

**Merrimack School Board Meeting  
Merrimack School District, SAU #26  
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room  
Monday, August 19, 2019**

**PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

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**Present:** Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Guagliumi, Board Members Schneider, Nunez, and Schoenfeld. Also in attendance were Superintendent McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio 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**

Mr. Rick Foote, 129 Indian Rock Road, addressed the Board and asked what the status of the pre-school program was. Board Member Schneider replied the School Board was waiting to hear whether the tuition was appropriate but noted there was no timeline associated with it.

**3. Consideration of Proposal to Construct a Permanent Concession Stand at the Merrimack High School**

Mr. Sean Powers, Board member of the Merrimack Football Program, addressed the School Board and said they wanted to replace the existing, small, very old concession stand with a safe, sanitary and secure concession stand which would be located in the same spot as the existing structure. He said the goal was to use it as a multi-purpose concession stand.

Mr. Powers said they were not asking the Merrimack taxpayers to pay for any of the cost but was hoping it could be 100% privately funded.

Chair Barnes asked the members of the School Board if they were open to explore the idea of having a donated facility. Chair Barnes commented if the proposed concession stand was green-lighted then a public hearing would have to be held because the donation would be over \$5,000.

Chair Barnes noted there was already power in the existing concession stand and there was a viable water source they could tap into. She also said all necessary site work would have to be completed.

Board Member Schneider commented while he did not see a downside to the proposed project, he did have one concern. He mentioned, with regard to the turf field, one of the concerns voters had was that there was a promise and intent to offset the cost through fundraising and donations but worried if the money would actually be collected. He said it would be difficult for him as a Board member to allow the project to start unless they were sure funds were available to finish it.

Mr. Powers replied he understood Board Member Schneider's concerns and he agreed with him 100%. He further replied it would be a phased approach. He said the first phase would be obtaining donations.

Board Member Schneider said one of the things he felt was important was that whoever the contractor was the company should be from Merrimack. Mr. Powers replied that was their plan.

Board Member Schoenfeld commented it was very helpful for the School Board to be included in the beginning stages. She said the turf field was a separate project but suggested perhaps they should not simultaneously attempt to fundraise from the same people.

Vice Chair Guagliumi moved (seconded by Board Member Nunez) to support the grass-roots initiative for the Merrimack High School concession stand project.

**Discussion:**

Board Member Schoenfeld stated while she intended on supporting the project she wondered if it should be made clear that the Board was supporting the exploration of the project only.

Superintendent McLaughlin commented the motion would authorize Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell to partner with Mr. Powers and his team.

Board Member Schneider commented if Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell chose to pull in resources from outside of the school district for advice, and if there were any monetary impact associated with that he would like it to be brought to the Board.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell commented he had already been in touch with Mr. Steve Keach, C.E. of Keach-Nordstrom who had provided him with some free advice

regarding grey water issues. He said it would become more involved and he would let the Board know what the potential cost would be.

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

**4. Consideration of District Options Relative to Signage on or near Madeleine Bennett Lane**

Chair Barnes stated at 4:15 p.m. on August 19, 2019, the School Board received a hand-delivered letter from the Chair of the Town Council which included tangible expectations being asked of the Board which would require them to make decisions without having any time to reflect on the content of the request.

Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Schoenfeld) to table item #4 and hold a special meeting on Monday, August 26, 2019, at 6:00 p.m. to discuss it.

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

**5. Status of Development and Implementation of a Data Governance Plan**

Ms. Nancy Rose, Director of Technology and Library Media & Information Security Officer, addressed the Board and provided an update on the work that had been done since the passage of HB 1612 (Data, Security and Privacy Law).

Ms. Rose stated that the law was put into place in June of 2018 and the policy was passed by the School Board in June of 2019. She said the district was a member of COSIN (Consortium of School Networking) and the state chapter was the New Hampshire CTO Group. She further said the New Hampshire CTO Group was her affiliate organization and they joined the Student Data Privacy Consortium. Ms. Rose commented that the Student Data Privacy Consortium helped track and work with vendors regarding student data protection. She further commented the cost to use the system was \$1.00 per student but it alleviated her from having to be the person interpreting and deciding whether or not the legal language made sense.

