

NORTHPOINT VISIT REPORT

by Art Gorski, 4/22/2010

Allen, Roger, and Art visited [Northpoint Academy](#) on 4-22-10 to assess the possibility of holding PMUG meetings and SIGs at this location. We met with Geneva Saint-Amour, the Director, and were given a tour by one of the students. Northpoint is a college prep high school based on the Expeditionary Learning model, and has intelligent and motivated students. All students are issued a MacBook.

Northpoint is currently a PUSD school, but they are leaving the district and becoming a charter school next year. They will continue to lease the facility from PUSD, but may move in the future, although they like this location for a number of reasons.

Speaking of which, Northpoint is located a couple of blocks west of North Montezuma, not far from downtown Prescott.

Northpoint Expeditionary Learning Academy
551 First Street Prescott, AZ 86301
928-717-3272



Facilities

There are a large number of classrooms available, but most are organized in a manner that would require significant rearrangement of chairs and tables and are probably not large enough.

For our main meeting, there is a large cafeteria with a raised stage and pull-down screen that can act as an auditorium. This would accommodate at least 150 people. There are no windows so the room can be darkened. We would have to provide our own projector and extension cords for the projector and computer for presentations. There is no problem with providing refreshments in this room. Parking is behind the school directly adjacent to the cafeteria, and there is direct access from the parking lot straight into the room. No disability access issues. For a Saturday meeting, when no one from the school is present, someone would have to come by during the week and check out the keys to the building and parking lot gates. Perhaps, in the future, we can keep a set of keys checked out. The school office is open year round. By arrangement they can always get keys to us.

For our Friday SIGs, there is a large conference room with 3 large tables and a number of chairs and a screen. Again, we would have to provide our own projector and extension cords. Parking would be

directly in front of the building with easy access straight through the front door of the school and down a short hallway. Next school year, when they become a charter school, they will be switching to a four day school week, with staff, not students, present on Fridays. This means the building will be open and not require key access for a Friday SIG.

There is one restroom in the large cafeteria. There are separate restrooms near the smaller meeting rooms.

Restrictions

- Wifi is available throughout the facility, with no password required. However, all inappropriate websites, including social networking sites, are blocked from access. This probably includes our Blog newsletter. However, if we need access to a specific website, we can arrange in advance and Northpoint will adjust their network settings to accommodate us. Therefore, we would have to ask speakers what websites they wish to access during their presentation, and arrange for any necessary permissions.
- No smoking is allowed anywhere on the property. This includes smoking in cars in the parking lot or on the street in front of the building.
- No firearms.

Cost and Availability

There would be no charge to use the facility as long as we provide some kind of support to the school. We have already indicated that we would be happy to welcome students, faculty, and staff to our meeting and SIGs without requiring a membership fee. We were told that some of the students have done amazing things with their Macs, and we could occasionally call on them for demonstrations and presentations, which would be a good opportunity for the students to practice presentation skills. We could also provide specific one-on-one help for student projects involving the Mac if called upon.

There doesn't seem to be any problem in scheduling the facility as there is with the Prescott Public Library.

Conclusions

We were impressed with how accommodating and welcoming Geneva was to our request. We feel that the facilities are more than adequate for our needs, and that the restrictions are not too burdensome. We feel that the opportunity to work with young, high energy students is a win-win for both PMUG and Northpoint. It would be nice to have some younger folks around! For a main meeting, we will have to provide detailed directions on where to park, as it is a little obscure. Perhaps we would need to put out a temporary PMUG meeting sign on the street.

