



## PLYMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CENTRAL OFFICE  
27 NORTH HARWINTON AVENUE  
TERRYVILLE, CONNECTICUT 06786

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Plymouth Public Schools is to challenge, inspire, and prepare all students for success in an ever-changing and complex world.

### PLYMOUTH BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING VIRTUAL MEETING – AUDIO ONLY

PUBLIC PLEASE CALL: +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)  
MEETING ID: 986 8867 2505  
PASSWORD: 689057

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 2020

7:00 P.M.

### MINUTES

Present: Mr. Seaman, Mrs. Kulesa, Mrs. Lucian, Mr. Showers, Mr. Foote, Mr. Elsaghir, Mrs. Kremmel, and Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani, Mrs. Johnson arrived at 7:04 p.m.

Others Present: Dr. Semmel, Superintendent, Mrs. Parsons, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Mrs. Aronheim, Director of Pupil Personnel & Special Education, Mr. Trudeau, Director of Technology, and Mr. Hendrickson, Business Manager

#### 1. **Call to Order & Pledge to the Flag**

Mr. Seaman called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The group joined in the Pledge to the Flag.

#### 2. **Adoption of the Agenda**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion Mr. Showers, second Mrs. Lucian, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion passes.

#### 3. **Approval of Minutes**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 13, 2020.

Motion Mr. Foote, second Mr. Showers, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion passes.

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MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of May 27, 2020.

Motion Mr. Showers, second Mrs. Lucian, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, Mr. Foote abstains, motion passes

4. **Presentations**

- \* Teacher of the Year for 2021– Mrs. Marie Whitehouse, Grade 2, Plymouth Center School introduced by Mrs. Parsons, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
- \* Recognition of Graduating Students Representatives  
Taylor Greenwood & Julia Zaniewski by Dr. Semmel, Superintendent

5. **Superintendent's Update**

- \* Ms. Aronheim – Update on Summer School Program

The district will be holding virtual summer school this year. Any parent who has a child/children recommended for the Extended School Year Summer School Program should have already received an email from Ms. Aronheim informing them of virtual summer school and were asked to complete a survey. Parents were also informed they would be hearing from the child's teacher. There is a meeting scheduled for June 15 with all of the teachers and staff working in the Extended School Year Program. Parents will be hearing from teachers after that meeting.

- \* Dr. Semmel – Update as to what is going to occur in the 2020 – 2021 school year.

Dr. Semmel shared with the Board Members a document from the Litchfield County Group, lead by EdAdvance. EdAdvance brought together a number of individuals from the Litchfield Group to look over the state guidelines that are currently available for summer school. Guidelines for summer school are being used to begin detailing what needs to occur when we open up school at the beginning of the 2020 – 2021. This is challenging as things are rapidly changing. Currently, we have no idea of what will happen in the fall. However, Administrators, along with additional voices, will be working diligently on trying to devise a plan. Safety concerns to be addressed first, followed by academics. Current staffing will be used to construct a plan. Everyone will need to be adaptable. Teachers may be in different roles than traditionally in order to get the numbers to where they need to be. We may see some movement of staff in order to make things work. We will need to work with the teachers union, etc. Reading and Math are continued major areas of focus that need to continually be worked on. Our goal is to try and complete this plan by July 31. There are no state guidelines yet for 2020 – 2021, although we should be receiving them shortly. As in the past, things change along the way so our plan needs to be adaptable. Two phases: Phase 1 – Distance Learning; Phase 2 – Physical Spaces.

Positive Notes: (a) Plymouth Center School and Harry S. Fisher Parades; (b) Eli Terry Jr. Middle School Moving forward ceremony for eighth grade students; and (c) Terryville High School Graduation has been moved to Friday, June 12, 2020.

- \* Student Representatives for 2020 – 2021 SY  
Tyler Mendela  
Lilyana Ricardo  
Gene Buckley

6. **Student Representatives**

- \* Taylor Greenwood - Absent
- \* Julia Zaniwski - Absent
- \* Tyler Mendela - Absent

7. **Public Comment** (limited to 3-minutes per speaker)

None

8. **Old Business**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the following textbook: Practice of Statistics – Sixth Edition © 2018, revised 2020 Daren S. Starnes; Josh Tabor.  
Motion Mr. Foote, second Mrs. Lucian, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any objection, motion passes.

9. **New Business**

(a) End of the Year Transfers

MOTION: To entertain a motion to authorize the Superintendent of Schools to work with the Business Manager in order to make the necessary transfers and expenditures to close the books as of June 30, 2020 and to expend funds for the fiscal year 2019 – 2020.

Motion Mrs. Johnson, second Mr. Foote, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion passes.

