

Pelham School Board Meeting
Pelham Elementary School
October 2, 2024
6:30 p.m.

School Board Members: Troy Bressette, Chair; David Wilkerson, Vice-Chair; Garrett Abare; Rebecca Cummings; and Darlene Greenwood

Superintendent: Chip McGee

Assistant Superintendent: Sarah Marandos

Business Administrator: Deb Mahoney

Student Representatives: Mya Belanger

Absent: None

Also in Attendance: None

I. Public Session:

A. Call to Order:

6:30 p.m. - Chair Troy Bressette called the meeting to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Public Input at 6:31 p.m.:

No came forward.

Public Input closed at 6:32 p.m.

C. Opening Remarks:

a. Superintendent:

Assistant Superintendent Marandos began by mentioning that Lynn Lyons had presented to the community and announced an upcoming NAMI's suicide prevention training, titled "Signs of Suicide," scheduled for October 10 from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at PMS. The training is open to parents and students, with a focus on fostering conversations before any concerns arise.

Dr. McGee shared his recent positive experience with Pelham High School's Student Government. He noted a meaningful conversation with students regarding social media and cell phones and expressed enthusiasm for an upcoming follow-up session. Dr. McGee also reflected on visits to local sports events, mentioning the PMS boys' soccer, field hockey, and volleyball games, highlighting the positive energy and achievements of the student-athletes. He commented on visits to fourth-grade classrooms showcasing successful coordinated math activities, marking a strong start to the school year.

b. Student Representatives:

Ms. Belanger provided an update on recent and upcoming events. She noted that Homecoming had been a great success, with increased student participation in supporting other sports. The Blackout football game was scheduled for Friday, followed by Parent-Teacher conferences on Thursday, October 10.

Ms. Belanger added that the Class of 2026 was holding a fundraiser at Chipotle in Salem on October 10 from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. She also mentioned the upcoming PSAT exams, with a senior trip scheduled on the same day, and a Blanket fundraiser by the class of 2025, inviting the community to support the Pelham Python blanket initiative.

54 **III. Presentations:**

55 **A. None**

56
57 **IV. Main Issues:**

58 **A. Enrollment Projections:**

59 Dr. McGee provided the official enrollment numbers, as of October 1, 2024, with **1,613** students enrolled, broken
60 down as follows: **752** at the PES, **349** at PMS, and **512** at PHS. Projections for the next two years estimate **1,589**
61 **students** next year and **1,549 students** the following year.

62
63 Dr. McGee explained his projection method, using a weighted average based on historical data, and highlighted the
64 capacity of certain grades, such as preschool Special Education (84) and full-day kindergarten, which currently has **99**
65 **students** enrolled.
66

	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
09/03/24	66	99	129	106	134	108	111	121	113	114	110	121	145	148
10/01/24	65	99	128	107	134	108	111	122	113	114	102	118	143	147
Difference	-1	0	-1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	-8	-3	-2	-1

67
68 Dr. McGee commented that NESDEC predicted that the District would have 1,662 students, which is off by 49. He also
69 addressed staffing reductions based on these projections, noting a decrease of **24 students** next year, which
70 supported the proposed staffing cuts.
71

72 Mr. Abare asked if Dr. McGee was able to get the staffing ratios information. Dr. McGee provided a detailed comparison
73 of staffing ratios, reporting **6.8 students per full-time equivalent staff member** in the District, compared to the
74 state average of **5.7 students per staff member**. The Board discussed the importance of clarifying these ratios to the
75 community, particularly in distinguishing between overall staff ratios and classroom sizes.
76

Year	District	Ratio
2023	Pelham	6.8
2022	Pelham	6.0
2021	Pelham	6.6
2023	State	5.7

77
78 Ms. Greenwood asked who was considered part of the staff. Dr. McGee commented that Teachers, IAs, Librarians,
79 Specialists, Admin Support, and All Others Support would fall into this category.
80

81 The Board acknowledged the District's fiscal efficiency compared to the state and agreed to gather more information
82 on class size data, particularly for different education levels and subjects.
83

