

**Merrimack School Board Meeting  
Merrimack School District, SAU #26  
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room  
Monday, June 17, 2019**

**PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

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**Present:** Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Guagliumi, Board Members Schneider, Schoenfeld and Nunez. Also in attendance were Superintendent Chiafery, Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin and Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell.

**1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

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

Chair Barnes led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**3. Legislative Update**

There was no legislative update.

**4. Presentation of a Girl Scout Bronze Award Project – (Girls for Green Lunch Trays)**  
(Helen Saunders and Maria Tribou, Girl Scouts)

Helen and Maria, both Girl Scouts, explained to the Board that they were working on a project called Girls for Green Lunch Trays. Maria said the foam lunch trays the Merrimack School District used were constructed out of polystyrene and was made from fossil fuels and had tiny amounts of chemicals which could cause Cancer, the manufacturing process was very harmful to the worker's health and it never decomposed. Helen said the district spent approximately \$9,500 on foam trays the previous year.

Helen said other options included re-usable or biodegradable trays but she recommended the district use Earth Maize biodegradable trays because they would compost in three weeks and were perfluorooctanoic acid (PFAS) free. She added the trays would contain PLA foam which was made from expanded polylactic acid and was taken from renewable sources that included starch and sugar.

Maria commented that the Earth Maize trays cost approximately .18 cents per tray which was an increase of .3 cents per tray that the district paid for the foam trays. She suggested that the price for school lunches should be increased by .15 cents per quarter to pay for the trays and they believed the community would receive the increase very well.

Vice Chair Guagliumi said she felt the Board should definitely consider the suggestion as the budget season neared and should also contact Mr. Dave Dziki who was the Director of Food Service to get his input.

Chair Barnes thanked Maria and Helen for their presentation and said she was very impressed with their hard work.

**5. Recognition of a Young Inventor from the Reeds Ferry Elementary School**

(Ella Hermon)

Ms. Kimberly Yarlott, Principal, Reeds Ferry Elementary School, introduced Ella Hermon who was a third-grade student at the Reeds Ferry Elementary School. Ms. Yarlott explained that Ella had participated in the “Invention Convention” and her invention qualified for the Nationals in Chicago. She said Ella did not attend the Nationals because it was not convenient for her but it was a very worthwhile invention that they wanted to celebrate.

Ella explained her invention included placing a microphone inside of breathing masks, placing stickers on the masks as well as adding felt straps to make them feel more comfortable. She said the name of her invention was “Mask Tastic.”

The Board collectively thanked Ella for her presentation.

**6. Recognition of High School Teachers, Mr. Phil Carle and Mr. Trevor Knight for Exceptional Projects**

(Ms. Sharon Putney)

Ms. Sharon Putney, Principal, Merrimack High School, addressed the Board and commented that Mr. Phil Carle taught Woodworking, Advanced Woodworking and Woods 3 Creative Enterprise at the high school. She said the Merrimack High School’s Wood Shop was the recipient of the Guild of New Hampshire Woodworker’s Grant in the amount of \$1,375 which was used to expand the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) curriculum using the latest technology in hollow form turning. She further said the grant would be used to purchase a tool stabilizing device which attached to a woodworking lathe enabling students to make advanced, distinctive, hollow form vessels and lit boxes.

Ms. Putney shared that Mr. Carle had been overseeing the consistent expansion of the woodworking lathe turning curriculum for the past 20 years. She thanked Mr. Carle for his efforts in exposing students to new woodturning lathe techniques and for receiving the grant from the Guild of New Hampshire Woodworkers.

Mr. Carle shared that with the support of the Guild of New Hampshire Woodworkers, the Merrimack School District and the School Board, were able to increase the number of lathes in the shop to sixteen and nearly all students who participated in the program were able to experience lathe turning.

Mr. Carle provided the School Board with examples of work that his students had worked on, specifically pointing out the work of Max St. Laurent. Mr. Carle then reviewed a list of competitions that Milford students had participated in.

Board Member Nunez commented she was very impressed that Mr. Carle's students were so excited about taking his class and thanked him for all of his work with the students.

Vice Chair Guagliumi asked if there were any internal woodworking classes available for community education. Mr. Carle replied he was very involved with adult education and the classes he taught were usually in the fall.

Chair Barnes thanked Mr. Carle for all his work in the district.

