

Pembroke Public Schools

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PEMBROKE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, June 17, 2024

North Pembroke Elementary School Library

Call to Order

Mr. Chilcott called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

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

Present from Committee: Patrick Chilcott, Chair; Allison Glennon, Vice Chair, Katrina Delaney, Clerk; Susan Bollinger, and David Boyle

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

Tara Gendreau – I'm a Bryantville mom and I've been semi-silent in the past about my son, he's six, and his gym teacher and the way that he's been treated by that gym teacher. I've been one of the semi-silent parents I've recently heard that we're getting rid of librarian paras in this district and that will dramatically affect the STEAM program in all locations. If I'm correct my son who had trouble in gym took solace in STREAM and we heard that this was something that might be getting disbanded essentially because we won't have anybody to teach it. He heard and he said mommy can I come fight for this, he's six and he wanted to miss the balloon fight to come and fight for his education. I said no buddy it's mommy's job to fight for you so I'm here to fight for him. How can we move forward as parents as children in a culture that's increasingly engineering-based if we're taking those pieces away, how can we move forward in a culture that needs more education in the library, that needs better access to books and computers? How do we do that if we're removing that from our system, where do our children go, who's going to teach them and how do we prevent this from happening? I know you can't answer these questions today and I know that you'll talk about this 150 more times before a decision's actually made but I just need you to talk about our children, my child who's an athlete and a funny kid and he loves to work with his hands and he loves his school and he was so sad to think that the one place he loves in his school, Mr. Matt too, won't be available for him. He's not the only one, I'm just the one who could come today so I'm sitting here pleading with you to continue the conversation to keep the library open and keep our STREAM doors open to help our children grow educationally so that they can continue to be better parts of our community as they get older. Mrs. Obey said Mr. Matt would remain on staff in some capacity and to let her son know this.

Mr. Chilcott said that the committee is in the final stages of negotiating contracts for a few bargaining units. The committee has not yet ratified the contracts, but it's important to note that all contracts, regardless of the department, must be funded and paid for. It is the committee's responsibility to provide open access to kids while also fulfilling the fiduciary duty to the town and taxpayers. The district needs to have the funds available to support the contracts that will be ratified. This matter will be discussed in an executive session by the committee and then officially ratified in a public session, which will be included in the agenda. There are also contractual obligations that must be met if there are changes to positions, which the Superintendent had to act on to preserve all of our rights, regardless of the outcome.

Carolyn Miller – I'm a North parent and would like to address the school committee and the Superintendent about the communication of decisions that are made by the school committee and the superintendent and wish that communication could be handled slightly differently. I understand that you have legal obligations and understand that some conversations have to be private for certain reasons but if you're going to remove an entire specialist from the elementary school and our children instead of going to music, art, gym, and library are now going to go to music, art, gym, music, art, gym. First of all, it sends a message to our children about what in Pembroke takes priority. We can communicate that to the kids in a way that makes sense and that's positive for our town but if we don't communicate

things properly and it comes across to our kids that gym, music, and art are more important than the library, which cannot possibly be true, all four of those are extremely important to their well-rounded development as children. I also understand that there are budgets but when you're making choices to get the budget to work out, choices are being made and conversations are being made behind closed doors and I think that for the parents it would be helpful to understand why certain choices are made, to the extent that the school committee and the superintendent can share that information. It will be helpful for parents to feel more involved in their kids' education and to feel empowered in the conversations that we have with our children about why the library is eliminated as opposed to other things. Kids have questions that parents have to answer and some more information or perhaps a little bit of clarity would be helpful to parents in going forward with those conversations with their children

Mr. Chilcott stated that no decision has been made at this point because it's not at that stage yet. Negotiations have been ongoing with the different bargaining units for the past five or six months. There was a preliminary agreement and the bargaining unit has not ratified the contract, and also the school committee hasn't been presented with the contract for review yet. Contract negotiations are always in executive session, followed by a public meeting in which the options will be discussed. The superintendent has taken the discussed action to fund the contract and has informed the library paraprofessionals that their role may potentially be eliminated. However, no final decision has been made, so it is too early to communicate this to parents. A public discussion will take place in July or mid-August.

