**Emerson Elementary PTO Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, January 10, 2017**

1. Welcome
* Meeting came to order.
1. Principal’s Report
	* Indicators show all is going well
		+ Relationship building with students
		+ A lot of students transition through Emerson
			1. About 40 new students since the school year began
			2. Emerson is closed to new enrollment, but not restricted for families who move to the neighborhood
		+ Reading foundational skills are improving
		+ Continuing to move towards more consistency across the school
		+ Early adopter for the new math curriculum
		+ Overall, a strong team
		+ New report cards to be issued soon
			1. Standard based
		+ Lexia was implemented last year
			1. Provides daily progress reporting
			2. 27% at grade level, good progress
2. Treasurer’s Report
	* Anna presented the report
		+ Scoopie night around $478
		+ Spellcheck was less than expected at $1,041
		+ Made a little over $250 on Emerson Gear
		+ Anna reviewed expenses
3. Committee Reports and Volunteer Opportunities (6:30)
	* REAP
		+ Did well overall
			1. About $3,000 raised, minus some expenses
			2. Emerson was the top selling school this year
	* Spellcheck
		+ Not all the participants have sent pledges in so fundraising is underperforming
		+ Potential to change the pledging focus to a sponsorship instead
		+ Set up a GoFundMe site for easier pledging
	* Mallard game – Tuesday, May 30th
		+ Emerson gets about $2.00 per ticket sold
			1. Some discussion on potentially raising the ticket price
			2. Emerson has large population of low-income households who might be priced out of participating
		+ Plus the 50/50 raffle
		+ Raised about $700 last year
	* Family Fun Night
		+ Winter carnival
		+ Community event, not a fundraiser
			1. Costs are covered by the event, however
		+ Heidi asked for a volunteer or volunteers to shadow her this year or next
			1. She will have two more years after this year and needs to be able to train someone on the event
				1. Also need new volunteers to take over projects for the event
			2. Also needs volunteers to run to collect items on the day of
		+ Mad Rollin Dolls, teachers, AmeriCorps, other outside groups all pitch in to help
		+ Airbrush tattoo artist is paid
	* Heidi has cleared out a bin of plastic cups and plates from the PTO that she recommended to be donated
		+ The group agreed
	* Madison Capitols game
		+ Junior A development team, expansion league
		+ Similar set up to the Mallards offerings
		+ Keeping it simple this first year
		+ Tickets would be at the fundraising level of $10
		+ Online ticketing
		+ Should funds raised be for something specific such as playground or keep it in the general fund?
		+ Date is Sunday, March 5th at 4:05pm
			1. Same date as their mascot
			2. Open skate afterwards
			3. Games at the Dane County Coliseum
		+ Reevaluate in September to determine participation again
	* Playground Update
		+ Project began 5 years ago
		+ On track to complete the strategic plan
		+ Began working with the city neighborhood plan to incorporate the Emerson playground
			1. Received City Council approval
			2. Had $55K funds dedicated from block grant
		+ In the fall the City was reconsidering the funds
			1. January, Amy, Brad, & Peter met with the City and received a new commitment
				1. Would need to come from a different source, but would have more funds available
				2. Unclear what the timeline is for the funds to be issued
			2. Current focus of continued development
				1. Equitable access paths; making playground barrier free
				2. Increase multigenerational interaction
				3. Increase options for nature based play
			3. Booster added this summer was part A
			4. Additional booster is about $35K
		+ If anyone is interested in being more involved, contact Amy
4. Gardens and Grounds Discussion
	* + Shaili attended a fall PTO meeting in order to recruit volunteers and someone to take over the management of the project.
		+ Megan Grill and Cara Scanlan joined the management team
			1. There are opportunities for people to participate ongoing
		+ Spring & Fall beautification events
			1. Ongoing maintenance of the property
			2. Help is needed to organize the event
			3. Welcoming volunteers
			4. Coordinating and leading projects
			5. Painting the blacktop, weeding, planting bulbs, other projects
			6. Families bring treats to share as well
				1. We do provide coffee and some other treats
		+ Garden Club
			1. Cara has organized garden club for the past three years
			2. Students in 2nd and 3rd grades
			3. Help needed
				1. Obtaining supplies (mulch, seeds, straw, compost, bulbs, etc.)
				2. Assisting the club teacher during the interest club timeframe (6 weeks in the fall and the spring)
		+ Emerson Kids Garden
			1. Ongoing for past 10 years
				1. Snack garden for students
				2. Garden club activities
				3. Help needed

Planning the garden

Organizing summer watering, weeding, and harvest

Maintaining the garden for a week over the summer

* + - New Projects
			1. Interest in making the kids garden more accessible
			2. Education on what’s a weed and what’s a plant to keep
			3. Help Needed:
				1. Designing, obtaining materials, and building raised beds
				2. Working with the Urban Tree Alliance to plant more tress in the playground
		- Shaili is ready to hand off the responsibility of being the contact for the garden and grounds
1. Adjournment – Thank you for coming!

## Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 14th

Agenda items for next meeting:

* Facebook Page – private or no?
* Use of Nextdoor
* Other social media