(b) Healthy Food Certification 2020 – 2021

All public school districts participating in the NSLP must submit the *Healthy Food Certification Statement – Addendum to Agreement for Child Nutrition Program (ED-099)* by July 1, 2020 to certify whether or not all food items sold to students will or will not meet Connecticut Nutritional Standards.

- **Healthy Food Option:** Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the board of education or governing authority certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to, school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or by non-school organizations and groups.

MOTION: To entertain a motion to implement the healthy food option.

Motion Mrs. Lucian, second Mrs. Kremmel, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion passes.

If the board of education or governing authority votes "yes" for the healthy food option above, the board of education or governing authority **must also vote** on whether to allow food exemptions, as indicated below. ***NOTE:** If the board of education or governing authority votes "no" for the healthy food option above, a vote on whether to allow food exemptions is not required.*

- **Exemption for Food Items:** The board of education or governing authority will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held. And must be the same place as the food sales.

MOTION: To entertain a motion to allow the food exemptions. Motion Mr. Showers, second Mr. Foote, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion passes.

(c) Portrait of a Graduate

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the Portrait of a Graduate. Motion Mrs. Johnson, second Mrs. Lucian, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion passes.

10. **Board Member/Committee Reports**

A. Finance/Operations –Mr. Hendrickson, Business Manager

(a) Review of Accounts by Facilities Report for the month of May 2020

Through May, the Board has spent \$2.5 million of its budget or 83.8%. We have encumbered another 4.7% for a total of \$21.6 million or 88.4% of the budget. This is 4.8% greater than the average for the past 3 years. However, this is attributable to major encumbrances for four large projects. Total spend is approximately 1% lower than last year through this time frame. As of May of last year, we spent \$22 million or 84% of our budget and we had only encumbered about \$452,000 or 1.9% of the budget. Our spend-to-date is less than last year. However, we have also paid off our health insurance for year-end and transportation for year-end, which is reflected in the May statements. But, it does not

reflect two major deposits that were received in early June. The \$94,000 transfer from the Town's Sinking Fund for the Harry S. Fisher roof project and the second piece of the Magnet School Transportation grant.

Accounts-by-Facilities Report – Mr. Hendrickson

Page 2 – Deficit balance which will be cleared up by this deposit and also the transfer later tonight. On June 3, we received our second portion of our transportation grant for magnet schools. We paid all All-Star invoices.

Page 21 – Health Insurance deficit balance. However, that is misleading because with each pay period we receive transfers from the salary account for the employee cost shares related to their premiums. We received \$48,000 with the latest pay period and we anticipate another \$50,000 before the end of the year, which will bring that account back to the plus column.

Page 17 – Overtime has been negative. Town Hall has cut a check for \$8,725, which will bring this account back to a positive balance. Also, cafeteria salaries were brought back by a transfer from the lunch account.

Page 4 – Major encumbrances – (a) page 5 – Harry S. Fisher Roof - \$273,000; (b) Page 15 – \$61,000 Terryville High School Track; (c) Special Education - \$421,000 in encumbrances that includes the 2 outplacement categories (diagnostic services, transportation and one or 2 other smaller accounts). The technology department has been heavy in chrome books. The technology equipment replacement line shows \$179,000 encumbered. So, the total of these is approximately \$934,000, which is 82% of the \$1.1 million of encumbrance.

Mr. Seaman – That overtime is from ....

Mr. Hendrickson – It is from our custodians handling Park & Recreation functions.

The Accounts-by-Facilities report will be forwarded to the Town of Plymouth Board of Finance.

(b) Transfers – Mr. Hendrickson

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the following transfers as presented. Motion Mrs. Johnson, second Mr. Foote, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion passes.

Mr. Elsaghir – My only question. Does the person that did the motion need to read them one by one?

Mr. Seaman – No, you have them in front of you.

(c) Roof Project at Harry S. Fisher Elementary School – Update  
Mr. Hendrickson

Mr. Mazon and Mr. Hendrickson met with the contractor at Fisher. The contractor will be starting to set up on Monday, June 15 and start work. On June 22, the firm will begin removing the solar panels. When the contractor was asked as to how long the project would take, he estimated a month. So, anticipation is mid to late July for the project to be completed. Mr. Mazon is in contact daily to make sure things are progressing.



Mr. Seaman – Do we have the calculation for loss for the solar panels while they are down?

Mr. Hendrickson – No, we do not. But, I had a spreadsheet that I shared with you and the Superintendent. I put in an estimate of \$20,000. Mr. Mazon advised me that was much too high. Therefore, I would estimate \$7,000 - \$10,000 at the most.

