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**PEMBROKE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Tuesday, January 30, 2024**  
**North Pembroke Elementary School Library**

**6:00 PM**

## **Call to Order**

Mrs. Bollinger called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

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

**Present from Committee:** Susan Bollinger, Chair; David Boyle, Vice Chair; Allison Glennon, Clerk; Michael Quinn and Patrick Chilcott

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

## **Acknowledge & Schedule Visitors**

Mrs. Bollinger welcomed the audience members.

- a) PHS Boys Soccer Team  
Mr. Phillips said they had a tremendous season and handed each player a certificate.  
Mr. Boyle said Mr. Phillips has done a tremendous job in his four years here.
- b) PHS Track & Field  
Sarah Claflin - All-state champion. Mrs. Obey said she is the most dedicated track athlete and she is going to U of CT in the fall.
- c) PHS Teacher – James Rooney  
Mrs. Obey said Mr. Rooney was inducted into the 2023 Coaches Hall of Fame. He is a Track coach and PE and Wellness Teacher at PHS.

Mr. Chilcott said PHS coaches give everything and what they do is very important for Pembroke students.

## **Communications**

Mrs. Bollinger read her statement:

After a very difficult couple of weeks, I thought it was very important that I make a statement to all of those who have counted on me to look over your children's education over the last 3 years. Many of you have supported me but disagree with my most recent decision to try to discuss how to make our class classrooms politically and socially neutral. For those who feel this applies to them there are a couple of important points that I'd like to highlight it's really important to me that I model Behavior to students and especially my own children but to students that when you have a divisive conversation with people you care about you should always try to find common ground and look at your own culpability in the situation even if you vehemently disagree with me. I care about your opinions and the well-being of your children I have no hate in my heart for any of you because I know that for the most part, you are passionate because you care deeply. With that in mind I want to start by admitting where I wish I had done better. You may not have agreed with my draft ideas and looking back on it I should never have shared any of my ideas until I got to this table with my four colleagues. We may have had a more productive conversation because when I take out the judgment and all that went along with some of the criticisms of my

proposals, I can see the errors. Having teachers wear pins that would out themselves was shortsighted and clearly not my best idea. It was never my intent to ask the Administration to keep a log of students who wanted flags and common areas and having the school committee approval was not my best idea. I want to open up a conversation about how to attempt a neutral classroom. This policy was not going to be voted on it was supposed to be a list of ideas and I should never have shared it until we were in a position to have a productive conversation. One community member who happens to be a teacher in a different district stood up and commented that we need to trust teachers and this is my biggest regret, making teachers feel that I don't trust them. I honestly believe that 95% of the teachers are amazing and trustworthy in that 95% there are some teachers that I know think differently than me politically but I trust them 100% with teaching my children. I've seen them in action, able to think creatively in order to reach every child in a positive way regardless of the child's cultural background. I'm asking all of you including my fellow committee members regardless of where you stand on this issue, please let's lay down our swords and let's come together as a community to move forward. If you disagree with me, I ask you to consider that this issue about neutrality in the classroom space and is not just one person's view I promise you that there are many people in the community who feel this way. This conversation was very important to all of them and I have a duty to represent everyone in the community. I know you heard administrators say that there have only been two complaints but I have personally heard a lot more than two complaints from people who were afraid to speak up. These people exist, you even heard from a couple of brave students who stood up to speak against a crowd of angry people. Please know that there are several more students like them and I'm asking you to have compassion for all students even if you don't agree with them. I ask of everyone to consider how we can reach out to others in the community so we can have peace. Please know that I advocate for every single child in the school. Whenever someone comes to me with any issue, many of you know this because I've actually advocated for your child personally, I've sat in living rooms to listen to concerns and I've gone to bat to make sure your children are treated appropriately in the schools. Those of you who have experienced this can attest this passion does not change based on the child's needs whether LGBTQ+, learning disabilities, 504 plans, backing bullying initiatives in our schools, special education services, championing the idea of having chords for various clubs and more. It is for this reason that I stood before you on the 16th to present my concerns. I want to stand up for students who feel they need to shrink to the back of the classroom. I will do this for all of your children including those who identify as LGBTQ+ or otherwise. I know many of you are disappointed about how the conversation went on Tuesday especially the students and families that felt they wanted neutrality but I want to highlight the good news. We did identify that we are lacking communication with our student body and families about how to anonymously message our administrators when there is a problem. That has not been clear to everyone and we can do better communicating that. If your student is being bullied, if a teacher or administrator does something that you're not comfortable with, if your student is being pressured to participate in something and you feel against your cultural beliefs you have a way to report this anonymously. Our administrators have already said that they plan to do a better job of communicating this to students and parents. Titan Talk is on our website homepage and you can click on this link to report anything, this is really good news. We need to move forward because there's a lot of work to do so I'm going to ask all of my committee members from this point forward to please let's set aside any differences we have about this issue and move forward as one body for the good of this community and our children. We need to focus on the budget, we have a lot of important discussions to have over the next few months. I'm ready to put in the work and I hope we can all do this together and move forward.

