

Pembroke Public Schools

72 Pilgrim Road, Pembroke, MA 02359

www.pembrokek12.org

pembroke@pembrokek12.org



(781) 829-1178
FAX (781) 829-6957

PEMBROKE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, October 1, 2024

North Pembroke Elementary School Library

Call to Order

Mr. Chilcott called the meeting to order at 6:45 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

None

Acknowledge & Schedule Visitors

Mr. Chilcott welcomed the audience members.

Mr. Chilcott said the committee has not discussed the FY26 budget or any potential cuts. Budget discussions will commence in late November. He expressed gratitude for the letters received in the school committee mailbox. He emphasized the importance of the music program, stating that there have been no discussions about cutting anything from the program. He also mentioned that this topic will be included as an agenda item for a future meeting in November or December to facilitate a discussion.

Communications

Student Letter regarding low enrollment in music offerings at PHS

Mrs. Delaney said that she received a student's letter addressed to the School Committee. The letter expressed concern about the declining enrollment in the marching band. It suggested that the Pathways Program might be the reason for this decline and requested the school committee to investigate and find a solution. The letter also mentioned that the Pathways Program is introduced to 8th graders, which might be too early for them to decide between Pathways, Marching Band, Chorus, etc. It also raised questions about whether the Pathways Program is replacing vocational education and whether it is beneficial for college applications.

Mrs. Delaney added it is great to see student advocacy and hear about what they're experiencing at the student level. Mr. Chilcott said the committee will not have a full discussion on this topic tonight as there is work to be done first. Mrs. Obey said she will attend the PAPA meeting on October 8th to answer questions and share data on the past 11 years of enrollment in chorus, band, and orchestra as a function of overall enrollment. She noted that in 2014, PHS enrollment was 1080 students and it's currently 680, resulting in fewer students in all courses. She went on to explain that the committee has extensively discussed the level of student choice and she anticipates more conversation on this topic as enrollment will eventually drive decision-making. Mrs. Glennon asked Mrs. Obey to remind everyone about the

status of the Latin program at PHS. Mrs. Obey explained that a vacancy in the Latin program occurred towards the end of the summer and the district was unable to fill the position. The administration and the guidance staff at PHS worked with those students who selected Latin courses to either enroll them in an online class or offer them the option of taking French or Spanish. Latin will continue to be offered next year, and the district will post the position during the spring hiring season with the hopes of finding a successful candidate.

Request to meet with Town Manager and Public Safety Officials regarding Communication protocols

Mr. Chilcott stated that he has no concerns about safety within the school buildings or the district, but he believes that the district should continuously evaluate its protocols and communication strategies. He has requested a meeting, coordinated through the Town Manager, between himself, the superintendent, the Chief of Police, and the Chair of the Select Board. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss protocols, strategies, and effective communication methods. The meeting is scheduled for Thursday and he wanted to be sure the committee was aware of why he asked for the meeting. Mrs. Obey said the committee discussed having an executive session on school safety and that will be after November 3rd when Officer Simmons becomes the new School Resource Officer.

Mrs. Glennon explained that MASC votes on resolutions annually to advocate for certain issues. Each district designates a representative to vote on its behalf. She stated that three committee members will attend the MASC Conference this year and she would like to appoint a member as the voting delegate, which the committee agreed to do. Mr. Boyle suggested the delegate simplify each resolution for better understanding. Mr. Chilcott recommended forming a working group with the voting delegate and an alternate delegate to develop recommendations to bring the full committee. If the working group cannot reach an agreement, the committee will discuss the matter and take a vote. The decision of the committee will prevail, and it is expected that the voting delegate will cast their vote in line with the committee's decision. Mrs. Bollinger nominated Mrs. Glennon as a delegate. Mrs. Delaney expressed interest in being a delegate. Mr. Chilcott suggested since it is Mrs. Delaney's first year as a committee member that she attend the MASC Conference learn the process and apply to be a delegate next year.

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to appoint Allison Glennon as the MASC voting delegate at the MASC Conference.

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 Patrick Chilcott and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to appoint Susan Bollinger as the alternate delegate.

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

Mrs. Chilcott asked that Mrs. Bollinger and Mrs. Glennon review the resolutions and bring the recommendations back to the committee.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None

Approval of Bill Schedule

Warrants will be sent out electronically.

Consideration for Approval: School Committee Meeting Minutes of September 3, 2024

VOTE: On a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to approve the School Committee meeting minutes of September 3, 2024, as presented.

