

Merrimack School District/SAU 26
School Board Meeting
Preliminary Agenda
April 21, 2025
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room

5:30 p.m. NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A:3, II (a) (b) (c) – Merrimack TV Training Classroom

- Staff Welfare

6:00 p.m. PUBLIC MEETING

- | | | |
|-----------|---|-------------------------------------|
| | 1. CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE | Lori Peters |
| | 2. SCHOOL BOARD REORGANIZATION | Lori Peters |
| 6:10 p.m. | 3. COMMITMENT TO BOARD CODE OF ETHICS | Chair |
| 6:20 p.m. | 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION | Chair |
| 6:30 p.m. | 5. RECOGNITIONS | Chair |
| | a. Tim Mark Gibson Memorial Scholarship | Chris Christensen, Gibson Family |
| 6:40 p.m. | 6. INFORMATIONAL UPDATES | Chair |
| | a. Superintendent Update | |
| | b. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Update | |
| | c. Assistant Superintendent for Business Update | |
| | d. School Board Update | |
| | e. Student Representative Update | |
| 6:50 p.m. | 7. OLD BUSINESS | Chair |
| | a. Review Outcomes of School District Elections,
2025-2026 Budget and Warrant Articles | Everett Olsen and
Matt Shevenell |
| | b. Gallup Survey | Amanda Doyle |
| 7:10 p.m. | 8. NEW BUSINESS | Chair |
| | a. Consideration of the Planning and Building Committee's Facilities
Naming Recommendation | |
| | b. Revision to 2025-26 School Year Calendar | Everett Olsen |
| | c. Summer Meeting Dates | |
| | d. Last Day of School | Everett Olsen |
| | e. Proposed FY 26 Budget Reductions | |
| | f. Other | |
| 8:00 p.m. | 9. POLICIES | Chair |
| | a. Approval of Food and Nutrition Services: Anti-Discrimination
and Civil Rights Complaints Policy (ACF) | |
| | b. Approval of Revised Title I Parent Involvement in Education Policy (KB) | |
| 8:10 p.m. | 10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES | Chair |
| | a. March 25, 2025 Non-Public Minutes | |
| | b. March 31, 2025 Non-Public Minutes | |
| | c. April 7, 2025 Public and Non-Public Minutes | |
| 8:15 p.m. | 11. CONSENT AGENDA | Amanda Doyle |
| | a. Resignations | |
| | b. Nominations | |
| | c. Educator Nominations for the 2025-2026 School Year | |
| 8:20 p.m. | 12. OTHER | Chair |
| | a. Committee Reports | |
| | b. Correspondence | |
| | c. Comments | |
| 8:30 p.m. | 13. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS | Chair |
| 8:45 p.m. | 14. ADJOURN | |

Merrimack School Board

Code of Ethics

As a member of the Merrimack School Board, I shall promote the best interests of the District by adhering to the following ethical standards, and affix my signature to the same:

Trustworthy in Responsibilities

I will always remember that my first and greatest concern will be the educational welfare of the students in the Merrimack School District.

I will be accountable to the public by accurately representing District policies, programs, priorities, and progress.

I will be responsive to the community by seeking its involvement in District affairs and by communicating its priorities and concerns.

I will work to ensure prudent and accountable use of District resources and never lose sight of the fiscal responsibility owed to the taxpayers of the District.

I will make no personal promise or take private action that may compromise my performance or my responsibilities or those of my fellow Board members.

I will avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest, and refrain from using my board position for personal or partisan gain.

Honor in Conduct

I will be honest, fair, just, and impartial in all my decisions and actions.

I will encourage and respect open dialogue and listen with an open mind while working for consensus.

I will respect the majority decision as the decision of the Board.

Integrity of Character

I will consistently uphold all applicable laws, rules, policies, and District procedures.

I will not disclose information that is confidential by law or that will undermine the District.

Commitment to Service

I will focus my attention on fulfilling the Board's responsibilities of goal setting, policymaking, and evaluation.

I will diligently prepare for and attend Board meetings.

I will avoid personal involvement in activities the Board has delegated to the Superintendent.

I will inform myself about relevant educational issues.