Mr. Quinn thanked Mrs. Bollinger for her statement. He added that he knew there was no malice in her heart and that she had every good intention, unfortunately, it wasn't presented correctly. He agreed to move on.

Mr. Boyle apologized for missing the last meeting. He said he has a lot of respect for Mrs. Bollinger and understands her intentions. He added that everyone has to meet in the middle and this job is about what is best for the kids first, what is best for the schools, teachers, administrators, and families. There are no political agendas here, decisions are based on the kids. He said he was happy to see so many people involved in the recent meetings and hopes the participation continues.

Mrs. Glennon said she is here to do the work and this hasn't changed. She added she is also glad to see so many people here tonight. Mr. Chilcott thanked Mrs. Bollinger and said he has known her for a long time and she has a strong value system. He added that the community needs to come together for the betterment of the district because there are tough decisions to make over the next couple of months.

### **Public Comment**

Ms. Graziano said she would like to talk about Latin and wondering if there have been any ideas on how to keep Latin in the schools. She suggested combining the classes and having students do an online program.

Mr. Ciciotti thanked Mrs. Bollinger and said he appreciated the statement. It is a testament to her leadership and leadership is about being willing to stick your neck out and give people a voice that don't have one. Also, leadership is to acknowledge missteps and take ownership of what those are in order to grow.

Mr. Cogliano said he was pleased with the budget subcommittee meeting yesterday and the presentation was excellent. He said the School Committee should continue to work with the Selectboard on the tough decisions that will have to be made. He added the Town is in a crisis and the numbers have never been as bad as they are now. He hopes to see the Budget subcommittee and Selectboard continue to work together even after the budget season.

Mrs. McCann said she is concerned that there is talk about moving forward and at the same time saying to continue the neutrality in the classroom. She does not want to continue the conversation about neutrality.

Mr. Don Bryant said this issue has not been settled and it is still out there and needs to be worked through. He said he was upset by how the meeting ended with a committee member making a motion in order to stop the conversation. He added that this is not a one-meeting deal, the conversation must continue.

Mr. Chilcott said he would like to follow up on Mr. Bryant's statement about the motion. He said there was a possible motion for a vote listed on the last meeting's agenda, which was read as listed, making it completely appropriate to make the motion. Mrs. Bollinger said the committee took the vote to move the meeting along and stated that when a vote was made, she was going to go with how the town felt and that's where the committee landed.

### **Adjustments to the Agenda**

None

### **Approval of Bill Schedule**

Warrants were sent out electronically.

### **Superintendent's Report**

#### a) FY25 Elementary Budget Presentation

Mrs. Obey said these individual budget presentations are done in a vacuum and can include "wish list items".

