

# CHAMPLAIN PTO

## Champlain PTO Meeting Minutes Feb. 13, 2020

**Attendees:** Jessica Blackman, Erica Houskeeper, Paul Shepherd, Katlyn Morris, Vanessa Berman, Kerrie Mathis, Rebecca Grannis, Mike Fisher, Joe Resteghini, Ken Allen

### **Role of the PTO**

The PTO discussed its role at Champlain, and how it should address school policy issues raised by parents. Examples brought to PTO President Jessica Blackman include an exploration of discontinuing chocolate milk in the cafeteria and a suggestion to provide a designated space for nursing mothers.

While these ideas may have merit, the PTO is primarily a fundraising organization and does not set policy for Champlain. If you have an issue you would like the PTO to fund or otherwise support, please come to a PTO meeting or partner with a teacher or Principal Resteghini. If attendance at a PTO meeting is difficult, please connect with a board member. Such requests will be shared with the entire board (so we can best share resources, histories, contacts, etc.)

### **Principal's Report**

Run Hide Fight: Principal Joe Resteghini put together a report regarding language that is shared with students about lockdown drills and safety drills at the school. Joe asked teachers to provide examples of what they say to students during a drill (which can be found in the [Principal's Report on the Champlain PTO website](#)). Joe said Champlain hosts these drills with the support of resource officers from the Burlington Police Department, who are trained and skillful in their work with the families, and specifically with kids.

Parent Ken Allen and PTO member Vanessa Berman brought up whether the drills and lockdowns cause more harm than good as they likely create stress for students with anxiety and trauma histories.

School Board member Mike Fischer suggested that [Run, Hide, Fight](#)—which is mandated by the state—be further addressed at the district (BSD) level.

### **Fiscal Year 2021 Budget**

School board member Mike Fischer provided an update about the proposed school budget of \$91.5 million budget, which is an increase of 3.18 percent over the FY 2020 budget. The tax impact estimates include a 7.36 percent increase for property taxpayers and 3.18 percent for income payers. A [budget overview](#) and [property tax formula info sheet](#) can be found on the Champlain PTO website.

### **Superintendent Search**

The Burlington Superintendent search is ongoing. Applications closed Feb. 6, and the board will interview candidates in early March. A hiring announcement is expected mid-March. A [one-pager about the Superintendent Search](#) can be found on the Champlain PTO website.

### **Education Funding**

Mike Fischer noted that the Legislative Education Committee will be reviewing [student weighting report](#), and Burlington school board members will be ready to testify.

What is student weighting? Vermont voters decide locally how much their schools will spend when they pass or vote down the budget drafted by their school board. Still, nearly all funds come from the state's education fund. To control costs, the state calculates local property taxes based on how much a district spends per pupil, based on a weighted formula that is intended to account for the fact that certain types of students cost more to teach. However, the state's current weighting system for poor students and English-language-learners is more than two decades old.

### **Other business**

- The PTO received \$2,400 in grant applications from teachers for the current grant round
- Trivia Night is scheduled for March 19 at Arts Riot.
- The PTO will send a reminder to Joe Resteghini over the summer so teachers know about grant funds available in the fall.
- Transportation/parking lot discussion was tabled until the next meeting.
- The next PTO meeting is March 12 at 7:30 a.m. in the CES Art Room.