

Portola High School School Site Council

Meeting

December 4, 2024

4:08 pm - 4:54 pm

Minutes

Attendance: Caryn Cherry, Nancy Wang, Christina Pa, Shari Markowitz, Samantha Gardner, John Pehrson, Jen Ochsner, Amanda Cramer, Nami Motwani, Cali Smith, Jake Wang (alternate)

- I. Principal's Youth Advisory Committee Focus - John
 - a. The Youth Advisory Committee is kind of a sounding board for learners and they have talked about things such as belonging, and academic honesty. They meet quarterly and are invited to be a part of WASC. They have talked about Portola's founding principles document that was finalized by staff last year and gave feedback about whether what's listed on the principles document is being experienced a little, or a lot. They are going into risk taking first.
 - i. Risk Taking: 18% regularly, 54% a little bit,
 - ii. The rest avg: 51.3% regularly, 35.1% a little bit
- II. Attendance During Final Exams - Jen
 - a. Learners have not been coming to school on finals days, if they don't have a final. The school is looking at ways to prevent this. "U" means the teacher does not need to let a student make-up their work. They want to help families understand their importance in shifting this culture.
 - b. The library can look at ways to add value to the days that students are here before a break, when they don't have a final. For example, by offering an engaging Innovation Lab activity.
 - c. There was discussion about a potential campaign about why attendance is important.
 - d. Maybe updates to the website can be added to improve navigability surrounding this subject.
 - e. A parent suggested emphasizing to families what their learner will be missing on the days they don't attend and how their grade will be impacted.
 - f. Teachers shared a thought around making some group work on those days where it's hard to not be there.
 - g. There was thinking to simply send a learner to go see their Assistant Principal, if they're thinking of missing finals so they can talk about their absence's potential impact. There was discussion about how to communicate this to families.
- III. [New Construction Update](#) - John
 - a. The second story of the new building should be completed within the first semester of the 2025-26 school year. The plan was for it to be completed by August, but it will probably just be the bottom floor completed at that time. In response, there may be some temporary portables located in the VAPA parking lot until the building is fully open. Hopefully it won't resort to that. The new building will be labeled as the 1700 building, and orders for

furniture are currently being placed for it. The cement surrounding the building will have seating and umbrellas added.

- b. Softball fields released and grass good to play on.

IV. Student Data- [SBAC by Ethnicity](#) (22-23 vs 23-24) - John

- a. Juniors take SBAC tests. Looking at the data from last year to two years ago isn't too significant. Science improved, though, and they think it may be due to some small scheduling and location changes. For example, they gave the test in different classrooms than in years prior, and on a minimum day. The teachers explained the importance of the tests to the learners before they were given, and there was some rearranging of curriculum. So from this, it looks like marketing matters...that adults need to be sure to talk about the importance of testing with learners, especially.

V. New Courses Process/Proposals - Jen & John

- a. Portola is about a month into the New Course proposal process. They are starting with site interest, where if a teacher wants to teach a course and proposes it to site leadership, they can then communicate to the district about what they want. Next, district committees would look at it (like about whether it will be an honors course, and that it's aligned with state standards, etc.). Then it would be marketed to families and learners during course selection. The school can highlight its new course options, which are typically elective options. Ethnic studies will eventually become required. The school needs about 30 learners to take a course. Social Studies already has about five new proposed electives.
 - i. The Library will need to be aware of these changes since it could affect semester textbook collection/exchange.
 - ii. Social studies electives may include Sports Psychology, Ancient World History, Asian American Studies, Sustainable Economics, and Ethnic Studies.
 - iii. The Engineering pathway of classes may include Digital Electronics, and Engineering Design & Development.
 - iv. New Pharmacy Technician program
 - 1. John - Portola received a grant from the state to go toward a pharmacy Technician program. It will be a three year program starting sophomore year. It will go over Chemistry (but with a different lens than the other Chemistry classes), and then include two courses after that. The culminating class will be a type of internship. Learners have to sign up for it, PHS will be adding one course at a time, and it will be taught by Mr. Quinteros.

VI. Calendar for Year

- a. See everyone in March and start to look at SPSA.
- b. Meetings planned: 3/5, 5/21

VII. Other topics to be covered at future meetings:

- a. LCAP Process (Timeline) LCAP Overview
 - b. SSPSA process and approval
 - c. Survey Information
 - d. Summer programs
 - e. WASC Progress
- and more....