



Pelham School Board Meeting Agenda

December 04, 2024

Meeting - 6:30 pm

PES Library

AGENDA

I. PUBLIC SESSION

A. Opening/Call to Order

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Public Input/Comment - The Board encourages public participation. Our approach is based on Policy BEDH which includes these guidelines:
 - a) Please stay within the allotted three minutes per person;
 - b) Please give your name, address, and the group, if any, that is represented;
 - c) We welcome comments on our school operations and programs. In public session, however, the Board will not hear personal complaints of school personnel nor complaints against any person connected with the school system;
 - d) We appreciate that speakers will conduct themselves in a civil manner.
4. Opening Remarks : Superintendent and Student Representative

B. Presentations

C. Main Issues

1. PMS Student Connection Presentation
 - a) Explanation: Memorial School Principal Zack Medlock will provide the Board with a description of the middle school's plan to strengthen student connections. This includes an update on the efforts to make Pelham Memorial School a phone-free environment.
 - b) Materials:
 - (1) Student Connection Memo
 - (2) YONDR Memo
 - (a) PMS Student YONDR Data
 - (b) PMS Teacher YONDR Data
2. Policy Review
 - a) Explanation: The Policy Committee is presenting the following policy changes for consideration.
 - b) Materials:
 - (1) First Reading - None
 - (2) Second Reading

- (a) EH - Public Access to School District Records
- (b) JLCJA - Emergency Plan for Sports Related Injuries and Additional Protocols for Athletics Participation

D. Board Member Reports

E. Consent Agenda

1. Adoption of Minutes
 - a) 2024.11.20 Draft School Board Minutes
2. Vendor and Payroll Manifests
 - a) 562 \$ 685,752.56
 - b) PAY562P \$ 18,744.16
 - c) BFPMS75 \$1,364,418.69
 - d) AP120424 \$1,033,312.99
3. Correspondence and Information
4. Enrollment Report
 - a) December 01, 2024 Enrollment Report
5. Staffing Updates
 - a) Leaves
 - b) Resignations
 - c) Retirements
 - d) Nominations

F. Future Agenda Planning

G. Future Meetings

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|--------|
| 1. December 18, 2024 | School Board Meeting | 6:30PM |
| 2. January 08, 2025 | School Board Meeting | 6:30PM |

H. Non Public Session 91-A:3 (II)

Rules for a non public session 91-A:3 (II)*

- II. Only the following matters shall be considered or acted upon in nonpublic session:
 - (a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.
 - (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee.
 - (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely adversely affect the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant.
 - (d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community.

- (e) Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed by or against the public body or any subdivision thereof, or by or against any member thereof because of his or her membership in such public body, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled. Any application filed for tax abatement, pursuant to law, with any body or board shall not constitute a threatened or filed litigation against any public body for the purposes of this subparagraph.
- (f) [Repealed.]
- (g) Consideration of security-related issues bearing on the immediate safety of security personnel or inmates at the county or state correctional facilities by county correctional superintendents or the commissioner of the department of corrections, or their designees.
- (h) Consideration of applications by the business finance authority under RSA 162-A:7-10 and 162-A:13, where consideration of an application in public session would cause harm to the applicant or would inhibit full discussion of the application.
- (i) Consideration of matters relating to the preparation for and the carrying out of emergency functions, including training to carry out such functions, developed by local or state safety officials that are directly intended to thwart a deliberate act that is intended to result in widespread or severe damage to property or widespread injury or loss of life.
- (j) Consideration of confidential, commercial, or financial information that is exempt from public disclosure under RSA 91-A:5, IV in an adjudicative proceeding pursuant to RSA 541 or RSA 541-A.
- (k) Consideration by a school board of entering into a student or pupil tuition contract authorized by RSA 194 or RSA 195-A, which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general public or the school district that is considering a contract, including any meeting between the school boards, or committees thereof, involved in the negotiations. A contract negotiated by a school board shall be made public prior to its consideration for approval by a school district, together with minutes of all meetings held in nonpublic session, any proposals or records related to the contract, and any proposal or records involving a school district that did not become a party to the contract, shall be made public. Approval of a contract by a school district shall occur only at a meeting open to the public at which, or after which, the public has had an opportunity to participate.
- (l) Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body, even where legal counsel is not present.
- (m) Consideration of whether to disclose minutes of a nonpublic session due to a change in circumstances under paragraph III. However, any vote on whether to disclose minutes shall take place in public session.

*Updated on 01/27/2023



Zachary Medlock
Principal

Cheryl Northrup
Special Ed. Coordinator

To: Pelham School Board
 From: Zack Medlock, Principal
 Re: Student Connection Goal at PMS
 Date: December 4, 2024
 Cc: Chip McGee, Superintendent
 Sarah Marandos, Assistant Superintendent

Goal: Student Connections/Belonging (Year 1 of 3, complete in 26-27)

Rationale: There is a positive correlation between strong student-teacher relationships and academic achievement, suggesting that a sense of belonging in the classroom is crucial for learning.¹ The staff at Pelham Memorial has decided to measure student belonging by counting students who have a trusted adult, friends at school, and who participate in a school based activity. Our goal is to improve next time we collect data in the winter and spring.

Measurement: Pelham Memorial collected baseline data in mid October of 2024 about student connection. We asked students the following questions:

- Do you have a trusted adult at school (someone you can talk to, share a worry or concern)?
 - If you have a trusted adult, who is it? If you have more than one, that is OK. List the first one that comes to mind. If you do not have one, that is OK, too. We will help you work on that.
- Who are two or three friends that you like to talk to at school? Someone you can talk to and feel connected to.
- Do you have a club or sport at the school that you participate in? An activity that you enjoy and meet other students
 - Which club, sport, or activity do you participate in?
 - If not, are there any that you might like to join. Someone from school will follow up with you about your interests.
- These are our baseline results:
 - 87% of students reported a trusted adult by name
 - 98% of students reported to have friends at school
 - 75% of students reported to be involved in a club or sport at PMS.

