

October 2007

Emerson Eagle

2121 Calaveras Avenue Davis CA 95616

A monthly publication of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Junior High PTA

Visit us on the web at <http://www2.dcn.org/orgs/ejhpta>

Submit articles to the editor at susan.hulsizer@comcast.net

Principal's Message

Welcome back to another great year! I look forward to the many adventures we will share as the year progresses!

Our students were already treated to a surprise when "Butterscotch," former Emerson student and third place winner on "America's Got Talent" performed for the student body last Friday. Additionally, she spent time conferencing with our three leadership classes, and had lunch with a few of our students. I appreciated very much her comments about junior high being both the best time in her life and the most challenging. She encouraged students to go after their dreams, and talked honestly about her own quest for "finding herself." It proved to be a well-received surprise that warmed us all.

Many thanks to our new PTA copresidents, Frances McChesney and Gustavo Soberano for stepping up to assume these roles. The first PTA meeting brought many new faces with energetic parents ready to move us forward. This is a good sign! Also, we have Julie Hendrickson, Shirley Concolino, and Marcie Bernard participating as our parent representatives on the School Site Council. Meetings are held the first week of each month and are open to all.

Please note that November will be filled with important events: 1) The new superintendent comes on board, 2) Measure Q will be on the ballot, and 3) Two new Board members will be elected. I bring this to your attention because Emerson still needs to be modernized, and the district attendance boundaries changed, so that we can get more funding into the school. Since there are always competing agendas, our vigilance will be required with the changes to ensure these issues are addressed. I will keep you posted.

I am happy to report that Emerson made gains again in our API.....now at 893 in California's ranking system. Thank you so much for your support to your children and our school. It continues to be a privilege to work with a great staff, a great student body, and parents who run with us!

Please feel free to give me a call if you have any questions. Take care...

--Diane Studley



The Emerson Jazz Band entertains the crowd at Back to School Night.

PTA Presidents' Report

The PTA had its first meeting of the new school year on September 11, 2007. New officers for this school year were elected:

Co-Presidents: Frances McChesney and Gustavo Soberano

Co-Vice-Presidents: Jackie Rutheiser and Virginie Bock

Secretary: Ellen Dean

Treasurer: Ellen Morrati

Auditor: Jim Belenis

Historian: Liz King

We want to thank the officers and other parents who generously volunteer their time to support the students. We are seeking additional volunteers - a garden coordinator to support the garden program (work with the paid staff), a parent education co-coordinator (work with current coordinator), a hospitality coordinator (coordinate with other parents to support the students and teachers for special occasions), and fundraising volunteers.

Our Principal, Dr. Studley, and the school's counselors Carolyn Kennedy and Michael Leahy, updated the PTA and answered questions. Some great news - Emerson is again the top school in middle school performance in the greater Sacramento area!!

Our E-scrip Coordinator - Kyria Boundy-Mills - pro-

(Continued on page 2)

PTA Notes

(Continued from page 1)

vided information about the effectiveness of the eScrip program in fundraising. We encourage each of you to participate in the program because it can generate significant funds for school activities and it doesn't take any effort once you sign up. There are many alternatives that can fit your own needs – Safeway, Savemart, credit card purchases, and Nugget.

The PTA is beginning the process of establishing a budget and generating fundraising ideas. Dr. Studley described a fabulous proposal to create a garden teaching structure to complement the garden-based instruction. The Emerson garden program is used as a model at the state level for middle school garden-based instruction. The new structure would allow a whole class to sit in the structure for classroom instruction. Dr. Studley also described the PE department's request for PTA funding to upgrade the fitness equipment at Emerson. There are other sources of funding for both projects but PTA funding is needed to support these projects.

At the meeting, the PTA unanimously voted to endorse Measure Q, which is on the November 6 ballot. The current parcel tax expires next year and this tax is used to preserve school programs that are not covered by state funds, including Music teachers, Art teachers, Foreign Language teachers, Advanced placement courses, Lower student-to-counselor ratios, Longer library hours, Classroom supplies, Reading programs and Reading Specialists, Math specialists, Computer and technology instruction, Career Technical Education, Classroom size reduction teachers, and Fresh farm fruits and vegetables to supplement lunch programs. Please join Emerson parents for phone banking at Remax Real Estate Offices at 408 G Street from 7 to 8:30 pm. There will be yummy cookies and a chance to meet other Emerson parents.

