Pembroke Public Schools

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PEMBROKE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, March 19, 2024
North Pembroke Elementary School Library

Call to Order
Mrs. Bollinger called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

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

Present from Committee: Susan Bollinger, Chair; David Boyle, Vice Chair; Allison Glennon, Clerk; Michael Quinn
Late: Patrick Chilcott arrived at 6:27 PM

Pledge of Allegiance
Pack 105 led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Acknowledge & Schedule Visitors
Mrs. Bollinger welcomed the audience members.

Communications
None

Public Comment
None

Adjustments to the Agenda
None

Approval of Bill Schedule
Warrants were sent out electronically.

Consideration of Approval: School Committee Meeting Minutes of February 15th and March 5th

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the School Committee meeting minutes of February 15, 2024 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 Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the School Committee meeting minutes of March 5, 2024 as presented.

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

Superintendent's Report

FY25 Student Services Presentation

Mrs. Obey introduced Ms. DeLorenzo, Director of Student Services. Ms. DeLorenzo highlighted Titan's Treasures, which is Hobomock's new school store open three days per week for students in grades 3-6. It is run by students in the PLC classroom grades 4-6 under the direction of the Assistant Principal, teachers, and support staff. She said Unified Bocce has been added to PCMS and PHS.

Ms. DeLorenzo said one of the big professional development focuses this year is on the new IEP Improvement Project through DESE. The focus has shifted to a more strength-based approach, family engagement and student voice. Professional development days are being held in March, May, June and over the summer, with grant funding available for the summer work. Parent notification will be sent out in May and there will also be a SEPAC presentation.

Ms. DeLorenzo said the FY24 Special Education Department highlights include the INTERFACE referral service co-funded by the district and PTAD. It is a helpline to navigate the challenges of finding mental health services. A second highlight is the MA Partnership for Youth which provides professional development for staff focused on mental and behavioral health, social and emotional learning, and trauma-sensitive classrooms. Another highlight is Lexia English which is an adaptive blended learning program that helps English learners develop their English language acquisition through academic conversations. Lastly, Bauer's Buddy Award was created and is an award given to students who positively impact the school culture by demonstrating compassion and kindness.

Ms. DeLorenzo said the current staffing of the Special Education Department PK-22 includes five Special Education Team Chairs, 30 Special Education sped teachers, one Transitional Coordinator, one Job Coach, 46 Special Education Instructional Paraprofessionals, four School Psychologists, five Speech and Language Pathologists, 1.8 Occupational Therapists, a .8 Physical Therapist, and contracted service providers that include a LPN, a Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Teacher of the Deaf, Orientation and Mobility Specialist and Education Audiologist. The social-emotional support staff includes six Social Workers, a contracted Behaviorist, one teacher and one para in the Compass Program, and four paras in the Titan Labs. In addition, there are four English Second Language Teachers and 5.6 Nurses.

Ms. DeLorenzo said the 2023-2024 school year has 2,467 students and 469 are in special education, which makes up 19% and is just below the State average of 20%. She explained the various Special Education placements which include full inclusion at 76%, partial inclusion at 9%, substantially separate at 8%, out-of-district public day at 3%, out-of-district private day at 3% and out-of-district residential at 1%. She went on to explain that Section 504 Plans are separate from Special Education. A Section 504 Plan outlines accommodations and/or services that are necessary for the student to access instruction and participate in their education environment. Students identified with a disability, physical or mental impairment that limits one or more areas of major life functioning.

The Special Education Department FY25 budget requests to help the department grow and support students include a .5FTE School Psychologist for PHS due to the increase in Special Education testing and an increase in counseling needs. Currently, there is a shared School Psychologist between Hobomock and PHS but this structure is no longer sustainable. A second budget request is for a .3FTE Out of District Coordinator to support the increased needs of the out-of-district students in grades 7-12 and the 18-22 population. A third budget request is continued professional development for the New IEP requirement for FY25. Mr. Quinn questioned the big increase in 504 plans from 2020-2021 to 2023-2024 and Ms. DeLorenzo said the increase is tied to mental health reasons. She noted that 26% of students qualify for IEPs/504 plans due to being identified as having a health disability.

