

Pelham School Board Meeting
July 15, 2020
Sherburne Hall
6:30 pm

In Attendance:

School Board Members: Megan Larson, Chair (virtual), Debbie Ryan, Vice-Chair, Troy Bressette, Darlene Greenwood, and David Wilkerson (virtual)
Superintendent: Chip McGee
Business Administrator: Deb Mahoney
Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessments: Sarah Marandos
Student Representative: Joe Wholey
Not Present: None

1. **Opening:**

1. **Welcome/Call to Order:**

Vice-Chair Debbie Ryan called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm, followed by The Pledge of Allegiance. Vice-Chair Debbie Ryan mentioned that she would act as the Chair because Chair Megan Larson, David Wilkerson, and Recording Secretary Matt Sullivan would be attending the meeting virtually.

2. **Public Input:**

None

3. **Opening Remarks:**

Student Report:

Student Representative Joe Wholey stated that he hoped everyone was having a good summer. Joe Wholey added the Prom had been canceled for the summer because of guidelines put in place by the state. Mrs. Mead is looking into having a fall formal dance. Vice-Chair Debbie Ryan mentioned that canceling the Prom was sad, but not unexpected.

The meeting was paused because of audio issues.

Superintendent Opening Remarks:

Superintendent Chip McGee commented on Student Representative Joe Wholey's report. He mentioned that the news was not the happiest, but he and Mrs. Mead discussed the guidelines and believed a Prom did not make sense with restrictions on large assemblies. Superintendent Chip McGee said that Proms across the state had been canceled. Pelham was one of the last holdouts.

On August 2nd, the School District has the PHS graduation at 2 pm. The graduation will occur on Harris Field. The Administration has gone over the graduation logistics, and they will review the logistics one more time. The School District wants to provide a happy, joyous celebration, and still make the graduation safe.

Superintendent Chip McGee mentioned that he had two other announcements to make. The first announcement was that the PHS athletes are in Phase One. Phase One is the return

48 to the athletic fields for fall sports. The return of athletics has moved slower than initially
49 expected towards Phase Two. Phase Two allows for the passing of the ball between two
50 student-athletes. The NHIAA is in constant talks trying to figure out what the right thing to do is.
51 At this time, they still have not made a decision on fall sports.
52 Director of Student Services Kimberly Lessard informed Superintendent Chip McGee that they
53 have 164 in-district and out-of-district students who were eligible for ESY. 145 out of the 164
54 students selected remote learning. 13 students selected to do a hybrid of remote learning and
55 face-to-face learning. Six students are coming for face-to-face ESY. All the face-to-face is
56 learning occurring at the elementary school. Vice-Chair Debbie Ryan mentioned that she
57 attended a Task Force meeting virtually. She enjoyed seeing the school library.
58

59 2. **Presentations:**

60 None

61

62 3. **Main Issues / Policy Updates:**

63

64 1. **Reopening Task Force Report**

65 Superintendent Chip McGee mentioned that he adjusted the agenda. He was hoping to receive
66 feedback from the School Board. The agenda's additions were related to the school calendar
67 and an additional School Board meeting on July 29.

68 The Task Force has met twice. The Task Force does not have a decision or a formal report out at
69 this point. Superintendent Chip McGee commented that the Task Force had done a lot of work,
70 and a whole lot of work is in the pipeline for the next ten days. The Superintendent wanted to
71 remind everyone that the priority is the safety of the children and staff. The second Task Force
72 meeting was yesterday. Superintendent Chip McGee thought it was a really powerful thing for
73 him to be in the room with the Task Force members. At the same time, the group had people
74 attending the meeting virtually. The PHS library was used because it provided the spacing
75 needed.

76 The Task Force does not have an announcement tonight. Superintendent Chip McGee would like
77 to share with everyone what the reopening will look like on July 29. Some communities have
78 already shared their reopening plans, and some communities will not share until August. He
79 added that one does not want to be first in a process like this, and one does not want to be last.
80 There were three things that the Superintendent wanted to highlight that the Task Force has
81 done.

