



Emerson Williams PTO Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 9th, 2026
6:30 p.m.

Attendees:

Sarrah Hughes	Katherine Patnaude	Andrea Hernandez
Neela Thakur	Anthony Uccello	Tabitha Zimmerman
Matt Laccavole		

Welcome: Sarrah Hughes

- Call to order at 6:31pm
- Welcome to everyone and introductions of those in attendance

Treasurer Report: Sarrah Hughes

- Current balance reviewed up to today – current cash account balance \$17,756
 - Includes advances for strawberry fest and parents night out
 - Current deficit \$5,332, most likely due to fall book fair not running
- Have more fundraisers planned for the spring

Principal Report: Neela Thakur

- Thank everyone for attending winter concerts on 1/29, Mrs. McLean did an amazing job and her sub did a nice job preparing the kids
- Neela attended Scott Driscoll’s presentation for parents on 2/2. There were 10 Emerson parents who attended. About 90-100 parents at the presentation
- On 2/4 had their second annual global school play day. It was a screen free day.
- Winter vacation 2/13-17
- With 2 snow days, up to June 18th (Thursday) – current last day of school
- The Town is getting rid of second (red) playscape in little kids area (it’s more than 13 years old) – due to damage, the Town will demolish it and not replace it. The Town will put in a few stand alone items, but not a full playscape. Will be done when the weather gets warmer

Teacher Report: Absent

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- Board of Ed – Matt Laccavole
 - Going into budget season. First budget workshop on 2/14 at 9am in Stillman building. Superintendent will present the budget. BOE will discuss that day and will have another budget workshop on 2/17 at 6pm in Stillman building. Hope to get around 4% increase each year, but about 3.7% is salaries, so that doesn’t leave much room for other items
 - Building committee – voted to hire TSKP as architecture firm for school rebuilds
 - Superintendent gave entry findings report – he’s doing a good job of assessing what we need and what we have. He talked to about 300 people (parents, staff, etc) in the District for the report. Really listening to everyone. Being proactive about curriculum and facilities. Putting together capital improvement report.

- Governor Lamont put out his proposed budget – includes items for education, maintain the excess cost appropriation (increased last year) – money for special education outplacements. Last year, the BOE didn't need it and were able to bank the surplus, but the current budget is overbudget due to outplacements and they may be able to use that funding. The budget proposal has more money for special ed seed grants, funding for LEAP program, \$12m for universal school breakfast.
- Balance Project – community movement to try to get kids off of so much screen time and being safe online. Spearheaded by a group of parents. Related to Anxious Generation
 - Wait until 8th pledge – want as many parents as possible to not give kids smart phones until 8th grade – band together as a community of parents. See PTO flyer for pledge link
- Dance – Katherine Patnaude
 - 4/24 6-7:30pm – theme Lights, Camera, Dance! in the gym
 - Have DJ and photobooth booked.
- Purse Bingo – Sarrah Hughes – plan for the spring - will try to do before Mother's Day
- Book Fair – Andrea Hernandez
 - Booked for 3/16-3/19 – need someone to helm this
 - Tues, Wed, Thurs are conferences in afternoon
 - Need someone who has the capacity and time
 - We have done a lot of things in the past like the book fair wish list, that no one else does – so there are things we could cut out. If we eliminate wish list and push e-wallet, could make this easier
 - Can we hold it in the upper media center again? Gym equipment is planned to be there until 3/19
 - Depending on the venue, and that it's through conferences – can dedicate that Monday for the kids. And parents shop during conferences. Tailored to what the week is and what's going on. Andrea to get more details so Neela can put out a one-pager. Most of the work is setting it up and taking it down.
 - Sarrah can help with scheduling and getting volunteers. But we need a project lead and someone to be physically present on site.
- 6th grade – Tabitha Zimmerman –
 - Waiting for confirmation for Town to book step up – change date from June 15th to 16th – already put in the building use form
 - 6th grade dues were just requested
 - Had Puerto Vallarta fundraiser last week for 6th grade, waiting on funds
 - 6th grade will be doing Munson's fundraiser soon
- Athletics – Anthony Uccello
 - Sports – karate – doing 4 additional 5/12,19,26 & 6/2 on Tuesdays – gym 3:15-3:45? Very engaging – offered Saturday class if students missed a class. Got a certificate at the end of the fourth class – showed off skills at the studio at the end.
 - Soccer – can do – season starts in April
 - Yard Goats – have to decide how many tickets to do, have to guarantee an amount of tickets. Can do 20 tickets, first come first serve – Anthony to find out pricing and how much deposit is. Do in May or June
 - Harlem Wizards – big event – they want a lot of tickets sold. Webb did for 6th grade and open for whole town, held at the high school. Something to think about for next year. Anthony can request info on it. Would have to check if Webb is doing it again.

- WSPC – Anthony Uccello
 - Balance Project – meeting 2/10 6-7:30 at Charles Wright – student led group will be at the same time as the parent meeting.
 - BIPOC community fair – 4/30 5-7:30 at community center. Presented \$1 pajama day fundraiser to support primary project. Funds will also help BIPOC community fair. Hoping schools will do the fundraiser. Also partnering with Transition Academy. Will have sensory friendly space at BIPOC fair
 - Looking into more information on scholarship options for PTOs to fund
 - Had winter walk and bike to school day – did see an increase in Emerson’s foot traffic
 - Discussed Walk Wednesday – to encourage more kids to walk at least once a week
- Restaurant Night fundraiser – Sarrah Hughes – No Mames on 3/3 – should have a flyer soon

NEW BUSINESS

- none

ITEMS TO VOTE ON

1. January Meeting minutes – will vote on next time
2. Internet Safety – Scott Driscoll presentation – add to budget \$700 for student presentation – 60 minute presentation for 4th, 5th and 6th graders
 - a. Andrea motions to approve \$700 to pay for presentation
 - b. Tabitha second
 - c. All in favor, approved

Meeting called to close at 7:35pm