



# Potomac Elementary School

## School Board Minutes

for

September 9, 2013

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*“Potomac School equips each student for his/her future  
within a culture of excellence that values the small community experience.”*

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### Call to Order

Board Chair Robert O’Boyle called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM by leading all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Those trustees present were: Jeff Hahn, Gary Long, Cliff Vann and Jim Wrobel. Tim Johnson, principal and Jill Thornton, clerk, were also in attendance.

**Public Input** (for issues not on the agenda) None.

### Visiting Speaker

Brandee Tyree, Missoula Forum for Children and Youth MUSAP (Missoula Underage Substance Abuse Prevention) Coordinator sent a letter for the board to read:

*September 9, 2013*

*Dear Potomac School Board members and Chairman Mr. O’Boyle,*

*My name is Brandee Tyree and I am the coordinator for the Missoula Underage Substance Abuse Prevention (MUSAP) team, which is an arm of the Missoula Forum for Children and Youth. The Forum is an agency that is designed to support, enhance, and promote organizations in Missoula that gear services toward positive youth development. Our primary focus is underage substance use prevention. I wanted to take a brief moment to tell you about our collaboration with Potomac School and how much we appreciate your staff and Mr. Johnson.*

*The Forum and MUSAP receive countless benefits from our on-going collaboration with Potomac School District and Principal, Tim Johnson. Our collaborations consist of supporting each other’s events through attendance and community wide promotion, creating educational opportunities for students in classroom presentations and giving sound expert advice on a wide variety of topics. Mr. Johnson has lent his expertise on student development in helping us to create a Media Literacy presentation for K-12<sup>th</sup> grade. This presentation talks with students about the dangers of alcohol and how alcohol advertisers direct their marketing to youth. Mr. Johnson played a vital role in allowing us to give our presentations to Potomac students, which allowed for us to make the presentations stronger and gave students a learning opportunity. Lastly, Mr. Johnson was a contributing author in our new Parent Resource Guide. The Parent Resource Guide is a free publication for parents and community members that discuss many of the pressing issues our youth are faced with in Missoula. Lastly, last fall Mr. Johnson invited me to create a team-building workshop for your staff. I appreciated his willingness to create a unique opportunity for staff to come together and discuss their desires and hopes for their school, student and families. It was truly a privilege and an honor to work with all the Potomac staff during this team build, the passion and zest each and every one of them have for their students and their school is truly remarkable. I know you must know this as Board members but you have remarkable dedicated staff with a driven equally dedicated leader.*

*As a coordinator nothing makes my job more rewarding then working with amazing community members who are dedicated to the well being of our youth; Mr. Johnson and Potomac School staff, embody this approach. Mr. Johnson, along with the wonderful staff at Potomac School shows our community that organizations can and do collaborate for the greater good of our youth. I spend a lot to time in meetings promoting how friendly and invested Potomac school and it’s staff are in creating opportunities for*

*students to be valued and to grow as people – it’s really amazing to be able to be a partner with all of you. Tim is a vital member of our MUSAP – Early Childhood Committee, providing instrumental insight into the life of student, parent, and community member while helping us to connect our work with other community efforts. In a county with 14 school districts and as a former teacher, I know just how busy Administrators can be – I value that Mr. Johnson is always willing to help our efforts, as well as, create opportunities for his staff, students and/or families. It sure makes my job a lot easier!*

*In closing, we deeply appreciate the efforts of Mr. Johnson, Potomac School and the school board for creating a school environment that looks to enrich a student both academically, as well as, their overall well being. We value our partnership and know that the work we try to accomplish in this County is enhanced because of our collaboration with Potomac School, your staff, your families, and Mr. Johnson. I am looking forward to working with Tim and your health teachers, at the request of Tim, to create a new series of presentations that will give students the continued opportunity to talk about healthy choices and the role of peer pressure. I know it will be very rewarding for all involved.*

*I appreciate your time in reading this letter and apologize for not being able to express my gratitude in person. If you have any further questions feel free to contact me.*

*Kind Regards,*

*Brandee Tyree  
MUSAP Coordinator  
[Brandee@missoulaforum.org](mailto:Brandee@missoulaforum.org)*



**Consent Agenda**

Warrant Lists – Total Claims = \$39,521.29, Total Payroll = \$46,849.76

Business Cards – Included in Total Claims noted.

