



Potomac Elementary School

School Board Minutes

for

November 13, 2017

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

Call to Order

Board Chair Cliff Vann called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm by leading all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Those trustees present were: Craig Nelson, Steven Van Grinsven, Gary Long and Kelsy Ployhar. Jill Thornton, Clerk and John Rouse, Principal were also in attendance.

Public Input (for issues not on the agenda)

None

Consent Agenda

September 11th and October 9th minutes included in this consent agenda.

Warrant Lists – Total Claims = \$21,944.92. Total Payroll = \$69,250.82.

Business Cards – Included in Total Claims noted.

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

Extracurricular (Student Accounts) –On October 1, 2017 - \$26,231.07 thru October 31, 2017 - \$21,313.21

Kelsy moved to approve the consent agenda. Gary seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Teachers Reports

Starla Dugger introduced herself. This is her first year at Potomac in Special Education. She had no idea what to expect when she came to teach here, but has been amazingly impressed. She finds the whole staff works well together and with her to help the students. She wanted to make sure the board knew she appreciated the opportunity.

Karry Betson is working with her Kindergarten on nocturnal animal studies. They have been studying owls, and were able to get owl pellets to dissect. A nurse was volunteering during the lab and helped name the bones they found in the pellets and showed the students where they could find the same bones in their body!

Principals Report – John Rouse

Teaching and Learning

- Teacher performance evaluations are beginning, so I can provide teachers with specific feedback regarding their teaching. We are using the Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching which has been used in the past. Due to the evaluation cycle for tenure and non-tenure teachers, nearly every teacher on our staff will receive a formal evaluation this school year. By the time of this board meeting, all teachers who are scheduled for evaluation will have had their formal observations. The non-tenured teachers will have additional formal observations.
- On Friday, October 13th, the teachers and I travelled to St. Regis to observe their Personalized Learning program in action. Overall I think our teachers were impressed with certain aspects on the program. Several commented that they liked the mentoring component which we could add to our existing schedule without going into the personalized learning program. The project-based component was appealing as

well. The platform that ST. Regis uses (Summit) is free to school districts. The program even pays to send the staff to training. The current version of the Summit program does not extend to the lower grades, but that part is in development.

- Our school district is eligible for the Montana Comprehensive Literacy Project through OPI. Mr. Rouse will be attending a training session in Helena on December 7th to attend the required training session and to complete our project application. Through this project, we are eligible for up to \$250,000 to use to improve and enhance our literacy program. Approximately \$100,000 of the project funds will go back to OPI for services and supports for the program. That will leave us around \$150,000 to spend on the project. If this project has the same restrictions as the previous ones Mr. Rouse has experienced, we will not be allowed to spend funds for staffing costs other than the costs to hire outside consultants or possibly instructional coach-type personnel. Generally we will be allowed to purchase technology equipment, instructional resources, software licenses, and professional development. We should be able to direct some of these funds to cover the expenses for a new ELA program. We will be working in tandem with Hellgate High since we are a feeder school for the campus.
- We prepared and submitted a grant to the Montana Masonic Foundation for \$2,500 to offset the expenses for our Missoula Children’s Theater program.

● **Budget and Finance**

- We have a mill levy in the amount of 5.34 mills for Adult Education, yet we do not have an active adult ed program. Is it the direction of the board that we seek to re-establish an adult ed program, so we can expend these funds? Currently there is a balance of \$12,740 in this account. We could offer some technology training courses for the community. Another option would be to purchase some exercise equipment like an elliptical machine, a treadmill, and an universal gym (as long as they are mobile). We would offer adult ed courses in personal fitness and also use the equipment with our students and athletes. Any of the equipment and materials we purchase could be used later by our teachers and students. The potential for storage of this equipment is an issue. Later this year, the Board needs to decide whether or not we are going to try to offer adult ed classes. If not we can decrease or eliminate this levy.
- I was recently notified by Montana OPI that we are eligible for the Montana Comprehensive Literacy Project (MCLP). The application for these funds is due by December 15th. I will be attending an applicant workshop in Helena on December 7th.
- We received a \$600 grant award from On behalf of Blackfoot Telephone Cooperative, Energy Partners and Missoula Electric Cooperative, the EEE Committee has met and reviewed the 2017 Grant Applications. The Committee was able to award a cumulative total of \$27,000 to these 90 schools. Each School was awarded a \$300 Gift Card for either an Amazon or Best Buy Gift Card based on your school’s application preference. The EEE Award for Award Luncheon was held on Thursday, November 2, 2017 at the Missoula Hilton Garden Inn.
- We have prepared and submitted an Improvements for Education grant in the amount of \$1,500. In the grant we requested funds to purchase iPad-compatible printers for our teachers.

● **Student Activities**

- The Bike-A-Thon that was held on October 12th was successful. The students rode a total of 1,451 miles and raised over \$7,000 dollars.
- Boy’s basketball began on October 30th with a game at St. Joseph’s. We had about 14 students show up for the first basketball practice, and we are anticipating a few more.

