

Pelham School Board Meeting
July 12, 2023
Pelham Elementary School
6:30 pm

In Attendance:

School Board Members: Thomas Gellar, Darlene Greenwood, and David Wilkerson

Superintendent: Chip McGee

Assistant Superintendent: Sarah Marandos

Business Administrator: Deb Mahoney

Absent: Troy Bressette, Chair

Also in Attendance: None

I. Public Session

A. Call to Order:

David Wilkerson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and requested that everyone stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Opening Remarks:

A. Superintendent:

Dr. McGee commented that it might appear to be a quiet month for the School District, but it is not. Dr. McGee mentioned that he wanted to celebrate a few operational things that happened during the summer. The first, the District has opened FY 2024. They had their first successful payroll run of the fiscal year. Dr. McGee stressed that a great deal of work goes into closing the books for the fiscal year.

The second thing is that the construction project has hit a gear Dr. McGee did not know they had. He acknowledged they were working so hard that they were able to meet at PMS in the Main Office. Dr. McGee pointed out that there is still much work to be done, and the air conditioning still needs to be turned on. He commented that during the meeting, there were 73 workers doing tasks.

The third is that the District is in hiring season. Dr. McGee mentioned that he sent a text trying to recruit Substitute Teachers. He commented that the District is doing everything possible to fill the open Substitute Teachers positions during the summer, so the District is in a good place when the school year begins. Dr. McGee added that he has had the opportunity to interview many candidates.

Dr. McGee commented that the ESY is still happening at PES and PHS. He noted that it is fantastic to have some students in the buildings.

III. Presentations:

A. None

IV. Main Issues / Policy Updates:

A. Board Member Vacancy

Mr. Wilkerson commented that the first main issue was the topic of a Board Member vacancy. He added that the Board would find a copy of the information to help them understand what is being proposed to solicit individuals interested in filling the empty position.

Ms. Greenwood asked how the District would get people to come forward for the position. Dr. McGee said his intention, if it is the Board's direction, is to post it on social media tomorrow and the District's website. Dr. McGee mentioned that he wants to get the notice into the Eagle Tribune and the Evergreen. Dr. McGee stated that he would also like to use his ability to send messages to families and community groups. He hoped the word would spread once the news was out there.

Dr. McGee stressed that he would not go beyond that because once the District starts picking some groups to share it with, it would have to share it with every group.

Mr. Gellar asked if the Evergreen would be out before July 28. Dr. McGee said he checked, and residents would receive the Evergreen on July 25.

Ms. Greenwood asked if the questionnaire would be in the Superintendent's Blast. Dr. McGee said 'yes,' and he would add as much as the source allowed.

Mr. Gellar asked if they should add a question that asks if the person would be interested in running in the following election. He pointed out that this would give the Board an idea of whether a person was looking at this as a short-term or long-term stint. He added that anyone who runs for the School Board has to be willing to commit to a three-year term. The question is not committing someone to run but would give the Board an idea if the person intends to run for the School Board. Mr. Wilkerson commented that the answer would be good to know, but it should not be a qualifying question. He pointed out that the best candidate might answer that they do not plan to run. The candidate could also change their mind and choose to run for the School Board.

Ms. Greenwood asked if the person who comes onto the Board would they take on Committee work. Mr. Wilkerson said that he believed that was the expectation of the position. The Board discussed what the expectations of the new Board Member would be.

Mr. Gellar made a motion to proceed with the plan to fill the School Board Member vacancy, as presented in the agenda. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

Dr. McGee said he would get the information out right away.

B. Nutrition Services Proposal for Breakfast and Lunch Prices for 2023 - 2024

Business Administrator Deb Mahoney said the Board received a memo from the Director of Food Service and Nutrition, Taryn Temmallo. Ms. Mahoney stated that she would review Ms. Temmallo's points in her memo.

Nutrition Service Program requests that the Board approve an increase of \$0.10 per lunch meal and uniform breakfast pricing for the next school year.

Ms. Mahoney mentioned that the USDA provides the District with a Paid Lunch Equity Tool. This tool allows the District to review the rates charged for lunch prices. She pointed out that to be in compliance, the District needs to increase the lunch prices by at least \$0.10. The District is currently under the required amount and recommends an increase of \$0.10 per lunch. This increase would be for all three schools.

Ms. Mahoney stated that they reviewed the breakfast prices and determined it would be appropriate for the District to charge the same rate for PMS and PHS breakfast meals as is charged for the PES breakfast meal. The Food Service requests to charge uniformly \$1.60 per breakfast meal at all three schools.

