

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack Town Hall Meeting Room
May 5, 2014
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

PRESENT: Chairman Ortega, Vice Chair Barnes, Board Members Powell, Guagliumi and Schneider, Superintendent Chiafery, Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin and Business Administrator Shevenell. Student Representative Crowley was excused from the meeting.

1. Call To Order

Chairman Ortega called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

Chairman Ortega led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of the April 21, 2014 Minutes

Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Powell) to approve the minutes of the April 21, 2014 meeting.

Board Member Powell requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 1 of 9, line 43, change “Contractor” to “Contract”

Vice Chair Barnes requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 2 of 9, line 95, correct the spelling of Kelliher
- Page 5 of 9, line 199, change the spelling of Killkelley.
- Page 5 of 9, line 236, should be “Chop Shop 166”

Chairman Ortega requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 5 of 9, line 214, change “become” to “becoming”
- Page 5 of 9, line 224, change the sentence to “This year in order to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) they gave a demonstration to about ...”
- Page 7 of 9, line 304 should be “Wenthworth”

The motion to accept the minutes of the April 21, 2014 meeting passed as amended 5-0-0.

3. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

4. Acceptance of Gifts/Grants under \$5,000

Business Administrator Shevenell presented a gift from Public Service of NH to James Masticola Elementary School for one hundred dollars (\$100.00) for student/classroom supplies.

Vice Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to accept the donation from Public Service of NH for one hundred dollars (\$100.00) with appreciation.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

5. Consent Agenda

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin presented the following items for approval:

- Teacher Resignation
 - Laura Fugere, Science Teacher, Merrimack High School
 - Lorraine Healey, First Grade Teacher, James Mastricola Elementary School
 - MaryEllen McGrath, First Grade Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School
 - Garth McKinney, Language Arts Coordinator, Merrimack Middle School
 - Paula Perry Chisholm, Special Educator, James Mastricola Elementary School

Vice Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to accept the Consent Agenda as presented.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

6. Merrimack Middle School: A Year in Review

Principal Debbie Woelflein gave a brief overview of the 2013-2014 school year at Merrimack Middle School.

- The school has been engaged in a standards-based curriculum over the past few years.
- The project is called SCALES which stands for Strategies for Collaboration in Learning Essential Standards
- They have worked with Nick Hardy, a consultant from WestEd Learning Innovations, to follow a very research-based approach to curriculum design, instruction, assessment and student support.
- The people making presentations at the meeting are the educators of team 8-2 and they will highlight how the SCALES project affects learning in the school.

Nicole Pinkerton, Language Arts teacher, spoke about unit templates.

- The templates list the standards that are being addressed and met in the unit, provide the educators with a clear direction as to the learning goals and success criteria of the unit of study, and offer suggestions as to how to approach the unit. A list of suggested texts is also included.
- The templates have created a consistency in the department.
- The SCALES work has provided the educators a great opportunity to collaborate on the development and implementation of Common Formative Assessments (CFAs). These assessments are given across grade levels and serve to help the educators determine the students' progress in the skills that are taught in the template.

Mark Cascadden, Social Studies teacher, spoke about the binders the teachers receive at the beginning of the school year.

- These binders help new and continuing educators create a good unit of study.
- The binders contain the standards of the unit and progressions that will be taught.
- There is constant collaboration between all the teachers on the team.
- All the educators may teach differently, but they all come together with the same materials.

Alyssa Foss, Math teacher, stated that there has been a shift in student learning over the years which has resulted in teachers having to shift the way they are teaching math.

- Students are expected to understand, explain and apply the mathematics that they are learning.
- Many of the standards require students to understand mathematics at a deeper level at a younger age than in the past.
- In the past, assessments were assessments OF learning to see what students have learned. Now they are assessments FOR learning, where assessments are conducted throughout a unit so that instruction can be shifted if necessary.
- Learning Targets are given to students at the beginning of a unit so the students will know what they are supposed to learn by the end of the unit. These “mini assessments” throughout the unit get the students engaged and put the emphasis back on them for learning.
- The Torch Bearer Program for new teachers or teachers new to the district has been really beneficial for her. She meets with her mentor every week or sometimes twice a week.

