

**Merrimack School Board Meeting  
Town Hall Meeting Room  
January 18, 2016  
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

**Present:** Vice Chair Barnes, Board Members Guagliumi, Schneider and Powell, Superintendent Chiafery, Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin, Business Administrator Shevenell and Student Representative Marcus.

**Absent:** Chairman Ortega was excused.

**1. Pledge of Allegiance**

Vice Chair Barnes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Vice Chair Barnes led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Approval of January 4, 2016 and January 7, 2016 Minutes**

January 4, 2016 Minutes

Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to approve the minutes of the January 4, 2016 meeting.

Vice Chair Barnes requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 3, line 105, Change "...VIP..." to "...VOIP..."
- Correct pagination on all 11 pages.

The motion passed as amended 3-0-1. Board Member Powell voted to abstain.

Student Representative Marcus voted In Favor.

January 7, 2016 Minutes

Board Member Guagliumi moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2016 meeting.

Board Member Schneider requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 4, line 155: Change "...co-curricular..." to "...athletic..."
- Page 4, line 172: Insert "...transportation..." between "...that the athletic..." and "...costs are fixed..."

Board Member Guagliumi requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 6, line 263, Insert the line item account number for the hockey rink account into the sentence.

Vice Chair Barnes requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 8, line 316, add "...because of it. If there was a case for it, it should have been in the budget with the other reductions in force for the original presentation."
- Page 8, line 349: Change 4-0-0 to 5-0-0
- Page 8, line 353: Change 4-0-0 to 5-0-0
- Correct the pagination on all 8 pages.

The motion passed as amended 4-0-0.

Student Representative Marcus voted In Favor.

### **3. Public Participation**

Merrimack resident Finlay Rothhaus of 14 Kittredge Lane spoke on the issue that was to come before the School Board later in this meeting. This is the issue of bringing drug-sniffing dogs into the Merrimack High School.

Mr. Rothhaus is the Town Counsel representative for Merrimack Safeguard. He spoke about the quality of life issue that is impacted by drug abuse and the importance of prevention and intervention. Citing the success of this tool in the neighboring communities of Nashua and Litchfield he recommended allowing the use of dogs so that students would be shown real boundaries. He stressed again the importance of prevention and intervention at an early age.

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

Business Administrator Shevenell presented a gift from the HealthTrust in the amount of \$100. This gift received by the Healthcare Containment Committee (HCCC) is for participation on the web portal challenge. The proceeds will be used for expenses related to communication with retirees regarding healthcare cost containment efforts.

Board Member Powell moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to accept the gift.

The motion passed 4-0-0.

Student Representative Marcus voted In Favor.

### **5. Presentation Regarding Drug Awareness at Merrimack High School and the Greater Merrimack Community**

Vice Chair Barnes welcomed to the table Merrimack Chief of Police Doyle, Merrimack High School Resource Officer Detective Mike Murray, Retired Merrimack Middle School Principal Deb Woelflein, and from Merrimack High School Principal Ken Johnson, Assistant Principal Peter Bergeron and Assistant Principal Rich Zampieri and acknowledged Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin as a part of the panel.

Police Chief Doyle began by providing a snapshot of what is happening in the community, the region and the state. New England has been especially hard hit by the drug crisis. The increase in heroin has climbed steadily in Merrimack since 2013. Chief Doyle stressed the lack of

resources and treatment facilities available to fight this problem. Massachusetts, Vermont and Maine are better prepared to provide the necessary resources due to state funding.

Arrest and prosecution are not the answer. Recidivism is very high because the appropriate treatments are limited or non-existent.

The gateway drugs are marijuana and alcohol. The increase in prescription opioids has risen markedly since 2005 especially Ritalin, Percocet, Vicodin and OxyContin.

The Merrimack Police Department has developed a smart phone application and put on their website information for families and loved ones to assist them in finding resources that might help them. Comprehensive help options include 211, Merrimack Safeguard, New Hampshire Care Path, Families in Transition, Hope for New Hampshire, Beyond Influence, Advocacy with Anonymity, New Hampshire Alcohol and Drug Treatment Locator, and Recovery.org.

Community connectedness is important. The Merrimack Police Department has partnered with Merrimack Safeguard on the drop box for unused/unwanted prescription drugs, gathering about 16 to 25 pounds of drugs a week. This is important because four out of five heroin users began with prescription opioids. Heroin is a Schedule One drug and addiction is immediate.

