

## Tiger Topics Newsletter, March 2017

### Emerson-Williams Elementary School PTO

**PTO Board:** July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

**2<sup>nd</sup> Year Co-President:** Darka Jara, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent

**1<sup>st</sup> Year Co-President:** Colleen Mattatall, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Parent

**Secretary:** James Langdo, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Parent

**Treasurer:** Peping Dee, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Parent

### From the Desk of the EW PTO Co-Presidents

Dear Emerson-Williams Families,

We are deeply saddened to learn of the death of James Marcelynas, parent of Giulia Marcelynas, on March 2, 2017. The entire Emerson-Williams community extends its heartfelt sympathy to Giulia and her family, friends, and relatives.

At our March PTO meeting, we were honored to have Mrs. Root, Mrs. Lacy, and Mrs. Corsair present us all with a buffet to thank the PTO for all that we do for our school. On behalf of the EWPTO, we thank all of the EW Staff for a lovely spread. Also, Mrs. Root explained the Look For the Good Project which will enhance the students on the concept of gratitude. EWPTO is grateful for you!

March can be a long month, but we still have many upcoming events and fundraisers to keep us busy. Apparel and Mixed Bag Designs should be in by May 1. Remember to attend the upcoming Board of Education (BOE) and Town Council meetings to keep the BOE budget as is with no reductions. We need parents to attend the meetings to show support for the budget.

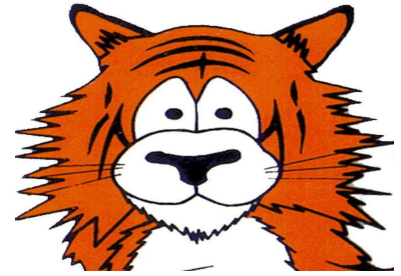
The saying goes Thank you parents and Staff for making our school so wonderful for our children we have three months left and so much to do on our calendar, but that's what makes us successful.

Respectfully Yours,

Darka Jara, 2yrpres@ewpto.com

Colleen Mattatall, 1yrpres@ewpto.com

Co-Presidents, EW PTO



### Upcoming Events

**April 7**

Staff Appreciation Event & Braided Pastry and Cookie Dough Pick-Up

**April 10 - 14**

Spring Recess – No School

**April 18**

Principal's Breakfast – Writer's Workshop, 9:00-10:15 a.m. in the Upper Media Center

**April 20**

PTO Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Upper Media Center at E-W

**April 21**

Wicked Cool Shirt Spirit Day

**April 27**

Talent Show Rehearsals 6 p.m. at Silas Deane Middle School

**May 3**

Shining Stars Talent Showcase 6 p.m. at Silas Deane Middle School

**May 4**

Field Day 12:30-2:30 p.m. E-W Lawn, Rain Date May 5

**May 11**

PTO Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Upper Media Center at E-W

### Emerson-Williams Elementary School

461 Wells Road  
Wethersfield, CT 06109  
Main Office (860) 571-8360

**Principal:** Neela Thakur

**Main Office:** Mary Lacy and  
Maria Intino

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Page 1 of 8 Tiger Topics  
March 2017  
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## From the Principal's Desk

By Ms. Neela Thakur

I wanted to send out this quick follow-up to Mr. Emmett and Mrs. Dastoli's recent letter they sent out to the Emerson-Williams community. For public school Principals in Connecticut, our recent Category 1 status for Emerson-Williams is a really big deal. All throughout Connecticut, all public schools were ranked in order from top performing to lowest performing, based on a complex mathematical formula comprised of multiple important indicators. Category 1 is the highest, and Category 5 is the lowest. The most significant indicators for success in this formula were: academic achievement, academic growth, physical fitness, and attendance. The fact that our beautiful school was ranked as a Category 1 school says so very much about our students, staff, and parents. What it says about the partnership between our parent community and our staff is really significant. What we do in our school each and every day is truly a team effort. We would not be as successful without your love, support, communication, and involvement. I am so incredibly grateful to have such a fantastic staff and engaged parent community that truly cares about education. While our state designation of Category 1 is a BIG DEAL, we recognize that it is only one measure of our success as a school. At Emerson-Williams, we also care deeply about many other factors such as: physical and emotional safety; creating a warm / welcoming environment for everyone; and making school a place where students feel excited to learn and grow. We need to continue to strive for excellence in these crucial areas as well. I am so very grateful to all of you for your support of the EW staff, our students, and me.

## School Mission

At Emerson-Williams Elementary School, we strongly believe in the joy of learning. Ours is a caring, compassionate environment that respects and supports the dignity of the whole child. We work hand-in-hand with families and the community to develop lifelong learners and contributing members of our changing society.

