



Emerson-Williams PTO
Virtual Meeting Minutes for
Thursday, November 12, 2020

Attendees

Anderson, Rebecca	Caravella, Emily	Carvalho, Stephanie	Conashevick, Stephanie
Dee, Peping	Hernandez, Andrea	Sczeczpanski, Anna	Smith, Shana
Tavares, Renee	Thakur, Neela	Williams, Leslie	

Welcome

Rebecca Anderson/Leslie Williams

Call to order at 7:05pm.

- Rebecca informed participants that a Board of Education representative, Charles Carey, was a guest speaker and due to listen about Emerson-Williams PTO. It was relayed that he was there to listen and not to answer questions.
- Rebecca reported that the Treasurer position remained open.
- Leslie reported that 41 Conscious Kids Books were purchased from Key Bookstore by an E-W parent and Neela would be sharing them with the Courageous Conversations Team.
- Leslie noted an E-W parent went out to town businesses to see if they could donate food to the Cheer Committee to provide lunch for E-W staff. For those staff in quarantine, gift cards were purchased by the PTO from a local business so they could purchase lunch when they returned to the building.

Secretary's Report

Stephanie Carvalho

- Approval of 10/08/2020 meeting minutes motioned by Neela and seconded by Shana.
- Stephanie read a letters of gratitude from Ms. Gove's class regarding the wish list items purchased.
- Stephanie read a letter of gratitude from Ms. Pulino regarding wish list items that were purchased.

Principal's Remarks

Neela Thakur

- Neela discussed the food drive for the Wethersfield Food Pantry that was organized by Ms. Miller. There is a table in the main entrance of the school where food items could be dropped off. The last day to donate is 11/13/2020.

- Last month Neela indicated the school was doing well and that it is much different this month. She noted that it is upsetting each night receiving emails from Mr. Emmett regarding the COVID positives.
- Two parents questioned why E-W and SDMS were the only two schools to shut down for two weeks when Highcrest only kept the 6th grade remote. Neela indicated that every situation at every school looks different. She reported that EW has been doing good and as of today there were no staff with COVID and there is no evidence of COVID being spread in the school community or classrooms. She noted that E-W closed for two weeks as it was difficult to manage in person learning given the number of staff out for quarantine.
- Neela stated that staffing is at an emergency level and she requested the shut down because she was unable to have the school function. She noted that there were 12 staff in quarantine and an additional 9 staff out on leaves of absence – totaling 21 staff out. She noted that Kelly Services also did not have anyone to staff. She indicated that she hopes to open and stay open under the hybrid model, however, things change every day.
- There will be two staff returning from long term absences. Mrs. Richards (art) to return on 11/13/2020 and Mrs. Woods (5th) to return 11/18/2020.
- Neela noted that her surplus staff have also been able to assist covering at Highcrest during the shut down.

Treasurer's Report

Rebecca Anderson /Leslie Williams

- Budget: As of 11/12/202- balance of \$16,385.30.
- Went over the balance sheet and the profit/loss sheets.
- Rebecca noted that in the last few months money has been spent on wish list items.
- There have been a few deposits into the account including deposits from Shop with Scrip.
- Leslie indicated that Ms. Caravella's Donors Choose project was close to being fully funded; though Ms. Caravella did indicate during the meeting it was fully funded.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS REMINDER

- Reminder the floor is open for nominations for the position of EWPTO Treasurer for 2020-2021.

Committee Reports:

During this time, committees will only provide reports. Any questions or comments, please email the committee or save for open forum.

Candles

Rebecca Anderson

- Kringle Candle ran from 10/25/2020 - 11/12/2020.
- The fundraiser was set to end today but it was extended to 11/15/2020.
- At last check, 12 families ordered. The PTO grossed over \$900 and 40% profit was made.

Sixth Grade Committee Stephanie Conashevick

- Stephanie provided update that the committee has met two times.
- The committee discussed fundraising. Some ideas included a raffle, however the committee was unsure if there were stipulations around the use of the word "raffle." Both Rebecca and Leslie were unaware of anything specific to "raffle."
- Discussion of Yearbook occurred and the committee will reach out to sixth grade parents to see if anyone would volunteer to take on the project.
- Rebecca asked if the Sixth Grade committee was interested in taking on the holiday store which they declined.

Spiritwear**Leslie Williams**

- The order period will be from 11/15/2020 - 11/25/2020.
- The vendor is Yours Personally, LLC which is local.
- They will have shirts, sweatshirts, etc in various sizes. They will offer beverageware as well – stainless steel wine tumblers. Leslie will be inquiring about possible holiday ornaments.
- This is an online fundraiser that will provide a modest delivery charge. All orders to be in before Christmas.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS:**None****Open Forum:**

- Anna provided a suggestion to the 6th grade committee about having an art auction. She also noted that with the yearbook that parents could provide submissions digitally.
 - Anna had a question for Neela about having a 14 day quarantine pre/post holiday travel. Neela responded that she meets regularly with Mr. Emmett and that as of now that there is no plan to close the schools after Thanksgiving or prior to Christmas.
 - Renee had a question about how the teachers were doing with in person and online learning. Neela noted that a vast majority of staff find it difficult and most are finding it challenging. She indicated that they are putting in quadruple hours of work and some don't feel they are being successful with the students. There are a few students who are thriving in the situation and she noted it is disturbing the number of those not thriving in addition to the concerns of the learning gap widening.
 - Leslie commented on the student interactions and their cooperation with doing what is asked of them during remote learning. Neela noted that staff is trying to be more clear of the expectations schoolwide while online. She did not that there are concerns schoolwide about remote learning behaviors/expectations of the students.
 - Andrea gave kudos to the teachers and stated, "if they're feeling it, then they're not showing it." She also gave a shoutout to Mrs. Dawson who took on remote learning of her class in addition to Ms. Yatrousis class.
 - Peping asked about elementary school updates. Neela noted that there have been no conversations since March about school updates but they will need to turn their attention to updates soon.
 - Peping noted that he wrote a letter to the Town Manager, Mr. Emmett and the Mayor because he did not feel that improvements in the air and ventilation systems are getting the attention they needed.
 - Neela commented that E-W will be the last on the list of restructuring of schools.
 - Stephanie Carvalho asked about the disengaged learners and bringing them back 4 days a week. Neela noted that they selected the most disengaged students and they are attending 4 days a week. She noted that 31 students were brought back 4 days a week due to how behind they were and there has been a tremendous improvement in those students.
- **Next meeting 01/07/2021.**

Closing Remarks**Rebecca Anderson**

- Rebecca thanked Neela for answering questions and providing feedback. Thank you for calling in and participating in the conference.

Adjourn: 8:34pm