84 **B. Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Presentation**

85 Mr. Bressette moved the meeting into the **budget portion** of the agenda. He introduced the proposed adjustments,
86 and Business Administrator Deb Mahoney provided an update on the tracking progress. The discussion then turned to
87 specific budget items, with Ms. Mahoney first addressing the Board.
88

89 Ms. Mahoney reported that between the previous Wednesday and the current meeting, a comprehensive review of
90 **Salaries, Benefits, and Utilities** had been conducted. She shared that they had gone out to bid on **natural gas**,
91 resulting in a **\$44,000 reduction** from the initial proposal made in early September. She highlighted that the District
92 is now under contract for natural gas through 2026 but noted that no similar agreement had been reached for
93 electricity due to ongoing installation challenges. The Board was informed that there would be no significant material
94 changes to existing contracts without further review. Ms. Mahoney confirmed that the natural gas savings were
95 reflected in the budget.
96

Ms. Mahoney addressed the **non-bargaining salary pool**. Initially, she had not calculated the exact percentage, but after review, she proposed a **3% salary increase** for non-bargaining staff, impacting about 100 positions, including Custodial Staff, Secretaries, Administrative Assistants, Psychologists, Social Workers, and Mental Health Counselors. The adjustments would bring the pool in line with this proposal.

Mr. Bressette sought clarification on the budget reduction presented on page 88, which initially showed a **\$44,000 reduction**. With Ms. Mahoney's adjustment, the reduction would decrease to **\$31,000**, which Ms. Mahoney confirmed was understood correctly. She also addressed questions about how historical expenditures were shown, explaining that costs were allocated line by line, school by school, and by position.

Ms. Mahoney concluded her report with a note on the **Food Service Fund**, explaining that, after a review of salaries and benefits, there was a reduction in hours for vacant positions, resulting in a **\$12,944 decrease**. She verified the information with the Directors of HR and Nutrition.

The Board reached a consensus because there were no objections to Ms. Mahoney's presentation. Mr. Bressette suggested that the Board move into a consensus approach, reviewing each proposed budget cut **line by line**.

DW – Daily Substitute Salaries & Long-Term Substitute Salaries

Ms. Mahoney reviewed Mr. Bressette's proposals related to **Daily Substitute and Long-Term Salaries**. The Daily Substitute Salaries were proposed to be reduced by **\$20,000** and Long-Term Substitutes by **\$5,600**. After a historical analysis, it was agreed that the Daily Substitute Salaries budget would remain at **\$170,000**, and the Long-Term Substitute Salaries would remain at **\$105,000**. The Board supported this decision, and Mr. Bressette withdrew the proposed cuts.

DW – Subs – Social Security & Teacher Retirement

Mr. Bressette withdrew his proposed reduction. He acknowledged that these line items were tied to the Daily Substitute and Long-Term Substitute Salaries.

DW – Grades 3 – 12 Peardec & IXL Math Grades 1 – 9

Ms. Cummings proposed a reduction to these specific line items, including **Peardec** and **IXL Math**. Dr. Marandos explained that Peardec was a tool used for **formative assessment** in grades 3-12 but was not considered a core product.

As for IXL Math, Dr. Marandos strongly recommended keeping it in the budget, citing over **100,000 questions** have been answered. She noted its importance for students and teachers. Ms. Cummings withdrew her proposals after receiving clarification on both items.

PES – Communication Folders

Ms. Cummings questioned whether these folders were essential, considering students could bring their own. The Board discussed the necessity of **Communication Folders** for grades 6 and 7. Dr. McGee provided insight into their usage and importance. Dr. McGee noted that he spoke with Principal VanVranken, and she informed him that the blue folders are important for consistency.

Mr. Abare suggested that the Board keep the Communication Folders in the budget and stressed that the folders should be the same. Ms. Cummings agreed to withdraw her proposed cut.

PES – Sound Panels

Ms. Greenwood asked about the sound panels in the cafeteria and proposed removing them from the budget. Dr. McGee suggested installing these panels would reduce the noise levels in the cafeteria, benefiting students during lunch and other activities. It was confirmed that sound panels were not currently in place, despite being budgeted previously. The consensus of the Board was to remove the **\$40,000.00** from the budget.