Sally Agel, Science teacher, spoke about her move from the business world to become a teacher.

- She loves teaching eighth grade because the students still have that “kid curiosity” while they are being prepared for high school and the business world.
- She runs a very “hands-on” classroom.
- She stated that it is no fun to memorize the information; it is more important to like science.

Joan McMahon is a Special Education teacher as well as a Resource teacher.

- As a Special Education teacher, she works in a “pull-out” program for students who are substantially below grade level to increase their skills.
- She is responsible for case management of twenty-five children with educational disabilities. It is her job to be the liaison between the students and the teachers on the team to make sure the students’ IEPs are complete, and their goals and objectives, accommodations and modifications are being met.
- She is a Resource teacher for all the students and teachers on the team.
- She is connected to the science group because of her background in science.
- She is part of the district-wide committee on developing a new science curriculum.

Assistant Principal Caragher explained some building-wide SCALES pieces.

- This year they have been working on an initiative called the Core Strategies. The objectives are very similar to SCALES. The idea is to create a consistency on a school-wide basis across teams and departments.

- The Core Strategies were selected because they were seen as being areas of significant need to prepare students for the middle school experience and beyond.
- Having common expectations help students get the most from their educational experience.
- The concept started at the August Academy of 2013 where the staff worked together to identify twenty-six different possible strategies. Of these strategies, seven were selected. They are listening skills, class preparedness, student planner use, afternoon announcements, classroom transition, behavior consequences, hallway behavior and hallway passes and procedures, and teacher/team expectations.
- The different content teams were asked to concentrate on one of the specific strategies. They then created a proposal which was presented to the entire faculty. The strategies were refined. A number of these Core Strategies have been implemented.
- He and Ms. Woelflein meet quarterly with the SCALES leaders to review the Common Formative Assessment results.

Board Member Schneider asked if the students in the middle school are being prepared for the high school competency grading system.

Principal Woelflein responded that there are plans next year to discuss assessments and grading. They also plan to have more consistent dialogue with the high school department heads to make sure they are connecting to them the ways they should.

Board Member Schneider asked about the Common Core Assessments and the Common Formative Assessments and how SCALES will adapt into these over time.

Principal Woelflein responded that the CFAs and the Summative Assessments are much more rigorous and require more critical thinking, which should be groundwork for Smarter Balanced.

Ms. Foss responded that the math department looks at the standards for college and career readiness. The math teachers have been pulling the more rigorous standards into what they are already doing and questioning how they are going to teach them.

Board Member Powell asked Ms. Foss if she has the opportunity to share her past teaching experiences with other educators in the district.

Ms. Foss responded that all experiences are different. She has been very impressed and loves working in Merrimack. Through SCALES she has been able to share and bring in practices from her past teaching experiences.

Mr. Cascadden responded that they work in a team approach. The staff decided as a team that they would help each other with their jobs, even though they teach different subjects. He added that it is amazing how much knowledge the educators give each other at the middle school. Every year they come away as a solid group.

Board Member Guagliumi asked about the development and formation of the templates. She also asked about the priority and process of the templates.

Principal Woelflein responded that she will provide information and materials to the board regarding the templates. She added that they have been working on the templates for four years. She thanked WestEd Learning Innovations because they brought this approach to the school.

Ms. Guagliumi asked about the Learning Targets and how the process works with the students.

Ms. Foss responded that as far as the math learning targets, the math department meets to discuss where they are going and what they want students to know at the end of the unit. They prepare a document in a student-friendly language stating what the students need to know and the progressions that make the most sense. The students receive this document the first day of presenting the unit to them to view and discuss the information.

