



Emerson Williams PTO Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 5th 2026
6:30 p.m.

Attendees:

Neela Thakur	Nicole Wante	Katrina Ross
Katherine Patnaude	Lauren Damm	Joella Thombs
Derek Lata	Andrea Hernandez	Joanna Heffernan
Aime Lugo		

Welcome:

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

Treasurer Report: Katrina Ross

- Current balance reviewed up to today
- We have had more membership dues coming in this year
- The budget is currently in the positive
- The photo fundraiser wasn't in the budget but already made \$400+

Principal Report: Neela Thakur

- Started the year with 2 Charity Drives –
 - Book Drive (former EW student) which was very successful
 - Food Drive - Anthony Uccello sent big thank you to everyone!
- Fall Parent Conferences are coming up: October 20th, 21st, 22nd
- Neela's Parent Book Club – Mindset - Starts on Wednesday October 28th
 - 3 staff members and 16 parents are currently signed up
 - This will meet virtually for 1 hour each month
 - There is still room if anyone else wants to join!
- EW is looking for a Lunch/Recess Aide – non-EW parent
- Thank you to all of the parents who helped with the Book Fair and Picture Day!

Teacher Report: None.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- **Fundraisers:**
 - Currently looking for a date in November to host Purse BINGO
 - Butter Braid Fundraiser will be in 2/8-2/22 with delivery on 3/22
 - Music BINGO – A company comes and does it for us, brings a screen and they play a song; we just provide the prizes. Cost is based on day of the week. Possibly January or February.
 - Use Scholastic Dollars for prizes
 - Restaurant Night: Do a poll for restaurant preferences
 - Non-Athon: You can donate \$50 to PTO and opt out of participating in fundraisers
 - Possibly during Giving Tuesday
- **Sports and Games:** Derek Lata
 - **Hartford Athletic** – October 24th – Fan Appreciation Night and the last game of the season
 - The link was included in Neela's recent post

- If we hit the 50 ticket minimum, we can have some kids come on the field for the national anthem
- **Karate** – 16 slots filled right now
 - Tuesdays – October 27th, November 10th, 17th, 24th from 3:15-3:45pm
 - We can do another session in the spring
- **Hartford Yard Goats** – Sunday, April 25th 1:10pm
 - 50 tickets reserved – We can get more if needed
 - \$21 per ticket
- **Hartford Wolf Pack** - Friday, March 19th - 7pm game
 - School band/orchestra is going to play a song during the first intermission
 - 2 slots for riding the zamboni before the game, and 12 bench warmers slots are available to us – we can raffle them off
 - We will brainstorm places to raffle them; possibly during parent/teacher conferences in March
 - 150 tickets available - \$25-27 per ticket
- **Spirit wear** –
 - Looking to do Spirit wear sale twice – October and Feb/March
 - October 19th - November 6th – with delivery being right before Thanksgiving
- **WSPC**
 - John Karzar reported on piloting Smart Start
 - Legislative money is to be used for Family Resource Center
 - They would like to have Carissa come to the next WSPC meeting to talk about internet safety and AI
 - Amplify would also come and talk about education around internet safety
 - They are still working on district calendar for next 2 years
 - At next BOE meeting – there will be 2 options and then they will finalize it at the November BOE meeting
- **Walk, Bike, Roll to school day:** Wednesday October 7th
 - DOT has a sticker design contest for all of the schools due November 1st
 - The winning design will be used for next year's Walk, Bike, Roll promo
- **Book Fair**
 - \$220 – Scholastic Dollars were used
 - Over \$10K in books were sold, which is similar to previous years
 - There is a new company (River Bend bookstore) that does book fairs – Joella will check out at Highcrest and report back
 - If books run out, they can be restocked the next day
 - Local business
- **Parent Connecting Parents:** Joanna Heffernan
 - This organization is helpful if you have any parents that need any resources, opportunities for families to connect, questions, support, etc.
 - Jessica Coelho and Kim Bobin (WECC) are in charge of it
 - They have some programs coming up:
 - 7th and 8th grade night out – October 30th
 - Therapeutic Recreation
- **Trunk or Treat:** Thursday October 29th 5:30-6:30pm in the EW parking lots
 - EW only families
 - Sign up to decorate a trunk or donate candy
- **Cheer Committee:** October 29th
 - Still looking for volunteers to help set up in teacher's lounge and clean up

NEW BUSINESS

- 75th EW Anniversary Brainstorming for next year
 - If anyone has any ideas, feel free to reach out to Neela
 - Family Event; Alumni Dance; Picnic; Dress as a 75-year-old

ITEMS TO VOTE ON

1. September Meeting minutes – With minor edits
 - Motioned to approve by Lauren
 - Seconded by Derek
 - All in favor, minutes approved
2. Funds for November Hip Hop Assembly – Total cost \$3,500
 - PTO to contribute \$1,000 (\$700 reallocated from the field trip line item, remaining \$300 to come from equity); \$1,000 contingent on possible redistribution of Nutmeg line item (to determine what Ms. Deegan needs and/or if we can purchase books with Scholastic Dollars)
 - Motioned to approve by Lauren
 - Seconded by Andrea
 - All in favor, funds approved
3. Using EW PTO bank account to use for Creative Arts
 - \$9,755 will go into EW PTO account and marked specifically for Creative Arts
 - \$4.50 per student will be billed for each school
 - 1st performance – CT Science Center – November (Science of Suds), In the spring looking for theater show
 - Vote to allow the money to be housed in EW PTO
 - Motioned to approve by Lauren
 - Seconded by Derek
 - All in favor, account approved

Meeting called to close at 7:36pm