Action Items: Collaboratively, staff and administration developed these are the action steps:

- Send the staff member the list of students that reported them as being a trusted adult
- Share the list of students of reported not having one, and staff will reach out by team/sport/club
- Share the list of students who reported no connection of friends and counselors and administration will support students making connections.
- Identify trends in student activity data, and staff will develop activities targeted to engage the unengaged.

¹ Goodenow, C., & Grady, W. R. (1993). The impact of student-teacher relationships on academic achievement. *Review of Educational Research*, 63(2), 583-608.



Zachary Medlock
Principal

Cheryl Northrup
Special Ed. Coordinator

To: Pelham School Board
From: Zack Medlock, Principal
Re: YONDR Update at PMS
Date: December 4, 2024
Cc: Chip McGee, Superintendent
Sarah Marandos, Assistant Superintendent

Overall the implementation of the YONDR cell-phone pouch program has been successful to date. We have had limited phone related consequences. The process of pouching and un-pouching of cell phones has fit well into the school day, with minimal impact on instructional time.

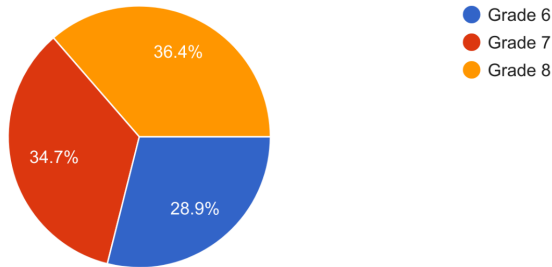
At the request of the school board, we have surveyed both students and teachers about the progress of the YONDR implementation at Pelham Memorial during Trimester 1. Teachers overall feel like this has a positive impact on students being more engaged in classrooms. From an administrative perspective, there are fewer office referrals and student damage in the restrooms.

Students had a much higher participation rate in this survey than the initial survey. Pelham Memorial administration sent the questions to parents to allow students to take the survey. There were 242 responses (approximately 70% of the student body). Not surprisingly, students were lukewarm about the implementation of the pouches, but 65% of students thought that the pouches had a neutral to positive impact. Students offered suggestions about offering limited times during the day when they could use their phones, and a desire to put phones in lockers instead.

PMS STUDENT YONDR DATA (November 2024)

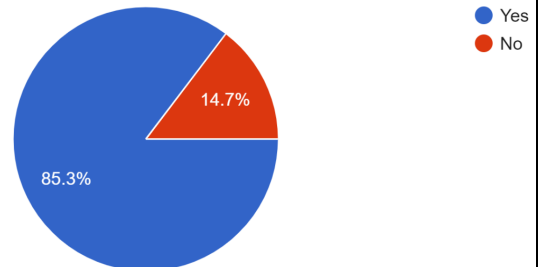
What grade are you in?

242 responses



Do you bring a cell phone to school with you?

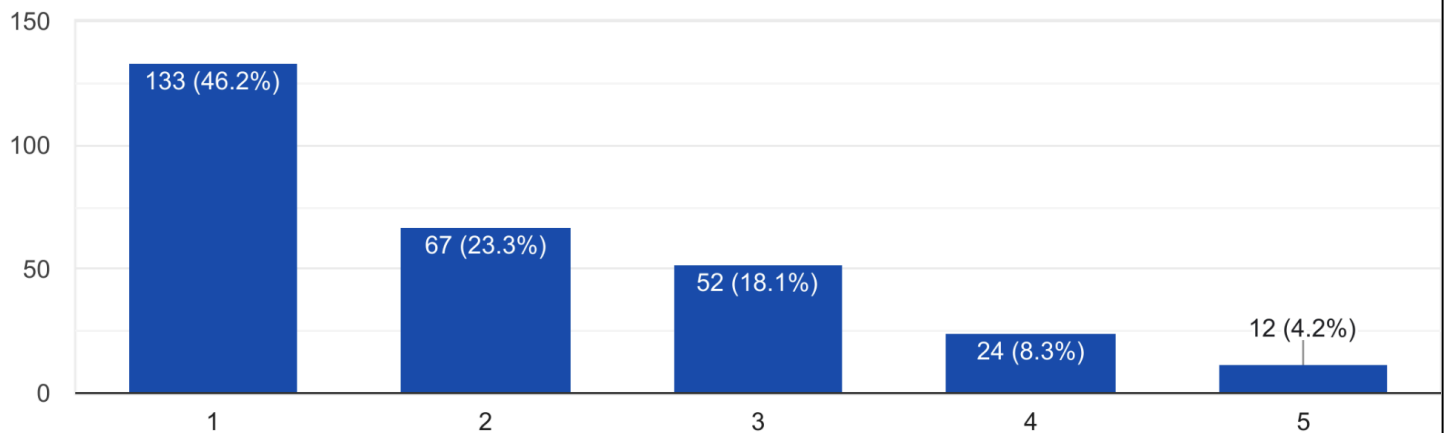
218 responses



How do you feel about Pelham Memorial School being a phone free space using the YONDR pouches?

288 responses

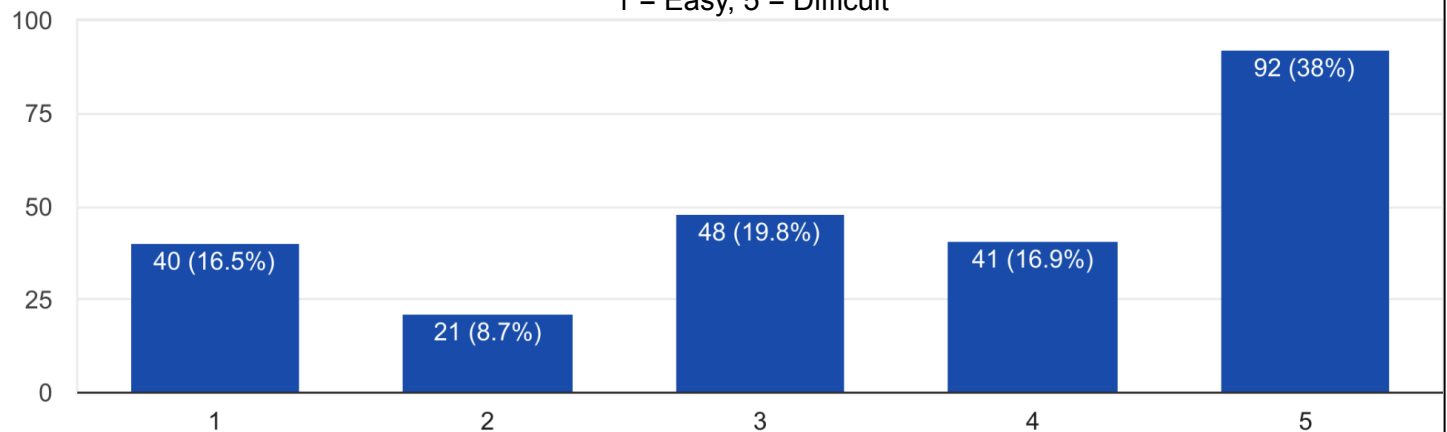
1 = I do not like this idea, 5 = I think it is a great idea.