Ms. Mahoney reviewed the meal price changes per school.

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Current School Year 2022-2023		Proposed School Year 2023-2024	
Breakfast	Lunch	Breakfast	Lunch
\$1.40	\$2.75	\$1.60	\$2.85
\$1.60	\$2.85	\$1.60	\$2.95
\$1.60	\$3.10	\$1.60	\$3.20

Ms. Mahoney mentioned that the Board Member packets include a spreadsheet of local School Districts and the rates they charge for meals.

Mr. Gellar asked if the increase in prices would cover the costs of the Food Service. Ms. Mahoney said it is intended to cover the expenses. However, the rise in food prices has been significant. She added that there is additional financial support from the state in STA funds. STA funds are supposed to support the increased costs of food. The District has applied for all three rounds of those funds. These funds will help offset the food costs for the next school year.

Ms. Mahoney said the District is attempting to be at a breakeven point regarding the Food Service.

Ms. Greenwood asked if this was a mandatory increase. Ms. Mahoney stated that it is a mandatory evaluation to use the tool to ensure that the District is charging suitable funds for a healthy meal. Every year the tool is used, and the District evaluates whether it needs to increase the price of meals.

Dr. McGee pointed out that if Districts did not do this evaluation, then the Districts would profit from the funds the government has provided the Districts. The government wants to ensure that Districts are charging a suitable meal rate.

Mr. Gellar asked if there was a recent change in free and reduced lunches. Ms. Mahoney mentioned that she did not have the answer for Mr. Gellar.

Ms. Wilkerson asked if the Board had a similar conversation in which the adjustment was more significant because the tool showed that the District was further behind in how much the District should be charging for meals. Ms. Mahoney noted that they had this conversation last year but did not remember ever-increasing more than \$0.10.

Mr. Gellar made a motion to increase the Pelham Elementary Breakfast price by \$0.20 and increase all school lunch prices by \$0.10 beginning at the start of the 2023-2024 school year. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

C. Solar Update

Mr. Wilkerson commented that this topic concerned the solar update and site selection in anticipation of the School Board meeting on August 14. Mr. Wilkerson said the idea is to get two members of the Board, one of which would be Mr. Bressette. Mr. Wilkerson said they need one more member to volunteer to engage in a conversation regarding site selection.

Ms. Greenwood asked if this meant that the roof was not considered sturdy enough to hold the solar panels. Ms. Mahoney commented that she wanted to share two pieces of information with the Board. First, the Kearsarge Group came onsite and looked at the physical rooftops, electrical switchgear, and other parts needed to analyze the District's current condition.

Ms. Mahoney stated that the District is also collecting interim data, providing them with demand data and data related to the electrical demand for every hour last year. She noted that this is taking some time to get the information from Liberty Utilities. Once the information is collected and they get the feedback from the Kearsarge Group, the District will have a lot of information. Ms. Mahoney said that they are collecting the information to be able to answer Ms. Greenwood's question, but they do not have it yet. Ms. Mahoney added that she had heard that one of the buildings could handle more than the original proposal.

Ms. Mahoney commented that the group might discuss more topics than the roof. She noted that when the group had all the information, they would discuss what was different from what was in the proposal and what they needed to decide.

Mr. Gellar asked if Ms. Mahoney was looking for a lively discussion so that the Board is not starting fresh with alternative locations. Instead, the District would have already vetted some of the alternative locations. Ms. Mahoney commented that the District would have information allowing the Board to go through the decision process with the consultant.

Dr. McGee stated that they want to make a decision before the Board's retreat on August 14. Dr. McGee added that he would prefer not to use the retreat as a meeting to discuss solar options. He asked the Board to delegate decision-making to a two-member Sub-Committee that can work with Ms. Mahoney to decide which alternative the District should move forward with.

Mr. Gellar asked Ms. Mahoney when and how often the Sub-Committee would meet. Ms. Mahoney stated that she believed the meetings would be during the day, but she commented that they might only meet once. Mr. Gellar noted that he could do a remote meeting during the day, but if it were in person, he would need to know the date and time.

The Board agreed that Mr. Gellar and Mr. Bressette would be the two-member Sub-Committee.

D. Audit Questionnaire

Ms. Mahoney noted that traditionally she has gone through the audit questionnaire, and the Board has provided responses. She has filled out the questionnaire on the Board's behalf. Ms. Mahoney said she talked with the auditors, who are comfortable with each Board member filling out the forms; then the District would provide the auditor with the forms.