Please come to your next meeting on October 9 at 7 pm in the Library.

—Frances McChesney & Gustavo Soberano



PTA Co-Presidents Gustavo Soberano and Frances McChesney welcomed parents at Back to School night on September 19th. Classrooms were packed with parents getting to know their student's teachers and what's in store for the year.

PTA Meeting Schedule:

Parents: Please join us for the PTA meetings. They are held in the Emerson Library on the second Tuesday of each month (except December and June) at 7 pm and typically last about 2 hours. The meetings provide an opportunity to ask questions of the Principal and the Counselors, to contribute to decisions made about PTA funding of activities, to create opportunities to support our kids and teachers, to participate in parent education evenings, and to meet other parents.

October 9, 2007
November 13, 2007
January 8, 2008
February 12, 2008
March 11, 2008
April 8, 2008
May 13, 2008



See you in the Library!!

Frances McChesney and Gustavo Soberano (Co-Presidents)

Sign up for SCRIP: It adds up!

Safeway, Save Mart, Nugget, and Target could donate to Emerson each time you shop! These programs are **free**, and can bring in thousands of dollars per year to our school.

- If you shop at **Nugget**, pick up a Nugget scrip card at the school office. Use the Nugget club card to get the discount, and the Nugget scrip card to earn donations to Emerson PTA. Nugget will donate 3% of your purchases!
- If you shop at **Safeway**, the store can donate 1% of your purchases each time you use your Safeway club card! Sign up for eScrip at www.escrip.com, or contact Kyria Mills to register for this FREE, NO-HASSLE program.
- If you shop at **Save Mart**, the store will donate 3% of your purchases made using the Save Mart SHARES Card. This is a re-usable gift card: you load a balance and spend it down. Contact Kyria Mills to request a card.
- If you shop at **Target** using a Target charge card or Target visa, they will donate 1% of your purchases to Emerson. Just stop by the Target service counter and let them know you would like to donate to Emerson Junior High.

THANK YOU to over 80 families that signed up for the eScrip and Save Mart programs using the Back to School forms! If you provided your Safeway number, we signed you up for eScrip. You will see a note about eScrip at the bottom of your Safeway receipt when your donations begin. You will be contacted if we had any problems signing you up, for example if you were already registered to support another school. **Save Mart SHARES cards** will be mailed to your home in about 3-4 weeks. Questions? Problems? Contact Emerson PTA's eScrip coordinator **Kyria Mills** at kblmills@ucdavis.edu or 756-8435.

Support the Davis public schools: Vote Yes on Q

On Tuesday, September 11th, the PTA voted to support Measure Q, the parcel tax first approved in 1983 and renewed every four years since then. In the 30 years since the passage of Proposition 13, many school districts took dramatic hits to their education programs and were forced to eliminate programs once thought to be core to a good public school education - art, music, counselors, foreign language classes, access to good libraries - to list just a few.

Rather than reduce or cut these essential programs, the Davis community took matters into their own hands and placed a parcel tax on the ballot to supplement the K-12 education to keep the excellent standards that our schools have to this day.

The money from the parcel tax benefits our schools and our children in the following ways:

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

- **Grades K-3:** Local funds to continue implementing Class Size Reduction to twenty students per class (6 teachers)
- **Grades 4-6:** Class size reduction of two students per classroom toward a continuing goal of 29 students in each class (4 teachers)
- **Elementary Reading:** Reading specialists and aides to ensure all children read at grade level standards (8 specialist teachers)
- **Elementary Math:** Math specialists to provide coaching and curriculum development to ensure grade level achievement (3 specialist teachers)

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

- **Seventh Period:** Enrichment and electives, including music, foreign language and art (over 13 full time teachers)
- **Library Aides:** Longer hours to provide student access to libraries
- **Counselors:** Additional staffing at each school to lower student-to-counselor ratios
- **Interventions for At-Risk Students:** Additional teachers to lower class sizes

HIGH SCHOOLS

- **Seventh Period:** Enrichment and electives (3 teachers/15 year long courses)
- **Career Technical Education:** Elective courses (1 teacher/5 year long courses)
- **Library Aides:** Longer hours to provide student access to libraries
- **Counselors:** Additional staffing at each school to lower student-to-counselor ratios

DISTRICT WIDE INITIATIVES

- **Nutrition:** Farm fresh fruits and vegetables available for every lunch; classroom support for nutrition initiatives
- **Classroom Supplies:** \$20 per student available directly to every classroom
- **Technology:** School site support for computers and instructional technology
- **Counseling Support:** Full-time crisis counselor; part-time psychologist, nurse and aide
- **English Learners:** Aides to support instruction
- **Teacher Training:** Additional funds available to teachers based on district enrollment

The Davis community likes to think these programs are not "extra" but are basic for children to receive the best education possible.