Vice Chair Barnes stated that the District Parent Group asked how, with all the standards based curriculum, there is still an individual experience in the classroom.

Mr. Cascadden replied that every teacher adds a different personality to the job. When the teams meet they decide as a consensus what is important to teach. The methods will be different, but the same content/skills will be taught.

Vice Chair Barnes asked that, with the evolution of the math curriculum, how the parents can support a more sophisticated math.

Ms. Foss responded that the traditional way of teaching math works for the minute, but once a person gets out into society or into the workforce or has children of their own, the facts are not remembered because they were memorized and not learned or understood. Now teachers are trying to teach students that math is a thinking subject, including problem solving and understanding. She added that parents should be patient and encourage students to ask questions.

Chairman Ortega asked Ms. Pinkerton to explain the “unpacking” of standards.

Ms. Pinkerton responded that the first challenge was to figure out what were the key standards to focus on. That was a process for about a year. Then the “unpacking” began, which was breaking the standards down to what they means, what they look like and what they want the students to walk away with when they meet that particular standard.

Chairman Ortega remarked that the key importance is having standards. Two different teachers can have different approaches to teaching, but have the same standards as the other teachers in the department. This is hugely important work. He wished Mr. Cascadden good luck in his retirement. He also spoke about his experience of shadowing an eighth grade student in the middle school.

7. Seventh Grade Experiential Learning Opportunity

Debbie Woelflein, Principal of Merrimack Middle School, explained that “After the Bell” was a pilot program with the Greater Nashua YMCA during the fall and winter months of 2013-2014. This was a collaborative effort by the YMCA and the middle school educators to fill a need that

had been identified, which was to have a supervised place for students to do homework, to learn about the world, to try a new interest or to just hang out in a safe place at a very reasonable cost. The program was highly publicized, but only a handful of students took advantage of the opportunity. Next week, when the grade six students meet to be introduced to the middle school, they will be told about this program.

Joe Manzoli, Chief Operating Officer of the Greater Nashua YMCA, stated that he thought that starting the program in the fall/winter was not ideal for participation. He added that the staff and school were wonderful to work with to create the program. However, there were not enough students to keep it operating. They are committed to filling the needs of the middle school. He added that Josh Schupack, the Sports and Teen Director of the YMCA, will look at the possibilities for next year.

Principal Woelflein added that the staff at the middle school has been looking at all the available programs including the seventh grade overnight program at Camp MiTeNa. Once it was determined they wanted to modify this experience, they turned to the YMCA because they have tried very hard to partner up with the school for the good of the students. Together they are looking to design an interdisciplinary experiential learning opportunity which will flow through the whole year.

Principal Woelflein stated that the YMCA of Manchester has been very helpful in making the experience at Camp MiTeNa worthwhile. However, over time there have been issues that have made it more and more difficult.

Assistant Principal Caragher explained that over the past few years there has been an increase in the need for scholarships for students to attend the overnight at Camp MiTeNa. This year twenty-two families have requested information on scholarships. In light of this, the leadership has looked at ways to provide a similar experience for the kids at a more cost-effective manner. It has also become more and more difficult to find chaperones, since MiTeNa is a three-day commitment which is very challenging for parents and staff. For many of the students there have been outside issues that have kept all the students from participating at the camp, such as accommodations for special needs students. A local experience would enable all the children in seventh grade to participate.

Principal Woelflein stated that the middle school parent group is in favor of the change from an overnight experience to a local full day experience two or three times a year. There would be an event at Camp Sargent in the fall, perhaps an event mid-year at Grater Woods and another Camp Sargent experience in the spring.

Randy Menken, Director of Camp Sargent, made a presentation on the camp. He explained that Josh Schupack approached him about holding an experiential learning opportunity at the camp. He stated that he was excited about the proposal. He presented a slide show which gave an overview of the camp including its history and its philosophy.

Chairman Ortega stated that this experience has to tie into the curriculum. He asked Principal Woelflein to explain the experience at MiTeNa and the expectations for the experience at Camp Sargent.