Ms. DeLorenzo provided some statistics about the social/emotional/behavioral needs of students. She said 11% of students qualify for IEPs and 504 plans due to being identified as having an emotional disability and this is up from 3% in 2019. The general student difficulties are managing emotions, anxiety, coping skills, social conflicts, depression and executive function skills. She explained the three levels of support within social-emotional learning and the proactive supports like the use of Social Thinking Curriculum, Calm Classroom, Restorative Practices, Break Free from Depression (gr 9) Signs of Suicide (PCMS) and therapy/comfort dogs. Additional supports include in or out-of-class-small group support by mental health staff, Titan Lab or Compass, and 1:1 counseling from mental health staff.

Ms. DeLorenzo said another FY25 budget request which was requested last year is for a Coordinator of Behavioral Health, Wellness, and Counseling to supervise, evaluate, and coordinate the alignment of the 7-12 Guidance Department, and to align support services across K-12. The position would include supervision and evaluation of all

mental health staff, nurses and guidance counselors, establishing an increase in care coordination between schools and community-based providers and increasing family engagement through the coordination of professional development for families and coordinating afterschool/evening support groups.

Ms. DeLorenzo said English Language Learners (ELLs) have increased over the last few years. This year there are 79 students and 52 receive direct instruction and 27 are former English learners who require formal monitoring. 37 families require interpreter/written translations and 9 non-ELs have families that require interpreter/written translations. The ELL population is made up of 15 different languages with the largest populations being Egyptian, Arabic, and Brazilian Portuguese. She added that the FY25 Budget requests for English Language Education (ELE) are Pocketalk which is a multi-sensory two-way translation device and curricular materials like National Geographic, Cengage, Saddleback and RAZ Plus to meet the needs of newcomers; and curriculum resources for secondary students.

Mr. Quinn said despite a decrease in enrollment, the needs of the population are increasing which is causing an increase in costs and therefore, the district cannot decrease its budget. Mrs. Bollinger said it is striking that the number of students needing services is rising even though the district has increased services. Mrs. Obey pointed out that the out-of-district placement number hasn't increased which means the district has done the job of keeping the students engaged as part of the community by adding the necessary supports.

Ms. DeLorenzo talked about the Special Education Department's communication practices. The goal is to foster a collaborative relationship with parents/guardians to ensure student success and strengthen family engagement. Current best practices are open, clear, and transparent communication, respectful two-way dialogues, proactive communication before IEP team meetings, acknowledging/addressing/documenting parent/guardian concerns, implementing conflict resolution when needed, and providing parent/guardians with their rights as it pertains for disagreement with IEP proposals or decisions. She went on to explain the district's obligation regarding communication. Parents/guardians have a right to invite a representative/advocate of their choice to attend IEP team meetings. However, Special Education law does not require a district to communicate with an educational advocate directly or include them in communication with parents/guardians. The district's obligations of communication are only to the child's parents/guardians although the ultimate goal is to be collaborative. Mrs. Glennon asked if communication is treated differently if it is an attorney and Ms. DeLorenzo said communication is still directly to the family only. Mrs. Glennon asked how this requirement is communicated with the advocate and Ms. DeLorenzo said the advocates generally know the process but it is still discussed with them. Mrs. Bollinger said she loves that the department and administration are always looking for grant funding and Bauer's award is a great idea.

<u>FY25 Teaching and Learning Presentation</u>

Ms. Brust said the Content Supervisors contribute to this work. She highlighted this year's focus on PreK-6 literacy. UFLI the new phonics program has been very positive and the two pieces of data so far have been affirming for the teachers. The district piloted Fish Tank, a program that offers reading opportunities to students to help them absorb information. It is crucial during their formative years that they receive this background information so that when it is taught in a more content-focused way from grades 3-12, they already have some working knowledge. Grades 3-5 switched to iReady for literacy because it is more aligned with the MA Frameworks. Lastly, No Red Ink has been extended to grade 6 and it is heavily based on writing and works on vocabulary.

Ms. Brust said in the STEM area K-6 has been focusing on Open Sci Ed, which is in its second year. The grade 6 science curriculum consists of lengthy and complex units that involve a lot of hands-on work. The main focus of Open Sci Ed is on identifying a particular phenomenon and using scientific methods to understand it. This approach is being adopted by Massachusetts to assess students' science skills and content knowledge.

Ms. Brust mentioned the February and April Math academies organized for students in grades 3-6. These academies provide students with up to five hours of math every day along with high-dosage tutoring. The academy is grant-funded and serves about 100 students. Additionally, teachers get the opportunity to share best practices district-wide during this time.