150 **PES – Grades 5 Desk Replacement**

151 Ms. Cummings and Mr. Bressette made proposals to reduce the budget to replace 150 desks as part of a three-year
152 plan for PES. It was clarified that the desks were old, and a phased replacement plan was in place. Mr. Bressette
153 suggested reducing the budget by half or two-thirds, recognizing the importance of maintaining a schedule for
154 furniture replacement. After further discussion, the consensus of the Board was for a **\$26,035.00** reduction. The
155 compromise would still allow for necessary updates while easing the financial burden.

156
157 **PES – Staff Room Replacement**

158 Ms. Cummings and Ms. Greenwood made proposals to reduce the budget for the replacement of furniture in a staff
159 room, with a proposal to phase the replacement over two years instead of completing it all at once. The Board
160 members reached a consensus regarding a phased approach, aligning it with similar decisions made for the fifth-grade
161 desks. This was a reduction of **\$7,500**.

162
163 **PES – Recognition and Staff Team Building**

164 Ms. Cummings raised a question about miscellaneous expenses, particularly the staff team-building lunch. It was noted
165 that the lunch was successful in fostering teamwork and camaraderie. The Board agreed that these types of events are
166 important for team building, particularly in a large organization with a headcount of approximately 157.

167
168 Dr. McGee moved the discussion to the role of the Sunshine Committee, which organizes various events throughout the
169 year, including meals during holidays, Teacher Recognition Week, and end-of-year celebrations. These events are
170 funded through a combination of District funds and donations. The members acknowledged the importance of
171 maintaining such events in the budget.

172
173 Ms. Cummings initially proposed withdrawing some of the funding but chose to withdraw her proposed cut.

174
175 **PES – Science Supplies**

176 Mr. Bressette proposed a **\$500** reduction to the Science Education budget at PES. He mentioned that the proposal was
177 made because the amount requested was not supported by historical spending. Dr. Marandos noted that science
178 supply spending had been reduced in previous years, and these cuts may have impacted the support of Next
179 Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Supplies such as plants and other consumable materials used for science
180 activities in early grades are essential for hands-on learning. Mr. Bressette expressed concern that the current
181 spending level might not align with the actual needs of the students.

182
183 Mr. Wilkerson highlighted the global inflationary pressures affecting supply costs but suggested that these pressures
184 might be easing. A consensus was reached to maintain level funding for both FY2025 and FY2026 and not support the
185 proposed cut.

186
187 **PES – Mystery Science**

188 The conversation then shifted to the Mystery Science program, a core curriculum tool aligned with NGSS. Dr. Marandos
189 emphasized its importance, as there is no formal science textbook in use. The subscription to this program allows
190 teachers to provide engaging, standards-based lessons, especially important given the limited time dedicated to
191 science in elementary school.

192
193 The budget for the Mystery Science program was reviewed, noting a **4%** year-over-year increase. Despite the cost, the
194 Board agreed that it is a valuable resource that must remain in place. Mr. Abare asked about the number of
195 subscriptions the District is locked into and the potential for rising costs. Dr. McGee acknowledged that transitioning
196 to a subscription-based model, as opposed to using traditional textbooks, has become a common practice in schools,
197 making it challenging to reduce costs without sacrificing essential resources.

198
199 Dr. Marandos clarified that **Mystery Science** is just one of many resources used to teach Science, alongside the
200 **Wonders** program, which integrates Science and Social Studies texts into the literacy curriculum. The teachers also
201 use hands-on supplies and labs at each grade level to build necessary science skills in alignment with the **Next**
202 **Generation Science Standards** (NGSS). These skills become crucial for the **5th-grade assessment** system.

Ms. Cummings voiced her concern that the shift towards using digital resources like Mystery Science might limit more hands-on, inquiry-based teaching methods. She explained that while the program is effective, it cannot fully replace the value of in-depth science inquiry. Nevertheless, the group agreed that, given the time constraints teachers face, maintaining the subscription was the best course of action to ensure students receive an education in Science.

Mr. Wilkerson suggested that the Board receive a presentation regarding what is happening in the PES classrooms concerning Science.