## EW Tiger Roars

A BIG EW Tiger Roar of Thanks going out to **Gordon Bonetti Florist, Inc.** of Wethersfield for donating a gorgeous floral centerpiece for our Luau dance. Thank you to **Nathalie Trevitazzo** for obtaining the donation.

# Thank You!



## EW Tiger Roars – Thank you!

*A BIG EW Tiger Roar of Thanks going out to:*

**Janet Carbo and all of the Dance Committee** for organizing the 2nd annual Bring Someone Special Dance. What a great idea to have a Luau and the kids had such a good time learning to hula and taking photos in the photo booth. Lots of memories made with someone special!

**All of the Fourth Grade Room Parents and Families** who organized a fantastic March Teacher/Staff Appreciation event. What a wonderful St. Patrick Day themed day that filled the staff lounge with rainbows and clovers.

**Leslie Williams, Autumn Struk, Nathalie Trevitazzo, Colleen Mattatall, Veronica and Delia Rondinelli, and the TONS of EW parents and students that helped bag popcorn** for the Family Fun Movie Night event! We hope you all had a wonderful time! **Special thanks to 99 Restaurant in Cromwell** for donating more popcorn than we could eat **and to Webb Elementary School** for allowing us to use their auditorium and Custodial staff.

**Darka Jara and Leslie Williams** for their work on the Mixed Bag Designs fundraiser and Apparel sale. Shipments are anticipated by May 1.

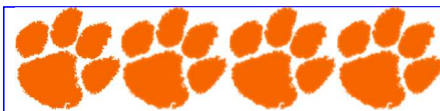
**Mary Fox and Emily Caravella and all our EW Instrumentalists** for organizing a great Wolfpack fundraiser and Family Sing A Long Night! Both were awesome fun!

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Page 2 of 8 Tiger Topics  
March 2017  
Editor: Leslie Williams

## Tiger Topics Health Quick Tips

By Linda Ciarcia, BSN, RN



6<sup>th</sup> Graders:

**Keep getting the physical forms in to me. I still have several students that have not gotten them in. You will not be allowed to enter 7<sup>th</sup> grade in September without one.**

### April is Backpack Safety Awareness Month!

Of all the things we think about as parents of school children, backpack safety may be a low priority. However, backpacks **are** something to think about as using them improperly over time, can cause long term back problems. To promote a healthy spine for your child, here are some tips to consider:

1. **Choose the Right Pack:** Choose a pack with wide, padded shoulders to help distribute the weight and contents of the backpack evenly. This will reduce pressure on the shoulders and neck.
2. **Pack the Right Stuff:** Pack only the essential items needed. The weight of the backpack and contents should not exceed **15%**. For example, an **80 lb** student should not carry a backpack weight of more **12 lbs**.
3. **Lift the Right Way:** When lifting a back pack from the floor, use both hands. And bend at the knees.
4. **Wear it Right:** Use both straps with a snug fit. Also, the waist strap is highly recommended (if the back pack is equipped with this feature).

Backpack  
Safety  
Awareness



April 2017

## A Tiger's Breakfast

Did you know... Breakfast is available daily in the Emerson-Williams School cafeteria?

Students who eat breakfast have better concentration, are more alert and miss fewer days of school. Start your child's day in a healthy way!

What's on the menu? Visit [Wethersfield.nutrislice.com](http://Wethersfield.nutrislice.com) to view the E-W Breakfast menu!

Do you have a healthy nut-free breakfast item or meal that your Tiger loves? Please share it with the E-W Community! Email it to [tigertopics@ewpto.com](mailto:tigertopics@ewpto.com) for publication in our next newsletter.



# Tiger Topics – Monthly Spotlight Article

## Emerson-Williams Book Clubs

By Jennifer Kardys- Member of EW Leadership Team

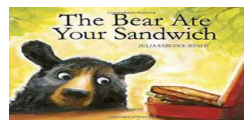
Let me start by saying: We have the best PTO EVER here at Emerson Williams! We are so lucky to have such a supportive group of parents who support both their children and teachers!

Earlier this year, our school Leadership Team (a team of teachers who brainstorm fun ways to both improve our school and community and have fun while doing it- a “think tank of sorts”!) had the idea of a “Whole School Book Club” where everyone in the school would read the same book, and have developmentally appropriate conversations within each classroom. Then, grade levels were to be paired together as buddies (for example: kindergarten and grade 4 are “buddies”). Each group of “buddies” would participate in fun conversations and activities across grade levels. When this idea was presented to staff, they loved the idea! Our only question was: Who will purchase the books? Funds are tight, as I know you are aware. So, we decided to ask our generous PTO if they would be willing to help us with this special project. The response from the PTO was overwhelmingly positive! They voted that night, unanimously, to FULLY fund our Book Club project! As our Leadership Team representative at this meeting, I was so moved by your support! Thank you so much for always putting your children, our students, first! Students and staff are having so much fun! It is so wonderful to see groups of different grade level students working cooperatively, learning from and growing with each other. Thank you, PTO for helping us with this project. We couldn't have done it without you!

