

**Pelham School Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, May 16, 2017  
Community Room, Pelham Library**

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Cara Castenson, Chair  
Ron Mannino  
Jessie Jean-Louis  
Emily Marriott

Mike Morris, Interim Superintendent  
Lisa Desjarlais, Principal  
Debbie Westmoreland, Recorder

**1. Call to Order and Approve Minutes**

**6:31 p.m.**

Dr. Morris called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. and explained the need to reorganize due to the recent election. He welcomed Ms. Jean-Louis to the School Committee then called for nominations for Chair. Mr. Mannino nominated Ms. Castenson, Ms. Marriott seconded and the nomination was unanimously approved. Ms. Castenson then requested nominations for Vice-Chair. Ms. Marriott nominated Mr. Mannino, Ms. Jean-Louis seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Ms. Castenson called for nominations for Regional representatives and discussion followed regarding the duties and commitment for these Regional representatives and the officers who also serve on Union 26. Ms. Castenson nominated Ms. Marriott to serve as a Regional representative and the nomination was unanimously approved. Ms. Marriott then nominated Mr. Mannino to serve on the Regional Committee. Ms. Jean-Louis seconded and the nomination was unanimously approved. Ms. Castenson nominated Ms. Marriott as Secretary and the nomination was unanimously approved. Ms. Castenson then welcomed Ms. Jean-Louis to the School Committee and thanked her for her willingness to serve.

Ms. Marriott moved to approve the minutes of May 3, 2017. Ms. Jean-Louis seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

**2. Announcements and Public Comment**

**6:43 p.m.**

There were no announcements or public comments.

**3. Principal's and Interim Superintendent's Update**

**6:43 p.m.**

Dr. Morris noted that there are a number of events coming up at the end of the school year, including the Pelham stepping up event on Tuesday, June 20. He reported that the Amherst elementary schools' PGOs are contemplating planning a picnic at Graff Park for the end of the year and Pelham will be invited if it is confirmed. Dr. Morris noted that all School Committee members are invited to sit on the stage at the ARHS graduation on June 9. On Thursday, June 15 at 4:00 p.m. in the Pelham Community Room, the STARS in Special Education recognition event is scheduled. The Employee Recognition event will be Monday, June 19 at 7:00 p.m. at the Social Hall of the Unitarian-Universalist Society in Amherst. Dr. Morris also noted that the Latino Student Achievement Night is scheduled for this Friday in the ARMS auditorium. Finally, Dr. Morris reported on the work that has been done with the publishers of SuperKids, noting that the revised second grade curriculum will be available in the fall. He expressed appreciation for the advocacy of our staff members and the responsiveness of the publisher. Ms. Desjarlais reported that there are two new events happening tomorrow. The third grade teacher and Cynthia Wiegel from the Historical Society have scheduled an event where Pelham students will meet with senior citizens who went to school in the former elementary school and then visit the museum at the Rhodes Building. Ms. Desjarlais noted that representatives from the Amherst Fire Department will be visiting the kindergarten class tomorrow to help introduce those children to firefighters and help them understand what they do. Field Day is being organized for next week. Ms. Desjarlais reported that Georgia Malcolm, the new administrative assistant, has been awarded one of the annual clerical awards and will be honored at the Employee Recognition Event. Dr. Morris recognized Ms. Malcolm for the major assistance she provided in

organizing a recent ALANA event for all district ALANA staff. He also noted that he and Ms. Desjarlais attended the Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Awards where Leanne Hunt was honored.

#### **4. New and Continuing Business**

**6:59 p.m.**

##### **A. Third Quarter Budget Update**

###### ***DOCUMENT: FY2017 Third Quarter Budget Update--Pelham***

Dr. Morris noted that Mr. Mangano is attending the annual MASBO (Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials) conference so he could not attend tonight. He then distributed and reviewed the highlights of the 2017 third quarter budget update, noting that the district is anticipated to end the year \$20,000-\$25,000 over budget. Dr. Morris explained that this amount would be taken from choice funds so there will not be a need to ask the Town for additional funds.

