



Emerson Williams PTO Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 8th, 2025
6:30 p.m.

Attendees:

Sarrah Hughes	Katherine Patnaude	Andrea Hernandez
Elisa Root	Neela Thakur	Katrina Ross
Lauren Rhines	Nicole Wante	Elizabeth Keyes
Megan Copland	Mindy Gold (WIN IT)	May Hanlon
Anthony Uccello	Emily Huffman	Amie Lugo
Shana Smith	Emily Lata	

Welcome: Sarrah Hughes

- Call to order 6:29pm
- Welcome to everyone and introductions of those in attendance

Principal Report: Neela Thakur

- Welcome to first PTO meeting of the year!
- Thank you to PTO for staff back to school luncheon and dinner on the lawn
- District in transition with new superintendent. He is looking to keep most things the same to start. Superintendent, assistant superintendent, and HR director left all at the same time.
- A new assistant superintendent will be hired for January with a focus on HR, staff evaluation, and talent management while the director role will have a focus on instruction.
- Open House is next week on Wednesday, September 17th. This event is for parents and guardians ONLY.
- Still looking for a 3-month long-term sub for music. Six different people have been hired, but then find a full-time job. Another candidate is pending...
 - Unsure if there will be an impact on the winter concert or chorus at this time.

Treasurer Report: Katrina Ross

- Current balance reviewed.
- 2025-2026 budget reviewed:
- Project income 17,725 based on the past.
- Has us operating at a net loss of \$1,565 for the year, however, we are adding additional fundraisers.
- Money is still on reserve for the buddy bench

Teacher Report:

- Thank you for the back-to-school luncheon and the wish list contributions.
- We have a temporary building sub that will be here until December 1st.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Referendum: Mindy Gold

- Referendum next Tuesday September 16th
- This will be the first of 2 referendums for a comprehensive plan on how to renovate all 5

elementary schools in the district.

- The first referendum includes whether to bond the town for up to \$88 million.
- During the first phase: A new Highcrest will be built on Kycia farm, then all Highcrest students will move into the new school. The old Highcrest will become the swing school.
- Next will be Webb – those kids will go to the old Highcrest. Once Webb is complete it will turn into a 5/6 academy districtwide
- Then Charles Wright will be renovated as new.
- The 2nd referendum will include Emerson Williams and Hanmer Schools which will be held in roughly 2028
- The building committee put together an assessment of what would need to be done if we don't renovate – this would be at least \$66 million, which includes a small number of what the state would reimburse us for.
- \$239 million is the total cost of the renovations on the 1st referendum, but with reimbursement from the state it will be \$88 million.
- If this passes, the next part of the process is to put the project out to bid. Also, the building committee and town council will start to work on a maintenance plan – we are required to have a 20-year maintenance plan as part of the state reimbursement. All the big systems come with a warranty of 20 years. That plan can't be worked on until the vote passes.
- Polling places: vote at your normal voting location 6am to 8pm. If you aren't going to be in town that day you can get an absentee ballot which are available at the town clerk's office.

Committee Updates:

- Any ideas to increase volunteers for the cheer committee
 - Send a paragraph to Neela to send out message to parents
- Creative Arts – might go away for next year if there aren't people to head it up
 - Assembly that comes in twice a year. All PTOs working together to get a better rate.
- Savers Drive
 - Takes place in the Emerson Williams parking lot. We will start collecting on Sept 19th at night and Sept 20th in the morning.
 - Sign up online on the sign-up genius – but also not necessary
 - Anything that is soft needs to be in a garbage bag
 - We are paid per pound – we will know in a couple days how much we earned.
- Purse BINGO
 - Friday, November 14th 7-9pm in the EW café (free!)
 - \$30 to buy 5 BINGO boards but you can purchase more if you want
 - There will also be raffles held
 - Bring your own food/snacks
- Color Run/Tiger Trot
 - Nicole, Sarrah, and Lauren – color fun run – October 18th at 10am at EW
 - Katherine to put in building/grounds request
 - Looking to do it again in the spring
- Book Fair
 - In order for it to be possible we need volunteers
 - Possibly asking for not just parent volunteers but also grandparents and other family members
 - We will wait until March conferences to hold one and cancel the fall book fair
 - We will write up a paragraph for Neela to send through parent square regarding

this.

- School Pictures
 - October 6th – K-2
 - October 8th – Grade 3-6
 - If your child misses picture day they will miss the class picture
 - Retake day – November 10th
 - A QR code comes home – after a couple weeks you get a link to the picture and then you decide if you want them or not.
 - Class pictures get sent home later – everyone gets one for free
 - Spring picture day – only if you sign up and sibling pictures are available.
- 6th Grade Committee
 - Going to send an email to all 6th grade parents to see if they wanted to join
- Room Parents
 - Not many have signed up so far, however, sign-ups continue through next week
- Lauren to make QR codes for sign ups
- Dinner on the Lawn
 - Great weather and good turn out
 - An EW dad played music outside all night to set the vibe.
 - Next year: 5:30 so it's not too early and doesn't get dark too soon. Other ideas include:
 - Used book swap
 - Gently used children's clothes (leftovers go to Savers fundraiser)
- Walk and Roll to School Day: October 7th
 - Try to get some "walking school buses" to gather nearby groups of students to walk together with meet up spots, music, etc.
- WSPC – Sponsoring movie night October 10th from 5-9pm at the Cove – Lilo and Stitch, music, main street creamery, bounce house, etc.
- PTO – Anthony asked if the PTO would be willing to do a field trip on the weekend for parents and kids, possibly.
- Table will be set up for Open House with flyers for PTO, room parents, etc.
- Referendum Night: Craft - maybe

NEW BUSINESS

Open Discussion:

- None.

ITEMS TO VOTE ON

1. June Meeting minutes
 - a. Motioned to approve
 - b. Seconded
 - c. All in favor, minutes approved
2. Edit to Budget for 25-26
 - a. Motioned to approve
 - b. Seconded
 - c. All in favor, budget approved

Meeting called to close at 7:45pm