How easy are the Yondr Pouches to use?

242 responses

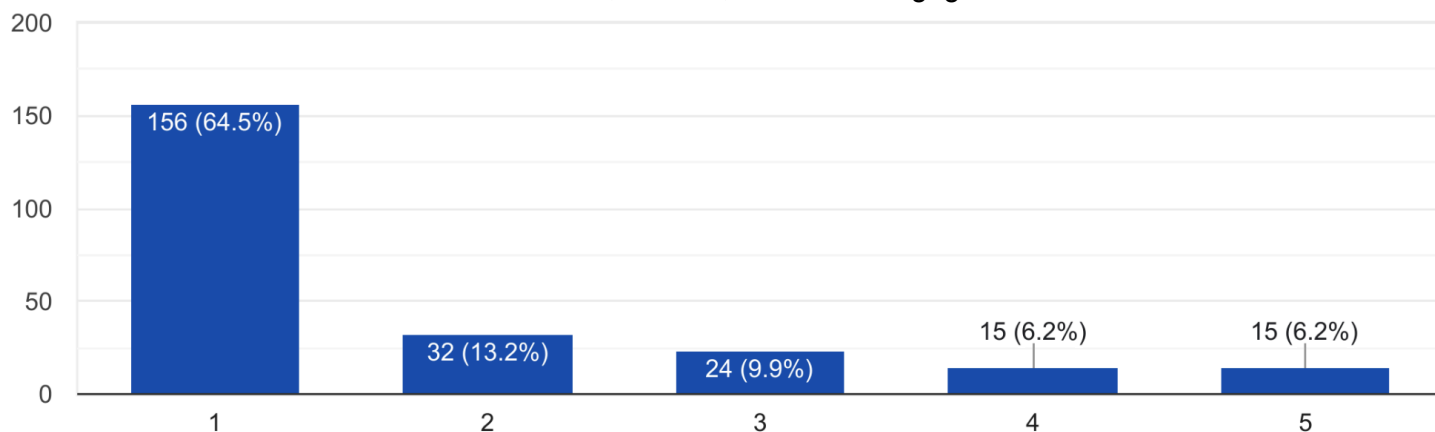
1 = Easy, 5 = Difficult



Do you feel that the usage of the Yondr pouch has kept you more engaged in class?

242 responses

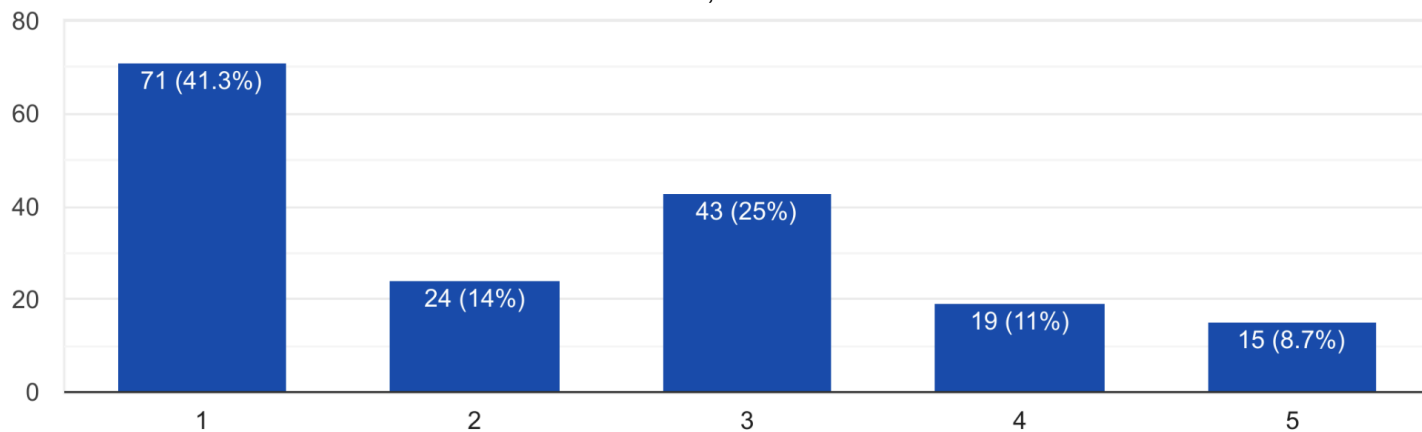
1 = No difference, 5 = Yes, I am more engaged



Do you feel that using the Yondr pouch has a positive impact at Memorial School?

