



Potomac Elementary School

School Board Minutes

for

December 12, 2011

Phone (406) 244-5581

Fax (406) 244-5840

www.potomacschoolmontana.us

*“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 Robert O’Boyle called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM by leading all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Those trustees present were: Gary Long and Jim Wrobel. Tim Johnson, principal and Jill Thornton, clerk, were also in attendance.

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

Consent Agenda

Gary moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Bob seconded the motion. **Passed with 2 votes, 1 abstains.**

Jeff Hahn arrived at the board meeting.

Principals Report

Community

- District Goal Setting Committee
- Race to Nowhere scheduled for January 19th at 7 pm in the Community Center.
- PAC meeting – this Thursday the 15th.

School

- MAP testing will be scheduled for late January, early February along with AIMs web.
- Hand Chimes performing at: Riverside Health Care, Senior Center and Southgate Mall
- The same day as the Chimes performances, Nancy’s Asian Studies are going to the China Woods store and a Chinese restaurant.
- Upper school has implemented an online typing course within Comm Arts time (Nancy Linnell)
- K-8 Holiday Program set for December 20th at 7pm. There will be treats and drinks afterwards, along with a special guest.
- 5-8 graders went to MSU in Bozeman to compete in the State Science Olympiad. We placed well for our first time with one student placing 7th out of approx. 25 teams in one event.
- 5th grade went to the Missoula Art Museum November 30th to view Ansel Adams prints and learn more about his style of photography. Following the Museum visit, they went to the Library to get library cards and check out books.
- WOW (Web on Wheels) bus is here every other Tuesday as a book drop-off/pick-up, student/adult tech ed; Bus is operated by the Missoula County Library.
- iPads have been rolled out in the 3rd and 4th grade classroom. This was originally scheduled for after Christmas Break, but when Diane Woodard gave her tech class here she showed the teachers how to roll the iPads out sooner.
- Kristina Davis attended the national conference for science teachers last week.
- Our school Counselor is working on an anti-bullying program

Activities

- Girls Volleyball beginning in the 3rd quarter with coaching by Wendy McDaniel and Grace Leacock.
- Boys Basketball: took 1st place in the Potomac Invitational over this last weekend.

Vision Impact

- Screening of “Race to Nowhere” in Potomac will be January 19th at 7 pm. The first screening has produced a small focus group of 6 individuals in the Missoula area, (two from Potomac, two from Clinton, and two from Missoula) in an effort to impact educational practices via research/best practices and common sense.
- The Goal Setting Committee has finished its proposal utilizing the school’s vision. Awaiting board approval.
- Articles related to grading practice and philosophies are being researched by staff through a recent publication of articles from the *ASCD: Education Leadership, Nov 2011*. November’s issue is dedicated to grades, what they mean, and what they should communicate, motivate, etc. **Committee to follow board approval of goals.**

Gary asked what the committee would focus on. Tim said they would meet to develop preliminary ideas. They would focus on the how homework, grading policies and the way students relate impacts education.

Jim asked when the board would see recommendations on the Sports Field. Tim said he can present the recommendations at the January meeting.

School Goals

The committee for school goals consisted of Bob O’Boyle and Jim Wrobel from the school board, Tim Johnson – principal, Terri Klein and Nancy Linnell from Potomac School, and Jason Johnson and Amy Vann from the Potomac community.

Through six meetings in a two month span, the Goal setting Committee has the following recommended list of goals for School board for approval:

- Provide the latest technology hardware and training to our staff and students.
- Address bullying.
- Enhance our outdoor sports programs and community participation through the completion of the Potomac Athletic Complex.
- Celebrate the Centennial of Potomac School (1913).
- Improve the capacity for and increase the use of outside funding/resources to our school.
- Improve student communication skills (written).
- Improve student communication skills (verbal, nonverbal).
- Establish minimum typing fluency benchmarks for students in grades 3, 5 and 7.
- Exceed state proficiency standards (Math, Science and Reading).
- Determine the factors of an effective math program.
- Communicate the factors of an effective math program.
- Increase student participation in all areas related to “their future”.
- Enhance our extracurricular programs
- Integrate critical thinking into all academic and behavioral settings.
- Improve the visibility and communication regarding Potomac School to the broader community.
- Enhance our Fine Arts program.

The goal setting process utilized Potomac’s Vision Statement, the strengths of our district and the known expectations now and in the future. The goals are primarily focused on the education and empowerment of our students. We also recognize the importance of including staff, parents and surrounding community members in this endeavor.

In the coming months, the Potomac School staff lead by Principal Johnson will review the goals and then assemble the tactics and time-lines necessary to achieve our district’s goals.

Bob also met with the student council to get student input, as Jim, Tim and Nancy did at another time. When he talked about the list in general there was good feedback, with all students getting involved when he talked about technology.

Once the goals are approved by the board, Tim will get a timeline for the February meeting.

Jim moved to approve the list of goals for the Potomac School district. Gary seconded the motion.

Jim said that the board needed to come up with goals annually as stated in Policy 1610. These goals will then be used in the Principal evaluation.

Tim said these goals have been reassuring to parents he has talked with.

At January's board meeting, items on the agenda will include the Principal evaluation form and Policies starting with the 1000 series.

Gary asked if the school has seen more bullying or less bullying. Nancy Linnell said this is a concern that now has more national awareness. Tim said we've become better diagnosticians, so bullying is reported more than in the past. Bob said when he was talking with students, they considered bullying a big issue.

Bob asked for a vote on the motion on the table. **Passed 4-0.**

School Board – Professional Development

School Board Professional Development and involvement is an ongoing concern. Bob stated the School Boards belief that maintaining a 'culture of excellence' as stated in our schools vision statement is best done through example.

Bob and Jim worked on the goal setting committee, and Jeff went to the legal training given by MTSBA in Helena.

Jeff found a class concerning technology very interesting. What technology can and cannot do was part of the discussion. Technology law is also rapidly changing. The 2nd day a representative from the FBI gave a presentation on internet crime.

Bob also reiterated the benefits that visiting the school during classes can give board members in understanding issues.

Personnel - Maintenance

Tim recommended that the board approve Mandy Preston be hired for early morning snow removal. Jim moved that she be hired as recommended pending her background check and pre employment physical. Gary seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0.**

School Policy Manual

- a) 1st Reading Policy 3122P – Tim contacted the MTSBA concerning how to add parameters to this policy to deal effectively with parents whose child has continual absences. Of the three sample policies from the MTSBA website, Tim likes 3122P1 to use as a base with some components added from 3122P and 3122P3. Bob said to change the number of days listed as required in a year to number of hours to comply with Montana State requirements. Tim said he will put together a policy 3122P4 to bring all the parts together.
- b) 1st Reading Policy 3312 – Tim would like to change 'Saturday' to 'after school' and add 'determined by administrator' to line 9.
- c) 1st Reading Policy 5122 – this policy review was requested by Jim as the Missoula County Schools have changed their background check requirements to include all volunteers, not just those with unsupervised access to students. He would like to compare this policy with Missoula County Schools when we review the 5000's again.

Adjourn

Chair O'Boyle adjourned the Board meeting at 8:20 pm.