(d) Track Project at Terryville High School – Update – Mr. Hendrickson

The track project is scheduled to start the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of July. It will be sprayed and will take approximately a few days if not a week. Then, it will need to lie dormant. Then, they will return and strip it. Mr. Hendrickson has reached out to Parks and Recreation and people on the staff for suggestions as to how to communicate with the community that the track will be closed during that time because the last thing we want is to mess up a project that is in progress. We do not want to disappoint the community if they go up to the track and discover they cannot use it. He estimates that it be completed by early August. Everything is ready to go.

Mrs. Johnson – Can we ask Town Hall to put it on their sign out front?

Mr. Hendrickson – Yes, I have been in touch with Briana. She indicated this would be one of the possibilities of communicating to the town. Also, the school website. Are there any other Board Members that have any suggestion?

Mrs. Candrea-Floresciani – Our sign in front of the high school. Give a list of alternative places where people can walk, i.e. Lake Winfield. So maybe we can say, “Our track is being replaced and here are a couple of other places in town that you may want to go to”. Lake Winfield may be the most suitable, as it is relatively flat and easy for people.

Mr. Foote – You have the sign at Baldwin Park as well.

Mrs. Johnson – I am assuming Dr. Semmel, you will put something out there also, i.e. an email to everyone?

Dr. Semmel – Yes, we will use the email. When we post things on Face Book, they tend to get shared pretty widely.

(e) Sidewalks at Terryville High School – Update – Mr. Hendrickson

About 10 days ago, the Superintendent, Mr. Mazon, Attorney Hamzy and myself met with the sidewalk people and their attorney. Currently, the matter is being handled between the attorneys. We put together a list of what we wanted done. There were certain spots that we identified that were loose or coming up and we definitely wanted repaired because it could be a liability and personal hazards. They are currently in discussion. I believe there are 4 distinct spots that we identified. One you can easily tell is right in front of the main entrance to the high school where the orange cone is. There are 2 that are not far from there. We also entertained the idea of possibly painting the finish to make it more pleasing and blending in with the existing sidewalk elsewhere in the area.

Mr. Seaman – When do you propose ...

Mr. Hendrickson – We should be exchanging the documents any day now. I anticipate that should be to the vendor's attorney shortly, if they do not already have it.

Mr. Seaman – I would like a copy of that to go to the Board Members so we can take a look at it before it is agreed upon.

Mr. Hendrickson – Will do.

(f) Personnel Report – Dr. Semmel

Dr. Semmel reviewed the Personnel Report with the Board Members pointing out two new hires, a science teacher at the high school and a school counselor at the middle school. He also pointed out the retirement of Carol Pierce a Grade 5 teacher at Plymouth Center School and the resignation of Annsue DiVenere, a special education teacher; the appointment of Allison Curtiss as a Math Coach which was included in the budget. This move allows Ms. Kathy Rossi to move from her special education position to her current area of teaching. Dr. Semmel also indicated he received just today a resignation from a teacher at Plymouth Center School who has accepted a position in another district. We continue to post as positions become vacant. The Director of Curriculum & Instruction first round of interviews are set up on June 15 with 8 applicants being interviewed. Round two is scheduled for Friday, June 19 with Dr. Semmel, Ms. Aronheim, Mr. Trudeau and Mr. Hendrickson. On Tuesday, June 23, the Board will interview the finalists, in person, beginning at 6 p.m. and ending at 9 p.m.

Mr. Seaman – How many applicants did we receive for the Director of Curriculum & Instruction?

Dr. Semmel – Approximately 30 or so.

Discussion as to the exact meeting date. Some Board Members had June 22, 23, or 24 on their calendar.

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani – Fall Sports Coaches

Dr. Semmel – Indicated he would be having a conversation with Mr. Mark Fowler, high school athletic director next week. We want to be completely comfortable with what the rules say and what we can allow and see if we will be able to work within the rules to get our athletes back out and get them into shape.

11. **Public Comment** (limited to 3-minutes per speaker)

None

12. **Board Liaisons to Schools**

Mr. Seaman -- Harry S. Fisher Elementary School  
No Report

Mr. Elsaghir -- Plymouth Center School  
No Report

However, Mrs. Johnson indicated she received an email stating there was a meeting tonight from 5:30 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani -- Eli Terry Jr. Middle School

June 10 – Graduation Parade; Signs delivered June 9 to all 8<sup>th</sup> graders; PTA presented gift cards to all staff (custodians, kitchen workers). Everyone in the middle school received an appreciation gift card for all of their hard work; and new board members were elected.

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani -- Booster Club

New board members were elected. Sports awards, because they come from China, not sure, when they will arrive. However, special award will be given out to seniors that should be in.

Mrs. Kulesa -- Terryville High School

Graduation survey to postpone for a more traditional ceremony in the future. Students voted to keep the graduation ceremony as scheduled since there was no guarantee for a real ceremony in the future. 85% of the students responded to the poll.

