Pelham School Board Meeting November 1, 2023 Pelham Elementary School 6:30 pm

In Attendance:

School Board Members: Troy Bressette, Chair; David Wilkerson, Vice-Chair; Thomas Gellar; Darlene

Greenwood; and John Russell

Superintendent: Chip McGee

Assistant Superintendent: Sarah Marandos

Business Administrator: Deb Mahoney

Student Representative: Mya Belanger

Absent: None

Also in Attendance: None

I. Public Session

A. Call to Order:

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

II. Public Input @ 6:32 pm

A. None

Public Input closed at 6:33 pm.

III. Opening Remarks:

A. <u>Superintendent:</u>

Dr. McGee commented that he had three exciting announcements regarding the District. He mentioned that tomorrow, Karena Carten, Instructional Math Specialist at PMS, a veteran in the District, and a gifted Math Teacher, is being honored by the Salem Boy's and Girl's Club as the Teacher of the Year from Pelham. Dr. McGee stated that Tuesday, November 7, is a workshop day, and Friday, November 10, is when the District recognizes Veteran's Day. He mentioned that the District continues its excellent work with the VFW. The VFW is collecting holiday cards for the troops to make sure that the troops have something in their stockings during the holidays.

Dr. McGee said that he was very excited to introduce Mya Belanger, who is present as the Student Representative, and he noted that Student Members of the School Board would be discussed during the policy section. He asked Ms. Belanger if she had any updates for the Board.

B. Student Representative:

Mya Belanger reminded the Board about the National Honor Society induction ceremony. Dr. McGee said that the ceremony would be at 6 pm tomorrow in the gymnasium.

IV. <u>Presentations:</u>A. None

V. Main Issues / Policy Updates:

A. Pelham High School Program of Studies

Dr. Marandos introduced PHS Principal Dawn Mead and Assistant Principal Adam Barriere. Dr. Marandos commented that this is the time of year when the Deans of each Department talk about the Program of Studies changes. She noted that they start with the presentation of any course changes. They hope to receive the blessing from the Board and the Deans would come back later with the entire changes for the 2024-2025 Program of Studies.

Ms. Mead said that this school year, they have been working on the third phase of a three-year curriculum model. She noted that Districts, at every level, use the model across the country. Ms. Mead commented that they saw the need to step back and look at the Program of Studies holistically. They acknowledged that some courses need revision, slight revamping, require changes in the prerequisites, and a combination of existing courses. They want to make sure that they are thoughtfully and mindfully developing courses that challenge and inspire all of the learnings. Ms. Mead turned the presentation over to Mr. Barriere.

Mr. Barriere mentioned that he was going to review some of the proposed changes and what their thoughts were regarding the changes. He noted that the District is proposing two new courses this year: Musical Theater 101 and AP Government and Politics. He stressed that they are trying to build the Music Department and make it more robust. Mr. Barriere commented that the chorus and theater programs were also growing.

Ms. Mead said they have an excellent new addition to the Music Program in Ms. Kondi. Ms. Mead pointed out that they want to ensure that Ms. Kondi stays and uses her expertise to support the students in the best way possible.

Mr. Barriere stated that they plan to introduce AP Government & Politics and have it replace US Government & Politics College Credit. He noted that they have been unable to run in at least the five years he has been in Pelham. He stressed that AP and College Courses are very similar, but College Credit Courses have very stringent requirements based on the college.

Ms. Greenwood commented that when she saw Musical Theater 101, she thought it was great. Ms. Mead agreed with Ms. Greenwood and added that the District lost students to charter schools or the arts academies because they did not previously offer the Fine Arts Program.

Mr. Bressette asked about grade levels and prerequisites to enroll in Musical Theater 101. Mr. Barriere said they are not asking for any prerequisites now; the course is designed for students with previous experience and improves one's experience. The course is for students in Grades 9 through 12.

