

**Merrimack School Board Meeting  
Town Hall Meeting Room  
May 4, 2015  
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Ortega, Vice Chairman Barnes, Board Members Powell, Guagliumi and Schneider, Superintendent Chiafery, Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin, Business Administrator Shevenell.

**1. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Ortega called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.  
Chairman Ortega led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Focus on Reeds Ferry Elementary School**

Chairman Ortega introduced Principal Yarlott and Assistant Principal Coler.

Principal Yarlott introduced Preschool Teacher Jerriane Anastos.

Ms. Anastos narrated a video that showed preschool students involved in small group instruction, purposeful play and table top activities.

Ms. Anastos introduced Mr. Scott Gorman a parent of a current and former preschool student.

Mr. Gorman, a former Merrimack student, explained that he returned to Merrimack as an adult to provide his children with the same educational opportunities he experienced. He shared personal testimony regarding his children's positive experiences in the preschool program.

Board Member Schneider explained his youngest child attended the preschool program at Reeds Ferry Elementary School and will be graduating in June. Board Member Schneider also attended school in Merrimack.

Vice Chair Barnes asked Mr. Gorman how he learned about the preschool program.

Mr. Gorman replied his wife learned of the preschool program, which at the time was only offered at Reeds Ferry Elementary, prior to moving to Merrimack.

Vice Chair Barnes asked if students used shaving cream in the table top activity and if parents were told what was used so they could practice with shaving cream at home.

Ms. Anastos clarified the material used in the table top activity was shaving cream. She added that parents are notified of the types of material, songs and books used in class.

Board Member Guagliumi shared her family chose to reside in Merrimack because of the schools and the overall Merrimack community.

Chairman Ortega acknowledged that Ms. Anatsos was the recipient of the New Hampshire Preschool Educator of the Year in 2013 and congratulated her on behalf of the School Board.

Ms. Anastos introduced Kindergarten Teacher Cathy Cibotti.

Ms. Cibotti narrated a video that showed kindergarten students involved in a writing lesson.

Student Stella read a story about a chicken. Student Lila read a story about fun ice castles.

Ms. Cibotti introduced Kindergarten Teacher Kathleen Donegan.

Ms. Donegan narrated a video that showed kindergarten students involved in small group instruction where the teacher guided the students through reading and basic comprehension, making connections and key details, reading responses, reading strategies, small group instruction, high frequency words and lastly independent reading and concepts of print.

Student Gina read a story about a caterpillar. Student Benjamin read a story about a little mouse.

Ms. Donegan introduced Kindergarten Teacher Christine Thibault.

Ms. Thibault narrated a video that showed kindergarten students participating in various math lessons.

Student Gavin shared his math journal. Student Reilly demonstrated how to divide a group in half using marshmallows.

Assistant Principal Coler introduced three students from Reeds Ferry Elementary School's first kindergarten class. Students Erin, Marshall and Kaley shared their kindergarten memories from ten years ago.

Chairman Ortega highlighted the evidence of rigor in the preschool and kindergarten programs.

Chairman Ortega explained that the board deferred a preschool program at Thorntons Ferry Elementary School for the school year 2015-2016. The Board would reconsider a preschool program at Thorntons Ferry Elementary School for the 2016-2017 school year.

Chairman Ortega added there have been discussions regarding a full-day kindergarten program and how it might be introduced.

### **3. Approval of April 6, 2015, April 20, 2015 and April 21, 2015 Minutes**

Board Member Powell moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2015 meeting.

Vice Chair Barnes requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 6, line 295 should read "Vice Chair Barnes stated a parent with children at the middle school and high school inquired about drug use in the school."

Chair Ortega requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 2, line 77, change the words "team leaders" to "students"
- Page 4, line 158 should read "It was previously open..."
- Page 4, line 188 should read "...could hide out of..."

Board Member Guagliumi requested the following changes to the minutes:

Page 4, line 155 should read "Board Member Guagliumi asked to be reminded of the current skate park hours."

The motion passed 5-0-0.

Vice Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2015 meeting.

