

March 2016 Board Spotlight

Greetings Beacon Community,

As you may know, we had two very important meetings this week. Monday night was a special board workshop to discuss information about our relocation options. At the workshop, we spent the first forty-five minutes hearing from our valued Beacon community. We also received about twenty letters directed to the board during the last four days. We want to thank those of you who took the time to reach out and share your thoughts about our relocation decision.

At last night's meeting, the board discussed how it had fully and exhaustively researched expansion possibilities at Church of the Open Door. The church has been a wonderful landlord to us, but our school is at the age and maturity where we need a permanent home. It has become abundantly clear to the board that a move is necessary to accomplish Beacon's purpose.

Charter schools rarely have two good expansion options, and we consider ourselves lucky in that regard. The Crystal property came to us in the middle of our due diligence on the Corcoran property, but it has risen above as the clear choice for Beacon's permanent home. In view of this, the board voted to pursue the expansion in Crystal. We realize that this news is greatly disappointing to some of our valued families. We care about you and the health and longevity of our organization, and hope that you believe in the heartbeat of Beacon enough to follow us to our new location. We're excited for this new direction and encourage you to keep watch on the developments that come from us during the next few months. We will have one more full year at our current location and plan to relocate to the new building for the Fall of 2017. We will keep information flowing to you as best we can, and you are always welcome to attend board and committee meetings.

While it is not possible to capture every word that was spoken at the board meeting last night, every board member took time to share his or her personal views regarding this historic decision. There was a respectful and thoughtful tone throughout the long evening. We have deliberately and diligently worked toward this decision day, and no one has taken it lightly. Following is a synopsis of the benefits of the Crystal location, spoken by various board members.

- Green space. The Crystal property has about 7 acres of green space, including two baseball fields and enough space for a soccer field and a playground area.
- Room sizes and overall square footage. The original school that is part of the Crystal property has classrooms larger than we would be able to afford in Corcoran. The overall square footage in Crystal gives us 15,000 additional sq ft over the Corcoran option.
- Overall cost. The expectation is that Crystal will cost less which means more money for things that Beacon values. We received comments and concerns on future class sizes,

and we intend to delve into the overarching project budget to see what we might accomplish.

- There is a need in the Robbinsdale school district for school choice. The district's middle schools have dropped honors classes, and we would be much more likely to attract and retain students for the entire k-8 experience.

Perhaps the epicenter of our parent leadership will shift, but we believe we will maintain our culture, academic rigor, and strong character development as we bring new families and staff into the fold. Beacon's core principles will guide us as we move forward. Please stay posted for further developments and updates.

With respect and gratitude for our school,
Heidi Sheard, Board Secretary