

**Pelham School Board Meeting
March 2, 2022
Pelham Elementary School
6:30 pm**

In Attendance:

School Board Members: Megan Larson, Chair; Troy Bressette, Vice-Chair; and Thomas Gellar

Superintendent: Chip McGee

Assistant Superintendent: Sarah Marandos

Business Administrator: Deb Mahoney

Absent: Darlene Greenwood, David Wilkerson, and Lily Chafe

Note: February School Vacation Week

1. Call to Order:

Chair Megan Larson called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm and requested that everyone stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

a. Public Input @ 6:35 pm:

No one was present for Public Input.

Public Input closed at 6:36 pm.

b. Opening Remarks:

Student Representative:

Nothing to report

Superintendent:

Superintendent Chip McGee mentioned that on Tuesday, March 8, from 7 am until 8 pm, at PHS, the residents of Pelham would have their Town election.

Dr. McGee stated that he was delighted to introduce to the community Taryn Temmallo. Ms. Temmallo is the new Director of Nutrition Services, and she came to the Pelham School District from a Beth Israel Lahey Health Hospital in Burlington, MA.

Assistant Superintendent Sarah Marandos commented that on March 22, Elizabeth Englander would speak about Cyber-Bullying. The event will be virtual and start at 6 pm, and the District will send out a link to watch the event. The event will also be recorded for people who cannot attend the event on March 22.

2. Presentations:

None

3. Main Issues / Policy Updates:

a. Voting Day and Solar Leasing:

Dr. McGee stated that he wanted to make everyone aware that the information regarding the District election is linked to the Warrant, the Voter's Guide, and the Deliberative Session slides.

Mr. Bressette mentioned that one of the questions he had was regarding the Solar Leasing Article. He asked if the Board would support setting back up the Solar Task Force to evaluate any potential proposals and get involved in the technical details that would not come until after the District received permission from the

53 voters to lease the School District's property for this purpose. Mr. Bressette said the composition of the Solar
54 Task Force would be similar to the previous Solar Task Force. Dr. McGee noted that he would be delighted to
55 have a Task Force with the same expertise as the original Solar Task Force.
56

57 Mr. Gellar asked what would be the charge of the Task Force. Mr. Bressette commented that the Task Force
58 would have some involvement in evaluating the request for proposals (RFPs) or requests for qualifications
59 (RFQs). Business Administrator Deb Mahoney stated that the Solar Task Force would gather questions and put
60 the questions into the RFP. The Task Force would then put together a proposal to present to the School Board.
61

62 The Board agreed to be cautious, but if Article Three – Solar Leasing passes, the Board will commit to
63 reestablishing the Solar Task Force.
64

65 b. **Pelham Memorial School Building Project:**

66 Superintendent Chip McGee reviewed the PMS Building Project details and commented on the crane moving
67 steel. The steel for the gymnasium is going up and provides a scale of the size of the gymnasium. The District
68 has switched over to a new transformer and it is in a temporary location.
69

70 Dr. McGee thanked the Building Committee for providing a lot of guidance and feedback regarding how to
71 make sure the renovation is back on track budget-wise. He mentioned that some of the changes made to get
72 renovation back on track budget-wise were:
73

74 **Accepted VE Items:**

- 75 i. Reduction curtain wall and storefront windows
- 76 ii. Elimination of the divider curtain at the gymnasium
- 77 iii. Reuse of gymnasium scoreboard
- 78 iv. Change in the type of acoustical treatment
79

80 Mr. Bressette commented that one of the commitments that the School Board reiterated all along was that
81 they do not want to compromise quality or the longevity of materials or the intended effectiveness of the
82 materials provided. He asked if there was any compromise regarding the acoustical treatment, and Dr. McGee
83 stated that no compromise was made; it is a different application.
84

85 Ms. Larson commented that she has heard people say the project is over budget, and she noted that the
86 project has a guaranteed maximum price that the project cannot exceed. Ms. Larson stressed that decisions
87 have to be made regarding the supplies and cost, similar to what happened with PHS.
88

89 Mr. Gellar asked if it was the last meeting that he asked about the cost overrun and if that information would
90 be available. Dr. McGee stated that BP&S had accepted bids from major subcontractors, but they are waiting
91 for the subcontractors to inform them where they expect something to cost more than it needs to be. They
92 are working on getting the cost information to the School Board.
93