Mr. Bressette asked, concerning AP Government & Politics, if they expect there to be more demand for it because the course is an AP course. Ms. Mead stated that AP Government has a phenomenal Teacher, the Dean, Dr. Husby. AP Government allows the District to join statewide and national competitions. She added that a lot of colleges are requiring that high school teachers have a Master's Degree in the content that they are teaching. The teachers also have to be approved as an Adjunct Professor.

Mr. Wilkerson entered the meeting at 6:44 pm.

Mr. Barriere said there should be a line in the description that reads, "Students will be able to take the AP exam."

Musical Theater 101: (New Course) This course is designed for students with previous experience in school choir, theater, or musical theater or who desire to improve their singing and acting skills as a lead and ensemble member. In Musical Theater 101, students will continue to develop and hone their singing skills and musical theater literacy, learning about each era of Musical Theater and the performance practices used. Musical Theater 101 runs for a quarter. The quarter will be split in three ways: the learning of history, putting that into practice, and then performances following those practices. This course is a continuation of building the student and ensemble's understanding and comfortability in the arts of acting and singing. Events to expect are weekly performances and a

final cabaret performance with scenes learned throughout the quarter. Students are encouraged to enroll in Musical Theater 101 if they intend to participate in the school's Spring Musical.

Open to: Grades 9 - 12

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AP Government & Politics (New Course) AP US Government and Politics is an introductory college-level course In US government and politics. Students cultivate their understanding of US government and politics through analysis of data and text-based sources as they explore topics like constitutionalism, liberty and order, civic participation in a representative democracy, competing policy-making interests, and methods of political analysis.

Prerequisite: Junior, Senior, Civics

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Mr. Barriere mentioned they are proposing some description changes to Statistics College Credit. This will better clarify what is expected out of the college credit course. He noted that Food Science has a description change but is a new course this year. The only option for seniors is College Comp or College Creating Writing; everything else is on level or a half credit.

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Statistics CC: (Description Change) This is a fundamental course in applying statistics. In this course, students learn how to use statistical techniques for various applications in business and social sciences. Students learn how to solve statistical problems manually and with computer software. Topics include measures of central tendency, probability distributions, confidence intervals, estimation, hypothesis testing, and linear regression. It is recommended that students purchase their own TI-84 graphing calculator for home use.

Prerequisite: Grade of B- or better in Algebra II L1 and Geometry L1

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Food Science: (Description Change) Students will examine the science behind our foods, from farm to table. The effects of processing, preparation, and storage on the quality, safety, wholesomeness, and nutritional values of foods will be evaluated. This course illustrates scientific principles in an applied context. Careers will be explored.

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Prerequisite: Sophomore, Junior, Senior; Physical Science

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Mr. Barriere said that the redesigned course is a new course that is exploring literature. The English Department looked at the senior class offerings, and the only option was College Comp or College Creative Writing; everything else is on level or a half credit. He noted that they are removing Short Stories and World Literature.

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Mr. Barriere commented that Exploring Modern Literature is a proposed new course for next year, but was placed under 'Redesigned Course' because it is Short Stories and World Literature being combined into one course.

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Exploring Modern Literature: (Redesigned Course) Students will embark on a captivating journey of literary selfexpression by diving into the rich world of modern literature, unlocking the craft of authorial style and profound themes while exploring diverse global perspectives. Beyond the written word, students will refine their writing skills, vocabulary, and oral communication, preparing for a world of post-secondary opportunities, whether vocational or college-bound. The theme of the course is self-discovery and literary enlightenment, in which student voices will flourish.

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Prerequisite: Senior; American Literature

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Mr. Barriere said that there were a couple of prerequisite changes for the AP Environmental Science and AP Biology.