Ms. Mahoney stated that a new section on the audit questionnaire requires the Board Members to provide their credentials and experience. Ms. Mahoney proposed that she support the Board with any questions, but she wanted to give each member of the Board a copy of the questionnaire and have them fill it out, so she could give it to the auditors.

Ms. Mahoney mentioned that she would send the Board a copy of this year's and last year's audit questionnaires. She asked that this year's questionnaire be returned by Wednesday, July 19. Each member would be responsible for signing their document.

E. School Handbooks

Dr. McGee commented that this is a place where the Board can ensure that the District communicates cleanly and well. Dr. McGee noted that he would remind the Board about the process and that all three schools maintain a handbook. Last year the Board changed the title of the PES Student Handbook to the Family Handbook. He pointed out that yellow is for a new language, and the strikeout is for language that is being removed.

Dr. McGee asked each school to provide the Board with a document showing only the changes. He noted that they are looking for a discussion now and vote to approve the handbooks at another meeting. Dr. McGee pointed out that this has the force of policy, and the handbooks are treated as legal documents.

Ms. Greenwood pointed out the Pickup Patrol App and hoped they would communicate its essence. Dr. McGee said that the District is not an early adopter of the program, and staff have informed the District about the app.

Ms. Greenwood noted that "unexcused" was missing from the PES handbook.

Mr. Gellar asked if the GPA scores had changed for PHS. Dr. McGee said that this was reflected in the program of study. He mentioned that the Board had raised the question about the Honor Roll approach about six months ago. The Board asked that the District look into whether the Honor Roll should be based on the grade received in every class currently taken or the GPA for the Quarter. He pointed out that a student's GPA determines their class rank. The District found no adverse

effect on the students, and the District liked the consistency. Dr. McGee said that this would confirm the change for next year.

Ms. Greenwood commented that she read that the District did away with paper report cards and noted that the change was sad.

Mr. Gellar asked if only the Board received the memos that listed the handbook changes or if the parents would also receive the memos. Dr. McGee mentioned that typically the memo only goes to the Board, but added that it would be good for parents who wanted to know the changes.

Mr. Gellar said that if the District does send out the memos to the families, he asked that the District change the date on the PHS memo to 2023 – 2024.

Mr. Wilkerson liked the idea of including the memo with the handbook. He pointed out that reading the handbook to look for changes is daunting. Dr. McGee agreed but noted that the memos should be changed to include the same content but have it presented differently.

Mr. Wilkerson said no action was required tonight, but they would resume the discussion on August 14.

F. Pre-school

On behalf of Principal Jessica VanVranken, Dr. McGee requested that the District use half of the PES Pre-School for a Special Education Teacher position instead of leaving it unfilled. Dr. McGee commented that the District has a Special Education Coordinator, and her name is Nicole Covart. He noted that there are seven grades if you include Pre-School. Dr. McGee mentioned that Pre-School has unique demands as a Special Education Program.

Dr. McGee stated that some unique demands are tuition-based, referrals from outside agencies and parents, and Child-Find requirements. Child Find makes School Districts responsible for finding and evaluating all children suspected to need Special Education and between the ages of 3 to 21 who reside in the School District. This includes children who are being home-schooled and those placed by parents in for-profit private schools.

Dr. McGee commented that this is a position that he mentioned two Board meetings ago. He anticipated needing the position for the PALS program.

Ms. Greenwood asked if this was a Special Education Case-Manager position. Dr. McGee said this is a Teacher position with zero evaluation responsibility for other staff. The position would include student evaluation, case management, and intake responsibilities for new Pre-School students. The job is not an Administrator position.

Ms. Greenwood acknowledged that she was leery of approving a half-time Special Education Teacher to assist with the Special Education Case Management of the Pre-School. Dr. McGee noted that this would be for one year only.

Mr. Gellar asked for confirmation that the District would not be depriving students of their educational value by approving the request. He noted the District is enhancing education because it will provide more Case Management support. Dr. McGee agreed and added that parents of three-year-olds need a lot of attention.

The Board discussed the position that Dr. McGee is looking to fill. He is looking for a half-time Special Educator in the Pre-School program and would have Case-Management responsibility for one year. Dr. McGee added that the position is fillable.

The consensus of the Board was to approve Dr. McGee's request.

G. Overnight Field Trips

Dr. McGee commented that the Board might remember that a few current Grade 9 students came to a School Board meeting and informed the Board of the value of the Washington, DC trip. He noted that Ms. Hatzimanolis prepared the memo regarding the Grade 8 trip. PHS Principal Stacy Maghakian reviewed the memo of what an overnight trip requires.