Ms. Putney explained that Mr. Trevor Knight had been a member of the Social Studies Department at the Merrimack High School for the past eighteen years and was also the advisor for the Annual Senior Service Day. Ms. Putney said she was present to recognize Mr. Putney for an amazing job.

Ms. Putney commented that Senior Service Day was held on Monday, May 20<sup>th</sup> and 191 seniors participated volunteering at 81 job sites throughout the community.

Ms. Putney read aloud a comment from Ms. Jessica Gott, a colleague of Mr. Knight's, as summarized as follows:

*"He coordinates with community members regarding what sorts of jobs need to be completed. Over and over, community members express their gratitude for how our students help them do the work they can no longer do for themselves." Trevor's work in organizing Senior Service Day allows the students to experience what it means to give back and to help others."*

Ms. Putney stated that she had spoken with some of the students and they were so excited, very willing and proud to talk about the experiences they had. She further stated the students always came back to how they had worked together with other students to complete the assignment given.

Ms. Putney thanked Mr. Knight for all of the countless hours of organizing for the very worthwhile and successful activity that demonstrated the importance of volunteerism and giving back to the Merrimack Community.

Mr. Knight acknowledge all of the work that the chaperones did and said he relied on them to help make the event a success. He also noted there were many community members who also helped and praised the American Legion for being an incredible partner in making the Annual Senior Service Day a success. Additionally, Mr. Knight thanked the staff and administration.

Vice Chair Guagliumi asked how many years the Annual Senior Service Day had been in existence. Mr. Knight replied it was in its twenty-third year.

Vice Chair Guagliumi asked how community members could find out more about the program. Mr. Knight replied community members could simply call the high school but added the National Honors Society had a raking program every fall and Merrimack Cares also had some gardening events.

Board Member Nunez said she was very impressed with the program and hoped all of the seniors continued to give back throughout their lives and pay it forward to the next generation of kids. She thanked Mr. Knight for all of his work.

Board Member Schneider asked if there were similar programs at the middle school level because he hoped opportunities to help the community were not only presented to the seniors. Superintendent Chiafery replied the younger students did things like food drives but did not necessarily go out into the community.

Chair Barnes thanked Mr. Knight for reaching out to the community.

**7. Fourth Quarter Curriculum Review**  
(Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin)

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin stated that a lot had changed over the years and what used to work twenty or thirty years ago would not presently be a conversation and the progress of time meant educators had to adapt.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin said the math, science, physical education and art K-12 curriculums had been updated over the past ten years and they were currently working on the health, social studies and world language curriculum, noting the English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum was constantly being reviewed.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin also said the network infrastructure with accompanying hardware and software to help adapt to twenty-first-century student needs had significantly expanded over the past ten years.

In addition, Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin commented the district had developed a comprehensive plan to address students social and emotional needs to help them learn. He said the district had studied, learned, adopted and implemented a consistent and rigorous set of standards to apply to social and emotional learning.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin stated over the past ten years the Merrimack School District had gone through the whole process of understanding what content standards meant and they had learned how to teach to standards as opposed to what might be a good thing for a particular student to know. He also said they were reviewing a revised elementary report card which was a huge undertaking and they were going to try to incorporate the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) recommendations over the next couple of years to apply to the upper grades. He also said there were four separate state-wide assessments over the past ten years and teachers worked very hard to adjust their instruction with each assessment.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin commented they were working with an organization, called CAST and it was most well-known for its work with Universal Design for Learning which was a framework for connecting and integrating the different areas of learning. He further commented that they presently needed to bring forth a template to help teachers make the most sense of students' learning and noted students needed to have a voice in their learning.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin noted the focus for the August Academy would be to introduce principles of Universal Design for Learning with the understanding they were committed to the framework of pulling all of the pieces together plus whatever else the world would toss their way. He said it was for the students benefit and the hope was to make their learning more meaningful to them and it would be a multi-year initiative.

Board Member Schneider asked Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin if standardized testing could not be used as a gauge to see if it were successful, how would leadership look at the district over a period of years to see if the Universal Design for Learning was successful or not. Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin replied the twenty-first-century college ready

and career learner had to demonstrate the ability to research, give a presentation and be able to speak in public, just to name a few. He further replied the Merrimack School District had many students who could already do those things but they had to dig a little bit deeper at what their students were capable of beyond the state's assessment. He noted, however, that he felt the assessment was important and there was an aspect of what a student really was that was never captured on a state assessment.