Mr. Bambery said the current North Pembroke enrollment is 514 PK-6, Bryantville enrollment is 433 and Hobomock is 396. Class sizes range from 18-24 students. Mrs. Simmons said a focus has been to increase social-emotional supports. This was done by adding a full-time social worker at each elementary school, the creation of Titan Labs at each school and the implementation of the Second Step Program (PK-6). Also, to support the academics, a full-time Reading Specialist was added at each building. They use data to coach teachers around meeting students' individual needs. In addition, to support the reading initiative, Science of Reading professional development was provided, DIBELS was adopted as a screening tool, IReady FLA intervention was implemented grades 3- 5 and No Red Ink in was implemented in grade 6. Supporting the science curriculum included ongoing professional development for Open SciEd and implementation of three units of Open SciEd for grade 6. The number of students being serviced by Reading Specialists has increased since last year. Bryantville was 38 students last year and now at 61. Hobomock was 41 and now at 44 and North Pembroke was 42 and now at 51.

Mr. Murphy highlighted the elementary budget priorities for the 2024-2025 school year. Tier I budget requests include the continuation of Science of Reading, the addition of a 1.0 FTE math interventionist at each elementary to support the need for small group instruction, Social Emotional curriculum for PK-6, and the roll out of Open SciEd for grade 6 with professional development. Tier II budget requests include a .5 math interventionist at each school if the request for a 1.0 can't be approved.

Mr. Quinn asked if one math interventionist would work for all three schools. Mr. Murphy said it would be difficult due to schedules and travel, but he wouldn't turn it down. Mr. Quinn asked for clarification on the DIBELS program and Mrs. Simmons said it will help streamline the work for the reading specialist to free up their time. He asked for clarification on the kindergarten projected enrollment and Mrs. Obey said the numbers are an average and will be more accurate around March.

Mrs. Glennon asked if DIBELS will give parents information and Mrs. Simmons said the information is not necessarily shared but the Reading Specialists have reports that they can share along with the report card. Mrs.

Glennon said it would be helpful to give parents more information. Mrs. Glennon asked if the math interventionist is similar to the tutors that were hired with COVID funds and Mr. Murphy said it would be more structured than the tutor services, more like the reading interventions.

Mr. Chilcott said enrollment has dropped but class sizes have remained about the same. The School Committee philosophy on class sizes is grades K-2 should be 22 and under and grades 3-6 should be 25 and under.

Mrs. Bollinger confirmed the grant funding for the social-emotional curriculum, Second Step.

b) FY25 PCMS Budget Presentation

Dr. McGarrigle said PCMS currently has an enrollment of 369 and is expecting 359 for 2024-2025. Class sizes are in the solid range. Last year's PCMS budget requests included six enclosed 3D printers for STEM Lab classes, the purchase of a Tynker license to allow for additional units of computer coding, an additional water station for the lower level, and a hard surface walkway for G8 bus arrival/dismissal to the gym. The big item last year was the creation of the Titan Compass Room which helps students who have fallen behind to successfully integrate back into a full school day due to a variety of reasons. The program facilitates work completion, time management, and assignment distribution and collection. 26 students were assigned between Terms 1 and 2. On average, students were in the Compass room at least once a day for 19 days. Most were assigned to the room for 1 period every day during their gym/STEM or elective period. The Compass room is also used for non-compass reasons like testing accommodations, emotional crises and students that were ineligible for P.E.

Dr. McGarrigle said the My College Academic Plan (MyCAP) goal is to increase awareness of the importance of middle school in preparation for high school and college/career readiness. It is grant-funded and began in 2022-2023 with the grant to support college and career initiatives at PCMS. In 2023-2024 PCMS received the implementation grant and for 2024-2025 the grant funding will be used for the college and career lesson schedule, which will include monthly lesson plans by grade on various topics.

Dr. McGarrigle said the PCMS 2024-2025 budget priorities include the continuation of the Titan Compass Room, the addition of a special education teacher due to the increased level of needs for incoming 7<sup>th</sup> graders, and a special education para also due to the increased need of incoming 7<sup>th</sup> graders. Mr. Quinn asked if Dr. McGarrigle thinks the number of students in the Titan Compass due to absences will decrease and she said tracking attendance is a very important data point, it shows if something is going on. The goal of Compass is to increase students' sense of physical and emotional safety in the building.

