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PEMBROKE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, November 28, 2023
North Pembroke Elementary School Library
6:00 PM

Call to Order

Mrs. Bollinger 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: Susan Bollinger, Chair; Allison Glennon, Secretary; Michael Quinn and Patrick Chilcott

Absent: David Boyle, Vice Chair

Public Comment

None

Acknowledge & Schedule Visitors

Mrs. Bollinger welcomed the visitors.

Adjustments to the Agenda

Mrs. Obey said the November 7th meeting minutes and Policy Section G will be presented at the next meeting. Discussion of another draft policy is being postponed due to Mr. Boyle's absence.

Mr. Chilcott discussed the governance that guides the committee. To be clear how a policy is brought forward and have to suspend policy. Any suggestion for a policy would start with the Policy Subcommittee. Mrs. Glennon read Policy BGB stating that the document should've been presented to the Policy Subcommittee first. Mrs. Bollinger said the intent was not to put it forward as a policy.

Communications

Mrs. Obey said she is happy to report there is internet access in all buildings on school-issued devices with functionality to print. PowerSchool will be available on Monday 12/4 and report cards will be delayed until 12/11. The Technology department has been working tirelessly to pinpoint the issue and the reason(s) and resolution(s) will be communicated once known. Teaching and learning continued without the internet.

Approval of Bill Schedule

Warrants were sent out electronically for signature.

Superintendent's Report

FY25 Maintenance of Effort Budget Overview

Mrs. Obey said Maintenance of Effort is doing everything this year at next year's prices.

The FY24 budget is \$37,670,000 and the FY25 MOE budget is \$39,574,698 which is a difference of \$1,904,698. Looking at previous years this is not an anomaly. Assumptions built into this difference include:

Collective bargaining agreement/COLAs, a special education tuition increase of \$212,000 based on OSD rate increase, the transportation contract increase of \$194,073 (4.25% increase for FY25), special education transportation costs of \$219,750 and a special education pre-buy of \$500,000.

Anticipated Circuit Breaker reimbursement of \$1,563,031 assumes a 75% reimbursement for instructional expenses and a 57% reimbursement for transportation. Mr. Chilcott mentioned that special education tuition has

increased by 75% in the last 10 years, and it is an unfunded mandate. Mrs. Obey stated that the district established a stabilization fund for special education costs in case of need. Mr. Chilcott said the \$1.9 is not a deficit and Mrs. Obey added that this is preliminary and there will be adjustments to these numbers over the next few months. Additionally, the Joint Budget Subcommittee meeting with the town is scheduled for tomorrow night.

Social Emotional Learning Update

Ms. DeLorenzo said current mental health staffing is made up of one social worker per school and four school psychologists, both roles fully support students. Titan Labs/Compass programs are staffed with paras at the elementary level and PCMS and staffed with a teacher and para at PHS. Continued student challenges include difficulties with behavioral dysregulation and coping skills, managing emotions, anxiety, social conflicts, school avoidance/refusal, and executive functioning skills. Mr. Chilcott confirmed that there has been an increase in student needs since the pandemic. Ms. DeLorenzo added that the Titan Labs and Compass programs have resulted in improvements in student challenges.

Ms. DeLorenzo said 11% of students with IEPs or 504s present with an emotional disability compared to 3% in 2019. Mrs. Bollinger inquired about the reason and Ms. DeLorenzo explained that a significant portion of it was due to the pandemic, as well as the influence of social media. Mrs. Glennon inquired about any specific grade seeing a rise. Ms. DeLorenzo responded that PK-6 students, not just those in special education, utilize supports for social skills more so than 7-12 students. Ms. DeLorenzo explained the curriculum tools and supports used at both the elementary and secondary levels. The elementary schools utilize Second Step, Social Thinking, Responsive Classroom, Calm Classroom, Zones of Regulation and Restorative Practices. The secondary level utilizes Signs of Suicide at PCMS, along with 21st Century Skills and Break Free from Depression and a therapy dog at PHS. Mrs. Bollinger said the teachers need programs like Second Step to support students.

Ms. DeLorenzo discussed the professional development opportunities being utilized by the district with MA Partnership for Youth. These opportunities include webinars and conferences focused on mental and behavioral health, social and emotional learning, and trauma-sensitive classrooms. She informed the committee that there is a referral service called INTERFACE that is available to Pembroke residents. This service is co-funded by the district and PTAD. Pembroke residents in need of help finding a counselor for mental health services can call the helpline. The helpline will assist in navigating the process of finding a counselor and provide follow-up support after services have begun.

Mr. Murphy said, the three elementary schools have a Titan Lab, which is designed to offer emotional support to all students, including those who need special education support. The main objective of this support is to provide a safe space where students who are de-escalated can calm down using strategies provided by trained mental health staff. The Titan Labs are supervised by a trained para and supported by a social worker and psychologist. Areas of focus include opportunities for breaks/time outs, in-class support, anxiety reduction strategies, emotional regulation strategies, preventative check-ins and earned breaks. The labs in the three schools are serving approximately 8 to 15 students daily.