HELP WANTED: We need 20 volunteers to staff a volunteer phone bank on **Wednesday, October 10th for 1 ½ hours**. This is the night that Emerson Jr. High needs to fill 20 slots. Every school in Davis is helping out and it's a great way to say "hi" to 19 other Emerson parents and to do a needed service. Believe it or not, calling with 19 other Emerson parents is pretty lively and fun as well as delicious – many fresh chocolate chip cookies and cold milk will be served to all!

We will meet at 6:45 for orientation at the REMAX Real Estate Offices at 408 G Street near Stadium 5 Movie Theater and call from 7-8:30 pm. You will also all be properly thanked in the school's newsletter! Please email Jackie Rutheiser at jackieruth@pacbell.net or call her at 902-0737 to sign up or if you have any questions.

For more information on Measure Q, please go to the website: <http://www.yesforourstudents.org/>.

Emerson Junior High School PTA Board 07-08

Would you like to join our board? We have vacancies in Hospitality, Parliamentarian and Parent Garden Coordinator. Come join our team to support the students and staff at Emerson. Could you help with one-time projects? Contact Lynn Amer, our volunteer coordinator at lynnamer@earthlink.net.

Co-President , Frances McChesney	fmcches@pacbell.net	Newsletter , Susan Hulsizer	susan.hulsizer@comcast.net
Co-President , Gustavo Soberano	soberanodvm@yahoo.com	List Serve , Bob Lawson	rjlawson@ucdavis.edu
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Auditor , Jim Belenis	jbelenis@omsoft.com	Logowear , Cathy Sacks	cjsacks@comcast.net
Historian , Liz King	kingaroo@sbcglobal.net		

Volunteers: Your Time is Valued. The PTA wants to estimate the time spent by volunteers in support of the school community this school year. Keep track and report your PTA volunteer hours anytime to our historian Liz King, kingaroo@sbcglobal.net. Thank you for making a difference.

Emerson Athletics

Emerson Junior High is part of the Yolo County Athletic League (YCAL), which was formed to provide its member schools a league that allows student-athletes to be on teams in which participation in sports is the primary goal. The YCAL only consists of 7th and 8th grade teams and Emerson upholds a no-cut policy.

All 9th grade Emerson students are eligible to tryout for sports offered at Davis High School. If you're interested in obtaining information about Davis High Athletics, you may call 757-5400 x151.

The following is the schedule of sports offered at Emerson:

<u>Sport</u>	<u>Season</u>
7th and 8th Grade Boys & Girls Cross Country - combined	Sep 4- Oct 17
7th and 8th Grade Girls Volleyball	Sep 4- Oct 18/20
7th Grade Boys & Girls Basketball	Oct. 22- Dec 13
8th Grade Boys & Girls Basketball	Dec 10- Feb 9
7th and 8th Grade Boys & Girls Soccer	Feb 11- Apr 3
7th and 8th Grade Boys & Girls Track & Field - combined	Apr 7- May 22



7th and 8th grade girls have a choice of participating in cross-country or volleyball, not both. All other sports may be played without interference.

We are pleased to have the following coaches already on board:

- Alexha Luong – 8th Grade Girls' Volleyball
- Colleen McCusker – 7th Grade Girls' Volleyball
- Joannie Siegler – co-7th and 8th Grade Cross Country
- Michael Leahy – 7th and 8th Grade Boys' Basketball
- Kelseigh Jones – 7th and 8th Grade Girls' Basketball
- Jason Teves – 7th and 8th Grade Boys' Soccer

We strongly urge parent participation in order to continue offering a successful athletic program. Parents are needed throughout the year for transporting the student-athletes to away games/meets, coaching, helping the coach, assisting at hosted events, and/or being a team parent.

