



## PLYMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CENTRAL OFFICE

27 NORTH HARWINTON AVENUE

TERRYVILLE, CONNECTICUT 06786

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Plymouth Public Schools is to challenge, inspire, and prepare all students for success in an ever-changing and complex world.

### PLYMOUTH BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING

### VIRTUAL MEETING – AUDIO ONLY

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2020

7:00 P.M.

### MINUTES

Present: Mr. Seaman, Mrs. Kulesa, Mr. Showers, Mrs. Johnson, Mr. Foote, Mr. Elsaghir,  
Mrs. Kremmel and Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani

Absent: Mrs. Lucian

Also Present: Mrs. Turner, Interim Superintendent, Mrs. Mozak-Pezza, Director of Curriculum & Instruction,  
Ms. Aronheim, Director of Pupil Personnel & Special Education Services, Mr. Tencza, Business  
Manager and Mr. Trudeau, Director of Technology

1. **Call to Order & Pledge to the Flag**

Mr. Seaman called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. The group joined in the Pledge to the Flag.

2. **Adoption of the Agenda**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion Mr. Showers,  
second Mrs. Kremmel, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion passes.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 11,  
2020.

Motion Mr. Showers, second Mrs. Kremel, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions,  
Mr. Foote abstains, motion passes.

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the minutes of the AD HOC Subcommittee Meeting of November 11, 2020.

Motion Mr. Showers, second Mrs. Johnson, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion passes.

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Board Meeting of November 19, 2020.

Motion Mr. Foote, second Mr. Showers, any discussion all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, Mrs. Johnson abstains, motion passes.

4. **Superintendent's Update - Mrs. Turner, Interim Superintendent**

- \* Building and Department Budget Requests have begun with the Administrators
- \* Superintendent's Budget Presentation to the Board at the regular meeting on January 13, 2021
  - \* Budget Workshops      January 20, 2020  
   January 27 (if needed)
  - \* Board's vote on Proposed Budget at the regular meeting on February 10, 2021

\* Weather Related Closures – The State Department of Education has allowed districts to use snow days as remote learning days. The guidance from the State Department of Education is it prefers districts make the decision to use a snow day as a remote learning day the night before in order to allow time for appropriate planning for both staff and parents. This would be the Superintendent's recommendation.

Note: However, if there are wide spread power outages, Plymouth will use this as a regular snow day. But, if there were to be a snow day on a Wednesday, (in school learning day) there would be changes in the schedule which would be communicated to parents later in the week. Messages will go out either the night before, if this is known ahead of time or that morning, if the district were to have a regular snow day. It would be helpful to use a snow day as a remote learning day, if possible, if there were enough notice the night before.

\* Remote Learning – Last week the district was in remote learning after the Thanksgiving Holiday. Feedback from staff and parents was positive. Synchronous Model was more interactive to students. The Superintendent thanked the Technology Team and Administrators.

The number of full remote learners is 250 across the district. This figure has been consistent.

\* Covid Update – Data: Between November 22 – December 9 there have been a total of 102 students and staff who have tested either positive or in quarantine or have been contact traced. The Superintendent thanked Mrs. Giannini, Nurse Coordinator and the other nurses for their help during this time.

Mrs. Mozak-Pezza - Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Curriculum review for the Math Curriculum – This process was put on hold due to Covid. Elementary textbooks were due to age out at the end of this year. Piloting a textbook now is going to be extremely difficult due to limited time and a textbook pilot requires time in order to make a good decision. Therefore, it has been decided to extend the current contract that the district has for the Math textbooks through the end of next year. This means the district will not be making a \$100,000 textbook purchase in the next budget year. It will defer out to the year after that and will help because we are also in difficult economic times. We have gathered up some of the unexpended funds in a few of the accounts and used that money to put together a contract with Houghton-Mifflin which will extend the contract for additional copies of Math books for K – 5 through the end of June, 2022.

Mr. Seaman – What grade level is that?

Mrs. Mozak-Pezza – It's going to cover grades K – 5. The middle school textbook is scheduled to age out the year after the purchase of the elementary textbooks. Elementary and middle school will not age out in the same fiscal year. Elementary will go one year before the middle school. There was a two-year gap but with the extension it will be back to back.

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani – How much did it cost for the one-year extension.

Mrs. Mozak-Pezza – About one-fifth of the original amount which was \$100,000 which is \$20,000.

5. **Student Representatives**

\* Tyler Mendela – December – Student Council Door Decorating Contest for the high school students and staff. Theme: Winter. Everyone was asked to display a message of kindness. Submissions due December 18. The winner from each grade will be announced on December 23<sup>rd</sup>.

\* Lilyana Ricardo – Bus Fundraiser in memory of Maddie Bell – consisted of clothes and food. The food collected will be donated to the local food pantry. (3,000 pounds of food which equated to about \$5,100). A donation of \$500 will also be given to the food pantry. The clothing will be donated to the Orphan Grain Train. The clubs involved in the Bus Fundraiser were: Student Council, PEP Club, FBLA, National Honor Society and the Leo Club.

