

PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD

MEETING AGENDA

5:30 p.m., Thursday, February 18, 2021

PMHS Lecture Hall

Pittsfield Middle High School

1. CALL THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOL BOARD TO ORDER
 - All speakers are to conduct themselves in a civil manner. Obscene, libelous, defamatory, or violent statements will be considered out of order and will not be tolerated. The Board Chairperson may terminate the speaker's privilege or address if the speaker does not follow this rule of order. (Pittsfield School Board Policy BEDH)
2. AGENDA REVIEW
3. ACTION ON AMENDED AGENDA
4. APPROVE MINUTES: February 3, 2021, Non-public session minutes
February 3, 2021, Deliberative session minutes
February 4, 2021
5. PUBLIC INPUT & PUBLIC ACCESS– Comments from community members, guests, and faculty. The public may join the meeting remotely using the following information.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9624435282?pwd=ZncvcW1VcUo1KzZEejk5SkNGVnZpQT09>

Meeting ID: 962 443 5282

Passcode: Harvey

Dial by your location:

1(312)626-6799

1(929)205-6099

6. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE – Oral Report

7. PES REPORT

Action

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Information & Discussion

- Attendance
- Grant Funds
- School Status

8. PMHS PRINCIPAL REPORT

Action

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Information & Discussion

- District Newsletter
- NEASC Collaborative Conference
- School Status

9. PMHS ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL REPORT

Action

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Information & Discussion

- Modern States Education Alliance
- Registrations and Withdrawals
- Class of 2021 Update
- Running Start Program
- Online and eStart Programs

10. DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES

Action

▪

Information & Discussion

- Medicaid
- IDEA Grant Overview

11. SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Action

▪

Information & Discussion

- 2021-2022 Budget
- School Status Report

12. SCHOOL BOARD

Action

▪

Information & Discussion

▪

13. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

- A) Budget Committee Representative: TM
- B) Drake Field & Facilities: AG
- C) Negotiating Team: BD & HA
- D) Foss Foundation: JD

14. PUBLIC INPUT

15. PLAN AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING: March 4, 2021

16. NON-PUBLIC SESSION – if required under RSA 91-A:3 II

17. ADJOURNMENT

PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD
NON PUBLIC SESSION
FEBRUARY 3, 2021

Members present

Heidi Asdot

Jessica Drouin

Adam Gauthier

Others present

John Graziano

Danielle Harvey

Derek Hamilton

Jessica Bickford

Melissa Brown

Kathleen LeMay

Barbara Loughman

MINUTES

Hedi Asdot called the meeting to order with a roll call vote at 6:06 pm. The School Board voted unanimously to enter non-public session.

The School Board had a discussion about the 2021 2020 school district budget.

The School Board had a discussion about the school district warrant.

The School Board had a discussion about the order and presentation of the warrant articles.

On a motion made by Adam Gauthier seconded by Jessica Drouin the School Board voted to come out of non- public session.

The School Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:19 pm

Respectfully submitted by

John Graziano

2021 ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING DELIBERATIVE SESSION MINUTES

TOWN OF PITTSFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT DELIBERATIVE SESSION February 3, 2021

The Pittsfield School District Deliberative Session was held at the Pittsfield Middle High School gymnasium Wednesday, February 3, 2021. School District Moderator Gerard LeDuc called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Moderator LeDuc explained the rules of procedure and then led the *Pledge of Allegiance*.

Due to the expectation of extended conversation regarding Article 03, Moderator LeDuc asked the Body if they would permit discussion of Articles 04 and 05 prior to Article 03. The Body agreed.

School Board Vice Chairperson Heidi Asdot read the following statement from School Board Chairperson Bea Douglas: "I am sorry that I am unable to attend tonight's meeting. Due to circumstances out of my control I am quarantined through Friday and will be released on Saturday. This is due to having been exposed to Covid 19. I must put my health and the health of all those around me as my first priority. Please be kind and thoughtful listeners as my board and our superintendent present and answer questions pertaining to the school budget. The board and all administrators have worked very hard on this budget. We understand your frustration as it is ours. We will answer your questions and hope that you will listen to what struggles have been while trying to develop a budget under the most extenuating of circumstances with the loss of a million dollars in state aid and rising costs in retirement and insurance. Thank you all for being here tonight, Sincerely, Bea Douglas, Pittsfield School Board Chair." She also read a statement from School Board Member Ted Mitchell: "Though I am not physically present at this deliberative session I want everyone to know that I completely support the School Board, School District, Administrations, Teachers and Students. I hope you will also, when considering the Warrant Articles presented to you."

ARTICLE 01 School Lunch Program

To see if the Pittsfield School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$330,000 for the support of the School Lunch Program. This appropriation will be funded by a like amount of revenue from the sales of food and State and Federal sources. (Estimated tax impact of this article: \$0) **Recommended** by the Pittsfield School Board. **Recommended** by the Pittsfield Budget Committee (12 yes, 0 no) (Majority vote required)

Article 01 was read by Moderator LeDuc.

Motion made by School Board Member Adam Gauthier to approve Article 01 as read, seconded by School Board Vice Chairperson Heidi Asdot.

Moderator LeDuc opened the floor for discussion.

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There being no further discussion, Article 01 shall appear on the ballot as written.

ARTICLE 02 Receive and expend grant funds

To see if the Pittsfield School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$850,000 for the support of Federal and private foundation grant-funded educational programs of the Pittsfield School District. This appropriation is contingent upon receiving revenue from Federal grants and private foundations and will be expended in accordance with Federal and State requirements upon approval by the NH Department of Education or private foundation requirements. (Estimated tax impact of this article: \$0) **Recommended** by the Pittsfield School Board. **Recommended** by the Pittsfield Budget Committee (12 yes, 0 no) (Majority vote required)

Article 02 was read by Moderator LeDuc.

