



## PLANNING & BUILDING COMMITTEE

Merrimack School District

<https://www.sau26.org/domain/23>

### Minutes September 10, 2025

Present: T. Groff, A. Santoriello, F. Rothhaus, K. Bernier, G. Groff and School Board Liaison L. Rothhaus

Excused: D. LaRue

Also Present: Chief Educational Officer B. Olson, Assistant Superintendent for Business M. Shevenell and Technology Director J. Pelletier

T. Groff called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. He announced that D. LaRue was excused.

#### **Proposed 2026-2031 Capital Improvement Plan (C.I.P.)**

T. Groff told the Committee that M. Shevenell was present to review a draft of the 2026-2031 C.I.P. to review with the Committee.

M. Shevenell explained that last year's proposed 2025-30 C.I.P. was never finalized. He said, in light of the fact that this is the second year in a row that the District is working within a default budget, Administration has reduced the plan for FY 2026-27 to only Technology: Infrastructure and Equipment.

M. Shevenell then reviewed the proposed 2026-31 line by line. He said the roof replacement project originally scheduled for 2026-27 has been moved to 2027-2028. He told the Committee that Maintenance has inspected the remaining roof sections scheduled for replacement and feels they can safely be deferred. He stated this means the remaining roof replacement projects will be completed by 2031 after which there should be 10 years without any roof replacements which could be a good time to make deposits in the roof Capital Reserve Fund (C.R.F.).

M. Shevenell explained that the high school gym floor can't take another sanding, which means it will need to be replaced soon. He said this project was tentatively put in the C.I.P. for 2028-2029. He also said most of the school boilers are old and may need to be replaced soon as well. They are inspected yearly but he has developed a potential boiler replacement schedule which he added to the C.I.P. starting in 2028-2029.

M. Shevenell said he added a line to the C.I.P. for Window Replacement starting in 2029-2030. He also mentioned that there is a critical need for athletic fields in the District and suggested that

perhaps the Committee could do a study of District and Town owned lands looking for potential field locations and then developing a plan and timeline.

M. Shevenell indicated that he had also added a “place holder” line in the C.I.P. for air conditioning with no specific projects, costs or dates. He said that the HVAC systems have an increasing need for pocketed AC in some areas of the buildings plus many I.E.P.s now have requirements for climatized areas to be available for some students. He also suggested that the Committee or an outside vendor could research what is needed and develop a proposed schedule.

M. Shevenell told the Committee that he has put off parking, sidewalk and paving along O’Gara Drive, a new Central Office, and associated signage until at least 2027-2028.

M. Shevenell introduced Technology Director, Jason Pelletier to discuss the Technology lines in the proposed C.I.P.

J. Pelletier said that the District is in Year Two of the Technology C.I.P. He explained that he had inventoried and dated all equipment to develop a six-year technology plan. He told the Committee that the new equipment and infrastructure has already resulted in reduced technology costs. He clarified for the Committee that all fifth graders and all high school freshmen get new individual Chromebooks and that the elementary schools have quantities of devices on carts so that one is available for every elementary school student.

Committee discussion included:

- Chromebooks need to be replaced about every 4 years.
- The department is trying to keep its annual budget level funded.
- The department is working to bring and keep its technology current.
- System security is important.
- Technology is always changing and there are recurring annual costs.
- The budget number in the C.I.P includes equipment: devices and servers.
- The Technology budget lines include anti-virus software and other software licenses.
- Staff and various labs have SAU devices. Teachers have SAU laptops.
- A chart of the current inventory, age of assets, current costs and projected replacement costs, attrition rate plus a list prioritized additional technology need would be helpful.
- Items or projects having a minimum cost of \$100,000 are placed on the C.I.P. for planning purposes. However, the items or projects listed on the C.I.P may be included in the operating budget or put on the ballot as a warrant article.
- Warrant articles on the ballot are proposed by the School Board or by petition.
- Some possible District priority items over the next few years include a Math Interventionist, curriculum updates, O’Gara Drive and HVAC.

### **Next Meeting Date**

L. Rothhaus told the Committee that School Board Chair, Lori Peters would like to attend a Committee meeting to talk to the Committee about areas that the School Board would like Committee to focus on during the upcoming year. L. Rothhaus said the big focus this year is meeting the needs of every student in the District while getting the proposed budget passed.

T. Groff said the Committee has tentatively selected either October 8 or October 22 for its next meeting and asked L. Rothhaus to find out which date works best for L. Peters. He said members would be notified when the October meeting date is confirmed and suggested tentatively scheduling October 22<sup>nd</sup>, November 12th and December 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **Potential Committee Projects**

T. Groff asked members to suggest projects the Committee might want to focus on this year.

The following were discussed:

- Getting Crossing Guards
- Central Office “What if plans”
- Effects of the Default Budget
- SAU Consolidation Legislation
- Traffic flow & pedestrians during Afternoon Dismissal at JMUES
- Updating the “Named” Facilities List and Facilities Naming Policy

### **Other**

B. Olson told the Committee that after the JMUES parking discussion at a recent Committee meeting, he had sent to the Manchester Archdiocese a letter about the District being given the right of first refusal should the Archdiocese ever decide to sell the Our Lady of Mercy properties. He said he would let the Committee know if he received feedback.

### **Approval of Prior Minutes**

T. Groff asked if anyone had any comments about the proposed June 11, 2025 minutes. No one did.

K. Bernier made a MOTION to approve the May 14, 2025 minutes as written. Second: G. Groff. MOTION PASSED: 4 – 0 – 1. (A. Santoriello abstained.)

G. Groff made a MOTION to adjourn. Second: K. Bernier. MOTION PASSED unanimously

T. Groff adjourned the meeting at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Heinrich