Mr. Foote -- SEPTA

No Report

Mrs. Kremmel -- CABE

There are a number of Webinars coming up within the next week or so focusing on equity and COVID. If anyone is interested, they can register on CABE's Website.

Mrs. Johnson -- EdAdvance

Information from EdAdvance regarding reopening. This is a service provided and is free to all our districts. Budget was passed. Their extended year program is in person this summer with the exception of the Post Program in Waterbury. Skills 21 held this past weekend virtually with 19 districts participating.

Mr. Showers -- District Safety Committee

Meeting was held this past Friday. Anyone interested in safety issues that were discussed, please feel free to contact him. A new meeting date has not been scheduled yet.

### 13. **Board Comments**

Mrs. Lucian – For summer school is this going to be one on one over Zoom Meets or will the Special Education Teachers take a group of students?

Ms. Aronheim – Students who need para support, we are going to make sure they have para support. We are trying to get as much live time as possible. It will not be four straight hours. We are going to do as much synchronous learning for our students in the summertime as possible.

Mrs. Lucian – Are you going to join the Zoom Meetings?

Ms. Aronheim – If I am working that day and there is something I can join but I do not plan on being at all of them. No

Mrs. Lucian – Then the teachers make the lessons.



Ms. Aronheim - Yes, the teachers are going to have a morning meeting and they will have time with the students during the day and paras will also be with the students during the day doing some of the teaching the teachers have planned.

Mrs. Lucian – I hope it goes well.

Ms. Aronheim – Me, too.

Mrs. Johnson – Congratulations to Mrs. Parsons. You are an amazing educator and have done a fantastic job in the district. We are going to miss you. Congratulations to Teacher of the Year, Marie Whitehouse. To all those who are retiring and those who are moving on to other districts or careers, good luck.

On a personal note: Mrs. Johnson indicated this would be her last year on the Board after the school year. She will be retiring after the next election and feels that it is time to leave. She has accomplished the things she felt were important. She wanted to thank everyone.

Mr. Seaman – Sorry to hear that. It is a personal decision. Not an easy one as he knows that Mrs. Johnson takes everything she has accomplished very passionately. He thanked her for that and is certain the district does as well. He thanked her for all of the work and all the time she put in as a Board Member.

Dr. Semmel – Echoed Mr. Seaman's sentiments. Mrs. Johnson as been a great Board Member. This was news to him and very sad. But he indicated he completely understood how things change over time and how this is probably what is best for her and her family. Good Luck

Mrs. Johnson – You have me for another year. It is time. Two terms is good.

Dr. Semmel – So, we have you for another whole year?

Mrs. Johnson – It is not today. Until the next election. I give Karen a lot of credit. She has been on the Board a long time.

Mr. Showers – You and I can finish up together.

Mr. Foote – Do you want us to be at the graduation ceremony?

Dr. Semmel – It is not a requirement. We do have some space issues. But, any Board Member who would like to attend is welcome. Please let me know if you would like to attend. We ask that Board Members be at the high school between 3:15 – 3:30 p.m.

Mrs. Kulesa – Thank you to all Plymouth Public School employees. It has been a difficult school year. Congratulations to all seniors, Class of 2020.

14. **Next Board Meeting** –There will not be a Board of Education Meeting in July. The next Meeting of the Board of Education will be a **Special Meeting** and is scheduled for Wednesday, August 19, 2020 at 7 p.m.

15. **Executive Session** – (to discuss a personnel matter: Extension of the Superintendent's Contract)

MOTION: To entertain a motion to enter into executive session at 8:13 p.m. to discuss the Extension of the Superintendent's Contract inviting Dr. Semmel to attend executive session. Motion Mr. Showers, second Mr. Foote, all in favor, motion passes.

16. **RESUME** Regular Session

MOTION: To entertain a motion to return to regular session at 9:03 p.m.

Motion Mr. Showers, second Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani, all in favor, motion passes.

17. **Possible Action from Executive Session**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the Extension of the Contract for the Superintendent as discussed in executive session. Motion Mrs. Kulesa, second Mr. Foote, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion passes.

ROLL VOTE: Mr. Showers - yes Mrs. Johnson - yes Mr. Foote - yes

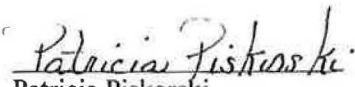
Mr. Elsaghir - yes Mrs. Kremmel - yes Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani - yes

Mrs. Lucian - yes Mrs. Kulesa - yes

MOTION PASSES: 8 in favor/ 0 against

18. **Adjournment**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to adjourn at 9:03 p.m. Motion Mrs. Kremmel, second Mr. Foote, all in favor, motion passes.

  
Patricia Piskorski  
Recording Secretary  
Plymouth Board of Education