82 1. **Proposed Calendar Change** – The change to the school calendar would allow for
83 additional training for the staff.

84 2. **Additional Play** – At the last meeting, Superintendent Chip McGee reviewed four
85 plays. The Task Force has added a fifth play. The five plays are:

86 a. **Continued Remote Learning** – This is the approach used from March 13,
87 2020, to the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

88 b. **Limited Reopening** – This would allow for reopening for the students most
89 in need of returning to school and those ablest to manage a limited school
90 schedule.

91 c. **Partial Reopening** – This would allow for reopening on a rotating schedule
92 to allow for social distancing through the school's cleaning and the
93 screening of students and staff as they enter the school.

94 d. **Full Reopening** – This will be a new normal with all students and staff
95 following a full schedule with universal guidance in place.

- 96 e. Hybrid Approach – This would allow the staff to anticipate that some
97 students or teachers will be medically unable, or the family is too concerned
98 to return the student to school. This approach will allow students to learn
99 either through face-to-face or remote learning. The hybrid approach is the
100 most complicated and relies on the most planning.
101

102 Superintendent Chip McGee stated what Vice-Chair Debbie Ryan said at the last meeting. 'The
103 need as we approach the reopening is to use a culture of grace.' Residents of the community
104 have shared their concerns with Superintendent Chip McGee. The residents are concerned for
105 their children and for the adults who are in the schools. At the same time, some residents are
106 concerned that students will not be in school. Superintendent Chip McGee believes that the
107 School District needs to listen to both sides. The decision chosen cannot make everyone happy.
108 The Superintendent said he refers to this as 'the world's worst snow-day call.' No matter which
109 decision is made, someone will be unhappy.

110 The one thing that came out from the Task Force meetings was that the Task Force does not
111 have enough members. The Task Force consists of 28 members, and they meet once a week for
112 two hours. The leadership team is putting working groups together. The groups are being told
113 that they need to start making nut and bolt decisions. For example, the food service needs to
114 decide how to order and provide the food in all five plays. Superintendent Chip McGee directed
115 his team to put the working groups together and begin working through these decisions next
116 week. The next Task Force meeting is Tuesday, July 21.

117 Superintendent Chip McGee acknowledged that the Department of Education (DOE) and the
118 Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) presented its STRRT Task Force findings. The
119 Superintendent thanked Sarah Marandos for pointing out the critical points of the presentation.
120 Superintendent Chip McGee pointed out two key points to the School Board. The first point was
121 that the guidance uses a range from three to six feet of separation for students. The
122 Superintendent mentioned that Massachusetts and the American Association of Pediatrics (AAP)
123 supports this guideline. The three to six feet separation guideline provides the School District
124 with more opportunities within the classroom. The second point was that the state offered
125 flexibility with regards to masks. Superintendent Chip McGee believes there is strong evidence
126 that masks are crucial to safety. Safety remains the priority of the Task Force. He has not made a
127 decision with regards to a mask policy.

128 Superintendent Chip McGee believes the time has come to have a second survey for the parents
129 and staff. He believes it is essential to spread the surveys out over time because beliefs are
130 consistently changing. The three areas that he would like to cover are:

- 131 1. How are parents and staff feeling about returning to school? The initial survey had
132 approximately 40% say that they wanted to return full-time. Approximately 40% said that
133 they preferred a blended partial reopening. Less than 20% said that they wanted full remote
134 learning.
- 135 2. Use of transportation. Superintendent Chip McGee commented that the responses would
136 not be considered commitments. The question would help the School District budget for
137 transportation.
- 138 3. Interest in participation in extracurricular activities. The response to the question will be
139 significant because parents will need to plan for the activities.

