



PEMBROKE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, April 4, 2023
North Pembroke Elementary School Library

Call to Order

Mr. Kennedy called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

Present from Administration: Erin Obey, Superintendent; Marybeth Brust, Assistant Superintendent; Jessica DeLorenzo, Director of Student Services

Present from Committee: Lance Kennedy, Chair; Susie Scholl, Vice Chair; Susan Bollinger, Secretary; David Boyle and Michael Quinn

Public Comment

None

Acknowledge & Schedule Visitors

Mr. Kennedy welcomed the audience members.

Adjustments to Agenda

None

Communications

Mrs. Obey said the 5th and 6th-grade NPES Ambassadors Club would like to come to a school committee meeting.

Approval of Bill Schedule

Warrants were sent out electronically for signature.

Consideration for Approval: School Committee Meeting Minutes of March 21, 2023

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the school committee meeting minutes of March 21, 2023, as amended.

Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, David Boyle and Michael Quinn

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Superintendent's Report

Administrative Recommended Budget

Mrs. Obey reviewed the historical funding from 2011 through 2023 and said there have been very minimal increases in the Chapter 70 funding year over year. She mentioned that health insurance premiums and some pension liability

are funded on the Town side. The school budget is made up of the Town's contribution and the Chapter 70 funding and equals about 50% of the total Town budget.

Mrs. Obey said the FY21 PPS per pupil expenditure was \$16,435 compared to the State per pupil of \$17,943. Mrs. Scholl suggested sharing this data with the State representatives. Mr. Quinn confirmed the per pupil spending includes all students in the district and out-of-district placements. In district per pupil spending for PPS is \$15,658 and this number is made up of the salaries of administrators, instructional leaders, teachers and other teaching services as well as PD, materials, guidance and psych, pupil services, operations/maintenance and benefits/fixed costs. She pointed out the low PD number and said this is a result of the district utilizing grant opportunities. She explained that DESE establishes what districts are comparable to Pembroke. Administratively PPS is lean, with the Superintendent also being the Business Manager, no Guidance Director, and missing other positions that would be helpful to have. The district is not able to move forward at the pace it could if it had these additional positions. Mrs. Scholl confirmed the administration is lean so the funding can go toward the classrooms. Mrs. Obey said the district has an attractive teacher pay grid to attract and retain quality teachers. The district also has leveraged the Cares and ESSER funding for instructional materials and some capital items.

The FY24 MOE budget is \$38,601,903. The required additions of one special education para at PHS and increased BCBA/LABA contract hours equal \$46,000. The level 1 priority of one Titan/COMPASS para at PCMS for student support and continuity of services preK-12 equals \$30,000. This brings the budget total to \$38,677,903.

Adjustments include a retirement with a savings of \$25,000, the Transportation Revolving Account offset of \$115,000, and the SPED Tuition Pre-buy of \$500,000 brings the budget total down to \$38,037,903. The resulting budget gap is (\$1,422,903). Adding in the Chapter 70 estimate of \$30/student of \$77,970 and the Town contribution of \$907,030 leaves a budget gap of (\$437,903).

The exact Chapter 70 number will come out in July.

Fees are the only other revenue stream to be applied to the budget gap. Level 2 and 3 priorities were also reviewed to discuss what other funding options might be available. There is ESSER III funding for staff laptop and student device replacements. \$295,521 of these priorities are budget neutral and can be funded through grants, capital items, or eRate savings. After fees, the only way to balance the budget is through staff reductions.

The next steps include the continuation of fee discussion/budget balancing at the 4/11 meeting. A meeting with the Select Board on 4/19, a meeting with Town Advisory Board on 4/20, another school committee meeting on 4/25 for budget finalization if needed, the Public budget hearing on 5/2 and Town Meeting on 5/9.

Mrs. Bollinger said she appreciates all the work on this. Mr. Kennedy said the dialogue around the sustainability of future budgets needs to continue. Mrs. Scholl suggested adding the list of level 2 and 3 priorities to the information being sent to the State Representatives so they can see that what PPS has for a wish list is what other districts are already doing. Mrs. Bollinger said the district can't move forward if it only has the MOE budget to work with, there are many great ideas that can't be funded, so the committee has to advocate that the PPS budget is considered at the time the Select Board does the Town budget. Mr. Kennedy said the funds are not there so everyone has to come together as a community to work on solutions.

FY24 Fee Discussion

Transportation Fee:

Mrs. Obey said over the past 10 years the transportation fee has gone up by \$45 and the last increase was the 2020-2021 school year but with COVID the fee was prorated. Costs have increased much greater over the decade and PPS has the lowest rate of surrounding towns. Mrs. Obey said First Student is the only vendor that submitted a bid. PPS has a three-year contract with two one-year renewal options at the discretion of the district. It was decided to go out to bid during this second year and next school year the increase will be 6% which is better than the 9% it would've been if the district did not go out to bid. Mr. Boyle asked if routes can be combined for savings and Mrs. Obey said routes have been combined and there are three fewer buses now than four years ago. Also, it is a requirement to have a seat for every student that purchases a bus pass, even though they might not take the bus all the time. When designing routes the district is mindful of the length of time students are on the bus. She informed the committee that the district gets credits if there are problems resulting from vendor issues with combining routes. She added that there has not been an increase since 2020 so it makes sense to increase it as costs for everything have increased. An increase of \$25 would generate about \$18k. Mrs. Scholl suggested informing families of the difficulty of setting routes

and the importance of registering for a bus pass earlier. Mrs. Bollinger said she is against reinstating the elementary fee and Mrs. Obey said she does not suggest reinstating the elementary fee at this time, but it can be discussed in the future. Mr. Boyle suggested increasing the fee by \$30 which balances with the early pay discount of \$30.