Please continue to read to hear how Book Clubs are impacting some of our fourth grade students.

### Introduction

Hi, we are Amaya and Madison and we both love to read! One reason why we like Book Clubs is because we get to express how we feel about some parts of the book during our class conversations. And, it's even more exciting when we get to interact with our kindergarten buddies when we work on our activities about the books and characters.



### The Bear Ate My Sandwich by Julie Sarcone-Roach

4th graders are always so serious! That is why it is fun to have a kindergartener who will think outside the box in a more enjoyable way! For example, with the book *The Bear Ate My Sandwich* we colored a picture of the bear, our buddies used exotic colors when 4th graders would have just colored it brown. We went on a Bear Hunt with our kindergarten buddies, and then we made bears eating sandwiches! We just loved the part where they find out that the dog was the one that really ate the sandwich!



### Ish by Peter H. Reynolds

*Ish* is a great book because it teaches that one mean or kind word can make a big impact on someone's life and feelings. We help our kindergarteners because we always encourage them to do their best and to always be helpful! Also you can never give up, for example when Lydia was playing tag and was it, so her 4th grade buddy Amaya told her not to give up on trying to tag someone. We made “Ish” pictures with our buddies to show that everyone can make something different but they are all amazing!

### Our buddies and us

We love playing with our buddies outside or making crafts with them. For example, we made pumpkins, bears, and giraffes. Also, we had tons of fun playing dreidel with them. But we had even more fun reading the book club books with our kindergarten buddies, we had fun interacting with our buddies and the characters.

THANK YOU PTO!!! We couldn't have done this without you!

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Page 4 of 8 Tiger Topics  
March 2017  
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## Reminders

### 2017 EWPTO Meeting Schedule

The Emerson-Williams Elementary School PTO meets at 7:00 p.m. in the Upper Media Center on the following Thursdays: April 20 (due to Spring Recess), May 11, and June 8. Social Hour begins at 6:30 p.m. prior to the meeting. Join us and find out how you can help this year or even next year. Plans are already underway for 2017-2018 school year.

### Teacher and Staff Appreciation Event – April 7 hosted by the Fifth Grade

The next teacher/staff appreciation event will be held on Friday, April 7, 2017. The Fifth Grade Room Parents and Fifth Grade families will be hosting an Ice Cream Sundae bar. To help with the event or to donate ice cream, toppings, etc., please contact your Fifth Grade Room Parents to sign up!

### Grades K, 1, and 2 Families!!!

The library reading volunteer schedule has been updated for the remainder of the school year. The schedule is on the EW PTO website at: <http://ewpto.com/mediacenter.html>. Please feel free to go in and sign-up today! If you are unable to access the schedule online, please send an email to Amy Burlingame at [amy.burlingame@gmail.com](mailto:amy.burlingame@gmail.com) or a hard copy note Attn: Amy Burlingame - Media Center Committee - EWPTO.

## PTO Emails

Please add the EW PTO to your contacts list and keep in touch:

2nd Year Co-President – [2yrpres@ewpto.com](mailto:2yrpres@ewpto.com)

1st Year Co-President – [1yrpres@ewpto.com](mailto:1yrpres@ewpto.com)

Treasurer – [treasurer@ewpto.com](mailto:treasurer@ewpto.com)

Secretary – [secretary@ewpto.com](mailto:secretary@ewpto.com)

PTO Board – [ptoboard@ewpto.com](mailto:ptoboard@ewpto.com)

Webmaster – [webmaster@ewpto.com](mailto:webmaster@ewpto.com)

Tiger Topics Newsletter – [figertopics@ewpto.com](mailto:figertopics@ewpto.com)

Do you have a PTO suggestion? – [suggestionbox@ewpto.com](mailto:suggestionbox@ewpto.com)



## Box Tops For Education

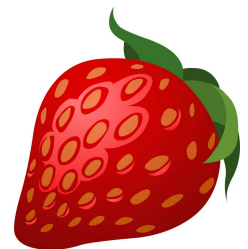
**Congratulations to Mrs. Harris' 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Class for winning the Box Tops Contest with 265 collected!** Mrs. Harris' students each won an Emerson-Williams drawstring back pack. Awesome job, EW Tigers! Great teamwork! Honorable Mention goes to Mrs. Laskowski's 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Class for 2<sup>nd</sup> place with 224 Box Tops collected. All Tigers collected a total of 2,998 for a total of \$299.80 earned for the PTO General Fund. Don't forget to keep clipping those Box Tops for Education during Spring Recess. Every Box Top earns \$0.10 for our school. And, did you know that there is a Box Tops For Education app for your smart phone? Download it today and start earning money for our school by purchasing qualified food items and submitting photos of your receipt right from your smart phone.