##### **B. Interim Superintendent Evaluation Instrument Vote**

###### ***DOCUMENT: End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report—Superintendent***

Ms. Castenson thanked Ms. Marriott for all of the work she put into developing the evaluation instrument. Ms. Marriott then reviewed the changes that have been made to the document since it was reviewed at the last meeting, noting that they were made in consultation with Dorothy Presser of MASC. Ms. Castenson then moved to approve the evaluation instrument as presented and Mr. Mannino seconded. Dr. Morris noted that he will be sending School Committee members a document this week with a report of progress and links to artifacts for each of the evaluation elements and the goals. After brief discussion of the evaluation process, the motion was unanimously approved. Dr. Morris noted that it will be helpful to have some idea of the process that will be followed since the committees are doing separate evaluations this year. Ms. Marriott reviewed the evaluation timeline discussed by the subcommittee and there was discussion of the collection method that will be used for the instrument. It was agreed that Pelham will plan to meet prior to the Regional meeting on June 27 to complete their evaluation.

##### **C. Charter/Choice/Private School Family Survey**

###### ***DOCUMENT: The Amherst-Regional Public Schools Survey of Families Choosing Private Schools; The Amherst-Regional Public Schools Survey of Families Choosing Charter Schools; The Amherst-Regional Public Schools Survey of Families Choosing Choice Schools***

Dr. Morris noted that the surveys have been drafted as a way to solicit feedback from families who choose to attend a school other than Pelham, particularly those who never attended Pelham School. He explained that the surveys will be sent to families with a self-addressed, stamped envelope and will also include a link to take the survey via Survey Monkey or a QR code. He asked School Committee members to share any feedback on the surveys, noting that they can email comments if they need additional time to review the documents. Ms. Marriott suggested adding the individual elementary schools to Amherst on the choice survey. Ms. Castenson asked if students who leave the district will still have the opportunity to complete an exit survey and Dr. Morris confirmed they will. Ms. Castenson suggested adding a choice of "Other" on question one of each survey. Ms. Marriott suggested changing the wording in all of the questions from "Amherst-Pelham Regional School" to just "Pelham." It was also agreed that the letterhead will be changed specifically to the Pelham letterhead.

##### **D. Innovation/Magnet School Engagement Process/Organization**

Ms. Castenson noted that exploring the possibility of pursuing an innovation/magnet school is something the School Committee may want to pursue based on financial considerations. Ms. Marriott said she would like to clarify up front whether there is interest in pursuing this only if it is financially beneficial or whether it would be pursued regardless. Mr. Mannino noted that his understanding is that this avenue would be pursued to make Pelham School more attractive, and less likely to be closed, if we regionalization. Dr. Morris noted that the language matters in establishing the group that will work on this exploration and noted the importance of involving the broader community. Ms. Marriott moved to develop a working group to explore successful

innovation school models in the geographic region comprised of School Committee members, staff, and parent/guardians. Mr. Mannino seconded and discussion followed. Dr. Morris proposed a friendly amendment to change the wording of the motion to read “to form an exploratory working group to investigate innovative small school models.” Ms. Marriott moved to approve the amendment, Ms. Jean-Louis seconded and the motion to amend was unanimously approved. The motion, as amended, was then unanimously approved. Brief discussion followed regarding innovation school grants and potential innovation school models, as well as the process for pursuing potential regionalization. Ms. Marriott noted that it will be beneficial to begin the exploratory work and the regionalization discussion at the same time.

#### **E. Policy: Protection of Undocumented Students**

##### ***DOCUMENT: Students: Protection of Undocumented Students***

Ms. Castenson noted that this policy has been approved at the Regional School Committee, and Dr. Morris noted that this is the first reading for some of the Pelham members. After brief discussion, it was agreed that this will be tabled until the next meeting in order to allow members time to review the policy.

#### **F. Future School Committee Planning**

Next Meeting topics: Working group document with a draft by Dr. Morris; Policy vote; and discussion of whether Pelham School Committee will meet on Tuesdays or Wednesdays in the 2017-2018 school year. It was agreed that a message will be included in the Pelham School Newsletter seeking a fifth member for the School Committee. For future school committee meetings, Mr. Mannino suggested discussion about Pelham School including student performance. Other suggested topics include technology and media research (both educational and recreational); Quarterly updates on the School Improvement Plan, including behavioral concerns and school climate; and Strategic planning which would involve a survey of Pelham families, a survey of families who opt-out of Pelham and an exploratory group.

#### **G. Accept Gifts**

##### ***DOCUMENT: Memos to Pelham School Committee from Jill Berry, Region Treasurer, dated March 20, 2017 and May 9, 2017***

Ms. Marriott moved to accept \$500 from Big Y for use at the Principal’s discretion and \$708 from the Pelham Cultural Council for the Pelham Elementary Arts grant. Ms. Jean-Louis seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

#### **6. Adjourn**

**8:31 p.m.**

Ms. Marriott moved to adjourn at 8:31 p.m. Ms. Marriott seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Debbie Westmoreland