

## Newton PTO Meeting March 20, 2018

Meeting began at 9:35 a.m. in room 1110.

In attendance: Brian Ewert, James O'Tremba, Lisa Svede, Jenni Rosen, Mandy Conn, Sian Miletich, Laura Mutton, Nicki Spiers, Erin Miller, Missy Crew, Amy Leach, Therese Revitte

### Brian Ewert – LPS Superintendent

- LPS needs to think differently about its physical facilities. Some buildings are at the end of their life span. We need to be forward-thinking for the upcoming generations of students.
- The District achievement goal is for 100% of LPS students to graduate prepared for meaningful post-secondary opportunities. 25-30% of the kids who are going through the basic model of public schools are just being compliant. Are we allowing kids to be creative and find their passion? LPS teaches well, but how can we do things differently so that juniors and seniors in high school have pathways and options available, even if they don't go to college.
- He showed the video *What we Know about Learning* (YouTube).
  - Education has facilitated conformity rather than learning, and treats students as if they have the same brain.
  - Use pleasure, not pain to motivate. Make learning relevant, meaningful and enjoyable.
  - There are multiple entry points to learning, and multiple solution paths.
  - There are three ingredients to intrinsic motivation – autonomy, connection (with each other and real world), and the pursuit of curiosity. Need the right combination of ability and challenge.
  - Passive learning doesn't get encoded in long-term learning. Active learning does. Self reflection is the final step of encoding to long-term learning.
- Teachers all agree this is the right model for teaching, but they don't have all the staffing and support needed. Some freshman classes in the high schools are up to 40 students.
- *Colorado ranks 47<sup>th</sup> out of 50 in per pupil funding!*
- The legislature implemented The Negative Factor, which has shortchanged LPS \$101 million in the last 8 years. LPS can't add new programs or do anything innovative. Facilities need renovating/are failing. Some can be renovated, some need rebuilding.
- In 2007-08, LPS was forward-thinking and made big cuts in closing schools. We never got that money back.
- Initiative 92: Many educators, school districts, and PTOs have come together to advocate for changes. This includes 178 superintendents.
  - Short term: We need money funneled into the negative factor for next year. We are advocating to Legislature that we need immediate funding for 2018-2019. This funding would go toward teacher retention, special education funding, and mental health services.
  - <https://kidsmatteredtoo.org> – go to this site to connect with legislature
  - Our schools haven't recovered from the last recession. Our state constitution doesn't allow increases in taxes. This initiative affects only those who earn \$150K or more, and large corporations (who are currently experiencing a drop in taxes from 35% to 21%).
  - It freezes property tax rates so they don't go down as home values go up.

- This initiative would get us close to national *average*.
- We know another recession is around the corner.
- This initiative would mean \$23.8 million for LPS.
- This is a graduated tax. 3% of families would see a tax increase that affects the most affluent, but they've gotten big tax cuts recently from the government.
- Colorado Superintendents' Modernized (student-centric) School Finance Formula
- Looking ahead to the future
  - Projected skills needed coming out of high school are changing quickly. Creativity and complex problem solving will be high on the list.
  - LPS will build an Innovation Center on the property across the street from Littleton High School. We are purchasing the property now. There is a lease agreement for the property for two more years. We anticipate opening it in the Fall of 2021. Programs will include health sciences, robotics, STEM, tech, drafting, tiny home construction.
- Facility renovations
  - Another challenge we have is wheelchair access.
  - Newton is not salvageable. Engineers say they can't salvage the slanting floors. Newton isn't unsafe, just unfixable.
  - There are challenges with athletic fields and gyms. They were all built before Title 9. Fields are overused.
  - Newton needs to be rebuilt. The old school will be kept going while the new one is being built. Then they will open at the new school while tearing down the old school.
  - Schools are now being built with multiple levels (not single level like our elementary schools are now) that take up less space.
  - If the bond doesn't go through, they will continue to fund only maintenance of the facilities. Safety and security will be top priority.
- What would we do differently with all this money
  - Full day kindergarten
  - Tech and trade classes and resources offered in high school as an alternative to college. Trades will look different in the future, and will incorporate new technologies (e.g., drones, robotics, 3D printers, self-driving cars), better engineering opportunities
  - Lower class size
  - Adding mental health resources
  - Consider universal preschool

### **Laura Mutton - Great Schools Thriving Communities**

- In addition to Initiative 92, a new bond is being proposed.
  - \$300 million bond over 25 years
  - \$40 a year for every \$100K of home value
  - Capital needs could be addressed by a combination of bond, capital reserve, and/or grant funding.
  - Laura passed out petition forms to those interested in collecting signatures.