Ms. Brust went on to talk about the 9-12 Pathways program. This year, the district received a grant of $35,000 to pay minimum wage to some STEM placement interns. Additionally, the district received another grant to pay high school seniors to work in three elementary schools and at PCMS. The Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Biomed and Engineering Pathways are rigorous and demanding, yet students are enthusiastically embracing the challenge. Apart from those

who have chosen it as their primary Pathway, there are around 100 additional students enrolled in Biomedical and about 75 in Engineering who are taking these classes as supplementary courses to their existing curriculum at PHS.

Ms. Brust reported that the MCAS ME+ rates for grade 9 Biology, grade 10 English, grade 10 Math, and grades 7 & 8 Math have bounced back to their pre-pandemic levels, indicating progress. She also mentioned that 49% of the class of 2023 achieved a qualifying score in their AP exams.

Ms. Brust presented the Teaching and Learning Department FY25 budget requests. The budget requests related to instructional leadership include the creation of a STEM Content Supervisor position which will combine the roles of the Science Content Supervisor and the Math Content Supervisor. A second is to add an Elementary Content Supervisor position for PreK-6 to supply instructional coaching and curriculum adjustment needed due to the addition of multiple resources for PreK-6. These two requests will not have a budget impact. There is a request to add a .4FTE Business Teacher to allow the Pathway Coordinator to focus full-time on advising students and finding internships, placing and evaluating. Another request is the addition of a Secondary Instructional Technology Integrator 7-12, as requested by Mr. Hall and the IT Department, due to continuous change and the addition of technology programs, thus giving 7-12 a dedicator integrator. Finally, the addition of a World Languages Specialist for grades 5 & 6 to introduce world language skills.

Ms. Brust explained the FY25 summer work related to curriculum revision and development and said the cost is included in MOE budget. The summer work involves new course development and revisions at PHS, reviewing common units and benchmarks for ELA, Math and Science for grades 6-8, and reviewing common units, benchmarks and MCAS, where applicable, in grades K-5.

Ms. Brust said when the Teaching and Learning Department was established, its primary focus was to ensure that all elementary schools had a consistent number of assessments in the units they taught. This was not meant to be exact; it was intended to give students a similar educational experience by the time they reach 7th grade, ensuring that they are at the same level content-wise. She went on to explain the budget requests for professional development to be additional Project Lead the Way professional development courses for Biomedical Science, Principals of Engineering and STEM 7 (PCMS). A second budget request is for advanced placement summer institutes in Biology, Spanish literature and World History, some of this can be grant-funded.

Ms. Brust presented the budget requests related to new materials to support instruction. She summarized the requests to be Fish Tank for grades 3-5 and the improved DIBELS scoring, textbooks for existing curriculum, materials for the Pathways, textbooks for new courses, and online support for core curriculum like Edulastic K-6 and iReady 3-5. She added that the purchase of OpenSciEd supplies for units in grades 6-8 will be grant-funded. The total of all the budget requests is $314,290, after the portion included in the MOE budget.

Mr. Boyle suggested an information night to solicit businesses for participation in the Pathway Program. Mr. Chilcott asked about the combination of the math and science content supervisor position and Ms. Brust explained the science content supervisor has experience in both fields. Mr. Chilcott said there is a need for the secondary Instructional Technology Integrator even if it doesn't happen this year. He added that the addition of the world language specialist for grades 5 and 6 is an important idea. Mr. Chilcott said the AP program is so important in terms of preparing students to go to college.

Ms. Brust said the next steps looking forward to FY26 are to select a science curriculum K-5, select a literacy curriculum 3-5, add an AP Precalculus curriculum, add third PLTW courses in Biomedical Science and Engineering, and add electives requirement, including World Language, for students beginning with the class 2030.

<u>Consideration for Approval: Overnight/Out of State PHS Music Department Trip to New York City</u>
Mrs. Obey said the trip is April 3-6, 2025.

VOTE: On a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the overnight/out-of-state PHS Music Department trip to New York City as presented.

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

Absent: none

Consideration for Approval: Overnight/Out of State World Languages Department Trip to France
Mrs. Obey said that this is a preliminary approval to gauge interest. If there are fewer than 10 students, the trip cannot proceed.

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to conceptually approve the overnight/out-of-state World Languages Department trip to France as presented.