140 Darlene Greenwood asked the Superintendent, what do three to six feet mean on a bus? The
141 Superintendent mentioned that he could not answer the question because he did not have the
142 guidelines. David Wilkerson mentioned that he remembered the Governor saying that students
143 may have assigned seating on a bus. He believed that the planning for transporting the students

144 was placed on the local districts. She added that there is a lot to think about with the spacing on
145 a bus. Superintendent Chip McGee agreed with David Wilkerson and said the responsibility is on
146 the local District. Darlene Greenwood believed that the transportation question would have
147 three results. There would be parents for the bussing, parents against bussing, and parents that
148 are hedging and waiting for more information. The Superintendent commented that the
149 question would require that the answer be based on the District's guidelines from the state. The
150 Superintendent mentioned that the town of Pelham had hired Karen McGlynn as the Public
151 Health Officer. She will attend the School Board meeting on July 29. Superintendent Chip McGee
152 made plans to meet with members of the fire department, the police department, and Karen
153 McGlynn and receive their feedback. He added that the survey would have a fourth section, the
154 section will allow parents and staff to add anything that they want the School District to know.
155 Student Representative Joe Wholey asked if the Superintendent planned on sending the survey
156 out to the students. The Superintendent said that the students would receive a survey. He also
157 mentioned that the students on the Task Force have been constructive. David Wilkerson
158 complimented Joe Wholey for asking the question and advocating for the students he
159 represents.
160 Vice-Chair Debbie Ryan asked how the survey would be disseminated. The Superintendent said
161 that the survey would be sent out on social media. The District will also send the survey out in
162 the mail and email. Troy Bressette asked if there is a mechanism in place to differentiate
163 between staff, parents, students, and the general public that wants to add their input.
164 Superintendent Chip McGee understood what Troy Bressette was asking, but believed more
165 input was valuable. Future surveys would become more restrictive.
166

167 Action Item:

168 Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Sarah Marandos requested that the School
169 Board add three additional days for teacher professional development. The three additional
170 development days would cover Health and Safety Protocols, Operational Changes, Consistent
171 and Effective Use of Technology, and Social-Emotional Impacts.
172 Historically the School District had three days for the teacher professional development. The
173 three develop days on the current calendar are August 27, 28, and 31. The first day of school
174 would be on Tuesday, September 1. The proposal is to add three additional development days
175 on September 1, 2, and 3. These days were selected because Friday, September 4, and Monday,
176 September 7, would be used for the Labor Day Holiday. The first day of school for students
177 would be Tuesday, September 8. Sarah Marandos mentioned that September 8 is a voting day.
178 She suggested that the day be used as an instructional day, but with limited students. PHS
179 would have freshmen orientation, and the other schools would have a meet and greet day.
180 Sarah Marandos commented that the Task Force's subgroup, Teacher and Learning, believed
181 adding additional days for development was necessary. The group also believed that teachers
182 needed time to prepare the classrooms for the students. She said that adding the three
183 additional days would not add days to the school year's end.
184 Superintendent Chip McGee commented that he was bringing the proposal to the School Board
185 now because parents need a school calendar as soon as possible. He asked the Board if they
186 wanted to vote on the calendar or wait until the next meeting. The Superintendent said he
187 would understand if the Board wanted to receive community input. Troy Bressette thanked
188 Sarah Marandos and Superintendent Chip McGee for bringing the proposal to the School Board.
189 Darlene Greenwood mentioned that she was happy that Sarah Marandos had spoken to the
190 teacher's association. Vice-Chair Debbie Ryan asked if the School District had the funding and
191 resources needed to perform the additional professional development. Sarah Marandos

192 believed that they have enough resources to complete the development. Superintendent Chip
193 McGee believed that there might be requests for resources, but they will be minimal. The cost
194 will come later. Vice-Chair Debbie Ryan wanted to know who was in charge of determining what
195 their needs are and what the needs are of the teachers. Sarah Marandos said that they have the
196 Reopening Task Force, the Teaching and Learning sub-committee has a workgroup with an
197 expanded number of teachers. The instructional coaches will determine the technology needs
198 and what a teacher needs to be successful. Darlene Greenwood mentioned that once District
199 got all the grades on a schedule, the parents felt better. Each grade found things that worked,
200 did not work, and things they could do better.