Signature

Name

Date

MERRIMACK SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Administrative Unit #26
36 McElwain Street
Merrimack, New Hampshire 03054
Tel. (603) 424-6200 Fax (603) 424-6229

AMANDA S. DOYLE
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum

EVERETT V. OLSEN, Jr.
Chief Educational Officer

MATTHEW D. SHEVENELL
Assistant Superintendent for Business

To: Lori Peters, Chair
Jenna Hardy, Vice Chair
Naomi Halter

Rachel Paepke
Laurie Rothhaus
Finnegan Haddad, Student Representative

From: Amanda S. Doyle



Date: April 21, 2025

Subject: 2025 New Hampshire Gallup Survey

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Board with an update on the 2025 NH Gallup Survey.

As you know, during the past two school years Merrimack Middle and High School students have been given the opportunity to complete the NH Gallup Survey as we strive to strengthen student engagement and increase career-connected learning opportunities. This was made possible through our collaboration with the New Hampshire Learning Initiative (NHLI).

Recently, I was informed by NHLI that for this school year, NH Commissioner of Education, Frank Edelblut, pivoted from his previous decision and classified the NH Gallup Survey as a non-academic/non-educational survey. As captured in school district policy **ILD: Non-Educational Surveys and Questionnaires**, separate federal and state laws require that written consent be obtained from a parent or guardian before a student participates in a non-academic/non-educational survey or questionnaire.

Given this change, it was my recommendation to the building teams that we do not administer the survey in this final year of our participation. The amount of effort and scrutiny associated with opt in compliance of non-academic surveys would likely offset the viability of the data we would collect. Instead, the survey results from our prior years of participation will continue to shape conversations about student engagement and career-connected learning opportunities in the Merrimack School District.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

MERRIMACK SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Administrative Unit #26
36 McElwain Street
Merrimack, New Hampshire 03054
Tel. (603) 424-6200 Fax (603) 424-6229

AMANDA S. DOYLE
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum

EVERETT V. OLSEN, Jr.
Chief Education Officer

MATTHEW D. SHEVENELL
Assistant Superintendent for Business

To: Lori Peters
Jenna Hardy

Naomi Halter
Rachel Paepke
Laurie Rothhaus
Finnegan Haddad

From: Everett V. Olsen, Jr.

Date: 4/16/25

Subject: Revision to 2025-2026 School Calendar

Several weeks ago, you approved the 2025-2026 school calendar that I presented. On that calendar May 6, 2026 is noted as an early release day. High school staff member Harley Hall has recently informed me that the College Board has not determined the exact schedule for Advanced Placement exams. However, the exams generally take place during the first two full weeks in May.

Based on the uncertainty over the exam dates, I am recommending that we change the May (2026) early release day from May 6, 2026 to May 20, 2026. I will greatly appreciate your approval of this request.

MERRIMACK SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Administrative Unit #26
36 McElwain Street
Merrimack, New Hampshire 03054
Tel. (603) 424-6200 Fax (603) 424-6229

AMANDA S. DOYLE
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum

EVERETT V. OLSEN, Jr.
Chief Education Officer

MATTHEW D. SHEVENNEL
Assistant Superintendent for Business

To: Lori Peters, Jenna Hardy, Laurie Rothhaus, Naomi Halter, Rachel Paepke, Finnegan Haddad

From: Everett V. Olsen, Jr. 

Date: 04/21/25

Subject: 2024-2025 Last Day of School

The 2024-2025 school calendar was approved with June 18th being the ending date of the school year. As of April 21, 2025, we have had two no-school days due to inclement weather. RSA 189:1 requires that the School Board of every district shall provide standard schools for at least 180 days in each year, or the equivalent number of instructional hours required in the rules of the department of education (ED306.18).

New Hampshire Department of Education ED306.18 requires that public schools are required to meet at least the following number of instructional hours:

Kindergarten	450 hours
Elementary Grades 1-6	945 hours
Middle and High School	990 hours

The number of instructional hours includes those hours devoted to direct instruction activities and does not include hours/minutes devoted to lunch, homeroom, passing time and early release for professional staff development. ED306.18 does allow elementary grades (K-6) to count up to 30 minutes of recess per day as instructional time. Additionally, advisory periods in the middle school and high school are counted as instructional time.

