



**Minutes for the Board of Directors for Emma Jewel Charter School Incorporated  
DBA Emma Jewel Charter Academy**

**January 2025**

**5:30 p.m.**

**705 Blake Avenue**

**Cocoa FL 32922**

**Community Center**

1. Call to Order- Alton Edmond called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance/School Pledge- Led by the candidates of the school SGA.
3. Roll Call- Ms. Lacy Bussey the board Secretary conducted roll call. Present at the meeting were Ross Whitley, Alton Edmond, Thomas Cole, Reggie Jones, Alexis White, Lacy Bussey, Phillip Holder. Absent were Eric Jones.
4. Opening Statement- Ms. Bussey read the opening address that outlined how the board would conduct business.
5. Public Notice- Mr. Edmond asked Mr. Cole how the meeting noticed in order to meet the standard of public notice. Mr. Cole reported that the meeting was noticed in the school app, electronic board, as well as the school website.
6. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes from October 28, 2024 \* There were no corrections to be made on the minutes. Ms. Bussey made a motion to approve the minutes Mrs. White seconded the motion. All in favor signified by saying, I. The motion carried unanimously. The motion held a 6-0 vote.
7. Legislative update/executive orders\* During the board meeting, Mr. Cole addressed both the board and the audience regarding the impact of new legislative and executive orders implemented under the new administration. He emphasized that these changes could have significant implications for the school's student population. Mr. Cole stressed the importance of ensuring that the school remains a safe space for all students, regardless of external challenges. To provide further guidance, he introduced Dr. Foreman from the Arnold Law Firm, who was invited to advise the board on how to respond if Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) were to visit the school seeking information on students. Dr. Foreman informed the board that the legal team is actively monitoring developments and continuously receiving updates on the appropriate course of action. He announced that the Arnold Law Firm would be hosting a meeting the following Wednesday from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM to provide a comprehensive legislative update to all their Charter School clients. In the meantime, Dr. Foreman advised the board that should ICE arrive at the school requesting access to students or information, the school administration—particularly Mr. Cole—should immediately contact the law firm for legal assistance and further instructions. This guidance aims to ensure that the school adheres to legal protocols while prioritizing the well-being and safety of its students.
8. Monthly financials\*- Mr. Ross Whitley explained the monthly financials. He noted that at the beginning of the school year, the school typically operates at a significant deficit due to upfront expenses such as textbooks. Mr. Whitley reviewed the December financials, which encompassed six months of financial data. He reported that for the month of December, there was a surplus of \$79,000. Year-to-date, the school had a positive balance of \$29,559. Additionally, Mr. Whitley mentioned that the school began the year with a positive fund balance of approximately \$117,000. By the end of December, the general fund balance had increased to \$146,000. Mr. Cole added that a significant portion of this increase was due to reimbursements



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*"Helping the Village Raise the Child"*

from Title I funding Mr. Holder made a motion to approve the monthly financials, which Mr. Ross Whitley seconded. The motion passed unanimously with a 6–0 vote.

9. Health and Wellness Plan\*—Mr. Cole explained the audit conducted through the NSLP program last July. As part of the audit, a health and wellness plan review was required. Mr. Cole informed the board and audience that everything was in order, with only minor adjustments needed, such as updating names on outdated paperwork. Mrs. Tatiana White was previously listed as the parent liaison for the board, and the new student government for the current school year also needed to be updated. Mr. Cole emphasized that these were only substantive changes and that no major issues were found. He also informed the board and audience that funds from the National School Lunch Program were being withheld until all necessary paperwork was submitted and properly recorded in the system. He confirmed that the payment had been processed in November. The health and wellness plan was the only outstanding item in the audit, but Mr. Cole assured the board that this had been addressed. Ms. Bussey made a motion to approve the health and wellness plan, and Miss Alexis White seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with a 6–0 vote.
10. ESOL Out-of-Field\*- Mr. Cole explained the ESOL out-of-field certifications for teachers. He informed the board and audience that while all teachers hold proper certifications to teach, those with English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students in their classrooms need to be on track to receive their ESOL endorsement. Mr. Cole reported that Melissa Thomas, Ashena Rankine, Amber Tarnowski, Emily Molina, and Gary Ross are all currently enrolled in the ESOL course. Additionally, he explained that Mr. Nigel Schroeter had missed a course but is currently taking two courses and will complete three additional courses in March to finish his endorsement. Mr. Reginald Jones made motion to approve the ESOL out of field certifications, Mr. Ross Whitley seconded. The motion passed unanimously with a 6–0 vote.
11. Out-of Field Teacher\*- Mr. Cole also addressed the board and audience regarding an out-of-field teacher, Mrs. Amber Tarnowski, who teaches fifth grade. He explained that while Mrs. Tarnowski had completed all her paperwork and courses back in November, she had inadvertently forgotten to pay for her certification. She has recently made the payment to have it officially added to her certification. However, if the school board were to look her up in the system, she would currently appear as out-of-field. To rectify this, Mr. Cole stated that board approval is needed to update the system to reflect that Mrs. Tarnowski has completed her coursework, made the necessary payment, and is no longer teaching out of field. Miss Bussey made a motion to approve the out of field teacher, Mrs. Tarnowski, Miss White second. Motion passed unanimously with a 6–0 vote.
12. VPK Background checks- Mr. Cole reminded the board members that are listed on sunbiz to have their background checks for VPK. He informed them to see Miss Tiffany Smith if they had any questions. Most of the board members had already made preparations or has had their background check submit it.
13. SGA Updates -SGA members gave updates on the upcoming black history program in February. They also gave an update on the Valentine's Day dance on February 14 doors open 8 o'clock SGA also gave information about the reading date night that would be happening at the school. Member of the SGA Athena, showed the Christmas parade trophy. Mr. Jordan showed the championship trophy for the girls basketball team as well as the team ring.
14. Adjourn- The meeting was adjourned at 6:23 p.m.



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Larry Bussey  
Board Secretary

3/10/25  
Date