The discussion concluded with a consensus to maintain the current budget levels for both Science education supplies and the Mystery Science program, recognizing their critical role in supporting the curriculum and student learning.

PES – Soc Studies Scholastic News

Ms. Cummings' next proposed reduction was the Social Studies Scholastic News. Dr. Marandos discussed the **Scholastic News** subscription; a newsletter used in grades K–5 to support literacy through Social Studies. The resource is supplemental to the instructional program and integrates well with other methods like the Wonders program.

Ms. Cummings withdrew her proposed reduction.

PES – Soc Studies Textbooks

Mr. Bressette proposed a budget cut of **\$318** for Social Science Textbooks. This would reduce the allocation to **\$150** per grade level. The consensus was to accept the reduction of **\$318** from the budget.

PES – Typing Club Online Program

Ms. Cummings proposed a budget cut of **\$1,466** for the Typing Club. Dr. Marandos mentioned that the Typing Club is part of the STEAM program for grades 3–5, which was considered costly, but it provides students with a structured platform to learn and retain typing skills. Unlike free programs, which often reset progress, Typing Club saves students' work, making it easier for them to build the necessary skills for future academic tasks.

Ms. Cummings withdrew her proposed reduction.

PES – Ozobot Kit

Ms. Cummings proposed a budget cut of **\$3,149** for the Ozobot Kit. Dr. Marandos commented that the Ozobots are nearing the end of their life cycle, other tools like **Spheros** and **Code.org** are being used to teach coding and problem-solving. The Board discussed the educational value of these robots, with some members expressing concerns about their reliability and high cost. Ms. Cummings noted that **Spheros** have proven more durable and effective for fostering higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills, especially for students in grades 3–6.

The Board leaned towards supporting cuts to outdated or less reliable tools like the Ozobots, while favoring the continued use of more robust resources like Spheros, to maximize budget efficiency.

The consensus was to reduce the budget by **\$3,149**.

PES – Heggerty Online Subscription

Ms. Greenwood raised a question about the Heggerty and Foundations Online Subscription. Dr. Marandos clarified that Heggerty is an evidence-based instructional model for phonemic awareness used in kindergarten, featuring 10-minute lessons across 35 weeks. The program had originally been funded through a literacy grant, but the current cost relates to an online resource for professional learning to support kindergarten teachers.

Although the kits were initially acquired through the grant, the ongoing costs are for the online resources. Heggerty has been in use for two years, but this is the first year the costs are reflected in the budget due to the expiration of the grant.

Ms. Greenwood withdrew her proposed reduction.

PMS – Music Textbooks

Mr. Bressette proposed a reduction of **\$1,000** for the Music Textbooks at PMS. The reduction would adjust for inflation and the addition of a Choir program. The Choir now has over 40 students, and the cost increase is tied to purchasing rights to perform songs, as well as the overall expansion of the music program. It was noted that the Music Teacher is District-wide, which requires sharing resources across schools.

Mr. Bressette withdrew his proposed reduction.

PMS Science – Generation Genius & Science World Subscriptions

Ms. Cummings asked about the Generation Genius and Science Point subscriptions. Dr. Marandos commented that both are new to the current fiscal year. Generation Genius, an online tool providing virtual science labs, aligns with Next Generation Science Standards and supports middle school science instruction where in-classroom demonstrations are not feasible. She added that Science World offers research-based articles to promote scientific literacy for grades six to ten. As the program is still new, its effectiveness has yet to be fully evaluated.

Ms. Cummings withdrew her proposed reductions.

PMS Soc Studies – Gimkit & Edpuzzle Subscriptions

Ms. Cummings and Ms. Greenwood proposed reductions for the New Information Access Fees. Ms. Greenwood raised an issue regarding supplemental tools for Social Studies, such as Gimkit and EdPuzzle. Dr. Marandos clarified that these are resources used by students to reinforce Social Studies content both in the classroom and at home.

EdPuzzle allows teachers to embed questions in educational videos, creating a more interactive learning experience. While both programs are supplemental, they are distinct and serve different functions. The Board agreed to keep one subscription but to defer the decision on which resource to retain to the relevant Educational Team.