Based on my conversations with principals and my calculations of instructional hours, in compliance with ED306.18, I am recommending that we maintain the last day of school as Wednesday, June 18, 2025. All students will have exceeded the number of required hours as of June 18, 2025. June 18, 19 and 20 will be devoted to professional development which will allow staff to fulfill the contracted work year. Unless there is an unexpected emergency that would require school closure for several days, I anticipate that the last day will remain as June 18, 2025.

Thank you for your consideration of my recommendation to revise the last day of school for the current school year.

Merrimack School District Policy Progress Chart

4/8/2025

Policies In Process					Comments
	1st Reading	2nd Review	3rd Review (if needed)	Adoption	
Food and Nutrition Services: Anti-Discrimination and Civil Rights complaints (ACF)	3/17/25	4/7/25	N/A	4/21/2025	Includes USDA new nondiscrimination statement.
Revised Title I Parent Involvement in Education Policy (KB)	4/7/25	NA	N/A	4/21/2025	
Title I Family and Community Engagement – Parent Involvement in Education Appendix KB-R(1)	4/7/25 Review	N/A	N/A	N/A	School Board Review Only. The School Board does not approve Appendices

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES: ANTI-DISCRIMINATION
AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINTS**

A. USDA Non-Discrimination Statement (copied to Policy AC).

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating ~~on the basis of~~ based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, ~~(including gender identity and sexual orientation)~~ disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. ~~(*See note at end of this Section A.)~~

~~Program information may be made available in languages other than English.~~ Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication ~~to obtain~~ for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the responsible ~~state or local~~ Agency ~~that administers the program~~ or USDA's TARGET Center at ~~(202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA~~ through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a ~~Form AD-3027~~, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form ~~AD-3027~~, which can be obtained online at: [USDA Form AD-3027 \(link tested 2024/5/9\)](#) from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **Mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
2. **Fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **Email:**
Program.Intake@usda.gov

49
50 **NOTE: the above listed classes are those for which protections are extended under USDA*
51 *regulations. Although the USDA only receives complaints relative to claims of discrimination*
52 *based upon those classes, additional state and federal laws, as well as Board policy AC extend*
53 *protections against discrimination to additional classes of persons. See policy AC for further*
54 *information regarding those additional classes and related grievance procedures.*

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES: ANTI-DISCRIMINATION
AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINTS**

B. Additional Discrimination Complaint Information.

1. Any person or representative alleging discrimination based on a prohibited basis relative to any of the District's food service programs has the right to file a complaint within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory action.
2. District staff who receive a complaint alleging illegal discrimination in the district's nutrition program will forward the complaint to the District's Human Rights Officer **Assistant Superintendent or Director of Human Resources** immediately, who shall note whether the allegation was made verbally or in person and will transcribe the complaint if it is not provided in writing. As required by the USDA, the District's Human Rights Officer **Assistant Superintendent or Director of Human Resources** will forward the complaint to the USDA Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights immediately and will not first attempt to resolve the complaint prior to contacting the USDA.

C. Notice of Non-Discrimination Statement and Program Rights.

The Superintendent shall ensure that all materials and resources that are used to inform the public about any USDA supported Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) program include the complete, most current USDA non-discrimination statement in its exact wording. The statement may be accessed **at: [USDA Non-discrimination Statement \(Other Programs\)](#) (link tested 2024/5/9) from any USDA office.**

At a minimum, the full USDA non-discrimination statement must be included on the following materials related to USDA programs:

- Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Application Form(s)
- Notification of Eligibility or Ineligibility
- Expiration of Certification Notification
- Discontinuance Notification
- Program (Home) Web Page
- Other Public Information

If the size of the material is too small to include the full USDA Non-Discrimination statement (e.g., newspaper printing of menus), the material must at a minimum include the following statement in print the same size font as the main text: *"This institution is an equal opportunity provider."*

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES: ANTI-DISCRIMINATION
AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINTS**

D. Display of "And Justice for All" Poster.

The USDA requires that its "And Justice for All" non-discrimination poster is prominently displayed in each location where FNS meals are most frequently provided (e.g., school cafeteria). Each poster must be no smaller than 11" x 17" and placed in a location that enables program participants to read the text regarding civil rights complaints without obstruction.

