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# Pelham PTAC Meeting of the Association

Thursday, December 1, 2022

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## ATTENDEES:

### Board:

Annemarie Garcia, President

Tiffany Herbert, Vice President

Melissa Labonte, Communications Chair

Allison Anderson, Community Engagement Co-Chair

Suzanne Snyder, Treasurer

Kristen Whalen, Secretary

### Members and Guests:

Dr. Cheryl Champ	Marjut Herzog	Joanne Colon
Traci Holtz	Lisa Horten	Stephanie Otero
Laura Caruso	Alex Wolff	Leah Tahbaz
David Sparano	Allison Frost	Suany Aquino
Kim Espinosa	Pilar Bartlett	
Silmara Sucena	Jennie Utsinger	

**TOTAL=22**

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## 8:49 AM - CALL To ORDER - Annemarie Garcia

We are going to give Dr. Champ a few minutes to join us, in the meantime we can take care of some PTA items.

### PTAC By-Laws Vote:

- ★ Change to By-Laws increasing Unit dues to \$1500.
- ★ Confirmed that a representative from each school unit and SEPTA were present, 6 and 1 = 7 reps
- ★ Pilar made a Motion to Vote
- ★ David Seconded the motion
- ★ Vote:
  - In Favor - 7
  - Against - 0
  - Abstentions: 0
  - Change to the By-Laws is approved

## 8:51 AM - Superintendent's Report - Dr. Champ:

- ★ Hoping that everyone had a great Thanksgiving!
- ★ Not a lot on the agenda
- ★ We are now in that Holiday window
  - Reminder that staff gifts are capped at \$75
- ★ Pelham SEPTA Talent Show is tomorrow in Alumni Hall
- ★ Black History Month
  - Internal conversations and planning
  - Next couple of weeks, more info to come
  - Authenticity and relevance are priorities
- ★ Past Monday night Community Project w/Parents
  - Many different perspectives
  - Parents from all age groups and schools
  - Found a lot of common ground
  - More in-person opportunities to workshop with community
  - Really meaningful conversions occurred
  - Data will be shared w/BoE
  - Alex Wolff putting together a video of students and staff perspectives on Excellence in Our Schools
  - Current Vision Statement
    - Crafted and established in 2000 by the late Dr. Wilson
    - Time to review and possibly update
    - However it is a testament that the Vision Statement has stood the test of time

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- Plans over the years have aligned with the statement
  - Work Session scheduled for next week, please join in
  - ★ Friends of Pelham Athletics (FoPA)
    - Group originally funded the turfing of Glover Field
    - FoPA will present a proposal for Board consideration at next meeting
    - Hopefully Board will pass a resolution to begin funding for renovation of existing athletics areas w/in the building, including but not limited to weight room, gyms, facilities, etc.
    - Communications on project to follow
  - ★ Worksession for Vision for High School
    - Currently scheduled for 1/4/23 but may be pushed back to later January BoE meeting in order to allow for time for people returning from break
    - Current vision is what has driven the APs, top college admissions, etc.
    - Time to review and possibly revise
  - ★ No progress on Hutchinson Playground unfortunately
    - Pricing from contractors
    - Continuing to push from Facilities committee
  - ★ RFP for Master Planning Services for Playgrounds has gone unanswered.
    - Now can go to any contractor to consider a bid
    - Possibly going to be same company as at Hutch
    - Will start working with PTA Units about renovations
    - Consider Juliannes
    - Planning for district will begin this year
    - Work would not begin until July 1 contingent on becoming part of the new budget and said budget passes vote.
  - ★ Covid Safety Reminder
    - During Holiday break please use caution
    - Upon return, masking is welcome and is not judged
    - Still expecting anyone experiencing symptoms to stay home and test.
    - District will continue monitoring trends locally and state wide
  - ★ Parent Teacher Conferences - New System
    - Upon scheduling, new system pulled room numbers from classes on Infinite Campus which is not where the teachers were located for conferences
      - Working on resolving issues and utilizing monitors to direct parents to the correct locations.
      - Some communications went out from some schools informing parents
    - Hybrid approach this year, allowing virtual and in-person appointments.

- Looking at extended time frames as 7 minutes obviously is not much time - this would severely limit availability though.