201 Chair Debbie Ryan was concerned having students return to school on a day when adults are
202 voting. She asked what the day would look like. Superintendent Chip McGee responded to her
203 COVID-19 concerns. He believed that parents need a start of school date to target. He was also
204 open to feedback concerning the voting. Dawn Mead, Sarah Marandos, and Superintendent
205 Chip McGee agreed that they would limit the number of students at PHS. One of the ideas was
206 to open the school to the freshmen. This would allow the freshmen to learn the routine. The
207 busses could run their routes and learn their routine with limited students. Superintendent Chip
208 McGee mentioned that some School Districts do not have school on voting days. If that were an
209 option, students would start school on the 9th. David Wilkerson mentioned that logistically
210 having students going to school, and adults voting in the school is problematic. The major issue
211 is the parking lot. Chair Megan Larson said that the number of people in the building should be
212 limited given the situation. She added that the students should not be in the building while
213 people are voting. The parking lot is an issue, and the District does not want more students to
214 use busses. Superintendent Chip McGee said that whatever the Board's decision is, the
215 Administration will make it work. He agreed that the 8th is a complicated day. His experience
216 with Primary Voting is the number of people voting is light. He deferred the decision to the
217 School Board. If the Board decided to vote in favor of starting school on the 9th, he would put
218 the 8th to good use.

219 Superintendent Chip McGee could not say what the 8th would look like, because he did not know
220 what the Primary would look like. Chair Megan Larson asked if the freshmen orientation would
221 still occur. Sarah Marandos mentioned that the plan was to have the orientation on the 3rd
222 initially. Once there is more information about the calendar, they will schedule the freshmen
223 orientation. Chair Megan Larson added that if the Administration can safely pull off a freshmen
224 orientation, she could live it. Darlene Greenwood said that she did not feel comfortable because
225 she did not have enough information. She suggested keeping the freshmen orientation on
226 September 3. Vice-Chair Debbie Ryan mentioned that the School Board needs to have a meeting
227 to put together a voting policy. Troy Bressette and Darlene Greenwood mentioned that another
228 committee made the policies on voting.

229

230 **David Wilkerson made a motion to adopt the proposed calendar with the additional amendment of**
231 **starting school on September 9, 2020. Troy Bressette seconded the motion. The motion passed**
232 **unanimously.**

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239 Action Item:
240 Superintendent Chip McGee requested to add a School Board meeting for Wednesday, July 29,
241 at 6:30 pm. Superintendent Chip McGee would like to present the reopening plans for the
242 School District. The presentation will be similar to the one he presented, but with more detail.
243 The meeting on the 29th would allow the School Board to review the plan and determine their
244 thoughts on the plan.
245 Troy Bressette commented that the schedule shows all the meetings occurring at PES. He asked
246 if the meetings would start back at PES or remain at Sherburne Hall. Superintendent Chip
247 McGee said that the library at PES is perfectly safe for a meeting. However, he was unsure
248 where the right location would be. David Wilkerson mentioned that if the School Board met in
249 the library at PES, the school would need to clean after the meeting. If the School Board met in
250 Sherburne Hall, cleaning would need to occur, but there is less traffic than the school library. He
251 suggested that the schedule be changed to TBD, Superintendent Chip McGee agreed but
252 deferred to Vice-Chair Debbie Ryan. Vice-Chair Debbie Ryan said that the schedule did not need
253 to be changed, at the time. She suggested that Chair Megan Larson and James Greenwood
254 discuss the logistics and make a decision.
255

256 **Troy Bressette made a motion to approve the proposed meeting schedule with the addition of July 29,**
257 **2020. David Wilkerson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

258
259 2. Student Handbooks

260 Action Item:
261 a. Superintendent Chip McGee shared proposed changes to the student handbooks at all
262 the schools. He wanted the School Board to review the handbooks because the
263 handbooks have the weight of policy. The Principals all understood the changes to the
264 Handbook were underway before he arrived. He pointed out that this school year is not
265 a year for radical changes. Until the School District knows what the plan is, COVID-19
266 language will not be built into the handbooks.
267 COVID-19 language will not be built into every working document. The COVID-19
268 language will have a separate set of documents. Superintendent Chip McGee mentioned
269 that he does not need feedback now, but he would value the feedback.
270