Legal References:

RSA 354-A:1, (Human Rights) Title and Purposes of Chapter
RSA 354-A:27, Opportunity for Public Education without Discrimination a Civil Right
RSA 354-A:6, Opportunity for Employment without Discrimination a Civil Right

1st Reading: March 17, 2025
2nd Review: April 7, 2025
Adoption: April 21, 2025

TITLE I PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

The Board endorses the ~~parent involvement~~ family and community engagement goals of ~~Title I~~ the Every Student Succeeds Act and encourages the regular ~~participation by parents of Title I eligible children in all aspects of the program~~ collaboration between family members, community members, and school leadership. The education of children is viewed as a cooperative effort among the parents, school and community, ~~other family members involved in supporting the child's development and education.~~ ~~In this policy, the word "parent" also includes guardians and other family members involved in supervising the child's schools.~~

Pursuant to federal law, the District will develop jointly and ~~agree on with,~~ distribute to parents of children participating in the Title I program a written ~~parent involvement family and community engagement~~ policy.

The goal of this policy is to:

1. Honor and recognize families' funds of knowledge,
2. Connect family engagement to student learning,
3. Create welcoming, inviting cultures, and
4. Develop and capacity of families to negotiate the role of supporters, advocates, and collaborators.

~~At the required annual meeting of Title I parents, parents will have opportunities to participate in the design, development, operation and evaluation of the program for the next school year. Proposed activities shall be presented to fulfill the requirements necessary to address the requirements of parental involvement goals.~~

~~At the required annual meeting and at other parent involvement activities planned throughout the school year and summer, parents will be provided with:~~

- ~~1. Information about programs provided under Title I;~~
- ~~2. A description and explanation of the curriculum in use, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet;~~
- ~~3. Opportunities to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children; and~~
- ~~4. The opportunity to bring parent comments, if they are dissatisfied with the school's Title I program, to the district level.~~

The District will implement at least one annual meeting that is available to all families of students attending Title I schools and/or for families that include a student who receives Title I services (Targeted School). These meetings will provide parents and family members opportunities to participate in the design, development, operation and evaluation of the program for the next school year. Additional meetings may be held at the will of the Superintendent or school board. These meetings will be used to:

1. Involve parents in the joint development of the Title I program plan, the process of reviewing the implementation of the plan, and suggesting overall school improvements goals.
2. Provide the coordination, technical assistance and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective family and community engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.
3. Build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong family and community engagement.
4. Coordinate and integrate Title I family and community engagement strategies with those of other educational programs.
5. Conduct, with the involvement of families, an annual evaluation of the content of the family engagement policy and its effectiveness in improving the academic quality of the schools served. This will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in activities authorized by law, particularly by parents who are economically disadvantaged, have disabilities, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background. The district will use the findings of such evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental involvement and to revise, if necessary, the parental involvement policies.
6. Involve families in the activities of the schools served.

Title I funding, if sufficient, may be used to facilitate parent attendance at meetings through payment of transportation and childcare costs, food for the event, and academic based supplies and activities during the event. In targeted assistance programs, the families of children identified to participate in Title I programs ~~shall~~ will receive from the school ~~Language Arts Coordinator and the district Title I Coordinator~~ Principal and/or Title I staff an explanation of the reasons supporting each child's selection for the program, a set of objectives to be addressed, and a description of the services to be provided. Opportunities ~~are~~ will be provided for parents to meet with ~~their child's teacher~~ the classroom and Title I teachers to discuss ~~student~~ their child's progress. ~~with input from the respective tutor~~. Parents ~~might~~ will also ~~meet with the tutor to learn~~ receive guidance as to how they can assist ~~in the child's education at home~~ in the education of their children at home.

Resources:

~~—“National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs,” National PTA (reprinted May 1998); Improving America’s Schools Act, P.L. No. 103-382, Sec. 1112; Local Education Agency Plans, P.L. 107-110, “No Child Left Behind Act of 2001”, Title I—Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, Sec. 1118 Policy.~~

Legal References:

1st Reading: April 2, 2007
2nd Review: April 16, 2007
Adopted: May 8, 2007

Revision

1st Reading: April 7, 2025
Revised: April 21, 2025

**Merrimack School Board Special Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Merrimack Town Hall – Memorial Room
April 7, 2025**

5:30 p.m. – Non-Public Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) (b) & (c) – Merrimack TV Training Classroom

- **Staff Welfare**

Present: Ms. Lori Peters, Chair; Ms. Jenna Hardy, Vice-Chair; Ms. Laurie Rothhaus, Board Member; Mr. Ken Martin, Board Member; Ms. Naomi Halter, Board Member; and Mr. Finnegan Haddad, Student Representative.