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Michael Quinn, it was unanimously voted to approve a \$30 increase for both the individual and family cap for transportation.

Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, David Boyle and Michael Quinn
Voting No: none
Abstaining: none
Absent: none

Athletics Fee:

The district charges \$225 for a PHS sport with a family cap of \$385. PCMS is \$50 per season with a \$100 cap. There is a premium for football and hockey. Mrs. Obey said she doesn't think increasing the fee by \$25 or \$50 will deter families and she does not suggest a per-sport fee. Mr. Kennedy said participation in sports helps shape students and it creates friendships, so the committee should remember this as it considers fee increases. Mrs. Scholl said the district has an obligation to offer these opportunities, so she doesn't want to hinder participation. She added that PPS might not produce professional athletes, but it will produce professional people. Mrs. Bollinger said she agrees. Mrs. Obey added that this fee has only increased by \$25 in the past 10 years and the cost to run the sports program is up about 30% over this timeframe.

Mrs. Glennon asked if the district can establish a total family cap and Mrs. Obey said the school committee has had discussions about this, but the district is about a year away from that. She said she can track this year to see what families are paying to begin the process of having an informed conversation on a total family cap in the future.

VOTE: On a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve a \$50 increase for both individual and family cap, bringing the Athletics fee to \$275 for individual and \$435 family cap for the 2023-2024 school year.

Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, David Boyle and Michael Quinn
Voting No: none
Abstaining: none
Absent: none

Facilities Usage Fees:

Mrs. Obey said there are not many opportunities for usage because the district uses the facilities. The district does not charge non-profit youth and adult groups for usage, only charges Pembroke youth and adult for-profit and any other groups. The rate charged is based on custodial overtime. Mrs. Scholl asked if there will be a decrease in usage or custodial overtime once the new community center opens and Mrs. Obey said there is a possible overlap with basketball usage. Mrs. Obey said the most usage is seen at the auditoriums at PCMS and PHS. Mr. Kennedy confirmed the committee has no desire to change what groups are being charged or not.

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the increase in the custodial overtime rate to \$52/hour on Saturday and \$65/hour on Sunday.

Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, David Boyle and Michael Quinn
Voting No: none
Abstaining: none
Absent: none

Co-Curricular Fees:

Mrs. Obey said she is sharing Administration's thoughts on these fees.

This year there are seven clubs running with a volunteer advisor and there will be about five next year. The goal is to pay all club advisors. The creation of the \$25 club fee last year raised only \$5k. She doesn't think the committee should move forward with an increase at this time as the district does not want to hinder opportunities for students. The committee agreed with Mrs. Obey.

Parking Fee:

Mrs. Obey said the parking fee is currently \$50 per year and she doesn't suggest increasing it as it is around the norm and the committee agreed. She added that the Administration does not want students to have assigned spaces.

Preschool Fee:

Mrs. Obey said this fee is based on the Chapter 70 formula and she doesn't suggest increasing it at this time and the committee agreed. The fee was increased three years ago.

Consideration for First Read: PCMS Program of Studies

Mrs. Obey said this is a first read and that it will come back to the committee at the next meeting for questions. Mrs. Bollinger asked why *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is being removed from 8th grade English and Mrs. Obey said she will get clarification on that. Mr. Kennedy asked if the No Red Ink assessment program is new and Ms. Brust said it is not new, it is updated verbiage. Mrs. Obey said the shift in science aligns with the OpenSci Ed program.

VOTE: On a motion made by Susie Scholl and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to accept the PCMS Program of Studies for 2023-2024 as a first read.

Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, David Boyle and Michael Quinn

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Future Meeting Dates and Topics

4/11, 5/2

Mrs. Glennon asked for clarification on the Town warrant article regarding the vocational regional planning committee and Mrs. Obey confirmed that the committee is being established to explore joining South Shore Vocational Tech. Mrs. Obey said a sample makeup of the planning committee will have one member of the school committee, one member of the Selectboard, and staff from both SSVT and PPS.

VOTE: At 7:34 PM, on a motion made by Susie Scholl and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted, by roll call vote, to Executive Session Pursuant to Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy related to collective bargaining as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the legal position of the School Committee, as declared by the Chair.

Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, David Boyle and Michael Quinn

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

APPROVED: April 11, 2023

MOTIONS

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the school committee meeting minutes of March 21, 2023, as amended.

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Voting No: none
Abstaining: none
Absent: none

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Abstaining: none
Absent: none

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Voting No: none
Abstaining: none
Absent: none

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Voting No: none
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Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, David Boyle and Michael Quinn
Voting No: none
Abstaining: none
Absent: none