Ms. Rose said they had also started their Data Governance Plan which included the data breach response as well as business continuity plans. She further said she was working with all of the schools regarding compiling an inventory of all of the software applications and digital resources that were in use.

Ms. Rose commented that they purchased Class Link which was a single sign-on solution and allowed them to create icons as a launchpad. She further commented it allowed her to vet the software much better.

Additionally, Ms. Rose said they had acquired access to a system which would help them with training staff on information security, phishing and malware. She also said they had completed a first-round security analysis with a third-party who had looked at their systems.

Ms. Rose stated they would be training teachers at the beginning of the school year on information privacy and the laws surrounding it.

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

Board Member Schneider commented he felt it would be good to understand what it cost the district in terms of brainpower and manpower as well as purchases made. He said he felt it would provide a good idea of what the taxpayers had to contribute to implement the Data Governance Program.

Board Member Schneider noted moving forward he would like to know what sort of on-going expertise they would need to ensure they were keeping up with the ever-changing pieces and if they needed to consider funding a new position.

Ms. Rose explained that at no point in time would the project ever be “done” because technology changed constantly.

Superintendent McLaughlin commented that he felt it was important to be mindful of the impact on taxpayers whenever a budget was proposed. He also commented there were things that the district had to attend to by law that the public did not always necessarily know about.

## **6. Paid Lunch Equity: Price Increase**

Mr. Dave Dziki, Director of Food Services, addressed the Board and stated they needed to put together an application for the National School Lunch Program and one of the items included in that application for the state was the paid lunch equity, he noted it was part of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. He said it was in place to ensure the amount the district was charging the paying student was equal too or greater than the reimbursement rate for free meals.

Ms. Dziki stated that he provided Superintendent McLaughlin with a proposal which reflected an increase in lunch prices for the year by .25 per each meal.

Vice Chair Guagliumi asked what percent increase the .25 represented? Mr. Dziki replied it was approximately a 10% increase from the last year.

Vice Chair Guagliumi asked what the increase was the previous year. Mr. Dziki replied prices did not go up the previous year.

Vice Chair Guagliumi asked if they had to increase the price in order to get the funding needed. Mr. Dziki replied that was correct.

Mr. Dziki commented there were two levels of lunch at the high school and the increase would not affect the lunches which were currently priced at \$3.50.

Board Member Schneider asked what the guidelines were for the types of food that would be served. Mr. Dziki replied the requirement for whole-grain products would be 50% which meant he could incorporate more options. Board Member Schneider said the increase in price might be more palatable if the food was as well.

Board Member Nunez asked if the increase would be communicated to parents on the first day of school. Mr. Dziki replied applications for free and reduced meals would go home in the opening packet and lunch prices would be included. He said they would also provide some type of notice. Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell suggested sending parents an e-mail as well as posting it on the school's website and Facebook.

Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Nunez) to increase the amount of school lunches for the 2019–2020 year by .25 and to waive the two-week rule.

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

## **7. Status of Litigation Relative to Homework Protocol**

Chair Barnes stated on June 26, 2019, the Superior Court ruled that the Board and the legislative body had and still had the statutory power to create, maintain and change the Merrimack School District's homework policy. She said on that basis, the court dismissed Mr. Bevill's lawsuit and out of the respect for the judicial process and the possibility of appeal, the School Board refrained from commenting on the matter. She further said on July 29, 2019, the period for appeal to the state's Supreme Court expired and the decision of the Superior Court was the final decision on the matter.

Chair Barnes said the School Board took responsibility to create, maintain and review policies seriously which was one of the primary functions of the Board. The homework policy was no exception. She further said the Board, through its' administration would be studying whether the change in grading homework had been positive, negative or neutral in its impact.

