strategic goals and an execution plan for achieving those goals.

To date, we have made progress on identifying our values and vision that involved the committee, staff and a group of eighth graders. The next step in our process will be gathering information so that we can review our current situation in an objective and meaningful way. We have a list nearly a mile long of the sorts of information we want to collect, potential sources for that information (e.g., parents; teachers; alumni; benchmark schools), and data collection methods (e.g., surveys; interviews; publicly available reports).

Although the committee includes a few parents, the involvement from parents to date has been limited. We are certain that you can add a lot of value to this process! That said, I will be facilitating a Town Hall meeting on Monday, January 23rd at 6:00 PM. to get your input. I know everyone is busy but I really hope you can make this important meeting. The meeting will be highly interactive, with exercises and activities planned to get parents informed and engaged.

ECS is a fabulous school, and this strategic planning process will help it become even better. Sort of like the New Year's resolutions we often set for ourselves, although unlike my resolutions – we will keep these ones!

Thanks and hope to see you at the January 23rd Town Hall.

Very truly yours, Ann

Let's Make Sure Our Kids Get Their Fair Share - Join Charter School Advocates at Tomorrow's PTSO Meeting

According to the NJDept of Education website, Hoboken received \$24,092 of taxpayer funds per pupil but Elysian Charter received only \$17,536 per pupil. That's just 72%! Hoboken parents of charter school students must unite to make sure their tax dollars follow their child to the charter school.

Please join a bipartisan group of charter school advocates including the NJ Charter School Association, B4 Kids NJ, parents from Hoboken Charter School and Hola, and Democrats for Education Reform at 6:30 pm on Wednesday evening January 4 2011 at Elysian's PTSO meeting which will be held at the Rue Building. Let's make sure our kids get their fair share!

The Annual Chili Cook-Off, January 21, 6:00 PM Our Lady of Grace (OLG) Meeting Hall, 400 Willow Ave.

It's a contest and a dinner!

Please look out for your "Evite" invitation and accept right away. Bring the whole family and non-Elysian friends too! Come meet other Elysian families, spend time with your kids and support your school. No experience required... just an appetite for some great Chili!

Suggested donation: \$10 per adult, \$5 per child (but all are invited to come and join us, regardless of ability to pay)

Chili cooks and volunteers needed!

Enter your famous chili or just help out!! Students and adults may volunteer to set up, serve, clean up, handle donations, and judge! For details, contact Paul at 646-298-6142 or email topauldemopoulos@gmail.com.

Please Pass Along the Elysian Brochures/Applications that we sent home prior to the vacation. Please keep in mind that Lottery Registration Forms are due Friday January 13th, 5:00 PM when sharing them with friends and neighbors.

A Letter From the Nurse

Happy 2012 to everyone! Just a few reminders for the upcoming winter months for our students and families to keep Elysian safe and healthy.

Please refrain from sending in shared snacks that contain any type of nut products including peanuts and tree nuts (walnuts, cashews and etc.) We have a number of students who are highly allergic to these types of products.

Children should come to school with appropriate winter clothing including gloves and hats. Students are outside in the winter unless the temperature falls below 28 degrees or there are hazardous playground conditions.

If your child has a fever of 100.2 or above, diarrhea, vomiting, productive cough, severe nasal discharge, pink eye or a rash of unknown origin, sever sore throat, please refrain from sending him/her to school. If your child comes to school with any of the above symptoms he or she will be sent home.

We are coming into flu season. Hand washing is still the first line of defense in

preventing the spread of the flu virus. Please remind your child of the importance of hand washing. Teachers are also being vigilant with reminding there students to wash hands before eating, after recess and after using the rest room.

Diane De Sombre

News from the Friends of Elysian

The 2011-2012 ANNUAL APPEAL kicks off this week. The Friends of Elysian Annual Appeal raises needed funds that help the Elysian Charter School provide for facilities, fund capital improvements and underwrite projects that help our students and teachers succeed. Look for the Appeal letter to arrive in your mailboxes early next week. Donations will be accepted by mail or on-line at www.friendsofelysian.org. The goal of this year's appeal is 100% participation from all Elysian families. More than 20 families have already donated so we are well on our way!

SAVE THE DATE: The Annual Friends of Elysian Dinner Dance and Fundraising Auction will be held on Saturday, March 10th from 7-11PM at Westin Hotel in Jersey City. This adults-only fun and festive evening will featuring several auctions, fantastic food and drink and of course rocking music and dancing. To see highlights of last year's event visit www.friendsofelysian.org and click on the fundraising events tab.