Principal Woelflein responded that two things that will be different at Camp Sargent are the world history and life science curriculum.

Assistant Principal Caragher explained that similarities at MiTeNa and Camp Sargent are the science curriculum, team building, encouragement, and challenge by choice.

Board Member Schneider asked about the estimated savings by changing the location and time.

Assistant Principal Caragher responded that the current cost is one hundred forty-four dollars per student, which includes transportation to MiTeNa and meals. There is the potential saving of one-third to one-half of the cost by attending Camp Sargent.

Mr. Menken added that the biggest factor is the meals. There is the possibility of utilizing Thorntons Ferry kitchen for lunches and there would be a cookout or pizza provided by the camp for dinner. He agreed that the biggest expense is the cost of food.

Board Member Schneider asked about the blend of our school staff with the camp staff.

Mr. Menken responded that the camp will be staffed by both the YMCA staff and the school staff, which will probably be the same cost as the staffing at MiTeNa.

Vice Chair Barnes asked who would be operating the camp and what kinds of skills and expertise they will bring to the experience.

Mr. Menken responded that the YMCA staff will include himself, Josh Schupack, a pre-school teacher from the YMCA and it might also include two paraeducators from Reeds Ferry Elementary School who also work at Camp Sargent in the summer. There are a variety of skill sets they will be able to bring to this program. One of the biggest factors is the adult participation. They will come up with a job description for the educators and chaperones explaining that this is not a social gathering but an educational experience.

Vice Chair Barnes asked if this is unique to Merrimack or have they done this with other schools in the past.

Mr. Manzoli responded that this has not been done at Camp Sargent before, but he, Mr. Schupack and Mr. Menken have all had the experience with other camps before, both day and overnight programs. He added that the staff has to meet the standards by the ACA (American Camping Association). The YMCA has three hundred talented staff people to draw from to staff the camp for the outings.

Board Member Guagliumi asked if there would be a nurse on staff at the camp.

Principal Woelflein responded that will be worked out, whether they use their own school nurse or talk to other schools to see if they can help in this area. At MiTeNa there was a nurse on staff because it was an overnight experience and there were some medical issues and needs with some of the students.

Board Member Powell asked how the board can help with planning this experience.

Principal Woelflein responded that they are looking for feedback, reactions and support.

Board Member Powell added that he thought that the Camp Sargent experience will present more opportunities for parents to be involved because it is for one day and goes into the evening hours. He added that he is very excited about and supports this program.

Board Member Schneider added that he supports the program as well.

Vice Chair Barnes asked if they are reaching out to the sub-committee of the Merrimack Middle School or if they are looking at internal resources to extend the curriculum at Grater Woods.

Principal Woelflein responded that they do make use of the area surrounding the middle school now. She would anticipate that next year would not mean any major changes but as they look to build the program they would reach out to those different bodies.

Vice Chair Barnes asked if Wasserman Park or Camp Naticook were considered as possible sites for a similar program.

Principal Woelflein responded that they were not considered because what was done at MiTeNa could be duplicated very easily at Camp Sargent and they have a very good relationship with the YMCA through the "After the Bell" program.

Chairman Ortega stated that the students have historically enjoyed the overnight experience of MiTeNa and that a day program for students at Camp Sargent, with evening activity, attempts to replicate that without having students stay overnight. He agreed that there are more details to be worked out.