Motion made by School Board Member Adam Gauthier to approve Article 02 as read, seconded by School Board Member Jessica Drouin.

Moderator LeDuc opened the floor for discussion.

There being no further discussion, Article 02 shall appear on the ballot as written.

ARTICLE 03 Operating Budget (discussed after Articles 04 & 05)

Shall the Pittsfield 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, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$10,529,306? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$10,918,600, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Pittsfield School District or by law; or the governing body 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. (Estimated tax impact of this article: \$3.30/thousand; estimated tax impact of the default budget \$4.43.) **Not Recommended** by the Pittsfield School Board. **Recommended** by the Pittsfield Budget Committee (8 yes, 4 no) (Majority vote required)

Article 03 was read by Moderator LeDuc.

Motion made by School Board Vice Chairperson Heidi Asdot to approve Article 03 as read, seconded by School Board Member Jessica Drouin.

Dan Green made the motion to amend Article 03 to read "Shall the Pittsfield School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount of \$10,029,306". Carole Dodge

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seconded the motion. Dan Green presented Moderator LeDuc the petition to amend the article on behalf of the signers Daniel Greene, Carole Dodge, Katie Bachelder, Daniel Ward, Helen Schiff, Scott Jackson, Teresa Jackson, Melissa Chagnon, Teresa Emerson, Justin Greene, Scot Palmer, Teresa Palmer, and Tracy Huyck. Budget Committee Chairperson Bob Schiferle stated it was an exceptionally challenging year. He stated the original budget proposed by the School Board would have resulted in a \$4.71 per thousand increase. This was primarily the result of the expected reduction of state revenue and some minor increases in expenses. The Budget Committee carefully reviewed and analyzed the budget and there was a lot of discussion. They could not find anything to cut, but because of the potential tax impact on the taxpayers, it was voted to reduce the overall budget by \$487,000. The Committee was torn. Dan Green requested a secret ballot to vote on the proposed amendment. Mike Cabral claimed the school got over \$200,000 from the State for COVID relief and additional federal COVID relief money. He claimed the school is not using the funds they have appropriately. Tracy Huyck voiced concern that all the proposed cuts based on the Budget Committee proposed budget will negatively impact the students. She claimed the School Board made cuts starting from the bottom up, and we have more administrators than we need. Rick Anthony asked the people who signed the petition to come forward and share their plan for where the additional \$500,000 in cuts will come. Dan Schroth reminded the voters of the \$400,000 that was cut from the budget when we lost the Barnstead students. It made sense to him at the time. Now he believes it is important to listen to the Budget Committee. We can't just decimate the school. He feels very differently now than he did back then. Budget Committee member Katie Bachelder stated she has no ill will toward the school or administration. She knows they are trying, but she is not sure she can afford it, and she knows others cannot. It is not up to her to find where to cut. She went through the budget line by line and doesn't know where the cuts can come from. She believes we should be comparing to the 2019 budget, not the 2020 budget. She knows there are costs out of our control such as health care and retirement costs, but they need to come from somewhere. Budget Committee member Mary Paradise stated it was a very difficult season for the Budget Committee. She agrees it is not our job to say where the cuts are made, but it is irresponsible to blindly cut the budget without a plan for those cuts and to base our education budget solely on what taxes we can afford, because the State does not fund education as it should. Without the funds the Budget Committee has already proposed cut, there will be substantial losses. Responding to a previous statement that "we have less and less for our kids, why should we give the school more", Ms. Paradise stated we have less for our kids because we have not been able to spend what we should on education because we are a property poor district. She stated her husband is retired, and she hopes to retire soon. We had tough years when her children were in school here as well, and many retirees and the elderly still supported the education budget. We have worked very hard to build our school district, but because of continued cuts to the education budget each year, we have decimated a school district that was recognized nationally and internationally for the amazing work we were doing with little amount of money. To cut even more from the budget is irresponsible, because it is not there to take. Just like the town budget, if we do not set money aside for big projects for maintenance and equipment, it will cost more because we did not plan for it. She encouraged everyone to vote down the amendment. Linda Small asked

2021 ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING DELIBERATIVE SESSION MINUTES

where \$1,000,000 came from and why we lost it. Interim School Superintendent Dr. John Graziano responded that it was loss of a one-time adequacy grant from the State. He understands the frustration, but the loss of the State revenue is devastating. Carol Dodge claimed the money was used to hire teachers, and not put into maintenance of the building. She claimed the money was not used as it should have been. Dr. Graziano responded the money went back to the town to reduce taxes, not to hire teachers. Budget Committee member Mary Paradise confirmed the money went back to the town. She said she believes the money was given to the schools because the State was sued for not fulfilling its obligation to adequately fund education, and they threw us a bone because they know they have not given the schools what they need. It was meant to be used to help our students, but we used it to lower taxes. Budget Committee member Mary Paradise responded statutorily, in order to use the funds we had to account for it in the budget.

Moderator LeDuc called for the secret ballot. Polls closed at 7:50pm. Moderator LeDuc asked the supervisors of the checklist to count the ballots.

44 yes 25 no. Amendment passes.

Moderator LeDuc read the article as amended.

There being no further discussion, Article 03 shall appear on the ballot as amended.

ARTICLE 04 Special Education Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000 to be added to the Special Education Capital Reserve Fund previously established in March 1996 to fund special education programs for identified students of the district under the provisions of RSA 35:1. This sum to come from June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1. No amount to be raised from taxation. (Current account balance, approximately \$277,540) **Recommended** by the Pittsfield School Board. **Recommended** by the Pittsfield Budget Committee (11 yes, 1 no) (Majority vote required)

Article 04 was read by Moderator LeDuc.