This is a major event for Elysian and therefore, volunteers are needed to help sell tickets, solicit auction items and handle event logistics. If you are interested helping out with this event, please email Grace Leong at gtleong@verizon.net.

Penny A Page

Reminder: Participants who raise the most receive a Barnes and Nobel gift card courtesy of the Kusner Family. The first collection date is February 17, 2012. If you have any questions, contact Christiano Kusner in the 8th grade.

Make a Wish Foundation

I'm in the 8th grade. In humanities we are working on our Improve a Life Project, the point of which is for us to improve at least one person's life. My friends Raymundo, Avery, and I have chosen the Make a Wish Foundation which is a charity that gives kids with fatal diseases a chance to have their one wish fulfilled. We will be sending flyers home with all the students this week asking families to buy a star for \$1 to help us raise

the money to make a wish come true. After filling out the flyer and turning it in to your child's teacher, we will give your child a blank white star which is to be colored in. These stars will be displayed on the wall to the left of Kate's 6th grade. Families may buy as many stars as they would like as long as the money is included with the form. We hope you will all help us out to reach our goal of fulfilling at least one wish. Thanks! Meryl, Raymundo, and Avery

Last Call for Session I Club Proposals

Thinking about hosting a club? Here is some information that might help you decide.

SESSION I – January 17 – March 2 (Session I proposals due back Monday, January 9, 2012 – e-mail or office)

"Free" After School for your child on the day of the club! Elysian parents who wish to lead a club can have their child/ren attend the After School Program for free during the time of the club. The children must be of the ages of K-8 and must attend our school. As of this time, we do not have care options for children under the age of Kindergarten.

What are Enrichment Clubs? The Clubs are fun/educational groups run by Elysian staff, parents or friends of the children of Elysian. Their purpose is to provide experiences outside of school which will further enrich the lives of our children. Clubs in the past have provided opportunities in many areas that children might not normally experience. The philosophy of the clubs mirrors that of the school, in that children will be encouraged to explore their potential and experience the joy of learning in a safe, nurturing environment.

What does a Club Leader do? The Club Leader is someone with a hobby, talent or interest that he or she would like to share with children. Leaders volunteer their services, but can expect to be reimbursed for materials purchased (please keep receipts). He or she should be comfortable working with a small group of children (usually no more than 10). Club Leaders should arrive no later than 2:45 PM and may leave as soon as all children are picked up at 4:00 PM by either their parents or After School. Leaders are responsible for clean up afterwards. If a Club meeting is canceled for any reason, it is up to the Club leader to notify parents, students and the Elysian office that the Club will not meet.

Times - Clubs meet Monday through Thursday. Clubs are not held on Fridays. Please call Susan at 201-876-0102 to discuss other possibilities.

Club Leader Assistance – Thinking of leading a club but afraid to do it alone? We can

sometimes find others interested in helping or atsuzgilbertson@yahoo.com		
Yes! I would like to lead a club! CLUB PROPOSAL FORM Session I – January 17 – March 2 (6 weeks)		
Proposals Due Monday, January 9 / Return to Office Or email: suzgilbertson@yahoo.com		
Name:		
Child:	Class:	
Telephone: Hm	Cell:	
E-Mail:	Work:	
Name of Club:		
Grade levels included: (Circle all that apply) K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8		
How many children total in the club?		
List the type of space needed:		
Give a summary of what a typical club day would be like. Be sure to include topics and activities.		
List expenses associated with this club as well as necessary items & how much they will cost. You will be provided a reasonable amount up to which you may submit receipts for reimbursement. If you feel expenses will be more that \$10 per child, list the expected cost per child.		
Dates: _Monday _Tuesday _Wednesday _Thursday		
*Questions? Call Susan at 201-876-0102		

Elysian Basketball Games Begin this Week - See Calendar

If there are any practice scheduling changes, parents will be notified by phone or e-mail in advance:

The Little Eagles, Weds, Rue Gym, 5:00 to 6:00 PM.

Girls' Varsity, Thurs., Rue Gym, 5:00 to 6:00 PM.

<u>Biddy</u> Fridays, Demarest Gym, 3:30 to 5:30 PM.

Boys' Varsity practices Fridays, Rue Gym, 5:00 to 6:00 PM.

