



The Emery/Weiner School

Connecting with the Past, Preparing for the Future

Highlights - Kotarot

A quarterly report on news and happenings

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FROM DR. DAVID A. PORTNOY, HEAD OF SCHOOL



The health and well-being of a school community are sometimes expressed in terms of a three-legged stool, with each leg representing the students, their families, and the school's professionals, respectively. Without the support, effort, and concern of each, the learning process is doomed, if not to failure, then to less-than-optimal results. In an independent school such

as ours, we have the added benefit of active alumni, concerned alumni parents, a committed Board of Trustees, and generous Donors, including leaders of the broader Houston and Jewish communities. Together, these engaged and devoted members of the Emery/Weiner Community comprise a "fourth leg," one that helps steady and buoy EWS amidst many educational, economic, and societal challenges. Let us briefly examine the Four Legs of the EWS stool, which together make our community the extraordinary one that it is.

Leg #1 – Our Students. Our students, of course, are at the heart of everything that we do. In the most sincere of terms, they are "who we live for." When I ask our teachers and coaches what they most love about EWS, they answer, without hesitation, "the students." Yes, our EWS students possess a rare mixture of kindness, compassion, and excitement for all that they do. From their academic growth to their commitment to athletics, arts, and Tikkun Olam, they are truly a joy to be around. Without their daily energy and enthusiasm, the hallways, stages, and playing fields on Stella Link are pretty dull places. The magic of EWS is fueled by their presence each and every day they are here.

Leg #2 – Our Parents and Families. Behind every truly successful person are those who have sacrificed time and resources, while devoting their love and attention unselfishly. From grandparents who drive carpool and attend games, to siblings who support our students from bar and bat mitzvah

through graduation, to our parents whose commitment to an Emery/Weiner education represents their highest ideals and priorities, we are indeed blessed to have such a strong cadre of support for our students, bolstering them in their efforts in the classroom, on the playing courts, and in everything they do. I know that I speak for each of our 480 Middle School and Upper School students when I say, "Thank you, Mom and Dad (and others) for enabling me to attend EWS. I love you."



Leg #3 – Our School Professionals. What kind of people decide to devote themselves to the education and training of our next generation? The faculty and staff of EWS are a phenomenal group of highly educated, hardworking, and passionate scholar-teacher-coaches. Great thinkers from the Talmud to Isaac Newton to Stephen Hawking have observed that success is achieved by "standing on the shoulders of giants." Here at EWS, it is our faculty and staff, first and foremost, who deserve the label of "giants." Paralleling the teacher comments above, when I ask our students what they consider the best thing about EWS, they answer without missing a beat, "the teachers and coaches." On behalf of the EWS community, I thank them for their dedication, expertise, and caring. For their part, however, they do it because they love what they do, and greatly appreciate the kindness and support of our students and families.

Leg #4 – Our Alumni, Alumni Parents, Board of Trustees and Donors. While they may not be in our hallways each day, these four groups cast a constant and loving shadow over all that we do at Emery/Weiner. Our graduates, with their accomplishments in college and beyond, inspire us in so many ways, as their EWS traditions continue to evolve for our current student body. And our Alumni Parents continue to bless the school with their energy and support, as the school that they, in large part, built continues to thrive and mature. Our Board of Trustees and our Donors comprise a remarkable group of men and women who support the school in the most generous and remarkable ways. On behalf of everyone in the EWS family, thank you for your extraordinary time, effort, and resources!
