

**Merrimack School Board Meeting  
Merrimack School District, SAU #26  
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room  
Monday, July 15, 2019**

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**PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

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**Present:** Chair Barnes, Board Members Schneider and Schoenfeld. Also in attendance were Superintendent McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio and Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell.

**Excused:** Vice Chair Guagliumi and Board Member Nunez.

**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. Updated Memorandum of Understanding between the Merrimack School District and the Merrimack Police Department**

(Police Chief Denise Roy and Superintendent McLaughlin)

Chief Roy commented that she felt one of the reasons Merrimack had one of the safest school districts in the State of New Hampshire was because of the good relationship between the police department and the school district. She further commented that the School Resource Officers did a fantastic job of maintaining safety in the schools as well as the Community Service Officer and thanked them for their work.

Superintendent McLaughlin stated former Superintendent Chiafery had established excellent relationships with the police department over the years and those relationships would continue. He further stated the community benefited from the partnership the school district

and the police department had for many years and just because there was a change in staff at the central office that partnership would not change. Superintendent McLaughlin said there was no way of knowing how many bad things had been prevented because of the partnership.

Superintendent McLaughlin noted there was one change in the updated Memorandum of Understanding which was a Data Governance and Security Plan and was directly related to a new state law requiring a plan and policy to be in place which ensured data would be secured. He further noted that any shared data between the police department and the school district would be governed by that policy. He said legal counsel had reviewed the document as well as the Data Governance component and had their stamp of approval.

Superintendent McLaughlin pointed out the item would be on the consent agenda at the next School Board meeting.

Chair Barnes asked if there were members of the Board who had questions or comments.

Board Member Schneider suggested the Memorandum of Understanding be read into the record. Chair Barnes replied the Memorandum of Understanding was for administering the provisions of RSA 193-D – Safe School Zones. Chair Barnes read aloud paragraph four of the Memorandum of Understanding because it was the only portion which had changed.

#### **4. Data Governance and Security**

*The School Board and the Police Department agree to the principles of student/staff data privacy and security as outlined in RSA 189:66(V): Specifically, the School Board and the Police Department agree that the sharing of any records, electronic or paper, pertaining to students or staff of either entity will be subject to, and limited by, the provisions of RSA 189:66(V) and the provisions and exceptions set forth in the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 USC 1232(g). Both agencies agree to exercise reasonable care in maintaining the security of student data that is lawfully exchanged between the two entities.*

Chair Barnes pointed out the public had two weeks to provide feedback.

#### **5. District Transition: A Summary and a Look Ahead**

(Superintendent McLaughlin)

Superintendent McLaughlin shared that on a typical school day there were approximately 3,900 students attending school in the district and that number represented nearly 8,000

parents or guardians, 350 professional staff which did not include custodians, food service staff, transportation crews, and contracted service providers. Superintendent McLaughlin said there were buildings to clean, properties to tend to and repairs to make every day. He further said given the enormity of that task, on any given day things ran quite smoothly. He also said on any given day there were things that did not run so smoothly and their promise to the community was that they took those things very seriously. Superintendent McLaughlin said given the enormity of need that was presented every day, he was quite proud of what the Merrimack School District was able to accomplish.

Superintendent McLaughlin stated going forward, they would be guided by a few core principles which were:

- The number one goal was what was best for the students.
- What would be the best thing was for the taxpayers whose support on which they were dependent.
- How they could make the best of the moment while casting one eye on the future.

Superintendent McLaughlin pointed out that the Merrimack School District had two new assistant principals, Ms. Michaela Champlin, Assistant Principal, at the Thorntons Ferry Elementary School and Ms. Bonnie Painchud, Assistant Principal at the Reeds Ferry Elementary School. He further pointed out the district had a new Student Services Director, Ms. Heather Barker, and added there was a Principal, an Assistant Superintendent and a Superintendent who while were not new in the district, were new to their roles.

Superintendent McLaughlin said while they were in a transition they would focus on a few particular items in the coming year.

**Communication** – Superintendent McLaughlin said the administration recognized the community deserved better, more frequent and more informative information regarding a wide range of things they were involved with and they were committed to doing that.

Superintendent McLaughlin shared the welfare and safety of the children were also the most important concern for the entire staff. He said in his experience when there had been situations, which required “all hands on deck”, they literally needed “all hands on deck” and could not even spare five minutes to share what was going on with the community which was what they needed to do for the safety of the children.

**Budget** – Superintendent McLaughlin commented that any School Board who had served the Merrimack School District over the past ten years had equally cared about creating conditions for the best possible education they could provide for the students.

**Instructional Improvement** – Superintendent McLaughlin said over the past ten years, the Merrimack School District had shared curriculum updates which were adopted by the School Board. He further said they had discussed programming through student services, irregular education, RTI (Response to Intervention) and UBD (Universal by Design). Superintendent McLaughlin pointed out under the spirit of continuous improvement for instruction or UDL (Universal Design for Learning) the August Academy would be completely devoted to training teachers in the practices of Universal Design for Learning.