8. Review of Pending Roof Project at Merrimack High School

Vice Chair Barnes introduced the topic. This project had been discussed during budget season. In this year's operating budget, the Budget Committee put back three hundred eighty-five thousand nine hundred twenty dollars (\$385,920.00) as a place holder for reconsideration of Section B of the high school roof. When the board went through their final budget preparations, they had to make an adjustment to the bottom line because the roofing project, which had been approved, came in at a lower cost than expected. Therefore it seems appropriate to do another review to see if this project could possibly work. She added that her biggest concern was that roofing projects have consistently risen year after year.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated the costs of roofing have gone up considerably in the past year. He spoke with Tom Touseau, Director of Maintenance, to see if it was feasible to have the current contractor who is working on sections C, C1 and G to go back and add section B, which is about twenty thousand square feet. Basically they would be combining two fiscal years' worth of money to do one project over this summer. There is seven hundred five thousand dollars (\$705,000.00) from the 2014-15 budget and three hundred eighty five thousand dollars (\$385,000.00) from the 2013-2014 budget which totals one million ninety thousand dollars (\$1,090,000.00).

Business Administrator Shevenell added that Mr. Touseau spoke with the current contractor to discuss the possibility of adding the completion of section B of the roof to his current work. The contractor stated that he would adjust his calendar to add the completion of section B. Mr. Touseau was not pleased with the amount of the estimate and asked the contractor re-negotiation the amount of the estimated cost. In the end, we have the possibility to take advantage of a reduction in price because the contractor did not want to lose the job of completing section B.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that the district has the opportunity to combine two fiscal years of money to get those two big sections of the roof completed for around one thousand dollars under budget. He added that one of the reasons he believes the board chose to hold money in abeyance was the loss of the state adequacy money in the amount of one point one million dollars (\$1,100,000.00). There is the HealthTrust money which, after reimbursing all the employees their share of the refund, nets the district around nine hundred thousand dollars which replaces the loss of adequacy aid.

Business Administrator Shevenell continued to state that when looking at the revenue portion of the budget, the catastrophic aid is coming in more than was estimated and the Medicare reimbursement is coming in at a good clip. At this point in time, he does not see the expenditure of three hundred eighty-five thousand dollars (\$385,000.00) as having a major impact on the bottom line tax rate. He added that he and Mr. Touseau feel that the district should take advantage of the proposal.

Board Member Schneider asked about the amounts of catastrophic aid and Medicare increases in revenue..

Business Administrator Shevenell responded that when he estimates catastrophic aid, he is given a range of 70% to 100% of the actual. He usually goes with the lower estimate. So the district now has two hundred seventy five to three hundred thousand dollars (\$275,000.00 to \$300,000.00) more than was the estimate in catastrophic aid and Medicare.

Board Member Schneider concluded that taking the Local Government Center refund out of the picture and looking at the revenue, we are getting as much, if not more, than it would cost to do the roof.

Business Administrator Shevenell agreed with what Board Member Schneider concluded.

Board Member Schneider stated that he had been concerned about the loss of state aid and putting the three hundred eighty-five thousand dollars into the budget to do the roof. Now he understands that the revenue came in stronger than budgeted which means that they could accommodate activity at the lower rate without impacting what was anticipated in return at the end of the year.

Board Member Powell asked Mr. Touseau if section C is budgeted for in 2014-2015.

Mr. Touseau responded that section C, C1 and G are the areas to be completed.

Board Member Powell asked Mr. Touseau if section B, scheduled to be done in 2013-2014, was put off, when it would be done.

Mr. Touseau responded that it will be done in 2015-2016.

Board Member Schneider asked about the cost of the roof if the work was delayed two years.

Mr. Touseau responded that the budget would probably be an extra one hundred thousand dollars, but in actuality if it is delayed it may cost an extra fifty to sixty thousand dollars.

Board Member Schneider asked about the replacement of the heat wheel.

Mr. Touseau responded that the heat wheel in section A will be done in 2015-2016.

Chairman Ortega stated that when the three hundred eighty thousand nine hundred twenty dollars was put into the roof and the loss of the adequacy aid of one point one million dollars, the board agreed that the prudent thing to do was to defer the roof, knowing that it could wait a couple of more years. There is still a seven or eight thousand dollar deficit in that adequacy aid. The fact that there is three hundred seventy-five thousand additional dollars coming in, in terms of catastrophic aid and Medicare that hadn't been anticipated, it still puts the district well shy. Even if the three hundred eighty-five thousand dollars (\$385,000.00) is not spent, there will still be a shortage in the revenue.