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

No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Discussion of Changes in Title IX Regulations – Attorney Joe Emerson

Mr. Emerson said he was asked to review the MASC recommendations of policies to be included in the PPS policy manual regarding updates to Title IX. He explained that he had been assigned the task of informing the committee about which policies are appropriate and which are unnecessary. The first policy AC: Non-Discrimination Policy Including Harassment & Retaliation has the addition of the words sex stereotypes and sex characteristics. These words are also added to policy AC-R: and all policies have changed the word harassment to discrimination. He said he has no issues with including policies AC, AC-R, and ACA in the policy manual, as they are consistent with the Massachusetts General Laws regarding discrimination, which are as strict, if not stricter, than Title IX. Policy ACGA regarding the civil rights grievance procedure is also consistent with both Title IX and Civil Rights laws. He added that ACA-R does not have a legal citation cited and he believes a policy should always be based on a statute either local or federal. Additionally, everything in ACA-R is covered in ACA, therefore he finds ACA-R redundant. Mr. Emerson said he also found policy ACGB to be redundant as well. Mrs. Glennon asked about policy ACAB and Mr. Emerson said it has consistency in the definitions and references MA Chapter 151B so this policy is fine. Mrs. Bollinger confirmed that there is a possibility that the Title IX changes might not happen. Mr. Emerson said a Kansas case in July put a stoppage for the districts that were involved, but is currently being appealed. He explained that Massachusetts is not part of this case, so Title IX still applies. Massachusetts law Chapter 151B already covers much of what was added to Title IX, and it is still mandatory to comply with MA law. He explained that the Federal government, through the Department of Education, can decide to withhold funding as an avenue of enforcement of Title IX. Mrs. Bollinger said she heard that since 1972 federal funds have never been withheld and Mrs. Emerson said that is his understanding. Mrs. Bollinger asked about taking a wait and-see approach before changing policies and Mr. Emerson explained there is an obligation to comply with the laws in place and this is in place at this time in MA. With the Kansas case, the question is whether or not the Department of Education can hold them accountable for failure to comply. He reiterated that Massachusetts Law already has laws and similar definitions in place. Mr. Chilcott explained his understanding of the Kansas case to be that if a student was a child of a member of Moms for Liberty the district could not be held accountable to the new Title IX regulations and it would default to the original Title IX regulations. Mr. Emerson clarified that it is by individual school, not the district. Mrs. Obey clarified that PPS does not have a standalone non-discrimination policy and this is the reason behind the recommendation to adopt policy AC. Mrs. Glennon said her understanding is that the current policy GBAA would require an update to change the word harassment to discrimination. Additionally, there is a need for the addition of a standalone non-discrimination policy and a policy specifically for pregnant students. Mrs. Obey clarified that the district does not have these policies and should regardless of the Title IX changes. Mrs. Delaney inquired whether the district is required to comply with the new Title IX Final Rule. Mr. Emerson explained that PPS has the authority to choose not to adopt any of these policies, but there is a risk beyond just the withholding of funding, such as potential lawsuits. Mr. Chilcott stated that he believes it's less about the Title IX piece and more about how the district's policies ultimately have to comply with the Massachusetts law. Mrs. Delaney said she thinks the district has to comply with both. Mrs. Bollinger confirmed that proof of membership in Moms for Liberty is all that is needed to exempt a school. She stated that she supports abiding by Massachusetts laws, but the district should not modify policies to comply with the new Title IX rule until the Supreme Court makes a decision. Mr. Emerson said the Kansas case only prohibits the Department of Education from enforcing the Title IX regulations it doesn't stop the Title IX regulations. Mr. Chilcott suggested the Policy Subcommittee consider this feedback and make a determination to present to the committee for discussion. Mrs. Delaney confirmed that the committee can get a list of the schools that have parents who are members of Moms for Liberty.

Discussion Regarding Recommending Policy Sub Look at Policy JJIB – Interscholastic Athletics

Mr. Chilcott said he asked for this to be on the agenda. He said Dighton-Rehoboth implemented a policy that allows coaches to forfeit a game if a biological male is playing on an all-female team against other females. He would like to ask the Policy Subcommittee to review JJIB and other related policies and compare them to Dighton-Rehoboth's policy and bring a recommendation of what may or may not make sense for PPS. Mrs. Obey clarified that this policy applies to opposite sexes in general, not just a male on a female team. She also mentioned that the current policy does not prohibit a coach or athlete from forfeiting a contest, and there are no listed consequences associated with that. Mr. Chilcott said he wants to ensure that all female athletes are afforded every protection to make sure they don't get injured while

playing sports. Mrs. Glennon said the committee has to be careful about how this is presented, as there is a male player on the volleyball team. Mrs. Obey mentioned the availability of optional safety equipment for field hockey, as this sport has particular safety concerns, which can be further discussed in the Policy Subcommittee meeting. Mrs. Bollinger said it is a good idea to put the information into the policy to make students feel safe. Mr. Boyle said he contacted the MIAA and confirmed that a forfeit will count toward the team's record. Mrs. Glennon asked Mr. Emerson if there is a legal reason to not include the language regarding no consequences if a coach or athlete decides not to participate. Mr. Emerson said no.