Superintendent McLaughlin noted the graduation rate at the high school was a concern for the administration and he had spoken with Ms. Sharon Putney, Principal, Merrimack High School, and she agreed to attend the August School Board meeting to discuss what actions she had taken within the last year and the benefits of those actions.

In conclusion, Superintendent McLaughlin stated that the administration was looking forward to the challenges that lay ahead and they would work hard every day to provide the best service to the students.

Chair Barnes asked if there were questions or comments from members of the Board.

Board Member Schneider thanked Superintendent McLaughlin for his transparency as well as for his approach. Board Member Schneider commented the School Board would support Superintendent McLaughlin as he went through the first month, year and process of being the Superintendent of the Merrimack School District.

Chair Barnes pointed out in some ways nothing was going to change but it was more about the way the end result would be obtained and former Superintendent Chiafery felt she could retire because she knew they were all in good hands.

Chair Barnes said she felt, concerning Facebook, if it was a comfortable place for people to have a constructive conversation on the Merrimack School District's page, then it was the right way to go. She said; however, privately moderated forums would not be a part of their future.

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

- June 17, 2019, Public School Board Minutes

Board Member Schoenfeld made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 17, 2019, public meeting as presented. Board Member Schneider seconded the motion.

**The motion passed 3-0-0.**

## **7. Consent Agenda**

(Assistant Superintendent Fabrizio of Curriculum and Instruction)

### Educator Nominations

- Ms. Jenna Deschaine, Science Teacher, Merrimack High School
- Ms. Abigail Garland, English Teacher, Merrimack High School
- Ms. Jennifer Haeck, Grade 1 Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School
- Ms. Lauryn Hanson, Kindergarten Teacher, James Masticola Elementary School
- Ms. Lauren Nelson, Special Education Coordinator, Thorntons Ferry School

### Educator Resignations

- Mr. Adam Vignault, Technology Teacher, Merrimack High School
- Ms. Kathleen Chartier, Math Teacher, Merrimack Middle School

Board Member Schneider made a motion (seconded by Board Member Schoenfeld) to accept the consent agenda as presented.

**The motion passed 3-0-0.**

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

(Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell)

- Merrimack Lion's Club to Merrimack High School for \$1,000

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell commented the Merrimack Lion's Club gifted the Merrimack High School with \$1,000. He said the 2019 Cheryl Pearsall Memorial Grant would be used to purchase an iPad Pro with accessories for Mr. Flis' classroom, #232. Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Schoenfeld) to accept the \$1,000 gift from the Merrimack Lion's Club with the School Board's sincere appreciation.

**The motion passed 3-0-0.**

## **9. Other**

### a) Correspondence

Superintendent McLaughlin stated he had received a letter from a parent of a student who attended the Throntons Ferry Elementary School. He further stated the parent shared his pleasure with the services his son received and said he was very grateful to the parent for sharing his comments.

### b) Comments

There were no new comments.

## **10. New Business**

There was no new business.

## **11. Committee Reports**

Board Member Schneider stated there had been a SERESC (Southeastern Regional Education Service Center) meeting and he was nominated as the Chair of the Board of Directors.

Board Member Schneider reported two new members had joined SERESC (Southeastern Regional Education Service Center) and they continued to search for a Program Director to assist in promoting their product.

Board Member Schneider commented they received three proposals concerning the different options for a possible SAU/SPED structure located at the Brentwood property. He said he presented them to the Planning and Building Committee but he had not yet received feedback as to the status. Board Member Schneider said he would invite the Planning and Building Committee to attend the School Board meeting in September for a discussion.

Chair Barnes commented that Parks and Recreation had met on June 19<sup>th</sup> and they were at capacity for camp registrations for kids but encouraged folks to still call if they were interested in the event of cancellations.

Chair Barnes said the week of July 4<sup>th</sup> was a busy and successful one and the Summer Concert Series would be held every Wednesday evening at the Abbie Griffin Park through August 21<sup>st</sup>. She further said there were two additional movie nights left and the dates were Sunday, July 21<sup>st</sup> at the Abbie Griffin Park and Tuesday, August 6<sup>th</sup> at the American Legion.

Chair Barnes noted the Greater Woods Sub-committee met on July 9<sup>th</sup> in the outdoor classroom which had been re-built by the Eagle Scouts and added there was a stage with a roof as well as a bench with seating for thirty people.

Chair Barnes stated that updates on the Master Plan continued including the addition of a number of properties which totaled over 600 acres. She said they were also reviewing the impact of current housing development projects regarding access to the property and its usage.

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

There were no public comments.

## **13. Manifest**

The Board signed the manifest.

At 7:45 p.m. Board Member Schoenfeld moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to adjourn.

**The motion passed 3-0-0.**