Of great frustration to the police department is when someone with an addiction problem comes in asking for help and there are no treatment centers or beds available. As the police continue to search for help, often the person changes his mind and leaves, looking for the next fix.

In 2015 the Merrimack community experienced 35 drug and alcohol related overdoses. Sixteen of the overdoses were due to heroin/phentynal. Phentynal is a powerful pain killer and a small dose can be deadly. Four of the sixteen people died as a result of the overdoses. The average age was 34 years old.

According to 2013 Youth Behavior Risk Survey, twenty-five (later corrected to twenty-one) percent of Merrimack High School students reported using heroin or controlled prescription drugs without a prescription, the highest in the region.

Between 2013 and 2015, Merrimack saw 61 drug-related overdoses of which 32 were due to heroin/phentonyl. There were a total of twelve deaths, ten of which were from heroin/phentonyl. The age range of the overdoses was 22 to 48 years old.

The lack of resources in New Hampshire has forced the police departments to use the court system to help for people. Chief Doyle spoke of the successes of the recently created drug court in Nashua South in Hillsborough County. Education and prevention are still the best options for combatting drug abuse. Leveraging community partnerships, such as the high school, are seen as key to successfully combatting the drug problem. Sharing information and acting swiftly are best practices utilized by the police department.

Principal Johnson then spoke about the trust that has been built up between high school administration, School Resource Officer Murray and the students. He provided statistics on student abuse of tobacco, alcohol and drugs over the past four years noting that it is very rare to

have a repeat offender. When the trust is violated the consequences are swift and significant. Observing student and group behavior, student reporting, teacher observations, camera surveillance, social media, and anonymous tips are investigated to root out substance abuse.

Student support before and after discovery can come from School Resource Officer Murray, administration, the school nurse, guidance officers, Merrimack Police Department, the closed campus, SADD, Merrimack Safeguard, Hampstead Hospital, Narcotics Anonymous and Greater Manchester Mental Health. Resources are provided pro-actively whenever possible.

The issue of Gunny, the drug-sniffing dog is complex to the school community. School culture fosters an environment that encourages students to come forward with concerns about classmates. Trust is paramount to the reputation of the school.

Principal Johnson would like to see students be educated about Gunny, through mini-assemblies, class-by-class. A demonstration of Gunny's skills and an explanation of why he is such a valuable resource to the community would be provided to the students. The decision as to using Gunny to search for drugs would be left to the discretion of the School Board.

Principal Johnson closed his remarks by stating that the drug issue is not only a school problem, but rather a community problem. Often the way drugs come into the school is from the homes and the community at large.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin spoke about the make-up of Merrimack Safeguard. It is comprised of twelve sectors that provide a cross-section of the community. The past seven years the community has benefitted from a seven year federal grant. Funds from this grant have been used to provide a school resource officer at Merrimack Middle School.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin attended a meeting recently to receive the second part of the grant. The common advice to new grantees was to not look for a quick fix. Instead, use all the tools at your disposal as a community. Look for institutional ways to address the problem.

Merrimack Safeguard Chair Deb Woelflein shared the seven research-based strategies of: providing information, developing skills, providing support, enhancing access and reducing barriers to service, changing the consequences, changing the physical design of areas and modifying or changing policies now in place. These strategies are recommended for creating successful change.

In order to comply with the grant, Merrimack Safeguard recently held focus groups in these seven of the twelve sectors: parents, educators, health care professionals, business owners, faith leaders, police and youth.

In each of the seven separate focus groups the questions were asked: "What does it mean to be responsible? What does it mean to not be responsible? What do we need to do differently?" The common thread throughout the groups was that people don't ask for help when they need it, often because of worry or embarrassment.

The culmination of these discussions is the AOK Campaign. Ask for help. Offer help. Keept it going. A brochure and help guide are available on the Merrimack Safeguard website to provide more education and information.

The brochure; “What’s your message? Take the quiz. How to raise healthy children in a culture of alcohol and drug use.” This brochure is a questionnaire for parents/guardians to see how they are doing with addressing their children’s early questions.

The “Merrimack Help Guide” is also on the Merrimack Safeguard website. It contains contact information for a variety of community resources.

Merrimack is also tied to “Beyond Influence,” a regional substance misuse network.

Ms. Woelflein closed by stressing the importance of everyone working together and communicating.

