

Port Townsend School District No. 50

Learning Through a Sense of Place



Superintendent Polm's Newsletter - Vol. 19-20, No. 17, May 22, 2020



Spring is here!

Like many of us in Port Townsend, we have a family of deer who seem to find solace in our backyard. They find several of our garden plants tasty, and they seem to be comfortable sharing their newborns with us. Pictured at left are the newest to join the PT herd.

Board Meeting ~ May 21, 2020

The Board of Directors met on Thursday, May 21 for a regular business meeting. It was a virtual Zoom meeting (again) that began at 5:30 pm and ended at about 8:45 pm. Thanks to Katy Gaffney for all her work setting the meeting up and ensuring we meet all the Open Meeting Act rules during the emergency.

The meeting was attended by about 30 people. There were some people who made public comments regarding OCEAN as well as an extensive consent agenda that included personnel actions, surplus, student/parent handbooks, meal prices, and school calendars. Reports included Wellness and Physical Education, Weed Treatment on fields, and OCEAN. Additional information on the Continuing Learning Plan, scenarios for 20-21 school opening, and the emergency closure waiver to OSPI.

The Board normally meets on the first and third Thursday of each month for their regularly scheduled study sessions and business meetings. Further, the Board at times holds special meetings on particular topics. For more information, please see: http://ptschools.org/board_supt. Also, the Board uses BoardDocs for meeting management. The website is: <https://go.boarddocs.com/wa/ptsd/Board.nsf/Public>.

High School Graduation ~ Carrie Ehrhardt

Graduation planning is in full swing at the high school. While we are unable to give the seniors the graduation that they deserve, we have worked to put together a fun program celebrating the seniors.... it should be a memorable experience.

Our new graduation date is Friday, June 12. Unfortunately, due to space limitations, we have to restrict the event at the Wheel In Drive In Theatre to the seniors and their families (limited to one car of immediate family members, including the graduating senior), along with school staff and school board members who are supporting the event. All adults working the event will be in face masks (school colors of course) and gloves. And we will be sanitizing our hands and surfaces as needed throughout the event.

Graduate Serpentine! Cars will be checking in at Blue Heron and lining up starting at 4:00 pm. The serpentine will move through a designated route through town, starting at approximately

4:45 pm. Folks are encouraged to make signs and be along the route to cheer on the seniors as they pass by. Please make sure to practice recommended social distancing to keep yourself and those around you safe and healthy. Our local KPTZ radio station will be providing serpentine music for the event. The serpentine will be led out of town towards the Wheel In Drive In Theatre. Thank you to our SRO Jeremy Vergin and the Port Townsend Police Department for supporting this event.

Graduation at the Wheel In! This will be a modified ceremony to recognize the Class of 2020! Student speakers will be allowed to exit their vehicle, one at a time, and come up onto the stage to give their speech to the audience. Diploma covers will be distributed to students in their vehicles, as the names of our graduates are being read.

Senior Celebration Video! Log onto the high school website at 8:00 pm on June 12 to find the link to a special video honoring the PTHS Class of 2020.

Professional Learning ~ Sarah Rubenstein

Teachers are engaging in weekly professional learning on Distance Learning. All classroom teachers are using google classroom or seesaw, and have implemented weekly playlists for distance learning. Teachers are learning practices from AESD's Reimagine WA ED with Jeff Utech and Modern Teacher. Teachers will continue to engage in professional learning for the rest of the school year that will support us as we transition to distance or blended learning for next year.

Highly Capable~ Sarah Rubenstein

Highly Capable evaluation for services will be delayed until the fall when in person assessments can be completed. Services for newly identified students will begin as soon as the identification process is completed.

Community Outreach~ Sarah Rubenstein

The Connected Students Initiative is supporting getting students home internet connections. Thanks to the support and partnership of the Port Townsend Education Foundation, and the support from the Jefferson Community Foundation COVID-19 Emergency fund. This initiative will continue into next school year to ensure continued home internet connections.