Chair Barnes commented the Merrimack School District sent students to national competitions almost every year and won and she said she felt a standardized test or a survey did not validate them as a district.

Vice Chair Guagliumi commented she felt they should look at the graduation rates in the context of what Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin was saying with regard to the Universal Design for Learning and how it best supported the students who were at risk for not graduating. She further commented she would like that topic to be discussed in the fall.

Board Member Schoenfeld stated that she very much looked forward to seeing the Universal Design for Learning program to unroll in the district.

Board Member Nunez commented she felt there were already teachers who were doing things very similar to the Universal Design for Learning program and was very happy about its implementation. Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin replied he was aware teachers were, in fact, using similar techniques but the goal of Universal Design for Learning would be to normalize the practice more broadly and to leverage the people who were already doing it.

Board Member Nunez commented she felt the teachers in the Merrimack School District went above and beyond for the students in many ways and it was not just about education but also about helping a child to be prepared for the following stages of life after they graduated. She said there were different elements at play in the middle school and each child was different and had different gauges of success. She said from her perspective, the teachers in the Merrimack School District avoided the idea of teaching to test but focused on making sure they were reaching every child in every classroom. She further said she had never seen any teacher close a door to an opportunity to help a child and felt the Universal Design for Learning model was amazing.

Superintendent Chiafery suggested the School Board start to track the class of 2032, which would be the graduates of the first full-time kindergarten class. She further commented she had received feedback from staff which indicated the children in the full-time kindergarten

class were developing literacy skills much quicker than children who were in the half-day kindergarten program.

Board Member Schneider stated he felt the real test would be how the middle and high school students benefited from the changes made at the earlier levels.

## **8. Approval of School Board Minutes**

- May 20, 2019, Public and Non-Public Minutes

Vice Chair Guagliumi made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 20, 2019, public and non-public meetings as presented. Board Member Schneider seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

- June 3, 2019, Public and Non-Public Minutes

Board Member Nunez made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 3, 2019, public and non-public meetings as presented. Board Member Schoenfeld seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

- June 11, 2019, Non-Public Minutes

Board Member Schneider made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 11, 2019, non-public meeting, as amended. Board Member Schoenfeld seconded the motion.

Board Member Schneider noted he was not present at the June 11, 2019, meeting and he felt the minutes should reflect he was excused.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

## **9. Consent Agenda**

(Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin)

### **Educator Resignation**

- Ms. Melissa Moyer, School Counselor, James Masticola Upper Elementary School.

Educator Nominations

- Mr. Jace Lamarre, Math Teacher, Merrimack Middle School
- Ms. Mikayla Ramsdell, Math Teacher, Merrimack High School

Administrator Nomination

- Ms. Heather Barker, Director of Student Services, Districtwide

Approval of Data Governance and Security Policy

Board Member Schneider made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented and commented they had a complete leadership team with the retirement of Superintendent Chiafery. Vice Chair Guagliumi seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

**10. Other**

a) Correspondence

Board Member Board Member Schoenfeld commented she was included on an e-mail with regard to the summer work for students at the high school and she enjoyed being a part of the conversation as addressed at the building level.

Vice Chair Guagliumi stated she was copied on correspondence with regard to the high school yearbook from a parent who had some concerns.

a) Comments

The School Board graciously thanked Superintendent Chiafery for her years of dedicated service and wished her well as it was her last School Board meeting before retiring.

**11. New Business**

There was no new business.



## **12. Committee Reports**

Board Member Nunez commented she had met with the District Parent Group regarding starting a districtwide “Kindness Initiative” which could have begun the following year but the committee decided to create a sub-committee to perhaps start it in the fall.

Board Member Schneider commented that some of the final data needed for the final building option for the SAU/SPED building would be coming within the next week. He further commented he was promised that the Planning and Building Committee would have a meeting in July to review the data.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin stated it had been the joy of his life to work with Superintendent Chiafery and could not begin to describe what he had learned from her and what she meant to him personally as well as professionally.

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

There were no public comments.

## **14. Manifest**

The Board signed the manifest.

At 9:01 p.m. Board Member Nunez moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to go into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) (b) & (c).

The motion passed 5-0-0 by a roll call vote.

At 9:45 p.m. Board member Schoenfeld moved (seconded by Chair Guagliumi) to adjourn the public session.

The motion passed 5-0-0.