



Emerson-Williams PTO Meeting
Thursday, February 11th, 2016
Minutes

Call to Order/Opening Remarks
7:03 p.m.

Nathalie Trevitazzo/Darka Jara

Officers' Reports

Principal's Remarks

Ms. Neela Thakur

- **Principal's Breakfast** - To be held on Monday 2/29. RSVP by Friday 2/19 for planning purposes. This month's topic is Special Education. Guests include Melissa Cook, District Special Education Supervisor and the Emerson-Williams Special Education team. Opportunity for parents to ask questions. Darka Jara will be coordinating the breakfast for the attendees.
- **Keane on Kids Grant** – After-School program grant.
 - Attended two planning meetings with Judy Keane. There is a planning meeting at 6pm on Thursday March 3rd at the Pitkin Community Center to discuss use of the grant money from the Keane Foundation for an after-school program for Emerson-Williams students. RSVP at kfafterschoolenrichment@gmail.com.
 - Proposal is for a Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday after-school program ending at 4pm or 5pm each day. Children can sign-up for 1, 2 or even 3 days per week.
 - The grant money would be spent on a district wide program coordinator, one person to run the program in each of the schools in the district, as well as for material and supplies. Money for a stipend to run the program will involve minimal cost to families with the majority of the money going to people to coordinate.
 - Other schools in the district currently have after-school programs and activities through Keane. Charles Wright has an after-school program which includes Chess club, Running club, Art club, Hip-Hop, Lego club, Channel 3 Kids Camp, Math Olympiad, Engineering club, Green club, and Drama club. A parent does this coordination. We might have different programs than Charles Wright but should be similar. Other schools have similar programs but not as large as Charles Wright but Keane would want the program to look similar.
 - Emerson-Williams would need to work out an arrangement with the YMCA after-school program at Emerson, as they currently have access to the gym and cafeteria each day after school.
 - The program does not have to be purely academic but enrichment based, exciting, fun, and extending beyond school hours.
 - Need a recommendation for a paraprofessional in each building that might coordinate the program. The person will need to apply for the coordinator position and be familiar with the children, the building, principal, and procedures. Parents and outside institutions will run the individual sessions. Program registration would occur through the parks and recreation office (release, medical forms, signups).
- **Raptor Visitor Management System** – new district-wide security management and procedures system implemented during the past week. Any person entering the building, not staff or students, must have their license scanned and their name goes into the security system. A badge is printed with the person's picture and name. Upon leaving the school the person must

come back into the main office and give the sticker badge to the secretary to check out of the system.

- **Hands-on Science Center Sessions** - Keane Foundation is funding a hands-on 50 minute long session throughout March and April through the Science Center of Connecticut for grades K-6. There will be 15 different topics (different topics for each grade level). Teachers will choose the topic for their grade.
- **SBAC testing** – testing will occur during the month of May for Grades 3-6. One 45-minute session per day (last year = 2 sessions per day, one in morning and one in the afternoon). Two English Language Arts and 2 Math. 4 days for English Language Arts (school-wide first) and then 4 days of Math (school-wide second).

Secretary's Report

James Langdo

- Approval of 1/14 Meeting minutes motioned by Shana Smith. Seconded by Autumn Struk and approved.

Treasurer's Report

John Williams

- 6th grade fundraiser - \$174 deposit
- Bring Someone Special Dance – two expenses (\$54.98 and \$30.84)
- \$10.62 for flash drive
- Hip-Hop program - \$1950
- Cheer/Teacher Appreciation - \$243 expense
- Chairs for wish list (Kindergarten) purchased (\$287.53)

Committee Reports

Committees

Chairs

Cheer/Teacher Appreciation

Darka Jara

- Cheer/Teacher Appreciation lunch for January
- Ms. Woods – baby due this summer.
- Valentine's Day - Hearts in the teacher lounge; chocolates for the staff
- St. Patrick's Day (3/17) – need volunteers. Chrissy to add request for volunteers to website, an email blast, and will post to Facebook to get volunteers. Contact Darka Jara if you would like to volunteer or would like to donate

