

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Monday, May 18, 2020
Remote Meeting**

Due to the state of emergency declared by Governor Sununu regarding the COVID-19 outbreak, and the subsequent Emergency Order #12, Chair Barnes determined that the physical presence of a quorum within the time required for School Board action was not reasonably practical, and therefore, the members of the School Board participated remotely.

Present: Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Guagliumi, Board Members Nunez, Schoenfeld, and Schneider. Also present were Superintendent McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio, Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell, and Student Representative Koroma.

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 Participation Guidelines for Remote Meeting

Chair Barnes stated public comments could be sent to publiccomment@sau26.org or by going to sau26.org where a meeting link was provided. She said all comments would be read and written into the record but noted the name and address of the speaker had to be provided.

3. Information Regarding Merrimack High School Graduation

Superintendent McLaughlin shared that one of the biggest concerns he had since the pandemic began was regarding high school graduation. He said the administration was working very hard to ensure two goals were achieved. He said the primary goal was the safety of all of the students and families. He said he also wanted to maintain as much tradition as possible.

Superintendent McLaughlin commented that Mr. Harley Hall and, Mr. Cory Ducharme, Senior Class Advisors had been working with the students and listening to the parents.

Mr. Peter Bergeron, Assistant Principal, Merrimack High School, stated the high school graduation for 2020 would be held on Saturday, June 13th with a rain date of Sunday, June 14th. He said graduation would look different this year but that it was important to

have each graduate walk up to receive their hard-earned diploma because it was an important part of the school's culture.

Mr. Bergeron said while there would be a live graduation ceremony, only ten students would be allowed on the field at a time and would have to adhere to social distancing protocols which would include wearing a mask.

Mr. Harley Hall, Senior Class Advisor, showed an image of what the intended graduation would look like.

Superintendent McLaughlin noted he would provide a series of informational updates as information became available.

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

Vice Chair Guagliumi asked what the plan was for the families who were not comfortable being in public. She asked if the ceremony would also be videotaped for family members not able to join. Superintendent McLaughlin replied he would certainly do whatever he could to make all people feel as included and comfortable as possible. He noted, however, they may have to limit the number of invited guests.

Board Member Schneider commented he felt it would be important to involve the town and the police to ensure safety and keep the flow of traffic going.

Chair Barnes said she felt the daily communications from Superintendent McLaughlin were full of encouragement and expectations. She further said she felt Superintendent McLaughlin would have a communication plan in place which would be very easy to follow.

Board Member Schoenfeld said she thought the plan for graduation was wonderful.

Ms. Koroma, Student Representative, thanked the administration on behalf of the Class of 2020 for all of the work they had done to make graduation happen.

4. Updated Information Regarding Summer Programming

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio stated so far the summer reading program was available for students in grades kindergarten through grade 8 who were below grade level. He said to date they had ninety responses to the program.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio said the Title I program was available to students in grades kindergarten through grade 6 and 500 students would be invited to participate.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio commented they were also working with the high school's 8.5 program and invitations to that had been sent out.

He pointed out they would know more about credit recovery as they completed the end of the fourth term.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio said the invitations had been sent out for the Extended Learning Year (ESY). He added they were working with the Social Emotional and Learning team to work on creating opportunities for kids for both the academic and social aspects.

5. Updated Information Regarding Reimbursements for School Lunch Programs

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell stated the school lunch program (after the school's shutdown) began on March 18th and he was working with the Bureau of Nutrition Services for the State of New Hampshire to see if there would be any relief to the district. He said after some back and forth communications the district was approved to be reimbursed for the lunches distributed to the community.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell said they put in for \$21,676 for the month of April which had been approved. He added the lunch program would end on June 30, 2020, but noted it may continue through the summer but that had not yet been determined.

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

Board Member Schoenfeld commented she felt that was wonderful news.

Board Member Schneider asked if they had stopped using the caterer to distribute the lunches as of yet. Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell replied they would start using their own food service employees the following day, May 19th.

6. Updated Information Regarding Federal CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act Funds due to the Merrimack School District

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell commented the district had purchased quite a few Chromebooks to ensure that every student had a device and could participate in on-line learning. He said the Department of Education put out a list with an estimate of the amount of money the district would likely receive which was \$397,000. He further said that amount would be for all of the COVID-19 related expenses for the current year, the summer, and into the following school year. Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell said the money would have to be spent by June 30, 2021.

7. Information Concerning School District Preparations for Return to School

Superintendent McLaughlin stated the district had to plan for many things including:

- What the infrastructure would look like in the main offices at all of the schools to maintain the health and safety of all employees.