Business Administrator Shevenell agreed.

Chairman Ortega stated that the district has another three hundred seventy-five thousand dollars that will further reduce that gap but will still not make it up. The question is whether to get closer to reducing the one point one million dollar deficit or do the roof.

Business Administrator Shevenell responded that this year we are receiving nine million dollars in adequacy aid. Last year the amount was ten million dollars. In 2015-2016 this amount will be nine million dollars. That is the figure used to set the tax rate in the fall. Instead of going into surplus to reduce the 2015-2016 tax rate, this money is going to be spent on the high school roof. In 2015-16, the district we will still get nine million dollars but the roof will cost an extra hundred thousand dollars because it will be two years hence.

Chairman Ortega stated that the difference was that the budgeted amount was nine million dollars for adequacy aid. The issue last summer was that the reduction from ten million dollars to nine million dollars was not taken into consideration. He had in his mind that this year the deficit needed to be made up.

Vice Chair Barnes stated that we are talking about the bottom line. Nine hundred ninety thousand dollars from the Local Government Center is going to the tax rate. This money is to complete a job affordably that will not be as affordable in the future. We are assured that this is the same work that will cost at least one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00) more in the future as our lowest bidding contractor took a seventy-five thousand dollar (\$75,000.00) hit on this add-on bid to get the total project. The bottom line is that it is not going to hurt the taxpayers because all that money went back to them. Right now we have a project that will not affect the taxpayers.

Vice Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) that the board spend three hundred eighty-five thousand nine hundred twenty dollars (\$385,920.00) from the operating year of 2013-2014 towards the roofing project to be done in the summer of 2014.

Vice Chair Barnes spoke to the motion stating that it is a better rate per square foot than was the original estimate. She added that she wanted to add to her motion that the two week rule be waived because the contractor needs an answer by tomorrow.

The waiver of the two week rule was moved by Vice Chair Barnes (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi).

Board Member Powell stated that he felt he needed more time to look at the information in order to make a decision. For that reason he is not in favor of this motion.

Board Member Schneider stated that he looked at the CIP and the upcoming projects. The Local Government Center money offsets the loss in state aid for this year. His understanding is that by the end of June the district would pay the vendor three hundred eighty-five thousand, nine hundred twenty dollars to replace section B of the roof. Then, for the next fiscal year, seven hundred five thousand dollars is budgeted for the other sections of the roof as well as the chiller replacement and other things that are tied together. So for him he can see the logic of spending this fiscal year's money and next fiscal year's money. Knowing the whole picture he tends to support this motion, since there is extra revenue.

Board Member Guagliumi asked about the savings from the vendor.

Mr. Touseau responded that the vendor gave a price that was too high. After negotiations with him and the supplier, they came out with the price of three hundred eighty-five thousand dollars. The advantage is that we are keeping one contractor on the roof for the entire project. The contractor needs to know if his proposal is accepted for scheduling purposes.

Chairman Ortega stated that keeping with the CIP and the high school roof is important. He cannot support this motion. He added that the taxpayers expect their money from the

HealthTrust back and did not want to spend it on the roof, since they spoke out in the negative when the board was looking to set up a Health Care Reserve Fund.

Board Member Powell stated that he is mainly opposed to this because of waiving the two week rule. He would like the tax payers to weigh in on this proposal.

The motion failed 2-3-0 with Board Members Guagliumi and Powell and Chairman Ortega in opposition.

9. Consideration of Date to Address Logic Model

Superintendent Chiafery stated that the board needs to come together to update the Logic Model. They had scheduled a meeting with Nancy Gerson of Learning Innovations WestEd which had to be cancelled due to a health issue. She is available on Wednesday, May 28th at 5:00 p.m. for a minimum of two hours. The goal is to have this framed before school begins in September.