### **Principal's Report – Mr. O'Trempa**

- CMAS will start right after Spring Break. The number of students choosing to opt out has gone way down.

- End of year field trips are being planned
- 8<sup>th</sup> grader continuation info will be sent out mid-April – May 24<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm – parents will get invitations in April.
- The planned walk-out on March 14<sup>th</sup> went smoothly. Approximately 125 - 150 kids participated. Students were respectful, quiet, orderly and efficient. It was held in the courtyard to provide a safe place.

### **President's Report – Amy Leach**

- There are several open PTO positions for next year. If you know someone who might be interested, e-mail Amy so she can reach out.
  - PTO President
  - PTO Vice President
  - Community Knights (restaurant nights) coordinator
  - Fundraising would like another person
  - Staff Appreciation person
  - Run With The Knights coordinator
  - Community Relations coordinator
- The annual Shred-a-thon will take place on April 14<sup>th</sup> between 9am and 1pm. Volunteers will be needed. It will be held in the back parking lot. A donation is suggested.
- PPC Meeting Update
  - Climate survey
    - District side results of the climate survey were discussed.
    - Suggest that Brian Wyckhuysen go over Newton's results at a future meeting.
    - Only 2% of high school parents responded
    - Generally favorable reports

### **Treasurer's Report – Melissa Smith, CPA**

- No report

### **Committee Reports**

- **Fundraising** – Fund Drive - Lisa Zook, Kim Caster
  - No update
- **Community Knights** – Mary Holmes
  - We received \$560 from Qdoba and \$320 from Noodles
  - Last community night will be April 10<sup>th</sup> – Chick-Fil-A (10% donation) – 5:00 -7:00 pm
- **VIPS**
  - No update
- **Hospitality Committee** – Peggy McCall, Charlotte Brady
  - No update
- **Staff Appreciation** – Desiree Garcia and Lisanna Parkhurst
  - No update

- **Backpack Program** – Erin Miller
  - Received a donation of Girl Scout cookies (60 boxes) – gave half to front office to use at their discretion.
  - Inconsistent use of ours – 3 one week, none the next
  - She will take some of the food to Field Elementary before it expires
- **Community Relations** – Vicki Mobus
  - For the LPS fundraiser on April 14<sup>th</sup>, Newton’s donation basket will come from Great Harvest.
- **PBIS Parent Representative** – Missy Crew
  - No update
- **District Accountability Committee Representative** – Heather Mantel
  - 62 languages are spoken in our district. 20% of the students are ESL.
  - Friday, March 23rd at 7:30 a.m., you can have breakfast with your representative. Your representative will see your face and hear your concerns. It will finish by 8:30 a.m.
- **Teacher Grants** – Nicole Spiers
  - 3 grants totaling \$1,400 were given out – PE speaker \$300, writers workshop \$600, Wellness room \$500
- **Joint Parent Teacher Organization (JPTO) Scholarship** – Lisa Svede
  - Each school donates money toward the scholarship. Newton donated \$300.
  - Reviewed 20-25 applications, none from Newton. On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, they will allocate money toward requests, based on ranking. Teachers must use it within a year.
- **Run with the Knights** – Christine Sweetland & Peter Blake
  - Christine is looking for a 6 grade parent to shadow and take over the coordinator job. Please contact her if you are interested.
  - This event will happen in the Spring, the last Tuesday of the school year.
  - This event has been going on for 20+ years and is a great end of year event for Newton
  - PTO will fund \$600 for gift cards for prizes.
  - Boulder Running Company gives gift cards, and PTO will boost the amount on those.
  - A DJ will be at the event.
  - There are 7-8 sponsors, including Boulder Running Company, Sam’s Club, Great Harvest, Yogurt Shack, Snooze, Chick-fil-a, and Natural Grocers.
  - Dinger – Rockies mascot – will be coming this year for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade race.

### **Other Business**

- On Thursday April 5<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 – 4:00 pm, there will be a Run for Fundz for Alex Hood, a Newton 8<sup>th</sup> grader, who will be in the hospital receiving treatments for several months. Ms. Petrelli is organizing this event.
- The next PTO meeting will take place on April 17, 2018 at 9:30 a.m.
- Meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Therese Revitte, Co-Secretary