Mrs. Miller inquired whether the same process applied to the decision to eliminate a fourth-grade teacher, and Mr. Chilcott responded that it did not. He explained that the committee discussed enrollment throughout the budget cycle. There were two public sessions to discuss what enrollment looked like and whether the committee would make any staffing reductions based on enrollment, this decision is final. Mrs. Miller expressed that the information was not clear to her and other parents. She emphasized the need for clearer communication in the future. Mr. Chilcott acknowledged this feedback and noted that the school committee has diligently worked over the years to ensure high transparency in the budget process. He mentioned that they would take note of Mrs. Miller's input for future improvements.

Mr. Chilcott took a moment to address public comments. He mentioned that while this part of the meeting is highly important, as the Chair of the committee, he believes it can be disruptive at times. He assured that the committee will always allow public comments and he will review the topics beforehand to ensure they are pertinent to PPS. As a reminder, this is a business meeting held in public, not a public forum. As a result, if the same topic is repeatedly brought up, it will not be acknowledged. The Chair has the discretion to decide whether or not to recognize a speaker and will do so judiciously, considering whether the topic is relevant to Pembroke and has not been discussed extensively before. While he will make every effort to allow people to speak, he will not allow the meeting to be disrupted by public comments.

Acknowledge & Schedule Visitors

Mr. Chilcott welcomed the audience members.

a) Plymouth County Educator Association Award Winners

Mrs. Obey said 12 PPS educators are recipients of awards but 11 award winners could not make it tonight. Mrs. Obey said the PCEA has been presenting Awards to outstanding educators across Plymouth County since 1960. Awards range from Rookie of the Year to lifetime membership awards which recognize 30 plus years of service. Mrs. Sue Fitzpatrick is here and she received the Plymouth County Education Association Honors Award. Mrs. Fitzpatrick was hired in Pembroke in September 1988 as a first-grade teacher and since then she has welcomed so many students through her classrooms with a smile. The last 23 years she has been teaching kindergarten. She is retiring after more than 30 years and PPS is sad to see her go.

Mr. Hawes is here and also received the Plymouth County Education Association Honors Award. Mr. Hawes started in Pembroke in 2006 and since then he's been instilling the love of music and band instruments in the three elementary schools. If you've ever attended an elementary concert, you know how much our students and families adore Mr. Hawes. Pembroke is fortunate that he brought his passion to our community.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None

Communications

Mr. Chilcott mentioned that the committee will start celebrating victories and successes by inviting staff and students to school committee meetings to share their achievements. The boys' track team set a new record, and a female track athlete also set a new record. Mrs. Glennon mentioned that the girls' tennis team won the State Championship. She added that she has been watching this team for the past two years, they worked hard and deserved the win. They will be acknowledged at an upcoming meeting.

Approval of Bill Schedule

Warrants will be sent out electronically.

Consideration of Approval: School Committee Meeting Minutes of May 20th

VOTE: On a motion made by Allison Glennon and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to approve the School Committee meeting minutes of May 20, 2024 as presented.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

School Committee Subcommittee/Liaison Reorganization

Mr. Chilcott said committee members gave feedback on the committees they would like to participate in. The Budget Subcommittee will consist of Mr. Chilcott and Mrs. Bollinger, with Mr. Boyle serving as the alternate. The Negotiations Subcommittee will consist of Mr. Chilcott and Mr. Boyle, with Mrs. Glennon serving as the alternate. The Policy Subcommittee will consist of Mrs. Glennon and Mrs. Delaney, with Mr. Chilcott serving as the alternate. The Education Subcommittee will consist of Mrs. Glennon and Mrs. Delaney with Mrs. Bollinger as the alternate. The Long Range Planning Subcommittee will consist of Mrs. Bollinger and Mr. Boyle with Mrs. Delaney as the alternate. The PTAD liaison will be Mrs. Glennon. The DEI liaison will be Mr. Chilcott. The Legislative liaison will be both Mr. Boyle and Mrs. Glennon. The Vocational liaison will be Mrs. Bollinger.

Superintendent's Report

Consideration for First Read: Administrative Salary Grid

Mrs. Obey said this proposed grid is for review as a first read. She is proposing a 2.5% increase for the Administrators. Units A and B are receiving a 2% increase for FY25. The thought behind the 2.5% is that Administrators do not receive a level change for three years, while other units receive a step increase in addition to the COLA each year. Looking at the salary data around us, we anticipate falling slightly behind the market in the upcoming years. Also, longevity has been added to recognize dedicated, long-time administrators. Mrs. Delaney asked Mrs. Obey to explain the importance of having the same administrator in a school. Mrs. Obey said she often hears from parents and staff about administrator turnover. It's challenging for students, families, and staff, as well as for the culture, processes, and protocols of a building when administrative positions turnover. The district aims to encourage teachers who have devoted their careers to PPS to progress into administrative roles, and this salary structure is created to attract them. Mrs. Bollinger asked to see other districts' administrative salaries.

