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PLYMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CENTRAL OFFICE
27 NORTH HARWINTON AVENUE
TERRYVILLE, CONNECTICUT 06786

Linda Kowalske
TOWN CLERK

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Plymouth Public Schools is to challenge, inspire, and prepare all students for success in an ever-changing and complex world.

PLYMOUTH BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
TERRYVILLE HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA
33 NORTH HARWINTON AVENUE
TERRYVILLE, CT 06786

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2025

7:00 P.M.

MINUTES

Present: Mrs. Kulesa, Mr. Seaman, Mr. Showers, Mrs. Tilton, Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani, Mr. Perugino and Mr. Zbuska

Virtual: Mrs. Lucian

Absent: Mr. Foote

Also Present: Mr. Falcone, Superintendent, Mrs. Melillo, Assistant Superintendent, Mrs. Mozak-Pezza, Director of Curriculum & Instruction and Mr. Tencza, Business Manager

1. **Call to Order and Pledge to the Flag**

Mrs. Kulesa Chair called the Special Meeting of the Plymouth Board of Education of January 15, 2025, to order 7 p.m. The group joined in the Pledge to the Flag.

2. **Adoption of the Agenda**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani, second Mr. Perugino, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve:

- (a) The minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Plymouth Board of Education of December 11, 2024.

Motion Mr. Perugino, second Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions (Mr. Seaman and Mr. Zbuska abstain) motion carries.

4. **Student Representatives**

Fallon Roth-Perreault – Absent due to scheduling conflict.

Ava Gwizd

- * Pre Winter-Break Activities (half day of games) – Bingo, holiday crafts, a winter movie and pickleball. Students and staff also went to the auditorium to listen to the chorus, band and staff perform.
- * Midterms – In progress.
- * Sports – Indoor Track first meet at Wesleyan University last week. The Girls Basketball team has been working hard. The Boys Basketball team has had two victories. Season Sport Award and being put in place, if not for this year, most definitely for next year.
- * Drama Club – The Drama Club has started rehearsals for the play, Legally Blonde!

Update

(a) Cafeteria Furniture – Mr. Tencza reported a delivery is expected on January 27, 2025.

(b) Football Co-Op, preferably with Thomaston – In speaking with Ms. Cross, Superintendent for Thomaston, Mr. Falcone indicated this would not be possible. Along with Terryville, her district has budget concerns. Also, her district does have a football team.

However, he indicated he could explore the possibility of a co-op partner. However, a survey would need to be sent out to parents first to see if they understand the expense and the cost of a co-op as this would be an expense to the parents and not the school district. Our district would not take on the cost of tuition, whatever the cost may be. Therefore, the cost of transportation would fall on the school district we partnered with.

There is also significant concern on the part of Mr. Fowler, the high school athletic director, over the impact this would have on our fall sports since participation numbers are not great. Football could possibly pull some of our male students who participate in fall sports.

(c) Request for Additional Night Games – Mr. Falcone in speaking with Mr. Fowler, high school athletic director and Mr. Hults, principal of Terryville High School, the concern is getting teams to agree to play in the evening. Also, there is concern about acquiring officials to agree to referee and cover evening schedules. Terryville and Thomaston are no longer going to play evening games outside based on how intense the atmosphere gets on and off the field. Both schools have decided to not continue the night games. The other alternative is to try to partner with other schools to come to our district to play evening games. Another concern, the lights are not the property of the school district. Trying to gather and borrow the lights from various places and then bring them up to the school is a task in itself. In conclusion, currently the district will keep to one night game. We will see if in the future, we may be able to do more.

5. Public Comment

(a) In-person public comment (limited to 3-minutes per speaker) – None

(b) Remote public comment (please go to www.plymouth.k12.ct.us for instructions on how to participate) - None

6. Executive Session (These items will be discussed in Executive Session)

MOTION: To entertain a motion to enter into executive session at 7:05 p.m. to discuss the following items inviting Mr. Falcone, Superintendent, Mrs. Melillo, Assistant Superintendent and Mr. Tencza, Business Manager into executive session.

- (a) Personnel Issues
- (b) Safety

Motion Mr. Showers, second Mr. Perugino, any discussion, all in favor, any abstentions, any opposed, motion carries.

7. Resume Regular Session

Mrs. Kulesa, Chair resumed regular session at 7:45 p.m.