## Volunteers Needed

The **Strawberry Festival** is scheduled for **June 10** and the committee is looking for co-chairpersons for the following sub-committees:

- 1). Food committee to work with Janet Carbo.
- 2). Cake walk committee to work with Fran Schwarzhaupt.
- 3). Strawberries committee to help organize, cut, and refrigerate 65 lbs. of strawberries, and bring to EW on the day of event.
- 4). Volunteer committee to recruit individuals to help on the day of the event.

If interested please contact [strawberry.fest@ewpto.com](mailto:strawberry.fest@ewpto.com)



## Save The Dates!

Sponsored by Mr. Coursey, Physical Education:

**May 4 – Field Day** 12:30 – 2:30 p.m. on the E-W Lawn. Rain Date May 5, 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Sponsored by EWPTO:

**April 28 – Family Book & Game Night** for our April Family Fun event. This is sure to be great fun for the whole family. More details to come home soon in the back packs.

**May 1 – 7 – TV Turn Off Week**, mark your calendars for some fun and exciting events such as Yoga, Shining Stars Talent Showcase, Dinner & Music on the E-W Lawn, and a new and exciting event.... Bowling! Stay tuned for more information!!

**June 1 (Tentative) – Jog-a-thon**, we'll need tons of volunteers to help keep the children hydrated while they run their hearts out exercising for good health for a great cause, the EWPTO.

**June 10 – Strawberry Festival**, volunteers are needed for this annual day of childhood fun at Emerson-Williams. It takes a village and we know we can count on you to help us. For more information, contact [strawberry.fest@ewpto.com](mailto:strawberry.fest@ewpto.com)

Sponsored by E-W Music Department:

**June 6 – E-W Singers** from grades 5 and 6 will sing the Star Spangled Banner on Tuesday, June 6, 2017 for the New Britain Bees. Game time is 6:35 p.m. Ticket information will be coming soon.

Sponsored by Neela Thakur, Principal:

### April 18 – Principal's Breakfast

Ms. Thakur will be hosting a Principal's Breakfast for Parents on Tuesday, April 18, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m. in the Upper Media Center at EW. The topic of focus for this Principal's Breakfast will be Writer's Workshop. You'll spend a little bit of time dropping in on a kindergarten classroom and a fourth grade classroom to get a sense of what Writer's Workshop looks like at different grade levels. The special guest that morning will be Mrs. Jennifer Hammer. Mrs. Hammer is the Literacy Curriculum Specialist for both Emerson-Williams and Webb. All parents of students in Grades K – 6 are welcome to attend. A light breakfast will be served. To help plan accordingly, please RSVP by Friday, April 8 using the recently sent home Principal's Breakfast letter. Ms. Thakur hopes you will come and come hungry!





# LOOK FOR THE GOOD PROJECT

## IS COMING TO EMERSON-WILLIAMS!!!

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Emerson-Williams staff and students will be participating in a two week program called Look for the Good. The program focuses on the concept of gratitude and encourages us to recognize the people and things in our lives that we are thankful for. The program will run from March 20<sup>th</sup> to the 31<sup>st</sup> and some of the activities will include;

- Handing out “You Matter” cards to students and staff to thank them for their kindness.
- Having reflective moments to stand on a “Look for the Good Spot” and share what you’re grateful for.
- Posting sticky notes of what you are grateful for on the “Gratitude Wall” that will be located near the nurse’s office.
- Writing a gratitude letter to share with someone that you are grateful to have in your life.

Student council is working in conjunction with the staff members listed below. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out. You can also check out their website at [www.lookforthegoodproject.org](http://www.lookforthegoodproject.org) for more information. Thank you in advance for your support and we hope this will encourage some positive/grateful conversations with your children at home.

Ms. Neela Thakur, Principal  
Ms. Joanne Charbonneau, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher  
Ms. Carissa Mierzejewski, School Social Worker  
Mrs. Katie Nunn, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher  
Mrs. Erica Richard, Art Teacher  
Ms. Elisa Root, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher



# Emerson-Williams annual Strawberry Festival

**SAVE THE DATE!**

June 10, 2017

10:00am - 2:00pm

Emerson-Williams

Elementary School Grounds

**JOIN US FOR A  
BERRY-LICIOUS  
DAY OF  
FOOD, MUSIC,  
GAMES  
AND FUN!**