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Katrina Delaney, it was unanimously voted to approve the Administrative Salary Grid as a first read as presented.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Consideration for Approval: Technology Surplus

Mrs. Obey said the list consists of old TVs, monitors, printers, laptops, speakers, keyboards, etc. The recycling company will pick up the items.

VOTE: On a motion made by Allison Glennon and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the technology surplus.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Consideration for Approval: Hobomock Entrance Project

Mrs. Obey said that any changes to school property require the approval of the School Committee. Mr. Murphy has requested the removal of the remaining rotted trellis at the entrance to Hobomock due to safety concerns.

VOTE: On a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the removal of the trellis at Hobomock Elementary School.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Subcommittee Updates:

Policy Subcommittee:

Mrs. Obey stated that this policy is the final approval needed to complete the update of Policy Section I.

Consideration for Second Read and Approval – Policy IMB: Controversial Issues and Speakers

Mrs. Obey mentioned that there was wording included on how to report a complaint, and the Policy Subcommittee decided that it would be better placed in Policy Section K, so it was removed from IMB. The only edit to IMB is the one that was originally proposed by the Policy Subcommittee back in August of last year. A cross-reference was added on where to find the public complaint.

VOTE: On a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve Policy IMB: Controversial Issues and Speakers as presented.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Consideration for Second Read and Approval: Policy IJ-R: Reconsideration of Library Materials and Resources

Mrs. Obey said the only change to this policy is to recode it from IJ-R to IJLA-R. There was another edit that was sent back to the Policy Subcommittee where they reviewed it and decided not to move it forward.

Mrs. Delaney cited the paragraph that says “when a problem concerning instructional resources in a school arises the disposition of the problem will be made in a reasonable period of time using district adopted procedures” and asked to cite the procedures that go along with that. Mrs. Obey said she would cross-reference the procedures.

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve Policy IJLA-R: Reconsideration of Library Materials and Resources as amended.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Consideration for Second Read and Approval – Policy Section J – Students

Mrs. Obey said Policy Section J went back to the Policy Subcommittee for review of potential repetitions with JII and JICI and the only change was a cross-reference in policy JI on how students can make a complaint under their rights and responsibilities.

Mrs. Delaney asked that a reference to the handbooks be added to Policy JRA: Student Records.

Mrs. Delaney said with Policy JIH: Searches and Interrogations, she suggested where it says “principal or their designate will be present when possible” be changed to “always present or take out “when possible”. Mrs. Obey said it would be amended.

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve Policy Section J as amended.

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

Mrs. Delaney questioned needing references in JICK: Harassment of Students regarding repeat harassment and how it relates to bullying specifically around disability such as regulations around Section 504 and 603 CMR. Mr. Chilcott suggested this be reviewed at the next Policy Subcommittee and an amendment can be brought back.

Consideration for First Read – Policy Section K – School Community and Home Relations

Mrs. Obey said Policy Section K includes the new policies KDB, KDD and KE. This section will come back for a second read.

VOTE: On a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve Policy Section K as a first read as presented.

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

Future Meeting Dates and Topics

7/16 and 8/20 at 6:00 PM

VOTE: At 6:58 PM on a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted, by roll call vote, to enter Executive Session Pursuant to Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(4) & Section 21(a)(3) to discuss a personal services contract and strategy related to collective bargaining as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the legal position of the School Committee, as declared by the Chair.

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

APPROVED: July 16, 2024

MOTIONS

VOTE: On a motion made by Allison Glennon and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to approve the School Committee meeting minutes of May 20, 2024 as presented.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Katrina Delaney, it was unanimously voted to approve the Administrative Salary Grid as a first read as presented.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: On a motion made by Allison Glennon and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the technology surplus as presented.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: On a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the removal of the trellis at Hobomock.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: On a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve Policy IMB as presented.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve Policy IJLA-R as amended.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve Policy Section J as amended.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: On a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve Policy Section K as a first read as presented.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: At 6:58 PM on a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted, by roll call vote, to enter Executive Session Pursuant to Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(4) & Section 21(a)(3) to discuss a personal services contract and strategy related to collective bargaining as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the legal position of the School Committee, as declared by the Chair.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none