

Pembroke Public Schools

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PEMBROKE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, January 21, 2025

North Pembroke Elementary School Library

Call to Order

Mr. Chilcott called the meeting to order at 7:30 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

None

Acknowledge & Schedule Visitors

Mr. Chilcott welcomed the audience members. He welcomed Pembroke Police Chief MacDonald and School Resource Officer Simmons. He welcomed the new student representative Ryan Milchunes.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None

Communications

Mr. Chilcott stated that the Pembroke Teachers Association (PTA) posted an open letter to the superintendent on their website. He emphasized that they have always had a good working relationship with the PTA and greatly value the incredible work that teachers do on a day-to-day basis. However, he expressed his dismay over the types of communications that have been distributed in recent months, highlighting the presence of multiple half-truths and biased spins in those messages.

The open letter addresses matters that have not previously been brought before this committee, which Mr. Chilcott believes the committee should not be involved in because they pertain to personnel issues. Under the law, personnel matters are managed through the administration and are not a matter of public record.

He asserted that this committee will not tolerate bullying, intimidation, or harassment directed at the administration or the team, and they will respond to such behavior until it ceases. He also acknowledged that they need to maintain a cooperative relationship with the leadership of the Pembroke Teachers Association to ensure that teachers are treated fairly.

Mr. Chilcott admitted that the district did not respond adequately to accusations made by a couple of teachers back in November. While he noted that they should have been more communicative, he asserted that the district acted fairly and appropriately by retaining legal counsel to conduct an impartial review. That process involved multiple investigatory interviews with various staff members, which takes time. As far as he knows, the final report and findings have not yet been completed. He emphasized that pushing, intimidating, or harassing the superintendent for a specific finding is unacceptable, and using children to spread misinformation and half-truths is also intolerable.

Furthermore, Mr. Chilcott mentioned that the School Committee will add a link to the PPS website where all information related to teacher negotiations and similar incidents will be made available to the extent that it can be publicly shared. By law, many details cannot be disclosed, but he believes that taxpayers and town residents have the right to be informed in a truthful and comprehensive manner.

Mrs. Delaney said the SEPAC schedule of meetings through June is out and the next meeting is on Monday at 9am at Pembroke Community Center.

Approval of Bill Schedule

Warrants were circulated electronically.

Consideration for Approval: School Committee Meeting Minutes of January 7, 2025

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Katrina Delaney, it was unanimously voted to approve the school committee meeting minutes of January 7, 2025 as presented.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Superintendent's Report

Consideration for Acceptance: School Resource Officer Memorandum of Understanding

Mrs. Obey mentioned that this template is similar to the DESE template. The document outlines how to share information and describes what the School Resource Officer (SRO) does during the school day. Mrs. Delaney inquired about adding a statement regarding collaboration with youth. Mr. Chilcott asked for details on how communication operates between the schools and the Police Department. Chief McDonald replied that he and Officer Simmons maintain open communication and frequently meet to discuss any needs to support the SRO position. Mr. Chilcott then asked Officer Simmons how she is adjusting to the role. She responded that it has been better than her previous experience in patrol, and her transition has gone smoothly, thanks to Sasha's assistance. She has been collaborating with the administration at each building, and Officer Kirby has shown her effective practices. Mr. Chilcott expressed his gratitude to them. Chief McDonald also thanked Officer Kirby for the excellent work he did as SRO over the past 12 years.

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to accept the School Resource Officer Memorandum of Understanding as amended.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Mrs. Glennon raised concerns about safety measures, including propped doors at schools. Mrs. Obey mentioned that Officer Simmons has been informing the administration about issues with non-working doors and reinforcing the importance of locking them among the staff. The committee discussed the need for improved signage regarding school zones and the safety of students during outdoor activities. Mrs. Obey stated that she is working with the Town Manager to create signs for the running trails and to enhance the signage on Learning Lane, possibly including flashing solar signs.

