



Emerson-Williams PTO Meeting
 Thursday, February 2nd, 2017
 Minutes

Attendees

Carbo, Janet	Iannucci, Diana	Silbo, Peter	Williams, Leslie
Collette, Peggy	Jara, Darka	Silbo, Sharon	
Dee, Peping	Langdo, James	Smith, Shana	
Gallagher-Cuadras, Amy	Mattatall, Colleen	Thakur, Neela	
Gilbert, Beth	Paradise, Elaine	Trevitazzo, Nathalie	
Granato, Bobbie	Shoham, Monika	Williams, Johnathan	

Call to Order/Opening Remarks

Darka Jara/Colleen Mattatall

7:01 p.m.

- Organizing is needed for the remaining events of 2016-17, including Talent Show and Strawberry Fest.
- Thank you to the 3rd grade parents for the January teacher appreciation lunch/brunch.
- Board of Education Bobbie Granato and Elaine Paradise are in attendance to discuss the state of the school and upcoming budget.
- Keep in mind the meeting guideline reminders:
 - Talk to and about each other the way you hope your children would speak to or about you (both at the meeting and beyond). Be respectful and kind with your words always, here, and away.
 - Stay on topic. We will use a timekeeper to stay on track but remember the PTO meeting for reporting purposes of what your committee is doing. We don't expect lengthy discussions or conversations. Please curb your discussions or comments for the end or reach out to the chairperson directly after the meeting. You will be reminded or redirected if topic gets turned or time expires.
 - Introduce yourself and briefly explain WHAT your committee does for those new at the meeting.
 - If you must criticize, you MUST offer a suggestion.
 - The Board will clarify rules for voting, explain why we are voting before any votes.

Officers' Reports

Principal's Remarks

Ms. Neela Thakur

- Thank you for everyone supporting the STEM event last week, a 1½ hour family event (engagement with children) incorporating science, technology, engineering, and math. The event was coordinated by Kathy St Onge (EW Curriculum Specialist). Twenty (20) staff members stayed through the event ending at 8pm and others contributed games, signage, and activities. 70 families participated with 32 families participating in the egg drop. Thank you to Deb Burn for going up and down the ladder to drop the eggs. Let Neela know if you have any suggestions or improvements for next year. Shana Smith suggested that the egg drop could have been a station like the other events.

Board of Education Representative

Elaine Paradise/Bobbie Granato

- Bobbie Granato (40 years involved in the school and town) and Elaine Paradise (teacher for 37 years in Wethersfield) spoke at the meeting:
 - **Operating budget:** \$58 million to keep what we currently have. No new initiatives. No new positions in this budget. Increase of 2.9% over this year.
 - **Salaries and benefits:** compose most of the budget (79.8%) for 2017-18. Increase of salaries and benefits only.
 - Salaries – 3.16% increase over current year (comprises 64.5% of the 2017-18 budget).
 - Benefits - 7.14% increase over current year.
 - **Other highlights of the 2017-18 budget:**
 - Textbook upgrades deferred. Decrease for books, periodicals.
 - Maintenance and repairs are deferred.
 - Any money remaining in the budget will be used for resources to keep the school modern and updated. For example, all kids in the Grades 3-6 classrooms have access to Chrome Books.
 - Keep extra money for field trips.
 - Focus is to maintain class size (under 20 for K-3 classrooms). Class sizes can't get large.
 - Focus on school security.
 - Governor is providing relief from some mandates for the future. They have requested the unfunded mandates list.
 - For each .25% cut to the budget amount to a \$141,000 budget cut. Imperative to keep what we have without any additional cuts.
 - Voice concerns through email or by speaking at the Town Council meetings. Need help and support of the current budget without any additional cuts.
 - 2/14 - presentation of the budget by Michael Emmett at the Board of Education meeting.
 - 3/6 7pm – Town Council meeting (Town Council chambers)
 - 3/15 – Town Council will see the budget by this date. Any emails to the board before this time will help to support no cuts to the budget. Town website has town council emails.
 - 3/20 7pm – Town Council meeting (Town Council chambers)
 - 4/3 7pm – Town Council meeting (Town Council chambers)
 - 4/17 – Town council hearing on the budget
 - 3/20 seems to be the night to represent the EW community at the Town Council meeting. Sharon Silbo and Beth Gilbert to work together to create a letter from the PTO community to the council. Deadline to submit any letters or comments on the budget is 3pm the day of the meeting. Community should plan to show-up for the vote.