Enrichment

Jacqueline LaPerriere

- Not at meeting

Finance Committee

John Williams/Paul LaPerriere

- Last meeting topics –
 - **Signage Proposal** – chose to defer for now and focus on wish list items and playground proposal first. Could we get at least 1 additional proposal for this cost? Colleen Mattatall researched signage – we would have to buy signs, buy the hardware, and have someone install it. WingSite Displays in Wethersfield toured the interior and exterior of the school 3 times, took picture, drew graphic mock ups, prepared a list of materials for Fire Marshall review, prepared art work and banners, and provided sample materials. Prepared a 15 page packet of signage for the entire building but only the main entrance is being proposed (\$2276).
 - **Hop-Hop Assembly** – agreed to fund the hip-hop assembly proposal (\$1550).
 - **Wish list** – Nathalie attended the teacher's weekly staff meeting and discussed wish list. Discussed with Finance Committee:
 - Mr. Bubser – Front Row Math (\$5200)
 - Ms. Fox – Lap desks (\$500 = \$20 each x25)

- Ms. Harris – Stability balls (\$313 = \$13 each x24)
- Ms. Charbonneau – Elmo camera (\$327)
- Ms. Ciarcia - Medication cabinet (\$149.95)
- Ms. Caravella – Bucket drumming (\$64.09)

Not discussed with Finance Committee:

- Ms. Woods – 5th grade field trip enhancement (\$1020 = \$20 each x51)
- Ms. Emmanuel - Road atlas (\$472.50 = \$18.90 each x25)

Chrissy will add this list to the website for visibility. Maybe for future requests we can ask that a form be completed and submitted for Wish list items (requiring principal review and signature to align with district needs). Neela to send a copy of a form to Leslie Williams and the PTO for review. Question about shipping and handling costs – are they included in these totals (need subtotals).

- **Kindergarten Playscape and Basketball Court** - 1/28 meeting with Marty Sitler, Wethersfield Parks and Recreation.
 - Kindergarten playscape constructed in 1999 has an average lifespan of 20 years but could last up to 30 years. Replacement cost will increase in price over time.
 - Emerson-Williams basketball court replacement cost is \$70,000 – 100,000 to rip up and re-grade, drain, and rebuild. Resurfacing cost would be \$5000 (but could crack in a year due to ground shift).
 - Need to research options for the replacement of the Kindergarten playscape and to look for grants, money to be utilized. Voted on formation of a future projects committee motioned by Shana Smith and seconded by Rebecca Anderson.
 - PTO will need to attend the Board of education and town council meetings to make sure the playground remains on the top of list. If anyone is interested in joining the committee please contact Colleen Mattatall
- **Spring Earth Day / Science Assembly** – remove from current consideration due to the upcoming K-6 Science Center hands-on interaction free of charge.

Sixth Grade

Beth Gilbert

- Buddy bench – 1 buddy bench for the playground. Not able to finance 2 benches. Each year 6th graders would teach the new kids how it works (create a video). Choose 3 designs and the 6th graders will vote on the bench to donate. 6th graders to make a video on how it works.
- Up-coming fundraisers - hat sale; offsite paint night; dinner night at Pazzo's; Light bulbs fundraiser.
- Memorial Bench (or plant tree or a remembrance plaque) for Emerson-Williams Shirley Markarian (lunch and recess aid).

WSPC

Karen Dicenso/Darka Jara

- Walk/Bike to School Safety – in March (Emerson Williams on 3/30) each grade in every school in the district will have some instruction on walking and biking to school safety. Each grade will have 45 minutes in the gym.
- PTO Volunteer Award – nominations requested for the 2015-16 school year. Each school to award to an outstanding volunteer. Request for nominations by 3/30. Contact Karen Dicenso or Joanne Pine. Use the Wethersfield School Parent Council Volunteer Form for 2015-16 nominees.
- Building Use Form – Joanne McPhee and Fred Bushey attended the WSPC meeting and discussed the 14 day notice (or more) for building use. If a cancellation is needed to please contact them.
- Mr. Emmett discussed the budget. A meeting will be held 2/17 at 7pm at the Stillman Building if anyone wants to attend.