94 c. **Draft 2022-2023 School Calendar:**

95 Superintendent Chip McGee stated that the school calendar for 2022 – 2023 is the second read, and he took
96 the feedback from the School Board. Dr. McGee noted that he included the Pinkerton Academy school
97 calendar for 2022 – 2023, and proposed to switch the Wednesday, April 5 early release to Friday, April 7. He
98 noted that if the proposed change were made, the Pelham School District school calendar and Pinkerton
99 Academy's school calendar for that week would not be the same.
100

101 Mr. Bressette expressed his appreciation to Dr. McGee for making the proposed change. He added that Dr.
102 McGee had struck a good balance regarding the school calendar for 2022 – 2023.
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104 Mr. Bressette made a motion to approve the 2022 – 2023 school calendar, as presented; Mr. Gellar seconded the
105 motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

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d. **Pandemic Response:**

Key Takeaways Regarding the Pandemic

Superintendent Chip McGee commented on the key takeaways of the pandemic.

- a. The Pelham School District remains fully open to students.
- b. The level of community transmission remains 'Substantial' but has decreased since February 16.
- c. The level of school impact remains 'low.'
- d. Masks and distancing are optional throughout the District. Starting on Monday, March 7, this will include school buses.
- e. Students and staff wishing to return after only five days from isolation or quarantine will be required to wear a mask for an additional five days.
- f. The School District will accept at-home rapid tests for Covid-19, starting on Monday, March 7.

i. **Hillsborough County**

The Covid-19 PCR test positivity as a 7-day average was 7.1% (Moderate) on February 16 and was 5.4% (Moderate) on March 2. The number of new infections per 100,000 population for the prior 14 days was 474 (Substantial) on February 16 and was 267 (Substantial) on March 2.

ii. **Town of Pelham**

The Covid-19 PCR test positivity as a 7-day average was 7.1% (Minimal) on February 16 and was 5.2% (Substantial) on March 2. The number of new infections per 100,000 population for the prior 14 days was 467 (Substantial) on February 16 and was 247 (Substantial) on March 2. 247 equates to 35 people in Pelham with new positive cases of Covid-19.

iii. **Level of School Impact**

The level of school impact has three measures: Transmission within Schools, Student Absenteeism, and Staff Capacity.

a. **Transmission Within Schools**

Dr. McGee mentioned that the transmission within schools has no new data on March 2.

b. **Student Absenteeism**

Dr. McGee noted that the level of student absenteeism was 5.0% (Low) on February 16, and there is no new data on March 2.

c. **Staff Capacity**

Dr. McGee commented that there is no new data regarding the percentage of certified educators absent from school, and the staff capacity also has no new data.

iv. **The Big Seven**

The District will continue to follow the big seven mitigation steps:

- a. Masks
- b. Distancing
- c. Hand Sanitation
- d. Screening
- e. Ventilation
- f. Vaccines
- g. PCR Testing

Dr. McGee said that the Level of School Impact is 'low' and the Level of Community Transmission is 'Substantial.' The decision grid recommends "Emphasis on Pelham Data."

159 e. **Audit Questions:**
160 Business Administrator Deb Mahoney commented that this was a follow-up to the January 5 School Board
161 meeting. She noted that there was a question regarding the negative net position that the District ended the
162 year in. Ms. Mahoney mentioned that Ms. Larson correctly pointed out, during the January 5 meeting, that the
163 approved liability from the retirement had increased and caused the negative net position.
164

165 Ms. Mahoney stated that there was an increase in the assets, but there was also a significant increase in the
166 liability. She added that NH Retirement calculates the District's approved liability. Under Government Account
167 Standards Board Statement 45 (GASB-45), the auditors are required to include this information in the School
168 District's financials.
169

170 Ms. Mahoney mentioned that the liability showed a significant increase when the auditors posted the number.
171 The auditors informed the District that many of the surrounding Districts that they audited had resulted in a
172 negative net position. She added that in 2017 the District saw a negative net position, which was caused by
173 the Government Account Standards Board (GASB) change.
174

175 Ms. Mahoney stated that the assets would continue to increase as the project completion comes to fruition.
176 The net position will adjust as long as the liability does not rise higher than the assets.
177