Motion made by School Board Member Jessica Drouin to approve Article 04 as read, seconded by School Board member Adam Gauthier.

Moderator LeDuc opened the floor for discussion.

There being no further discussion, Article 04 shall appear on the ballot as written.

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ARTICLE 05 Dumpster Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Pittsfield School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,000 to be added to the Dumpster Replacement Capital Reserve Fund previously established to fund replacement of dumpsters at the schools of the district. (Estimated tax impact of this article: \$0.01/thousand. (Current account balance \$6,005). **Recommended** by the Pittsfield School Board. **Recommended** by the Pittsfield Budget Committee (11 yes, 1 no) (Majority vote required)

Article 05 was read by Moderator LeDuc.

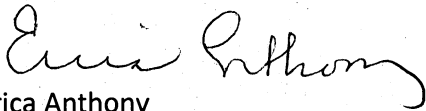
Motion made by School Board Member Jessica Drouin to approve Article 05 as read, seconded by School Board Member Adam Gauthier.

Moderator LeDuc opened the floor for discussion.

There being no further discussion, Article 05 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Moderator Leduc adjourned the meeting at 8:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Erica Anthony
School District Clerk

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT #51
PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD**

MINUTES

Pittsfield School Board Meeting
February 4, 2021
Pittsfield Middle High School

I. CALL TO ORDER

Members Present: Bea Douglas, Chairperson (via Zoom)
Heidi Asdot, Vice Chairperson
Jessica Drouin
Adam Gauthier
Ted Mitchell (via Zoom)

Others Present: John Graziano, Interim Superintendent of Schools
Jessica Bickford, Director of Student Services
Melissa Brown, PMHS Assistant Principal
Derek Hamilton, PMHS Principal
Danielle Harvey, PES Principal
Kathy LeMay, PES Assistant Principal
Members of the Public (some via Zoom)

Vice Chairperson Asdot called the meeting to order at 5:29 p.m.

II. AGENDA REVIEW

The following item was added to the agenda:

- Revolution Basketball Program (Mr. Mitchell)
- Superintendent Search (Ms. Asdot)
- Program of Studies (Ms. Brown)

III. ACTION ON AMENDED AGENDA

On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Ms. Drouin , the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as amended.

IV. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Mr. Mitchell to approve the minutes of the public meeting on January 21, 2021. Changes made include on page eight, paragraph eight, change to "...can meet face to face and not socially distance, they should..." and on page ten, paragraph two change to "Ms. Douglas stated that no money is being made from allowing PMHS basketball." The motion was passed unanimously to approve the minutes as amended.

On a motion by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Ms. Drouin, the minutes of the January 26, 2021 non-public meeting were unanimously approved as written.

V. PUBLIC INPUT

Ms. Asdot recognized the number of members of the public and directed people to limit their public input to three minutes each.

Girard LeDuc stated that there was confusion at the Deliberative Session regarding the voting practices. He checked with the Town's attorney and his decision was accurate. He explained that he allowed some people extra time to speak rather than risk upsetting them.

Robert Beliveau asked what the deciding factor for closing the schools to 100 percent remote was. Dr. Graziano stated that the decision was made in the best interest of the safety of the students. Mr. Beliveau then asked what are the factors now to move to hybrid? Dr. Graziano said that again the decision was based on data and maintaining safety of the students. Mr. Beliveau opined that compared to surrounding towns, Pittsfield's numbers look better and it warrants students returning to school. He said that if he had known that Pittsfield would go fully remote, he would have moved his children to other schools. Mr. Beliveau praised his son's teacher, Ms. Brown, for her patience; in spite of her efforts his son is not learning. Mr. Beliveau stated that mental health issues due to students learning remotely are serious; he provided some statistics to make his point. He is concerned that his child is not able to focus on his learning and is worried about his mental health. He added that sports are important to his son.

Tabatha Farmer asked for clarification about staffing during COVID and asked how it has affected decisions made. Ms. Harvey explained that staffing has been determined by the number of available staff and the space available. She explained that when staff have been sick or quarantined, there have not been a sufficient number of substitutes. She further explained that when there are large numbers of students to keep separated, there is not adequate space available. Ms. Farmer made the point that if students were back in school, more parents might step up to substitute teach. Ms. Bickford stated that there are vacant paraprofessional positions, as well as substitute teaching opportunities.

Ms. Douglas asked if it would make sense to have the administration do their presentation before taking further public input. Ms. Asdot paused public input in order for the administration to present information relative to the reopening plan.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT

A. School Status Update

Dr. Graziano introduced the presentation by saying that the administration has taken many factors in consideration as they have navigated decisions relative to school opening during the pandemic.

Ms. Harvey provided background information. She stated that the Pittsfield School Board had extended the school district's red status through Friday, February 5. The red status means that students and staff will be fully remote during this time period. The decision to extend the remote period was primarily based on three reasons. First, the positivity rate of new COVID-19 cases is now higher than 10%, and the total number of cases in Pittsfield had nearly tripled in the six weeks prior to the decision. If they had moved back into orange or yellow status (hybrid), it was likely they would go back and forth between being open and closed. Ms. Harvey said that the administration believed this offered stability, consistency, and safety for students and staff during an unpredictable time. The School Board planned to reassess the school status at its meeting on February 4, 2021.

Ms. Harvey provided the audience with some data regarding the practices of local schools. She explained that a major factor that was considered was the number of shifts that students would need to make between in-person and remote. She showed data relative to the shifting that students have had to make from hybrid and full remote.

