

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District
School Administrative Unit #26
June 18, 2018
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

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

Student Representative Puzzo 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. Focus on Implementation of the Elementary and Middle School Math Program at James Mastricola Upper Elementary School and Merrimack Middle School

Chair Barnes welcomed the various administrators, educators and students to the table.

James Mastricola Upper Elementary School administrators in attendance were Principal Marsha McGill, Assistant Principal William Morris and math facilitator Helen Fitzgerald. The Envisions Math 2.0 resource components were shared and students demonstrated how they have used them.

Grade Five Educator Mr. Mailloux and Special Educator Ms. Hargraves and students Timothy and Maeve spoke about and demonstrated how math practice “I can” statements guide their work. They use the on-line math resources (audio, short videos and guided group share) on a daily basis. After completing the solve-and-share; students move to a visual learning piece.

Grade Five Educator Mrs. Fay and students Michael and Jordan spoke about the “We do” portion of the program. This is the guided and independent practice piece where students demonstrate mastery before moving on in their learning. Enrichment, homework and re-teaching are further opportunities for students to achieve understanding.

Special Educator Hargraves participates in the re-teaching. She will often push-in to the classroom to observe the lesson and note which supplementals and manipulatives are in use. She also looks to see that students understand the math vocabulary and will sometimes move students into tier two instruction when needed.

Chair Barnes asked the students if they like math more this year.

Students responded that it was smoother to work through the transitions, the videos were very helpful, there were real-life problems, and the value of the guided practice.

Educator responses were also unanimous in favoring the new program. This program is sequential, guides students towards mastery, and has better resources, diagnostics and technology pieces. There is no need to seek out additional resources.

The grade six presentation was a demonstration of how a math topic is broken into a three day learning experience. The example was on how to relate fractions, decimals and percentages.

Grade Six Educator Mrs. Labreche and students Mia and Delaney shared how the lesson begins with building background knowledge through the solve-and-discuss portion of the lesson. Students are then able to work independently or with a partner. This allows for an animated and interactive discussion between students. Students then move to journal work and then independent work where they show their work. The lesson quiz leads to an exit slip and informs day two instruction.

Grade Six Educator Mrs. Garbarz and students Chase and Molly shared how in day two instruction, groups are assigned and any needed re-teaching takes place. Successful completion of the exit slip allows students to move into enrichment. Students who need more understanding will work on scaffolded re-teaching to move them forward in their math understanding. They will then work independently and show their work for the group check. The students explained and demonstrated how vocabulary support and the building of math literacy are accomplished.

Day three instruction involves additional leveled practice where students work either independently or with others and then compare their answers in groups. Inquiry-based STEM activities are also options throughout the math lessons.

Board Member Schoenfeld asked where the shared language began.

Educator LaBreche responded that it was developed and has evolved on the district level.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum McLaughlin added that the District Curriculum Committee has worked on common language in the various disciplines.

Chair Barnes asked the sixth grade students and teachers if they liked the Envisions math program better than the previous program.

Students responded that the program is more adaptive to individual skills, students can focus on their specific areas of need, more understanding is built, the sequential order makes the content easier to understand, the steps are clear and thoroughly explained, the videos can be stopped for class discussion, the try-it section at the end lets you know if you understand the material, and the tests are short which can negatively affect your math grade.

Educators responded that the program is technology rich, has real world applications, builds solid math foundations, every student has the opportunity to succeed, and it is leveled and individualized.

Principal McGill remained to speak about the Career-Ready survey.

Principal McGill shared that James Masticola Upper Elementary School hosted its first Career Day on June 12th and welcomed over 35 guests. Students met with guests based on the results of their responses on the survey. It was a very successful day.

Merrimack Middle School administrators in attendance were Principal Adam Caragher, Assistant Principal Shawna D'Amour.

Assistant Principal D'Amour began with a highlight from the recent Washington D.C. trip. Three hundred and ten eighth graders visited the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. Students saw Ethel Kennedy, her family and various political dignitaries arrive for a memorial ceremony in honor of Senator Robert Kennedy. Special arrangements were made for the students to attend the ceremony. Principal Caragher received unsolicited praise from one of the Capital tour guides on how the students conducted themselves and the questions they asked.

Math Coordinator Cheryl Smith then began the math presentation. This past year the entire scope and sequence was revamped and two grade eight teachers piloted various algebra programs.