Secretary's Report

James Langdo

- Approval of 1/12 Meeting minutes motioned by Shana Smith. Seconded by Janet Carbo and approved.
- Sign-in attendance sheet distributed for each attendee to add their name and email address.
- Thank you to PTO from:
 - Music department team – for the Bluetooth wireless adapter for the sound system
 - 4th grade team – for the staff appreciation lunch/brunch on 1/13
 - 2nd grade team – for the magnetic letter tiles to help in Guiding Reading Groups
- James setup a Dropbox for all committee files. Committee chairs should contact James for access to any of the committee folders.

Treasurer's Report

Peping Dee

- Income:
 - 6th grade committee – \$3900 in fundraising efforts.
 - Box Tops - \$969
 - Total income: \$18,000
- Expenses:
 - Safe graduation donation - \$100
 - Hip Hop Program - \$2600 (paid in full by the Keane Foundation grant. Included in special items line item.)
- Total assets: \$58,000+

Committee Reports

Committees

Chairs

- Budget Committee Peping Dee
 - Starting to think about 2017-18 budget (start planning in March). Send any input to Peping. Leslie Williams and Shana Smith have asked to be involved in the committee.
- Bingo Night Beth Gilbert/Diana Iannucci
 - Bingo Night on 2/3 6pm. 175 attendees including adults. Prizes for winning bingo game. If child wins twice, a friend will get the prize. Neela will email teachers to ask if they want to volunteer to be a bingo caller.
- Creative Arts Deidre Sassano
 - Picasso Art Assemblies – Friday 4/7.
- Dance (3/18) Janet Carbo
 - Luau theme dance on 3/18 4-7pm. Building use forms have been submitted. Same DJ from last year. Hula dancers to teach kids the hula dance. Photo booths. Tickets have been ordered from the vendor. Décor provided by Autumn Struk. Flyer will be sent towards end of next week. Ticket Presale: 3/1 - 3/10. \$7.50 per ticket. \$10 at door. Adult is required to supervise. Setup from 2:30-4pm. Cleanup after. Signup genius will be created.
- Family Fun Committee Colleen Mattatall
 - Movie night on 2/24. Building use forms submitted for Webb but location not official yet. SDMS is more conducive but we are still moving ahead for 2/24. Voting sheets submitted to classes for children to vote on the movie.
 - Book Swap or Family Free book night – possible addition to TV turnoff week.

- Kindergarten Handprint Rebecca Anderson/
Monika Shoham
 - Date not official yet. Monika to speak to the teachers for possible date. Want to wait until spring for the children to be able to write their names.

- Room Parents Autumn Struk/
Diana Iannucci/Shana Smith
 - All grades hosted the December appreciation lunch. 3rd grade parents hosted the January lunch/brunch. PTO board hosted the February appreciation.
 - Leslie suggested Cheer Teacher Appreciation events should go back to the Cheer Teacher appreciation committee instead of Room Parents citing difficulty for parents to host consecutive months due to having children in each of the hosting grades.

- Strawberry Fest Autumn Struk/Colleen Mattatall
 - Strawberry Fest scheduled for 5/13. Free admission. Fundraising efforts through food and raffles tickets. Need to make \$2800 (in budget). Beth mentioned free admission might set a later precedent that could be difficult to change in later years if we charge no admission at all now. Nathalie mentioned to be cautious about changing the usual date of the event 3 weeks earlier than normal citing possible difficulties in attendance due to the change.

- Talent Show Christina Carreiro
 - Christina Carreiro has volunteered to chair the event. A potential date has been identified but it is also EW Field Day. Emerson Williams Shining Stars is the proposed name. Jessica Marvin has joined the committee. If anyone would like to help, please reach out to Christina.