Reopening of School in Fall ~ from OSPI and From John

Throughout the spring 2020 school facility closures due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has kept compassion, communication, and common sense at the center of the work. Partnership with the Governor's Office and the Department of Health is an ongoing element of the state planning process. Several weeks of experience through remote continuous learning has given a starting point from which to build an even stronger educational program for the 2020–21 school year.

Now, school districts must plan for a non-traditional start to the school year and should be prepared to pivot to a more robust continuous learning model as needed based on county and

state health guidance. There are some examples of return scenarios from schools in other countries. A short article in Edutopia is at this [link](#) if you are interested.

Planning of this type engages many stakeholders and experts and led to the creation of the Reopening Washington Schools 2020–21 Workgroup. The Workgroup includes over 120 members, representative of the diversity of our state, who share expertise and knowledge from the following perspectives:

- Teachers, education support professionals, school support staff, school principals, and district administrators
- Appointed statutory advisory groups
- Community-based organizations
- Education partners
- Elected officials

On May 13, the Workgroup provided feedback on several potential models for reopening our schools in the fall. Several smaller groups of technical experts will build upon the Workgroup's reactions and feedback to shape the tools OSPI will publish for school districts by mid-June.

The Port Townsend School District has formed a steering committee and subcommittees to engage in discussion on considerations for this non-traditional start. We understand that OSPI may provide guidance in June, but we need to get a start (put our collective thinking caps on). The guiding question: *How will Port Townsend School District ensure student learning and student/staff health and safety for 2020–21?* The groups will explore probable scenarios that have direct implications regarding Wellness, Facilities, Technology, Instruction, and Operations. There is no recipe for this process yet, but this framework should serve to structure discussion and help the district be prepared to tackle the reality determined by OSPI as well as state and local Departments of Health. The steering committee (Management Team plus additional staff) will meet on May 26 with this larger group of district leaders, Public Health officials and Emergency Management. Anyone interested in reviewing the examples shared as potential scenarios, please see: [Continuum of Options](#). The list is not exhaustive. Further, we do not know if OPSI will be providing required guidance, or recommendations.

Please continue to be patient and keep in mind that no one has ever gone through a pandemic like we are today. There have been numerous needs for pivoting, and I suspect we will need to be very flexible as we forge on. I am confident in the PT team and community, and absolutely sure that PT will emerge with a quality educational system in the fall.

Information Regarding Access to Schools ~ Repeat

To keep students and staff healthy and safe, we will not be allowing staff or students in the buildings to retrieve *non-essential* items at this time. We will wait for the stay home order to end, or we will create another option as we get closer to the end of the school year. However, some teachers or staff may need *essential* items from the school now.

Our direction remains the same, staff members, who are not working in childcare or food service, need principal permission and a specific time frame, to enter the building. The district must maintain health checks at Salish, and sign-in and out sheets at each school. We have directed non-essential staff to stay home. However, teachers and some classified staff may need to retrieve teaching materials or tools to deliver instructional resources to students. In that

event, please work with the building principal. There are ways to maintain the Governor's orders and still maintain needed safety guidelines.

Please remember physical distancing of at least six feet is required and a face covering is needed when in proximity to others within the buildings. Wash hands before and after entering, and also avoid touching surfaces where possible. The principal will work with staff and ensure custodial staff is aware of any additional areas that may need sanitizing. Of course, no one should be in the buildings if ill.

Child Nutrition

The child nutrition program is still going well and growing in the number of meals served. To date we have served 23,026 meals. Thanks to all the Food Service, bus drivers and EAs for helping get the healthy meals out to families. Chicken Teriyaki with brown rice, Chicken Gyro with homemade Tazaki sauce, hummus and sloppy joes are just some of the meals we are serving.

Childcare Program

The district plans for childcare service to end on June 17, 2020. The YMCA is working on plans to offer summer childcare. The district is not in a position to continue to provide this service as our employees are finished working for the year on June 19, 2020.

Port Townsend School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, immigration status, national origin, age, honorably-discharged veteran or military status, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, marital status, the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. The district provides equal access to school facilities to the Boy Scouts of America and all other designated youth groups listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society. The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination:

Laurie McGinnis, Title IX

Shelby MacMeekin, 504 Coordinator & ADA Compliance

Amy Khile, Civil Rights Compliance