**Q: (Marjut) - Now that we are really back in the swing of things, if an individual tests positive but is asymptomatic, it's very frustrating for the student to be missing out. Can an online option be reinstated or just a listening function so they are not falling behind?**

**A: (Dr. Champ) - A student actually said this exact thing at the last meeting. Continue monitoring the situation and will be open to suggestions as the need arises.**

**Q: (Melissa Labonte/Tiffany Herbert) - Any update on the DEI Coordinator?**

**A: (Dr. C) - Posting internally again but also posting externally as a P/T Position. We are also checking back with the consultant company used previously, open to continue working with us on this search. We've had some recommendations from community members and BOCES. With that being said, the work itself continues on a daily basis. Climate Survey to be taken in High and Middle schools and work on the rubric continues.**

**C: (David Sparano) - Just found out and wanted to share that the lunch program has gluten free options on a daily basis. Students can request, through Admin, gluten free products, ie. hamburger roll, chicken tenders. MS/HS have such items labeled and listed ingredients.**

**R: (Dr. C) - Appreciate that. Covid took a big hit on sustainability and food services. We are reorienting and rebuilding this program. Wanda is the new Director of Food Services, having started last year. We continue to improve and look for suggestions and feedback, you can also touch base with Wanda directly.**

**Q: (Kristen Whalen) - Curious as to why the DEI position would be only P/T if hired externally.**

**A: (Dr. C) - The description and responsibilities of the role would only equate to a part time number of hours. If hiring internally, the role would allow for rescheduling or shifting current staff members' responsibilities to include the DEI coordination.**

**Q: (Marjut Herzog) - Can the district work with the town on standard signage/enforcement within the school zones and crossings? The**

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**speeding/dangerous driving that is occurring in these areas is very common at this point.**

**A: (Dr. C) - Agree and will pass this on to Mr. Hricay to act on.**

**Q: (Tiffany) - Does the Board get bias training?**

**A: (Dr. C) - Good question. They definitely receive other trainings but will look into if it is covered already. Definitely will explore further.**

**(Tiffany cont..) - If hiring a DEI Coordinator internally, how can an existing staff member go to P/T?**

**A: (Dr. C) - An existing teacher may drop a couple of classes or restructure in order to accommodate the responsibilities.**

**Q: (Lisa Horten) - Can we discuss the BMI Form that was sent? How does this work, what is this accomplishing? There is a lot of concern and questions on line, can we address?**

**A: (Dr. C) - State reporting requirements. Traci may be able to speak to this better than I.**

**(Traci Holtz) - The building Nurses are compiling this information. Survey varies every year. This year our district was selected. You can Opt-Out by filling out the form and sending it back to school. No personal info is given out, only stats. Will try and get more information for you.**

**Q: (Marjut) - How can we address the negative stereotypes of PTAs and increase participation, more men?**

**A: (Annemarie Garcia) - We can actually discuss this during the President's Report.**

**Q: (Suzanne Snyder) - High School is very beige! Maybe we can address this and make it more welcoming?**

**A: (Dr. C) - You are correct, the High School did receive a new coat of paint at the start of the year but beige is still beige. Mr. Hricay is looking at neighboring districts for aesthetic purposes.**

\*\*\*\*Back to Traci on BMI - The information is being compiled from last year's Health Assessment Forms that are already on file. No one is being called down to the office to be weighed or measured in any way.

No further questions at this time. Thanks to Dr. Champ

### 9:33 AM - President's Report- Annemarie Garcia:

- ★ Would like to discuss Marjut's concern at the next Unit meeting.
  - Definitely warrants a conversation
  - Comments made recently and historically about some PTAs
  - Marjut - the comments that were made make me sad, knowing all of you and knowing how hard we all are working to get participation.
  - Kim Espinosa - Try to highlight those who don't usually volunteer when they do participate. Create diversity and welcome creativity around cultural holidays and events - support representation and ownership of new ideas and directions
  - Silmara Sucena - adding to what Kim said, not everyone wants to raise Minuttetheir hand for one reason or another, however, at International Day people come out and participate and celebrate their cultures. It's such an amazing event when everyone comes together. Shows that you don't necessarily have to volunteer in order to participate and help make an event a success and build our community bonds.
  - Joanne Colon - SEPTA Talent Show is across the community and just wants participation and we facilitate in order to form and foster the relationships
    - Take a second to plug - need to start recruiting for a new board as our terms are coming to an end this year.
    - Suzanne - agree that we should collaborate on filling Board positions
  - Annemarie - NYS has some resources that I will look into. As to the stereotypes, words matter, leadership behaviors matter, welcoming new ideas.
    - Add to agenda for Unit Mtng
    - Need to schedule the meeting - I will send email