Mrs. Obey said the state is looking closely at because it is on the rise. Chronic absenteeism is 18 or more missed school days and the state lists 34% of elementary students as chronically absent and the district is looking at this PK-12. Mr. Boyle asked about bullying intervention and Dr. McGarrigle said there is a bullying intervention program PK-12 and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century curriculum addresses bullying. Also, the PCMS guidance counselors are classroom teachers so they know all students. PCMS is proactive at investigating when something is heard. Mr. Chilcott asked her to explain what social-emotional learning is and Dr. McGarrigle said it is understanding your emotional profile and how to manage your emotions. Kids need to understand their emotions and deal with them in a way that makes them successful in school and as a member of society. Some kids need more support and tools than others. Mr. Murphy added that at the elementary level, they discuss how feelings affect others.

c) FY25 PHS Budget Presentation

Mr. Talbot said enrollment is 703 for 2023-2024. Class sizes have held steady, only English has increased. The PHS FY25 budget priorities include the addition of a Director of Counseling, which would assume leadership of all counseling and guidance as well as Compass and ARC, an increase in funding for the extracurricular program, to offset the stipend for the advisor and bus transportation and associations fees and the addition of a full-time Education Technology Integration Specialist to support teachers in creating lesson plans and assessments, as well as support the Computer Science Pathway with the new Help Desk course.

Mr. Talbot said looking into the FY26 budget, facility repairs will be needed including plumbing, flooring, roof, exterior walkways and stairways and parking lots. Also, an additional full-time math and science teacher as the Biomedical and Engineering Pathways grow. Mr. Quinn said that he likes that Mr. Talbot is looking into FY26. He asked if the Director of Counselor would counsel or just manage and Mr. Talbot said it would be based on need. Mrs. Glennon asked about stipend versus volunteer club advisors and Mr. Talbot said it is based on how long the club has run.

Mr. Chilcott said the committee has tried a Director of Guidance structure in different iterations in the past and Mrs. Obey clarified that the Director of Counseling position would cover PK-12 and would be a similar structure to the Content Supervisors. Mrs. Bollinger said her concern is that the district hired counselors and maybe should've started with the Director position. Mrs. Obey said very rarely are their requests for additions to administration

generally that's where the cuts are made or a reorganization is done in hopes of preserving classrooms or programming at any one of the schools. Supports have been added in all of the buildings across the past eight or nine years and now we're to the point where we need somebody to manage that in addition to the staff. Mrs. Bollinger said she is reluctant to look at this at this time and Mrs. Obey said as a reminder this is a wish list at this point. Mrs. Bollinger added that knowing what facility repairs are going to be needed is so important to maintain the schools.

Mrs. Obey said there is a South Shore Voc Tech planning meeting next week and they have some preliminary cost estimates to share. Any budget costs relating to the buy-in would be part of the FY26 budget.

### **Budget Subcommittee**

Mrs. Obey said the joint budget subcommittee is made up of two members of the select board, two members of the school committee, myself, the Town manager, the Town Accountant and Assistant Superintendent. There have been two meetings since the school committee last met and we are looking at FY25 revenues and expenses trying to figure out a strategy for what is appearing to be a quite difficult budget cycle. Mr. Chilcott said it has been important to share how we formulate our plan and how the Town does it. In difficult budget years, it is important to work together and cooperate. Mrs. Bollinger said the committees will meet again on 2/12.

### **Education Subcommittee:**

#### Consideration for Second Read and Approval: PHS New Course Proposals

Mrs. Obey said this is a continuation of the first read in December. Ms. Brust said the four proposed courses for next year are Principles of Engineering, Human Body Systems, AP World History and AP Spanish Literature and Culture. Mr. Chilcott confirmed that the courses are enrollment-driven. Ms. Brust said there could be a need for additional staff with the Biomedical Pathway.

