



Potomac Elementary School

School Board Minutes

for

February 12, 2018

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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: Steven Van Grinsven, Craig Nelson and Kelsy Ployhar. Gary Long and Principal Rouse joined on the phone. Jill Thornton, Clerk was also in attendance.

Public Input (for issues not on the agenda)

A request was made to plow more of the parking near the fence at the field.

Consent Agenda

January 8, 2018 minutes included in this consent agenda.

Warrant Lists – Total Claims = \$27,486.13. Total Payroll = \$67,909.47.

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, 2018 - \$29,727.69 thru January 31, 2018 - \$31,339.37

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

Student Council Report

No Report

Parent Report Explorers Committee

Potomac Parents Group Proposal for Continuation of the Explorers

Overview

POTOMAC PARENTS GROUP is pleased to submit this proposal to support The Potomac Explorer's Program in providing hands on and applied learning to the students on the optional 5th day to support to enhance our children's learning. We the parents feel that this program is an essential addition to our regular curriculum and thus we are committed to helping secure a funding source and volunteer base to support the program.

The Objective

As a group, our goal is to support the Explorer's program by providing supplemental funding, planning of educational opportunities and volunteer support. We plan to work with the school board and principal to create a program that is sustainable. The most pressing issue is the lack of funding. We plan to bring back "Potomac Pioneer Days" as a fund raising event. Additionally, once funding is secured we hope to bring and AmeriCorps Volunteer on board to coordinate the program and provide instruction to the students. We will supplement the program with parent volunteers.

Our Proposal

The Potomac Parents Group recognizes that the Explorer’s program in its current form is unfeasible. The ability to raise \$60,000 per year from private donors is unrealistic. Therefore, going forward we will be basing our objectives on the “Revised Explorer’s Program for 2018-2019” model outlined in the December 2017 School Board minutes (see table of pricing below also). This model proposes a cost of the program to be approximately \$16,000, and still includes 12 field trips and will fulfill the essential elements of the program.

This model includes \$6,608 for a program coordinator. This position could be fulfilled by a staff member or alternatively we could apply for an AmeriCorps volunteer. The AmeriCorps Volunteer would be ideal, as the cost would be \$6,600 per year and the individual could be utilized on non-Explorer’s days to assist in other areas at the school. We would ask that Mr. Rouse assist us in applying for this assistance.

To assist the program coordinator a volunteer base will be established from parents and community members. They will help out the coordinator on a weekly basis in the role that the assistant currently fulfills. A list and/or website can be set up to facilitate the process. Should enough money be raised yearly we may be able to hire an assistant as is outlined in the revised program, and volunteer help will not be required. Should we use volunteer assistants, this will decrease the amount of funding required to ~\$12,500.

To raise the required funding a GoFundMe account has already been established. A solicitation letter for requesting funding from private entities has also been circulated. However, as our primary fund raising event we would like to bring back “Potomac Pioneers Days”. Several ideas have been suggested for the format of the festival and planning is in its infancy. However, as it is currently envisioned it will be a 2 day festival in the summer (possibly June). We would like to work in conjunction with the community center and have several offerings to celebrate our community. We would like to have music, booths, food, drinks and events such as a “Run” and a parade.

Alternatively, we have explored a fee based model for the program should we be unable to raise the required amount to fund the program. We feel that \$75 a semester (\$150 per year) would be a reasonable amount for those that participate in the program. We’d like to offer a sliding scale or opportunities so that no one misses out on the offering due to inability to pay. There may be opportunity for “paying” the fees by volunteering or being involved in Pioneer Day’s activities.

We would prefer all monies raised to go directly to the school into a dedicated fund. However, we recognize that we may need to establish ourselves as a non-profit organization, and that in doing so we may be able to obtain other types of grants not available to the school. We are still exploring this option.

Depending on the amount of money we are able to raise and the acceptance of our application by AmeriCorps, the program could be a combination of the above ideas included above, or may evolve as we move through the process. Ultimately, we request the support of the principal Mr. Rouse and the School Board achieve our goal of keeping the Explorer’s program in place. We may ask additional support not listed in this proposal (i.e. proposing a mill levy voted on by the people that supports Explorer’s exclusively).