The consensus was a general reduction of **\$600** from the line item.

PMS Reading – Supplies

Mr. Bressette made a proposed reduction of **\$472** to the PMS Reading Supplies. He noted that this was done to bring spending in line with historical spending. The consensus of the Board was to accept the proposal.

PMS Computer Education – T-shirt Tiger Techs

Ms. Greenwood proposed a reduction of **\$500**. Ms. Greenwood stated that students could either create these supplies at PHS or purchase them independently. Mr. Wilkerson noted that the Tiger Tech group, composed of students, provides valuable information services, assisting with technology issues in classrooms. After some discussion, it was agreed that the students should be supported for their contributions.

Dr. Marandos said that the Tiger Techs are a group of highly engaged students contributing to various tasks around the school. The group, which differs from NJHS and the Student Council, takes on responsibilities such as signage and code-related projects, establishing them as school leaders.

The consensus was to keep the **\$500** in the budget for the Tiger Techs.

PHS – Outdoor Picnic Table Sets

Ms. Greenwood proposed a reduction of **\$4,000** for three picnic tables instead of six. Dr. McGee noted that the tables would serve multiple purposes, including outdoor classes and general use. However, concerns were raised about the practicality and necessity of the full number requested.

Mr. Abare expressed interest in cutting the six picnic tables completely. He expressed his concerns about reinstating items previously cut from another fiscal year's budget, questioning the logic of a default budget if items are restored later. After some discussion, there was consensus to support reducing the table count by half, leading to a **\$2,000** cut.

PHS – T-Shirt Launcher

Ms. Greenwood proposed to cut the T-shirt launcher, seen as an unnecessary expense. The Board agreed that this would be better suited for a Booster fundraiser, resulting in the removal of this item from the budget.

The consensus was to reduce the budget by **\$850**.

PHS – Replacement of Desks/Chairs

Mr. Bressette proposed a reduction of **\$2,055** for furniture replacement, focusing on maintaining essential cafeteria tables but reducing expenditures on desks and chairs.

The consensus was to reduce the budget by **\$2,055**.

PHS – Tech Ed Supplies

Mr. Bressette proposed a reduction of **\$702** for TechEd Supplies. The consensus was to reduce the budget by **\$702**.

PHS – Math Supplies

Mr. Bressette proposed a reduction of **\$900** for Math Supplies. The consensus was to reduce the budget by **\$900**.

PHS – Science Supplies

Mr. Bressette commented on Science Supplies, where he noted that the FY2024 spending was significantly lower than FY2023. Dr. Marandos mentioned that a typical year varies depending on the electives being offered. She noted that this year due to staffing shortages, the budget for these supplies was expected to decrease.

Mr. Bressette was satisfied with the reason for less spending.

DW – Special Education Salaries & Related Benefits

Special Education was then discussed, highlighting historical underspending in this category. Mr. Bressette commented that between 2018 and 2024, the District spent between **\$4.6 million and \$5.3 million**, compared to budgeted amounts of **\$5 million to \$6 million**.

Despite the **9%** increase in the FY2024 budget, there remained an underspend of **\$700,000**. Mr. Bressette suggested that further cuts could be made without compromising the District's ability to meet its obligations. The Board also reviewed the Special Education Reserve Fund, which currently holds **\$228,560**.

Mr. Bressette proposed a **\$15,000** reduction in the budget for additional days allocated to Special Education Teachers for Case Management. He suggested leaving it to the experts to decide where the funds would be reduced.

The consensus was to reduce the budget by **\$15,000**. Mr. Bressette added that this would have a corresponding reduction in Benefits and FICA (**\$4,088**).

DW – Tuition to Private Schools

Mr. Bressette then moved to Tuition to Private Schools. Dr. McGee had spoken with the Director and affirmed that the proposed approach aligns with past conservative budgeting practices within Special Education. He acknowledged that Special Education is budgeted conservatively, with the intent to only spend what is necessary. For private school tuition, an increase of **\$1,000,000** was noted as a requirement for Special Education.

