

Pembroke Public Schools

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PEMBROKE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING **Tuesday, January 7, 2025** **North Pembroke Elementary School Library**

Call to Order

Mr. Chilcott called the meeting to order at 6:30 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; and Susan Bollinger and David Boyle

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

Paige Graziano brought to the committee's attention that it was very difficult to hear the members during the last meeting. To address this issue, she has created cards that she will raise when the audience cannot hear the committee members. She emphasized the importance of being able to hear the business being discussed. Mrs. Delaney thanked Ms. Graziano for highlighting this concern.

Acknowledge & Schedule Visitors

Mr. Chilcott welcomed the audience members.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None

Communications

None

Approval of Bill Schedule

Warrants were circulated electronically.

Consideration for Approval: School Committee Meeting Minutes of December 17, 2024

VOTE: On a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the school committee meeting minutes of December 17, 2024 as presented.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Discussion of School Committee Goals

Mrs. Glennon stated that she has met several times with Mrs. Obey and Ms. Brust regarding the draft goals, and the decision was made that the committee needs a strategic plan. Mrs. Obey mentioned that, as discussed in the last meeting, some of the action steps are beyond the committee's capacity to support, except those related to budget and policy. She and Mrs. Glennon dedicated about 6-7 hours to refining the committee's feedback. However, she believes

that the focus should shift towards creating an 18-month strategic plan, and this document will then be incorporated into that plan. The committee will continue to receive updates on achievement, communication, and social/emotional wellness as the work is done on the strategic plan. She added that a strategic plan has not existed since she has worked here. Mrs. Bollinger noted that this work can be costly and Mrs. Obey said there is an option to use a DESE facilitator for a day or two and they give the committee the tools to do the rest of the work, this would cost about \$3,500. Mrs. Delaney asked Mrs. Obey to explain the benefits of a strategic plan to the public. Mrs. Obey explained that the public will have a voice in the process, which ensures transparency and allows the committee to be held accountable. Mr. Chilcott added that a strategic plan provides a multi-year vision. Mrs. Obey suggested putting out an RFP to see who is interested in the work and she will provide the committee with that information in February.

Superintendent's Report

Special Education Department Overview

Ms. DeLorenzo explained that Special Education team chairs in each building oversee teachers, support staff, and paraprofessionals. Special education focuses on meeting the individual needs of students through tailored instruction, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed. Research shows that providing access to inclusive settings promotes both academic growth and social-emotional well-being for all students. One department goal is to involve families as active participants in the IEP process. A second goal is to educate the community which includes the expansion of Unified Sports to an after-school club with Hobomock and PCMS students. PCMS is also working with a couple of agencies around sensitivity and inclusivity training for students. A third goal is to expand training on the specialized reading program LIPS through grade 8. The last goal is to support students in achieving post-secondary readiness, including vocational skills and independent living skills.

Ms. DeLorenzo said Massachusetts reports to federal agencies regarding IDEA, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. States have oversight of local districts regarding performance and compliance. Districts must report various indicators to DESE, rotating annually. Some data, like early childhood outcomes and secondary transition students, are collected every year. Under IDEA, the Special Education Determination is received in January and is based on performance and compliance. MA is based on four categories: Meets Requirements (MR), Needs Assistance (NA), Needs Intervention (NI) and Needs Substantial Intervention (NSI). She said in 2023, which is the most recent data, PPS was categorized as Meets Requirements (MR) and this has been the case in previous years for as long as she can remember. When this information is received each January, she meets with the Team Chairs and special education departments at the building level to talk about trends and to use the data to inform decision-making. She mentioned that PPS has consistently maintained an inclusion rate of 70-75% each year, which is regarded as a success. The majority of PPS students are in full inclusion models, with a small percentage in partial inclusion. The goal not only of the district but also of the State is to educate students with their peers as much as possible.

Ms. DeLorenzo explained that Tiered Focus Monitoring occurs every three years and this review process emphasizes elements tied to student outcomes. It alternates the focus of each review on either Group A Universal Standards or Group B Universal Standards. In 2023, PPS was Tier 1: Meets Requirements in all areas, which means data points indicate no concern with compliance and performance outcomes. If the district didn't meet requirements DESE would conduct check-ins more frequently than 3 years.

Ms. DeLorenzo said the district's students with disabilities population is just below 19% which is less than the State average. She explained that the district internally monitors data as well. Rejected IEPs are one data piece that is monitored. The district proposes an IEP to families and they can either accept it partially or reject it. The average rejected during 2022 and 2023 is 39 and 34 respectively. She mentioned that the department has made significant efforts to address families' questions and concerns before an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is rejected. This proactive approach aims to reach an agreement, and as a result, the number of IEPs rejected this year so far is seven. She went on to explain that if a family rejects any part of an IEP that is not the first IEP, there is a stay-put on the previous IEP. If the district or family believes it's a denial of a free and appropriate education then the district or family will decide whether to file for a due process hearing. Mrs. Bollinger asked if there is a timeline for resolving it and Ms. DeLorenzo said the district must send it to the Bureau of Special Ed within five school days of receiving it and if a family asks for a meeting it has to be held within 10 school days. The families are encouraged to discuss their rejections and concerns even if they don't request a meeting. Mrs. Delaney said she believes the new IEP positively empowers parents. Ms. DeLorenzo explained that the district-wide elementary program at Hobomock has two tracks, one is called PACE, which is a life skills program and the others are the Transition Programs. The goal is to help children in substantially separate programs transition into inclusive opportunities as much as possible. Additionally, another objective is to move them from their current program to a more moderate setting, whether that be a partial inclusion or a full inclusion model. The district has transitioned 10 students over the last four years out of substantially separate programs back and into an inclusionary setting. Over the years the district added an additional teacher to the Transition Program and this helped create a K-1 program a 2-3 program and a 4-6 program which has allowed for

