

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District
School Administrative Unit #26
May 1, 2017
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room**

Present: Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Schneider, Board Members Guagliumi, Thompson and Schoenfeld, Superintendent Chiafery, Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell and Student Representative Sernik.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Barnes called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

Chair Barnes led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

3. Focus on Student Voice and Mindset at James Masticola Elementary School

Chair Barnes invited Principal Emilie Carter and other honored guests to the table.

Principal Carter began the presentation by introducing principal-elect Michelle Romein.

Principal Carter then shared that the topic of mindset was chosen as a result of several professional development experiences over the past year. The focus of tonight’s presentation is to share how the James Masticola Elementary School community has encouraged student voice through the learning process.

The school leadership team challenged the school community to think about how to make a mindset shift and become open to others thoughts and opinions. The topic was introduced by school counselor Kate Harrington.

Students gave demonstrations on the difference between fixed and growth mindset. Examples presented were:

Fixed Mindset

I made a mistake.
I give up.
I will never be that smart.
This is too hard.
My friend can do this, but I can’t.
It is good enough.

Growth Mindset

Mistakes help me learn.
Let me try again.
I will learn how to do this.
This may take some time and effort.
I can learn from my friend how to do this.
Is it really my best work?

Students explained the areas of the brain, neurons and their functions. They provided detailed understanding of how a fixed mindset can be changed.

Educator Theriault and students shared their mindset phrases of mistakes are expected, inspected, corrected, and respected; and examples of how this helps them grow their gross mindsets to think more positively. They add the word yet to sentences to encourage themselves to try harder and not give up.

Kindergarten students under the direction of educators Bolduc and Fournier demonstrated positive teamwork with problem solving activities such as how to get three billy goats across a bridge. All of the curriculum areas are pulled together for the activity. Students learned to work together in groups to solve the problems.

Kindergarten and first grade students learned steps in a beginning research project by working with the school librarian.

This was Principal Carter's last presentation before her retirement. Chair Barnes thanked her for her service to the district.

4. Update from Trustees of the Trust Funds

Chair Barnes invited Jack Balcom and Chris Christensen to the table. Trustee Christensen reviewed the funds that are held by the Trustees.

The MS-9 is the form the Trustees file with the State of New Hampshire every year in September for the previous fiscal year ended June 30. Previous reports are available on line on the Town of Merrimack's website and in the Merrimack Town Annual Report.

Over the last several months there has been a transitioning to a new advisor, Cambridge Trust Co., New Hampshire.

Trustee Balcom spoke about the specific funds of Gage & Lawrence, Stockley, Watkins, Watkins Spelling, Watkins Speaking, Masticola and Watkins Forest Income.

Superintendent Chiafery commented that one of the roles of the Trustees is to offer seed money to the high school for new initiatives. One program that began this way was the Mandarin Chinese program. This year's UNH recipient of the Chinese Mandarin proficiency award was a former Merrimack student from this program.

Another use of the funds has been to upgrade the school libraries.

Board Member Thompson asked if the background information on the various funds could be posted on the webpage next to the funds.

Chair Barnes thanked the Trustees for their concerned oversight and noted the impact the trust fund spending has on the district and the students.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell added that the Trustees are prudent stewards of the funds.

5. Information regarding Health Insurance Plan Options for Employees

Chair Barnes invited to the table Human Resources Director Linda Hastings and HealthTrust Benefits Coordinator Debie Clayton.

Human Resources Director Hastings began by noting that the three plans about to be unveiled will be made available next year to professional staff.

HealthTrust Benefits Coordinator Clayton explained the three options. They are all offered by Anthem BlueCross BlueShield. The three plan offerings are Blue Choice Point of Service, Access Blue, and Access Blue Site of Service. The Blue Choice Point of Service plan is primarily New Hampshire and allows a person to go the doctor of their choosing. The other two plans are HMO plans and do not require referrals if the care is from a New England provider.