The Board discussed the inherent risks of underfunding this area, highlighting that private tuition obligations must be met, regardless of available funds. Dr. McGee emphasized that while the Reserve Fund provides some coverage, it is

not an annual fund and should be used cautiously. The Board needs to balance the risks associated with cutting the budget against the financial realities.

Mr. Bressette proposed a reduction of **\$78,506** to the Tuition to Private School budget. The consensus was to accept the reduction.

DW – Tuition to Private Schools ESY

Mr. Bressette then addressed the anticipated Extended School Year (ESY), with a proposal to allocate an additional **\$12,570** for the associated costs.

Board members emphasized the importance of communicating these budgetary decisions to taxpayers, explaining the rationale for the cuts while acknowledging potential future risks and the need to possibly revisit these decisions. The reserve fund was deemed adequate to cover unexpected expenses, but caution was urged.

Mr. Bressette proposed a reduction of **\$12,570** to the Tuition to Private School ESY budget. The consensus was to accept the reduction.

Ms. Greenwood asked about the transportation costs associated with residential placements. It was confirmed that the anticipated tuition does not include residential placements, which involve separate-day placements. Dr. McGee stated that the transportation is assumed to be combined with the tuition.

Ms. Mahoney stressed that the Board would review the Special Education budget later in the school year and make any necessary adjustments in December, in preparation for a reconsideration by the Budget Committee in January. The Reconsideration process will include an evaluation of the Default Budget number, which is significantly impacted by legally required Special Education services and other contractual obligations.

PES – Special Education Teacher Position

Mr. Bressette shifted the discussion to the necessity of a Special Education (SPED) Teacher position, considering the caseload and Individual Education Plans (IEPs) at the elementary school level. He acknowledged that the need for Special Education services at this level is significant, with more vacancies than usual.

The Case Manager position was clarified to be listed as a teacher role in the budget. Dr. McGee referenced a memo from Principal VanVranken outlining the caseloads:

- a. **27** identified students in first grade.
- b. **17** identified students in second grade.
- c. **24** identified students in third grade.
- d. **16** identified students in kindergarten.

These numbers were noted as substantial, similar to the size of typical classroom cohorts, although no classroom would be expected to manage a class size of **27**.

Dr. McGee emphasized the school's commitment to keeping Case Managers and Special Educators aligned with grade-level teams to avoid overburdening any single teacher. The recommendation was made to not increase the budget for this position next year, although Dr. McGee expressed excitement about the potential of the program.

The new position being discussed was a Special Education Teacher and Case Manager role, intended to replace the PALS program's previous position, which has since been contracted out to the New England Center for Children (NECC). This would result in no net increase in full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, but rather a reduction if the Board chose to eliminate the role.

The Board discussed the budgetary implications, with the speaker recommending the elimination of the contracted PALS position while acknowledging the success of the NECC program. Concerns were raised about the potential need

to maintain the position in case the program did not work as intended, but Dr. McGee expressed optimism regarding the program's outcomes.

Ms. Greenwood posed a question about whether to allow the position to remain as Case Management or eliminate it. Dr. McGee clarified that they proposed reallocating resources, reducing the proposed cut by half, and keeping only a single new Special Education position.

Dr. McGee explained that the District includes anticipated needs in the budget, acknowledging that vacancies may arise unexpectedly as students with IEPs move into the District. The current need includes **four vacancies** and **two additional proposed positions**, and the recommendation was to maintain this approach as a reasonable solution given the circumstances.

Mr. Bressette proposed reducing the Special Education Teacher Position by **\$52,196**. The Board came to a general consensus to support the proposed cuts, recognizing the challenges faced by Special Education teachers, especially at the elementary level. Concerns were raised about potential burnout and turnover, with the importance of maintaining manageable caseloads emphasized.

The Board agreed to move forward with the adjustments, keeping the balance between necessary resources and the constraints of the default budget. Ms. Mahoney confirmed that the benefits associated with the position were **\$40,247.24** for benefits and **\$52,196** for salaries, which totaled **\$92,443.24**.