Mr. Hamilton provided the following information from the NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) dashboard: 1) There has been an average of 393 cases per day over the most recent 7 day period (January 28-February 3); 2) This is a 31% decrease compared to the previous 7 day period; 3) There are 14 new cases in Pittsfield (in the last 14 days); and 4) The antigen and PCR positivity test rate over the last 7 days in Pittsfield is 9.1% (compared to 4.6% state-wide).

Mr. Hamilton explained the DHHS decision matrix. The decision matrix is intended to be a guide for making decisions about how/when to switch school instructional models with metrics schools should consider.

Mr. Hamilton explained criteria used to make the decisions about school opening: 1) Level of community transmission; 2) Level of school impact; and 3) Method of instruction. He said that the factors not considered by DHHS are the number of

students and the size of space available.

Ms. Asdot asked if, when considering space, furniture has been removed. Mr. Hamilton said that since August furniture has been moved into storage units outside the building. It was asked if larger spaces such as the cafeteria are being considered to which Mr. Hamilton answered in the affirmative. Ms. Harvey stated that when the weather was better, outside spaces were used as much as possible.

Molly Goggin asked if there are options available to move kids around according to how many students are in each class. Ms. Harvey said that they are considering the use of space according to the overall needs of the school and that all options are being considered.

Tim Goggin suggested that a three-foot distance be used, instead of the recommended six-foot distance. He suggested that if you go to three-feet, it will significantly increase the number of students who can be in school. He also stated that he thinks this issue will move into the fall due to limitations of the vaccination and encouraged the administration to consider all options now. Ms. Goggin spoke in favor of the three-foot distance requirement.

Ms. Harvey explained that they are proposing that the week of February 8 they move to orange status. Students previously in orange are invited back in; teams may consider revisions to the list. The goal would be to see where students are and prepare them for the class returning. During orange status it is proposed that Kindergarten students come in on their A or B day. All staff in the building will work on resetting rooms, resetting technology, plan for the NEASC visit, and be offered team support. For the week of February 15 they propose moving forward with Kindergarten and grade five to yellow status. And, if there are enough students remaining remote, they would move to teal status. Ms. Harvey explained that pre-school and grades one through four would move to teal status for four days per week. This will require a family survey to confirm that there is enough space.

Mr. Hamilton exhibited the color coding scheme that is being used.

STATUS	MODALITY	TARGET CAPACITY	SAFETY PROTOCOLS
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Red	Campus Closed	0%	NA
Orange	Limited Access	10-25%	Strict - limited access to students with special needs and those who require additional support; strict protocols for screening, masks, and travel
Yellow	Campus Open	50%	Required protocols - screening upon arrival, masks required inside the school building, extensive minimization of travel within the building
Green	Campus Open	50%	Recommended protocols - self monitoring of symptoms, masks suggested in the classroom, and limited travel within the building
Teal	Campus Open	90%	Self monitoring of symptoms, masks required in the building, and travel within the building only as needed
Blue	Near Normal Operations	99%	Transition back to near normal operations; those with severe medical concerns will still be allowed to work remotely

Mr. Hamilton explained the proposal for the reopening of PMHS. During the week of February 8 they would shift to orange status to support the most high risk students while they prepare for the transition to yellow status. During the week of February 15 they would shift to yellow status (grades six through twelve). Sixth graders would follow the current schedule in a hybrid model; seventh and eighth graders would follow the previous yellow status schedule with teachers rotating through home bases to deliver instruction. Grades nine through twelve would continue synchronous learning; students will rotate to classrooms for instruction.

Karen Perras asked for clarification regarding staffing at the middle school level. Mr. Hamilton stated that staffing issues will be worked out.

Mr. Hamilton explained that if approved tonight, the administration would survey families for commitment to in-person or remote following the meeting. The work that will also need to be done includes: 1) Regrouping students; 2) Set up physical spaces; 3) Organize bus runs; 4) Re-organize food services (meal delivery will stop on 2/12; and 5) Check that we are clear on supplies for those coming to

school and those staying at home

Ms. Asdot reopened the meeting to public input.

Justin Clough said thank you to all of the community members who have come out to speak. He also thanked the administration for their work in figuring this out. Mr. Clough implored the School Board to make the decisions necessary to have students come back to school. He opined that the administration is being too cautious and that they should listen to the parents and have students come back to school.

Mr. Beliveau stated that it is better for students to go to school even if only a day at a time. Discussion ensued regarding the three-foot versus six-foot suggestion. Ms. Farmer stated that students are suffering and thinks going to school with a three-foot distance is better than not going.

Lewis Driscoll stated that he needs to be in school. He said that he and other students he knows need to have contact with their teachers. Online learning, according to Mr. Driscoll, is difficult.

Nicole Mooney opined that the decisions being made are having a negative effect on many aspects of students' lives, including their mental health.

Gage Bursey summarized his experience as a student fluctuating between online and hybrid learning.

Mr. Driscoll stated that the lack of structure is detrimental to him and other students.

Faith Griffin summarized her experience as a student trying to learn remotely. She stated that she is more motivated when in school and would like to go back to school.

Frank Miller stated that students need to go back to school.

Jenn Codispoti thanked the administration, School Board, and teachers for their work during this challenging time. She suggested looking at all spaces available in order to have students return. She suggested using the unified arts rooms as classrooms. Ms. Codispoti urged the Board to take into consideration recommendations, data, and what other neighboring schools are doing, as well as what the Pittsfield parents are saying.

Heather Elliott stated concern regarding Kindergarten. She stated that Kindergarten students are having the most difficulty with remote learning but may be disadvantaged because of class size. She would rather have her Kindergarten child go four days, rather than two-day remote.

Kelly Page stated that she is grateful to everyone making decisions regarding the reopening. She said that she wants her children back in school full time, especially her son, who is in Kindergarten. She feels that social emotional learning is crucial for Kindergarteners.