Grade Seven Math Educator Jill Smith spoke about how she uses the Envisions math program. The process is similar to that shared by grades 5 and 6.

Students Jack and Kaitlyn shared that they liked the book page layout, the vocabulary and reading help, the variety of examples for pre-learning, real world problems, and is less repetitive than the previous program.

Grade Seven Math Educator Laurie Brody shared that the middle school has fewer supplemental resources than is provided for the lower grades. The program is very language-based and vocabulary is reviewed regularly. Students keep an interactive notebook and are provided plenty of time to practice and build their knowledge. The program does provide many on-line supports for students.

Students Ainsley and Megan shared that the program is more sequential, has real world applications, and allows for peer help. Students feel they are progressing faster and understanding the material better. Peer help and the use of outside supplemental material is also very important. The technology allows for easier access to the material.

Principal Caragher read a letter from Grade Eight Educator Jen Lavigne. Her thoughts echoed those already presented, emphasizing vocabulary work and the need to find supplemental material elsewhere.

Vice Chair Schneider asked if the program needs to be augmented with outside materials when it reaches the middle school level.

Math Coordinator Smith noted that the Envisions program is the third program in three years and does offer less supplemental material at this point. Both teachers and students are struggling with this newest change.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum McLaughlin commented that supplemental materials would have been needed regardless of the program that was chosen. This allows for differentiated instruction.

Vice Chair Schneider agreed on the importance of differentiation as students move into the higher grades.

Board Member Guagliumi noted that there is no seamless transition and will be watching to see if the need for supplementals decreases over the years.

Board Member Schoenfeld asked about educator expectations on how students math vocabulary growth will be evaluated going forward.

Assistant Principal D'Amour had a recent conversation with the teachers and their consensus was that the students' math language will grow as they move through the program.

Board Member Guagliumi noted that the regular assessments will assist with this progress.

Chair Barnes lauded Math Coordinator Smith and thanked everyone for their presentations.

4. Focus on District-Wide STEM (Science, Technology, Math, Science) Plan

Chair Barnes welcomed Director of Library and Technology Nancy Rose to the table.

Director Rose provided a PowerPoint presentation to accompany her remarks to the board.

She began by noting the addition of Art to the STEM Plan and then focused on the goal to create more equity of access to the FIRST Lego League across all the elementary schools.

New this past school year was a FIRST Technical Challenge team at Merrimack Middle School. This challenge is for grades 7-12 and is based on a smaller robot than is typically used at the FIRST Robotics Challenge level.

The Merrimack School District was awarded \$43,000 in Federal Title IV funds for the purpose of building and supporting STEAM Education. These funds came through the NH DOE and can be used through December 2019.

The Trustees of the Trust Fund provided \$50,000 to be used for STEM education equipment for grades K-8. These funds were used to purchase iPads, Android tablets, carts and Lego kits.

Efforts to grow the program have moved to providing teachers more professional development. Twenty-two K-12 Merrimack School District educators went on a field trip to Watertown, Massachusetts to visit a Maker Space hosted by Eduporium. This environment is like a

playground for teachers where they are exposed to various types of maker kits that they might use with students.

This will be followed in late June by PlayShops for hands-on exploration of MakerEd types of tools. Ongoing summer and school year workshops will be made available in the schools.

Director Rose set up a survey on the district website for K-8 students to gauge interest in STEAM for the 2018-2019 school year. The options are FIRST (FLL Jr, FLL, FTC), Destination Imagination, Science Olympiad, and STEM/STEAM clubs. There is a constant need for coaches in all of the groups.

Board Member Guagliumi appreciated seeing the pictures of the field trip to Eduporium and asked how the teachers were selected.

Director Rose responded that the administrators self-selected. She created a Merrimack STEAM engine “club” for K-12 educators and disseminates information through it on various STEAM programs and opportunities. The field trip date was chosen at a Leadership meeting and then the participants were determined.

Board Member Guagliumi asked that at a later date the board consider adding more interdisciplinary opportunities.

Board Member Guagliumi asked if the district has the right technology to support the new Envisions math program.

Director Rose responded that the demand for devices continues to grow and by the end of this summer the ratio will be about one device to two/three students. Math teachers will either schedule for lab time or access to mobile devices.

