



**PEMBROKE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Tuesday, November 1, 2022**  
**North Pembroke Elementary School Library**

### **Call to Order**

Mr. Kennedy called the meeting to order at 7:02 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; Michael Tropeano and David Boyle

### **Acknowledge & Schedule Visitors**

Mr. Kennedy welcomed the audience members.

### **Adjustments to Agenda**

None

### **Communications**

Mrs. Obey said the letter from OSD regarding rate increases for state approved private special education schools states there will be a 14% increase for FY24 which is a very large number. PPS private placements cost about \$2 million dollars so a 14% increase would be just under \$300k and this will break the budget. There is a call for advocacy and a call to action via a draft letter from Superintendents and a draft MASC letter from School Committees and Mrs. Obey offered to customize the letters and bring them to the next meeting for review. Mr. Tropeano said in the past the committee has asked the legislatures to work to cap the increases and he suggested reaching out to Senator Moran and Representative Cutler about this. Mr. Kennedy said the committee is in support of the superintendent drafting the letters and also having the government liaison reach out to the representatives.

### **Approval of Bill Schedule**

Warrants were sent out electronically for signature.

### **Consideration for Approval: Regular School Committee Meeting Minutes of October 18, 2022**

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Susie Scholl, it was unanimously voted to approve the school committee meeting minutes of October 18, 2022.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

### **Superintendent's Report**

Consideration for Second Read and Acceptance: 2022-2023 School Improvement Plans

Mrs. Obey said the principals are here to talk about an item they are excited about this year. Mrs. McGarrigle said she wants to highlight the transition from middle school to high school. This year PCMS is focusing on the good things that happen at the school and pushing this information out to families. Information around the service learning projects that students are working on is being shared. Also, also there is two student announcers per week, and they have the option to share their project. PCMS is working on being more proactive with communication to families.

Mrs. Swift said at North Pembroke she is excited about “Celebrating Community” and the changes to the community meetings. The meetings previously were by grade level and there was discussion with students around the different character traits that are focused on throughout the year. The school is trying to be more inclusive, so it has moved to whole school community meetings once per month and focusing on all character traits instead of just one. Created Titan Tickets as a way to recognize more students for the positive things they are doing, and the tickets are entered into a drawing each month at the meeting. Also, the school is having community members come speak at the monthly meeting.

Mrs. Simmons said Bryantville and Hobomock are also doing their “Celebrating Community”. Bryantville been working over the past two years with K-2 staff to look at what is being down programmatically and consistently across the three schools. Professional development on The Science of Reading is happening this year for staff to help make programmatic decisions to target the gaps in early literacy.

Mr. Murphy said the three elementary schools are doing similar work. He said the creation of the therapeutic resource rooms, now named Titam Labs, were approved last budget season and the administration is collecting data and it shows that students are utilizing it exactly as it was intended. Mr. Tropeano asked what the time in the Titan Lab looks like and Mr. Murphy said it is all communication, listening to the students and using strategies in conjunction with the mental health staff in order to support them. Mr. Tropeano asked what happens when more than one student is there, and Mr. Murphy said there is additional support available from mental health staff or an administrator. Mrs. Scholl asked if they will be tracking the trends that the school committee can see to help gage the success year to year and Mr. Murphy said that work is starting, and he can bring this data back to the committee.

VOTE: On a motion made by Susie Scholl and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to accept the 2022-2023 School Improvement Plans.

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

Consideration for Approval: New Self-Administration Medication Form

Mrs. Obey said this an updated more streamlined form for the school nurses. The form is referenced in Policy JLCD: Administration of Medications.

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Michael Tropeano, it was unanimously voted to approve the new Self-Administration Medication Form.

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

Consideration for Approval: Girls Basketball Waiver

Mrs. Obey said the Athletic Director is looking for a waiver for 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls to play on the JV basketball team. Currently there are 20 players, which is not ideal.

VOTE: On a motion made by Susie Scholl and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the girls' basketball waiver for 8<sup>th</sup> graders to play at the high school level.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

### **Subcommittee Updates:**

#### **Policy Subcommittee:**

##### **Consideration for First Read: Revisions to Policy GBAA: Sexual Harassment**

Mrs. Obey said this is a sample policy from MASC to replace the current PPS policy. Ms. DeLorenzo said this policy change is being brought forward due to changes in 2020 to Title IX, which are reflected in this policy as well as in the Title IX Grievance Procedures. There are more steps to go through if there is an infraction of sexual harassment.

##### **Consideration for First Read: Title IX Grievance Procedures**

Ms. DeLorenzo said the district has gone through this process a couple of times and has tweaked the grievance procedure to be sure it is PPS practice along with the regulations set forth. Ms. DeLorenzo explained the role of legal counsel as being said counsel is involved for questions and for the appeal process.