Emerson still needs coaches for 7th and 8th Grade Girls' Soccer, and Track and Field. Please contact Mr. Fahlen if you're interested.

We look forward to a spirit-filled and enjoyable year.

-Tim Fahlen, Athletic Director/PE Teacher/Cross Country Coach
757-5430 x163 direct x652 voice-mail, tfahlen@djusd.k12.ca.us



Web Page

The library web URL is <http://www.djUSD.k12.ca.us/emerson/LibraryMain.asp>. It contains many resources that can help students complete assignments at home. The following page will give you an overview of the page layout and content.

Electronic Resources

The library has two subscriptions for electronic resources. The first one is from Grolier and contains both *Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia* and *Americana Encyclopedia*. It is available directly on the World Wide Web, and contains thousands of new and expanded articles, extensive hyperlinking, bibliographies and links to other sources of information on the Web. It is updated monthly, providing up to date information to the students. It can be accessed at school through our web site.

The second subscription is for *EBSCO Middle Search*. This database contains full text for nearly 90 magazines. Full text is also available for biographies, historical essays, pamphlets and primary resources. Also included are *Funk & Wagnall's New Encyclopedia*, *American Heritage Dictionary*, the *Encyclopedia of Animals* and an image collection. This can be accessed through the library web page and may be used at school or at home. Ask at the library for the logins and passwords.

"After Hours" at the Emerson Library

All students are invited to "After Hours" at the EJHS library, Mondays through Thursdays from 3:12 to 5:15. Get help on homework, do school related research, work on group projects, or find a good book to read.

Online Book Club

All students, staff and parents are invited to join the Online Book Club. It can be accessed through the library web page or by going directly to <http://www.djUSD.k12.ca.us/harper/library/blog/>. As you can see, it is housed on my Harper web site. Everyone at both sites can chat together about books they are reading. You must come to the library to get a permission form and password to participate. Once registered, you are welcome to post in the "Booktalk" section about any book that you think others would be interested in reading. There is also a book discussion about a specific book about every six weeks. Our first book this year is *The Revealers* by Doug Wilhelm. Seventh-grader Russell, who is being physically terrorized, reaches out to a geek named Elliot and to Catalina, who has incurred the wrath of seventh-grade queen Bethany and her minions. The kids first become friends and then devise a way to use the school's pilot project e-mail system to tell their stories--and the stories of other kids who are subject to regular bullying. Briskly plotted, the novel shows how bringing the stories to light transforms stereotypes into real people and provides a vehicle for others to become involved. There are copies available at both school libraries. You can read chapter one online to see if you are interested. Go to http://www.the-revealers.com/revealers_chapter_1.html

Textbooks

We are still seeing some textbooks floating around that are not covered. Please make sure all textbooks that your students are carrying back and forth from home to school are covered and that the student's name is clearly marked on the cover.

-Jamie Boston, librarian

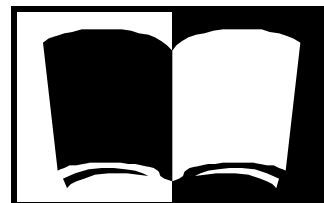
2007-2008 Yearbook

Order your yearbook for \$40 now through Oct 31st. Many options are available on personalization, CD's, clear cover and more. Contact Ms. Wolfe or yearbook staff for more information.

2006-07 Yearbook DVD's 8th and 9th graders: Did you miss out on last year's super cool Emerson DVD? Wish you had bought one? Well, you have one last chance! The yearbook class is selling the remaining DVD's for ONLY \$3! Hurry to room A-1 or ask a yearbook staff member...first come, first served-when they're gone, they're gone!!

9th Grade Baby Pictures Hey 9th graders, if you want your baby picture in the yearbook, bring it to A-1. Make sure it isn't bigger than 4"x6". Remember to write your first and last names and homeroom on the back. It will be returned to you at the end of the school year.

-Jennifer Wolfe, Publications Teacher, jwolfe@djUSD.k12.ca.us



The Emerson Eagle is the newsletter of the Emerson Junior High School PTA. If you would like to subscribe to the newsletter in the mail, please contact the editor, Susan Hulsizer at susan.hulsizer@comcast.net or 753-2221. If you find the e-mail or website version is sufficient, and you don't need the paper version, please let her know to remove you from the mailing list. The deadline for the November newsletter is Tuesday, Oct 23.