Scott Jackson stated that his granddaughter is struggling with remote learning in spite of being a capable student in a good home. He stated that school is important for the students who are not as well off. When he sees how difficult it is for his granddaughter, he is worried about other students. He strongly feels that students need to return to school.

Jodi Cunningham stated that although she enjoys having her children home, she is concerned about their education. She stated she would not send her children back to school unless they are going to return to a normal routine in school. Ms. Cunningham stated strongly that students should return to school.

Dan Green asked if the Board would make a decision tonight, to which Ms. Asdot confirmed that as the plan.

Dylan Mills stated that online learning is not working and never will. He said there is no passion involved in education when online. He spoke to the importance of friends in the learning process. He explained that he no longer is motivated to learn because he is not receiving the reward of seeing his friends. Mr. Mills stated he is a hands-on learner and cannot learn from a computer screen. He said that teachers are doing an amazing job trying to teach students but not seeing students is likely affecting them, as well. He stated that students are not learning so if they do not go back to school, failure is to be expected.

Samantha Taylor stated that she has the luxury of having assistance from family members to supervise remote learning. In spite of that, one of her children is failing miserably and needs to be in school. Ms. Taylor stated that students want to go back to school and suggested that the Board may not be listening to the parents and the students when making decisions.

Mr. Mitchell stated that he came to the meeting knowing that getting students back to school needed to be accelerated. He suggested a three-foot distance and to move to yellow status immediately. Based on the mental health of our students, he thinks students need to return to school. Mr. Mitchell said that the previous decisions were made because of the conditions at the time and now things are different.

Ms. Douglas stated that she is speaking from the perspective of an educator, a Board member, and a citizen of Pittsfield. She said that she believes we are losing students. She stated that the decisions made previously were for good reasons, especially around the holidays. Ms. Douglas thanked the administration for their work on the plan but suggested that they become more aggressive in getting the students back. She suggested that they move to teal status immediately.

Ms. Asdot stated that her daughter has been struggling with remote learning. She stated her agreement with Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Douglas; she stated being in favor of changing to a three-foot distance and moving to yellow status on February 8, and teal status on February 15, 2021.

Ms. Drouin stated that she stands behind the decision to have been in remote learning during and after the holidays. She now thinks it's time to move into a more aggressive phase.

Mr. Gauthier stated that his children are not doing well with remote learning. Students are losing out on the social emotional aspect of their education. He stated his agreement with the three-foot distancing, moving to yellow status, but give the administration two weeks to figure that out and go to teal status after February vacation, to which Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Douglas agreed.

On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Ms. Asdot, the Board unanimously approved reducing six-foot distancing to three-feet distancing, effective immediately

On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Ms Asdot, the Board voted unanimously to move to yellow status for the week of February 8, orange status the week of February 15, and teal status the week of March 1, 2021.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the participation of the community was outstanding tonight and he was sorry that it has taken a crisis to see this level of participation.

Ms. Douglas thanked the members of the community, especially the students who made their voices heard. She, too, wished there was more involvement from the community. Ms. Douglas said that the Board is often accused of not listening. She said that although they don't always make decisions with which everyone agrees, they are listening.

Ms. Harvey asked if PES could go to teal status earlier than March 1 if they are ready and the Board agreed.

VII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE - No report

VIII. PES PRINCIPAL

A. Attendance

Ms. Harvey provided attendance data, reporting that there had been a slight improvement in the last two weeks, averaging thirty one absences per day.

B. COVID Tracking

Ms. Harvey reported on the impact of COVID for PES, especially regarding custodial coverage.

C. School Status

Team leaders prepared to return to on-site during the past week. They determined what was needed based on experiences so far this year of what needed to happen to improve on areas that did not work.

IX. PMHS PRINCIPAL

A. Pandemic Report

Mr. Hamilton provided data from the DHHS dashboard to put Pittsfield in context with the state relative to the pandemic.

B. School Calendar

Mr. Hamilton asked for a change to the calendar to accommodate voting day. On a motion made by Mr. Gautheir and seconded by Mr. Mitchell, the Board

unanimously approved changing the calendar to swap the remote day scheduled for March 10 to March 9, 2021.

C. School Status

In preparation for a return to on-site learning, Mr. Hamilton met with the common planning time teams to get a sense of what worked well and what needed to be improved upon based on previous experiences.

X. PMHS ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

A. Program of Studies

Ms. Brown distributed a revised Program of Studies and asked the Board for their approval. She reviewed the changes that have been made to the document. Ms. Brown clarified the community service requirements relative to the recent decision of the Board. Mr. Gauthier made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Mitchell to approve the Program of Studies. Discussion ensued regarding guided study issues, including a clarification offered by Ms. Bickford. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

XI. DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES - No report

XII. INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (Continued)

A. 2021-2022 Budget Update

Dr. Graziano suggested the Board meet to consider the ramifications of the budget decisions made at the Deliberative Session. February 16, 2021 at 5:00 was determined to be the date of the meeting for the Board to consider the budget.

XIII. SCHOOL BOARD

A. Revolution Basketball

Mr. Mitchell asked the Board to reconsider the previous decision relative to Revolution Basketball. On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and second by Mr. Mitchell, the Board voted unanimously to approve Revolution Basketball using the school facilities.

B. Superintendent Search

Ms. Douglas stated that she has discussed the contract with the NH School Board Association and they are willing to put it on hold. Dr. Graziano has agreed to stay through the fall.