- Tiger Topics Leslie Williams
 - 2/5 Tiger Topics deadline. Email to tigertopics@ewpto.com.
 - Looking for submissions: EW Principal letter; PTO Presidents letter; Mrs. Woods – Dare; Mrs. Kardys – Book club; Ms. M – Buddy Bench refresher; Sharon and Beth - Budget Reminder. And for any additional events. Send flyers, information and links to sign up genius or reminders to publish in Tiger Topics.

- TV Turnoff Week (5/1-5/7) Jaime Rogalski/Colleen Mattatall
 - To be held 5/1 – 5/7 during the National TV Turnoff Week. Dinner on the Lawn – The Rents have agreed to perform this year. Many other events in progress.

- Wish List Beth Gilbert/Christen Sousa
 - Wish List submissions will be accepted through the end of March. Approving Mrs. Ciarcia (EW Nurse) request for children's emergency changing clothes (underwear). We will see if the Kindergarten teachers need pencils, paints, general classrooms due to the cuts in the budget.

- WSPC (3/9) Vacant
 - Cyber Seminar to be held on Thursday 2/9. Flyer was sent home.

Fundraisers

- Box Tops for Education Beth Gilbert/Christen Sousa
 - Flyer to be sent home. One last box tops contest by March.
- Butter Braids (3/14-3/28) Darka Jara
 - Fundraiser on March 14th -28th . Pickup on 4/7.
- Mixed Bags (2/24-3/10) Darka Jara
 - Fundraiser February 24th – March 10th. Pick up TBD.
- Wolf Pack (3/5) Ms. Caravella
 - Game at the XL Center on 3/5 at 3pm. Super Hero Day. Tickets will be entered in a raffle. Winner of the raffle will get 2 regular season game tickets and can ride on the Zamboni at one of those games. Ms. Caravella sent home a flyer. This is not a PTO fundraiser but for the instrumental music department. Coordination through PTO.
- UConn Basketball Colleen Mattatall
 - Games are too late for the children and they didn't work within our calendar. We will consider the event next year.

New Business

- Keane Foundation Grant Autumn Struk/Amy Burlingame
 - Autumn submitted application for an EW Color Run, a health wellness and fitness run for September. Free if covered by grant. 1 mile run on a Saturday in September. Event will have a second course for others that don't want to be hit with color. \$2500 grant. Food trucks, DJ, Italian ice, and glasses and shirt for kids to wear. The grant will cover these items.
- Building Use Forms Colleen Mattatall
 - Building use forms must be completed more thoroughly for Joanne McPhee to process. Be as specific and thorough as possible on the submitted forms. List specific hallways, bathrooms, offices, tables, stage needed. Any access or items you might need for an event. Different form from last year. The form is a downloadable and fillable PDF which can be completed and then submitted via email.
- School Store Darka Jara
 - Brochure sent to us about school store items (pens, pencils, etc.). Student Council held a school store in the past. If a parent wants to volunteer, parent could have supplies and a cart and maybe hold school store once a month to collect money for items. Could be every other month, every month, every Friday, every other Friday, or Friday and Monday. Best time to hold school store is in the morning: Grades 4-6 are in the cafeteria at that time. Could be combined with purchasing for EW apparel sale.

- Teacher Lounge Colleen Mattatall
 - Research teacher lounge ideas

- Future Projects committee Colleen Mattatall
 - Committee to research any major projects or ideas. Projects such as fixing the basketball court. Dissolve committee if not needed and can reform committee if needed in the future. Add to tiger topics or blast email to see if anyone has ideas.

Open Forum

- PTO Today Expo – Leslie Williams, Nathalie Trevitazzo, and Courtney Harlow attended today. All vendors (for assemblies, all fundraising ideas, etc.)
- Kindergarten Orientation (3/1) – opportunity to enlist Kindergarten lunch volunteers for September.
- PTO closet - closet cleaned by Colleen Mattatall and Darka Jara. Threw items away that are not needed. Boxes consolidated and organized.

Closing Remarks

Darka Jara/Colleen Mattatall

Adjourn: 8:51 p.m.

Tiger Topic submissions are due by the Sunday after the PTO meeting.

Email to: tigertopics@ewpto.com