Dr. McGarrigle said this is the first year of the Titan Compass program at PCMS. It was structured with the elementary and PHS programs in mind and is based on the level of student need. Students are either coming back after a medical absence or have a social-emotional need. 11 students were assigned to the program during term 1. On average, students were in Titan Compass at least once a day for 17 days. Most students were assigned to the program for one period every day during their gym/elective period. Two students were assigned indefinitely. Most students admitted to the program for support were concurrently receiving social-emotional supports via the counseling department. Students exit the program once they are deemed ready.

Mr. Talbot said Tier 1 supports at PHS include a social, emotional and interpersonal relationship unit through the health and wellness curriculum in grade 9 PE classes and Break Free from Depression taking place 11/28-12/1. A second support is Target Social Groups run by PHS Social Workers during Titan Time where students are invited based on education plans or by referral on an as-needed basis. Topics covered include anxiety-reducing strategies, stress management, conflict resolution, anger management, substance use, and drop-pout prevention. provide support. Tier 2 support through Compass is for students who have returned from a long-term mental health absence. The goal is to get them caught up with school work, connect mental health support staff, and develop a plan for a full return to classes. Tier 3 support is when additional long-term supports are needed and the entrance criteria are established as part of SST. It is scheduled onto the student's day if possible or on an as-needed basis.

Currently, 20 students are receiving Tier 3 support, which is a significant increase from last year. School avoidance and the impact of social media are the two main reasons for this. The objective is to utilize Tier 3 to decrease the number of students who lose credit due to absences. At the end of Term 1 in 2022, 10 students had surpassed the attendance policy. By the end of Term 1 in 2023, only 4 students had exceeded the attendance policy. Mr. Quinn said he can see how this would be helpful for students after coming back from an extended absence. Mr. Chilcott asked how the school is identifying a student who is withdrawn and Mr. Talbot said teachers provide information as well as nurses and mental health staff. Mrs. Bollinger thanked them for the update and expressed her appreciation for the work they do.

Consideration for Approval: PHS Overnight Field Trip Request(s) – Model UN

Mrs. Obey presented two requests for the Model UN field trip. Due to the high cost, PHS may only choose one.

VOTE: On a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to approve the Model UN overnight field trip requests as presented.

Voting Yes: Susan Bollinger, Allison Glennon, Michael Quinn and Patrick Chilcott

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: David Boyle

Consideration for Approval: Surplus Materials – Treasures/DRA (North & Hobomock)

Mrs. Obey presented the NPES and HES surplus materials request.

VOTE: On a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to approve the surplus materials.

Voting Yes: Susan Bollinger, Allison Glennon, Michael Quinn and Patrick Chilcott

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: David Boyle

Subcommittee/Liaison Updates

Legislative Update

Mrs. Bollinger said there is an update from both Senator Moran and Representative Cutler and they will be added to the website for the public to view.

Policy Subcommittee

Consideration for Second Read and Approval: Policy Section D (recode/revise/rescind)

Mrs. Obey stated that these are revised policies resulting from meetings of the Budget and Policy Subcommittees.

DB: Budget Process, DG: Financial Operations, DJE: Procurement Requirements.

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve Policy Section D (recode/revise/rescind) as presented.

Voting Yes: Susan Bollinger, Allison Glennon, Michael Quinn and Patrick Chilcott

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: David Boyle

Consideration for Second Read and Approval: Policy Section F (recode/revise/rescind)

Mrs. Obey said these are facilities policies. There is a new policy FCB: Retirement of Facilities. FF: Naming Facilities and FFA: Commemoration had no changes and FA: Facilities Development Goals will be removed.

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Michael Quinn, it was unanimously voted to approve Policy Section F (recode/revise/rescind) as presented.

Voting Yes: Susan Bollinger, Allison Glennon, Michael Quinn and Patrick Chilcott

Voting No: none
Abstaining: none
Absent: David Boyle

Future Meeting Dates and Topics

12/19

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

Voting Yes: Susan Bollinger, Allison Glennon, Michael Quinn and Patrick Chilcott
Voting No: none
Abstaining: none
Absent: David Boyle

Approved: January 2, 2024

MOTIONS

VOTE: On a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to approve the Model UN overnight field trip requests as presented.

Voting Yes: Susan Bollinger, Allison Glennon, Michael Quinn and Patrick Chilcott
Voting No: none
Abstaining: none
Absent: David Boyle

VOTE: On a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to approve the surplus materials.

Voting Yes: Susan Bollinger, Allison Glennon, Michael Quinn and Patrick Chilcott
Voting No: none
Abstaining: none
Absent: David Boyle

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve Policy Section D (recode/revise/rescind) as presented.

Voting Yes: Susan Bollinger, Allison Glennon, Michael Quinn and Patrick Chilcott
Voting No: none
Abstaining: none
Absent: David Boyle

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Michael Quinn, it was unanimously voted to approve Policy Section F (recode/revise/rescind) as presented.

Voting Yes: Susan Bollinger, Allison Glennon, Michael Quinn and Patrick Chilcott
Voting No: none
Abstaining: none
Absent: David Boyle

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

Voting Yes: Susan Bollinger, Allison Glennon, Michael Quinn and Patrick Chilcott

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: David Boyle