Board Member Guagliumi thanked the presenters and then asked Chief Doyle about the limited amount of resources in New Hampshire.

Police Chief Doyle responded that the first issue is the lack of available/affordable mental health insurance. The State Legislature has tried to earmark its limited funds to create a safety net for those at critical mass.

Principal Johnson inserted the comment that insurance issue is one of the delicate questions that the school personnel must ask students when trying to provide resources.

Board Member Guagliumi asked what we do in Merrimack regarding drug awareness and at what age we begin.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin responded that it needs to be educationally and developmentally appropriate. The research-based evidence points to the critical thinking skills of the students.

Board Member Guagliumi asked Chief Doyle and Officer Murray to weigh in on the pros/cons of bringing a drug-sniffing dog into the school.

Chief Doyle responded that his role was to provide information and to assist in any policy that is later developed and implemented by the School Board.

Officer Murray stated that if the parents and students were informed ahead of time that there would be searches, that it would become an effective tool in the fight. Parents and students would be told up front that the consequences would be administrative and not criminal. He cited the fact that a student who has a drug conviction becomes ineligible for federal student aid for college. An intervention during freshman or sophomore year highlighting this fact could open the student’s eyes to the seriousness of drugs.

Both officers stressed the importance of the educational piece before the enforcement piece.

Principal Johnson added that discipline is always followed up with support and guidance in order to assure a more successful outcome for the student and the community.

Board Member Guagliumi summed up by stating that what she was hearing was that some of the strong pillars in combatting the drug problem is a combination of education, communication and support.

Board Member Schneider spoke of the risk youth surveys done in Merrimack Middle School over the years and the results of the education piece. His concern was the students who are dealing the drugs rather than those who are using drugs. Can Gunny be used to assist in routing out dealers?

Chief Doyle stated that the police department does periodically get information that there are individuals in the community who are dealing drugs. The police aggressively pursue these leads.

Board Member Schneider noted that the perception in the community of the results of a drug sweep might bring a false sense of relief if no drugs are found.

Principal Johnson reiterated his position that letting the students know the boundaries and consequences up front is fair and when followed, enhances the trust between the administration and the student body.

Officer Murray took a moment to address the community at large on the issue of prescription drugs. He gave the example of a student who has his wisdom teeth removed and is given a prescription for thirty opioids when often only three are needed. He asked parents to ask the doctor for just the three pills. These left-over pills are a significant part of the drug problem.

Superintendent Chiafery asked how many of the employers of our high school students are knowledgeable about the seriousness of the drug problem.

Chief Doyle stated that most businesses have the rudimentary review of policies procedures in place as a part of the hiring process. This is an area that invites more attention.

Board Member Powell asked Chief Doyle to confirm the 2013 survey and the 21% of Merrimack students who had admitted to using heroin or prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription. Chief Doyle did confirm the data.

Board Member Powell asked if the drug-sniffing dog was to be used in the school, would it just drive the problem underground.

Chief Doyle responded that the goal is to get the message out to students that the behavior will not be tolerated in the school.

Principal Johnson added that in his past administrative assignments the drug activity was removed from the school and it moved into another part of the community.

Board Member Powell referred to the June 4, 2012 School Board Meeting at which Chief Doyle stated that many prescription drugs are difficult to detect and if this has changed.

Chief Doyle responded that he was speaking about Gunny's capabilities at the time. He has since been trained to detect marijuana, cocaine, crack cocaine, heroin, black tar heroin, ecstasy, MDMA, meth-amphetamine, oxytocin and other like-opioids and LSD.

Student Representative Marcus gave the student perspective. He was concerned that the use of Gunny would breed distrust or even animosity between the students and Officer Murray. The problem would move from the lockers to the backpacks. He is firmly against the use of a drug-sniffing dog.

Vice Chair Barnes noted that parents ask every year what the School Board is doing about the drug problem. The last time this was brought before the board was four years ago when opioids were the focus and heroin was not even being discussed. The changing landscape of the drug issue is a reason to keep talking about the efforts of the police, Merrimack Safeguard, and the school administration in combatting the problem. She asked, "What is the message to the parents?" She does not think Gunny is the answer, but acknowledged that something needs to be done. She recommended annual input.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin appreciated the School Board's desire for data before making decisions and admitted that perceptions can cloud the picture.

Vice Chair Barnes thanked the panel for their attendance at the meeting and for their work combatting the drug problem.