smaller, substantially separate classrooms with more direct instruction in smaller groups. As the department moves forward, the next steps will include continuing to monitor reading data for grades K-2, particularly focusing on the impact of the UFLI and DIBELS programs. Additionally, we will evaluate the curricular programs currently in use, especially in the area of math, to ensure they provide effective direct instruction. It is also important to confirm that we have the appropriate staffing to meet the needs of our students.

Update on Athletic Handbook Language (Policy JJIB)

Mrs. Obey said there is a suggested update to the Athletic Handbook from Mr. Phillips which reads “participation in athletics is governed by Policy JJIB in the Pembroke Public Schools School Committee Policy Manual. No student-athlete or coach shall be penalized by the district in any manner for forfeiting an athletic contest against an opposing team because such a team includes athletes of the opposite sex. She added that this has always been the practice but now it will be in writing. Mr. Chilcott inquired why the Policy Subcommittee did not want to incorporate this into the current policy. Mrs. Delaney explained that she had reviewed what other districts have implemented, and this language is not in most policies in Massachusetts schools. She added the concern is that it could be viewed as discriminatory. Mrs. Glennon stated that she believes most students do not read the policies but do read the Athletic Handbook. Mrs. Bollinger said it would be helpful to have it in the policy. Mrs. Delaney suggested consulting legal counsel. Mr. Boyle mentioned that he believes there could be backlash from parents regarding the forfeiture of games. Mr. Chilcott said he believes it should be in both the policy and the handbook and he would like the Policy Subcommittee to review the policy and come back with a recommendation. Mrs. Obey explained that edits to the Athletic Handbook are being worked on by a group that includes students, parents, teachers, and administrators at PHS, and this work is not yet completed.

Consideration for Approval – Commemoration of GAGA Pit at Bryantville Elementary School (requires suspension of Policy FFA- Commemoration)

Mr. Chilcott stated that Camden Hawkes has completed the GAGA pit at Bryantville. He requested that the pit be dedicated to Maddie Straub and Karen Boyle, with the possibility of including another name in the dedication. This requires a suspension of Policy FFA which was done once before for a piece garden dedicated to Mr. Summergrad at North Pembroke Elementary. Mr. Chilcott noted that the pit is not a permanent structure and can be removed. Camden addressed that committee and said he went to Bryantville Elementary. He said as he was completing the project two amazing people died, Maddie Straub and Karen Boyle and he would like to honor them by dedicating the GAGA pit to them. He added that Mr. Boyle has been a big help with Eagle Scout projects as well. Mr. Chilcott added that Camden noted that Mrs. Boyle raised a lot of money for the schools and did a lot for students and that Maddie Straub had a personal impact on him. Mr. Chilcott asked the committee to suspend FFA: Commemoration

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to suspend Policy FFA: Commemoration.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger, 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 allow Camden to make a dedication and commemoration of the GAGA pit for Karen Boyle, Maddie Straub and a potential third person, a student who passed away who attended Bryantville, per their family’s agreement.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Subcommittee/Liaison Updates

Education Subcommittee: Consideration for Second Read and Approval: PHS New Course Proposals

Mrs. Obey said approval is needed to add these to the Program of Studies.

VOTE: On a motion made by Allison Glennon and seconded by Katrina Delaney, it was unanimously voted to accept as a second read and approval the PHS new course proposals.

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

Future Meeting Dates and Topics

1/21/25

VOTE: At 8:39 PM on a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted, by roll call vote, to enter Executive Session Pursuant to Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) to discuss 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, David Boyle
Voting No: none
Abstaining: none
Absent: none

APPROVED: January 21, 2025

MOTIONS

VOTE: On a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the school committee meeting minutes of December 17, 2024 as presented.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to suspend Policy FFA: Commemoration.

Voting Yes: Patrick Chilcott, Allison Glennon, Katrina Delaney, Susan Bollinger, 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 allow Camden to make a dedication and commemoration of the GAGA pit for Karen Boyle, Maddie Straub and a potential third person, a student who passed away who attended Bryantville, per their family's agreement.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by Allison Glennon and seconded by Katrina Delaney, it was unanimously voted to accept as a second read and approval the PHS new course proposals.

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

VOTE: At 8:39 PM on a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted, by roll call vote, to enter Executive Session Pursuant to Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) to discuss 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, David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none