



Potomac Elementary School

School Board Minutes

For
February 8th, 2021

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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

In room 112, Chair Vann called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm by leading all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Trustees Wes Mitchell, Dr. Courtney Hathaway and Gary Long were present. Vice Chair Kelsy Ployhar attended via Webex. Principal John Rouse and Clerk, Heather Marcella, were also in attendance.

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

Consent Agenda

Minutes of January 11th were on the Consent Agenda

Warrant Lists – Total Claims = \$33,458.25. Total Payroll = \$73,588.18

Business Cards – Included in Total Claims noted.

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

Extracurricular (Student Accounts) – On January 1, 2021- \$54,874.69 thru January 31, 2021 - \$58,011.86.

Vice Chair Kelsy Ployhar moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Dr. Courtney Hathaway seconded the motion.

Passed 5-0

8th Grade Class Trip Report –

Cale Vann and Hilde Hamilton presented to the Board via Webex. They have raised \$27,465 to date. Their budget goal was \$23,844. The class is waiting on a check from Universal Athletics for the spirit wear. The class is doing Candy Grams for Valentine’s Day. There are still raffle tickets being sold.

Cale presented a Power Point detailing the trip itinerary. They plan to leave early on Monday, May 24th, and travel by bus to Utah. Tuesday will be the Raven’s Rim Zipline followed by Arches National Park. Wednesday through Saturday will be the Canyonlands Field Institute river rafting trip. The class will travel home on Sunday, May 30th.

The rafting trip will include hands on learning in subjects including archeology, biology, wildlife, hydrology, and environmental issues.

Per Principal Rouse the students also discussed restaurants near hotels and travel routes in class that day. Kristina Davis had the students estimate meal costs per students.

Teacher Reports:

Kristina Davis

Kristina Davis discussed current science units for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade classes. In 6th grade science, students are learning how to use a compass with topographical maps to locate landmarks in the valley. The 7th grade students are learning about osmosis by doing experiments using eggs. The 8th grade science unit is covering the measurement of density for regular and irregular shaped objects. They are also learning to identify chemical versus physical changes.

Lauren Wilson

Lauren Wilson discussed Kindergarten math. The students are learning addition and using 10 blocks.

Principal’s Report – John Rouse

All of the following activities and accomplishments would not have been possible without the full cooperation and engagement of all of the Potomac School staff members.

Teaching and Learning- Instructional Framework

- As part of our original literacy grant, the staff developed an instructional framework to help guide our instructional planning and lesson delivery.
- The components include:
 - Consistent Beginning/Opening
 - Authentic Literacy
 - Effective Instruction
 - Ending
- Beginning/Opening
 - Bell ringer
 - Essential Question
 - Anticipatory Set
 - Lesson Objective
 - Activating Background Knowledge
 - Overview of Prior Learning
- Authentic Literacy
 - Purposeful Reading, Writing, and Discussion in all content areas
 - Vocabulary instruction
 - Reading to infer/interpret/draw conclusions
 - Support arguments w/evidence
 - Resolve conflicting views encountered in source documents
 - Solve complex problems with no obvious answer
- Effective Instruction
 - Direct Instruction
 - Gradual Release of Responsibility
 - Academically Engaged Students
 - Check for Understanding
 - Reflective Lesson Plan
 - Maximize Use of Time
- **Ending**
 - **Lesson wrap-up**
 - **Exit strategies/ Check for Understanding**

Over the past few months, we have discussed various components of our Instructional Framework in an effort to clarify for board members as well as our community members who choose to listen to our board meeting some of the key elements of what we believe are important for quality learning to take place in our classrooms. This month’s Instructional Framework focus will be the last in this series. We encourage our teachers to consider how they will end or wrap up their lessons. The terms we use to describe this component of the Instructional Framework are “exit strategies” and “checking for understanding.”

Exit strategies include:

- Recapping key points of the lesson,
- Having students restate those key points using their own words,
- Tying today’s lesson to prior learnings and/or personal experiences of the learner, and
- Having students demonstrate their individual level of understanding of the concepts that were covered through “exit tickets.”

Exit Tickets can include:

- Brief activities typically done at the conclusion of the lesson as the student exit the classroom, and/or
- Short individual responses to a question composed by the teacher to check the student’s level of understanding of a key concept.