FY26 Elementary Budget Presentation

Mrs. Obey stated that this presentation is about their goals and what is needed to advance their buildings. Mr. Chilcott mentioned that FY26 will be challenging, not just for Pembroke, but also at the state and federal levels. Mr. Murphy noted that this presentation is the combined effort of the three principals. Elementary enrollment has remained stable. FY25 class sizes among the three schools are similar with Hobomock a bit less. Projected class sizes for FY26 show Hobomock will stay about the same, Bryantville down about 10 students, and North up about five. Current trends indicate that this movement may lead to a review of staffing levels at each building. Mrs. Obey mentioned that she will evaluate the sixth-grade teaching model if there is a need to reduce a section. Additionally, Mrs. Cross noted that four years ago, Hobomock had only two sections of sixth grade. Enrollment numbers will be monitored throughout the summer. Mr. Murphy said the previously funded elementary priorities included a full-time reading specialist in each elementary, the Science of Reading PD and curriculum tools, Grade 6 Open Sci Ed PD and curriculum, a full-time social worker at each elementary school, paras for the Titan Labs, and the Second Step Program.

Mrs. Simmons said reading specialists have done an amazing job using the Science of Reading knowledge and the Dibbles to inform instruction. Mrs. Delaney asked about seeing achievement differences and Mrs. Simmons said not just with achievement but also in the IST student support special ed referrals.

Mrs. Cross stated that, because of the reading specialists, students now receive tiered instructional support.

Ryan Milchunes requested an overview of the Second Step program. Mr. Murphy explained that either the entire grade level or a specific classroom collaborates to review some student-friendly short videos. Teachers can then conduct extension activities based on those videos. This program empowers students to make their own decisions and identify trusted adults within the school.

Mrs. Simmons the FY26 budget priorities include a fourth specialist rotation, an additional math interventionist at each building, a behaviorist at each building, and the creation of a social-emotional substantially separate special education program. For Tier II, the request is for an RBT to support student behaviors, the addition of a .5fte math and .5fte reading interventionist. Mrs. Glennon said it is important to mention that this would help keep students in the district. Mrs. Cross said they are seeing an increase in students with social-emotional difficulties that require a more restrictive learning environment and therapeutic support. The benefits of a social-emotional substantially separate special education program include a tailored special education approach, community and student benefits, and cost savings through reduced out-of-district placements. The goal is to bring back Pembroke out-of-district students with this program. The proposal would be to roll out one classroom. The needs to create this program are a special ed teacher, an RBT, a .5FTE BCBA, a .5FTE social worker, and PD all at a cost of \$207,500. Mr. Chilcott suggested consulting the legislative representatives about start-up funding for this program and recommended that the Budget Subcommittee review the proposal. Mr. Chilcott clarified that this is in addition to the existing inclusive program.

Consideration for Approval: PCMS & Elementary Out-of-State Music Department Trip

Mrs. Obey said the Music Department grades 4-8 will go on a field trip to Providence, RI.

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the PCMS and elementary schools out-of-state music trip as presented.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Subcommittee/Liaison Updates

Mrs. Obey indicated that the Negotiations Subcommittee met last week. A tab will be added to the website for subcommittee information. The Education Subcommittee and Policy Subcommittee will examine the competency determination language. The Long Range Planning Committee will discuss playground inspections. The Vocational Planning Committee will meet in about a week after the SST votes on January 25th regarding their building project. Mrs. Obey mentioned that if the vote passes, the Vocational Planning Committee will start preparing estimates for Pembroke around late winter.

Future Meeting Dates and Topics

2/4/25 and possibly 2/25/25.

VOTE: At 8:50 PM on a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

APPROVED: February 25, 2025

MOTIONS

VOTE: On a motion made by Susan Bollinger and seconded by Katrina Delaney, it was unanimously voted to approve the school committee meeting minutes of January 7, 2025 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 Susan Bollinger and seconded by Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to accept the School Resource Officer Memorandum of Understanding as amended.

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 Allison Glennon, it was unanimously voted to approve the PCMS and elementary schools' out-of-state music trip as presented.

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

VOTE: At 8:50 PM on a motion made by Katrina Delaney and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

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