172 responses

1 = No, 5 = Yes



Comments:

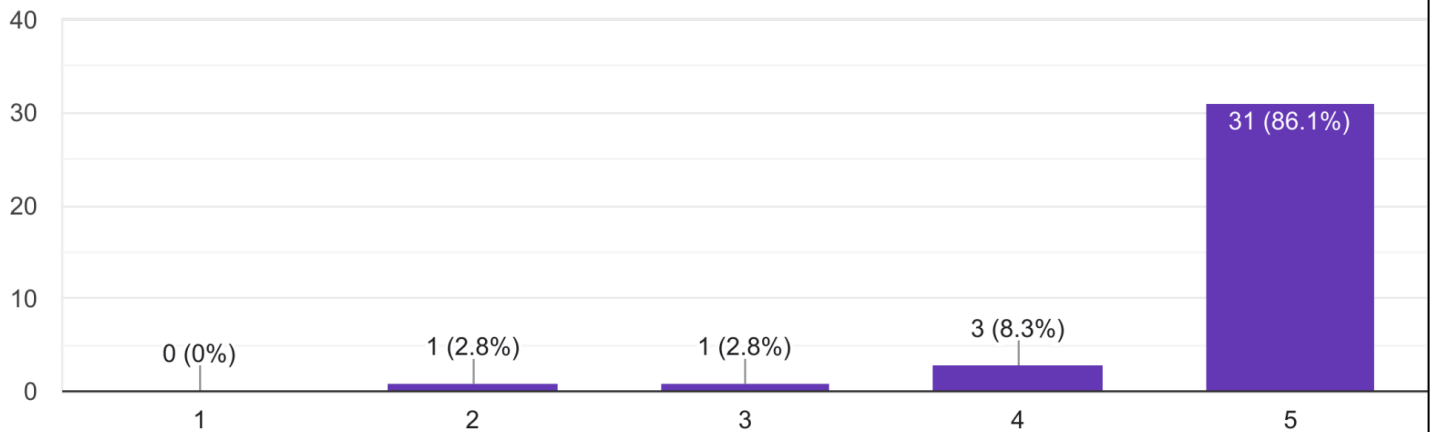
- Put phones in lockers instead
- Lock pouch a different way
- Want to use during lunch, before school
- Magnets in class for emergencies
- Phone cubby/bin in classes instead
- Only use Yondr if phone is being used inappropriately or at the wrong time
- Lost pouches/phones
- Use during free time after work is done
- Money is better spent elsewhere

PMS TEACHER YONDR DATA (November 2024)

How do you feel about Pelham Memorial School being a phone free space using the YONDR pouches?

36 responses

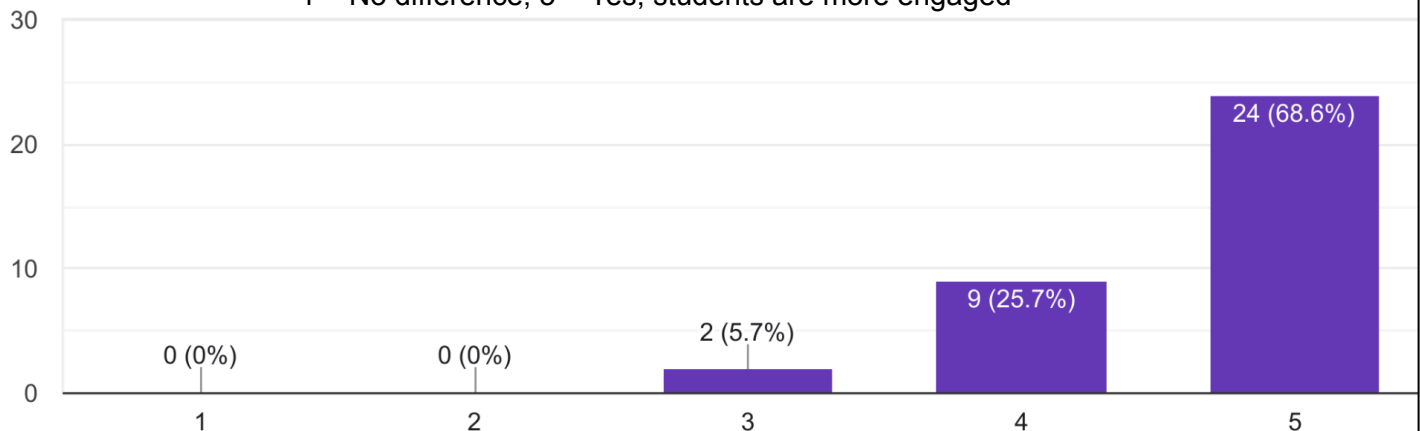
1 = I do not like this idea, 5 = I think it is a great idea.



Do you feel that the usage of the Yondr pouch has kept students more engaged in class?

35 responses

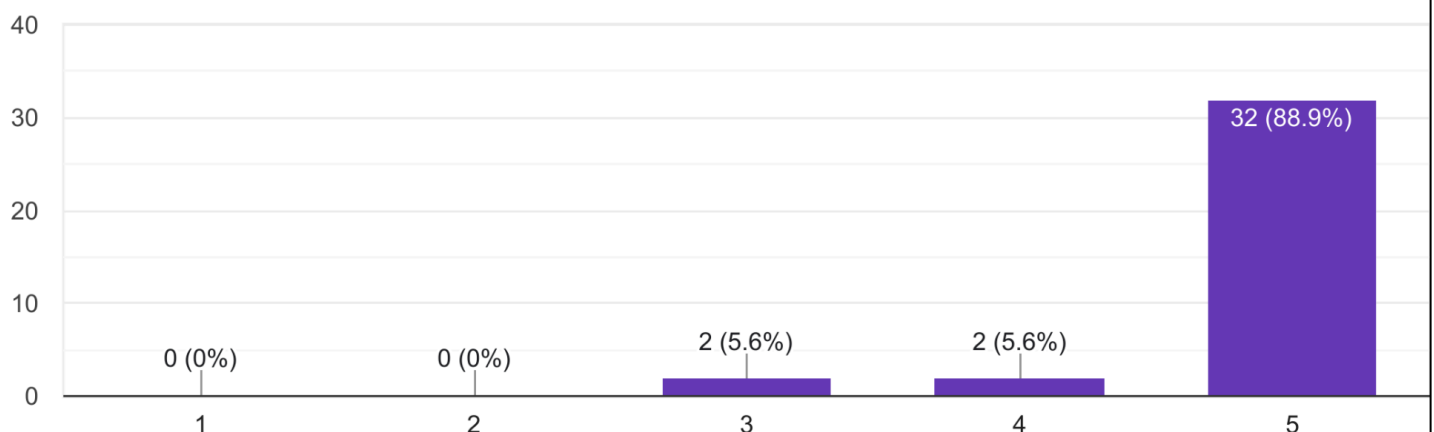
1 = No difference, 5 = Yes, students are more engaged



Do you feel that using the Yondr pouch has a positive impact at Memorial School?