Also Present: Mr. Everett Olsen, Chief Educational Officer; Ms. Amy Doyle, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum; and Mr. Matt Shevenell, Assistant Superintendent for Business.

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

At 6:00 p.m., Chair Peters called the regular meeting to order.

Chair Peters read aloud the Merrimack School District's mission statement into the record as follows:

The Merrimack School District will provide a high-quality, future-driven education to all students in the community. Students will engage in learning opportunities that reflect both rigor and relevance and meet their cognitive, social, and emotional needs. The district will prepare students to understand, adapt to, and adjust to the changing world, including civic, economic, social, and technological developments. Our overall goal is to inspire, create, and encourage students to be curious, connected, prepared, resilient, and dedicated individuals who are lifelong expert learners. Merrimack graduates exercise judgment; they are innovative and will become responsible contributors to society. We hope the discussions we have tonight will always align with that mission.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Erin M., a student, addressed the Board and stated that she wished to comment on the "Bring your own Device" policy. She said she did not think it was a good idea to limit the students to only Chromebooks. She said she was aware of the fact that there were some security concerns, but the Wi-Fi mostly covered that. She added that high-level students had a hard time achieving the work that they were doing on Chromebooks.

3. RECOGNITIONS

Chair Peters commented that this was Ken Martin's last meeting as a Board Member. Chair Peters said it had been a pleasure to work with him. Chair Peters, on behalf of the Board and the administration, presented Board Member Martin with a plaque indicating the Board's sincere appreciation for all he had done from 2022 to 2025. The School Board, in its entirety, thanked Board Member Martin for being one of the finest Board Members who had ever served, and they wished him all the best in his future.

Board Member Martin thanked the School Board for all their very kind comments.

53
54 **4. INFORMATIONAL UPDATES**
55

56 a. Superintendent Update
57

58 Chief Educational Officer Olsen reviewed the following:
59

- 60 • Cable Program with Dr. Sara Campbell, where they talked about her
61 attendance at an upcoming summer program at M.I.T.
62
- 63 • Granite State Challenge - Thursday, April 10th at 8:30 p.m.
64
- 65 • Jackie McMahon and Cinzia Bibb, both school nurses, were recognized by
66 the New Hampshire Department of Education as "Trailblazers in Education."
67
- 68 • Nicole Soucie, Special Education Coordinator at Merrimack High School,
69 was recognized as the "March WZID Teacher of the Month."
70
- 71 • The district had recently recognized the paraprofessionals with a big thank
72 you in honor of Paraprofessionals Appreciation Day. He added that he felt
73 the paraprofessionals were the unsung heroes of the school district.
74
- 75 • Susan Stubbs, Rebecca Lessard, and the administration hosted the third
76 annual Literacy Night the prior week, and it was a success.
77
- 78 • Jacob K., a 7th-grader at Merrimack Middle School, competed in the State Jr.
79 Oratorical Contest and placed 5th. He also said 7th-grader Kylie K. competed
80 in a national Ice Hockey competition, and her team made it to the semi-finals.
81
- 82 • Brendan McWalter, Music Teacher, Merrimack High School, informed Chief
83 Educational Officer Olsen that they had two district concerts, the Celebration
84 of Song, and the Cavalcade of Bands.
85
- 86 • The Merrimack High School Chorus and Concert Band traveled to Bow High
87 School to participate in the NH Music Educators Association's Large Group
88 Festival, and they did very well.
89
- 90 • The Merrimack High School Science Olympiad team competed at the 2025
91 New Hampshire State Tournament held at St. Anselm College and finished
92 in 3rd place, with only half of the team being able to attend.
93

94 b. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Update
95

96 Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle commented that Susan Luhrs, Federal Funds
97 Bookkeeper, recently went through an audit with the Department of Education. She said she did
98 very well and appreciated her hard work.
99

100 Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle said the state had decided to make a change in how
101 the district reported data to them. She thanked Luda Balanovich, Systems Manager, for all of her
102 hard work.
103