Petty Cash – Supplemental to monthly warrants used between Board Meetings – Reimbursed thru Claims.

Extracurricular (Student Accounts) – Beginning Balance May 16 - \$21,027.84; Ending Balance June 30 - \$20,102.60

Jim moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Gary seconded the motion.

Jim asked for clarification on how much detail the minutes should contain. In Robert’s Rules, the ideal is just the motion, and the vote, without all the discussion.

Jill stated the discussion has been included in the past for those who could not attend the meetings.

Bob feels the discussion is valuable for those who do read the minutes.

Cliff had a comment on the August 12 statement he made, which wasn’t clear in the minutes. He had commented on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant funds and asked if it wouldn’t give more students access to those funds if there was a five day school week with after school programs, instead of just the bulk of the money going to the current Friday Explorers program.

Jill said she would clarify that statement in the August 12 minutes.

Jill did not attend the August 26 board meeting, so Bob filled in the blanks for the times the meeting started, closed, reopened, and adjourned.

Jim moved to amend his motion to include the corrections in the August 12 and 26 minutes. Gary seconded the motion.

**Passed 5-0**

**Principals Report**

**Community**

- Open House; +75 people including staff and 2 board members

**School**

- 108 students currently.
- All School photo on Facebook (for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the school)
- Student Council Elections Wednesday Sept 11th; Student Council representation at board meeting including student(s) of the month. This is part of our strategic plan to receive student input on school issues.
- AYP Plan for achievement (including Math):
  - Data Collection: Identify through current data needs through our TOSA position of 1 period per day, qualitative study of lower performing students
  - Title staff using pullout rather than in-class support for math and/or reading if the student is not growing at the expected rate.
  - Explorers: utilizing alternative topics to practice math, reading. This is another tool, as about 80% of those who attend Friday explorers are also Title students.
  - Singapore Math as a supplement to our current curriculum: using current resources to prepare for MCCS
  - WMCSPD: professional development regarding MCCS, Singapore Math
  - Increased expectations (100% for reading and math) A good expectation to aim for, not likely this year.
  - Going to Smarter Balance assessment model for our testing system
- Contacted by three different parents in the last four months regarding how to attend Potomac. Our reputation as a innovative school is growing.
- Race To Nowhere summit in Potomac or Missoula (United Way potential host in Missoula); Mid January date TBD

Gary asked what outcome the realigning of math 2 years ago has had. Is the 3 day weekend affecting the process? Tim said the population of the lower performing kids is shrinking. Some in the lower level had become apathetic, so they were pushed up for more incentive.

**Activities**

- Flag Football (game Friday Lone Rock)
- Girls Basketball practice started last week

**Grant Writer update**

**SUMMARY OF SERVICES July and August 2013**

**Grant Awards**

\* PSD11 received a 5 year grant award from OPI for nearly \$300,000 in support of our out-of-school time programming (just under \$60K per year pending funding availability from federal government). PSD11s proposal ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the state during the competitive review process.

Deliverables: Year 1 of 5

- 704 hours of Explorer programming support for 32 all day Friday programs
- 140 hours Robotics staffing support
- 300 hours of Summer programming support (3 one week sessions proposed)
- 112 hours of Media Center support (library)
- 320 hours of coordination support

Budget: \$59,678.95

Staffing Support	\$41120.00	68.90%
Professional Development	\$6229.50	10.43%
Operational Support	\$6396.00	10.71%
Transportation	\$2800.00	4.69%

Supplies: Robotic support	\$3133.45	5.25%
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\* The Historical Museum at Fort Missoula fully funded a \$5K request in support of the Adult Ed/History Project that will be used to purchase priority equipment and conduct outreach.

Total project expenses are estimated at \$29,500. Expenses include: priority equipment (\$8,000), outreach (\$2500) including surveys, mailings, signs, local symposia and website development, Media and History Center renovation (\$8,000), and professional services required for project implementation (\$11,000) including data collection, organization, training and networking.

\* PSD11 received \$3K from OPI for initiating a new breakfast nutrition program in 2012-13.

\*Missoula County Tobacco Prevention Program paid for direct Pioneer Festival expenses including t-shirts for runners and volunteers, give aways and generator rental for sound system/education program/announcements.

