

Emerson Williams PTO Meeting Minutes
Monday September 12, 2022

Attendees:

Rachael Alderige	Jeannine Almeida	Brandon Britto	Genevieve Britto
Amy Burlingame	Amy Gallagher-Cuadras	Andrea Hernandez	Pamela Jones
Brandy Kerns	Mila Martinez	Colleen Mattatall	Kate Nadeau
Karla Pelarinos	Jessica Peltier	Emily Rasgo	Jennifer Reilly
Jim Reilly	Lauren Rhines	Elisa Root	Nicole Sandillo
Stephanie Scanlon	Shana Smith	Christen Sousa	Anna Szczepanski
Neela Thakur	Anthony Uccello	Leslie Williams	

Welcome: Colleen Mattatall

- Call to order 6:30pm
- Welcome to everyone and introduction of new board members
- Introduction of those in attendance

Secretary Report: Jessica Peltier

- Thank you note from 5th grade teachers for the taco bar luncheon was read
- Sign in passed around
- Briefly discussed how everyone should look through minutes from the June meeting, as they will be approved at the end of the meeting.

Treasurer Report: Anthony Uccello

- Current balance=\$12,512.65
- Discussed how PTO raises money through the various fundraisers throughout the year: School pictures, book fair, soccer game, apparel sale, membership drive.

Principal Report: Neela Thakur

- Thank you to everyone for keeping the PTO going the last two years, it was difficult with the pandemic. Shout out to past PTO President Leslie Williams because she made sure the PTO did not miss a meeting and adapted to Zoom meetings seamlessly.
- Thank you for the taco bar luncheon, the organizing of "Dinner on the Lawn", and to the kindergarten parents who came in to help during the lunch waves
- COVID protocol: if you test positive, isolate for 5 days, then when back at school need to wear a mask for 5 days.
- This has been a very positive start to the school year with things back to normal
- New staff has been hired for open jobs except the EL teacher needed through November

Teacher Report: Elisa Root

- Thank you to PTO for taco lunch!
- Reminder that ParentSquare should be used as the main communication between parents and teachers. (More so than email)

- Open house is next week along with book fair
- October 5th first early dismissal
- October 10th school closed for Indigenous Persons Day

COMMITTEE UPDATES

- Colleen mentioned that the committees were listed in alphabetical order and not by importance, in order to keep things fair
- Andrea passed around sign up for committees that still had available volunteer openings
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- Amy B. & Colleen: Book fair
 - Set up is this Friday 9/16
 - Students will come down with their class to look through books to create wish lists
 - Students will be able to purchase books throughout the day during fair
 - Book fair will be open during Open House
 - Volunteer sign up was passed around
- Karla: Cheer & Color Run
 - Thankful Thursdays were started during COVID to show appreciation towards the staff for all their hard work.
 - Some Thursday events were: Puzzles, donuts & coffee, calming jars, and the Zen den
 - New volunteers and ideas are welcome any time
 - Tiger Trot/Color Run is October 1
 - Sign up genius for volunteers to help out that Saturday will be sent out soon to help before or after
 - Tiger Trot is a one mile run where powdered chalk is thrown at people in white shirts as they go by.
 - Shirts can be purchased for \$7 or they can wear a shirt of their own
 - Any attendees need to register to make sure there are enough supplies
 - Flyers were sent home with students but can also be found on the EW PTO website
- Colleen: Dinner on the Lawn Hundreds of people attended Dinner on the Lawn
 - The music was great!
 - Thank you to Neela for suggesting to do the event
- Anthony: Hartford Athletics Fundraiser
 - Saturday 9/17 is the actual game
 - The PTO receives \$5 per ticket sold
 - May purchase tickets until the night of, no assigned seats, all are welcome, weather looks great
 - Anthony will be sending out a video ad this week
- Colleen: Jump Start Read for the Record
 - This is a nationwide program started about 7 years ago. This year it is on October 27th.

- A book is picked and the idea is that every child around the country will read the same book on the same day. This year the book is Nigel and the Moon.
- Ten books were purchased: 7 in English & 3 in Spanish

- Colleen: Membership Drive Fundraiser
 - Every year anyone who would like to vote at the PTO meetings must register as a member of the PTO. You may give a donation or not, that is up to the person.
 - Depending on the level of donation given, EW swag is given out
 - If you know of a company that will do a corporate match for the donation, those are always welcome as well!