8. Possible Action from Executive Session (if any)

No Action Taken

9. **Presentation**

(a) **Superintendent's Budget Presentation 2025 – 2026 to the Plymouth Board of Education**

Below is a brief breakdown of the summary of the Superintendent's Budget Presentation 2025 – 2026 to the Plymouth Board of Education. The full presentation may be found on the district website at <http://plymouth.k12.ct.us> on Thursday, January 16, 2025.

Budget Eliminations

Proposed Staffing Eliminations

Four full-time Certified Faculty
Salary & Benefits = \$379,544

Two full-time Non-Certified Staff
Five part-time Non-Certified Staff
Salary & Benefits = \$239,779

Total = **\$619,323**

Proposed Budget Eliminations

Administrative Workdays Reduction
Magnet School Transportation
Insurance – Capped at 10.5% &
Budgeted at 9%
Technology – One-time Purchases
Title I Transfer
Title II Transfer
Title III Transfer
Perkins Grants Transfer
Building Budget Reductions
Approximate Retirement Savings

Total = **\$347,536**

Total Amount Eliminated from Budget = \$966,859

Budget Request Breakdown

Proposed Budget

2025 – 2026 Original Submitted Budget	\$28,969,920
Budget Eliminations	\$ 966,859
Excess Cost Reimbursement	\$ 458,918 (60% Reimbursement)
Budget Additions	<u>\$ 101,845</u> (Evening Security @THS & Contracted Services – Teacher of The Deaf)

2025 – 2026 Proposed Budget Total **\$27,645,988**

2025-2026 Superintendent Recommended Budget

Current BOE Adopted Operating Budget	\$26,775,293
2025-2026 Recommended Budget Total	<u>\$27,645,988</u>

Increase from the 2024-2025 Budget \$870,695 3.25%

10. **Unfinished Business**

(a) **Out-of-the-Country Field Trip to Puerto Rico**

As discussed at the December Board of Education Meeting, the Board agreed to any change with respect to the dates of the Puerto Rico Field Trip. This is a 5-day trip using the following dates: April 5, 2026 – April 13, 2026. These dates are based on EF availability. **Note:** "EF availability" refers to the number of spots remaining on tour for a specific departure date, essentially indicating how many seats are still available for a traveler to book on that particular trip.

11. **Business Manager's Report and Personnel Report**

(a) **Business Manager's Report** – Mr. Tencza, Business Manager

- Included in the packet are the following - Accounts by Facilities Report for November and 7 different submissions.

- (1 & 2) Business Office Activity Report & Negative Balance Explanations
- (3) Board of Education Summary through December 31, 2024
- (4) Monthly Budget Report, December 31, 2024
- (5) Cumulative Board of Education Budget Expenditures % by Month, December 2024 – 2025
- (6) Food Services Financial Performance Year-to-Date (July 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024)
- (7) Capital Improvement Plan 2024 – 2033 Plymouth Public Schools (updated December 31, 2024)

Mr. Tencza – Reviewed the following: (a) Budget Expenditures for 2024 – 2025 with respect to negative impact, cost reimbursement, how to cover the shortfall and how several employees have decided to take the benefit packet, which was not expected. (b) Food Service – Thanked the entire staff for stepping up as the district continues to operate without a director. Thanked Merideth Patel for accepting the role of Interim Director. (c) Cafeteria Furniture – The vendor has been contacted and there is a tentative delivery date of January 27, 2025, for the replacement furniture to arrive. (d) The district's 2012 Ford F-350 pick-up truck is out of commission. Originally, this vehicle is used in the winter plowing. However, the contractor is now responsible for sidewalks, therefore, the pick-up is not being used. Currently, the district is waiting for repair estimates and are researching replacement options.

Mr. Perugino – (a) Negative Balance Outplacements- Public and Negative Balance Outplacements – Non-Public, (b) Fuel and (c) District Plowing – Who is responsible?

Mr. Tencza – (a) He received notice on Monday, the district will be receiving approximately \$464,00 in total. However, this is below the expected range of \$600,000. Working with the special education department on all encumbrances.

Do not look at what the district has at the end because the district has so much encumbered. All transactions have been encumbered for the rest of the year. All the monies have been set aside. (b) With respect to fuel, tanks are full and have been capped off. (c) a contractor does take care of the schools. It is contracted through the town. They put out the RFP.

