



Elgin Math & Science Academy

Minutes

Enviro Group December Meeting

Date and Time

Friday December 3, 2021 at 8:30 AM

Location

Meet at the Dining Hall
EMSA Campus
1600 Dundee Ave
Elgin

Committee Members Present

C. Flaherty, D. Alexander, G. Swick, K. Kelly, R. Wilson, S. Bennett, S. Said

Committee Members Absent

None

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

K. Kelly called a meeting of the Environmental Work Group--Subcommittee to Master Plan and Facilities Committee of Elgin Math & Science Academy to order on Friday Dec 3, 2021 at 8:30 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

S. Bennett made a motion to approve the minutes from In-person Enviro Work Group on 09-03-21.

G. Swick seconded the motion.

The committee **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Enviro Work Group Items

We will try a Friday afternoon meeting to see if teachers can attend, next meeting will be January 7, at 1:30 pm. We also can survey teachers/parents for interest and availability.

II. Environmental Work Group--Subcommittee to Master Plan and Facilities

A. Water Runoff--Updates

D Alexander and C Flaherty updated the committee on status of gutter improvements. Drainage system installed at swing set playground--improvement noted in that area is not as wet and not puddling but still problematic as a low area. Discussed next steps: mulch or turf for the swing set playground, for gym & primary school try gutter splashes that spread out & slow down the water with small rocks, use diversion on the two southernly (on west side) gutters to send water to existing swale/drain, at primary school playground--can we look at less expensive (than current bid) and more creative options?

To determine: can we get help/feedback/direction from students--as a Passion Project (due in May), as help installing gutter splashes, to suggest swing set playground mulching vs grassing areas, etc

B. Native Plantings--Grant Available, anyone interested?

Did not have time to discuss.

C. Swing set update

See above.

Student norms needed for this area (e.g., stay off the area if there is standing water).

D. Playgrounds & Natural Play Areas

The group identified additional areas for students to play and/or passively enjoy: oak hillside for reading and passive play, the area next to the kinder playground (by the gym) for active play, the area behind the admin building for more passive-type of play, the area between the gym blacktop and admin building for active play, dorm field for active play.

To determine:

- can we remove bouncy playground piece at kinder area so that 5/6 can use the space (keep the dino and dome for now),

- can we consider longer gym time (allow access to dorm field),
- will students submit a passion project for play area?,
- can sport-stations be added around the campus?,
- signage recommended to i.d. passive play areas.

E. Chimney Swifts and Other Bird Protections

R Wilson will be present to learn how chimney cap is installed/uninstalled.

Gym building windows still need bird-strike prevention measures. EMSA has a quote for all of the windows but it is very expensive; R Wilson offered to install special strips on the lower windows.

To determine: is there a less expensive option to prevent bird strikes at the gym building?

F. Ongoing Tree Care & Planned Landscaping

D Alexander and R Wilson discussed ongoing tree care for this winter, including trimming branches.

To determine: can some of the trunks cut down this summer be dried for furniture?

G. Trails and walkways

The group visited the new permeable rock path that has been the subject of staff complaints. Discussed benefits and detriments vs asphalt.

The group would like to get a nature path started in the ravine. K Kelly & R Wilson can make recommendations to start work this winter.

To determine:

- how will rock path withstand winter, will it be more/less slippery than existing paths;
- can behavior norms be created that discourage picking up rocks?
- How do we get the nature path started?
- Will students pick this as a Passion Project?

H. Ecosystem Education

To determine:

- would students join an enviro club/crew to help advise and implement on eco improvements?
- how to communicate eco-info to staff/families/students,
- creation of campus map for display in common area,
- safety training

- can teacher planning time be used for staff eco ed? next steps?
- partnership with Friends of the Fox and/or Friday Field Studies could provide eco ed

III. Other Business

A. What else do we need to be thinking about?

The group discussed adding two new safety horses at road by admin building, then eventually a gate. R Wilson to obtain the safety horses.

To determine: will students be responsible for placing safety horses? What are the costs/options for a gate?

B. Goal setting/vision of work group

IV. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
K. Kelly