Board Member Barnes stated that she has a conflict with the date. Board Member Powell stated that he needs to check his calendar for availability.

Superintendent Chiafery asked the board to get back to her regarding their availability.

10. Completion of School Board Assignments for 2014-1015

Chairman Ortega referenced the assignment sheet for the board. He stated that he took all of the input he received and did his best to align the assignments with the requests. He also did his best to level the assignments off so all the board members have the same number of assignments. He added that if a board member has a question or concern, they should contact him.

11. Request to Commissioner for School Calendar less than 180 days for Merrimack High School

Superintendent Chiafery reported that on April 9, 2014, the high school students were in the school for two hours when there was a major power outage. According to Public Service of New Hampshire, the power was going to be off for a number of hours and there was not a working kitchen. Therefore the students from the high school were dismissed.

Superintendent Chiafery explained that the Commissioner of Education normally expects that time will be made up in such situations. However, there were no teacher workshops scheduled for the rest of the school year in Merrimack, so there is no time to make up the time lost due to the power outage.

Superintendent Chiafery explained to the Commissioner that this was an emergency situation. The Commissioner responded that she wanted the Superintendent to calculate the instructional hours to see if the requirement is met. The number of instructional hours at the high school is three hundred thirty-five minutes a day. At a minimum, they have to meet nine hundred and ninety instructional hours for the year. When one hundred and eighty days is multiplied by three hundred thirty-five minutes, the total is one thousand five hours. If the calculation is one

hundred seventy-nine days times three hundred thirty-five minutes, the total is nine hundred ninety-nine hours. That nine hundred ninety-nine hours is nine hours more than the requirement. Therefore the requirement for instructional hours will be met.

Superintendent Chiafery stated that she would explain to the Commissioner that the high school meets the required number of instructional hours. She also felt it was important to ask the board to give her the right to request that the Commissioner be petitioned for a waiver for Merrimack high school students to complete one hundred seventy-nine days of school instead of one hundred eighty days.

Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to have Superintendent Chiafery request a waiver by the Commissioner of Education for the high school calendar for one hundred seventy-nine days as opposed to the one hundred eighty days.

Board Member Schneider asked if there were any early release days this year.

Superintendent Chiafery responded that there had been one early release day. The amount of hours needed to count the day as a complete day was met.

Board Member Powell asked about the anticipated last day of school at the high school.

Superintendent Chiafery responded that it is June 20, 2014.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

12. Other

a) Correspondence

Board Member Powell reported that he received an email expressing concern over the Day of Silence at the high school.

b) Comments

Superintendent Chiafery stated that at the last School Board meeting, a query was raised about support for the students who were going to participate in the National History Day Final Competition. The high school provided her with information that there are nineteen students eligible to attend. Given the fact that this competition is going to take place after commencement, it is not definite exactly how many students will participate. She added that the cost to attend for each student is six hundred dollars, including registration. She was told that each student will be provided one hundred dollars towards his/her registration. The group as a whole will be provided with an additional one thousand dollars to defray the overall costs.

Board Member Schneider stated that there was an additional query about students being able to take their final exams at another time since they will be attending the National History Day Final Competition during finals week.

Superintendent Chiafery responded that she was responding to the particular query about the finances. As far as the final exams, accommodations will be made by the faculty.

13. New Business

There was no new business.

14. Committee Reports

Chairman Ortega reported that he attended the Town Center Committee meeting and that he will give a more detailed report when he receives the minutes to that meeting. He did state that there were some changes. There was an open seat on the committee that was being actively recruited for a member of the public-at-large. There were not many people who stepped forward to fill this vacancy other than a gentleman from the Abel Ebenezer Brewing Company that is opening on Columbia Circle on June 14, 2014. The gentleman was very interested in filling the vacancy, but he is not a Merrimack resident.

15. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments on agenda items.

16. Manifest

The Board signed the manifest.

At 10:15 p.m. Board Member Powell moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed 5-0-0.