36 responses

1 = No, 5 = Yes



Comments:

- Leave pouches in lockers or safe spot instead of carrying them around to avoid losing them
- Increased engagement

PELHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY

EH – PUBLIC ACCESS TO USE OF SCHOOL DISTRICT RECORDS

Category: Recommended

The Superintendent is hereby designated the custodian of all “District records,” which term shall have the same meaning as “governmental records” as that term is defined in the state’s Right to Know Law, RSA 91-A:1-a. Without limiting that meaning, District records shall include Board and Board committee minutes, documents, writings, letters, memoranda, e-mails, images, or other information of any kind kept or maintained by the District in any physical form (written, visual, electronic, digital, etc.).

The Superintendent shall develop written procedures concerning all requests by the public to inspect or obtain copies of school district records (i.e., “governmental records”). The procedures shall conform in all respects to the Right to Know Law. The written procedures should contain provisions clearly indicating personnel responsible for processing any request for District records, as well as the cost for providing requested copies. No fee or expense shall be charged other than as allowed under RSA 91-A:4.

The Superintendent shall review such procedures annually and make such changes as are required as a result of legislative changes to the Right to Know or other applicable law or regulations, or as deemed appropriate. Any changes to the written procedures should be provided to all appropriate personnel and to the School Board.

All District records shall be retained, deleted, or destroyed in accordance with Policy EHB and Administrative Procedures EHB-R. Minutes of School Board meetings, and materials used to prepare the same, shall also be made available in accordance with Policy BEDG.

The Superintendent is authorized to contact the District's attorney for any matter related to requests for public records and/or the development of the written procedures required under this policy.

These procedures will apply to all requests to inspect or obtain copies of “District records”, as defined in Policy EH.

1. **Responsibilities:** All requests for access to or copies of District records should be made through the Superintendent’s Office at the SAU. Any board member or staff member who receives a request from a member of the public to see, receive or otherwise inspect any District record(s) (“Right to Know request”) should immediately communicate that request to the Superintendent.
2. **Written Requests Encouraged:** Members of the public are encouraged to make their requests in writing and to include a specific description of the desired record(s). Right to Know requests for District records will not be denied if such request is not in writing. If the person making the request refuses to put the request in writing, the staff member receiving the request shall put the request in writing and shall provide the person with a copy. Individuals making Right-to-Know requests are encouraged to discuss their requests with the school administration to ensure the request is stated in a manner that will focus on the records desired and avoid being unnecessarily overbroad.
3. **Clarifications, Refinement and Modification of Requests:** Carefully tailored requests often can be fulfilled more promptly and help avoid resources being expended to retrieve and prepare material which exceeds what is actually being sought. The Superintendent or

PELHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY
EH – PUBLIC ACCESS TO ~~USE OF~~ SCHOOL DISTRICT RECORDS

Category: Recommended

designee may contact the person making the request if the request is unclear or will be time consuming or onerous to fulfill to determine if the person will clarify the request or agree to narrow the request. Any clarification or narrowing of the request shall be documented in writing and a copy of the re-formed request provided to the person making the request.

4. **Record Availability:** Records requested under the Right-to-Know law which are not exempt under RSA 91-A:5 (or otherwise) will be made available immediately when such records are available for such release. If such records are not immediately available, if a determination needs to be made if such records exist, or if a determination needs to be made whether such records are exempt from public disclosure, the Superintendent will, within five (5) business days of the request, respond to the requestor, in writing, acknowledging receipt of the request and providing a statement of the time reasonably necessary to determine whether the request shall be granted or denied. Records will be reviewed in their entirety by either the Superintendent or his/her designee before they are released in order to ensure that no confidential or exempted information is disclosed. District legal counsel may be consulted as necessary.
5. **Exempt Information and Redaction:** ~~Records~~ **Information** exempted from disclosure by RSA 91-A:5 or other law will not be disclosed. If a member of the public requests records that are determined to be exempt from disclosure under RSA 91-A:5 or other law, the Superintendent will respond to the requestor, in writing, including a statement of the specific exemption authorizing the withholding, and a brief explanation of how the exemption applies to the record(s) withheld.
6. **No Fee for Inspection:** No cost or fee shall be charged for the inspection, without copying of records, whether in paper, electronic, or other form. The School District will charge a fee of \$0.10 per page for copying/photocopies of records when the person requests a paper copy. **No cost or fee shall be charged for the delivery of the copies.** Electronic copies of the records may be provided when feasible for the school district to produce, **copy, and deliver.**

All District records shall be retained, deleted or destroyed in accordance with Board policy EHB and administrative procedure EHB-R. Minutes of school board meetings shall also be made available in accordance with Board policy BEDG.

District Policy History:

Adopted: July, 1998

Revised: November, 1999

Revised: June 7, 2006

Revised: February 17, 2021

Legal References:

RSA 91-A:4

PELHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY

JLCJA – EMERGENCY PLAN FOR SPORTS RELATED INJURIES & ADDITIONAL PROTOCOLS FOR ATHLETICS PARTICIPATION

Category: Priority

Creation of Plan

No later than August 1, 2022, the Superintendent or his/her designee [in consultation with each building Principal, the Athletic Director/Coordinator, district athletic trainer(s) and school nurse(s)], shall establish a “Sports Injury Emergency Action Plan” (at times referred to in this policy as the “Plan”) for responding to serious or potentially life-threatening injuries sustained from sports or other school sponsored athletic activities. The Sports Injury Emergency Action Plan shall:

1. Document the proper procedures to be followed when a student sustains a serious injury or illness while participating in school sponsored sports or other athletic activity;
2. List the employees, team coaches, and licensed athletic trainers in each school who are trained in first aid or cardiopulmonary resuscitation;
3. Identify the employees, team coaches, or licensed athletic trainers responsible for carrying out the emergency action plan;
4. Identify the activity location, address, or venue for the purpose of directing emergency personnel;
5. Identify the equipment and supplies and location thereof needed to respond to the emergency;
6. Identify the location of any automated external defibrillators and personnel trained in the use of the automated external defibrillator;
7. Identify the equipment and supplies and location thereof needed to respond to the emergency;
8. Identify the location (which shall be consistent with the provisions of GBGBA/JLCEA/KFD) of any automated external defibrillators ("AED"s) and personnel trained in the use of the AED;
9. Document policies related to cooling for an exertional heat stroke victim consistent with guidelines established by the American College of Sports Medicine and the National Athletic Trainers' Association; and
10. Require that all school sponsored sports activities for any of grades 6-12 be supervised by a person trained in CPR.