**Fund Development**

**Grants**

- United Way of Missoula County: submitted request of \$5K for Explorers Program from unrestricted funding outside of granting process at the request of the Executive Director.
- Dreyfuss Foundation: submitted request of \$5K for Explorers Program.
- Humanities Montana: submitted request of \$5K in support of Adult Education/History Project budget on August 20<sup>th</sup>.
  - Contracted Professional Support Services: Program Coordinator, A Vanderheiden \$4000
  - Contracted Professional Support Services: Technical Consultant, Clay Scott \$1000

**Grant Research and Planning**

\*Conduct weekly research on additional funding opportunities for HUB, Explorers, Athletics, History, Technology and general operation support for School.

\*Met with Administrator and Board Chair July 24th to review existing and future funding opportunities and program development for Adult Education.

\*Scheduled and met in person with Cindy Wulfekuhle Missoula Dept. of Grants and Community Programs and additional staff to discuss district successes, priorities and needs on August 8<sup>th</sup>. Grant of interest identified for spring 2014. Potential sources of support identified for snacks and lunch at Explorers program Friday and in summer.

**Explorers**

- Reviewed proposal score and comments in July and attended meeting to respond to questions about proposal program and budget with Administrator and Jim Wrobel.
- Received final budget award notification in August and attended the OPI conference August 6-8<sup>th</sup>.
- Researched and submitted professional development opportunities in state and out of state focused on Robotics.
- Prepped Registration form for review and approval. Drafted comprehensive Explorers calendar for 2013-2014. Drafted grant tracking sheet for review by PSD11 clerk as checks and balance system with grant funded expenses.

**Centennial Circle**

784 brochures were mailed to 59823 zip code last spring; the remaining 200 copies are available for use during 2013-2014 school year. Orders were collected at the Centennial Celebration on June 29<sup>th</sup> and submitted to the

engraver in July. The base brick order was received in July from Mutual Materials and the concrete berm was completed. The 2.5' circular granite centerpiece design was finalized in August for engraving by Garden City in Missoula. Thank you notes to be written and mailed in September to all individuals that ordered a brick (60). Anticipate all bricks engraved and laid by October. Brick prices are now \$85 for 3 lines of text – 12 characters per line. Project has raised over \$3900 to date less expenses (2 pallets of bricks totaling 1176 bricks at \$922, brochure \$384, concrete berm, sand/brick laying). The design, materials research/purchase, contracting, and marketing materials were all developed with volunteer support.

**Pioneer Festival**

- Reviewed draft financial report from PGCC and sent questions/comment for review. Anticipate finalizing report and profit sharing between PSD11 and PGCC by October 1, 2013. Expect minimum of \$1500 profit for PSD11.
- Planning team to discuss and finalize future timing of event (after school ends in June or after school begins in September) and goal/objectives (audience demographic and marketing).

**PGCC and other local partners**

Continue updating PGCC website and facebook pages to share community news, including school information and pilot of educational information on local resources of interest. Continue to keep local organizations informed as Adult Ed program develops – including building renovations and funding support for initiation of local community history project. Supported the implementation of the PSD11 week long art camp July 15-19<sup>th</sup>.

**September Work Plan:**

- Identify/refine school priorities for funding and research relevant grant opportunities and foundations.
  - MDU Resources
  - Ash Grove Foundation
  - Browning Kimball Foundation
  - Murdock Trust
  - Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation
  - Steele Reese Foundation
- Develop grant trax spreadsheet for each grant award/funding program.
- Provide Explorers support as identified in contract and requested by educational team including September 15<sup>th</sup> deadline for OSTMLS data upload and student records, calendar, registration binder, draft safety plan, etc.
- Mail thank you letters from PSD11 for Centennial Circle brick purchases and Memory Station participants at Pioneer Festival.
- Finalize funding budget for Year 1 of Adult Education/History Project and initiate equipment purchases and interview schedules.
- Receive and submit 2013-2015 IC license to the district (submitted to state August 30)

To questions about grant information, Tim asked as clarification if the board wants a narrative that shows a spreadsheet and how it ties in with the Strategic Plan. Jim asked if that would be a monthly report. Tim asked what the board thinks,

Gary said he would like better grant information for all grants, including a breakdown for past grants.

Jim asked what Alicia's role is with the Pioneer Festival. Do we support her on that?

Tim said Alicia played an instrumental role in getting the festival going and did fundraising for it.