271 PES: Handbook and Memo – PES Assistant Principal Kelly LaBonte suggested a language
272 change for the 20-21 PES Family and Student Handbook. She suggested they change the
273 sentence that reads, “Teachers will grade and enter assignments into PowerSchool
274 within two weeks if the assignment being turned in.” She suggested they change the
275 language to read, “Teachers will grade assignments and provide this feedback to
276 students and families within two weeks of the assignment being turned in. Grades may
277 be entered into PowerSchool or sent home through graded rubrics and/or graded
278 assignments.”
279

280 PMS: Handbook and Memo – The Administration at the Pelham Memorial School
281 requested four changes. The first change was to request "Possible Consequences" on
282 page 16 of the Student Handbook. The second request was the addition of a statement
283 clarifying the lunch and recess disciplinary procedures found on page 28 of the Student
284 Handbook. The third change was to request the addition of a clarifying statement to the
285 “Water Bottles” section found on pages 32 and 33 of the Student Handbook. The fourth

286 change was to request the addition of "Bus Discipline" to the Student Handbook. The
287 addition can be found on page 35 of the Student Handbook.
288

289 PHS: Handbook and Memo – The Administration requested several changes. The
290 addition of a detailed chain of command on page three for common areas of concern.
291 The removal of all references to quarters because they use a rolling grading system at
292 PHS. Removal of "Seniors failing a course may lose their privilege of late arrive/early
293 dismissal. At the discretion of an administrator, students may regain this privilege if
294 their grades are passing." Under arrival to school on page 14, we changed, "Students
295 arriving after the start of the third block will be unable to participate in after school
296 activities" to "Students arriving after the start of the advisory will be unable to
297 participate in after school activities." Tardy procedures on page 16 were changed to 8
298 or more tardies receiving an in-school suspension from 7. Level III disciplinary offenses
299 on page 20 were updated to include suspension as a disciplinary option as that was an
300 oversight in last year's Handbook.

301 Additionally, we included an example of level III offenses: "possession of paraphernalia
302 including but not limited to: rolling papers, pipes, vape juice, hookah pens, or other
303 types of electronic delivery devices, vape chargers, or drug/vape related packaging."
304 Under "Procedure for handling incidents" on page 21, the Student Support Team was
305 redefined as the student's "school counselor in conjunction with administration." In the
306 dress code on page 22, we removed the line regarding chain wallets/heavy metal
307 jewelry, necklaces, and ornamental chains.

308 Additionally, we changed the line regarding ripped clothing to read "ripped clothing of
309 any kind must be in compliance with the shorts/pants/dresses/skirts rule mentioned
310 above" which is 6" from the kneecap center. Procedures regarding Overnight and Day
311 trips on page 24 were updated to include the line, "All bags are subject to a search by
312 administration before the trip." Furthermore, under "Parking Information," on page 28,
313 the timeline for the lottery for junior parking spots was updated from "October 1st" to
314 "September" as that more accurately reflects when we run the lottery. We also
315 removed the line stating that students who fail a class may lose their parking privileges.
316

317 Troy Bressette thanked Superintendent Chip McGee for the memos and the Handbooks with
318 redlines through the corrections. He also said that he liked the letters to the parents and
319 students.

320 Vice-Chair Debbie Ryan asked if Superintendent Chip McGee was looking for feedback. He
321 mentioned that he was looking for feedback on the Student Handbooks. She also asked if she
322 had initially missed the memos or were they not provided. Darlene Greenwood said the memos
323 were provided with the Handbooks.

324 Darlene Greenwood mentioned that she contacted Kelly LaBonte about PowerSchool. Darlene
325 Greenwood wanted to know if the grades were still entered into PowerSchool if the grades were
326 sent home. Kelly LaBonte said the grades would go into PowerSchool, but not within the two-
327 weeks.

328 David Wilkerson suggested the School District look into project that will help to better
329 understand and facilitate recess. He mentioned that the sight of seeing the PMS students during
330 recess is grim. Darlene Greenwood believes the PTA is an excellent group to get involved.

