

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District
School Administrative Unit #26
Town Hall Meeting Room
August 14, 2017
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

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

Absent: Board Member Guagliumi was excused from the meeting.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

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

Chair Barnes led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

3. Request for School District to Participate in a University of New Hampshire (Carsey School of Public Policy) Research Study Regarding Children's Behavioral Health Expenditures in Schools

Chair Barnes invited the presenters to the table.

Dr. Douglas Gagnon of the Carsey School of Public Policy opened the presentation by explaining his work in developing a system of care for children's services in New Hampshire in conjunction with the New Hampshire Department of Education and the New Hampshire Department of Human Services. This work is required under the June 2016 statute; RSA 135F.

One of the requirements of the statute is to report on the cost of children's health expenditures statewide. This proposed study will be conducted at various districts within the state. Follow up with the data collectors in each district will be done by the researchers.

Board Member Thompson asked if the information collected will be given back to the schools so that they may compare their information with other districts.

Dr. Gagnon responded that the data would be returned to the districts and it would be their individual decision as to how to use or share it. He is willing to facilitate district sharing if asked. The information would go into a Carsey brief stating the findings.

He further stated that this would be public domain information available to all.

Superintendent Chiafery noted the timeliness of this study and its value to the district. She agreed that sharing would be very likely.

Special Services Director Fabrizio added that even the initial meetings with Dr. Gagnon have been valuable in defining commonalities and determining a common language.

Vice Chair Schneider asked for the connection between what the New Hampshire RSA requires for the proposed data gathering.

Dr. Gagnon responded that it requires a report on the cost of children's behavioral health expenditures.

Vice Chair Schneider asked if there is a potential for a negative funding impact on the Merrimack School District when the study is completed.

Dr. Gagnon responded that this is a case study approach with limited sampling. The emphasis will be on developing a common lexicon going forward.

Board Member Schoenfeld asked how the Carsey School is connected to the RSA requirement.

Dr. Gagnon responded that this work is funded by the Endowment for Health and they act as moderators and facilitators.

Board Member Schoenfeld asked if when the report is released if it could be sent directly to the board members.

Chair Barnes asked how many of the six districts targeted for the study have been confirmed to participate and expressed concern about the district being behind in the data collecting. She asked for a timeline.

Dr. Gagnon responded that he would like to publish the report in late October and December for the other reports.

Chair Barnes asked for the names of the other five districts.

Dr. Gagnon responded that while he does not think any of the other districts would mind, he has not yet asked them if he could share their involvement in the study publicly.

Chair Barnes asked if Dr. Gagnon knows how this information will be used by the politicians in Concord in regards to state funding.

Dr. Gagnon responded that he is unable to answer the question. He sees this more as an opportunity for a state by-in in this area.

Board Member Schoenfeld moved (seconded by Board Member Thompson) to approve the request for the school district to participate in a University of New Hampshire research study regarding children's behavioral health expenditures in schools.

The motion passed 4-0-0.

Chair Barnes expressed good luck to Dr. Gagnon.

4. Further Information Regarding the Feasibility of Putting on an Addition to the High School for SAU/Special Services Office

Chair Barnes joined Superintendent Chiafery in welcoming the Planning Board members to the table.

Superintendent Chiafery opened by recapping the Planning Board's recommendation that was discussed at the last School Board meeting in July. The recommendation generated varied discussion which led to members feeling the need for clarification of the request.

Chair Barnes opened by asking if the expectation is to spend thousands of dollars vetting the feasibility of building an addition.

Planning Board Chair Bob Best began his remarks by noting that his Board has not met officially since the last School Board meeting and asked that all be mindful of that fact.

While recognizing the need for new offices, the location remains unsettled. The concern of the Planning Board was that options be considered and a more concrete reason be given for a site decision.

Planning Board member Alastair Millns shared that in his capacity as a school bus driver he has been to many of the newer high schools in New Hampshire and the SAU offices were built into them. His opinion is that an addition might be less costly and more apt to get vote approval.

Planning Board member Nelson Disco agreed with Planning Board Chair Best on looking into the feasibility of the study.

Planning Board member Lynn Christensen considers herself the driver of this recommendation and bases her position on what she hears from voters. She is looking for a result that would be more effective for students and parents as well as the voters.

Chair Barnes appreciated the summation and reiterated the concern of the board that both boards be in alignment on the final recommendation.

Board Member Thompson reiterated his thoughts that care go into the process and money on any studies be spent cautiously.

Vice Chair Schneider provided historical perspective on the issue of new SAU offices. He also more clearly articulated the board's concerns about the costs involved in retrofitting an older building by building an addition.

Planning Board Chair Best stated that from what he heard, the school board has already decided that the building of an addition is not the most feasible option and the stand alone building would be their recommendation. Therefore he sees no need for any studies. However, when putting the issue before the voters, these same questions might arise.

Board Member Schoenfeld asked what the Planning Board would do if they were the ones exploring this option.

Planning Board Best responded that the answer depends on whether it is being explored to discover barriers or to solve problems.

Discussion ensued among both boards as to the merits of the need for a study for an addition to the high school. The importance of more clearly articulating, and the research to validate the school board's recommendation, is still needed.

Chair Barnes and Superintendent Chiafery thanked the Planning Board members for attending on their own time and listening and offering guidance on the issue.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell provided additional historical information on existing plans for an addition to the high school. He then shared a written report from architect Frank P. Marinace on the investigative work necessary to ascertain the feasibility of an addition to the high school. Anecdotal costs provided by Fire Chief Currier and Architect Marinace were also shared. The estimated cost for a study to build an addition onto the high school would be about \$50,000.00. To go this route would most likely keep the item from going to the voters in the spring election.