PES – Instructional Assistant Salaries & Benefits

Mr. Bressette considered the Special Education Instruction Assistant teacher positions, with salaries reflecting **\$43,480** and a proposed reduction to just one supported position. After the Board provided its input, the members came to a consensus to reduce two IA positions with associated benefits of **\$10,385** each, resulting in total benefits of **\$20,769.40**, alongside the **\$43,480** salary for each position.

PES – Classroom Interactive Equipment Replacement

Ms. Cummings proposed a reduction of **\$95,200** from the Classroom Interactive Equipment Replacement budget. Mr. Bressette expressed concerns over the six-year lifespan of **\$200,000** worth of equipment. Dr. McGee mentioned that the District had looked at the usage of the interactive equipment at the elementary level. At PES, they have fully adopted the equipment, and the teachers use it daily.

Dr. McGee said that the Tech Director and Instructional Specialist for Technology have been exploring less expensive alternatives to meet the needs of classrooms, emphasizing the importance of having functional projection capabilities. The Board acknowledged the necessity of maintaining budgeted funds for this equipment, allowing for future reconsideration to potentially reduce costs based on available alternatives.

A consensus was reached to retain the budget allocation for the interactive replacements, with the understanding that the funds would remain available while further research on options continued. The conversation highlighted the importance of being proactive in planning for equipment needs while remaining adaptable to budgetary constraints.

Mr. Bressette made a proposal to table the discussions, effectively keeping the items within the budget for submission to the Budget Committee. The consensus of the Board was to accept his proposal.

SAU – Superintendent Professional Services

Mr. Bressette proposed a reduction of **\$2,230** to the Superintendent's Professional Services budget. The consensus was to accept the reduction.

SAU – Superintendent Miscellaneous

Mr. Bressette proposed a reduction of **\$1,877.50** to the Superintendent's Miscellaneous budget. The consensus was to accept the reduction.

PES – Emergency Supplies

Mr. Bressette proposed a reduction of **\$515** to the PES - Emergency Supplies budget. The consensus was to accept the reduction.

PHS – Emergency Supplies

Mr. Bressette proposed a reduction of **\$1,015** to the PHS - Emergency Supplies budget. The consensus was to accept the reduction.

DW – Special Education Transportation

Mr. Bressette withdrew his proposal for a reduction.

DW – Technology Professional Services

Mr. Bressette proposed a reduction of **\$7,500** to the DW – Technology Professional budget. The consensus was to accept the reduction.

PHS – CIP Boiler

Mr. Bressette asked about the current boiler situation in the building, clarifying that there are two boilers in the old building and two in the new one, with a proposed replacement cost of **\$532,000** for one of the boilers. He expressed interest in understanding future boiler replacement needs and potential cost-saving measures, including energy-efficient renovations.

Mr. Bressette asked for the District to reach out to EEI and ask if there are options to only address the need for the boiler.

Additional budget considerations included the potential to isolate the boiler proposal for clearer evaluation. A proposal for energy-efficient upgrades was discussed, with hopes for further investigations into comprehensive solutions. Mr. Bressette stated that they would, for the time being, keep the boiler in the budget and the CIP.

Ms. Mahoney stated that the boiler is a topic that can be brought up at reconsideration because it is additional information that the Board does not currently have.

- a. The Board reviewed a list of proposed adjustments, ultimately confirming a total reduction of **\$379,028** to the General Fund balance of **\$42,716,830**.

Mr. Wilkerson moved to set the General Fund budget to **\$42,716,830**. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion, which passed (4-1-0). (Mr. Abare voted 'No')

Mr. Abare said that he voted 'No' because he thought the budget for the School District was too much.

- b. The Food Service Fund is **\$1,176,441**, and that is a reduction of **\$12,942**.
- c. The Grants Fund is level-funded at **\$723,577**.
- d. The Special Revenue is level-funded at **\$52,000**.
- e. All the funds together total **\$44,668,848**.

Mr. Wilkerson moved to set the total budget number of **\$44,668,848**. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion, which passed (4-1-0). (Mr. Abare voted 'No')

Ms. Mahoney informed the Board that she put the one warrant article in the packet but added it did not have a financial number. She will work with Dr. McGee to get the Operating Budget number for the next meeting.