## **6. Quarterly Curriculum Reviews**

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin introduced the members of the panel, all of whom teach at Merrimack High School. They were Special Education Department Head Christine Reinart, Math Department Chair Ron Delude, Special Education Teacher Michele Sheremeta, English Department Chair Jan Moynihan-Cooney, Social Studies Chair Rob Huckins, Social Studies teacher Lindsey Seibert, English Teacher Carolyn Johnson, and Science Department Chair James Davis.

Educator Moynihan-Cooney opened by thanking the School Board for the opportunity to offer these new inter-disciplinary courses. Currently 127 students are enrolled and more are expected next year. Student feedback has been highly positive.

Educator Huckins noted that the goal of interdisciplinary is to immerse the students in the material to provide deeper understanding. Additionally, skills such as reading comprehension, writing, analysis, evaluation, and research are reinforced in these classes.

Suggested new course offerings for next year include: Project Earth (Science/Social Studies), Make Your Own Way (Social Studies/English) and Language, Truth and Logic (English/Math). All are dual credit courses to be taught in a double block.

Educator Davis spoke about the Art/Science class that is comprised of sixteen juniors and seniors. This is a half credit in each discipline that meets for one class period daily. Most classes take place in the Science Room. Lessons have included researching how to make paint, article reading on how artists use science, integrating the scientific method into art, color mixing

and optical illusions, making paper and guest speakers. Students have benefitted from seeing the art and science disciplines from different perspectives.

Educators Siebert and Johnson then spoke about their experience teaching the interdisciplinary class Foundations in World Cultures, comprised of 40 sophomores. Students were put into pods of 8 and given the assignment of creating a medieval land theme park. They took advantage of the 50 laptops available to them to allow the students to do their research. Aside from the research and creation of the park, the students had to pitch their project to “Shark Tank” sharks Mr. Huckins and Mrs. Moynihan-Cooney. Students experienced Social Studies, research and economics in this month-long project.

Academic rigor continued as students re-enacted Shakespeare’s “Twelfth Night” and wrote two essays.

Teachers noted that after one semester the students have risen in their academic levels. This was marked because the class is a heterogeneous group.

Educator Johnson noted that as a long-term educator she had an opportunity to wear a student hat when the material being taught was not in her content area. By participating in the lesson as a student she was able to pick up on things that the students needed to work on, such as quality note taking. This was a valuable insight.

Student Representative Marcus asked if the teachers felt it challenging to get through the material in each discipline.

Educator Siebert stated that Educator Johnson was very accommodating. Additionally, she let the inquiry-based method guide the instruction.

Student Representative Marcus asked if there are plans in the immediate future to offer this class as an honors class.

Educator Moynihan-Cooney responded that this has been incorporated into the interdisciplinary course now. The honors option includes a summer project.

Board Member Powell asked if there is feedback from colleges to the guidance counselors.

Educator Huckins responded that these courses already fit into the existing course descriptions.

Board Member Powell then suggested soliciting feedback from the colleges.

Student Representative Marcus agreed noting that students are concerned that colleges might not see the academic rigor behind the course titles.

Educator Moynihan-Cooney noted that colleges are familiar with inter-disciplinary courses, the honors designation is noted on the transcript and many high schools offer these classes.

Vice Chair Barnes asked where classes such as band, auto shop and photography fit in an interdisciplinary schedule. Is there a long-term strategy in place to manage these changes?



Educator Huckins noted that the challenge is in the electives and that this is an issue for the guidance department.

Principal Johnson noted that Deb Barker of the Guidance Department receives continuous training in this area and is aware of the challenges.

Principal Johnson stated that Merrimack High School is the only school that has received the Advanced Placement (AP) designation three out of the last four years and attributes this to the continued rigor in course offerings.

Vice Chair Barnes asked the panel how they measured competencies.

Educator Johnson responded that competencies are measured separately. The same essay, debate or performance can be used to measure content knowledge, writing, comprehension and reading.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin noted that what the teachers have been sharing goes to rigor, application and understanding.

Board Member Guagliumi commented that her experience this past year on the Program Evaluation and Review Committee (PERC) made her aware of the large amount of work teachers do in developing new course offerings.

Educator Delude noted a Math/Science offering this year did not have enough student interest and was dropped. Next year a Math/English class will be offered.