331 Student Representative Joe Wholey noticed that the items that were to be removed from the
332 Handbook are still in the Handbook, and the Chromebook fees were not updated.

333 Superintendent Chip McGee mentioned that they did an overlay of the memo, without changing
334 the document. He said the changes would be made as they are reflected in the memo.
335

336 **Troy Bressette made a motion to approve the three Handbooks as presented with the amendments**
337 **discussed. David Wilkerson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

338
339 **3. Donation Item: Donation of a Large Mobile Screen**

340 Action Items:
341 Superintendent Chip McGee commented that Thistle Communication, owned by a former
342 Pelham graduate, donated a large mobile screen. The large mobile screen will be used for the
343 PHS graduation ceremony at Harris Field. Chair Megan Larson mentioned that Thistle
344 Communications has become very creative with their business structure. The company has a
345 Facebook page that shows the type of work they have been performing.
346 The large mobile screen is valued at \$3,500. Vice-Chair Debbie Ryan said that a couple of the
347 Thistles were PTV employees. The School Board thanked the Thistles for their donation.
348

349 **David Wilkerson made a motion, with great gratitude, to accept the gift of services to the District and**
350 **the community, as stated in the letter that was provided. Troy Bressette seconded the motion. The**
351 **motion passed unanimously.**

352
353 **4. Old Business:**

354 Board Member Reports:
355 a. None
356

357 **5. Housekeeping:**

358 a. Adoption of Meeting Minutes:
359 July 1, 2020 – School Board Meeting Minutes – the minutes were pulled.
360

361 b. Vendor and Payroll Manifests:

362	1. AP063020	\$144,574.45
363	2. AP070820	\$1,989,299.61
364	3. AP071520	\$134,119.37
365	4. PAY102P	\$269.93
366	5. PAY101P	\$2,568.78
367	6. PAY102M	\$50.00
368	7. 102	\$26,531.28
369	8. 102M	\$2,623.78

370
371 Troy Bressette asked B.A. Deb Mahoney if the School Board members would receive an email to
372 all sign-off on, or was she only looking for three signatures. B.A. Deb Mahoney said that she was
373 only looking for the three signatures. She also mentioned that per the Executive Order, they are
374 permitted to continue using PandaDoc.
375

376 **Troy Bressette made a motion to approve the Vendor and Payroll Manifests as presented. David**
377 **Wilkerson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
378

379 c. Correspondence & Information:

380 1. None

381

382 d. Staffing Updates:

383 **Nominations** –

384 1. Dennis Larocque PHS Special Education Teacher and Case Manager

385 2. Tracy Parkhurst PES Grade 3 Teacher

386 3. Melanie Duval-Buell PMS Grade 7 Science Teacher

387

388 Superintendent Chip McGee said that Dennis Larocque is energetic and looking for a long-term

389 home. He mentioned that Tracy Parkhurst is looking to come north of the border. He

390 commented that Melanie Duval-Buell worked at Pennichuck Middle School in Nashua. His

391 daughter attends the same school and is in the same grade, but different team.

392

393 **Troy Bressette made a motion to approve the nominations of Dennis Larocque, Tracy Parkhurst, and**

394 **Melanie Duval-Buell as presented. David Wilkerson seconded the motion. The motion passed**

395 **unanimously.**

396

397 **Resignations** –

398 1. Karen Steinbeck PES Special Education Coordinator Part-Time

399

400 Superintendent Chip McGee mentioned that it is nice when someone knows they are

401 not a fit. The commute was not a fit.

402

403 **Troy Bressette made a motion to accept the resignation of Karen Steinbeck. David Wilkerson**

404 **seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

405

406 **Future Meetings:**

407 1. 07/29/2020 – 6:30 pm School Board Meeting

408 2. 08/05/2020 – 6:30 pm School Board Meeting

409 3. 08/19/2020 – 6:30 pm School Board Meeting

410

411 **Adjournment:**

412 **David Wilkerson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 pm. Troy Bressette seconded the**

413 **motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

414

415

416 Submitted by Matthew Sullivan