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

Subcommittee/Liaison Updates
Policy Subcommittee:

Consideration for First Read: Policy Section I: Instruction
Mrs. Obey said Policy Section I is being presented for a first read. The Policy Subcommittee is recommending five new policies in addition to revision/rescinding of current ones. Mrs. Obey said she revised IMB: Controversial Issues and Speakers and According to the speaker, the Policy Subcommittee had discussions in January but did not convene again. Therefore, she made some edits based on the school committee's conversation regarding the inclusion of information on how students and families can express or report their concerns, as well as the reporting structure that should be followed. Mr. Quinn suggested adding something about school committee oversight so the school committee can track how it is working. Mr. Chilcott said he doesn't think the committee wants that role but instead, the committee can ask the administration to produce data on the number of complaints received and resolved. Mr. Quinn suggested that IGA/IGD: Curriculum Development and Adoption has language clarifying the school committee's role in the curriculum. Mrs. Glennon said these new policies came from MASC and Mrs. Obey added that the school committee approves curriculum in terms of supporting or not supporting the annual budget. Mr. Chilcott said he agrees with Mr. Quinn and added that the school committee needs to approve the curriculum, and delineation is required as these policies will guide future committees. Mrs. Obey stated that she will draft an addition to this policy. Mr. Quinn referenced Policy ILD: Student Submission to Educational Surveys and Research and asked whether parents are informed in advance about surveys their students will participate in. Mrs. Obey clarified that while the district does notify parents of global surveys, it does not include classwork surveys given by teachers. Mr. Quinn asked if Policy IJNDD: Policy on Social Media applies to staff's personal social media accounts. Mrs. Obey said there are several staff that have both personal and professional social media accounts and the overarching rules are for both types.

Mrs. Obey said IJ-R: Reconsideration of Library Resources and Materials is listed as a recode to IJLA-R to follow the MASC guidance. This policy was discussed at the October 4, 2022 school committee meeting in regards to what happens if there's a complaint about a library material. During that meeting, it was decided to remove the material while investigating the complaint. However, this decision was not added to the policy, so the revised language will be included and the policy will be presented to the committee for a first read.

VOTE: On a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to approve Policy Section I: Instruction as a first read.

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

Vocational Planning Committee
Mrs. Obey said the Vocational Planning Committee met last week and Tom Hickey shared that their committee decided to go with the rendering for the 900-student building. The plan is to have their member towns approve the project in January 2025 so this puts Pembroke's timeline at spring of 2025. A lot of the work will have to happen in early fall to prepare for a presentation that includes the costs to decide if it will move forward as a warrant article for the spring Town Meeting.

Mr. Quinn said Mr. Hickey suggested showing that Pembroke is serious about joining South Shore Tech. Mr. Quinn added that if Pembroke decides and is approved to join, South Shore Tech will start taking Pembroke students in the fall of 2026.

Mr. Chilcott inquired about the district's ability to provide vocational education opportunities to students through internship programs or other initiatives until a more permanent solution is established. Mrs. Obey mentioned that there are options available for both the school district and families. For example, South Shore Tech offers nighttime shop hours to provide students with exposure to various trades. PPS is exploring options but there is little flexibility in the PHS schedule for students to go during the day and still meet their academic requirements. She added that there are discussions every year about potentially freezing the schedule. This would mean that either only the morning classes rotate or only the afternoon classes rotate. The purpose of this would be to allow students to have a block of time during the day to explore these opportunities.

Mrs. Obey clarified the role of the Vocational Planning Committee. It is to gather information and present the factual information to the school committee and then the school committee decides whether or not to move forward.

Future Meeting Dates and Topics
4/1 and 4/14/23

Mrs. Glennon said she would like to bring an agenda topic for discussion around the best practices of recording and posting subcommittee meetings and Mrs. Bollinger said this can be addressed at the next meeting.

VOTE: At 7:51 PM, on a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, 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:

MOTIONS

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the School Committee meeting minutes of February 15, 2024 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 Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the School Committee meeting minutes of March 5, 2024 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 Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the overnight/out-of-state PHS Music Department trip to New York City 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 David Boyle and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to conceptually approve the overnight/out-of-state World Languages Department trip to France 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 Policy Section I: Instruction as a first read.

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

VOTE: At 7:51 PM, on a motion made by Michael Quinn and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, 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