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AP Environmental Science: (Prerequisite Course) The goal of the AP Environmental Science course is to provide students with the scientific principles, concepts, and methodologies required to understand the interrelationships of the natural world, to identify and analyze environmental problems, both natural and human-made, to evaluate the relative risks associated with these problems, and to examine alternative solutions for resolving or preventing them. There are several major unifying constructs, or themes, that cut across the many topics included in the study of environmental science. Themes and analysis of problems include earth systems and resources, the living world, population biology, and human population, land and water use, energy resources and consumption, impacts on the environment and human health, and global changes including stratospheric ozone, global warming, and loss of biodiversity. The course requires a separate laboratory notebook. Students can take the AP Environmental Science

exam administered by the College Board. Test fees are the responsibility of the student. **Chemistry Level 1, CP Biology, and Algebra II Level 1 are highly recommended.**

Prerequisite: Junior or Senior; Biology and Algebra II

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AP Biology: (Prerequisite Course) This course is designed to be the equivalent of a college introductory biology course, usually taken by biology majors during their first year. Students will build upon the concepts, techniques, and skills presented in Level 1 Biology. After completion of the course, students will be able to analyze scientists' understanding of molecules and cells, heredity and evolution, as well as organisms and populations. The two primary goals of AP Biology are to help students develop a conceptual framework for modern biology and an appreciation of science as a process (APcentral.collegeboard.com). Students can take the AP Biology exam as administered by the College Board. Test fees are the responsibility of the student. Anatomy and Physiology is highly recommended.

Prerequisite: Chemistry L1 or CC with a B- or better; CP Biology Honors with a B- or better.

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Mr. Barriere commented that they are looking at removing the following courses:

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Business

- a. Computer Applications II
- b. Principles of Management

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English

- a. Short Stories
- b. World Literature

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Fine Arts

a. Singing and Songwriting

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Mathematics

a. Applied Algebra

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Physical Education

- a. Unified PE
- b. Conditioning & Movement

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Social Studies

a. US Government & Politics College Credit

a. Exploration in Physical Education

b. Psychology College Credit

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Special Education

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Marandos said there is little to no interest, less than two students a year.

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Ms. Belanger mentioned that the District has a US History College Credit Course. She questioned whether running an AP Government & Politics Course would conflict with someone taking a Social Studies path. She pointed out that an AP and a College Course could conflict when going to college. Mr. Barriere said it would not because the courses are very dependent on what the colleges will accept.

Mr. Gellar asked whether there was no interest in Applied Algebra or insufficient interest to warrant a class. Dr.

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Mr. Russell asked about the Singing and Songwriting Course. He wanted to know if the course would be offered to the students who are in the Chorus. Ms. Mead mentioned how the students want to look at the production piece and noted that she has been invited to a Choir class, and they do discuss singers and songwriting.

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Mr. Gellar commented that he understood that a College Credit Course gives a student a head start in receiving college courses and credits. It also saves money. Ms. Mead stated that if a college accepts the College Credit Course, the student gets credit for the course in college and does not have to take the course. An AP Course, if the college accepts it, the student will not receive the credit but will not have to take the course.

Dr. Marandos mentioned that Advanced Placement (AP) is a standard across the country and is widely accepted.

Ms. Greenwood noted that College Credit worked out for her children because they did not have to take a whole semester of courses.

Mr. Wilkerson stated how the School Board, years ago, was presented with the College Credit initiative, and the selling point was saving student's money. He asked if this was no longer the case or if the students did not have as many opportunities to save money as they previously did. Ms. Mead said that was not true, and it comes down to the Teachers themselves, having to be approved by the colleges. She added that College Credit still saves students money.

The Board thanked Ms. Mead and Mr. Barriere for their comprehensive presentation and for answering their questions.

B. Fiscal Year 2025 Budget:

Dr. McGee commented that he was considering starting with the comment from Drummond Woodsum, Attorneys at Law. Dr. McGee said that the letter had to do with the District's responsibility regarding the arbitrage earnings on the District's \$31,980,000 Bond in 2021 and the additions to PMS. The New Hampshire Municipal Bond Bank issued the Bond. Dr. McGee noted that the interest rate on the Bond was 1.5% and added that with the increase in interest rates and putting the money in an interest-bearing account. Dr. McGee noted that the District was supposed to spend the money in two years.