Dissemination of Sports Injury Emergency Action Plan

The Sports Injury Emergency Action Plan shall be posted within each school and disseminated to pertinent emergency medical services, fire department, and law enforcement.

Additional Written Protocols and Procedures Required

PELHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY

JLCJA – EMERGENCY PLAN FOR SPORTS RELATED INJURIES & ADDITIONAL PROTOCOLS FOR ATHLETICS PARTICIPATION

Category: Priority

No later than August 1, 2022, the Superintendent or his/her designee [in consultation with each building Principal, the Athletic Director/Coordinator, district athletic trainer(s) and school nurse(s)], shall develop written procedures and protocols as described below:

1. Hydration, Heat Acclimatization and, Wet Bulb Globe Temperature – protocols relating to hydration, heat acclimatization and wet bulb globe temperature as established by the American College of Sports Medicine and the National Athletic Trainers' Association;
2. Student Medical History – procedures for obtaining student-participant medical information for each student athlete prior to engaging in sports. Such information must include:
 - a. injury or illness related to or involving any head, face, or cervical spine;
 - b. cardiac injury or diagnosis;
 - c. exertional heat stroke;
 - d. sickle cell trait;
 - e. asthma;
 - f. allergies; or
 - g. diabetes.

Access, filing, and confidentiality of student-participant medical information shall be managed in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

3. Student Return to Play – Procedures governing a student's return to play after a sports or illness related injury pertaining to this policy are in addition to the return to play provisions specific to head injuries set forth in Board policy JLCJ, and copies of the procedures must be maintained at the SAU office and available to the Department of Education and public upon request.

Annual Review and Update

The Superintendent and/or designee shall ensure that the Sports Injury Emergency Action Plan, and all procedures and protocols adopted pursuant to this policy, are reviewed no less than annually and updated as necessary. Copies of the updated Plan and procedures should be available to the Board no later than the start of each school year.

Inclusion of Sports Injury Emergency Action Plan with Emergency Response Plan

The Sports Injury Emergency Action Plan shall be included with each school's annual Emergency Response Plan (see Board policy *EBCA*).

**PELHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY
JLCJA – EMERGENCY PLAN FOR SPORTS RELATED INJURIES &
ADDITIONAL PROTOCOLS FOR ATHLETICS PARTICIPATION**

Category: Priority

District Policy History:

Adopted: December 1, 2021

Legal References:

20 U.S.C. §1232g, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

34 C.F.R. Part 99, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations

RSA 200:40-c, Emergency Plan for Sports Related Injuries

Pelham School Board Meeting
Pelham Elementary School
November 20, 2024
6:30 p.m.

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

Superintendent: Chip McGee

Business Administrator: Deb Mahoney

Absent: Mya Belanger; Alexia Nou; and Sarah Marandos

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 one came forward.

Public Input closed at 6:31 p.m.

C. Opening Remarks:

a. Superintendent:

Superintendent McGee provided updates as the school year progressed toward the Thanksgiving holiday. He noted that the high school's National Honor Society induction ceremony will occur tomorrow night. This year, 82 students, including high-achieving sophomores, will be inducted. Dr. McGee mentioned that the high school football team has advanced to the state championship game, scheduled for 1:00 p.m. this Saturday at Pinkerton Academy. The cheer squad will support them, ranking them second in the state.

Dr. McGee commented that the Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) program teaches students to create three meals from one chicken, emphasizing practicality and budget-friendly cooking. He said that students continue to benefit from the 3D printing program at the Memorial School, a resource available for several years.

Dr. McGee stated that PES will host a PTA Fun Night for second and third graders this Friday from 6 p.m. until 7:15 p.m. These events promote family engagement and community spirit. He added that the Salem Boys and Girls Club recently honored Fifth-grade Teacher Ms. McGuire as the Pelham Teacher of the Year. The Board congratulated her for this well-deserved recognition.

II. Presentations:

A. None

III. Main Issues:

A. Budget Committee Decision:

Dr. McGee commented that on November 14, the Pelham Budget Committee voted unanimously to support their School District's FY2026 Operating Budget, which they had reduced by **\$586,437** from the School Board's recommended budget. This changed the overall budget from **\$44,668,848** to **\$44,082,411**.

The Budget Committee reduced in three areas:

1. PES Computer Technology Equipment Replacement (1011222500-738)

The Budget Committee reduced this line by **\$19,600**. This was based on research the technology team completed regarding replacing our interactive panels. The team identified panels that cost **\$700** less per panel, which is **\$2,700** per panel instead of **\$3,400**. These panels still meet the required specifications. This is a reduction from **\$95,200** to **\$75,600** for 28 panels. This is for half of the panels at PES, with the other half scheduled for replacement in FY2027.

2. Medical Insurance Premiums

The Budget Committee reduced these various lines by a total of **\$34,837**. This resulted from work by the Business Office to align the budgeted amounts for the district portion of the obligation for employee health insurance premiums with the actual rate increases. These rate increases varied according to the plan for this year. The overall rate increase was **\$34,837**, below the budgeted increase of **\$673,037**.

3. PHS Building Improvement Contracted Repair & Maintenance (1033460000-433)

The Budget Committee reduced this line by **\$532,000** by removing the item to replace two boilers at PHS. The project is part of the Town Capital Improvement Plan. The Committee expressed openness to seeing this item again for reconsideration. They would expect additional information about whether the boilers need to be replaced in FY2026, whether they have useful life left, and the return on investment for this replacement. They asked for an impartial analysis.