Chair Barnes stated that in the future the Board anticipated a presentation which would be made to the Board on the findings by the administration.

#### **8. Determination of First Board Meeting in September**

Chair Barnes noted the next School Board meeting would be Tuesday, September 3, 2019, in the Memorial Room which was located across from the Town Manager's office.

#### **9. Approval of July 15, 2019 Minutes & August 12, 2019 Non-Public Minutes**

- July 15, 2019, Minutes

Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Schoenfeld) to approve the minutes from the July 15, 2019, public meeting as presented.

**The motion passed 3-0-2. (Abstained – Vice Chair Guagliumi & Board Member Nunez)**

- August 12, 2019, Non-Public Minutes

Board Member Schoenfeld moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to approve the non-public minutes from the August 12, 2019, non-public meeting as presented.

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

#### **10. Consent Agenda**

(Assistant Superintendent Fabrizio of Curriculum and Instruction)

##### **a) Educator Nominations**

- Ms. Karen Costura-Hoffman, Special Education Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School
- Ms. Jenna Deschaine, Science Teacher, Merrimack High School
- Ms. Mary-Elizabeth Hauver, Special Education Teacher, Merrimack Middle School

- Ms. Michelle Laramie, Pre-School Teacher, James Mastricola Elementary School
- Mr. Matthew McGuinness, Music Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School
- Ms. Erica McLaughlin Pereira, Digital Learning Specialist, James Mastricola Elementary School
- Ms. Kristen Peterson, Social Studies Teacher, Merrimack Middle School
- Ms. Deborah Rapson, Technology Education Teacher, Merrimack Middle School
- Ms. Melanie Swiensi-Sadek, Sixth Grade Teacher, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School
- Ms. Bethany Taylor, Digital Learning Specialist, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School
- Mr. Michael Valinski, Technology Education Teacher, Merrimack High School
- Mr. Louis Esposito, Special Education Teacher, Merrimack High School

b) Educator Resignations

- Mr. Tyler Pare, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School

c) Administrator Retirement

- Ms. Linda Hastings, Director of Human Resources

d) Memorandum of Understanding between the Merrimack School District and the Merrimack Police Department

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

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

## **11. Other**

### Correspondence

Vice Chair Guagliumi stated a community member had reached out to her and asked if the staff at the schools had LGBTQ training and if the district had a transgender and gender non-conforming policy. She said she was working in conjunction with the administration to properly answer the question.

Vice Chair Guagliumi also stated she received a question from a citizen who asked if the school district had tested the water this year after the PFOA (Perfluorooctanic acid) filtration had been put in and if the filters were being replaced in a timely fashion. She said she brought it to the attention of Superintendent McLaughlin and Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell and was informed the water had been sent to the lab and the results were pending and filters would be replaced to maintain zero PFOA's.

Chair Barnes reiterated that the School Board received a letter from Mr. Tom Koenig, Chair of Town Council regarding Madeline Bennett Lane which resulted in tabling item #4 on the agenda.

### Comments

Superintendent McLaughlin commented there would be one fairly significant change in the way they would conduct August Academy. He further commented there were a lot of people who worked at the central office who were very important to the operations of the district and very few people even knew. Additionally, he said there was office staff at each building about whom could be said that without them they would be in a rough place. Superintendent McLaughlin noted the staff did their jobs without professional development and yet they were often the people on the frontline. He said as a way to both recognize them and share some professional development with them, he decided to close the district entirely on August 27<sup>th</sup> so the folks at each building, as well as those at the central office, could join the teachers they support on day one of the August Academy and hear his opening message and also have a day of training that would help them with their professional growth.

## **12. New Business**

There was no new business.

**13. Committee Reports**

There were no committee reports.

**14. Public Comments on Agenda Items**

There were no public comments.

**15. Manifest**

The Board signed the manifest.

**16. Adjournment**

At 8:00 p.m. Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Schoenfeld) 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 9:15 p.m. Board Member Schoenfeld moved (seconded by Board Member Nunez) to adjourn the public meeting.

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**