

**Pelham School Board Meeting
Emergency School Board Meeting
November 21, 2020
Pelham Elementary School
10:00 am**

In Attendance:

School Board Members: Megan Larson, Chair, Debbie Ryan, Vice-Chair (virtual), Troy Bressette (virtual), Darlene Greenwood (virtual), and David Wilkerson (virtual)

Superintendent: Chip McGee (virtual)

Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessments: Sarah Marandos

Student Representative: Joe Wholey (virtual)

1. Call to Order:

Chair Megan Larson called the Emergency School Board Meeting to order at 10:00 am. Ms. Larson then requested every member introduce themselves and say whether they are alone or if someone else is in the room.

- a. Dr. McGee - alone in the Assistant Principal's Office at PES
- b. Ms. Greenwood - alone
- c. Ms. Ryan – alone
- d. Mr. Bressette – alone in Front Office at PES
- e. Mr. Wilkerson – alone
- f. Mr. Wholey – alone in the Conference Room at PES

2. Public Input:

- a. None

3. Main Issues / Policy Updates:

Superintendent Chip McGee mentioned that he recommended that the District have an early-release on Monday and Tuesday of next week to prepare for remote learning . He added that on Monday, November 30 through at least December 11, the District would pivot to remote learning. Dr. McGee notified the School Board of five significant issues:

- a. The early release for next week will follow the same schedule we do for all early-releases.
- b. The school building and the SAU will remain open, and people will be required to follow the same guidelines for entering the buildings.
- c. Pre-school will remain in session during the pivot to remote learning.
- d. The District will consider in-school Special Education Services on a case-by-case basis.
- e. The Family Choice decisions that have been made for kindergarten through eighth grade will continue.

Dr. McGee mentioned that if the School Board does approve his recommendation, the key will be communication. He noted that after the meeting, he would share the link to the meeting with the community. Dr. McGee commented that he had shared a memo with the School Board members, and he would post a copy of the notice onto the School District's website.

Dr. McGee noted that DHHS data shows that the community's test positivity rate continues to be minimal. The number of new infections is at a substantial level, and substantial is considered the highest level. The District has also looked into the number of hospitalizations, and the level is minimal. Dr. McGee stated that the community is at a moderate level for transmission of the virus.

Dr. McGee commented that the School District currently has sporadic cases within the schools. The schools have not had any clusters in the last two weeks. He added that student absenteeism is below the 15 percent threshold.

52 Dr. McGee requested that the Board approve his request so that families could plan for coverage starting on
53 November 30. The staff would need to plan for two weeks of specific instructional materials, and prepare for
54 working with students who have special needs.
55

56 Dr. McGee mentioned that the staff capacity is an issue and is a significant reason for why the PHS transitioned to
57 remote learning and why the Emergency School Board Meeting was called. Currently, the staff are not only being
58 impacted by close contacts and quarantines, but they are also being affected by the other School Districts that
59 have already transitioned to remote learning. Superintendent Chip McGee noted that cold and flu season has
60 arrived, and he sees a staff that is already strained move to a critical level.

61
62 Dr. McGee commented that during the past 48 hours, the District went back to the Reopening Safely Guide. The
63 District's first consideration was safety, and the second consideration was students returning from a two-week
64 quarantine. Using that information, and not predicting past the fourteen days, the District chose Monday,
65 December 14 as the return to in-school learning date.
66

67 Dr. McGee stated that he is concerned about the difficulty of transitioning back from remote learning to in-school
68 learning. He added that it is better to assume that the Pelham School District will be back in school on December
69 14. The School Board discussed the pros and cons of only two-weeks in remote learning. The Board agreed that the
70 best situation for the students would be to learn in school, as long as it is safe. Another concern is that staffing will
71 become more difficult after the holidays.
72

73 Dr. McGee mentioned that remote learning from November 30 until at least December 11 would not impact
74 winter sports. He pointed out that the first organized practice would not occur until after the planned return. The
75 transition to remote learning is not intended to impact the second-trimester plans for kindergarten through eighth
76 grade.
77

78 Student Representative Joe Wholey mentioned that students at PHS have commented that they would be
79 interested in returning from remote learning after the holidays. Mr. Wholey also stated that the PHS students
80 recognized that their situation is more flexible than those who attend PES and PMS.
81

82 Ms. Larson suggested that the School Board agree to transition to remote learning until December 11. The Board
83 will revisit the discussion at the next School Board meeting on December 2.
84

85 Ms. Ryan made a motion to incorporate the recommendations of the Superintendent as outlined. Mr. Bressette
86 seconded the motion.

87 **Roll Call:**

88 Debbie Ryan - Yes
89 Darlene Greenwood - Yes
90 Troy Bressette - Yes
91 David Wilkerson - Yes
92 Megan Larson - Yes
93

94 **4. Future Meetings:**

- 95 a. 12/02/2020 – 6:30 pm School Board Meeting @ PES Library
96 b. 12/16/2020 – 6:30 pm School Board Meeting @ PES Library
97

98 **5. Adjourn Meeting:**

99 Mr. Bressette made a motion to adjourn the public session at 10:40 am. Mr. Wilkerson seconded the motion.

100 **Roll Call:**

101 Debbie Ryan - Yes
102 Darlene Greenwood - Yes

103 Troy Bressette - Yes
104 David Wilkerson - Yes
105 Megan Larson - Yes
106
107
108 Submitted by Matthew Sullivan