Dr. McGee mentioned that there are laws that stop School Districts from playing an arbitrage game. Drummond Woodsum informed the District that it would be liable to pay a rebate, which is to pay a calculated penalty for earning more on its interest rate than the District is paying for having borrowed the money.

Dr. McGee stated that this is all related to the warrant article discussed at the last Board meeting. At this point, they do not think it would be a wise financial decision to set the funds aside in a Capital Reserve Fund. He added that the reason for not believing it is a wise decision is that the District does not know how much penalty it will pay. Ms. Mahoney confirmed that Dr. McGee was correct in his explanation.

Mr. Bressette thanked Dr. McGee and said he did an excellent job digesting the material in the memo.

Mr. Bressette asked Dr. McGee about the certainty that he could say that the District cannot avoid the rebate. Dr. McGee said that the bond company informed him that there was nothing that they could think of that would get the District out of having to pay the rebate. Ms. Mahoney confirmed that Dr. McGee was correct. The recommendation provided to the District was to leave the money where it is and not create a warrant article for a Capital Reserve Fund.

Mr. Gellar asked if they knew how much the rebate would be. Dr. McGee said it would not be more than what they earned. Mr. Gellar asked where the money was being held currently. Ms. Mahoney stated the funds were in the New Hampshire Public Deposit Investment Pool (NH PDIP) and Citizen's Bank.

Mr. Gellar asked Ms. Mahoney if the proposed warrant article was based on the District earning interest and wanting to put that in the Capital Reserve Fund. Ms. Mahoney agreed. Mr. Gellar said they had something that depleted the Capital Reserve Fund. Ms. Mahoney agreed but noted a small balance in the Capital Reserve Fund for Upgrades and Renovations.

Mr. Wilkerson asked when the five-year period started. Ms. Mahoney said that was from the beginning. He noted that the District will find out the amount of the rebate two years after the expected completion of the project.

November 1, 2023 Page 5

 Mr. Bressette asked if Drummond Woodsum happened to say anything about potential changes in the law because of supply chain issues. Dr. McGee stated that he did not hear that from Drummond Woodsum.

C. Default Calculation

Ms. Mahoney stated she provided the Board with the November 1, 2023 Default Budget calculation. The calculation started with the MS-22 appropriations. She began by going over the additions and change columns and noted that the default budget was calculated by using last year's budget, approved by the voters. They are permitted to adjust for certain changes that are allowed by law. Ms. Mahoney reviewed the adjustments that were allowed.

2025 Default General Fund Operating Budget\$ 39,568,8202025 Default Food Service Budget\$ 1,176,7562025 Default Grants Fund Budget\$ 705,8652025 Default Special Other Budget\$ 52,000Total PSD 2024 Default Budget\$ 41,503,422

Mr. Bressette thanked Ms. Mahoney for the thorough and comprehensive explanation. He noted that the Default Budget was approximately \$250,000 less than the proposed Operating Budget.

D. Warrant Articles

Article A

To elect by ballot the following School District Officers:

- a. School Board Member 3-Year Term
- b. School Board Member 3-Year Term
- c. School District Moderator 3-Year Term

Article 1 - Operating Budget

Shall the Pelham School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session of the annual School District meeting, for the purposes set forth herein, totaling Forty-One Million, Seven Hundred Sixty-Eight Thousand, Four Hundred Fifty-Three Dollars (\$41,768,453)?

Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Forty-One Million, Five Hundred Three Thousand, Four Hundred Forty-Two Dollars (\$41,503,442), which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Pelham School District or by law; or the Pelham School Board may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13 X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (Majority vote required)

 	by the School Board
 	by the Budget Committee

Mr. Wilkerson made a motion to approve as presented. Mr. Gellar seconded the motion. The motion passed (5-0-0).

Mr. Wilkerson commented the Budget Committee chose to include the tallies of their votes. The School Board discussed what they wanted to do regarding having or not having the tallies listed. Ms. Mahoney mentioned that the Budget Committee and School Board could each vote on whether to include the tallies on the ballot. She stressed that legal informed her that what the Budget Committee decides to do does not affect what the School Board does regarding the tallies. Dr. McGee mentioned that he had a different recollection of the discussion from last year. He said that he would contact legal counsel for their opinion.