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle stated that ACCESS testing had been completed, noting that ESOL teachers were required to do the assessment annually. She also said that the New Hampshire SAS window opened on April 1st.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle said on April 16th that students in grades 9 through 11 would participate in the pre-SAT or the SAT.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle commented that there would be two family engagement activities with Sarah Sherman. She said the first one would be held on April 16th via Zoom on Practical Home Supports for Students with Anxiety, ADHD, and Autism. She added that the second one would be held on April 23rd (in-person) at the Merrimack Middle School library at 4:00 p.m. regarding the IEP process.

c. Assistant Superintendent for Business Update

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell stated that Mike Dumais, Assistant Director of Maintenance, would be retiring after 34 years with the district. He wished him all the best in his future.

d. School Board Update

Chair Peters reminded everyone that the following day was election day and encouraged the residents to vote.

e. Student Representative Update

Student Representative Haddad reported the following:

- An Outing Club would be starting at Merrimack High School.
- Chop Shop 166 had completed their district events and would move on to the "Worlds" in Houston, TX.
- Spring sports were starting.
- Students took the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery.
- The Merrimack High School building would host the state Quiz Bowl finals.
- The Student Council was hard at work regarding Spirit Week and the prom.
- The Students Against Destructive Decisions Club were planning the mock crash.
- In response to a Right-to-Know request and an issued complaint made to the Commissioner of Education, Frank Edelblut, the administration decided to no longer allow students in the Cultural Equality Club to go to the elementary schools and read the book *I Promise* by Lebron James. Student Representative Haddad commented that the students were sad and angry about the decision, and he had been told that the students did not feel that the book had anything to do with DEI (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion) but was about kindness. He said he felt scared when kindness got banned, and everyone just sat down.

Chair Peters commented that she, too, was disappointed with the decision.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen proposed that the names of residents who had made Right-to-Know requests should be published. He said that oftentimes, it was very costly, time and labor-intensive, and in some cases, the same person made multiple requests. Chief Educational Officer Olsen said he would double-check with the school district's attorney and relay that information to the School Board.

157 **5. OLD BUSINESS**

158
159 a. Discussion on Warrant Articles/Review Voters Guide

160
161 Chair Peters explained that every resident should have received a voter's guide in the mail.

162
163 Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell reviewed the Warrant Articles.

164
165 b. Review of the Draft Letter Regarding the Spending Cap Legislation

166
167 Chair Peters stated that after the Board's last discussion regarding New Hampshire's Fair Funding
168 letter and adding the additional tax cap legislation that passed the House, she drafted a letter. She
169 read the letter aloud as summarized below:

170
171 Dear Governor Ayotte,

172
173 On behalf of the Merrimack School Board, we are writing to express our concerns about the equality
174 and long-term viability of New Hampshire's funding of public education. We implore you to back
175 laws and programs that:

- 176
177 1. **Determine and increase state-level funding sources for education.** The
178 main source for funding for public education in New Hampshire is local
179 property taxes, which have led to substantial inequalities among areas and
180 an unmanageable burden on local taxpayers. School districts throughout
181 the state are forced to make more tough decisions that impact staffing,
182 student services, program offerings, and class sizes in the absence of
183 adequate state-level financial streams to sustain education. To boost
184 statewide investment in public education, we respectfully ask that the
185 legislature and administration investigate and implement new or improved
186 revenue choices. The common need to guarantee that all students,
187 irrespective of their residence, have access to a sufficient and fair education
188 ought to be reflected in these solutions.
- 189
190 2. **Raise the state's share of funding for public education.** When it comes
191 to the proportion of state funds allocated to public education, New
192 Hampshire has the lowest percentage in the country. School districts are
193 forced to either increase local taxes or cut back on services for students as
194 costs climb, particularly those associated with special education,
195 transportation, buildings, and health insurance. This process exacerbates
196 inequality between communities with varying levels of property wealth and
197 tax bases and is unsustainable.

198
199 We urge the state to reconsider how it finances education and to significantly
200 increase its share of local school budgets in order to fulfill its constitutional
201 duty to ensure that every child receives a quality education. This would
202 improve the consistency of high-quality educational options across the state
203 and lessen the financial strain on local property taxpayers.