Gary asked if we received a breakdown from the festival. Tim said we didn't, though it is a good request. Jim also had a similar question last meeting, and wondered what our participation should entail. What do we get from it as a school? Tim said there is a 60/40 split of any profit.

Jim asked if we could put this on the next agenda as Pioneer Festival Participation.

Bob added that he feels the school can tie other things into the festival. It shows success for future grant requests.

Cliff said he feels the Grant Update is missing some information. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant is laid out well, and then the Humanities Montana shows \$4,000 to Alicia. This creates questions in his mind.

Tim said the Humanities grant is one that leverages Adult Education dollars to expand the Adult Ed program.

Then Cliff asked if we are developing grants by intent or by which grants are available. Tim said they are by intent.

Jim shifted the discussion to AYP. He asked if we could include AYP direction in our goals for the upcoming year. How can we work with the '100%' requirement?

Tim said that the goal is always to strive for 100%. Statistically schools reach a plateau at 85%. His goal is getting into the 80% range in math this year. Reading is up to AYP standard at this point.

***Vision Impact***

- I was contacted by Mary Ellen Earnhardt (OPI director for 21st Century Grant) regarding attending a conference in Seattle about 21st Century recipients in Montana. We will be presenting and attending seminars related to 21st Century in Washington. The department within the US Department of Education, which focuses on innovative education, will be attending and taking input from the Montana delegation among others.

**Clerks Report**

Jill added two changes to reports for the schools monthly financial data in Septembers report.

1. The first was to circle the funds for checks that do not get paid out of the General fund. The detailed list of checks has been misunderstood as total amounts that come out of the General budgeted fund, and not a total from all the school funds. Reports from the Black Mountain Software are difficult to read, but highlighting the different funds this time shows where to look in the future.
2. The second was to add both the 1) Expenditure Detail and 2) Statement of Expenditure – Budget vs. Actual Reports in this clerks report. Looking between the two reports shows where the Expenditure Detail is in the overall General Fund Budget. Hopefully this makes some of the distinctions between the funds clearer.

She asked if the board would like these reports in the future. All said they would.

**School Board – Professional Development**

Gary attended the open house and tried to talk to all the teachers. He also participated in the field rock picking day. Bob said he appreciated seeing Gary at the open house, especially since he doesn't have a student in school.

Jill noted at this point that 'Personnel' was missed on this agenda. The board set up a special meeting for Personnel on Monday, September 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm.

**Performance Pay Direction**

Jim started the performance pay discussion off with the statement that we need to determine how to proceed – or not proceed – on this item. Last year there were many different perceptions of what 'Performance Pay' meant. Since our budget was so limited last year, we tried at that time to negotiate with only excess contingency amounts left in the General Fund budget at the end of the fiscal year. So, how do we proceed this year?

In other performance pay plans Jim’s researched, a pay amount was set aside ahead of time in the budget. If the amount decided upon remains excess contingency funds, it creates other problems. First, who’s in control of the final funds, and second, what stops the school from deciding not to purchase something like books in order to keep an excess to pay out?

Bob said he feels one of the things the board has an advantage in is that we do not have any financial expectation.

Cliff thinks if we do it on excess contingency funds it can cause problems. He feels it should be budgeted. Gary agrees.

Bob said that if we do it that way, any years such as last year would not have had any money put towards it. He then said it we are going to have any performance standards set this year; it needs to be done now.

Jim agrees, and he also added that the standards need to include the entire staff. Other plans focus mainly on the teaching staff. Also, should the plan be optional? Where does the money come from? And would it influence purchases?

Bob said perhaps there could be a cap on the dollar amount.

Cliff asked what mechanism is used for cost of living and education.

Bob said that comes from the teachers’ matrix. The teachers usually move to a new row in the matrix for each year they are at the school. And whenever they accrue 10 credits in college, they move over to a new column on the matrix.

Jeff asked if performance pay was part of the matrix. It is not.

Bob said, if we are going to put money in the budget for performance pay in the beginning of the year, how is that different than putting it on the matrix.

Tim asked if other plans have state infusion of funds to set into a beginning budget. Jim said sometimes that is the case.

Tim then said it seems that the biggest issue is trust. “How do I know the money is going to be there?” Last year, it was part of the budgets contingency funds. Statements that “we always have money at the end of the year” conflict with “How do we know...” There have been times the contingency funds were needed, but history shows it is reasonable to expect there will be excess funds left at the end of the year.