178 Ms. Mahoney commented that the Board had talked about putting out an RFP for other auditing firms. Ms.
179 Mahoney mentioned that she had looked into other auditing firms and asked for options. The one concern she
180 had was regarding the amount of time a new firm would need to get ready for the next audit. She stated that
181 the Town of Salem and the City of Manchester chose to keep the same auditing firms but switch partners and
182 managers. The benefit is that the School District would have a different set of eyes performing the audit but
183 still have the information from previous audits.
184

185 Ms. Mahoney proposed that the School District continue to use Plodzick and Sanderson, P.A. for the upcoming
186 school year ending. The District could request a switch of the partner and manager for the audit.
187

188 Mr. Bressette asked if there was any consequence for having a net negative position and if there is any action
189 the Board should consider. Ms. Mahoney stated that there is no action that she would recommend. Mr.
190 Bressette then asked if there were any consequences of delaying the audit of the records if the School District
191 put an RFP out for bid. Ms. Mahoney said that the District would receive interest from about four auditing
192 firms with about five auditors each. The issue would be the resources available to the agencies to meet the
193 School District's timeline. She noted that if the audit firms were unable to meet the deadlines, the School
194 District would have to request an extension from the State of New Hampshire for the Draft Audit Reports.
195

196 Ms. Larson stated that she was not in favor of an RFP this year because accounting firms similar to other
197 companies are stretched thin personnel-wise. She added that a new auditing firm would not have an
198 established relationship with the Pelham School District. Mr. Gellar agreed with Ms. Larson.
199

200 f. **Request to Reallocate Stipend Funds:**

201 Superintendent Chip McGee commented that the stipends are covered under the Collective Bargaining
202 Agreement, and the CBA has specific language that prohibits the transfer of stipends unless they are brought
203 to the School Board and the PEA. Dr. McGee mentioned that this is the beginning of the reopening of activities
204 at PES.
205

206 i. **Recorder Club Stipend**

207 Dr. McGee stated that PES Music Teacher Erin Weigler has a stipend for a Recorder Club but does not have
208 enough participation in the club. Ms. Weigler wants to expand what she provides to the PES band by shifting
209 the funds from the Recorder Club to an additional Band Stipend.
210

211 Dr. McGee stressed that the transfer of funds does not affect who receives the funds but allows the District to
212 expand its scope with the PES band.

213

214 ii. **Girls on the Run Program**

215 Dr. McGee mentioned that 33 girls are interested in getting involved with Girls on the Run. The plan is to
216 reallocate funds from the Volleyball Club and the Soccer Club to create a stipend to hire three or four coaches
217 for Girls on the Run. If the reallocation of funds were not done, the funds for the Volleyball Club and the
218 Soccer Club would go unspent.

219

220 Mr. Bressette commented that he appreciated the proposal and how the District is working within the existing
221 framework of the approved budget.

222

223 Mr. Bressette made a motion to reallocate the stipends, as presented; Mr. Gellar seconded the motion. The
224 motion passed (3-0-0).

225

226 g. **Policy Reviews:**

227 The Board reviewed the policies listed below.

228

229 i. **First Reading**

230 a. JHC – Student Early Release Precautions (Revised based on Board feedback)

231 Ms. Larson mentioned that the first paragraph needs to be clarified and read similar to rule four. The
232 Board agreed that the edit would be made.

233 b. JFABE – Education of Children in Foster Care (New Policy)

234 c. JFABD – Education of Homeless Children and Unaccompanied Youth

235 d. JICG – Tobacco Products Ban (to rescind)

236 i. ADC – Tobacco-Products-Ban (for reference)

237 e. JICH – Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

238 f. JICJ – Unauthorized Communication Devices (rescind)

239 i. JICL – Responsible Use of Technology (for reference)

240 ii. JICL-R – Technology Responsible Use Agreement (for reference)

241 iii. EEAA – Video and Audio Surveillance on School Property (for reference)

242 g. JICC – District Policy

243 The Board discussed the sentence, 'that may warrant more immediate removal of privileges.' The
244 Board agreed to remove the word 'more.'