Execution Strategy

- Plan and implement “Potomac Pioneer Days” event
- Apply for AmeriCorps volunteer
- Develop assistant volunteer base to assist coordinator
- Develop goals and establish program based on funding available and student needs
- Look into Fee based program and determine specifics on how it would work, if it would be feasible, and if we need to partner with an external agency like The Boy’s and Girl’s Club of America
- Explore partnerships with PTC and the Community Center and others

Costs

The following table details the cost for the Explorer’s Program based on the model in the December School Board minutes of the services outlined in this proposal. This pricing is subject to change based on funding raised and actual programming provided to the students. Additional revenue of up to ~\$3000 could be added to our funding if we go with a fee based model, and will depend on participation.

Staff	Price
Program Coordinator (\$20/hour + 18% benefits for 280 hours)	\$6,608.00
Assistant (\$15/hour + benefits for 256 hours)- Could be fulfilled with Volunteers	\$4,531.20
Total Staff Costs	\$11,139.20
Supplies & Costs	
Field trips- 12 @ ~300 each	\$3,600
Supplies	\$350
Cost of using Community Center (Facility rental \$104 per Friday X 32)- \$3328	?
Total Supplies & Costs	\$3,950 (\$7,278)
Total	\$15,089.20 (22,367.20)

Disclaimer: The prices listed in the preceding table are an estimate for the program discussed. This summary is not a warranty of final price. Estimates are subject to change if project specifications are changed.

Conclusion

We look forward to working with the School Board and Principal to continue to provide applied learning opportunities to our children through the Explorer’s Program. We are confident that we can meet the challenges ahead, and stand ready to partner with you in delivering a solution that satisfies the need for our children and in our community. We want Potomac School to remain a leader in quality education and will do whatever is required of us to meet that goal. If you have questions on this proposal, feel free to contact us at your convenience via email, our Potomac Planning Group Facebook page or by phone. We plan to communicate with you all as progress is made, and ask that you keep us in informed of any changes, proposals, or when decisions are made by the school board.

Cliff requested two things for the next meeting:

1. The chain of Custody for the money raised
2. Due to the time frame the board has to approve moving forward, the \$15,000 for the program needs to be available by the next board meeting for the board to consider the proposal

John will contact MTSBA for information about using Go Fund Me
Jill will check with the auditor to see what needs to be put in place to accept and document any Go Fund Me monies.

Teachers Reports

Raynee Pace said her literature class is preparing book reports from books they chose. They were restricted to the first in a series. In their reports they noted the elements of literature; theme, style, mood, characters, setting, plot, point of view, and conflict. The students chose the 4 they wanted to represent on "trioramas" they made.

Another assignment her class did was a collaboration with Kristina to use 5 sentences to describe a trail based on a topographic map.

She is also using a 10 x 10 grid teaching her students about statistics and probability.

Abby Stitt showed interactive notebooks. These are used as resources for students to learn things like text structures. They are also learning how to use a dictionary with guide words.

Principals Report – John Rouse

- **Teaching and Learning**
 - Our MCLP grant was approved by OPI!
 - I will be meeting with the Montana Comprehensive Literacy Project Director, Terri Barclay, to go through a final negotiation to discuss the exact amount of funds for which we were approved. We receive \$750,000 for the three- year grant cycle. I expect that the amount that received funding approval will be less than that amount. This funding negotiation is a process OPI goes through with each grant recipient.
 - We have been given the OK to go ahead and begin spending the grant funds.
 - Here are the Talking Points about the grant that were released by OPI:
 - The Office of Public Instruction applied for and was awarded a federal literacy grant called The Montana Comprehensive Literacy Project (MCLP). The MCLP is intended to advance literacy skills, including pre-literacy skills, reading, and writing, for children age 4 through grade 12, with emphasis on disadvantaged children, including children living in poverty, English learners, and children with disabilities. The ultimate outcome of the MCLP is improved literacy skills for Montana students. Districts receiving the MCLP funds have committed to implementing high-quality comprehensive literacy instruction. Within the framework of this project, districts have committed to:
 - serve a high percentage of disadvantaged children.
 - align instruction across an Age 4 through Grade 12 Continuum.
 - create and implement a local literacy plan that is based on evidence-based interventions and is sustainable beyond the years of grant funding.
 - increase the percentage of children aged 3 to 5 who make significant gains on the E/ROWPVT from fall to spring
 - increase the percentage of fifth and eighth grade students proficient on the State Assessment
 - increase the percentage of eleventh grade students proficient on the ACT assessment.
 - As partners in this work, the OPI will:
 - provide high-quality professional development through on-site coaching, instructional consultant support, and state-sponsored conferences.
 - A major portion of the grant is dedicated to providing quality professional development to our teaching staff. To that end, instructional coaches will be provided at three different levels. An instructional coach is