Jim said he feels it’s a slippery slope, with grants also impacting the general fund.

Tim said grants often give a two for one bonus on the money with matches from our funds allowing us to receive more funding through grants.

Jim feels what we have to look out for is the impact on negotiations. He thinks we should plan annually for money covering performance pay from the General fund.

Tim said priorities need to be built into any performance plan so performance is tied into the schools Strategic Plan.

Jim said also that the board should be involved in determining funding.

Tim said that other considerations need to be taken into account. This year our numbers are increasing, which could lead to additional staffing required. All of this is part of our priorities and should be considered in the Performance pay model. He also feels that the matrix should still be considered part of the 80% division of our General fund budget, and if we put performance pay in ahead of time, it also needs to come out of that 80%. With that scenario, it still leaves possible performance pay incentive money in the end of year contingency dollars that do not have a mechanism for distribution to staff that have excelled. And that money is controlled by the priorities we set up, which ties into our goals and strategic plan.

Gary said he sensed there was not a lot of enthusiasm from the teachers last year. Can’t we just put the money in the matrix?

Tim said that would still leave possible pay from the end of the year contingency funds that couldn’t be used for staff incentives if a plan was not put in place.

Cliff asked if the matrix is covered from our funds this year, then what's in it for the school to create additional pay?

Jim said that with every negotiation, the board needs to be responsible by leaving a percentage of our General fund for the unknown, as well as considering our future needs for staffing.

Bob said the board decided to maintain contingency funds about 4 or 5 years ago.

Gary agreed we need to have flexibility in our fund. If we have a big emergency, then where do we get funds to cover it? That needs to be considered. With the challenges discussed, he thinks the end of year money is a good consideration.

Jill added the need for an end of year maintenance list of priorities since we do not have a separate maintenance fund like other schools and we need to keep the building and grounds up. The board agreed.

Bob asked the board if they feel we should pursue a Pay for Performance model. All agreed.

Jeff asked if the teachers are interested in a Pay for Performance model. Tim said every unit, from the PEA, PACE, Administrator and Clerk, can either participate or not.

Gary said it becomes a big issue when there is no raise in the matrix like last year.

Bob accepted Jim and Gary as volunteers on a Performance Pay committee. He asked if they could bring a proposal to the October board meeting. They agreed.

**Preliminary Budget Detail Review**

Jill presented a preliminary budget for the General Fund for review. It is based on the following factors:

1. A pay increase is included for all staff. It is based on the matrix for the teachers, with the average percentage increase on the matrix then applied to teachers who are at the top of the matrix and do not have any increase in pay. That average percentage increased is also applied to the rest of the staff. This preliminary budget also includes a beginning teacher salary set at the third step in the matrix. Other schools deal with beginning teacher salaries this way as an incentive to bring good teachers into their district without the large payroll increases that happen with an increase in the matrix base.
2. The budget also includes some large maintenance issues that have been put off for a long time due to cost. They include painting the interior of the school, as well as vinyl/carpeting for the basement and third floor. These cannot be completely covered in the current fiscal year as the budget takes up more money than needed to do this maintenance. It could be possible to cover the large expense between this fiscal year, and next fiscal year, and still do the work next summer. The reasoning for doing both the paint and vinyl/carpeting together is the work involved in preparation for painting and flooring is the same.
3. The rest of the budget is based on last year's expenses.

**Multi District PARA Agreement**

Tim said there is a need for additional teacher help. His suggestion is to add a .2 additional PARA to our staff through a cost sharing agreement with Sunset school.

Jeff moved to approve a .2 PARA position. Jim seconded the motion.

Concerns were expressed with how an agreement with Sunset would be set up, and the explanation of the additional teaching needs.

Jim recommended postponing the vote until the next board meeting to clarify the agreement and needs. All agreed.

**Appointment for Missoula Area Curriculum Consortium**

Jim moved to appoint Erin Lipkind, superintendent, to serve on the Missoula Area Curriculum Consortium for the 2013-2014 school year. Cliff seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0.**

**Adjourn**

Board Chair O'Boyle adjourned the Board meeting at 10:31pm.

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Robert O'Boyle, Chair

date

Jill M Thornton, Clerk

date