Dialogue with Dr. Deborah, DJUSD Crisis Guidance Manager

Please respond to Dialogue with Dr. Deborah. Forward any comments, questions, or any concerns to me, Deborah Kimokeo, Ed D. - Crisis Guidance Manager for DJUSD. I can be reached: Email: dkimokeo@djUSD.k12.ca.us & Phone: 757-5400x133.

I wanted to talk a little this month about information received at a conference this summer in a session with Dr. Ken Winters, University of Minnesota-Dept. of Psychiatry. This presentation dealt with the adolescent brain. Even if you are a parent of younger children, I think it is good information to store for later!

Dr. Winters left us with this Take Home Summary:

P = PROMOTE activities that capitalize on the strengths of the developing brain

A = ASSIST children with challenges that require planning

R = REINFORCE their seeking advice from adults; teach decision making

E = ENCOURAGE lifestyle that promotes good brain development

N = NEVER under-estimate the effects of alcohol on the developing brain

T = TOLERATE the "oops" behaviors due to an immature brain

A few key points from his marvelous session are below:

Adolescence is a period of profound brain maturation. We now know maturation is not complete until about age 24. Maturation occurs from the back to the front of the brain. The volume of certain parts of the adolescent brain are smaller than those same parts in adults, notably the prefrontal cortex. The pre-frontal cortex is involved in problem solving, reasoning, and judgment.

The cerebellum of an adolescent is fairly on par with adults, which attests to the superb motor ability of adolescents in tasks such as music and sport performance. So often we over ascribe good maturity and judgment to youth because they look like adults, excel at physical challenges, and impress us with their comfort and skill in the high-tech arena. Their judgment for structured challenges is roughly equal to adults, but judgment that involves resisting impulses or delaying gratification is still under construction during late adolescence and early adulthood.

Arrested development of the judgment center of the brain has implications for adolescent behavior:

- Preference for physical activity
- Preference for high excitement and low effort activities
- Preferences for activities that trigger high intensity feelings and arousal
- Poor planning and judgment
- Minimal consideration of negative consequences
- More risky impulsive behaviors, (further evidenced by motor vehicle crashes being the leading cause of death in 16-20 year-olds & the crash rate among 16 year-olds is nearly 9 times the rate of general population)
- Increased drug use vulnerability
- Studies show alcohol and other drugs affects the adolescent more profoundly than adults
- Repeated alcohol exposure may harm adolescent brain development.

Until next month,
Dr. Deborah

BOOK OF THE MONTH: *Why Do They Act That Way?*
A Survival Guide to the Adolescent Brain for You and Your Teen

Free Press Copyright 2004 - ISBN: 0-7432-6071-6



Notes From the Teachers

Kathy Koblik



Literature Around The World: Thanks to all the parents for coming to Back to School Night. There is no way that I ever cover all I want to in 12 minutes, but I appreciate the time to see all of you.

The first several weeks I presented the year-long Reading Binders. At back to school night I gave you the (corrected) versions of the letters explaining the outside reading program. I've gone over the details several times with students. I present an extensive inside and outside of class reading program that you complement the English and Social Studies curriculum and allow students to explore their interests. The infamous "Think Pages" that students write about some of the book selections are not book summaries or reports - they are informal but thoughtful responses to the books that connect them with other books, stories, and social studies topics. Some students are worried about reading amount and reading speed. I present this assignment at the beginning of the school year because reading it always our fall back homework. Your Literature student always has English homework and that is to read. That being said, I remind them that it is the Spirit of the assignment (read widely for pleasure, skill, and enrichment and think about your reading and your education as a whole entire connected curriculum) rather than each detail that I care about. I give students opportunities to self-report on their efforts to work on outside reading. Remember if you have any issues about types of books your children can read to let me know and let your student know.

Progress Reports hit after less than four full weeks in the class. I am not marking A's and B's because students haven't really had a chance to earn them and they would be misleading, but I am marking any missing work. Remember uncompleted work could include a student whose outside reading seems a little skimpy at this moment (and certainly there are some students who haven't yet gotten into the swing of the outside reading yet). Today I touched base with students about missing work and out came the work from the back packs. When a student misses class that student needs to remember to turn in work that was turned in the day they were absent. I have turn in baskets that are always available for the students to turn in work throughout the day.