The Board tabled the discussion until they heard back from legal counsel.

318 Ms. Mahoney noted that the District is still negotiating with the PEA and does not have a completed warrant article for 319 the Board to discuss. 320 321 Mr. Bressette asked if any members of the PEA were not teachers. Dr. McGee commented that the contract language 322 defines them as teachers, but as an example, a nurse is part of the PEA. Mr. Bressette suggested that the CBA should 323 include a list of positions that are part of the PEA. He would also like to see the headers for the articles spelled out. 324 325 **Article 2 - PEA CBA** 326 Shall the Pelham School District vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement 327 reached between the Pelham School District and the Pelham Education Association (PEA) that calls for the following 328 increases in salaries and benefits over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year at current staffing levels: 329 Year Estimated Increase 330 2024-2025 \$_____ 331 2025-2026 \$_____ 332 2026-2027 \$_____ 333 and further to raise and appropriate the sum of ______(\$_____) for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, such sum 334 representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement 335 336 that would be paid at current staffing levels? (Majority vote required) 337 ____-_by the School Board 338 ____- by the Budget Committee 339 340 341 342 Ms. Mahoney noted that they requested that the Board withdraw the article. 343 344 **Article 3 - Capital Reserve Fund** 345 Shall the Pelham School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of up to Four Hundred Forty-Eight Thousand, 346 One Hundred Forty-Five Dollars (\$448,145) to be added to the Capital Reserve Fund for building and grounds 347 renovation and improvements previously established in 2019? This sum shall be placed in the fund from the 348 unassigned fund balance generated by the interest on the Memorial School bond available for the transfer on July 1. 349 No amount is to be raised from taxation. (Majority vote required). 350 351 The consensus of the Board was to withdraw the warrant article. 352 353 Article 4 - Capital Reserve Fund - Special Education 354 Shall the Pelham School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of up to Eighty-Thousand Dollars (\$80,000) to 355 be added to the Capital Reserve Fund for Special Education previously established in 2014? This sum will come from 356 the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1. No amount is to be raised from taxation. (Majority vote 357 required). 358 359 Mr. Bressette commented that at the last meeting, there was a discussion about the Board not going in this direction. 360 361 Mr. Gellar mentioned that he did not think the Board should have Articles 3 and 4 on the ballot. 362 363 Dr. McGee said that it was the Administration's recommendation to exclude Articles 3 and 4 from the ballot. 364 365 The consensus of the Board was to withdraw the warrant articles. 366 367 Ms. Mahoney stated that the District would provide the Budget Committee with the one School District warrant 368 article. 369

November 1, 2023 Page 7

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Professional Development Update:

Dr. Marandos commented that there was no school on Tuesday, and it is one of the District's in-service days. The District provides Professional Development on these days.

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Dr. Marandos reviewed the Professional Development that has occurred since August.

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August

- a. Lynn Lyons presented on Managing Anxiety for all professional staff, instructional staff, and administration.
 - b. PES Instructional Assistants were trained in Responsive Classroom
 - c. Kindergarten teachers were trained in Heggerty, a phonemic awareness curriculum that supports the Science of Reading

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September/October

- a. PES teachers received training on a new math program, Reveal, provided by McGraw Hill
- b. All staff are in the process of being trained in NAMI Suicide Prevention
- c. Workshops provided after school by our talented staff on Promethean Boards, UDL (Universal Design for Learning), Google, AI Tools, Accommodations and Modifications, Co-Teaching
- d. Medicaid Training for Instructional Assistants

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November

- a. In-service Day: vertical teams working on a variety of instructional tasks and choice sessions presented by staff
- b. Additional math training in Reveal for PES Teachers Administration
- c. Completed a three-day training in Franklin Covey's Speed of Trust
- d. Social Media Challenges with Elizabeth Englander
- e. Bullying Investigations with Diane Gorrow

