



PEMBROKE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, December 13, 2022
North Pembroke Elementary School Library

Call to Order

Mr. Kennedy called the meeting to order at 6:05 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; and David Boyle

Acknowledge & Schedule Visitors

Mr. Kennedy welcomed the audience members.

Representatives from Bob Rogers Travel to discuss Disney Trip

Ms. East and Ms. Chipman from Bob Rogers Travel joined via Zoom.

Mr. Boyle said the increase of \$580 in the price of the trip is disheartening. He wonders why the flights and hotel prices were not locked in. He said parents have approached him about the price concern and he is looking for answers. Ms. East said the price of flights and the number of students participating in the trip was less than anticipated so this increased the shared fixed cost of the tour. The hotel rate and Disney ticket were locked in during spring the only variables were the flights and the number of participants. The flight conversation started on April 13th with Mrs. Chapman to try to find the best flight price. Thought \$500 placeholder was sufficient but summer costs of flights went up in summer so decided to wait to see how the market would trend. In the fall the prices continued to rise so there was concern it would go higher and so the decision was made with Mrs. Chapman to lock in the fare with the hope it would go down. There is software that checks the prices regularly. Mr. Boyle asked what a comp structure it and Ms. East explained that the price structure includes chaperones and two school nurses. Mrs. Chapman said the trip will have three teachers, one para and two nurses, as one nurse was not sufficient on the last trip. Mrs. Bollinger confirmed that a Southwest flight has been locked in and Mrs. Chapman said there would be a \$50 fee to change flights to another carrier. Mr. Kennedy asked if it is standard practice to hold on locking in and Ms. East said this is the practice because Southwest and Jet Blue announce their air schedules much later in the summer. She said they are continuing to search for a cheaper flight rate. Mrs. Scholl asked if a stop loss could be put into a future contract and Ms. East said there are ways to mitigate this in the future by adding a contingency fund.

Mrs. Obey clarified the price increase for the airfare is about \$350 and the additional \$230 is because the number of students going is fewer than contracted and this amount will not be made up. Ms. East said air travel can be removed from the contract and the school can do it. Mrs. Scholl confirmed that if airfare is removed from the contract then it would not be covered by the insurance. Mrs. Obey said the district could not charter a flight because insurance does not cover it. Mrs. Scholl confirmed that the company is open to switching flights in order to get the price down. Ms. East explained that in her experience when flights are released the price generally goes up.

Mr. Milchunes said the letter said the increase was due to airfare and now he is hearing it is because participation is less than expected. Some students have been saving money for this trip and this puts it in jeopardy. He pointed out that the insurance went up as well. He asked about a refund and Ms. East said it depends on the insurance purchased.

Ms. East explained the \$500 was a placeholder and airfare wasn't expected to go this high. The three options are to stay with Southwest and hope the price goes down, second try to release the parent contract and try to pick it up, or third, remove the flight from the package.

Mr. Vitale asked for clarification on the rate being based on the number of students going. He said the contract should state that the cost can vary based on fluctuations and the number of students going. The contract should also include paying for chaperones and nurses, and the district should pay for the additional people. Ms. East said Mrs. Chapman was conservative and based the estimate on historical participation. Mrs. Chapman said she looked at the past couple of trips and forecasted 80% and this trip ended up slightly lower than she anticipated. Ms. East said she and Mrs. Chapman looked at all components of the trip once the prices went up to search for savings. Mr. Vitale said the communication should've included more information about the possibility of a price increase.

Mrs. Obey said she is happy to work with families if there is a hardship. She also confirmed that students can switch to a quad room to save money.,

Mrs. Pam Barone asked for clarification on the flights and stated the communication of the increase could have been better.

Ms. DeRenne said families should've been told that if students dropped off then the price would increase. Also, a meeting should've been called to discuss this not just an email. She doesn't think families should have to pay for the nurses or teachers. She said she is the one that looked at the price for a charter flight and got a cheaper flight quote from Jet Blue. She would've liked an itemized invoice of all costs. Ms. East said Jet Blue is the most variable airline.

Mr. Kennedy summed up what the committee has heard and agreed that the communication could've been better around the costs and changes will be made moving forward.

Adjustments to Agenda

None

Communications: Update on Timeline for Filling School Committee Vacancy

Mrs. Obey said the vacancy has been publicized and Mr. Kennedy and the Chair of the Selectboard will set up a joint meeting in January.

Approval of Bill Schedule

Warrants were sent out electronically for signature.

Superintendent's Report

Consideration for First Read: Technology Plan

Mrs. Obey said the Education Subcommittee reviewed the technology plan.

Mr. Hall thanked Mrs. Tinker, Mr. Tinker, Mr. Ulysse, Mr. Cruise, Mr. Shapiro, and the five Technology Integrators for their work. The goal of the plan is to ensure student growth and achievement through the integration of technology programs and teaching practices that will prepare students for citizenship in a digital world. The essentials for effective technology use in schools are having a shared vision, implementation planning, equitable access, prepared educators, skilled and sufficient technical support, high-quality learning activities and content, and ongoing evaluation.