Mr. Abare asked if the impartial analysis would be provided in time for reconsideration. Ms. Mahoney noted that third-party evaluations are being pursued to provide impartial analysis regarding the boiler's condition and potential return on investment if replaced. Challenges in this process include the recent departure of the Director of Facilities.

Mr. Bressette stated that this stemmed from the direction the Board provided Dr. McGee in October, and there was a clear expectation that they would meet that if possible.

Ms. Greenwood asked if the medical insurance number was set and whether the number was not going to be increased or decreased. Dr. McGee stated that the number used to be a guaranteed maximum, but now the number does not decrease.

Ms. Greenwood asked if the District would check how much life was left in the boiler. Dr. McGee added that a Budget Committee member had noted that the boiler could have four more years of useful life. The Budget Committee requested that a third-party company, not the vendor, provide alternatives to financing and energy efficiency.

Mr. Bressette pointed out that the Budget Committee is open to hearing additional information regarding the boiler if the information comes from an impartial third-party company, not the vendor. Reconsideration is approximately on January 16, 2025.

It was noted that the boiler's inclusion in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) should have ensured its priority status before reaching the Budget Committee.

Ms. Greenwood asked if the District had an emergency account in case the boiler stopped working. Ms. Mahoney said the District has a Capital Reserve Fund for facility emergencies. As of the end of the year, the account had \$330,512, and the District also has a Building and Grounds Renovations and Improvement Capital Reserve Fund, which has approximately **\$83,000**.

Mr. Bressette requested a list of all the District's Capital Reserve Funds.

Mr. Wilkerson entered the meeting at 6:49 p.m.

B. Goal Development:

The conversation shifted to the School Board's goals for the current school year, which focus on strengthening student connections and improving student outcomes in mathematics. Dr. McGee noted that improving student connections would be handled at the individual school level, allowing each building to tailor its approach to its unique needs.

Board members debated the balance between providing oversight and allowing schools the autonomy to develop and execute their plans. Members agreed on the importance of transparency and the need for each school to publicly present its specific plans and progress.

Dr. McGee clarified that progress updates will be presented while each school develops its strategy to improve student connections. The first update from PMS is scheduled for the next meeting. This update will serve as a model for other schools.

Mr. Bressette suggested understanding the plans beforehand would help the Board and the public assess progress effectively. He highlighted the value of aligning building-level goals with broader District objectives, ensuring accountability while respecting the schools' expertise in achieving these goals.

The Board discussed language challenges impacting communication and trust. It was noted that terms like "escalate" and "judge" had been used during the meeting but were not intended in their literal or negative connotations. Mr. Wilkerson emphasized that communication barriers represent a significant obstacle, particularly in expressing trust across various entities within the District.

Mr. Wilkerson highlighted a broader concern: educators often feel directed by the District, the Board, or Principals rather than treated as collaborators. It was stated that effective educators prefer to work *with* these entities, not *for* them. This sentiment underscored the importance of addressing language issues to foster mutual trust and enable individual schools to align with shared goals.

Mr. Wilkerson expressed satisfaction with articulating the Board's objectives and readiness to proceed. The discussion concluded with an agreement to proceed iteratively, ensuring that plans are shared and feedback is incorporated at every stage.

The conversation continued with a brief discussion on the agenda order. A review of literacy goals highlighted a performance improvement, with Dr. McGee emphasizing the foundational role of language. The previously established goals were reiterated, focusing on the current challenges and the rationale for continuing them. It was noted that progress in literacy is ongoing and will remain a priority until the desired outcomes are achieved. The group expressed satisfaction with the positive trends observed so far.

Mr. Bressette welcomed input and acknowledged that public feedback has been instrumental in reshaping the approach to individual goals. The contributions were appreciated, reinforcing the importance of community involvement in the planning process.

The goal of making the District the "best place to work " was unchanged from the version presented at the retreat. The merging of "culture," "belonging," and "best place to work" into a unified goal was confirmed. No further discussion arose on this topic.

Mr. Wilkerson moved to approve the District goals as presented. Mr. Abare seconded the motion, which passed (5-0-0).

Before proceeding with the vote, the distinction between building-level plans and the District goals was clarified. The Board concurred that building-level plans are separate but will be provided for review.

Mr. Bressette thanked Dr. McGee for his receptiveness to feedback and confirmed that updates regarding the Memorial School will be shared in the coming weeks.

C. Policy Review:

The Board reviewed the policies listed below.

a. First Reading:

- i. EH - Public Access to School District Records
- ii. JLCJA - Emergency Plan for Sports-Related Injuries and Additional Protocols for Athletics Participation.

b. Second Reading:

- i. BBBF - Student Members of the School Board
- ii. GBGNA/JLCEA/KFD - Use of Automated External Defibrillators(s) (AED)
- iii. IC - School Year and School Year Calendar
- iv. IJOA - Field Trips
- v. JRA - Student Records and Access - FERPA
- vi. IHBA - Programs for Pupils with Disabilities

Green text - Language that the Policy Committee added.

Yellow text - Language Recommended by the NH School Board Association

Mr. Wilkerson moved to approve the policies recommended upon second reading. Mr. Abare seconded the motion, which passed (5-0-0).

VI. Other:

- A. None

VII. Board Member Reports:

- A. Mr. Wilkerson noted that he could not attend the regional meeting in Salem on November 14.
- B. Dr. McGee mentioned that the regional meeting in Salem was a great event. He stated that the Salem Boys and Girls Club helps build a strong community and added that he was proud to have the Teacher of the Year on stage with the Policeman and Firefighter of the Year. Last year was the first year that Pelham was involved in the event.

VIII. Consent Agenda:

- A. Dr. McGee provided an update regarding Brian Sands, the Director of Facilities. Mr. Sands resignation letter was presented, as he had accepted a position with the New Hampshire Department of Education focusing on building inspections. The Board wished Mr. Sands well with his future endeavors.

The Board agreed to approve the Consent Agenda with the exception of the noted Correspondence item.