First Session of Annual Meeting (Deliberative Session)

You are hereby notified that the first session of the annual meeting of the School District of the Town of Pelham will be held at Town Hall, 6 Village Green, in said Pelham on Wednesday, February 5, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. for explanation, discussion, and debate of warrant articles number 1 through number 1. Warrant articles may be amended subject to the following limitations: (a) warrant articles whose wording is prescribed by law shall not be amended, (b) warrant articles that are amended shall be placed on the official ballot for a final vote on the main motion, as amended, and (c) no warrant article shall be amended to eliminate the subject matter of the article.

Second Session of Annual Meeting (Official Ballot Voting)

You are hereby notified that the second session of the annual meeting of the School District of the Town of Pelham will be held at Pelham High School gymnasium, 85 Marsh Road, in said Pelham on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at 7:00 a.m. for the choice of School District Officers elected by official ballot, to vote on questions required by law to be inserted on the official ballot, and to vote on all Warrant Articles from the first session on official ballot per RSA 40:13, VII. The polls for the election of School District Officers and other actions required to be inserted on the said ballot will open on said date at 7:00 a.m. and will not close earlier than 8:00 p.m.

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

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 _____ Dollars (\$_____)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be _____ Dollars (\$_____), 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 (0-0-0)
_____ by the Budget Committee (0-0-0)

V. Policy Review:

The Board reviewed the policies listed below.

a. First Reading:

- i. None

b. Second Reading:

- i. BGAA - Policy Development, Adoption, and Review
- ii. FAA - Annual Facility Plan and Unused District Property
- iii. JICD - Student Discipline and Due Process

Mr. Wilkerson moved to approve the policies as presented. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion, which passed (5-0-0).

VI. Other:

- A. None

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- VII. Board Member Reports:**
- A. Ms. Greenwood mentioned the District had the grand reopening of PMS and it was a smash. She thanked the band, the choir, and the parents for attending the event. Mr. Bressette added that he was pleased to see a great community turnout.
- VIII. Consent Agenda:**
- A. **Adoption of Minutes**
- a. September 25, 2024 – Draft Public Minutes
- B. **Vendor and Payroll Manifests:**
- | | | |
|----|----------|--------------|
| a. | AP100224 | \$644,627.96 |
| b. | BFPMS73 | \$14,060.20 |
- C. **Correspondence & Information:**
- a. None
- D. **Enrollment Report:**
- a. October 1, 2024
- E. **Staffing Updates:**
- a. **Leaves:**
- i. None
- b. **Resignations:**
- i. None
- c. **Retirements:**
- i. None
- d. **Nominations:**
- i. None
- Ms. Greenwood moved to approve the meeting minutes from September 25, 2024, as presented. Mr. Abare seconded the motion, which passed (4-0-1). (Mr. Wilkerson abstained)
- Mr. Wilkerson moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion, which passed (5-0-0).
- IX. Future Agenda Planning:**
- A. The Budget Committee walkthrough of PMS is scheduled for Saturday, October 12, at **8:00 a.m.** at PMS. The importance of attendance was highlighted, and it was agreed that the agenda would simply be to discuss logistics without making any decisions.
- X. Future Meetings:**
- A. 10/16/2024 – 6:30 p.m. School Board Meeting @ PES Library
- B. 10/17/2024 – 6:30 p.m. Budget Committee Meeting
- C. 10/24/2024 – 6:30 p.m. Budget Committee Meeting
- D. 10/30/2024 – 6:30 p.m. Budget Committee Meeting
- E. 11/06/2024 – 6:30 p.m. School Board Meeting @ PES Library
- XI. Non-Public Session:**

617 Mr. Wilkerson moved enter non-public 91-A:3, II (c) – Reputation at 9:21 p.m. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion, which
618 passed (5-0-0).
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620 **XII. Reconvene:**

621 9:34 p.m.
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623 **XIII. Adjournment:**

624 Mr. Wilkerson moved to adjourn the School Board Meeting at 9:35 p.m. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion, which passed
625 (5-0-0).
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629 Respectfully Submitted,

630 Matthew Sullivan

631 School Board Recording Secretary