Educator Reinart then spoke about the co-teaching experience which pairs a content area specialist with a special education teacher in a single discipline. This allows teachers the opportunity to differentiate and deepen instruction.

Educator Reinart shared that the co-teaching experience was piloted this year in grade 9 in the four core subjects. She shared examples of how the teaching was differentiated in the different classrooms. An oral lecture by the content area teacher was enhanced by the special educator providing a visual outline on the board. Prior to a science unit the vocabulary was handed out as the new concepts were being introduced. Test taking skills were addressed and strategies presented to struggling students to encourage more successful outcomes.

Educator Sheremeta shared some of the student successes she witnessed and assisted with as a co-teacher. Simple modifications such as re-wording written questions allowed students to progress through the material to completion. Allowing students to respond orally before they wrote their answers provided very beneficial to students.

Board Member Schneider asked how the students were selected for the pilot group.

Educator Reinart responded that after consultation with middle school staff the pilot groups were made up of designated at risk students, about half of whom had 504 plans.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin shared that the next step is to share more details with the School Board in the Spring.

Student Representative Marcus asked if the pilot program in grade 9 will ultimately spread through all four grades.

Educator Delude responded that it is too soon to know yet, but the benefits of the co-teaching classes is already evident.

Educator Reinart commented that an expansion would quickly absorb all of the special education teachers. Discussions among the department heads are on-going.

Board Member Powell made the observation that the co-teaching practice answers the question of finding a way to teach to the child.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin noted that the co-teaching arrangement promotes academic rigor.

Vice Chair Barnes closed the discussion with the praise of the school staff for the innovative teaching and hard work done by the teachers on a daily basis.

## **7. Board's Final Response to Proposed 2016-2017 School District Budget**

Board Member Powell moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to accept the \$5,000 cut in Tier IV, line 2.

Superintendent Chiafery stated that none of the suggested cuts were desired.

Board Member Guagliumi noted the issue of the Kinder Morgan pipeline and was concerned that this might involve more legal fees.

Board Member Schneider noted that the easier cuts are in Tiers I and II.

Business Administrator Shevenell agreed, noting the Tier I cuts can easily be made. The amounts are definitely known. Tier II cuts are unknowns.

Vice Chair Barnes called for a vote on the motion made by Board Member Powell.

The motion failed 1-3-0. Vice Chair Barnes, and Board Members Guagliumi and Schneider voted against.

The Student Representative Marcus voted to Abstain.

Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to accept the cuts listed in Tier I and line 1 of Tier II for a total of \$459, 097.00.

Board Member Powell asked if it was safe to defer the paving projects at the high school.

Business Administrator Shevenell responded that while the disrepair is constant, there is no structural damage.

Vice Chair Barnes noted that delaying the paving project provides an opportunity to do a more comprehensive evaluation of the design.

Student Representative Marcus recommended not putting off the paving project.

Discussion ensued among the Board Members about tying the paving project into the O’Gara Drive re-paving.

Board Member Schneider at the request of Board Member Guagliumi read aloud the items in Tier I and Tier II that were in the motion.

The motion passed 4-0-0.

Student Representative Marcus voted Against.

Board Member Powell moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to accept the proposed cut in Tier II for the half time para-educator at a Charter School in the amount of \$10,000.00.

Discussion ensued among the Board Members.

The motion passed 3-1-0 with Board Member Schneider voting against.

Student Representative Marcus voted In Favor.

Board Member Powell moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to approve the budget as adjusted. The adjusted amount brings the proposed 2016-2017 district school budget to \$72,283,299.00, for an increase of 2.3%.

The motion carried 4-0-0.

Student Representative Marcus voted In Favor.

Vice Chair Barnes acknowledged the difficult decisions that needed to be made and thanked the Board Members, the Superintendent and the Leadership Team for their cooperation.

## **8. First Review of a New Policy: Video and Audio Recording in School Classrooms**

Superintendent Chiafery noted that the law requires that this policy be aired at a public hearing. The next opportunity for airing this policy at a public hearing will be on January 28, 2016.

Superintendent Chiafery read the proposed policy into the minutes.

It reads: Video and Audio Recording in School Classrooms

The Board recognizes that video and/or audio records (“recordings”) can serve many valuable purposes that align with our schools’ educational mission and programming. The Board approves the use of these recordings for educational purposes including, but not limited to,

recording student performances for instructional purposes; creating classroom instructional materials; and providing tools for teacher instruction and development.