Ms. Clayton reviewed the differences between the three plans by reading through the handouts and adding additional comments and information.

Board Member Guagliumi noted appreciation for the handouts. She found them very helpful.

Vice Chair Schneider noted that the site of service plan is new this year and is hoped to reduce costs to the district.

Ms. Hastings noted that this plan has already been rolled out to the non-affiliated employees and retirees very successfully.

Chair Barnes appreciated that the new site of service plan is comprehensive and should be highly desirable.

Ms. Hastings noted the additional programs that go along with the coverage.

Ms. Clayton highlighted the benefits of the Slice of Life and the Smart Shopper programs.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell promoted the Smart Shopper program with a personal experience.

Open enrollment begins the second week of May.

6. Discussion Regarding Water Testing

Chair Barnes opened the discussion by noting that the drought appears to be almost over and that now is the time to think about more water testing in the schools.

Board Member Thompson asked for testing now and at the end of the summer.

Chair Barnes recommended that the testing take place at the end of the summer after wells 4 and 5 are back on line. She also suggested the Merrimack Village District share results at a future school board meeting.

7. School Board Committee Assignments

Chair Barnes referred to the list for the next school year which is status quo with only one change.

There were no other changes requested.

8. Approval of School Board Minutes

• **April 17, 2017 Minutes**

Board Member Guagliumi moved (seconded by Vice Chair Schneider) to accept the minutes of the April 17, 2017 meeting.

Board Member Thompson requested the following change to the minutes:

Page 4, line 179, Add in the number of hours that the parents also give to the community.

The motion passed as amended 5-0-0.

• **April 18, 2017 Non-Public Minutes**

Vice Chair Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Schoenfeld) to accept the minutes of the April 18, 2017 meeting.

The motion passed as presented 5-0-0.

9. Acceptance of Gifts and Grants under \$5,000.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell presented a gift from Fidelity to the Merrimack School District National Art Honor Society in the amount of \$3,500.00. The proceeds will be used to support students pursuing career paths in the visual arts.

Board Member Schoenfeld moved (seconded by Board Member Thompson) to accept the gift with appreciation.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

10. Consent Agenda

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin presented the consent agenda.

• **Educator Nominations**

Matthew Govoni, Merrimack High School, Social Studies Teacher
Mallory Higgins, Merrimack High School, Social Studies Teacher
Allison Spencer, Merrimack High School, Library Media Specialist

- **Election of Administrators**

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

The motion carried 5-0-0.

11. Other

a) Correspondence

Board Member Guagliumi received correspondence from a parent with questions about the honors program selection process.

Chair Barnes received correspondence from a constituent asking when the findings for the dog in school will be on the agenda.

Chair Barnes received correspondence in regards to the skate park closing.

b) Comments

Superintendent Chiafery commented that the next school to present will be the James Masticola Upper Elementary School. It is hoped that Honeywell executive Jim Lucy will be in attendance to be thanked for affording two teachers to attend the Honeywell Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama.

She noted some of the other agenda items that will be on the next meeting. They include the Wellness Policy update, Homework Committee and Lunch Program issues.

Board Member Schoenfeld has been noting the online conversation on the skate park and asked for a brief re-cap of the situation.

Vice Chair Schneider commented that he had put together a summary of the story of the skate park. He offered to lead a discussion at a future meeting. The topic will be a future agenda item.

Board Member Thompson gave the board a synopsis of his own inspection of the area.

Board Member Guagliumi suggested that the school board construct a timeline for the Town Council relative to the skate park.

12. New Business

There was no new business.

13. Committee Reports

Vice Chair Schneider attended the SERESC Board of Directors meeting that focused on real estate issues. That will be shared in the next two weeks.

14. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments on agenda items.

15. Manifest

The board signed the manifest at 9:13 p.m.

Board Member Thompson moved (seconded by Vice Chair Schneider) to adjourn the meeting.

The motion carried 5-0-0.