● **Community**

- Interested members of teaching staff will be meeting with members of the board prior to the regular board meeting to share their views regarding the proposal to restructure the Explorers program for next year by having the teachers cover the Fridays on a rotating basis.
- Another approach to the Friday programming for next year is to require those families who choose to take advantage of the Friday offerings pay the costs for the program. We could have one fee structure for those participating in the Friday programs that would take place at the school and a separate fee structure for field trips and/or special events.

- **Safety**

- We have established a Safety Committee for the school in order to maintain a constant awareness of the safety needs of our students and staff members. We have held our first meeting and have revised our emergency response plan. Revised copies of the plan are available for your information.
- We held our second fire drill on November 9th. It went well.
- We have added an additional rail to the handrail along our ramp. The current structure created a potential safety hazard for individuals in wheelchairs.
- School Wellness- Mr. Rouse attended a training on School Wellness on November 7th in Missoula. During the session, the importance of having a school wellness policy was emphasized. Our Wellness policy was updated last May.

- **Facilities and Grounds**

- We need to form a facilities committee of board members to put together a long-range facilities plan.
- The Missoula County Parks board subcommittee approved our grant request for the matching grant for our playground and track upgrades. They will provide \$7,000 towards the project. Final approval has to come from the county commissioners in January.

- **Student Council**

- We held our student council elections recently. Our council members are as follows:
 - 8th Graders- Maggie Vann, Elizabeth Boyd, and Lou Cheff
 - 7th Graders- Kaitlyn Henry and Mila Yedinek
 - 6th Graders- Penelope Russell and Hailey Jones
- Their first agenda item is to develop a set of bylaws for the organization.

Clerks Report

None

Board Professional Development Reports

Cliff talked about the school his family used to attend in Virginia. They are the number 2 school there. He also met with the Community Center and they discussed ways the visions of the school and community center could be better aligned. He has also been thinking about his goals for the sales managers he works with and how those could apply to our school. Gary attended volleyball, basketball and flag football. Steven is reading about 'Effective boards'. Kelsy has attended Boys Basketball & 4-H when she can get away from traveling for work. She also agreed with Cliff concerning his discussion with the Community Center Board and thought we could ask them to come participate in our meetings.

School Board Calendar

1. Add the Consideration & Adaptation of Resolution estimating changes in Revenue/Mills for Adult Ed, Transportation, Building Reserve and Tuition Funds to February, and
2. Add a discussion of the evaluation process for the principal in November

Audit Contract for 2016-2017 Audit

Kelsy moved to approve the audit contract for 2016-2017. Gary seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Out of District Students – 14

Steven moved to approve the 14 out of district students. Kelsy seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Policy 5721 – Volunteer Agreement Form

Steven moved to approve policy 5721 – Volunteer Agreement Form. Craig seconded the motion.

Cliff started the discussion with the point that the focus of putting this issue on the agenda is to consider the volunteers as well as the complaints, and not just a policy. Steven asked John for his input.

John said the most effective coach for student engagement is to use teachers. The teachers are more attuned to the student due to exposure during the regular scheduled days. Also, volunteers cannot have some of the information teachers have due to privacy issues. That’s why he prefers a staff member.

Steven suggested that the volunteers could help as assistant coaches with that information in mind. Or, if the volunteer is not interested in being an assistant, does John feel it makes a difference if the teacher is the assistant coach? John said he believed it did.

Cliff said if the student always comes first in considering coaches, then the school would have the best outcome. The volunteers would need to be flexible for that to happen. And sometimes volunteers can coach if that is the best solution. Kelsy said she didn’t think a policy should only focus on one issue or situation. The proposed policy just outlines issues to create consensus between a volunteer and the school.

Kelsy also suggested bringing the volunteer dinner the school used to do to thank volunteers back to the schools schedule. Appreciating our volunteers with something concrete like that is something she would like to see.

The policy does help to clarify any questions a volunteer would have and helps everyone understand expectations for both the volunteer and the school. Adding a beginning paragraph to the policy could state the schools appreciation of volunteers and explain that the policy is for that very issue of clarification. Using the policy would make sure all parties understand what is expected from both.

John wrote the following and the board thought that would be a good introduction to the policy that the volunteers can then complete and sign. His suggestion was:

“The Potomac School District 11 recognizes the valuable contributions that community volunteers make to our school and our students. In order to clarify the relationship between Potomac School and our volunteers the Board has adopted the following volunteer agreement.”

The board agreed and would like to see the addition with the policy at the next meeting.

Cliff asked for a vote on the motion to approve the policy. **Failed 0-5**

Adjourn

Chair Vann adjourned the Board meeting at 9:10 pm.

Cliff Vann, Chair

date

Jill M Thornton, Clerk

date