PTSO Corner

Upcoming PTSO Events Topics	: Date	Chairpersons and Speakers-
PTSO Meeting	1/4	Kathy Mone has invited Kathleen
		Nugent to speak on Parent Political
		Advocacy for Charter Schools
Chili Dinner Square One Art PTSO Meeting PTSO Meeting	1/21 January 2/1 3/7	Paul Demopoulos, Ted Mauseth
Annual Meeting Spring Fling PTSO Meeting PTSO Meeting PTSO Meeting End of Year Picnic	3/13 3/16 4/4 5/2 6/6 6/14	Melissa

Half Gallon Milk Containers Wanted

The second grades are collecting rinsed out half gallon milk containers for an upcoming project. Please drop containers off outside of Alyssa's second grade classroom in Demarest or outside the Rue office.

Last Call...Sibling Registration Forms

We will set aside spots in next year's kindergarten and/or give preference on the 1st-8th grade wait list if you turn in a registration form for in-coming students. Call Lynne Shapiro to discuss.

Lunch on Tuesdays

Send in a bag lunch for the Hoboken Shelter. We collect lunches every Tuesday. Contact: Jennifer Giattino, 201.780.6779

Donate By Giving....Or At Least Shopping!

Target Takes Charge of Education: A fabulous Target REDcard receives a 5% discount at www.target.com and in stores. Register and 1% of Target purchases are donated to Elysian.

Campbell's Labels for Education: A&P doesn't participate, but Shoprite does, <u>register</u>your participating store card. Each product you purchase earns 1 point for Elysian.

Amazon: Yes, Virgina, there is a new Amazon widget on our <u>Donate</u> page and if you use it, up to 10% of each purchase is donated to us.

Innisbrook donates an incredible 50%! Use code #120231.

Can You Top This? Shop online at 200+ stores like Oriental Trading, JCPenny and Lands' End to donate 8% to Elysian's art, music and gym programs.

General Mills Box Tops from your home purchases are gladly received at the office at Rue. www.boxtops4education.com

<u>iGive.com</u> Shop at 900+ stores on the web or add the new iGive App to donate up to 26% of each purchase to Elysian.

Matching Gift Programs: Some companies will double, or even triple, individual tax-deductible contributions made by their employees to non-profit organizations. Friends of Elysian Charter School is a 501/C non-profit association whose sole purpose is the support of the Elysian Charter School. All donations to the Friends are tax-deductible.

Check with your company's human resources department to find out about your company's program. They can give you a form to fill out and send to the Friends with your contribution.

Thank you for your continued support by shopping all year around.

January Calendar

Wednesday, January 4

6:15 PM, Varsity Basketball Game at Wallace School, Elysian Green vs. All Saints 7:15 PM, Varsity Basketball Game at Wallace School, Elysian White vs. Hoboken Charter.

PTSO Meeting, 6:30, pizza and childcare available. Rue building. Kathleen Nugent speaks on Parent Political Advocacy for Charter Schools. *Please join a bipartisan group of charter school advocates including the NJ Charter School Association, B4 Kids NJ, parents from Hoboken Charter School and Hola, and Democrats for Education Reform.*

Thursday, January 5

6:15 PM, Biddy Basketball Game at Wallace School, Elysian Green vs. All Saints 7:30 PM, Biddy Basketball Game at Wallace School, Elysian White vs. Mustard Seed.

Saturday, January 7

10:00 AM sharp. Open House for Prospective Parents. Volunteers wanted. 12:00 PM, Small Fry Basketball Game at Wallace School, Elysian Green vs. Hoboken Charter.

4:10 PM, Small Fry Basketball Game at Wallace School, Elysian White vs. Hola.

Monday, January 9

Session I Club Proposals are due today.

Tuesday, January 10

6th grade to Old Barrack's Museum

Thursday, January 12

3rd grade to see *Miss Ophelia*, New Victory Theater

Friday, January 13

Commiunity Meeting. All students should be dropped off at Rue Building, 8:30 AM. Families are invited. Encore presentation of KUUMBA day dance by 3rd grade. Lottery Registration forms are due by 5:00 PM in order to be included in the lottery for 2012 -13 school year. (If there's anyone who hasn't let Lynne Shapiro know about a sibling who will be attending Elysian in September, please do so immediately. The deadline is today, as well.)

Monday, January 16

Elysian closed. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Wednesday, January 18

Lottery for Admissions, 2012-13 school year, 11:00 AM Half-day for staff development. After school available.

Saturday, January 21

Chili Cook-Off, see above, 6:00 PM, OLG meeting Hall, 400 Willow.

Monday, January 23

Elysian Town Hall Strategic Planning Meeting, 6:00 PM, Rue Building. (See Harry's Corner.)

Board of Trustees Meeting, 7:30 PM, Rue Building.

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