Family Events

Someone Special Dance

Janet Carbo

- Janet was not available for this meeting. Separate subcommittees have been formed. Flyers went out and received ticket requests for the dance. Sign up to volunteer online (setup, cleanup and during dance activities - food table, chaperoning).

Wolf Pack

Colleen Mattatall

- Flyers went out for the Friday 3/18 7:15pm event. Extended RSVP until 2/19 due to snow days. There will be a raffle to ride the Zamboni. Child last year didn't get to ride the Zamboni after winning raffle (didn't hear announcement). Need to check if he got that ride last year. EW will be performing in the balcony.
- \$4 profit per ticket goes to music department (none to PTO). PTO will be collecting the money and it will be going through the PTO account. John Williams confirmed that historically the PTO coordinated this event and handled the money and based on the previous PTO meeting, John's knowledge was that the PTO had decided not to utilize this event as a PTO fundraiser. John mentioned that he was not aware that the Wolfpack event was going to be used as a fundraiser for the music department.

Fundraisers

Butter Braids

Janet Carbo / Jessica Martin

- Fundraiser from 2/17 through 2/26. Forms will be out next week.

Box Tops

Beth Gilbert/James Langdo

- Box Tops contest collected over 5000 box tops. Ms. Charbonneau's class was the winner of the Box Tops Contest with 981 box tops. Second place was Ms. Emmanuel's class with 530 box tops. Each 3rd grade class had 300 box tops each. Nathalie has volunteered to provide drinks for the winning teachers. The winning class receives an extra recess.
- Need for volunteers to prepare the box tops for submission (by 2/19). James will ship them to the company before 3/1.
- Concern over the wicker hampers blocking the defibrillator in the hallway so we needed to remove them and install a metal container (mailbox) that will hang on the wall in the hallway for future collections.

Mixed Bag Designs

Leslie Williams

- Home and Kitchen Catalog - seller packets ordered this week for the 3/7 – 3/18 fundraiser. Packets will be sent home on Friday 3/4.

Suggestion Box

Shana Smith

- None

Tiger Topics

Chris Thompson

- Tiger Topics submissions due by 02/12 at 11am.

Yankee Candle

Darka Jara

- Yankee Candle fundraiser will be held starting 3/24 – 4/7.

New Business/Open Forum

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Teachers Wish list** -
 - Approved:
 - Lap desks - \$500 (20 each x25). Voted. Approved.
 - Stability balls - \$312 (\$13 each x24). Voted. Approved.
 - Medication cabinet - \$149.95. Voted. Approved.
 - Bucket drumming – \$64.09. Voted. Approved.
 - Not-Approved:
 - Field trip enhancement – Not approved, however, PTO can assist with any hardship for people that can't afford it to help reduce the cost.
 - Not Voted On (more information needed):
 - Elmo camera – not voted on.
 - Front row math – Neela will talk to Mr. Bubser to receive more info.
 - Road atlas – Neela to see if they could work with half of the 25 requested.
- **Friendly Tiger Mascot** – \$1097 was voted price. Total price is actually 1202.91. Vote to spend an additional \$105 to make purchase of the friendly tiger mascot costume and mascot tote bag. Voted. Approved.
- **Strawberry Fest** – Autumn, Colleen and Diana chairing the event. Did brainstorming and met with Neela to talk about past year's events. Tentative date for Strawberry Fest is Saturday 6/4 10am-2pm. Checked with other PTOs in the district and Art Show occurring on 6/2 and will have no impact with our event.
 - Nathalie provided the folder of information for previous years.
 - Will reach out to subcommittee chairs from last year.
 - Need volunteers for the committees. Sign-up sheet created: food committee (Janet is chair), raffles/donations (Beth), and games/prizes/activities (no chair), setup and cleanup (no chair)
 - No vendors at the event
 - Need DJ, Photo booth, Advertising
- **New Exterior Doors** - new doors district wide (exterior doors will be like our front doors) – very sturdy doors

Closing Remarks

Adjourn: 9:38 p.m.

Nathalie Trevitazzo

Tiger Topic submissions are due by February 12th.

Email to: tigertopics@ewpto.com