XIV. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Budget Committee - Mr. Mitchell
- C. Drake Field & Facilities - Mr. Gauthier
- D. Negotiations – Ms. Asdot and Ms. Douglas
- E. Foss Family Scholarship Foundation – Ms. Drouin

XV. PUBLIC INPUT

Tim Goggin stated that if the schools return to in-school sessions, then the community needs to cooperate by following guidelines such as wearing masks and maintaining distance. He suggested working with the students to help them understand the importance of following the guidelines. Otherwise, the schools will quickly close again.

Elisha Griffin stated that guidelines are reviewed with students. She said there has not been a huge issue with the exception of having to occasionally remind students.

Molly Goggin thanked the School Board for listening to the community's concerns. She is appreciative of the teachers' hard work in doing their best to provide the best education that they can. She stated that the good that is happening in spite of COVID, needs to be celebrated.

Tracy Hyuck stated that Medicaid reimbursement practices need to be investigated further. She opined that the health insurance policy that is being supported by the taxpayers for teachers is inappropriate. Ms. Douglas stated that the Board will do what is best for the students in the district when making adjustments subsequent to the decisions made at the Deliberative Session.

Jill Gauthier asked if the PTO will be able to meet in the school when they go to the teal status. Ms. Douglas stated that organizations should be able to return to using the school facilities once the district is in the teal phase.

Ashley Perron stated that there have been positive things happening and should be celebrated. She offered to help in any way she can to assist in her children returning to school. She thanked the administration and the School Board for their work during this difficult time.

Korilyn Martin thanked the School Board and teachers for their work. She stated that there are victories to be celebrated. She expressed her appreciation for the teachers who are making a difference in her children's lives. She acknowledged how hard teachers are working.

Mr. Gauthier stated that not only do decisions need to be made in the best interest of students but also in the best interest of taxpayers.

Scott Jackson asked for clarification regarding the term “district” and thought it meant several towns. Ms. Asdot clarified that it can also mean a single town district. He asked about the role of the superintendent, to which Ms. Douglas suggested he make an appointment to visit the superintendent for clarification.

Mr. Mitchell suggested that once COVID has passed a celebration should be planned to acknowledge the work that was done to survive the pandemic.

XVI. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, February 18, 2021 at 5:30 in the Pittsfield Middle High School Lecture Hall.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Ms. Asdot, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tobi Gray Chassie
Recording Secretary (via Zoom)

Pittsfield School District

To: Pittsfield School Board

From: PES Administration, Danielle Harvey and Kathy LeMay

Subject: Board Meeting – February 18, 2021

Date: February 9, 2021

ACTION

None at this time.

INFORMATION

1. Attendance: PES has seen slightly improved attendance in the last few days, averaging 24 absences per day. With students returning to school, we know we will need to provide extra supports for students who have missed many school days, some over half of the school year. We hope that the attendance for these students will improve now that they will be working on campus.
2. Grant Funds: During recent budget discussions there seemed to be questions about what grants can be used for what purposes. The below chart highlights the state grants and their use. They are entitlement grants; and the amounts are based on formulas.

Program	General	Pittsfield Activities
Title I, Part A	Helping Disadvantaged Students	Software, books, resources and materials, salaries for Title I teachers, ½ of K. LeMay's salary, homeless set aside, family engagement, professional development. Only used at PES.
Title II, Part A	Professional Learning	Online supports and training, software for teacher learning, books, Medicaid training, college course reimbursement, CPI training. District.
Title IV, Part A	Student Support and Enrichment	Flex money can follow rules of Title II or Title I, WestEd consultation. District.
CARES, ESSER	Emergency Relief Fund	PPE, furniture, online software, technology, remote supplies, air purifiers, extra transportation costs, hotspots, internet reimbursement, cleaning supplies. District.

3. School Status: We will be able to provide an update on the switch to teal. We are incredibly proud of our teachers, especially K and 5. They pushed to set up two completely new classrooms and

figure out a schedule so we can staff those classrooms while providing direct instruction for students in all three rooms with two classroom teachers.

A summary of the room switches is below:

- *Removal of the PES conference room. OT moved here.

- *Third K set up in the previous OT space.

- *Removal of Title 1 room. Supplies relocated to classrooms or the hallway.

- *Third 5th grade set up here.

- *The 4 rooms (203, 211, 109, 112) that were being used for remote teachers and special education are now all homebase classrooms.

- *Remote teachers and special education will have to use space in the learning commons, Special Ed office, or the tech closet.

- *Learning Commons will happen in the homebase classrooms; Mrs Bickford is sharing space; Mrs Darrah is now only working out of PMHS. We thank them for their flexibility.

- *The PES conference room was our mandated isolation space. The Nurse's office will now be the isolation space. Any non isolation issues will be dealt with in Danielle or Kathy's offices. The conference room also held the extra winter clothes; all that is now in the hallway.

- *We had to increase seating in the cafe. Some students will have to sit facing the wall at a counter style table; milk coolers are now in the hallway.

Pittsfield School District

To: Pittsfield School Board
From: Derek Hamilton, PMHS Principal
Subject: Board Meeting – February 18, 2021
Date: February 12, 2021

INFORMATION

1. District Newsletter. I've enclosed a copy of our latest district newsletter. This edition highlights the changes to our school status, town elections on March 9, and provides a summary of the 2021-2022 school district budget.
2. NEASC Collaborative Conference. We had our decennial visit this past week with a team composed of seven educators from across New England. During the two-day visit, team members reviewed our self-reflection reports, observed classes, and met with a variety of stakeholders, including students, staff members, administration, parents, and community members. The feedback from the visiting team was very positive. In fact, the chairperson remarked, "it was inspiring to be here." Commendations included our student support programs and innovative practices. Priority areas to focus on moving forward include establishing a current logic model and Vision of the Graduate. A full report will be available in the coming months.
3. School Status. Since the School Board's approval to return to on-site learning, our staff has been working hard to prepare for orange, yellow, and teal status. We are on track for all grade levels to be in the teal status by March 1. The high school will be transitioning to the teal status the week of February 15 due to the reorganization of the high school class schedule. Other details related to yellow and teal status preparation are noted below:
 - The sixth grade has added a third home base due to the increased number of requests for students to work on-site (we re-located three work spaces or offices to create space for a third sixth grade home base)
 - The middle school (grades 7-8) added a fourth home base to accommodate an increase in requests to work on-site.
 - Due to a variety of scheduling needs, we established an open block release for juniors and seniors in good academic standing in order to limit teacher supervision of study halls to provide feedback to students; particularly those working remotely.
 - We used CARES Act funding to purchase additional supplies, furniture, and barriers.
 - The bus schedule and routes were revised to reflect students working on-site four days per week.



