

PTO meeting minutes Jan. 4th (Revised to reflect updated guidance provided on Jan. 11th)

Jessica, our PTO President, opened the meeting with introductions a short agenda, more akin to a “welcome back” meeting, due to the holiday break.

1. In this challenging time, the recent focus of the PTO is centered on how we can build a strong, engaged community of parents, teachers, and staff when we are not able to come together physically.
 - a. The first way that we are trying to do this through expanding PTO Facebook page by soliciting positive feedback and participation. Please check out the PTO Facebook page, and encourage your friends and neighbors to do the same. We are always in search of ideas and topics for the participation topics/questions. The first topic was what books were you reading. Other ideas for Facebook participate posts – could be tell us or post a photo of any fun or funny science experiments you have done or posts about building a snowman or participating in other snow-related fun.
 - b. The second way that we are trying to do this is to host some type of a school-wide, virtual event, but this is challenging because we also want to limit screen time during non-school hours. We are trying to brainstorm ideas of what that looks like, and we truly welcome any and all ideas that you have for this type of event. Some ideas discussed thus far have included playing virtual bingo, a physical activity challenge (like last year’s remote participation of the mileage club), or a remote movie night where the entire school watches the same movie at the same time. We want this to be a fun and engaging community event and not just another virtual event. Kids are parents are getting virtual/screen fatigue.
 - c. Judi also noted that some teachers have participated in these types of events within their classrooms. For example, Mrs. Lee hosted a bedtime story with her kids that was great, and the kids participated and drank cocoa. Other teachers hosted baking with your teacher. We could build upon these types of ideas from the classrooms and could coordinate with whole school based on homerooms. Mrs. Phillippo also is thinking about virtual power hour-type of experiences as well, so there will be more to come on Power Hour.
2. Tony provided a board member update. The board’s primary question to tackle is: “How are we getting kids back in the school?” Our superintendent has been asked to be part of a commission tasked with getting kids back into school, and he has been meeting with the Regional Support Team to ensure we are following Governors orders. **Please note:** At the time of the PTO meeting, the plan for some or all students to return to the classroom was still in its planning stage; however, Northpoint has communicated that plan in communications sent on Monday, January 11, 2021.
3. Judi provided an update on how Q1 went and what to expect in the near term.
 - a. The last time we met in November, we were excited to hear about what a good experience the kids in the flexible learning program have had, and families shared their gratitude with teachers, staff and the administration. We learned a lot from this insight. Unfortunately, after that last meeting in November, the virus numbers spiked, which required us to move all students to flexible learning. To prepare for that transition, each

grade level team met with one or more members of our flexible learning team to make plans to transition into flex learning. It was clear that small group instruction was very valuable, and the structured overview of the day was helpful. Flexible learning had a valuable mix of big and small group lessons and asynchronous, independent learning assignments as well. It was key that we made sure that each student is prepared for independent learning, including understanding the expectations. We also have learned that students need to actively participate in the lesson such that lessons should be a combination of lectures and collaborative conversations, which can be facilitated with breakout rooms and small group instruction. From teacher's POV, the ability to give feedback in real time is very valuable as is the feedback provided on the independent learning assignments. Teachers must work to find the right balance for meaningful feedback, and they are doing so. Making relationships and having some social time built into the school day is important as well to help build community and strengthen relationships. As we move back to in-classroom learning, we want to capitalize on these flexible learning opportunities in which we replicate small groups and build upon personalized, independent lessons tailored to each student when we move back into the classroom model. Critical discovery is the importance of independent lessons being very tailored to specific needs of kids and providing feedback.

- b. **As previously indicated:** Northpoint recently communicated its plan to have students return to classroom learning. As stated in communications sent on Monday, January 11, 2021: Northpoint is excited to welcome its preK-4 students back to full-time learning at school on Thursday, January 21st. With this transition, all students in Modified Campus (hybrid) will transition to full-time, 5 days per week learning at school beginning January 21, 2021. All students whose families have chosen Extended Flexible Learning (distance learning) will continue with distance learning.
4. Questions from the Community:
 - a. Question as to timeframe for vaccinations for the teachers and staff: No new updates on timeframe for teacher vaccinations.
 - b. Have there been any issues with staff availability: We have had some issues with staff availability, but we have done a good job working through these challenges – including teaching from home, utilizing building subs and the flexibility of available district staff.
 - c. Question as to any concern that hybrid learning students may be behind where they should be (i.e. certain milestones or lesson plans) and how this potential lag will be assessed to ensure that the kids are able to catch up. Judi says must teach kids up to level no matter what, and the data does not support holding child back except in extreme circumstances. Instead, we need to find ways to support kids and find ways to catch these kids up, whether it be a group of kids or individual kids who are struggling. Learning maps are key for individualized learning plan. This needs to be more about figuring out where a kid (or collective group of kids) is at and how can we structure learning to meet their specific needs. Also, there has been industry discussion of standardized benchmarks and rethinking these benchmarks in this time of learning during Covid.
 5. We would love to hear from you! Please to email Jessica any PTO ideas or suggestions and head out to the PTO Facebook page for some fun topics and community engagement.