VOTE: On a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to approve the four course proposals as presented.

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

#### Consideration for Second Read and Approval: PHS Program of Studies Pathways Revisions

Ms. Brust said the proposal is for a Music Pathway, an Information Technology Pathway, and a Global Citizenship & Learning Pathway.

VOTE: On a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to approve the PHS Program of Studies Pathways Revisions as presented.

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

#### Consideration for Second Read and Approval: 2024-2025 PHS Program of Studies Revisions

Ms. Brust said this acknowledges that AP World History will count toward the history requirement.

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to accept the change to the PHS Program of Studies Social Studies requirement to allow AP World History to count towards the history requirement.

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

Ms. Brust said the second change is to add the estimated college grade point average to PowerSchool and guidance programs based on core academic classes. This is an internal data point only for students and families.

VOTE: On a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to approve PHS Program of Studies addition of the estimated GPA requirement.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Ms. Brust said the minimum requirements are listed in red and they will be added to the PHS Program of Studies.

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the PHS Program of Studies to add the MA College accepted information.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Ms. Brust said the recommendation to change is to change grades for Street Law to 10-12 from 9-12.

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Michael Quinn, it was unanimously voted to change the PHS Program of Studies for Street Law from grades 9-12 to grades 10-12.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Ms. Brust said the recommendation is to eliminate the directed study for grade 9.

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was voted to eliminate directed study for grade 9 students.

Mrs. Glennon said she is strongly opposed to taking away the directed study and she has heard from a lot of families. Mrs. Bollinger said she was on the fence about this and talked with families but thinks that Titan Time is a helpful avenue for students. Mrs. Glennon said students get pulled into Titan Time it is not always free time. Mr. Chilcott confirmed that if a parent requested it their student could be considered for a study.

Voting Yes: Susan Bollinger, David Boyle, Michael Quinn and Patrick Chilcott

Voting No: Allison Glennon

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Ms. Brust said the recommendation is to begin to phase Latin III and Latin IV. Latin I and II would continue. Students can continue with Latin as an independent study.

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by David Boyle, it was voted to phase out Latin III and IV.

Mrs. Glennon said she is against this proposal and doesn't see it as an enrollment decision. Mrs. Brust said that students can pursue this as an independent study online. Mr. Boyle confirmed that there would be a minimal cost. Mrs. Obey said the commitment from the committee is languages that start at PCMS carry through to PHS AP and Latin is no longer offered at PCMS. Mr. Chilcott said middle school is the feeder program and he was against removing it from PCMS in the past and he is against eliminating it now. Mrs. Bollinger said she was on the fence but

now feels strongly that it should be offered. Mr. Quinn said he feels the administration is bringing this forward for a reason. Mrs. Obey said it is about the efficiency of the schedule and the use of resources.

Voting Yes: David Boyle

Voting No: Allison Glennon, Patrick Chilcott, Susan Bollinger, Michael Quinn

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

**Policy Subcommittee:**

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

Mr. Chilcott asked to table this until the next meeting so that he has time to do some research. The committee agreed.

**Future Meeting Dates and Topics**

2/13, 3/5, 3/19

VOTE: At 8:37 pm, on a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Michael Quinn, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

**APPROVED: March 5, 2024**

**MOTIONS**

VOTE: On a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to approve the four course proposals as presented.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: On a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to approve the PHS Program of Studies Pathways Revisions as presented.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to accept the change to the PHS Program of Studies Social Studies requirement to allow AP World History to count towards the history requirement.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: On a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to approve PHS Program of Studies addition of the estimated GPA requirement.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the PHS Program of Studies to add the MA College accepted information.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Michael Quinn, it was unanimously voted to change the PHS Program of Studies for Street Law from grades 9-12 to grades 10-12.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was voted to eliminate directed study for grade 9 students.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by David Boyle, it was voted to phase out Latin III and IV.

The motion failed.

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

VOTE: At 8:37 pm, on a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Michael Quinn, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

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