We will begin working on our descriptive writing unit starting out in the Garden. We've worked on dialogue. Next up will be a couple of autobiographical pieces and by the semester, students will turn in a portfolio of pieces about themselves, including several poems that they have already written and, I think, a family biography that I will tell you more about later.

I wish everyone a wonderful junior high school experience. Your students are full of fun and life and sweetness and I thank you for loaning them to me each day for an hour. If you have questions for me, please remember you can e-mail me at kkoblik@djud.k12.ca.us.

English 9: Welcome to high school! Students earn credits towards graduation in the ninth grade and one of my brief writing assignments has been to have them acknowledge that fact.

Right now we are finishing up reading *The Outsiders* and students are immersed in questions and creative projects. We have also been reading short stories in class and discussing narrative technique and learning and relearning some of the literary terminology. We will continue to read short stories and poems throughout the year and our various units and discuss the literature, support our inferences with references to literature, and learn and apply terms and concepts to our discussion of literature (as well as getting in numerous interesting discussions about life). Some students need to be encouraged to listen and respond to others: either because they are only used to talking or because they have trouble talking in groups. I feel that this is an important skill that all students will use in their life and work and I encourage and require students to push themselves a little outside their comfort zone. We have small classes in ninth grade English (thanks to the State) and so this is a perfect place to hone these essential communication skills.

The first essay was a personal essay to old On-Demand essay test writing prompts. I used these essays to discuss pre-write activities and show students at least two different brainstorming techniques. After writing the essay, students needed to look at their essay and analyze the strengths and weaknesses. We will be writing more personal essays and also literary analysis essays as the school year goes along.

We have begun looking at grammar and sentence structure with class exploration of very short sentences. We discussed complete sentences, subjects, predicates, adjectives and adverbs and begun having short quizzes to master this material and the literary terms that we've been discussing in class.

Students are required to do outside reading each quarter. The first quarter I ask students to read one pleasure reading book (as I do each quarter) and to read another teenage fiction that they can compare to *The Outsiders*. We will read a third teenage fiction at the beginning of next quarter and do outside reading projects throughout the year.

Our next unit will be one on Greek mythology. Students will research gods/goddesses and make posters with autobiographical stories, symbols, bibliographies (and we will work again on the MLA style bibliography required by Emerson and the High School) and give presentations of these gods to the class. We will learn some of the Greek myths that have become important for western literature and will read parts of *The Odyssey*.

I look forward to working with your students this school year. I am well aware that not everyone is as lucky as I am. I have a job that allows me to discuss life and literature with adolescents - that's keeping it real AND keeping it fun. If you need to communicate with me, please send me an e-mail at kkoblik@djud.k12.ca.us.

Reading with Jason Teves and Kathy Koblik This week has been Cause and Effect in the reading class; the last two weeks we

Notes from the Teachers, cont.

were working on Main Idea and Supporting Details. We've combined reading and thinking exercises. We've also had students working on goal setting and thinking about reading tasks and being successful in other classes. There have been several diagnostic tests that we are administering to students in order to better serve their needs. At some point we will be moving to our Reading Lab in C-11. Students will be broken up into small groups in that setting to practice skills both individually and in small groups.

Thanks to all the parents who came to Back to School Night. We loved meeting you. Best wishes to everyone for a wonderful school year.

October Calendar

1st	Mon	Assembly Nightmare on Puberty St
2nd	Tues	Picture Retake
9th	Tues	PTA Mtg 7:00 pm, Library
10th	Wed	PTA phone calls for Measure Q <i>email Jackie Rutheiser at jackieruth@pacbell.net</i>
16th	Tues	7th grade diversity training
18th	Thurs	Minimum Day– School out at 12:30
19th	Fri	Student Council, 11:00 am
23rd	Tues	Eagle deadline
26th	Fri	End of First Quarter



Every great and commanding moment in the annals of the world is the triumph of some enthusiasm.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Are you Connected?

Get up-to-the-minutes updates through listservs for the bulletin, the band, and the orchestra. You can find them through the PTA website at <http://www2.dcn.org/orgs/ejhpta/> Additional information on the school and school assessments are on the school website at <http://www.djUSD.k12.ca.us/emerson/>



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