



**NFS PTO Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, February 15, 2018 @ 7 p.m.**

**Welcome, Approval of January's PTO Minutes, and Portsmouth School Department Introduction (David)**

- Minutes approved

**Chat with the Portsmouth School Department**

Superintendent Steve Zdravec, Asst. Superintendent George Shea, Board Member Roseann Vozella Clark, and our own, newly appointed Board Member Tara Kennedy will be in attendance representing the School Department.

- **Class sizes and number of rooms:** Value class size, 20 is that threshold; K-3 is to be well under that. In process with budget, looking to increase teachers to 16 ½ or 17 (we have a half time teacher). NFS has the lowest student to teacher ratio. We are pretty steady at about 260 kids/year. Physical space of the room is also a challenge, 24 kids, a teacher and 2 assistants; it is very hard to have personal space or a holiday party.
- School boards do get projections based on birth, etc. for school size. We benefit from a steady school enrollment. Incoming K, we have 38 students to date registered.
- NFS student population. We have to write an annual review every year, going back 30 years, we have hovered around that 260-student mark.
- Workshop model learning, have a core piece you teach, but then individualize the reading and writing to the student. Some experimenting in this model with math.
- Right now we have 16 sections/classroom, we are talking about 16 ½ or 17 for next year.
- Parents want to know how to share their thoughts on their child's placement for the following year.
- Have a spring PTO meeting that addresses child placement in the following year.
- **Renovation:** 2-phase renovation at Dondero, needed energy efficiency and sprinkler system upgrades. Dondero gets wrapped up this summer. Soon an assessment of space at NFS will take place. NFS already has some of those upgrades; we will need a new HCAV system. We have a \$2 million to start. We'll get a better idea of needs from the architects and planners. \$2 million we looked at the cost of systems we need and then we'll look at what else is required. We can take a whole meeting with NFS when we get to the point to discuss improvements to NFS. City has been very supportive of what we need at our Portsmouth schools.
- **World Languages:** Last spring a committee was formed to study offering world languages. In process of studying what would be effective. Outcomes are focused around language acquisition and global citizenship. Proposal will be presented to school board this year to be phased in 2019-2020 year. Looking at

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Spanish in earlier grades and some choices later on. ESL for students, but do we offer anything for parents.

- **PEAK and MC3:** PEAK is run by Community Campus, basically childcare. At all three schools, happens on snow days and vacations. MC3 is a grant we received 5-years ago, meant to be extended day learning, not child care, not open on snow days or vacation. PEAK is larger at other schools because students enroll in MC3. PEAK has specific rules about what they can and can't do. MC3 is in the fifth year; we have been waiting for the RFP for reapplication. We got news this week for a renewal, not a reapplication; we review at our first year's money. Based on fee structures, MC3 can sustain itself. As long as federal funds are around, we will get renewal. Working on PEAK to offer more enrichment activities. Pre-MC3 is capped (15) at enrollment, so that it is a better adjustment for the long day.
- **Buses:** This year we had some changes, enough buses and drivers has been a challenge. We are actually down a bus, we hope to at least get whole again next year. Pressure point this year was the same starting time, created some awkward timing for bus arrivals. Going forward we'll take a look at everything early, so that we can avoid the last minute changes. HS students with elementary students, generally we haven't seen any issues pop up around that. We were thoughtful where students were sitting.
- **Open comment at every School Board meeting.** We love to hear from everyone, concerns, whatever you want to bring up. City has a YouTube channel as well for all meetings.

#### **Financials (Dave)**

- P&L is posted to NFS Web Site.
- Investment in the Growth Mindset books was the most exciting investment in January.
- At about 55% of what we budgeted for has been raised. About \$10,000 in fundraising remains.
- Expenditures are only at about 16% of planned budget, but it is heavily backend for expenses.

#### **Principal's Report-Joanne Simons**

- BrainPop username and password is on the library Wiki.
- March 27 NFS is hosting the School Board meeting, add school board meeting dates to NFS PTO newsletter
- More impactful when parents come in to talk when they are passionate about a topic.
- New traffic pattern is going well, a bit of difficulty on the Early Release Day and cancelation of afterschool programs was hard. Turning right onto Woodbury is difficult. We are expressing our concerns on the traffic, we are advocating.
- Play structure out back was built on a sewer line, so that came down today. And we have a big mud pit out back, so we are trying to work with that.

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- Ben suggested moving the crossing at end of Franklin further up on Franklin, so easier for cars to get out onto Woodbury.
- For police detail, it is a 3-hour minimum commitment.

**Upcoming events:**

- “Souper” Friday for staff, Feb. 16
- Pasta Dinner, Feb. 22
- Healthy Try-It-Day, March 8
- Café Nostimo Restaurant Night, March 13

**Meeting adjourns at 8:30 p.m. Please join us at STREET directly after for further discussion and friendship.**

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