Dr. McGee mentioned that this is the same trip the District has been running for years. He stated that the District continues to find excellent student programs and do it as cost-effectively as possible. Dr. McGee said they need to receive the Boards approval to start the fundraising for the trip, the planning, and the contract signing.

Mr. Wilkerson asked about the non-refundable deposit and why it is non-transferable. Dr. McGee mentioned that he did not know but would look into it and report back to the Board.

Ms. Greenwood made a motion to accept the Grade 8 trip to Washington, DC, as presented. Mr. Gellar seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

H. Pelham Memorial School Update

Dr. McGee stated that the update is dated and noted that the Board tabled the discussion at the last meeting. He commented that the construction workers are making enormous progress. Dr. McGee mentioned that he had been asked several times why they were digging a swimming pool in the front of the building. He pointed out that the hole was for Storm Water holding for runoff related to the hardtop surfaces and is a standard environmental requirement.

Dr. McGee said that the District has spent 2/3 of the project, which puts the District on track. He added that the new sections will be opened to students and staff this fall. Dr. McGee commented that the wall panels on the outside of the building continue to go up. He noted they are not all up because the builders hold off with specific sections that are not a priority.

Dr. McGee mentioned that the air conditioning is operating, and the workers are testing all the mechanical systems in the new area. He noted that the gymnasium is essentially complete, except that they are hanging the second sign. Dr. McGee added that there was a minor remodeling of what had been the Band Modular Building to have two classrooms in there. He stated that there would be five classrooms for Grade 8, it is the one student area that will be fully air-conditioned next year.

Ms. Greenwood asked if the construction was now in Phase 7. Dr. McGee confirmed that the construction was in Phase 7.

Mr. Gellar asked if they had started renovating the existing building. Dr. McGee said that the second-floor demolition is well underway. This includes the removal of the old cabinetry and the stairwell. He mentioned that this is concerning because the workers are looking for undetected asbestos. As soon as the workers complete the inspection, the District will know what extra hits will go to the construction site.

Mr. Gellar asked if it was too early to know if there were surprises once they started taking things off the walls. Dr. McGee said that it was too early, but it was very close.

Mr. Gellar asked about the switchgear. Dr. McGee said it was here but noted that it would not be installed at this time because it is not a priority and the building can operate without it.

Mr. Wilkerson stated that the EPA is getting ready to introduce a new requirement that if any lead is detected, the lead paint must be removed entirely. He noted that previously you could paint over it to seal it. Mr. Wilkerson asked if this new requirement would impact the District. Dr. McGee said that he has not had lead paint discussions, and the renovation in the current building is down to the studs almost everywhere. Ms. Mahoney confirmed that she had not heard any discussions regarding lead paint. Dr. McGee said he would get back to the Board regarding the question.

302 **I. Policy Reviews**

303 The Board reviewed the policies listed below.

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305 **1. First Reading:**

306 a. JICA – Student Dress Code

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308 b. BBBA – Board Member Qualifications

309 Dr. McGee commented that they wanted to clarify that a Substitute Teacher is one of the positions a Board
310 member cannot do. Ms. Greenwood noted that she was disappointed by the decision because she would have
311 liked to be a substitute teacher.

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313 c. KF – Use of School Building and Facilities

314 Dr. McGee mentioned that the process to request the use of the building and facilities had become too long.
315 He pointed out that the fee schedule would move out of here and into a procedure that he vetted with the
316 Facilities Department and the primary users of the facilities. Dr. McGee noted that he took the application out
317 because it is now done online.

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319 Mr. Gellar asked if the codes to access the tennis courts are ever changed. Ms. Mahoney stated that they are
320 changed annually. She commented that the Facilities Director comes up with the new codes in March. The
321 District then goes through the list of registered users and email them the new code.

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323 **2. Second Reading:**

324 a. JLCC/JLCG – Exclusion of Students who Present a Health Hazard

325 i. EBCG – Communicable and Infectious Diseases (for reference)

326 b. IK – Earning a High School Credit

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328 Mr. Gellar made a motion to approve Policy JLCC/JLCG – The Exclusion of Students Who Present a Health Hazard, as written. Ms.
329 Greenwood seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

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331 Mr. Gellar asked if home-schooled students go through a GED. Dr. McGee said that some home school families do not
332 need or have any interest in receiving a high school diploma. He added that these families could produce a diploma
333 through their system.