245 i. JICC-R – Student Rules and Conduct on the School Bus (for reference)

246 ii. EEAE – Student Conduct on School Buses (to rescind)

247

248 ii. **Second Reading**

249 a. JF – Enrollment (rescind)

250 i. JEA – Compulsory Attendance Age (for reference)

251 ii. JEB – Age of Entrance (for reference)

252 iii. IHBG – Home Education Instruction & Access to Curricular and Co-Curricular Programs (for
253 reference)

254 iv. IHBH – Extended Learning Opportunities (for reference)

255 b. JG – Assignment of Students to Classes and Grade Levels

256

257 Mr. Bressette made a motion to rescind Policy JF - Enrollment; Mr. Gellar seconded the motion. The motion passed
258 (3-0-0).

259

260 Mr. Bressette made a motion to approve Policy JG- Assignment of Students to Classes and Grade Levels; Mr. Gellar
261 seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

262

263

264 **4. Board Member Reports:**
265 Mr. Bressette – Mr. Bressette stated that this was possibly his last School Board meeting, and he noted how
266 much he appreciated being part of the Board for the past three years. Mr. Bressette commented how Bill
267 McDevitt mentioned at a Deliberative Session, ‘no matter what, it is not about the individual. We cannot do
268 anything individually as Board Members; you have to be able to count to three.’ Mr. McDevitt’s second
269 reminder was, ‘Always continue in respectful discourse.’
270

271 The Board thanked Mr. Bressette for his comments and wished him the best in the upcoming election.
272

273 **5. Housekeeping:**

274 a. **Adoption of Minutes**

275 i. February 16, 2022 – Draft Public Minutes
276

277 Mr. Bressette made a motion to approve the Pelham School Board Public Minutes from February 16, 2022; Mr.
278 Gellar seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).
279

280 ii. February 16, 2022 – Draft Non-Public Minutes
281

282 Mr. Bressette made a motion to approve the Pelham School Board Non-Public Minutes from February 16, 2022;
283 Mr. Gellar seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).
284

285 b. **Vendor and Payroll Manifests**

286	i.	218	\$567,658.90
287	ii.	PAY218P	\$21,885.45
288	iii.	BFPMS12	\$330,248.69
289	iv.	AP030222	\$686,197.38

290

291 Mr. Bressette asked if it is typical for the zeroes to be entered in the middle of the first page. Ms. Mahoney
292 mentioned that this had to do with when an employee elects to make a 403(b) contribution or retirement
293 investment, and they wind up with a zero amount for their check. She added that this could also be additional
294 taxes or deductions that the employee has selected. Ms. Mahoney stressed that her response was in general and
295 not specific to any one individual.
296

297 Mr. Bressette made a motion to approve the Vendor and Payroll Manifests, as presented; Mr. Gellar seconded the
298 motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).
299

300 c. **Correspondence & Information**

301 i. None
302

303 d. **Enrollment Report**

304 i. March 1, 2022, Enrollment Report – Dr. McGee mentioned that the District has been plus four students
305 since February 1, 2022.
306

307 e. **Staffing Updates**

308 i. **Leaves:**

309 a. None
310

311 ii. **Resignations:**

312 a. Daniel Buchner PHS Music Teacher
313

314 iii. **Nominations:**

315 a. None
316

317 Dr. McGee stated that one of the PHS Music Teachers has decided to further his education and music career.
318
319 Mr. Bressette made a motion to approve the resignation of Daniel Buchner; Mr. Gellar seconded the motion. The
320 motion passed (3-0-0).
321
322 **6. Future Agenda Planning:**
323 a. No Future Agenda Planning
324
325 **7. Future Meetings:**
326 a. 03/08/2022 – 7:00 am – 8 pm School District Vote
327 b. 03/16/2022 – 6:30 pm School Board Meeting (reorganization) @ PES Library
328
329 **8. Non-Public:**
330 Mr. Gellar made a motion at 7:23 pm to enter non-public under RSA 91-A:3, II (c) – Reputation; Mr. Bressette
331 seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).
332
333 **9. Adjournment:**
334 Mr. Gellar made a motion to adjourn the public session at 8:40 pm. Mr. Bressette seconded the motion. The
335 motion passed (3-0-1). (Mr. Wilkerson abstained)
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338
339 Respectfully Submitted,
340 Matthew Sullivan
341 School Board Recording Secretary