Director Rose finished by sharing an idea for a MERRIMACK STEAM Night community event she will be working on for the 2018-2019 school year.

5. Fourth Quarter Curriculum Review

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum McLaughlin began by stating some of the common understandings under which teachers operate. These include differentiation of instruction, actionable assessments, inquiry-based instruction, and student voice.

The Foreign Language Curriculum Committee was created for grades 5-12. An inaugural meeting was held recently and work was done to prepare for the 2018-2019 school year agenda.

In the Fall a Social Studies K-12 Curriculum Committee will convene and begin the next ten-year cycle of review.

The Mental Health Committee will continue to evaluate materials that might be implemented in the future to support conversations now taking place around social emotional health and wellness.

The Science Curriculum Committee will be evaluating the first year of the new program and will be starting up its feedback group, comprised of all district science teachers.

The Language Arts Curriculum Committee constantly evaluates its work and meets frequently. In the Fall a 5-12 Vertical Alignment Team will commence to establish better connections between the schools.

The Math Curriculum Committee has seen the implementation of the new Envisions program. This program emphasizes the importance of understanding what students are doing.

6. Review and Approval of the Document Entitled “General Assurances, Terms and Requirements for Participation in Federal Programs”

Superintendent Chiafery began by emphasizing the importance of federal grant funds to the school district. In the past the NHDOE only required the superintendent’s signature but going forward the signature of the school board chairperson is now also required. This document must be submitted by June 30, 2018 in order to ensure the district receives its federal Title II grant money.

She requested the approval of the board that she and Chair Barnes sign and remit the document so that it may be sent with the grant request.

This change was made at the discretion of New Hampshire Department of Education Commissioner Edelblut, who wants to see school boards have more “skin in the game.”

Vice Chair Schneider asked if there are any other changes to this document and was told no.

Board Member Guagliumi asked about the difference between state and federal funds.

Superintendent Chiafery explained that the federal funds go to the state and are disseminated from there.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell added that the financial requirements are already being done by the district.

Board Member Guagliumi moved (seconded by Vice Chair Schneider) to allow Chair Shannon Barnes to be a co-signature on the General Assurances, Terms and Requirements for Participation in Federal Programs form.

The motion passed 4-0-0.

7. First Reading of a New Policy

- **Advanced Course Work/Advanced Placement Courses**

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum McLaughlin began by stating that for a number of years the district has provided dual enrollment for college credit. A change at the State level now provides STEM scholarship funds to reimburse families for dual enrolled coursework. This requires that a district have a written policy around advanced coursework.

The new policy was read in to the record and is as follows:

Advanced Course Work/Advanced Placement Courses

Any student who is capable of and wishes to do advanced course work or take advanced placement classes while in high school should be permitted to do so. School district administrators and school counselors will provide assistance to students who wish to enroll in such courses. If advanced course work or advanced placement courses are not available within the School District, administrators or school counselors are instructed to assist students in identifying alternative means of taking such classes. This may include taking courses through the Dual and Concurrent Enrollment Program, at a different public school, or a private school, through distance education courses, or other suitable means.

Any student whose eligibility for taking advanced course work is recommended by his/her counselor may enroll in a course. Credit may be given, provided the course comports with applicable District policies and state standards. The District will not be responsible for any tuition, fees, or other associated costs incurred by the student for enrollment in such courses.

High School and Career Technical Education Center students in grades 11 and 12 may participate in the Dual and Concurrent Enrollment Program, through which a student may earn both High School and College credits by enrolling in a course designed by the Community College System of New Hampshire ("CCSNH") as part of the dual and concurrent enrollment program. The Superintendent shall designate a point of contact for the program who can provide for student counseling, support services, course scheduling, managing course forms and student registration, program evaluation, course transferability, and assisting with online courses. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall establish regulations for the program which:

1. Require compliance with measurable educational standards and criteria approved by CCSNH;
2. Require that courses meet the same standard of quality and rigor as courses offered on campus by CCSNH;
3. Require that program and courses comply with the standards for accreditation and program development established by the National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships;
4. Establish criteria for student eligibility to participate in the program;
5. Establish standards for course content;
6. Establish standards for faculty approval;
7. Establish program coordination and communication requirements;
8. Address tuition, fees, textbooks and materials, course grading policy, data collection, maintenance, and security, revenue and expenditure reporting, and a process for renewal of the agreement;

9. Requires annual notification to high school students and their parents of Dual and Concurrent Enrollment opportunities.