- The Accounts by Facilities Report will be forwarded to the Town of Plymouth Board of Finance

(b) Personnel Report – Mr. Falcone, Superintendent

A Math position was posted and there was no response. We are working to fill the position internally, if possible, as a temporary solution to that concern. Also, we have hired an evening security individual for Terryville High School this afternoon for the remainder of the school year.

12. Public Comment

(a) In-person public comment (limited to 3-minutes per speaker) – None.

(b) Remote public comment (please go to www.plymouth.k12.ct.us for instructions on how to participate)

Joe Dolan, 14 Ridge Road

Question: With the large population of outplacement, if a student wants to attend a technical school, Is there a reason why the town has to pay the full tuition cost? It is my belief that the family should be responsible for all or at least a portion of the education cost. If a child wants to attend a catholic school, they have to pay for the full tuition cost.

13. Board Liaison Reports

Mr. Perugino/Mrs. Tilton

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Harry S. Fisher Elementary School

1/24/2025

Color Wars and School Store

Boosterthon – this is an important fundraiser for many events.

Yearbooks are now on sale.

1/21/2025

Next PTA meeting at 7 p.m. in the Harry S. Fisher Library

Mr. Zbuska

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Plymouth Center School

1/16/2025

PTA Virtual Meeting

1/20/2025

No School – Martin Luther King Day

1/31/2025

Bingo Night – PCS cafeteria, free event- 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. They are looking for volunteers. If you plan on attending, you must RSVP, i.e., Facebook Page

2/2/2025

School Store

2/10 – 2/14/2025

Tentative Book Fair Week

2/11/2025

PTA Virtual Meeting at 7 p.m.

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani

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Eli Terry Jr. Middle School

1/21/2025

First Dance in a long time. Students are excited.

PTA working on Grit "n Wit for the summertime.

1/22/2025

PTA Meeting 7 p.m. on-line or virtual

Mr. Foote

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Terryville High School

Absent

Mrs. Kulesa – Be on the lookout for fundraisers from Terryville High School. Most of these fundraisers are for seniors to have a safe and fun last get together after graduation. Please support these fundraisers.

Mrs. Tilton

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EdAdvance

EdAdvance met last week. A staff member from CABE attended the meeting to present some information about upcoming legislative changes.

3/12/2025

Day on the Hill

A select committee was put together on special education to look into how to better fund special education.

Also discussed, services, transportation grant and Head Start Funding. The next budget meeting will be held in March.

Next EdAdvance meeting will take place on February 6, virtual.

14. **Board Comment Overall Comments on the Superintendent's Budget Presentation**

This is a tough time of the year. The district wants students to succeed. Decisions that need to be made will not be easy. The Board has some challenging work ahead of them. Parents were urged to attend the budget workshops. Have your voice heard. Reach out to a council member, the Board of Education, and other elected officials to let them know how you feel. The budget meetings, town council meetings and board of finance meetings are open to the public. Please, if you are able, attend these meetings or write a letter, make a phone call, send an email. Let your officials know what is important to you and what you feel strongly about. It is important the Board and others know how you are feeling. Your input is important and appreciated. An email from the superintendent will be sent out as to the dates and times of the Budget Workshops.

Thank you to the Superintendent and all those individuals who participated in putting the budget presentation together. It is never an easy task. Once the Board has had an opportunity to review the presentation, they will bring their questions to the budget workshop.

Family & Consumer Science Classes at Eli Terry Jr. Middle School – Classes joined an Adopt a Cow Program. They are following the growth of Minnie, a calf who was born in September on the Oakridge Dairy Farm in Ellington, CT. The farm delivers fresh dairy products. A delivery of fresh cream was used to make homemade butter and then whipped cream was used in the apple crisp food lab.

Other Comments – The cafeteria staff was thanked for stepping up to address the district's needs. The AI presentation, prior to the meeting, was enjoyed. Request the Board Members receive the job postings.

15. **Next Board Meeting** – The next Regular Meeting of the Plymouth Board of Education is on Wednesday February 12, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the cafeteria at Terryville High School.

16. **Adjournment**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to adjourn at 8:47p.m. Motion Mr. Showers, second, Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani all in favor, motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia Piskorski

Recording Secretary

For the Plymouth Board of Education