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Community Presentations

- a. Elizabeth Englander: "Raising Resilient and Socially Healthy Students in the Digital Age"
- b. Lynn Lyons, "The Do's and Don'ts of Managing Anxiety: Concrete Tips To Help Families Move Forward"
- c. Shannon Hebert & Brian Driscoll, NAMI Suicide Prevention Professional Development Committee 2023-2024

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Dr. Marandos thanked the teachers who worked hard to develop ideas for Professional Development. She thanked:

- a. Jill Zidek, PES Grade 4 Teacher
- b. Pattie Lamontagne, PMS Instructional Coach
- c. Kaleigh Martins, PHS Science Teacher
- d. Nancy Haskins, PESPA President

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Providing Administrative Support:

- a. Jessica VanVranken, PES Principal
- 410 b. Kim Noyes, Director of Student Services

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Mr. Bressette mentioned that he was disappointed because he could not attend the Shannon Hebert and Brian Driscoll Suicide Prevention Professional Development Workshop. He asked how the attendance was at the event. Dr. Marandos stated that it was low. She said they would record it on Zoom and put it on the District's website.

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Mr. Gellar asked what the "Franklin Covey's Speed of Trust" was. Dr. McGee said it was based on Stephen Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. The presentation is regarding trust between colleagues and trust within an organization.

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E. Policy Review:

The Board reviewed the policies listed below.

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First Reading: i. **ILCA** - Physical Examinations of Students ii. KCD - Public Gifts/Donations iii. **EHAB** - Data Governance and Security Mr. Gellar commented that on page 2 of 6, there is a redundancy regarding line "f."

iv. FAA – Annual Facility Plan and Unused District Property
 Mr. Wilkerson asked if they were required to inform Charter Schools regarding unused District property. Dr. McGee said that the policy is new, and he did not know of a District that has run into this situation.

v. BBBF - Student Members of the School Board

Mr. Gellar stated that he was concerned that the policy reads as if it is filling a seat. He noted that a Student Representative who only attends one meeting would not learn anything. Dr. McGee agreed that there was merit for the concern. He said the District has very busy students and pointed out it was a better solution than an empty seat.

Ms. Belanger mentioned that she agreed that the policy makes it possible for a student to be on the School Board, but if the student does not attend the meetings, they will not understand what is happening. She believed that there needs to be some leeway at this time, and in the future, there may be a better solution. She reminded the Board that there is a policy that restricts Student Council members from holding an Officer position.

Mr. Russell asked Ms. Belanger how often the rotation should be. She explained how students were signing up on a sheet to volunteer to attend the School Board meetings. Ms. Belanger asked how often the agenda subjects change. The Board answered her question.

Mr. Bressette said he would like to return this policy to the Committee and meet with all the stakeholders.

Ms. Greenwood asked Ms. Belanger if the Student Representative was an elected position. Ms. Belanger said it was, but no one ran for the position this year.

b. **Second Reading:**

i. None

VI. Board Member Reports:

A. Ms. Greenwood commented that the Master Plan Committee met, and they have a Master Plan going through final revisions. She described the plan and added that it should be complete by December.

Mr. Bressette asked if Ms. Greenwood believed that the District had done enough to integrate what they do in the schools into the broader plan. Ms. Greenwood stated that most of the plan was land, forest, and energy management. She added parts of the plan that relate to the students.

Mr. Wilkerson mentioned that there appears to be a diluted sense of community and engagement. He pointed out that this affects how people support the schools and those in them.

VII. Housekeeping:

A. Adoption of Minutes

a. October 18, 2023 – Draft Public Minutes

Mr. Gellar made a motion to approve the October 18, 2023, Public School Board Minutes. Mr. Wilkerson seconded the motion. The motion passed (5-0-0).

November 1, 2023 Page 9

November 1, 2023 Page 10

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motion passed (5-0-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

School Board Recording Secretary

Matthew Sullivan