someone who supports and assists individual teachers as they work to improve their effectiveness. All teachers will receive this support on an individual basis in an effort to provide each individual teacher with the specific type of support that teacher needs. The three levels of instructional coaching support will be as follows:

- OPI will provide one instructional coach who will visit our school once per month throughout the grant. I was informed that this person will be Terri Barclay. Ms. Barclay is the Director for the entire statewide grant. I am excited that she assigned herself to our school. She has worked previously with teachers at Potomac School. I also worked with Ms. Barclay for four years while I was in Browning. It is a real advantage to have the project director working in our school, so she will understand our needs.
 - The second level of coaching support will come from an outside consultant with whom we will be required to contract from outside of our school district. There is an approved list of consultants from which we can select one to come to Potomac. I have the advantage of having worked with several of the outside consultants before, so I will be recommending one of the individuals with whom I have worked to fulfill this role. IO arranged for our teachers to “meet” these individuals via FaceTime, so they could give me feedback with regard to the person they believe would work best in our school.
 - The third level of coaching support will be from a full-time instructional coach who will work only at our school. After considering the idea of hiring someone from outside the school who may not be familiar with Potomac, I decided to approach one of our current staff members to see if she would be willing to leave the classroom to serve in the role as instructional coach for the duration of the grant. Abby Stitt has agreed to accept this new challenge with the understanding that she can opt to return to the classroom in the future should she prefer the role of teacher over that of a coach.
 - To support Ms. Stitt in her new capacity, I have asked her to attend an intensive instructional coaching training institute with me later this month. This institute will be an intense five-day training under the auspices of Jim Knight, perhaps the leading trainer for instructional coaches in the nation. All expenses for this training will be paid out of the grant’s professional development funds.
- Mr. Gaglia and Ms. Stitt attended a day-long session with me at the Missoula County Public Schools (MCPS) district office during which representatives from textbook publishing companies made presentations of the English language arts resources. We have been invited back by the MCPS district administrators to a second round of presentations on February 13th. Being included in this process has helped us to begin establishing a working relationship between our school and the MCPS high schools.

• **Budget and Finance**

- As a final reminder, we have to make known to the public any proposed changes to our permissive mill levies by March 31st; therefore, the board will need to make a decision regarding the status our current adult education mill levy. Currently that levy is set in the amount of 5.34 mills. Do we want to re-establish an adult ed program or do we want to shift the amount of revenue generated by the 5.00 mills from the adult ed levy to our special building fund levy in order to be eligible for the full facilities matching funds (approximately an 80% state match for our district) from the state in FY 20 and FY 21?
- Also the Board must identify the anticipated school major maintenance projects for which the funds will be used. Mr. Rouse received a confirmation of this concept of shifting of the mill impact from Paul Taylor at OPI.
- Kara Sperle at OPI sent me the following response to my question about how the deferred maintenance funds could be used:
 - “There is a pecking order of repairs included with the permissive levy.
 - From the facilities inventory report found on the website at <http://opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Finance-Grants/School-Finance/School-Finance-Budgets>, about half way down the page is a State of

Montana – Survey Reports link, districts must repair "safety, damage/wear out, codes and standards" first.