Legal References:

RSA 188-E:25 through RSA 188-E:28
Ed. 306.141 (a)(6), Advanced Course Work

Vice Chair Schneider asked about the impact of this policy on existing policies and was told that all of these requirements are things already done in the district.

Board Member Guagliumi asked to move the item to Consent for the July 20th meeting.

Superintendent Chiafery responded yes, this can be done. She will provide a revised copy to clear up minor errors at the June 20th meeting.

Vice Chair Schneider noted that there are two documents put before the board.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum McLaughlin stated that one document is the policy which is required in order for parents to qualify for reimbursement and the other document is the signing by the superintendent and board chair to qualify for the federal funds.

8. Request for Board to Provide Letter of Recommendation for NHSBA Grant Application

Chair Barnes presented the request from the NHSBA for a letter of recommendation for their Nellie Mae Foundation's New England Alliances for College and Career Readiness grant request. She provided the board with a sample letter she had written.

Board Member Schoenfeld moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to empower the chair to sign the letter.

The motion passed 4-0-0.

9. Approval of School Board Minutes for June 4, 2018

Vice Chair Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Schoenfeld) to approve the minutes of the May 21, 2018 meeting.

Board Member Guagliumi requested the following changes to the minutes:

Page 1, lines 44-45: Change "...and what practices educators use to address this." To: "...because materials are based on full-day kindergarten, and what practices educators use to address this."

Page 2, line 49: Add to end of sentence: "...as the year progressed."

Page 5, line 209: Add to end of sentence: "...and understands optimization will be ongoing and communication can be improved."

Page 7, line 290: Add to end of sentence: "...and have it posted in a more timely manner so parents can plan their summer activities."

The motion passed as amended 4-0-0.

10. Acceptance of Gift/Grant under \$5,000

A gift to the Merrimack School District in the amount of \$401.44 was received from the Wentworth Place Association. The funds are to be used to address the needs of homeless students by providing supplies, at the discretion of Homeless Liaison Jodi Hanley.

Vice Chair Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Schoenfeld) to accept the donation with sincere thanks.

The motion passed 4-0-0.

11. Consent Agenda

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum McLaughlin presented the consent agenda for approval.

- **Educator Nominations for 2018-2019**

Kara Cave, Preschool Coordinator, Student Services
Kaela Daly, Kindergarten Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School
Katie Finken, Speech Teacher, Reeds Ferry Elementary School
Meghan Pearson, Grade 2 Teacher, James Mastricola Elementary School

- **Educator Retirement/Resignations**

Jennifer L. Pelletier, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School, Grade 5 teacher

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

The motion passed 4-0-0.

12. Other

a) Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

b) Comments

Superintendent Chiafery shared that Merrimack educator Alice Donahue has risen to the top five on a list of candidates for New Hampshire teacher of the year.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum McLaughlin noted that the summer sports and band schedules are out to families as soon as they are confirmed. There is a link of the district website to sports schedules and work will be done to add a tab for band schedules.

Board Member Guagliumi asked if the athletic director could commit to parameters around start dates for sports, so as not to negatively impact family summer plans.

Chair Barnes expressed thanks to Special Services Director Fabrizio for assisting the Kearsarge School District as they look to form a Mental Health Committee.

Chair Barnes took a moment to thank outgoing school board scribe Rose DeNucci for her three years of service to the board.

13. New Business

There was no new business.

14. Committee Reports

Vice Chair Schneider attended the SERESC Board of Directors meeting. The model of SERESC as membership-based ceased and a new board of directors was elected. SERESC will move forward as an autonomous non-profit, continuing to provide support to school districts.

Vice Chair Schneider also attended the Planning and Building Committee and heard a presentation from Honeywell representatives on the status of the school equipment. Additionally the Brentwood building was discussed. The district will take ownership of the building in July.

15. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments.

16. Manifest

The Board signed the manifest at 10:19 p.m.

At 10:20 p.m. Vice Chair Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Schoenfeld) to non-public session per RSA 91-A:3,II (a)(c).

The motion passed 4-0-0.

At 10:47 p.m. Vice Chair Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Schoenfeld) to adjourn the public meeting.

The motion passed 4-0-0.