B. Adoption of Minutes

- a. November 6, 2024 – Draft Public Minutes
- b. November 6, 2024 – Draft Public Minutes

C. Vendor and Payroll Manifests:

- a. 561 \$632,109.10
- b. AP112024 \$298,883.99
- c. DU112024 \$100.00
- d. PAY561P \$320,529.99

D. Enrollment Report:

- a. None

E. Staffing Updates:

- a. **Leaves:**
 - i. None

- b. **Resignations:**
 - i. Brian Sands District Facilities Director
- c. **Retirements:**
 - i. None
- d. **Nominations:**
 - i. None

Mr. Wilkerson motioned to approve the Consent Agenda with the exception of the Correspondence. Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion, which passed (5-0-0).

F. Correspondence & Information:

a. Special Education Funding

The meeting moved on to discuss Correspondence received from the Commissioner of Education for New Hampshire regarding Special Education Aid. Dr. McGee introduced the topic, summarizing the letter and its implications for the Pelham School District's budget.

The Commissioner's letter outlined that the reimbursement rate for Special Education Aid for fiscal year 2025 is anticipated to be **67%**. For high-cost Special Education Cases—those exceeding 3.5 times the state per-pupil cost—the District is eligible for **\$821,248** in aid, known as **District Entitlement**. However, the state will only reimburse **\$554,342**, leaving a shortfall of **\$266,906**. This gap arises because the reimbursement rate has dropped significantly, marking the lowest level in eight years.

Dr. McGee explained that while the District qualified for aid under state and federal mandates, the reduced reimbursement rate shifts the financial burden to local taxpayers. Historically, reimbursement rates have ranged from 87% to 100%, with the current year's **67%** being unprecedented. This funding gap directly impacts the District's ability to manage its budget without relying on local property taxes.

Dr. McGee noted that the statewide appropriation for Special Education Aid has remained flat for three years despite rising costs due to inflation, increased transportation expenses, and higher identification rates for Special Education services. This static funding allocation has led to reduced reimbursement percentages for all Districts in New Hampshire.

Dr. McGee proposed discussing the matter with Pelham's legislative delegation to advocate for increased appropriations in the state budget. The Board unanimously supported this initiative, recognizing the importance of addressing the growing financial burden on local taxpayers

During the discussion, Board members raised questions about the sources of state education funding, including the use of the Statewide Education Property Tax (SWEPT) and the Educational Trust Fund. Dr. McGee clarified that while funds from SWEPT are not used for Special Education Aid, revenue sources such as business taxes and the state lottery contribute to the Educational Trust Fund, which covers these costs.

Board members voiced frustration with the unfunded mandates imposed by state and federal laws, which require compliance without adequate financial support. They agreed to engage local and federal representatives to address the disparity and advocate for fair funding for mandated services.

Ms. Mahoney assured the Board that revenue estimates for the budget had accounted for a conservative reimbursement rate of **56%**, which mitigated potential shortfalls. However, the reduced reimbursement rate will affect the District's year-end fund balance, leading to a lower return to taxpayers.

In conclusion, the Board strongly supported Dr. McGee’s plan to collaborate with legislators and other Superintendents to address the funding challenges. Dr. McGee acknowledged the Board’s consensus and commitment to advocating for fairer financial support for Special Education mandates.

IX. Future Agenda Planning:

Mr. Abare suggested including a topic for a future agenda, specifically requesting a brief overview of the mandates and responsibilities assigned to the District by the Department of Education. He clarified that this would include state and federal mandates, emphasizing its potential focus in the coming years.

Dr. McGee and Ms. Mahoney discussed researching federal funding and grants. Mr. Abare sought clarification regarding the specific funds received from the federal government. The budget includes **\$723,000** in grant funds categorized under Fund 227. These appropriations cover various grants, such as IDEA, Title I, Title II, and others, which flow through as reimbursements to the District.

Ms. Mahoney noted that these funds are allocated for Special Education and other programs with no tax impact since grants fully fund them. If these federal revenues were unavailable, the corresponding expenses would have a tax impact.

X. Future Meetings:

A. 12/04/2024 – 6:30 p.m. School Board Meeting @ PES Library

B. 12/18/2024 – 6:30 p.m. School Board Meeting @ PES Library

XI. Adjournment:

Mr. Wilkerson moved to adjourn the School Board Meeting at 7:38 p.m. Mr. Abare seconded the motion, which passed (5-0-0).

Respectfully Submitted,
Matthew Sullivan
School Board Recording Secretary

November 20, 2024

Monthly Enrollment
Pelham School District
As of December 01, 2024

Enrollment						
Grade Level	End of Year 23-24	9/3/24	10/1/24	11/1/24	12/1/24	Change from November
Preschool	69	66	65	64	66	2
Kindergarten	122	99	99	99	99	0
1	104	129	128	129	128	-1
2	132	106	107	107	107	0
3	108	134	134	135	134	-1
4	106	108	108	107	107	0
5	121	111	111	111	109	-2
6	115	121	122	123	123	0
7	118	113	113	113	112	-1
8	110	114	114	115	116	1
9	119	110	102	103	103	0
10	139	121	118	118	116	-2
11	143	145	143	144	144	0
12	148	148	147	146	146	0
PES Total	762	753	752	752	750	-2
PMS Total	343	348	349	351	351	0
PHS Total	549	524	510	511	509	-2
PSD Total	1654	1,625	1,611	1,614	1,610	-4

Withdrawals			
School	Grade	Date	Notes
PHS	10	11/4/24	Sanborn, NH
PHS	11	11/4/24	Kittery, ME
PHS	10	11/15/24	Hollis, NH
PHS	10	11/15/24	Hollis, NH
PMS	7	11/18/24	Hudson, NH
PES	PK-3	11/9/24	Gorham, NH
PES	1	11/9/24	Bedford, NH
PES	3	11/15/24	Hollis, NH
PES	5	11/15/24	Brookline, NH
PES	5	11/15/24	Hollis, NH
New Students			
School	Grade	Date	Notes
PHS	10	11/12/24	Dover, PA
PHS	11	11/12/24	Lawrence, MA
PMS	8	11/18/24	Tewksbury, MA
PES	PK-3	11/1/24	New enrollment
PES	PK-3	11/1/24	New enrollment
PES	PK-3	11/13/24	New enrollment