VOTE: On a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to instruct the Policy Subcommittee to review Policy JJIB: Interscholastic Athletics and similar policies in order to review for student safety on single-sex teams.

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

Discussion of School Committee Goals

The committee decided that Mrs. Glennon and Mrs. Delaney will take all the suggested goals and combine them into a cohesive document to be presented at a November meeting.

Superintendent's Report

Technology Scorecard

Mrs. Obey said this is a quarterly snapshot in time of what's happening in the Technology Department.

Consideration for Approval: World Languages Department Trip to France February 2025 Mrs.

Obey said this trip has happened in the past based on student interest.

VOTE: On a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the World Languages Department trip to France February 2025 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: Music Department Trip to New York City/New Jersey April 2025

Mrs. Obey said Mrs. Chapman heard the feedback from last year's trip and the price listed will not change.

VOTE: On a motion made by Allison Glennon and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the Music Department trip to New York City/New Jersey April 2025 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: World Languages Department Trip to Quebec City May 2025 Mrs.

Obey said this trip took place in the past and is for students in grades 7-12.

VOTE: On a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the World Languages Department trip to Quebec City May 2025 as presented.

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

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Subcommittee Updates: Policy:

Consideration for First Read: Rescind/Recode of Numbered Policy Sections

Mrs. Obey said most of the policies are being rescinded because they were recoded to lettered policies.

VOTE: On a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to accept as a first read the Rescind/Recode of Numbered Policy Sections.

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

No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Long Range Planning:

Potential Topic – Playground Audit

Mrs. Obey mentioned that Mrs. Glennon has requested the Long-Range Planning Committee to conduct a playground audit. She mentioned that Marshfield paid \$16,000 for an audit of approximately 5 playgrounds, so the cost would be less than that. She expressed her concern about the potentially expensive recommendations that would come from the audit, given that playground equipment is very costly. Mrs. Delaney asked about the purpose of the audit, and Mrs. Obey explained that the goal is to make recommendations for improvements. This is in the hopes of securing Community Preservation funds for the playground improvements. Mr. Boyle expressed concern about identifying any hazards, and Mrs. Obey clarified that the audit is not an inspection. She emphasized that although it's a worthy cause, the committee needs to be prepared for the associated costs. Mrs. Obey also noted that no work has been done to the playgrounds since the buildings were renovated in 1999. However, the playgrounds were last inspected in 2012, and there is an annual minimum safety standard as part of the town's insurance coverage. Mrs. Delaney confirmed that part of the audit would involve ensuring that the playground is accessible for children with disabilities. Mrs. Bollinger echoed Mr. Boyle's concern, and Mrs. Obey mentioned that if any serious issues were found, they would recommend closing the playground. Mrs. Obey also stated that the district doesn't have the \$16,000 needed for the audit and suggested asking CPC to fund it, which Mr. Chilcott agreed with. Mr. Chilcott stated that he believes the audit's results will increase the district's liability. However, he emphasized the importance of prioritizing student safety. He also mentioned that the audit recommendations will require a multi-year implementation process. Mrs. Glennon said she understands the district is facing financial constraints but stressed that it should not compromise student safety. She suggested that the Long-Range Planning Committee consider forgoing the audit and reallocating the funds towards necessary repairs. Mr. Chilcott pointed out that an audit would provide essential data when requesting funding. The committee agreed to assign the Long-Range Planning Committee with this task.

Future Meeting Dates and Topics

10/22, 11/12 and 11/19

VOTE: At 8:15 PM on a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted, by roll call vote, to enter Executive Session Pursuant to Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(2) to discuss a personal services contract 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: October 22, 2024

MOTIONS

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to appoint Allison Glennon as the MASC voting delegate at the MASC Conference.

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 Patrick Chilcott and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to appoint Susan Bollinger as the alternate delegate.

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 David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to approve the School Committee meeting minutes of September 3, 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 Katrina Delaney and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to instruct the Policy Subcommittee to review Policy JJIB: Interscholastic Athletics and similar policies in order to review for student safety on single-sex teams.

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 World Languages Department trip to France February 2025 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 Music Department trip to New York City/New Jersey April 2025 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 World Languages Department trip to Quebec City May 2025 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 accept as a first read the Rescind/Recode of Numbered Policy Sections.

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

VOTE: At 8:15 PM on a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted, by roll call vote, to enter Executive Session Pursuant to Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(2) to discuss a personal services contract 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