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APPROVED
Pelham School Board
Workshop Meeting – Public Session
September 3, 2008
Pelham High School Library

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School Board Members Cindy Kyzer; Linda Mahoney;
Linda Koehler; Eleanor Burton
Superintendent: Dr. Frank Bass
Assistant Superintendent: Roxanne Wilson
Business Administrator: Kathleen Sargent

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Cindy Kyzer called the public session to order at 7:44 p.m. All those in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. Mrs. Kyzer excused herself from presiding over the meeting and turned it over to Eleanor Burton and joined the public discussion.

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Kindergarten Discussion

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Dr. Bass explained the SB530 Senate Bill on kindergarten. It was stressed that this is mandated. The state would pay 100% for the use of portable classroom(s) for three years to house kindergarten age students. This also would include the setup and break down of these classrooms. No monies would have to be appropriated and there would be no direct impact to the tax payer. Dr. Bass stated this would be a short term solution.

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It was further noted that a plan would have to be submitted to the Commissioner by December 1, 2008 outlining Pelham's long term plans to provide kindergarten. The state would provide 75% reimbursement for the building/renovation for kindergarten use. It was also noted the No Mean No law could be overridden by the School District should the School Board choose to craft a warrant article with regard to kindergarten and it is turned down by the voters. The School Board has the obligation to go forward and provide a kindergarten program.

Linda Koehler added that the portable classroom(s) could be used for other students with any freed up space being used for kindergarten students.

Roxanne Wilson noted there is a provision that allows districts that do not have kindergarten to contract with a private entity that meets or exceeds standards adopted by the Department of Education. However, this would also be temporary – a three year period. It was noted this would probably not be a viable option for Pelham.

Linda Mahoney questioned the DOE assumption that it would provide \$1,200 per student – noting they cannot count on receiving this amount every year.

Dean Egert, PSB legal counsel, responded by stating it is the fiscal impact summary the DOE is referring to which is a state budget adopted each year to fund this.

1 Dr. Bass also responded by stating the number is \$1,200, but there is expectation that it
2 will go up to \$1,700 per student, assuming the state continues with it's funding, as it does
3 for any student who comes through the door.

4
5 Mr. Scanzani questioned if the 75% state building aid reimbursement could happen
6 simultaneously with the 100% coverage for portables. Dr. Bass stated that yes both types
7 of aid could occur together – the portables could be used while construction of
8 kindergarten classrooms was also taking place. Mr. Scanzani reminded the Board to
9 think ahead to the increasing enrollment numbers when they are making a decision. He
10 stated he could provide information regarding population.

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12 Lorraine Dube questioned if there could be a voucher system so that parents could
13 continue to send their children to a kindergarten of their choice.

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15 Roxanne Wilson responded by stating there will not be a voucher system.

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17 Tom Hillson questioned if transportation would be included. Dr. Bass stated A.M.
18 kindergarten would have the option of riding the bus to school with parental pickup after
19 the program; and P.M. kindergarten children would have the option of riding the buses
20 home from the program.

21
22 Diane Chubb questioned how the curriculum would be designed along with the hiring
23 process for teachers. Roxanne Wilson responded by stating that she is pulling the
24 curriculum together now and is looking at the standards that exist from the state. She is
25 also proposing a committee be formed to look at what the practice for kindergarten would
26 be. With regard to teachers, they would go through the same recruitment process –
27 noting HQT is not a requirement for kindergarten teachers.

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29 Sue Desimone questioned if teacher aides and specialists would be need. It was noted
30 they would be needed – noting there is a whole budget that has to go along with this.
31 However, all the furniture, fixtures and materials would be paid for by the state. Space
32 for related services with regard to kindergarten would also be included.

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34 Eleanor Burton noted that the State would not fund full day kindergarten.

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36 Lorraine Dube questioned if there could be a lottery for parents with regard to A.M.
37 kindergarten. She also questioned what the consequences to the town would be if they
38 did not comply with the state.

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40 Eleanor Burton responded by stating they did not know for certain but stated they may
41 withhold funding.

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43 Charlie Collins questioned if the Board would be crafting a warrant article for March.
44 Kathleen Sargent responded by stating they will if they decide to. There will be other
45 meetings to discuss this issue further.

1 Linda Mahoney spoke, stating she is struggling with this issue as it has to do with the
2 constitutional rights of the community. She is also thinking of the impact it will have on
3 the School District. She noted that if they put it before the voters and the voters say no,
4 the State is still telling Pelham to go forward with kindergarten.

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6 Linda Koehler stated only 9 towns in the entire country are without a kindergarten
7 program. She also stressed that Pelham is being told by legislation in New Hampshire
8 that kindergarten is considered part of an adequate education. She feels that the State has
9 really extended themselves to us.

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11 Mr. Scanzanni stated Pelham should move forward and figure out how to fund this.

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13 Linda Mahoney noted she would like for Pelham to vote in kindergarten when they are
14 ready and that she does think what the state is offering is very generous but has a problem
15 with the way they are mandating Pelham to do this.

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17 Notation was made that Representative, Lynne Ober, worked very hard putting forth
18 revisions to the original state plan and this new bill is far better because of her efforts.

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20 Eleanor Burton stated the School Board would be continuing their talks regarding this
21 matter at future meetings and encouraged members of the public to attend. Future
22 meetings would be televised.

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24 **Discussion of Plans**

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26 Roxanne Wilson spoke of the formation of a committee which could consist of a School
27 Board member; first grade teacher; elementary administrator; parent of kindergarten to be
28 student; current kindergarten teacher and Tina McCoy.

29
30 Mrs. McCoy stated she would like to have one teacher on the committee who works at
31 the kindergarten level with special needs. The committee is needed to help prepare a plan
32 which needs to be presented to the State by December 1, 2008.

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34 It was noted the District found out in June of this year of the December 1, 2008 deadline.

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36 Available rooms at PES was discussed for use by kindergarten with others students using
37 the portables for the short term.

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39 Attorney Egert stated that continuing contractual obligations have to go into a default
40 budget.

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42 Dr. Bass stated they looked at renovating Sherburne School and they found it impossible
43 to implement. With regard to an addition at PES, it was noted they believe they do not
44 have the necessary land to put on an addition as codes keep changing. Other
45 considerations could be a free standing building to house preschool, kindergarten and

1 possible first and second grade. Dr. Bass stressed that the Board would have to think
2 long and hard about the entire impact to the District when making a decision.

3
4 Kathleen Sargent stated information would be made available to the public regarding
5 building or renovation matters when they are complete as possible. It was noted such
6 information, when ready, would be available at the library, on the web site and in the
7 minutes.

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10 Motion to adjourn under RSA 91-A: 3II at 9:15 p.m. was made by Linda Mahoney with a
11 2nd by Linda Koehler 3-0

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14 Respectfully Submitted – Diane Figaro