DISTRICT NEWSLETTER



School Status Update

This past Thursday the Pittsfield School Board took the following actions to re-open for on-site learning:

- Week of February 8 – transition to the *orange status* (only students with approved alternative plans)
- Week of February 15 – PMHS transitions to the *yellow status* (hybrid learning; 2 days per week); PES transitions to the *teal status* (full in-person; 4 days per week)
- Week of March 1 – PMHS transitions to the *teal status*

Families will continue to have the option of full remote learning for the remainder of the school year. More building specific information will be available later this week.



Town Elections at PMHS

On March 9, 2021, town elections will be held in the Pittsfield Middle High School gymnasium from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Due to the elections, Tuesday, March 9 will be a remote learning day district-wide and Wednesday, March 10, will be an in-person learning day. Ballot items will include the 2021-2022 school district budget and School Board elections. For more information on the school district budget, please visit the Pittsfield School District website.

IMPORTANT DATES

School Board Meeting
PMHS Lecture Hall
February 18, 2021, 5:30 PM

Winter Break
PES/PMHS
February 22-26, 2021

School Board Meeting
PMHS Lecture Hall
March 4, 2021, 5:30 PM

Town Elections
PMHS Gymnasium
March 9, 2021, 7:00-7:00 PM

Remote Learning Day
PES/PMHS
March 9, 2021

In-Person Learning Day
PES/PMHS
March 10, 2021

School Board Meeting
PMHS Lecture Hall
March 18, 2021, 5:30 PM

The district calendar is available at:
www.pittsfieldnhschools.org

Meet Miss Lion

Emily Lion is from Erie, Pennsylvania. She attended Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, and graduated with a B.A. in English/Secondary Education. She later attended Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania, and holds an M.A. in English. Miss Lion has taught high school English in King George, Virginia, and Erie, Pennsylvania. Outside of the classroom, Miss Lion reads a great deal, loves trying new recipes (especially cakes), and spends time outside; she is very excited to explore New Hampshire. Miss Lion is greatly looking forward to her new position at Pittsfield Middle High School teaching English 11/12.

School District Budget Summary

At the Deliberative Session on February 3, 2021, a majority vote supported an amendment to reduce the school district budget by \$500,000, bringing the total amount cut from the proposed 2021-2022 budget to \$1,119,041. Therefore, at the March 9 ballot vote, a *yes vote* will support the \$10,029,306 operating budget for the 2021-2022 school year (estimated tax impact of \$1.85 per thousand). A *no vote* will support the default budget of \$10,918,600 (estimated tax impact of \$4.43 per thousand). More information on potential reductions or cuts to school programs, resources, and staffing will be shared at February 18 School Board meeting.

Winter Solstice Celebration



Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten celebrated Winter Solstice by making ornaments. Here is Shelby showing off her creation!

HEALTH SERVICES CORNER

Health Screenings

A friendly reminder to families to continue assessing their child(ren) prior to sending them to school. Any student who is sick or not feeling well is advised to stay home.

Symptoms to look for include fever, respiratory symptoms (runny nose, sore throat, or cough) and muscle aches or chills.

COVID-19 Priority Test Sites

On the Pittsfield Elementary School and Pittsfield Middle High School websites, you'll see a link to testing locations with priority appointments within 24 hours for students and school employees with symptoms of COVID-19. The National Guard test site in Concord is the closest location to Pittsfield.

Pittsfield School District

To: Pittsfield School Board
From: Melissa Brown, PMHS Assistant Principal
Subject: Board Meeting – February 18, 2021
Date: February 11, 2021

ACTION

None at this time.

INFORMATION

1. Modern States Education Alliance. This past fall, Commissioner of Education, Frank Edelblut emailed the following announcement to all high schools in the state.

I am excited to announce a new partnership with Modern States Education Alliance to offer free, online courses, and free CLEP exams, giving New Hampshire high school students the chance to earn college credit at no cost. Modern States tuition-free online courses prepare students for the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams, which are accepted at 29,000 colleges and universities across the country, including the University System of New Hampshire and New Hampshire Community College System. Through our new partnership, Modern States will pay the \$89 CLEP exam fee and proctoring fee for the first 1,000 New Hampshire students who complete their courses. That will save our students the equivalent of \$1.5 million in post-secondary tuition. Under New Hampshire's competency-based system, students who demonstrate mastery may also be able to earn high school credit for these courses.

After vetting the program, a few of our top students were approached to pilot this program. Currently, one student accepted the challenge and is enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP) Macroeconomics, and is scheduled to take the AP exam in May. Students who earn a four or five on an AP exam typically receive college credit.

