

***Welcome to your first EC3 auction--or your tenth! Here are a few fun facts about the EC3 auction; we'd like to help manage your expectations so everybody has a great time!***

The auction is a longstanding tradition at EC3 and our biggest fundraising event of the year. The proceeds from the auction are an essential portion of our annual operating budget. **Proceeds from the event are not “extra;”** they support the general operations of the Center, such as teacher salaries, benefits, facility maintenance, classroom supplies, and continuing education opportunities for our staff. We write our budget to include fundraising dollars in order to keep tuition rates stable.

**Date: Friday, April 12, 2019**

**Time: 5:45 to 8 p.m.**

Cost to attend: FREE! There is no charge for attendance, and there is free food for all! There is also free beer and wine, but only for those age 21 and older.

Guest speaker: State Representative Sarah Anthony will open the event with welcoming remarks.

Child care during the event: we provide FREE child care for currently-enrolled children, their siblings up to age 10, and alumni kids. Pre-registration is absolutely required, before Friday morning: <http://bit.ly/2019AuctionChildCare>. If your children are already at EC3 and you intend to stay for the auction, please do NOT go to their room and visit them first; this typically creates some “attachment confusion” for young children. The teachers will have the registration lists in advance and will be sure to shepherd your children to the appropriate area so you can enjoy the activities.

Guests: Yes please! Relatives, neighbors, and friends are all welcome to attend and join the fun. The more, the merrier!

Process for purchasing and bidding: All bidding for the silent auction is being done electronically, which is new this year! Bring your smartphone or tablet, CHARGED and ready to go. If you can't come to the auction itself, you'll still be able to have some fun by participating online—and so can the grandparents and relatives in far-away places! Please spread the word.

All parents have been pre-registered, and should have received a text message last week to complete the process. If you haven't done so already, to go <https://one.bidpal.net/ec3> to join the auction. You can use your computer or smartphone. Browse items, place bids, and even set your own preferred maximum bids! You can also purchase tickets for the cash raffle and tuition giveaway, and you'll be able to preview the items for the live auction. When you register, you will be prompted to enter a credit card in order to make any purchases or win any auction items.

Bidder numbers: Since we have pre-registered all EC3 families (except for your financial information), there's no need to stop by the registration table! Your bidder numbers and nametags will be in your child's cubby by Thursday, 4/11/19. Simply pick them up and bring them when you come for the evening, and you can head straight to the gym.

Other ways to participate and support EC3:

Tuition giveaway: Back by popular demand! You can purchase tickets to win a week's worth of tuition even if you can't stay until the end of the auction for the drawing! Tickets are only \$25 each, and you can purchase as many as you like! Tickets are available NOW and can be purchased through your BidPal account. Hint: this is a great way for the grandparents to support EC3 and maybe win a prize for you!

Cash raffle: Tickets for the cash-giveaway raffle can be purchased through your BidPal account as well. You could win \$100, \$250, or \$500 cash! The drawing is held on auction night, and you need not be present to win. Tickets are \$15 each, or two for \$25.

EC3 T-shirts: Show your pride in EC3 by sporting our logo on a maroon t-shirt. Available through your BidPal account, they come in all sizes for both adults and youth. T-shirts will be delivered within a week or two after the auction.

Check-out: All of your auction purchases are completed through your BidPal account, NOT your EC3 account. Cash raffle, bake sale, silent auction, live auction, EC-Plea, tuition giveaway--at the close of the auction, you will be prompted to finalize your purchases directly on your mobile device and you will receive an electronic receipt. Please note, you will need to register a credit card or bank account using the BidPal app, and it's best if you do it before auction night. Although it's a small extra step for you, it saves us a significant amount of time and money—so we can focus on the REAL job of making EC3 a great place for children and families!

Parking: The EC3 auction is heavily attended, which benefits EC3 and its families in many ways. However, we strive to be a good neighbor to those who live near us. Therefore, please take special care that you don't park your car in somebody's driveway, or in such a way to block any portion of their driveway. You may have to park a few blocks away and walk to EC3; you are also welcome to park carefully on our east lawn, or in the parking lot of the West Lansing Church of God. Do your best to carpool so we don't have two cars per family in attendance.

Timing: Because we know you are busy and have young children who need their sleep, we have scheduled the auction program in such a way to fit it all in and still get you out by 8:00 p.m. at the latest. But we need your cooperation!

The silent auction will be set up in the gym and available for real-time viewing by 7:00 a.m. on auction day. All the bidding takes place using the BidPal app. The silent auction closes at 6:30 p.m. sharp--another reason to set up your BidPal account early. At that time, silent auction winners will be notified and staff members will distribute the prizes right then and there.

The cash raffle winners will be drawn as soon when the silent auction closes. Then we'll introduce State Representative Sarah Anthony, who will give opening remarks. At 7:00 p.m. we keep the excitement going with the live auction, followed by the "EC-Plea," where attendees can pledge a donation to EC3 without purchasing anything. What a way to support and continue the quality work EC3 provides! At the end, we'll select and announce the winner of the tuition giveaway.

Whether you come to make purchases or simply enjoy a fun evening, we're glad to have you as part of the EC3 family!

Warm regards,

Elisabeth Weston, Executive Director