Superintendent Chiafery noted that as she and Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell will soon be working on the Capital Improvement Plan, that they will need direction from the board on this issue.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell through his building contacts, will seek to provide to the board, gratis, a conceptual design for an addition to the high school.

5. Presentation of District Science Curriculum Final Draft

Chair Barnes invited District Science Chair Bill Morris and his committee members to the table.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin lauded the committee for their dedication to the district, and complimented their committee leader Bill Morris.

Science Chair Morris noted that the K-12 scope guided the work that strove for a goal of science mastery. The Understanding by Design model was used to develop the curriculum in conjunction with the state Science frameworks. Throughout the work educator feedback was welcomed and adjustments were made.

Chair Morris referred the board to materials they had received in their packets. He pointed out some of the new common science vocabulary, process skills, big ideas, and desired results. This format will be consistent across all grade levels.

Chair Barnes asked how the realignment will impact existing students going forward.

She was told that as the realignment has been shaped and the standards have been met along the way.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin noted the high quality of the model used to develop this curriculum and has encouraged the committee to publish their process for the benefit of other professionals.

Chair Barnes thanked the members of the District Science Curriculum Committee for their work.

6. Report from Special Services

Chair Barnes invited Director of Special Services Fabrizio to the table. He referred the board to materials he had provided to them in advance.

- **Determination Letter from New Hampshire Department of Education**

The Merrimack School District was again found to be in complete compliance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA). A perfect score for over nine years is highly commendable. Director Fabrizio stressed the importance of all of those who contribute to this success.

Vice Chair Schneider noted that the report is for the 2014-2015 school year. Reporting is done after the school year closes.

Chair Barnes praised the meticulous work done every year to earn this perfect score.

- **Special Education Total Student Trend Count**

Director Fabrizio noted that that his predictions have remained steady since the year 2000.

- **2018-2019 Budget Forecasting**

Director Fabrizio noted the changes in technology over the years that drive new purchases.

A priority item that will be included in the upcoming budget request is to continue to install split air conditioner units in one final building.

- **Proposed Department Name Change**

Director Fabrizio referred board members to a copy of a letter included in their packets that he had sent to Superintendent Chiafery. In it he requested changing his department's name from Department of Special Services to Department of Student Services. He noted the changes in the responsibilities of the department, as it has become more inclusive and proactive.

Chair Barnes noted the proposed name change will go on the consent agenda for the September 5, 2017 meeting.

7. Clarification on Newspaper Article Regarding Water Testing with a Focus on Trihalomethanes (THMs)

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell received information from the state of New Hampshire clarifying the water testing results. They were forwarded to the national reporter who had written the original article. The results are considered to be well within safe limits.

8. Board's Response to a Partnership with Manchester Community College to Establish an Early College Automotive Program for Merrimack High School

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin reminded the board of how the retirement of the automotive teacher led to the journey to partner with Manchester Community College.

At this time there are two committed students for this program and two students who are strongly interested in it. In the interim a qualified candidate has come forward and expressed interest in teaching the automotive program. His name will appear on the September 5th consent agenda.

During the upcoming year the feeder program with Manchester Community College will be further explored. Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin asked that the board build into next year's budget the funding for the Manchester Community College program to go forward. He sees the goal as creating a feeder program that leads to Manchester Community College's certification program.

Vice Chair Schneider asked if the student tuition piece would now belong to the students instead of the district.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin responded that would be an item of discussion going forward.

9. Board's Initial Response to Explore the Feasibility of a Lease to Construct Wireless Communications Facility on School Property

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell read from an e-mail he had received from Tower Resource Management, Inc. looking to lease land near Reeds Ferry Elementary School for a wireless tower. The lease payments to the district would amount to approximately \$20,000.00 a year.

Superintendent Chiafery shared that she spoke with legal counsel about the request. A series of public hearings would need to take place if the board expressed interest in this idea.

The attending board members were unanimous in their decision to respectfully decline the request.

10. Approval of July 17, 2017 and July 25, 2017 Minutes

Vice Chair Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Thompson) to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2017 meeting.

The motion passed as presented 4-0-0.

Board Member Schoenfeld moved (seconded by Board Member Thompson) to accept the minutes of the July 25, 2017 meeting.

The motion passed as presented 4-0-0.

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

- **Lifetouch National School Studios to James Mastricola Upper Elementary School for \$912.00**

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell presented to the board a gift in the amount of \$912.00 from the Lifetouch National School Studios to be used to support the grade 6 Enterprise City economics unit for Social Studies.

Vice Chair Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Schoenfeld) to accept the gift.

The motion passed 4-0-0.

12. Consent Agenda

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin presented the consent agenda for approval.

- **Approval of Meals Charging Policy and Amended Meal Charging Procedure List**
- **Educator Resignations**

Michael Cirelli, Merrimack High School, Photography teacher
John Mannarini, Merrimack High School, Math teacher

- **Educator Nominations**

Anna Boghigian, James Mastricola Elementary School, part time Preschool teacher
Laurie Brody, Merrimack Middle School, Math teacher
Jennifer Pelletier, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School, Grade 6 teacher

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

13. Other

a) Correspondence

Board Member Thompson had communication from a constituent in regards to the water issues.

Chair Barnes had correspondence from a constituent in regards to the cameras at the middle school that she forwarded to Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell.

b) Comments

There were no comments.

14. New Business

There was no new business.

15. Committee Reports

Chair Barnes attended the Grater Woods sub-committee meeting at which the yearly maintenance plans were reviewed. The determination of where the information kiosk will be placed will be decided in collaboration with Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell and Dig Safe.

16. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments.

17. Manifest

The Board signed the manifest.

At 9:58 p.m. Vice Chair Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Thompson) to adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed 4-0-0.