Budget and Finance

- HB 143 will likely pass through the legislature and be signed by Governor Gianforte. This bill provides financial incentives to school districts to increase their starting pay for teachers. The funding from the state would impact teachers who have three years or less experience. They qualify for these state funds the local school district’s minimum starting salary for teachers must be at least equal to 10 times the Qualified Educator component of the state funding formula. For the 2020-21 school year, 10 times of Quality Educator funding amount would be \$35,184.25 (according to calculations done by Heather Marcella). Our current starting salary for a beginning teacher with a B.A. degree and no experience is \$31,160.75. To qualify for the new state funding under HB 143, we would need to increase our 2020-21 beginning teacher salary amount by \$4,023.50.
- Montana Teacher Retirement System (TRS) allows their members to purchase service credits for previous employment as educators in private schools or out-of-state institutions prior to retirement in order to boost their monthly retirement benefit. Furthermore, Montana TRS allows school districts to permit their TRS-eligible employees to purchase these service credits through a payroll deduction option that allows the contribution amounts to be taken out of the employee’s paycheck prior to income taxes being withheld. That translates into a significant saving for the employee over simply paying for the service credits from a savings account or other source that has already been taxed. While the TRS allows employers to make financial contributions on behalf of their employees for this purpose, employer financial participation is not required. In order to be able to provide this pre-tax payroll deduction option to eligible employees, the school board must pass a specific resolution authorizing this option. The administration recommends that the school board approve the appropriate resolution to allow this pre-tax payroll deduction option to be available to Potomac school district employees who qualify under the Montana TRS guidelines. This is way to give our employees a lasting financial benefit into their retirement without any expense to the school district.

Student Activities

- The 8th Grade students are planning to present their itinerary for their end-of-the-year culminating experience at this month’s board meeting.

Safety

- According to the most recent version of the vaccination roll out protocol, educators will not be eligible to receive their Covid-19 vaccinations until Phase 1b is completed in Missoula County unless they have underlying conditions or they are 70 or older.

Facilities

- We have received written clarification of the acceptable uses of the ESSER funds (Covid-relief federal dollars) and that the document includes:
 - 14. “Inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities, including mechanical and non-mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, filtering, purification and other air cleaning, fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement.”
 - We are receiving \$77,992 in ESSER funds plus we have a balance of \$71,499 in our building reserve fund. That gives us access to \$149,491 that can be used to replace our outdated furnaces. These furnaces are oil-burning units that were installed in the 1960’s. The administration recommends that we act now to replace these units. The building reserve funds will continue to be replenished as long as the legislature to continue to allow this permissive levy.
 - According to Board Policy 7320 and 20-9-204 MCA, we are required to seek bids and prepare contracts for projects that cost more than \$80,000. The administration would like permission to advertise for bids to replace our existing furnaces. We propose the to include in the project the following:
 - Removal and disposal of the existing oil-burning furnaces (2) that are located in the basement of our main building,
 - Purchase and installation of two (2) new gas furnaces including associated controls, ductwork only in the necessary areas for installation purposes, insulation as needed for proper installation, and any additional electronic equipment or other electrical components necessary for the operation of the newly installed units.
 - Procurement of all necessary permits and/or licenses necessary for the installation and operation of the newly installed system.
 - All maintenance and service support without any additional service fees necessary for the proper and efficient operation of the newly installed system for a period off one calendar year from the date that the school district accepts the completed project.

Respectfully submitted by:

John P. Rouse, Principal

Clerk’s Report

The Clerk reported on the FY19-20 Audit progress and gave details on the upcoming CRRSA relief funds. Proposed changes in permissive levies were explained and upcoming calendar events were reviewed.

Board Professional Development Reports – None

Old Business - None

New Business

**Chair Cliff Vann moved Agenda item 12 to the beginning of New Business
Community Center Negotiation Committee**

The board discussed the negotiation committee. Trustees Wes Mitchell and Dr. Courtney Hathaway will form the committee and begin the negotiations.

Personnel –

Consider Approving Michael Miller as Substitute Custodian.

Dr. Courtney Hathaway moved to hire Michael Miller as substitute custodian. Wes Mitchell seconded the motion.
Passed – 5-0

**Chair Cliff Vann moved Agenda item 3
Approve the PEA Contract for 2021-2023**

Chair Vann presented the board with requested changes to the upcoming 2021-2023 salary matrix including a \$4,024.25 increase across all steps.