Vice Chair Barnes requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 6, line 96, the vote should read “4-0-1”.
- Page 1, lines 37-38 should read “Board Member Guagliumi stated that Mrs. Barnes has been a strong representative for the school board, and a strong representative for other stakeholders such as the kids, parent, community and taxpayers and she is supportive of the motion.”
- Page 5, line 209, add the word “appreciated” after the words “important and”.
- Page 6, line 262-264 should read, “Board Member Guagliumi reported Matt Casparius would be drafting a letter for the Town Council to sign and send requesting relief of the Town’s obligations for the tennis area on O’Gara Drive. Additional details will follow at upcoming Town Council meetings.”

The motion passed 5-0-0.

#### **4. Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

#### **5. Consent Agenda**

- a) Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin presented the following teacher and nurse resignation and retirement
  - Sandra Eherenman, nurse at Merrimack High School
  - Nancy Flynn, nurse at Merrimack Middle School
  - Diana Plantier, English teacher at Merrimack High School

Vice Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to accept the consent agenda as presented.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

#### **6. Formal Signing of Master Agreement Between the Merrimack Educational Support Staff Association and Merrimack School Board**

Chairman Ortega, on behalf of the Town of Merrimack and taxpayers thanked negotiators Vice Chair Barnes and Board Member Schneider and MESSA for negotiating in good faith.

Carol Scopa, MESSA President and Paraeducator at Thorntons Ferry Elementary School, on behalf of MESSA thanked Vice Chair Barnes, Board Member Schneider, Business Administrator Shevenell and Director of Human Resources Linda Hastings. She also thanked the voters for their support.

Chairman Ortega, Superintendent Chiafery and MESSA representatives Carol Scopa and Kim Gontarz signed the Master Agreement.

## **7. 2015-2016 School Board Committee Assignments**

Chairman Ortega read School Board Committee Assignments for 2015-2016.

Vice Chair Barnes stated last year she questioned the Board's participation on curriculum committees. She explained she reviewed the minutes and notes and there were only five curriculum committee reports in the last twelve months so she still had the same question. She noted that Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin provides curriculum information to the Board when appropriate.

Board Member Schneider noted that curriculum committee assignments were less active than other committees and he felt it was important to have school board representation even if there is nothing to report.

Board Member Guagliumi suggested adding a third item under the agenda item "other" entitled administration updates including curriculum.

Board Member Schneider expressed his desire to formalize the structure for reporting curriculum committee reports.

Superintendent Chiafery suggested that during the July and August meetings Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin explain what is on the horizon relative to curricula and clarify how the board might be more engaged.

Board Member Guagliumi asked if Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin could provide a year in review prior to a report of what is on the horizon.

Vice Chair Barnes asked for a better understanding of what the board's role is relative to curriculum committee assignments.

Board Member Powell asked Superintendent Chiafery if the Educator Performance Evaluation Committee (EPEC) should remain on the committee assignment list.

Superintendent Chiafery responded she remove the Educator Performance Evaluation Committee from the committee assignment list because the development of the model, the pilot phase and editing were complete. She will keep the board informed during the implementation phase.

## **8. Other**

### **a) Correspondence**

School Board Member Schneider reported he received an email from a parent about the No Child Left Behind extension.

Chairman Ortega reported he received an inquiry about the status of the request for the waiver of one emergency snow day.

**b) Comments**

Superintendent Chiafery reported that James Jolly, a Merrimack High School senior met with Business Administrator Shevenell and Maintenance Director Touseau regarding his proposal for an outdoor classroom near the lower ball field behind the high school.

Business Administrator Shevenell explained that he and Director Touseau provided James Jolly with specifications for his outdoor classroom.

Superintendent Chiafery reported that James Jolly gave a formal presentation to the Rotary Club. The Rotary Club may provide funding for the outdoor classroom project.

Board Member Schneider asked when the response to the Superintendent's request for a waiver of one snow day was expected.

Superintendent Chiafery replied she was hopeful that she would have an answer by May 18<sup>th</sup>.

Board Member Powell congratulated Superintendent Chiafery for being named one of 25 Extraordinary Women recognized by The Nashua Telegraph. He thanked the Superintendent for her many years of service.

**9. New Business**

There was no new business to report.

**10. Committee Reports**

Vice Chair Barnes reported she participated in training for new school board members as a member of the Board of Directors for the New Hampshire School Boards Association.

**11. Public Participation on Agenda Items**

There were no public comments.

**12. Manifest**

The board signed the manifest.

At 8:30 p.m. Board Member Powell moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to adjourn the public meeting.

The motion passed 5-0-0.