### Minutes - Annemarie:

- ★ Kristen having technical difficulty
- ★ Everyone has had a chance to review

- ★ Are there any edits, updates, or changes?
  - No
- ★ Annemarie asked for a Motion to Approve the November Minutes
- ★ David Sparano Moved to Approve
- ★ Tiffany Herbert Seconded the Motion
- ★ The Minutes are hereby approved

### Treasurer's Report - Suzanne Snyder:

- ★ First Dues payment was due in October
- ★ Let me know if you need help with the MTK update
- ★ LumaPay - you can hold off until end of year if needed
- ★ Once LumaPay is activated you must deactivate PayPal.
- ★ More seamless on front end for the user
- ★ MS and HS working really well

### 9:49 AM - BoE not in attendance

- ★ Melissa - surely we can get an alternate rep if Michael cannot make it or at least the update would be appreciated
- ★ Annemarie agreed, need a report

### Communications - Melissa Labonte:

- ★ Thanks again for continuing to distribute the announcements
- ★ Any wrinkles or ideas for improvements in system, please let me know

### Community Engagement - Allison Anderson:

- ★ Read-A-Thon : alignment moving forward well
- ★ "Leave Your Mark On Pelham"
  - Craft making Bookmarks
  - Will print off of made designs to give out
- ★ Potential problem with Author Visits.
  - Timing may not align with kickoff
  - Trying to schedule Sarah Hughes
  - Working with Librarian to purchase books by that author for the schools
- ★ Can we align on sustainability/outdoor classroom stewardship?
- ★ Talking with EcoPel ad Pelham Eliminates Plastic Discussion of Earth Day Projects
- ★ Teacher Professional Development Days

**Q: (Suany Aquino) - Are there any gardens at the schools? Are all schools working on outdoor classrooms?**

**A: Most of the schools either have or are working towards.**

**(Kristen) Hutch has just built the beds behind the school, more work being done soon and waiting on fruit trees for another area.**

## **9:56 AM - Community Organizations**

### **Pelham Together - Laura Caruso:**

- ★ Youth Council hopes that Project Happiness was successful
  - Would love feedback, comments, pics to share w/ the kids
- ★ Search continues for Director for Youth Mental Health Program
- ★ Youth Mental Health First Aid - collaborating with County Health Dept.
- ★ Free event at the Picture House
  - 12/13 @ 7PM
  - Break Free of Anxiety - Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions = SPACE
  - Yale Clinical Study Center - Q&A
- ★ Other Language speakers/communicators for new families
  - Via Civics and Pelham Together
  - Contact Aileen Dose, Rich Davidian, or Laura Caruso

### **Pelham Education Foundation (PEF) - Lisa Horten:**

- ★ Approved first 2 Grants
  - First for Upshur Bren Psychology presentation at Picture House as mentioned
  - Second for Suzuki Guitar Program for all elementaries for grades 3,4, and 5.

### **Junior League of Pelham (JLP) - Allison Frost:**

- ★ This past Tuesday night - Community Roundtable
  - Dr. Champ
  - PMHS Students - superstars
- ★ New Science Curriculum
  - Including expansion on environmental concerns
  - Elementary and MS - consider having students come to a Town Hall
- ★ JLP site
  - Highlight actions
  - Summaries/Photos



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- ★ JLP Reads at Library 12/14 and 1/4

### Not in Attendance:

- ★ Civics
- ★ Pelham Rec
- ★ Project Community

### Annemarie - Any Updates or Highlights?

- ★ Stephanie Otero - for SEPTA
  - Emphasize Pelham Has Talent
  - #inclusivetalentshow
  - Geared toward bringing community together all schools, parents, kids
  - PTA Leaders, please attend with your families and/or support and promote our kids!
  - Joanne - will send reminder emails monthly regarding uploads of any new memberships on your sites
    - Thanks to MS and HS - had a 27% increase in membership!

### No other business

### 10:9 AM - Meeting Adjourned