Wes Mitchell moved to approve the pay increase to the teacher salary matrix as presented by Chair Vann. Dr. Courtney Hathaway seconded the motion. The board discussed the proposed increase. Abby Stitt advised there were some small updates in language pertaining to dates and workday hours (total hours remain the same). Wes Mitchell amended his motion to approve the pay increase to the teacher salary matrix and the CBA language changes. Dr. Courtney Hathaway seconded the amended motion.

**Chair Cliff Vann, and trustees Wes Mitchell, Gary Long, and Dr. Courtney Hathaway voted aye. Vice Chair Kelsy Ployhar voted nay.
Passed 4-1**

Approve the Principal Contract for 2021-2022

Vice Chair Kelsy Ployhar and Dr. Courtney Hathaway advised the board that negotiations are still in progress. The contract approval will be moved to the March 8th meeting. No action.

Approve the PACE Contract for 2021-2023

Gary Long and Dr. Courtney Hathaway advised the board that negotiations are still in progress. The contract approval will be moved to the March 8th meeting. No action.

Approve Professional Services Contract with Seth Martin/Computer Foundations, LLC

Vice Chair Kelsy Ployhar moved to approve the contract for Computer Foundations Professional Services Contract. Dr. Courtney Hathaway seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Approve advertising for bids to replace our current furnaces with new gas furnaces.

Vice Chair Kelsy Ployhar moved to approve Principal Rouse to advertise for bids to replace our current furnaces with new gas furnaces. Dr. Courtney Hathaway seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Discussion/committee for future Levy.

The board reviewed the estimated maximum allowable levy for the general fund. The board is not seeking an additional levy at this time.

Consideration and Adoption of Resolution estimating changes in Revenues/Mills from Transportation, Tuition, and Building Reserve Permissive Levies.

Dr. Courtney Hathaway moved to approve the resolution estimating changes in revenues/mills from Transportation, Tuition, and Building Reserve permissive levies. Vice Chair Kelsy Ployhar seconded the motion.
Chair Cliff Vann, Vice Chair Kelsy Ployhar, and trustees Wes Mitchell and Dr. Courtney Hathaway voted aye. Trustee Gary Long voted nay. Passed 4-1

Trustees Call for an Election

Gary Long moved to call for an election. Vice Chair Kelsy Ployhar seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Consider Resolution to allow Potomac School District to Facilitate the Purchase of Service for TRS Members (Teacher’s Retirement System)

Wes Mitchell moved to consider approving the resolution to allow Potomac School District to facilitate the purchase of serves for TRS members. Gary Long seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Policy Updates – 1st reading

3310 – Student Discipline

Gary Long moved to consider approving changes to Policy 3310 – Student Discipline. Dr. Courtney Hathaway seconded the motion. First reading. **Passed 5-0**

4315 – Visitor and Spectator Conduct

Dr. Courtney Hathaway moved to adopt the proposed changes to policy 4315 as shown. Vice Chair Kelsy Ployhar seconded the motion. First reading.
Chair Cliff Vann, Vice Chair Kelsy Ployhar, and trustees Wes Mitchell and Dr. Courtney Hathaway voted aye. Trustee Gary Long voted nay. Passed 4-1

4332 – Conduct on School Property

Dr. Courtney Hathaway moved to approve policy changes to policy 4332 as outlined. Wes Mitchell seconded the motion. First reading. **Passed 5-0**

5223 – Personal Conduct

Dr. Courtney Hathaway moved to approve policy changes to policy 5223 as outlined. Wes Mitchell seconded the motion. First reading. **Passed 5-0**

5226 – Drug-free Workplace

Wes Mitchell moved to approve the first reading of Policy updates in 5226. Dr. Courtney Hathaway seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

7425F – Fundraising Notice

Wes Mitchell moved to review the 1st reading of Policy updates to 7425F. Dr. Courtney Hathaway seconded the motion. Trustee Gary Long noted that the form was new and not an update. Wes Mitchell amended the motion to adopting the new form 7425F. Dr. Courtney Hathaway seconded the amended motion. **Passed 5-0**

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Chair Cliff Vann asked the Clerk to include Policy 3311 for cross reference at the next reading of the updated policies and new form.

Adjourn

Chair Vann adjourned the meeting at 9:44 pm.

Cliff Vann, Chair

date

Heather Marcella, Clerk

date