- 205 3. **Oppose any legislation that would cap local school districts' budgets**
206 **at the state level.** The principle of local control has long been supported
207 by the people of New Hampshire. Every town or city is in the best position
208 to recognize and address the educational needs of its citizens and
209 children. A statewide tax cap would undermine this tradition by
210 restricting the ability of locally elected boards and town meetings to
211 decide on appropriate spending levels based on local priorities, needs,
212 and values.

213
214 Such a cap would jeopardize our capacity to deliver necessary services
215 and uphold high standards for teaching and learning, in addition to
216 limiting our ability to adapt to shifting educational demands. As a
217 fundamental component of New Hampshire's governance, local control
218 must be maintained and supported.

219
220 We implore you to promote equitable, sustainable, and responsible
221 education policies by standing alongside your local communities. The
222 moment has come for significant reforms that acknowledge the role that
223 public education will play in the future of our state. We appreciate your
224 dedication to our children and your ongoing devotion to the people of
225 New Hampshire.

226
227 Respectfully,

228
229 To be signed by all members of the School Board.
230

231 c. **Merrimack High School Graduation Date**

232
233 Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated that the Merrimack High School graduation ceremony
234 would take place on Saturday, June 14, 2025.

235
236 Chief Educational Officer Olsen said that the expected last day of school would be Wednesday,
237 June 18, 2025.

238
239 **6. NEW BUSINESS**

240
241 a. **Facilities Naming Recommendation from the Planning & Building Committee**
242

243 Mr. Gage Perry, Vice-Chair of the Planning & Building Committee; Mr. Joe Sanborn, Track Coach
244 & Science teacher; Mr. Jason Wright, Assistant Coach; Mr. Pat McGrath, Former School Board
245 Member; Mr. Mike Monahan, Former Track Coach; and Mr. Brent Whitney, Track & Cross Country
246 Coach were present on behalf of the request.

247
248 Mr. Sanborn addressed the Board and said he and his colleagues were present to request that the
249 name of the school's track be after a person who had dedicated his life to shaping the lives of
250 thousands of students, both in and out of the classroom. He said Mr. John Snell had been a
251 dedicated leader in Merrimack for decades, and they felt it was appropriate to honor his tangible
252 contributions.
253

Mr. Wright explained that the first-ever "John Snell Alumni Mile" on the track. He said it had tremendous support, and he had already received many entries.

Board Member Rothhaus commented that she had spoken with the Athletics Director, who was in a Master's Class on naming buildings. She said one of the concerns was that if there were an emergency, there might be some confusion regarding going to Memorial Field or the track. She added that one of the options they discussed was having a plaque that was flat on the ground. Board Member Rothhaus said she felt that it may help to minimize any confusion while still honoring Mr. Snell.

Chair Peters stated that the School Board gladly accepted the recommendation from the Planning & Building Committee to name the track in honor of Mr. John Snell. She said the Board would place the item on the next meeting's agenda so that they could discuss matters such as funding, etc.

b. Update on Request to Fidelity

Board Member Rothhaus stated that she was happy to report that she had a Zoom meeting with Ms. Carolyn Shaughnessy, Program Officer at Fidelity Investments. She said Carolyn carefully listened to the School Board's request regarding assistance with funding the new SAU building. She added that, unfortunately, the Board's request did not currently meet Fidelity's criteria for receiving money. Board Member Rothhaus explained that the amount of funds that Merrimack would have had to have been 80% of their goal.

Chair Peters suggested that the Board should also reach out to Budweiser, BAE, and Elbit Systems, in addition to Fidelity Investments.

c. Review & Approval of the Document Entitled "FY26 General Assurances Requirements and Definitions for Participation in Federal Programs"

Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated that the document had to be reviewed and approved on an annual basis.

MOTION: Board Member Martin made a motion to approve the document entitled "FY26 General Assurances Requirements and Definitions for Participation in Federal Programs." Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

7. POLICIES

a. Second Review of Food and Nutrition Services: Anti-Discrimination and Civil Rights Complaints (ACF)

Chair Peters asked if there were members of the Board who had questions or comments. There were none.

b. First Reading of Revised Title I Parent Involvement in Education Policy (KB)

MOTION: Board Member Martin made a motion to waive the first reading. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

c. Review of Title I Parent Involvement in Education Appendix KB-R(1)

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle said they were reviewing policies to compare them to the New Hampshire School Board recommendation. She said they were looking to have the document aligned since the last time it was adopted in 2007.

