

**Emergency Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room
March 17, 2020**

Present: Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Guagliumi, and Board Member Nunez. Also in attendance were Superintendent McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio, Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell, and Student Representative Johanna Koroma.

Participated via Telephone

Board Member Schneider
Board Member Schoenfeld

Chair Barnes commented pursuant to RSA-91-A:2 all parties must contemporaneously be able to hear and speak to each other. The meeting should be audible to the public, all person's present must be identified, and all votes must be taken by a roll call vote.

Board Member Schneider participated from his residence in Merrimack, was alone and not in the presence of other persons.

Board Member Schoenfeld participated from her residence in Merrimack, was alone and not in the presence of other persons.

Board Member Schneider and Board Member Schoenfeld stated the reason they were not in attendance and confirmed that they were both alone.

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Barnes called the emergency meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Chair Barnes led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

3. Consideration of Emergency Outreach Related to Food Services in the Merrimack School District

Superintendent McLaughlin stated the times' everyone was experiencing with the Coronavirus were extraordinary and called for extraordinary measures. He said one of the issues that was raised at the meeting the previous evening had to do with the concern relating to the ability of students being able to access food during the school closure.

Superintendent McLaughlin stated even as of that day they had not received a waiver from the State of New Hampshire related to the issue and they would need such a waiver in order to utilize their foodservice for the distribution of food. He added the Merrimack School District was not going to go against state or federal laws, particularly as it related to the distribution of food without the proper authority.

Superintendent McLaughlin commented there was an alternative to that which would be to ask the School Board to authorize the district to transfer funds for the purposes of providing food to the students.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell stated the previous evening there was a comment made that Londonderry was providing lunch for their students and asked how they were doing that. He said he spoke with the school district in Londonderry and was told that they requested a waiver. He added if there were 50% or more of students that qualified for free and reduced meals then a waiver could be given when school was not in session but anything less than 50% was on a case-by-case basis. Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell said they were hoping for a more sweeping declaration from the state in that they would waive all of the school districts in the State of New Hampshire.

Superintendent McLaughlin stated the option before the School Board presently was to transfer money and he was not able to authorize that on his own. He said in response to the fact that they had still not heard anything from the state, and in response to the School Board's very clear message about what should be done, an emergency meeting was arranged.

Superintendent McLaughlin stated the very specific question was whether or not the School Board would authorize the transfer of funds from the general fund to the foodservice fund for the purposes of providing lunch to students in the community for a period of time during the health emergency.

Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Nunez) that the School Board authorize the administration to transfer any necessary funds from the general fund to the foodservice fund for the sake of providing lunch to students during the state of emergency. Chair Barnes added the date and total dollar amount would be left open-ended.

Discussion:

Board Member Schoenfeld asked if at some point they could talk about adding breakfast as well. Superintendent McLaughlin replied they did not serve breakfast in the Merrimack School District. He added that he certainly wanted students to be fed but he was also mindful of what their commitments were to the taxpayer's and what their history was for the services they typically provided. Superintendent McLaughlin stated providing breakfast would be in excess of what they had ever done in the past and added he was hopeful the schools would be joined by other agencies, both in the town and the state.

Superintendent McLaughlin commented as soon as the Merrimack School District received support they would no longer have to draw from the general fund.

Board Member Schneider asked if the intent would be to offer lunch to those students that had free and reduced lunches as well as offering to sell a lunch to any student who wanted it. Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell replied they did not feel it was necessary at the present time, in consideration of privacy, to send a staff member out with a roster in a printed form of all students who had free and reduced lunches. He said whoever needed a lunch would be given a lunch.

A Viva Voce Roll Call was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea:	Board Member Nunez, Vice Chair Guagliumi, Board Member Schoenfeld, Board Member Schneider, and Chair Barnes	5
Nay:		0

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

Superintendent McLaughlin publicly thanked Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell for all his hard work.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell stated the plan currently in place was that on March 18, 2020, from 10:30 a.m. through 12:30 p.m., the Merrimack School District would provide a grab-and-go-lunch to students in the Merrimack School District which would be free of charge. He said the pick-up site would be at Merrimack High School. He noted that parents should remain in their cars and the bagged lunches would be brought to them.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell announced in the event community members were unable to pick up lunch(es) at Merrimack High School they could call Student Transportation of America at 424-7880 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. Lunches would be delivered to them by the bus company. Mr. Rich Desmond will deliver lunches to families on roads that the buses are not allowed to travel.

Vice Chair Guagliumi asked about students with allergies. Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell replied their general practice was to avoid peanut products and provisions would be made for other allergies such as gluten.

Chair Barnes shared that the Task Force which had been created in the past few weeks would be meeting on Friday at 11:00 a.m.

4. Public Participation

Chair Barnes read aloud questions that came in via the live stream broadcast as summarized below:

Mr. Andy Hunter, 15 Mountain View Drive – “I would like to thank the School Board for pressing the issue last night. We are a few days behind on this and I am glad we are finally acting. I would also like to thank the administration for developing a plan so quickly and I commend all of your actions over the past few days.”

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

Mr. Joe Savage, 3 Fairway Drive, addressed the School Board and offered any help he could provide and asked where the public could access information. Superintendent McLaughlin replied he felt the public would hear communication for the coordination of volunteer efforts in the very near future. Superintendent McLaughlin added he sincerely appreciated the offer to volunteer.

Chair Barnes mentioned that the call between Board Member Schneider and Board Member Schoenfeld had dropped and they were no longer participating in the meeting.

At approximately 6:15 p.m. Board Member Nunez moved (seconded by Vice Chair Guagliumi) to adjourn.

A Viva Voce Roll Call was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea:	Board Member Nunez, Vice Chair Guagliumi, and Chair Barnes	3
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Nay:		0
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The motion passed 3 – 0 – 0 by a roll call vote.