- After this step, the school must update the inventory report. Then you can begin on efficiency projects -energy, building, etc.
- The state portion of the funding is not available until the legislature provides funding to OPI. We are hoping for funding for FY 2020, but that is all contingent upon the legislature.
- But schools have the ability to permissively levy up to 10 mills or \$15,000 for EL and HS plus \$100 x PY ANB. You can levy that locally and start your projects.”
- I have updated the “inventory” that Ms. Sperle referenced and provided a copy to the board’s facility committee. We do have a few “code” issues that need to be addressed; however, most of those are in the community center building. I am waiting for confirmation from OPI that we are allowed to expend levy funds for leased facilities.
- **Adult Education-** We have established a working relationship with MCPS in the area of adult education. We are working with the Lifelong Learning Center (LLC) from MCPS to set up and advertise some adult education offerings in Potomac. We have selected an adult education coordinator who will be an employee of the LLC and will be responsible for coordinating the programs at Potomac. The individual who was selected is Jennifer Vogel, a parent of two Potomac students. Her salary will be paid out of our adult education funds. Through the LLC.
- The current course offerings are:
 - Family Cooking
 - Smartphone Class
 - Introduction to Fly Fishing
 - Academic Success Program.
- Ms. Thornton has developed the three-year projection of revenues for the school district. We are also beginning the process of building a preliminary budget for 2018-19. The budget will include a line item system for the general fund that will allow the administration to track and report the level of expenditures in each line item. Many of the items included in the budget are “fived” such as salary and salary-related expenses. A number of other expenses are relatively stable and predictable such as utilities and transportation. The intent behind establishing a “line item” type budget is so we can plan more effectively how funds are spent. It is not necessary that the Board approve the budget on a line item basis; however, being able to provide the board with periodic status reports of our expenditures provides for more clarity of understanding of the budget by the board and the public.

• **Student Activities**

- Girl’s basketball season is underway, and the 8th graders are closing in on thee fund-raising goal for their annual trip.

• **Safety**

- We are still continuing to try to address safety concerns in and around the school. Slippery walks is also a concern.

• **Facilities and Grounds**

- The facilities committee will be preparing the Facilities Plan document for presentation to the board before the March board meeting. We will need to identify specific major maintenance projects that will eventually be funded through the state matching funds via SB 307.
- As a reminder among the topics discussed by the facilities committee were the roof of the library building, security cameras for our building entries, and the condition of our two furnaces. The school got an estimate in March of 2013 regarding a possible replacement of the furnaces. At that time, the estimated cost was around \$33,000 to remove the oil-burning furnaces and replace them with propane furnaces and

heat pump systems. Thus far we have received a preliminary bid to replace the existing roof on the library with an asphalt shingle roof.

- **Student Council**
 - We will include a regular agenda item for our board meetings to allow the student council to give a monthly report on their activities and goals.

- **Community**
 - A group of concerned parents is continuing to meet to discuss ways to maintain the Explorer's program for next year and future years. I met with the group along with a couple of board members to respond to their questions and concerns.

Clerks Report

Jill presented and explained Budget to Actual reports.

Board Professional Development Reports

Steven has been attending Girls Basketball, Craig has been researching what other school have considered for firearms on school grounds as well as reviewing the Board Packet with Jill, Cliff & Kelsy negotiated with Principal Rouse for his 18-19 contract. Cliff has also been working on Facilities, has attended Basketball, and went through an unintentional intruder training with work. It was coordinated by NW Shooters.

School Board Calendar

No updates

Committee Report – Policy 1705

Gary and Steven met to look at safety and also attended a safety committee meeting. They are developing a comprehensive list of ideas to address.

2018-2019 Principal Contract

Kelsy moved to approve the 2018-2019 Principal Contract. Craig seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0** (Gary's phone connection was lost.)

2018-2019 School Calendar

Craig moved to approve the 2018-2019 School Calendar. Kelsy seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0**

Literacy Grant Discussion – Mileage & Meals

Steven moved to approve mileage and meals for the Literacy Grant. Craig seconded the motion. The board feels this is John's administrative determination and doesn't need board action. **Failed 4-0**

Trustee Resolution Calling for an Election

Kelsy moved to call an election. Steven seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0**

Trustee Resolution to Request the County Conduct the Election

Steven moved to approve the request for the County to conduct our election. Craig seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0**

Consideration & Adoption of Resolution estimating changes in Revenues/Mills from Adult Ed, Transportation, Building Reserve and Tuition Funds

Steven moved to adopt the resolution estimating changes in revenues/mills from Adult Ed, Transportation, Building Reserve and Tuition Funds. Kelsy seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0**

Adjourn

Chair Vann adjourned the Board meeting at 10:00 pm.

Cliff Vann, Chair

date

Jill M Thornton, Clerk

date