

EBPO Meeting Minutes

4 June 2019

Chris N (President) opened the mtg. at 18:30. There were 15 parents present, some of whom brought their students (who were steered to the chorus room for a student “jam session”). More people arrived throughout the mtg. and when Chris closed the mtg. at 19:30 there were 24 people present, but it was unclear if all the new parents got onto the sign-up sheet and/or filled out and turned in the EBPO parent info sheet. Chris N collected the sheets for follow-up.

Chris N. (President) spoke at length regarding the great band programs at Edison and encouraged parents to help the EBPO by volunteering whatever time they could spare and by considering commitment to serve as a Chair of one of the standing EBPO Positions (e.g. chaperone, hospitality, uniform, fund raising, pit). Several serving and prior EBPO Officers and Chairs added their observations and recommendations. EBPO needs someone to volunteer to maintain our webpage – great for a person with inflexible schedule b/c you can do that from home on your own time. Also need a Home Game leader and a Fundraising leader.

Chris N. highlighted that while there are some up-front costs (for shoes and uniforms and food and transportation for trips and fees and etc.) that much of the reason EBPO exists is to work to reduce the overall costs of those items and thus to reduce the costs to each student. Emphasis was - we are telling you about all these costs to avoid surprises. Chris and other parents talked about the many expenses we take on (e.g. feeding the students during home games and before some other events and getting them all show shirts and renting trucks to haul the big instruments to competitions). Also discussed the various fundraising efforts done to lower those costs (e.g. TAG DAY and car washes and restaurant night and gift wrapping and etc.)

Point made that we also seek to reduce costs by sharing the specific marching band shoes as hand-me-downs from graduating seniors to new students when possible. Emphasis made that an hour or two helping at the concession stand get us money and parents helping to measure students for uniforms (year round requirement for different outfits for marching and concert and advanced band) made for many options for helping here and there without having to make an every week or long term commitment (e.g. TAG DAY drivers and escorts, pit drivers and equipment assemblers, help with buying, making, or packaging food and drinks for events and trips).

Parents said this is “a family” and that in addition to a close knit and supportive BPO, your children will have a trusted support group of friends who are (statistically speaking) high achieving students with good grades and other good educational and social outcomes. These students are lucky to have a great band director – as recognized in 2019 by their selection as a State of Virginia Honor Band. The students are proud and they are not “embarrassed to talk to EBPO parents” or to share their pride in being part of this great band.

Ginger recommended that everybody sign up for the list-serve to get updates which will include requests for specific time blocks/events for which the EBPO needs help so that parents who have limited time can help as it fits their schedule. Others mentioned the students very much enjoy the banquet in November.

Mr. Mitchell (Band Director): talked about the differences between Concert and Advanced band and mentioned that the requirement to do marching band to be in Advanced band is an FCPS not and Edison HS policy. Also talked about the band fees and what those pay for (instrument maintenance, new shirt for entire band student body not just marching, mouth pieces, other items). He mentioned pep-band as a student-run thing that has been very well received. Said that Jazz band is new and well-received and that future concerts at EHS will include ensemble performers b/c those students work so hard; said he'd publish and send full-year calendar of band events soon; said Spring Tripp would be to NYC/Broadway and encouraged parents with interests/connections to contact him / EBPO to help with the trip.

Questions for Mr. Mitchell by parents

Q: what if my student's instrument is not a marching instrument?

A: EHS will provide the marching version (e.g. Sousaphone, Tuba players).

Q: Band camp purposes and hours?

A: purposes 1) to learn how to march with instruments and 2) to learn the specific steps of the shows we'll be doing at football games;

A: hours: yet to be determined b/c weather and other school clubs/teams' needs must be is a considered.

Several past parents and EBPO officers encouraged new parents to help when they could, themes were: you will be glad you did b/c it is personally fulfilling, your student will be glad you did b/c they will have once-in a lifetime opportunities (e.g. marching down main street in Disney world) and they will have a support group of high performing students as friends.

Chris N. closed the mtg. at 19:30 but several new parents stuck around chatting with legacy parents and awaiting the chance to speak to Mr. Mitchel individually.

Drafted by **Doug Kelly (Vice-President)**