Mr. Seaman – Comment – Most of the time out of tragedy comes a good thing. With the Bus Fundraiser, the student and faculty sent that message home.

\* Gena Buckley – The transition to remote learning went smooth. The schedule was easy to adapt to. Although teachers and classmates are missed in person, everyone is grateful for all of the hard work.

6. **Public Comment** (limited to 3-minutes per speaker)

None

7. **New Business**

A. Proposed Change in Plymouth Public Schools Calendar for the 2020 – 2021 School Year

MOTION: To entertain a motion to make the following changes to the Plymouth Public Schools Calendar for the 2020- 2021 School Year:

- a. to change Thursday, January 28, 2021 from an early release day to a full day of school for students.
- b. to change Wednesday, January 27, 2021 from a full day to an early release day for students with Professional Development Day for teachers in the afternoon.

Motion: Mr. Foote, second Mr. Showers, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion passes.

8. **Board Member/Committee Reports**

A. Finance/Operations - Matthew Tencza, School Business Manager

- Review of the following: Accounts by Facilities Report for the month of November 2020; The Cumulative Total Board of Education Budget percentage by Month (2017 – 18; 2018 – 19; 2019 – 20 and 2020 – 2021; and Board of Education Budget Summary November 2020.

We have spent through November 30<sup>th</sup> about 38.2% of the budget. A question was asked at the last meeting, how is this related to previous years? The bar graph the board members were given shows we are tracking right along as in previous years. Things are progressing as if almost normal.

The other item in the packet was the Board of Education Budget Summary November 2020. Two items are showing a negative balance: Health Services and System Wide Technology. No concern as grant money will offset these negative amounts.

- The Accounts by Facilities Report will be forwarded to the Town of Plymouth Board of Finance.
- Personnel Report – Mrs. Turner, Interim Superintendent  
No Questions

9. **Public Comment** (limited to 3-minutes per speaker)

None

10. **Board Liaison Reports**

Mr. Seaman -- Harry S. Fisher Elementary School  
No Report

Mr. Elsaghir -- Plymouth Center School  
Spirit Wear Event went exceptionally well under the circumstances.  
Upcoming Events – monthly membership meeting  
Other events are being explored

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani -- Eli Terry Jr. Middle School  
Calendar Fundraiser – Tickets on sale - \$5.00 each – 31 days of giveaways in January. (Amazon gift cards, lottery baskets, gift cards to local businesses, i.e. pizza shops. Every item is worth between \$25 - \$50. Thank you to all the parents who help to get donations, the businesses that donated and to all who purchased tickets.

Next Meeting: December 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7 p.m. and will be virtual.

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani -- Booster Club  
Calendar Giveaway is happening now. Good fundraiser.  
Hoping for a Car Wash in the spring.  
No January Meeting  
If you are a member of the Booster Club and have a son/daughter at Terryville High School, he/she is eligible to apply for a scholarship.

Mrs. Kulesa -- Terryville High School  
No Report

Mr. Foote -- SEPTA  
No Report

Mrs. Kremmel -- CABE  
CABE is having a series of workshops in January.  
Topics Include: Re-engaging Students for Equitable Learning  
Promoting Stability around the Board Table and Beyond  
Relationships Matter

Mrs. Johnson -- EdAdvance  
No Report

Mr. Showers -- District Safety Committee  
No Report

11. **Board Comments**

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani - Comment: Nice to see how the community all pulled together for the Bus Fundraiser. Supporting one another and the services that were put forth in the school system. Home schooling has been difficult for parents, school trying to figure ways to keep individuals engaged with fundraisers and still be able to have money at the end of the year for any type of: sports awards program; ceremonies, graduation, etc. If anyone has any ideas of suggestions that they know of from other communities, please reach out to us.

Mr. Foote – Received a piece of mail in his board packet from a religious organization. Feels that religion has no place in public schools.

Mrs. Kremmel – Echoed Mr. Foote's comment. Totally agrees that religion does not belong in the school system and was not impressed by the piece of mail she received.

Mrs. Johnson – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

Mr. Showers – Received the same piece of mail, marked it return to sender, deceased. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

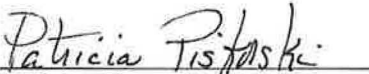
Mr. Seaman – This has not been an easy year for the Board, staff, students and parents. He commented how proud and amazed by the work that gets done and the dedication of Mrs. Turner, technology team, nurse Carol, all the nurses, the students and the parents. Hopes the end is in site. Concentrate on a Happy Holiday Season. The budget fun is about to begin.

12. **Next Board Meeting** –The next Regular Meeting of the Plymouth Board of Education is on Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 7 p.m. Time will tell if this meeting will be in person or virtual.

13. **Adjournment**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to adjourn at 7:27 p.m. Motion Mrs. Kremmel, second, Mr. Foote, all in favor, motion passes.

Respectfully Submitted

  
Patricia Piskorski  
Recording Secretary  
Plymouth Board of Education