

# the Ecology Learning Center

## Board Agenda

April 29, 2026

5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

**In attendance:** Josh Kercksmar, Tia Poulin, Leza Packard, Randy Fox, Jennifer Albee, Lauren Giroux, Margaret Micolichuk, Beth Arnold, Donyse Babin

**Guests:** Beth Alma

### **Mission Moment: Dylan Thombs, Science and Math Teacher**

Dyland shared that in his chemistry class. He has run the course for 3 years. He feels that this unit on stoichiometry ends with a lesson around maple syruping. There is a focus on the process as well as the elements and molecules that go into making syrup. The last day is making maple syrup. They run calculations on the syrup they make and do a sucrose reading. Dylan brings a “mobile” white board with them to document the results from the day. The following day they use this data to extrapolate key points that they have learned throughout the year. He shared that this is a highlight unit for the students and that although he did not come to ELC with the intention of being a chemistry instructor he has found that he really enjoys this subject.

ELC, Maine Academy of Natural Science and the Cornville Community Regional Charter School’s science teachers all got together at MOFGA with a team of students where they had a cupcake cookoff challenge. Maple syrup had to be a main ingredient. ELC won the Cupcake Maple Challenge!

### **Consent Agenda:**

- Minutes: [3.25.26 Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- Executive Director’s Report [4.29.26 Board Meeting Director’s Report](#)
- Governance Committee [4.27.26 Governance Committee Meeting Minutes](#)
- March Treasury Report [Finance Committee Report to the Board 26.03.11](#)

**Motion to accept the consent agenda by Randy Fox, seconded by Tia Poulin; Unanimous.**

### **Capacity Quotient (CQ):**

- CQ Overview (Lori Roming, Unity Foundation)
  - Unity foundation helped create the survey of 75 questions that the executive team and all board members will take. Then metrics will be analyzed and identify all of the board’s strengths and areas of growth opportunity. STED metrics will also be available to individuals that dig deeper into who we are.
  - How it works:
    - Intro (today)
    - Separate emails will be sent to board members
      - 2-3 weeks to complete
    - 2-3 Weeks to analyze data
    - Results shared 1 week prior to Board Retreat
    - Report out on results and offer resources at the June Board Retreat
      - Could support identifying qualities of new board members
      - Improve strategic plan
  - This assessment is free to ELC

- Questions: Do we have any board members in the works? Should they be involved in the CQ?
  - No one is currently pending board membership
- Next steps: all ELC BOD emails will be sent to Lori Roming so that she can send out the individual emails.

## Financial Strategies & Discussion:

- Budget Preview
  - Final budget will be presented at the next BOD meeting
  - Income:
    - Increase in student enrollment
    - Unity FOundation lease ends
    - Cliff rentals increased to 5,000
    - Cliff events admission decreased to 10,000
  - Expenses:
    - Pay structure increase
  - Per student student subsidy has decreased this year resulting in less of an increase in income than we originally expected.
  - Foundation Grants- Changes of how ELC pursues grants which should increase success in the future. Increasing volume of applications and targeting larger awards.
    - Identifying grants to fund Public Charter Schools is limiting
    - Identify a fiscal sponsor to partner with
    - Make the Cliff its own non-profit. This would make the Cliff eligible for far more grant opportunities
  - Pay Scale restructure- Necessary due to pay being below market value. The step scale has been restructured to reflect annual tenure and education levels. This will reflect a \$79,000 increase in this budget for Faculty and Ed Techs.
    - Current scale only extends to 15 years of experience
    - Recommend that there is further discussion on the Admin pay scale as the increase is only reflected at 1.8%
  - Reviewed Organizational Chart- .6 FTE increase
  - Transportation- new contract with RSU 3 was renegotiated at a decrease due to fewer school days for ELC.
  - Maintenance- Flat budget to last year. Taking into consideration that unforeseen maintenance issue may arise. For the past 2 years we have not had a reserve for these incidents.
    - Monday there is a meeting with facilities and they may have more information to inform the budget for this year.
  - Risks- Foundation grants gap, no reserves for unforeseen expenses
  - Opportunities- Focused grant application approach, Parent group fundraising activities, New Cliff management approach
  - Comments- Build in \$6,000 for a grant writer into the budget. This was requested by the board last year for this year's budget.

## Annual ED Eval Process:(see [Director Evaluation Process 2024 REVISED.docx](#))

- Shared the takeaways from the April training and what Governance Committee has proposed to do next year for the ED evaluation process:
  - Board Chair will continue to meet weekly with ED
  - The ED evaluation task force will be a role that the Governance Committee takes on

- The beginning of each meeting GC will check in with a check in with the ED on her SMART Goals for the year.
  - The ED evaluation will be moved to the BOD meeting at the Board Retreat.
  - GC will give recommendations and discuss evaluation with the greater board members.
  - Vote will occur during the BOD meeting at the Board Retreat
  - The Panorama survey results will also help to inform the recommendations of the GC.
- Reviewed the Google Drive that is now shared with all the Board.
  - Contains meeting minutes, agendas, and the ED evaluation timeline
- ED overview of self-assessment and portfolio
  - Monthly Academic Excellence Committee will meet with ED and Dean of Students to have a better understanding throughout the year of academic progress
- Fundraising- The maple run brought in 4x more money than last year.
  - Goal met for this year
- Title Grants
  - ED will add updates from the mid-term report
- Shared Google Drive was shared to the entire board
- ED Evaluation hard copy was distributed to the board.
  - ED will utilize the tool for a self-assessment
  - Board members will utilize the tool and bring results to the next BOD meeting
- Board questions and discussion
  - Please rename the file from “Board” to “ELC Board”
  - Beth will make a Google Assessment of the Ed eval for this year.

**Motion to table the ED evaluation and contract renewal until the Board Retreat in June by Randy Fox, seconded by Donyse Babin, Unanimous**

**Comments:**

- Leza shared she likes this because it allows her time to collect all of the data and to feel truly evaluated.
- Leza will have the self-assessment completed reflecting progress on SMART Goals and applicable data to support by June 15th and shared with the board.
- Board will complete the ED Evaluation Assessment via Google Assessments
- The Panorama survey results will be available to the board for review in mid-may

**Wrap-Up:**

- Board Retreat
  - June 27, 2026, 8am-1pm
  - Brown bag lunch from home
- Annual Board Self Assessment
  - See your ELC email

**Motion to adjourn by Tia Poulin, seconded by Randy Fox; Unanimous  
Adjourned: 7:16 pm**