Chair Peters asked if there were members of the Board who had questions or comments. There were none.

Chair Peters noted that the policy would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. March 3, 2025 – Non-Public Minutes

MOTION: Board Member Martin made a motion to accept the non-public minutes of the March 3, 2025, meeting, as presented. Vice-Chair Hardy seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

b. March 17, 2025 – Non-Public and Public Minutes

MOTION: Vice-Chair Hardy made a motion to accept the non-public minutes and public minutes of the March 17, 2025, meeting, as presented. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5– 0 – 0.

9. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Teacher Resignations

- Jennifer Gonzalez, Science Teacher, Merrimack High School
- Elizabeth Dumais, Science Teacher, Merrimack High School
- Michael Smith, School Counselor, Merrimack Middle School

b. Administrator Resignations

- Amanda (Amy) Doyle, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Districtwide

c. Teacher Retirements

- Maryanne Sabat, Special Education Teacher, James Mastricola Elementary School – 31 years of service.
- Jeannie Wagner, Special Education Teacher, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School – 41 years of service.
- Line Keane, F.A.C.S. Teacher, Merrimack Middle School – 28 years of service.
- Philip Carle, Woodworking Teacher, Merrimack High School – 35 years of service.

- Pamela Foster, Technology Education Teacher – Merrimack High School – 24 years of service.
- Karen Hammes, School Nurse, Merrimack High School – 13 years of service.
- Harry Hewitt, Social Studies Teacher, Merrimack High School – 25 years of service.
- Marla Jones, Science Teacher, Merrimack High School – 36 years of service.

MOTION: Board Member Martin made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda, as presented, with the Board's sincere appreciation for all of the employees' years of service to the Merrimack School District. Board Member Rothhaus seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

Chair Peters noted that the School Board would regretfully accept the resignation of Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle. She said Amy had been a crucial member of the team, and they were excited for her future but were also very sad that she was leaving the district.

Student Representative Haddad commented that he felt Ms. Dumais was one of the finest people he had ever been taught by. He said she was a role model and a mentor. He also said Mr. Hewitt was another incredible professional whom he was extremely lucky to have had as a teacher. Finn wished them both the best of luck in the future.

Board Member Rothhaus and Vice-Chair Hardy stated that the school was losing some incredible teachers.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen said Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle had an extraordinary impact on the Merrimack School District, and they were profoundly grateful for her service.

d. Administrator Nomination

- Shane Rozamus, Assistant Principal, Merrimack High School

e. Non-Union/Director Nomination

- Matthew O'Brien, Director of Extended Learning Opportunities and Graduation Pathways, Merrimack High School.

MOTION: Board Member Martin made a motion to accept the Administrator Nomination and the Non-Union/Director Nomination. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

10. OTHER

a. Committee Reports

There were none.

403
404 b. Correspondence
405

406 Chair Peters stated that the Board received a number of "Right-to-Know" requests, noting that some
407 of the Board members were included and some were not, but pointed out that the number of
408 requests was extensive. She said she received an email regarding the election and candidates
409 requesting a School Board opinion, to which she replied, "The School Board did not take an opinion
410 on candidates, and they did not make recommendations or prohibitions."
411

412 Chair Peters commented that she also received an email from a parent of a special education
413 student who thanked the district for the work they did regarding special education.
414

415 Chair Peters also said that she received a few emails that she forwarded to the administration, as
416 that was the proper chain of command.
417

418 c. Comments
419

420 Board Member Halter commented that before the Board made its decision regarding the Facilities
421 Naming Recommendation, the logistics of the process would be discussed. Chair Peters replied
422 that the Board would receive all of the information prior to the next meeting.
423

424 Board Member Martin thanked the School Board and the members of the Merrimack community for
425 the opportunity to serve on the Board. He said he learned a great deal.
426

427 Student Representative Haddad commented that he agreed the students should not be forced to
428 use Chromebooks only and not use their personal laptops at school.
429

430 **11. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**
431

432 There were none.
433

434 **12. ADJOURNMENT**
435

436 **MOTION:** At approximately 7:30 p.m., Board Member Martin made a motion to adjourn.
437 Chair Peters seconded the motion.
438

439 **MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.**
440