2. Registrations and Withdrawals. Since the start of the school year, there have been 24 registrations and 23 withdrawals at PMHS. In comparison to the entire 2019-2020 school year of 19 registrations and 32 withdrawals.
3. Class of 2021 Update. There are 30 students who are in the class of 2021. One student graduated early at the end of first semester. One student needs additional

time beyond June to meet graduation requirements. Presently, there are five students who are of extreme concern of not graduating, with an additional nine students who are closely being monitored. Meetings with students and families are ongoing. Five students will be receiving the New Hampshire state minimum diploma. Six students are pursuing the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET).

4. Running Start Program. Currently, PMHS offers two Running Start courses. This program provides students the opportunity to take a course at our school, taught by one of our teachers, and earn high school credit as well as college credit through NHTI. The two Running Start courses are Composition (English 12) and College Algebra (grades 11 and 12)-eleven students registered for Composition and fourteen for College Algebra. The fee for the Composition course is \$150 for families with scholarship opportunities available. Eligible students may receive a full tuition scholarship through the Governor's Dual and Concurrent Enrollment STEM Scholarship program, which pays for up to two STEM courses per year for students in 10th, 11th, and 12th grade. As a result, the College Algebra course is free to all program participants.
5. Online and eStart Programs. There are 39 high school students taking an online course through the Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS). Students also have the opportunity to earn college credit through the eStart program, a partnership between the Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH). Some examples of the eStart courses that Pittsfield students are enrolled in are:
 - Ethical Issues
 - Introduction to Business
 - Introduction to Psychology
 - PC Applications
 - Social Media Marketing

Two additional students are taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses; US Government and Literature and Composition.

Pittsfield School District

To: Pittsfield School Board

From: Jess Bickford

Subject: Board Meeting – February 18, 2021

Date: February 8, 2021

INFORMATION

1. Medicaid:

OVERVIEW:

The Medicaid To Schools (MTS) program is a reimbursement program that Pittsfield historically and currently participates in. In August 2019 the State of New Hampshire through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) made an emergency rule changing the MTS program that essentially halted the billing and reimbursement process for school districts across the state. The rule changing process took nearly the entire school year of 2019-2020 to iron out and have a new rule put in place that would allow schools to begin the billing process again.

BEGINNING:

Before the initial rule change in August 2019, school counselors, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and other service providers could order a service that was related to their practice. After the emergency order, only a Registered Nurse working under the direction of a Doctor or a Medical Doctor could order ANY Medicaid Billable Services for schools.

MIDDLE:

In March of 2020 a new rule passed that expanded some providers that could now order a billable service. However, there were no templates, documents, or practices in place yet for these new rules. At this point schools began completely re-doing their forms, meeting with other districts to ensure a systematic approach, and began training all of the staff around what the new rule changes meant. With the new rules, we are still limited in who can order services for students. Our Speech and Language Pathologist can order for speech services and for paraprofessionals that are only needed due to communication needs; our School Psychologist can order for paraprofessional services that are for behavioral needs only (and only because she was grandfathered in to the state board licensing agreement); our Physical Therapist

can order for physical therapy services; and we can only obtain orders from a medical doctor to bill for Occupational Therapy- this means that a family needs to give us permission to communicate with their child's doctor in order for us to fax an order form to them and they would need to order OT services and then fax it back to us.

NOW:

With many man hours and changes in practice since last March, Pittsfield is finally at the point this winter where we were back into the full swing of billing for services that we could (while still limited compared to past practice due to rule changes). In December 2020, there were additional rules put into place that now require a 30 day reviewer for paraprofessionals, which was discussed in the January board report.

We have now fully updated all of our district forms, done professional development training for all special educators and service providers, as well as partnered with a Medicaid Consultant to help fine tune our practices. I have personally gone through every single special education file for every single student in the district at this point to look for any missing Medicaid orders to make sure we have documents in place to bill at our full capacity this school year.

We will be going through a mock audit in March to ensure our practices are thorough and sound. We will continue to fax doctor's office orders for Occupational Therapy, but will more than likely never be at full billing capacity for this service, due to the need of permission to contact a child's primary care physician and the physician returning the order. We are also limited for what paraprofessionals we can claim for billing being only those that are assigned for behavioral needs, communication needs, and life skills. We cannot bill for ANY academic support, only medical.

Most commonly we bill for the following services: speech and language therapy, paras that are for behavior or communication, physical therapy, and occupational therapy (when there is a doctor's order).

*****Here in NH, FY19 MTS reimbursement was \$26,379,998 for 10,498 students; FY20 MTS reimbursement was \$8,223,474 for 9,003 students served.*****

- This largely has to do with the reduced capacity to obtain doctor's orders for occupational therapy services, ability to have a board licensed psychologist order para support for behavior (used to be school counselors could do this), and inability to bill for paras for behavior support during remote learning.

2. IDEA Grant Overview:

The IDEA Grant is an annual grant that we receive in Pittsfield to help offset some of the extremely expensive services, tools, programs, and other education needs that students with special needs often need. These funds are determined based on a “formula that went into effect in Federal Fiscal Years 1999 and 1997 for IDEA Part B as described by Code of Federal Regulation Part 34 CFR §§300.705 and 300.815-816” (DOE Memo #35 6/24/19).

Last school year we received just over \$150,000 in this grant, this school year it is \$170,000. The majority of this grant is allocated each year for us to be able to have our own school psychologist in Pittsfield so we do not have to contract with outside agencies that would cost us much more (However, this will gradually need to move them out of the grant). There is also 1 Paraprofessional position and the part time Out of District Coordinator in this grant. After these three positions are covered in the grant, there is very little money left to cover very necessary supplies, program subscriptions, and tools our students with special needs have. We often still have to rely on other grants such as the Title II grant to cover other needs. There are also strict rules in place for this grant that we cannot use these funds to supplant district costs and they have to meet one of the justifications given by the DOE.

Interim Superintendent of Schools

A.

School District 2021 2022 school district budget

B.

School status report