##### **Consideration for First Read: Revisions to Policy JIC-R: Antibullying Regulations**

Mrs. Obey said the only change to this policy is listing where the antibullying plan is located. The bullying intervention plan is being reviewed and will be brought to the committee.

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Susie Scholl, it was unanimously voted to approve policies GBAA: Sexual Harassment, Title IX Grievance Procedures and Policy JIC-R: Antibullying Regulations as a first read.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

### **Education Subcommittee:**

#### **Review of District Accommodation Plan (DCAP)**

Mrs. Obey said the Education Subcommittee met to review the current DCAP and said this is not a policy. She said this is a series of interventions that all students are eligible for in the general education setting. This is not a new concept, this a document that explains the interventions and she is looking for feedback from the committee before posting it to the PPS website. Mrs. Scholl asked how new parents to the school system would know about this and Mrs. Obey said it begins with a referral from the teacher to the IST team and then a conversation is started with the parents. She added that the work outlined in the DCAP is happening in the classrooms as good teaching practices. Ms. DeLorenzo said while this is helpful for families to understand the process, this is a good resource for the teaching staff.

### **Superintendent's Evaluation**

Lance Kennedy - The district has just come through a uniquely challenging time in educational history, and I would attest to how you helped navigate the district through these challenging pandemic times and want to comment and acknowledge your leadership of the district through that time. It's not an easy time, there are challenges every day and there continues to be waves after the fact that we will continue to address like the social emotional component. The great work that you've done with your team and leading us through, and it's not over yet, but we appreciate the work you've done. It's a challenging role and it's not for the faint of heart. The committee focused on two areas out of the four standards to evaluate you. Management and Operations and Family and Community Engagement. The committee felt that those areas covered all the school committee goals which are Communication, Achievement, Social

Emotional Health and Technology goals. First we talked about the environment and how you and your team have really spent time dealing with some major health issues and working to get our facilities ready, like the HVAC systems and the great work that was done getting those systems in place. From a social emotional well-being component we talked about that how you and your team have helped to put steps in place not only when kids were learning at home but then as we transitioned them back part time and then as they transitioned back full time. We talked about student health and safety and how you continue to make that a priority and how we have followed the state guidelines and followed local guidelines by working closely with the health department through that whole process. The collaboration that you had working with the different departments in the town to make sure that we were making the best safety decisions for students and families. With the human resources management and development piece, we talked about recruiting and hiring and how the Social Justice Working group made some adjustments on verbiage to make sure we're inclusive. With recruiting and hiring, making sure that the type of individual that we wanted for our district is a good match. We've been able to add staff in the areas that needed it like the paras for the Titan Labs in the elementary schools and that is great work. The professional development and career growth is celebrated, and resources are put toward developing our teachers and making sure they have the supports they need to educate the students. This reflects on our focus as a district and your focus as a leader to see our teachers grow and support their students. The culture of collaboration is evident when you hear the three elementary school principals talk about how they work together, and that culture comes from your leadership and its reflective of the work you do and your team and how you lead by example. You also make sure the district follows the laws and guidelines especially when there were many more guidelines put on the district from COVID and we appreciate that. Finally, we talked about the budget process and how each year we are given a certain amount to work with to make sure that we provide the best education possible for our students and you really understand what our needs are and what our wants are and how to make that work within the district. You have the vision to see where we need to be in the next few years and make decisions not only for now but for later as well so great work there.

David Boyle – When I first joined the committee about six years ago I wasn't sure what to expect, I had heard some amazing things about you being a whiz with numbers and all, but I didn't know you. I will tell you if you treat your people well they will treat you well and to go through something as unprecedented as the pandemic with no playbook and the rules changing every day I was absolutely amazed. I think when you're looking at schools and education people are looking for grades and I would give this team an A from top to bottom. With your leadership you were absolutely incredible with every little detail that would come up, whether it was how to get lunches to kids at home or how to get the kids to the lunches, anything we could do to make it work. The thing that I give you full credit for is I know you're a mom to two young sons and you have to balance home life along with work. I commend you and I think if you honestly look in the mirror and say we do our best, can we get better, I hope we can. You are running the largest department in the town and people did not see the nights and weekends of emails, phone calls and meetings. I am absolutely honored to be a colleague, I call you a friend, and I want thank you all publicly.

Susan Bollinger - Watching everything you do; I'm blown away at the amount of work that you do. When you should be taking a day off I don't think most people realize that you're still worried about the district. I'm blown away by the way that you were able to take all of the Cares funds and money coming into the district because of the pandemic and be able to categorize that. I think that takes a certain skill level that I feel most other districts don't have and I am really grateful that you were here to take care of all of it. Any ideas that I had before I was on the committee about what you do I found that you do triple the amount and I thank you very much for all you do. I only have the one year to reference and I wasn't here during the pandemic but all of you did an amazing job through all of that.