- Lauren: Room Parent
 - Room parents are the liaison to help let the parents know of opportunities to volunteer in the classroom and organize the teacher gifts
 - We need about 36 volunteers and some teachers still do not have a room parent
 - Flier going out through school about volunteering opportunities for this

- Shana: School Pictures
 - Dates are September 26 & 27
 - Every child will get a class photo because they are free for all
 - Every child is photographed even if you do not purchase photos
 - A QR code will be going home with each child the day of pictures. You can sign up to be notified when pictures are ready for viewing/purchasing.(Usually takes about 2 weeks)
 - If child misses picture day, there will be retakes on 10/24, but child will not be in class photo
 - Please let your child's teacher know that they will be retaking their photos when the time comes
 - Kindergarten goes first and the others are scheduled so that they are before lunch
 - Only 1 more volunteer is needed

- Amy G-C.: Sixth Grade Committee
 - There are 11 members and 3 co-chairs this year. Plan to meet with teachers later this week and at the end of the month.
 - They plan all the activities for the 6th graders: socials, team building ropes course, Pine Acres trip, handprint project, yearbooks, presents, etc.
 - First fundraiser for the 6th graders is the Lyman Pie Fundraiser. This will be going on from October 7-21.
 - Pie pickups will be on November 4th
 - Puerto Vallarta Night will be coming up too
 - Parents can also opt to pay the dues for their child and there is always money to help those who may need it

- Andrea: Spirit wear
 - Sale ends October 5th
 - Sizes run small and items cannot be returned
 - There are a few samples in the main office
 - Solid colored t-shirts and long sleeved shirts now can have either design decal.

- Lauren: Sponsorship
 - Businesses donate money and will be featured on the PTO website, FB page, and newsletters
 - So far \$300 were raised from Yard Cards and Chic Hair Boutique

- Lauren: Teacher Fund
 - This week every staff member will receive a certain amount of money from the PTO to help buy supplies for their classroom/program

- Colleen: WSPC & BoE
 - All school breakfasts and lunches are free again this year
 - Please “appreciate” messages on Parent Square
 - Wethersfield School Parent Council: representatives from the schools PTO get together to discuss and share ideas
 - Then they meet with Mr. Emmett, the superintendent for an hour to discuss and hear what is going on
 - The elementary school referendum is the big discussion point right now.
 - Jim Reilly described a little about what it is: a ten year plan to build two new schools (Highcrest & Hanmer). Then EW & Webb will be renovated and Charles Wright would no longer be in use and new school districts will be in place.
 - EW district will be of course be impacted, look at the map
 - This project will cost a great deal of money/taxes will increase
 - More information can be found online and the main office
 - If this referendum does not pass, the next vote will be the following November.
 - Recommended that people learn as much as possible in order to make an informed decision in November
 - It was mentioned that you do not have to be a registered voter in the town of Wethersfield to vote on the referendum, you must just pay property taxes greater than \$1,000.
 - There is a group of parents getting together to try and make the referendum packet more user friendly.

NEW BUSINESS

- Scarecrows on Main: Anna will take this on again. She has last year’s still in her garage and has an idea for the theme already too.
 - Registration needs to be in by September 23rd.
- Walk to School Day October 5th: still looking for a volunteer to take this on and breathe new life into it.

VOTES

1. June minutes passed: Leslie motioned to approve the June PTO minutes, Ms. Root seconded the vote. All were in favor of passing.
2. Nutmeg Books: Request put in to buy more copies of each of the Nutmeg books for grades 4-6 this year because the district/school is buying 4 books instead of 5. (The PTO usually buys the other 5 books so the school has 10 copies of each.
 - Colleen provided an overview of past support from the PTO and of the Nutmeg Books process in general
 - The amount budgeted for the purchasing of these books was originally \$750, now the price would increase to \$902.45.
 - Motion to spend money on additional copies made by Amy B. and seconded by Shana. All were in favor.

FINAL THOUGHTS

- Fundraisers can be added throughout the year, new ideas encouraged
 - Parent's Night Out, Holiday Bizarre (Nicole, Stephanie & Kate volunteered to head this committee) Mini-Photo Sessions: Stephanie is a photographer and volunteered to take family photos during the fall at an apple orchard, or park.
 - PTO website needs new photos, please email webmaster@wepto.com with any recent event photos