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335 Mr. Gellar made a motion to approve Policy IK – Earning a High School Credit, as presented. Ms. Greenwood seconded the
336 motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

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338 **V. Board Member Reports:**

339 A. Ms. Greenwood mentioned that she attended the Master Plan Committee meeting, and the Committee will meet again
340 this month. Ms. Greenwood noted that the Committee is moving along and is very interesting, and she has learned
341 many things about Pelham.

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343 Ms. Greenwood commented that tonight was Cole Drouins last evening working for PTV. The Board thanked Mr.
344 Drouin for his hard work and wished him well in college.

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347 **VI. Housekeeping:**

348 **A. Adoption of Minutes**

349 1. June 21, 2023 – Draft Public Minutes

350 2. June 21, 2023 – Draft Non-Public Minutes

Mr. Gellar made a motion to approve June 21, 2023, Public School Board Minutes, as presented. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

Mr. Gellar made a motion to approve June 21, 2023, Non-Public Minutes, as presented. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

B. Vendor and Payroll Manifests

A. 328	\$ 77,978.05 (signed)
B. 451	\$ 139,772.17
C. AP062823	\$ 206,923.38 (signed)
D. AP072123	\$3,785,009.09
E. BFPMS44	\$ 13,991.13 (signed)
F. BFPMS45	\$ 12,840.13
G. PAY328P	\$ 677,442.00 (signed)
H. PAY451P	\$ 3,765.26

Mr. Gellar made a motion to approve the Vendor and Payroll Manifest as presented. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

C. Correspondence & Information

A. None

D. Enrollment Report

A. None

E. Staffing Updates

A. Leaves

a. None

B. Resignations:

a. Traci Flaherty,	PES	Counselor
b. Katie Davis	PMS	Teacher – English
c. Cheryl Page	PHS	Teacher – Math
d. Thomas Limerick	PHS	Teacher – Science
e. Heather Pacheco	District	Deputy Treasurer
f. Jennifer Grover	PMS	Teacher – Grade 6
g. Emilie Slossar	PES	Teacher – Special education

C. Retirements:

a. None

D. Nominations:

a. Tara MacDonald,	District	Assistant Director of Student Services
b. Noah Huizenga	PMS	Teacher – Music
c. Karen Emery,	PMS	Reading Specialist
d. Kristen Descheneaux	PMS	Teacher – Grade 6
e. Jennifer Steck-Lubao	PMS	English Teacher

Dr. McGee commented that this is a challenging time of year. He noted that there are seven resignations, and they are very hard. Dr. McGee stated that he looked very closely at the resignations, and two of the people took different types of jobs in

education, and two reported to him that it was regarding money. Dr. McGee said that one person informed him that it was about family circumstances, and another one he had an exit interview scheduled.

Dr. McGee stressed that he wants to keep talent and not lose it.

Mr. Gellar made a motion to approve the resignations as presented. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

Dr. McGee stated that four nominations are listed, but he added a fifth this afternoon. He pointed out that the District lost six staff members, but they were able to add five. Dr. McGee pointed out that he was excited that the nomination list included Teachers with experience in the background that the District was looking for. Dr. McGee commented that there was an addition to his Leadership Team with the Assistant Director of Student Services, Tara MacDonald.

Dr. McGee stated that he has authorization from the Board to hire and is passing around a document with another name for nomination. Dr. McGee said the position was for an English Teacher at PMS, and the employee is currently an IA at PMS.

Mr. Gellar made a motion to approve the nominations as presented in the agenda and the fifth nomination of Jennifer Steck-Lubao as PMS English Teacher. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

VII. Future Agenda Planning:

A. No Future Agenda Planning

VIII. Future Meetings:

A. 08/14/2023 – 5:00 pm School Board Retreat @ PHS

B. 08/30/2023 – 6:30 pm School Board Meeting @ PES Library

IX. Non-Public:

Mr. Gellar made a motion to enter a Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c) – Reputation and RSA 91-A:3 II (i) – Emergency Functions at 7:48 pm. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

Roll Call:

Thomas Gellar – Yes

Darlene Greenwood – Yes

David Wilkerson – Yes

X. Reconvene:

The Board returned to Public Session at 8:30 pm.

XI. Adjournment:

Mr. Gellar made a motion to adjourn the School Board Meeting at 8:31 pm. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

Roll Call:

Thomas Gellar – Yes

Darlene Greenwood – Yes

David Wilkerson – Yes

Respectfully Submitted,

Matthew Sullivan

School Board Recording Secretary

July 12, 2023,