Susie School – All of what I would say was already said. As you work with this team you see the level of patience and what you don't see is the sending of incredibly detailed questions to this team and if one person can't answer it they're coordinating with one another to get an answer so that it can be addressed. Your patience and the number of meetings, calls, questions, and emails coming in especially during the pandemic increased exponentially. Having been in the finance world for a while, I especially loved the spreadsheets that kept track of the certain changes or requests, these are important things. Your poker face, you kept a straight face even when a Zoom meeting was hacked, and that's the sign of leader, not reacting but instead responding. I thank you for that.

Michael Tropeano – I don't think people realized that the superintendent was measuring classrooms during the pandemic preparing for hybrid learning and I don't think a tape measure is part of the standard operating equipment for a Superintendent, nor is hopping in your car and having to drive to a state distribution center to make sure that we had PPE available based upon what was being mandated. I think PPS has turned into a desirable place to work, seeing that we have PPS graduates now teaching in the district and numerous applicants any open positions. I don't think there is meeting she hasn't taken with a parent of community member. I've joined her on several and you're not always going to give people the answer they want but there was an answer. I don't think people realize the organization and planning that goes into the budget. When we were going through the pandemic other town departments asked what we would've done differently, and we said based on the data we had there wasn't anything major we would've changed, and this showed that every decision had critical thinking behind it. I feel confident that everything brought to this committee was well thought out through a collaborative discussion. I've had the privilege and pleasure of working with all three superintendents and they all have different qualities but when you look at the willingness to meet and openness to hearing what this committee has to say, what other town committees have to say, and what the community has to say, I can tell you that she is the best of them. Not to knock the previous superintendents, it was a different time.

Mrs. Obey – I am appreciative of the feedback. When I first got hired there was some concern that the district hired somebody with an MBA because it could create a situation where you were running the school district like a business. I would just say that having the business side of it makes running the school district so much easier because I don't have to spend time figuring that part out, so it leaves the time and the manpower to do the things that are really important for students. I appreciate that you all took a chance and even though I don't live here I consider it my home. Much to the credit of Ms. Brust and Ms. DeLorenzo and the principals that are here today, it starts with me and I have to be willing to do what I expect of the people that work with me and community involvement really makes this job that much easier to do.

Mr. Boyle said he attended the Unified Basketball game and said it was great.

Don Byant said he would like to suggest the DEI Working Group have open meetings and people on the committee be public knowledge. Mrs. Obey said will list members of the group and presented at least four time to the SC about the DEI group work. The members will be listed on the PPS website. The meetings are generally not open as there are 26 members which is hard to manage conversation. Mr. Tropeano suggested a bimonthly update at the school committee meetings of the work of the DEI committee and break it into three main categories of curriculum, budget, and policy.

Mrs. Jasie thanked Mrs. Obey for always giving her time to her and she appreciates her professionalism.

Jay Sweeney when you hear the work diversity, equity and inclusion it's a hot button topic even beyond Pembroke. In other parts of the country it is more than that and that is what Pembroke parents are concerned about. The more open the meetings are it will be more acceptable to people.

Mr. Tropeano said his first school committee meeting was June 2001 and when he took this job it was to do his best and if he couldn't do his best he wouldn't be here, so unfortunately he has to step aside. It is because of personal and professional reasons, all positive, in his life. He can't serve to level that the people of Pembroke deserve. He thanked the people of Pembroke for allowing him to serve and said it was a pleasure. The students and staff over the years have made an impact. He thanked the members he has served with and the partners in Town government that have made the job easier. He added that for the Town to get better everyone has to have a conversation. He thanked his family for giving up a lot for him, and said they understood why he wanted to serve. Mrs. Scholl said he has been a tremendous mentor and inspiration for future volunteers in this community. Mrs. Bollinger thanked him for his years of service and mentorship and said the town is much better for having him serve. Mrs. Boyle thanked him and said it is an honor. Mr. Kennedy said there will be a future time to recognize Mr. Tropeano's service.

### **Future Meeting Dates and Topics**

11/15, 12/6, 12/13

VOTE: At 8:47PM, on a motion made by Michael Tropeano and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

**APPROVED: November 15, 2022**

### **MOTIONS**

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Susie Scholl, it was unanimously voted to approve the school committee meeting minutes of October 18, 2022.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: On a motion made by Susie Scholl and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to accept the 2022-2023 School Improvement Plans.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Michael Tropeano, it was unanimously voted to approve the new Self-Administration Medication Form.

Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, Michael Tropeano 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 girls' basketball waiver for 8<sup>th</sup> graders to play at the high school level.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Susie Scholl, it was unanimously voted to approve policies GBAA: Sexual Harassment, Title IX Grievance Procedures and Policy JIC-R: Antibullying Regulations as a first read.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: At 8:47PM, on a motion made by Michael Tropeano and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none