Teaching and Learning action steps for this year are to promote global connections and communication in the classroom through the use of social media, to provide collaborative opportunities for staff and students to share ideas and creations, to facilitate teacher-led workshops for peer-to-peer learning to enhance and empower teachers and to provide on-going daily in-school support and professional development to all educators and staff members.

Assessment and data management action step for this year is to execute and analyze the results of a biannual survey of staff to measure technology comfort levels, use of technology, skill acquisition, and program effectiveness.

Professional development action steps for this year are to provide effective technology training and support for all staff on how to integrate technology across all content areas, to develop and continually update instructional modules

on the PPS professional development site so that all members have access to tutorials, to provide technology orientation annually to newly hired staff members, to provide teachers with training on how to integrate digital citizenship and cybersafety curriculum into their instruction, and to provide professional development to staff member on how to merge curriculum and technology.

Infrastructure and Access actions steps are to provide a projection system for all academic classrooms, to install robust use of the internet and cloud-based applications while decreasing reliance on installed software, to provide state-of-the-art applications to enhance instruction, learning and data management, to utilize a monitoring/filtering solution on-premises to ensure a safe online learning environment and off-premises to remain compliant with federal law, to provide high-speed internet in school and information to families on internet options outside the school, to assess and upgrade wireless and fixed network access on an annual basis, and to evaluate annually the life expectancy of all wireless and fixed devices. Mr. Kennedy asked if there is support for students that don't have access at home and Mr. Hall said a grant was used to secure hotspots that families can use.

The department consists of a 1.0 Director of Instructional Technology, 1.0 Software and Data Manager, 1.0 Network Manager, 1.0 Digital Learning Specialist, 1.0 Media Technician, and 5 Technology Integrators. The expansion from 190 devices in 2019 to over 3500 in 2022 requires the addition of a Junior Network Administrator. The addition of a second Digital Learning Specialist for the secondary level would allow the current specialist the time to address the demands of all three elementary schools.

Mr. Hall reviewed the work tickets completed from 2020-2022 and pointed out the tasks performed outside of the IT staff members' position.

Mr. Hall said the district is taking advantage of federal funding and grants and at the end of the day the department is doing a very good job servicing PPS, but additional staffing would be helpful.

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the Technology Plan as a first read.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Consideration for First Read: PHS Program of Studies: New Course Proposals

Mrs. Obey said PHS is looking to add these new courses to the Program of Studies. Ms. Brust said five of the nine courses are to support the Pathways Program. The district will know in February if it will receive the grant for the Biomedical and Engineering Pathways. The Business Pathways would like to offer a Microsoft Office Certification, the Digital Arts Pathway would like to offer Digital Arts IV honors and CP, and the Computer Science Pathway would like to offer an IT component. Additional courses being requested are Advanced Ceramics, Arabic II honors and CP, and Senior Seminars offerings of Women in Literature and Contemporary World Literature.

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Susie Scholl, it was unanimously voted to approve the PHS Program of Studies' new course proposals as a first read.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Consideration for Approval: PPS Surplus – 2009 School Bus

Mrs. Obey said this used bus was purchased last year to defray costs with athletic transportation and now it will not pass inspection, so the request is to deem it surplus.

VOTE: On a motion made by Susie Scholl and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the surplus of the 2009 school bus.

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

Consideration for Approval: PHS Foreign Exchange Student

Mrs. Obey said the approval is required to allow the district to work with Cultural Homestay International. There is always the concern of an exchange student needing additional educational services, but the ELL teacher has reviewed her testing and said she should be fine. She will be here from January to June 2023 with a host family. Mr. Kennedy said it is great to introduce an international student to Pembroke.

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Susie Scholl, it was unanimously voted to approve the Cultural Homestay International foreign exchange company.

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

Mrs. Jasie spoke on behalf of a concerned parent regarding PHS dismissal and traffic safety concerns. Mr. Talbot said the one way in, and one way out doesn't help. MA Safe Routes observed PHS traffic before Thanksgiving to supply feedback and he will get the follow-up mid-winter. He said the staff does talk to students about safety and crossing the streets. Mrs. Obey said can look into repainting crosswalks or other visual options.

Future Meeting Dates and Topics

1/17/23

VOTE: At 8:12 PM, on a motion made by Susie Scholl and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

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

APPROVED: January 24, 2023

MOTIONS

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the Technology Plan as a first read.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Susie Scholl, it was unanimously voted to approve the PHS Program of Studies' new course proposals as a first read.

Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, and David Boyle
Voting No: none

Abstaining: none
Absent: none

VOTE: On a motion made by Susie Scholl and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the surplus of the 2009 school bus.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Susie Scholl, it was unanimously voted to approve the Cultural Homestay International foreign exchange company.

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

VOTE: At 8:12 PM, on a motion made by Susie Scholl and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

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