A. Purpose for Which Written Consent Is Required

Unless otherwise permitted by law, the following conditions apply to recordings in classrooms. "Classroom" is defined as any area on school grounds where instruction is taking place.

1. If classroom activities planned for recording include one or more students, prior written consent must be obtained from the parents/legal guardians of each affected student in the class. Prior consent must be obtained on an annual basis.
2. If school-related activities planned for recording include one or more staff members, prior written consent must be obtained from each of those staff members. Prior consent must be obtained on an annual basis.

B. Circumstances Under Which Written Consent Is Not Required

1. Video and/or audio recordings made pursuant to a student's IEP or 504 Plan, when the IEP or 504 Team determines that such recording is necessary for the delivery of a free appropriate public education (FAPE), do not require consent under this policy. In such cases, the IEP or 504 Team is expected to establish reasonable conditions and limitations reasonably necessary for the student to receive a FAPE.
2. Written consent is not required for recordings of non-classroom activities including but not limited to extracurricular/co-curricular activities, club events, competitions, ceremonies, musical performances, presentations, orientations, training, assemblies, activities such as student government, yearbook, and other school-sponsored events that occur outside of classrooms, or any recording of hallways, open or general areas for school security purposes.

**Legal Reference:**

RSA 189:68, IV

Board Member Powell asked if the policy is restricted to teacher/school recordings and asked about cell phone recordings.

Superintendent Chiafery responded that the policy was written for a specific purpose. It is an opt-in, not an opt-out policy and she would need to get legal counsel on the question of smart phone video-recordings.

Vice Chair Barnes shared that legislation will be coming forward to address this issue in the policy.

Board Member Guagliumi questioned the word "yearbook" in section B number 2.

Board Member Schneider asked about videography class consent forms.

Superintendent Chiafery responded that past practices would no longer apply.

Student Representative Marcus commentated on “presentations” in Section B number 2.

There will be a second review after the public hearing.

## **9. Information Regarding the Eleventh Grade State Assessment: Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)**

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin noted that the State of New Hampshire has moved from Smarter Balanced to the SAT for grade eleven students. The benefits are that this test is a known entity and its association with college applications gives it more weight with students. On March 2, 2016 the SAT will be administered statewide. The English and Math portions will be paid for by the state. The writing portion will be paid for by a grant that the Merrimack School District received.

Student Representative Marcus thought that students would be more likely to take the SAT seriously, resulting in a rise in test scores.

Juniors will still take the NECAP Science test.

The cost per student for the SAT essay will be \$11.50 per student.

## **10. Other**

### **a) Correspondence**

A number of emails on this issue of bringing a drug sniffing dog into the high school was 6/4 in favor.

Student Representative Marcus on behalf of the student body, presented thank you cards and Dunkin Donuts gift cards to the Board Members in honor of January being School Board Appreciation Month. On a personal note he expressed his appreciation that his opinions are valued.

Board Member Guagliumi heard from a parent questioning why school was held on Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Board Member Schneider heard from constituents about the fact that the agenda was not posted on the website for the past two meetings.

Superintendent Chiafery shared that the NHIAA recognized Joanne Coffey as a Student Athlete of the Month for December 2015.

### **b) Comments**

There were no comments.

## **11. New Business**

There was no new business.

## **12. Committee Reports**

Board Member Powell shared that he will be relinquishing his position on the Town Center Committee. A parent with a student in the district will take over the position.

Board Member Guagliumi shared that the Parks and Recreation Committee will meet on Wednesday, January 20, 2016.

Vice Chair Barnes shared that the New Hampshire School Board Association held their delegate assembly. Vice Chair Barnes was elected as second Vice-President.

## **13. Public Comments on Agenda Items**

Merrimack resident Finlay Rothhaus addressed the Board. Before he addressed the issue he complimented Student Representative Marcus, noting that he is a nice addition to the School Board.

Mr. Rothhaus underscored his position on approving the use of a drug-sniffing dog at the high school. He spoke of the use of the word trust during the earlier presentation. He sees the drug sniffing dogs as just another tool in the arsenal.

## **14. Manifest**

The Board signed the manifest.

At 11:00 p.m. Board Member Guagliumi moved (seconded by Board Member Powell) to enter non-public session per RSA 91-A: 3, II, (a), (b), (c).

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed 4-0-0.

At 11:20 p.m. Board Member Powell moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed 4-0-0.