



# Emma Jewel Charter Academy



*"Helping the Village Raise the Child"*

## **Minutes for Board of Directors Meeting for Emma Jewel Charter School Inc.**

**DBA**

**Emma Jewel Charter Academy**

**September 23, 2024**

**5:30 p.m.**

**705 Blake Avenue**

**Cocoa, FL 32922**

1. **Call to order**– Mr. Alton Edmond called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance/School Pledge**- The members of the student government led us with the Pledge of Allegiance, following the school's pledge.
3. **Roll Call**- Board Secretary Lacy Bussey conducted a roll call. Present were Reginald Jones, Alexis White, Lacy Bussey, Alton Edmond, Phillip Holder, not in attendance were Ross Whitely and Eric Jones.
4. **Opening Statement** – Board secretary, Lacy Bussey read the opening statement.
5. **Public Notice**- Mr. Cole stated that the public was notified by the EJCA website as well as the push app.
6. **Approval of Minutes from Board Meetings held August 26, 2024\*** - Board chair Alton Edmond asked the board to take the time to look over the last minutes. Ms. Bussey made a motion to approve the minutes and Mrs. White seconded the motion. The motion held 5-0 vote.
7. **Annual External Audit \***-Rich and Brandon reviewed the annual external audit with the board, distributing draft copies of the final report for everyone's reference. They presented the independent auditor's report, which primarily detailed the school's financial standings. They noted that, similar to the previous year, the school received grant funding, though this year's amount was slightly reduced. As part of the audit, a compliance audit, known as a single audit, was also conducted to ensure adherence to regulatory standards. Rich and Brandon highlighted specific sections of the report, mentioning that page 6 presented a condensed balance sheet, comparing the current year's assets and liabilities with those of the previous year. On page 7, a summary of revenue, expenses, and income from this year versus last was provided for further context. They reported that the school's total assets reached \$2.6 million at year-end, with cash holdings showing a notable increase to \$170,000 compared to \$50,000 the previous year. Additional receivables from federal grants accounted for around \$130,000, adding to the school's overall financial health. The majority of assets were comprised of fixed assets, underscoring the school's stable asset base. On the liabilities side, they indicated about \$200,000 in accounts payable by year-end, mainly stemming from payroll obligations, which increased by \$20,000 from the prior year. Rich and Brandon concluded by affirming that the audit findings were



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clean, indicating a positive financial review and solid compliance standing for the school. Mr. Alton Edmond made a motion for the approval of the external audit. Mr. Phillip Holder made the motion to approve and Mr. Reginald Jones second motion. The motion held a 5–0 vote.

8. **ESOL Out of Field\***-Mr. Cole explained that The ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) endorsement is a certification required for teachers who work with students learning English as an additional language. This endorsement is essential for several teachers to effectively support their ESOL students, helping them build language skills within the classroom. For instance, Ms. Rankine, a kindergarten teacher, needs this endorsement to support a scholar in her class who is an ESOL learner. Similarly, Ms. Molina and Ms. Tarnowski, who each have ESOL students in their classrooms, are also seeking this endorsement. Although these educators are already state-certified, they must obtain the ESOL endorsement to meet state requirements and enhance their teaching approach for ESOL scholars. Board chair, Alton Edmond, entertained motion for the approval of the ESOL endorsement certification for the educators. Ms. Bussey made the motion to approve, Mrs. White second the motion. The motion stood 5–0.
9. **Section 457 (f)\*** – LPL Financial’s Lancet Warren talked about the 457(f) plan is a type of retirement plan specifically designed for founders and cofounders of nonprofit organizations, such as Mr. and Mrs. Cole, the founder and cofounder of Emma Jewel Charter Academy. This plan is advantageous for a long-term, 10-year retirement strategy, with the benefit rolling over each year. Unlike other retirement plans, the 457(f) plan is deferred, meaning it cannot be accessed until separation or upon an unforeseen event like the death of the beneficiary. Importantly, the board members of the organization oversee and manage the 457(f) plan, and they are responsible for formally signing it over to Mr. and Mrs. Cole on designated dates and times, ensuring compliance and support for their retirement planning within the nonprofit framework. Additional compensation considered would be 30% of salary at the time of separation until age 65 and medical benefits until age 65. Board chair, Alton Edmond, made a motion to move forward with the structuring of the plan with a lawyer. Mr. Holder made the motion to approve, and Mr. Jones took a second motion. The motion stood 5–0.
10. **Florida Purple Star School of Distinction Resolution\***- Mr. Cole presented to the board the concept of the Florida Purple Star School of Distinction resolution, which he explained as a recognition for schools that are military-friendly, designed to attract and support military families. He requested board approval for this resolution, which would then be included in the school’s application packet. Being a Florida Purple Star School of Distinction signifies that the school actively welcomes military families, providing a comfortable and supportive environment. As part of the criteria, the school must host at



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least one annual event to honor both veterans and active-duty military members. Additionally, the school is required to reserve at least 2% of its enrollment capacity for military families who relocate to the area. A formal board approval of this resolution is necessary for the application to proceed. Mrs. White made a motion to approve the Florida purple star school of distinction resolution application. Ms. Bussey second the motion. The motion stood 5–0.

11. **Mediation Request Arnold Law Firm** – Mr. Cole informed the board about a mediation request presented by the school’s lawyer, Sean Arnold, and his firm, aimed at challenging the district over IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) funds. The mediation, requested of the district along with other schools, is a strategy to dispute the allocation of these funds. Mr. Cole cautioned the board, explaining that pursuing mediation involves risks, as it essentially signals a readiness to initiate legal action against the school district. He noted that he and Mr. Edmond had thoroughly reviewed and considered all available options, emphasizing that this mediation was not a guaranteed success. Furthermore, he highlighted that only a limited number of schools were currently prepared to join in the mediation effort, underscoring the challenges involved.
12. **Principle Evaluation\***- Board chair Alton Edmond, presented the principal evaluation scores to the board. That the principal evaluation showed that Mr. Cole scored highly effective 67 out of 67. Mr. Jones made the motion to approve the principal evaluation scores that will be presented to the district. Mrs. White second the motion the motion stood 5–0.
13. **Introduction of SGA Officers**- Kamaiyah brothers is the new treasurer of the SGA, Athena Dela Cruz holds the position of secretary of the SGA, Kane Harrell holds the position of vice president of the SGA, and Nehemiah Pierce holds the position of president of the SGA.
14. **Blue and Gold Gala**- Mr. Cole informed the board that the blue and gold gala will be on October 12 at 5 PM. Here encouraged all members of the board to attend.
15. **Adjourn**-Mr. Edmond, entertained motion for adjournment for 6:44 PM.

*\*Requires Formal Board Action*

Lacy Bussey  
Board Secretary

October 28, 2024  
Date