- Adjustments to the set-up of school classrooms.
- A curriculum that was focused only on how to convey in a developmentally appropriate way how students needed to behave.
- Plan for remote instruction for some who would not be comfortable returning to school.

Superintendent McLaughlin stated they would form a task force that would be comprised of health professionals, educators, administrators, and community members. He further stated the task force would be sub-divided into categories, i.e. instruction, remote instruction, health practices, and infrastructure updates.

8. Approval of Minutes

- **April 30, 2020 – Non-Public Minutes**

Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Vice Chair Guagliumi) to approve the April 30, 2020, non-public minutes as presented.

The motion passed 4–0–1 by a roll call vote. (Abstained – Schoenfeld)

- **May 4, 2020 – Public School Board Minutes**

Board Member Nunez moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to approve the May 4, 2020, public minutes as presented.

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

- **May 5, 2020 – Non-Public Minutes**

Vice Chair Guagliumi moved (seconded by Board Member Nunez) to approve the May 5, 2020, non-public minutes as presented.

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

9. Consent Agenda

Educator Resignations

- Ms. Laurie Bavaro, Kindergarten Teacher, Reeds Ferry Elementary School
- Ms. Karen Astell, Behavior Specialist, Reeds Ferry Elementary School
- Ms. Abigail Garland, English Teacher, Merrimack High School

Teacher Nominations

- Ms. Jenna Deschaine, Science Teacher, Merrimack High School
- Ms. Kara Cave, Preschool Coordinator, Districtwide
- Ms. Courtney DesRoches, Math Teacher, Merrimack Middle School
- Ms. Abby White, Grade 1 Teacher, Reeds Ferry Elementary School

Approval of Policies

- School Board Legal Status
- Board Organization
- Officers of the School Board
- Regular Board Meetings

Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Nunez) to accept the Consent Agenda as presented.

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

10. Other

a) Correspondence

Chair Barnes stated she received an e-mail from a parent who was looking at homeschooling as an option in the fall and asked what resources would be made available. She said Superintendent McLaughlin was copied on the e-mail and the district office would reply to the parent.

Chair Barnes also stated she received an e-mail from the Conservation Commission who wanted to discuss the use of the parking lots. She said they wanted to review the rules surrounding parking at the high school where the Wildcat Falls Trails was located.

Further, Chair Barnes noted she received another e-mail from a parent who wanted to discuss what options were available for celebrations at different schools for different milestones for the students. She said Superintendent McLaughlin was able to provide clear answers.

Chair Barnes said she received a communication from Ms. Pat Heinrich, School District Clerk. Chair Barnes announced there was an official Merrimack Elections Facebook page for questions and answers. She said the plan was to hold voting on June 23rd at the regular three locations. She added COVID-19 social distancing, wearing masks, and the use of sanitizer would be required by all who chose to vote at the polls. She further said, however, that all voters were eligible by virtue of COVID-19 to vote via an absentee ballot. Chair Barnes said all the voters needed to do to obtain an absentee ballot was to send Ms. Diane Trippett, Town Clerk, a signed request which indicated the voter's name and

address via mail, fax the request to (423-8539) or place in the drop box at Town Hall. She said with that the voters would be sent both the town and school ballots and would have to be mailed back to the Town Clerk. Chair Barnes added a new voter registration packet could also be requested.

Vice Chair Guagliumi asked if School Board was the appropriate place for the Conservation Commission to bring forth their discussion or if it might be timelier for them to work with the administration separately. Chair Barnes replied she would have no issue turning it over to administration but if they felt representation from the School Board was needed they would certainly attend.

Superintendent McLaughlin stated he and Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell would work together and attend the Conservation Commission's meeting.

b) Comments

Chair Barnes congratulated the Merrimack High School students who were the Granite State's Challenge champions for 2020.

Chair Barnes stated she would have a call with Senator Jeanne Shaheen the following day and she would represent the School Board's on behalf of the State of New Hampshire.

Chair Barnes said also joining the telephone call would be Mr. Carl Ladd, Director, New Hampshire School Administrator's Association, Mr. Barrett Christina, Executive Director of the New Hampshire School Board's Association, and a number of Superintendent's and Principal's around the state to talk about school district operations under COVID-19.

11. New Business

There was no new business.

12. Committee Reports

Chair Barnes stated on May 14th the Professional Development Committee met and were doing approvals for credit hours, reimbursements, and going through recertification for professional development plans. She said the next meeting would be on June 4th. She also mentioned they held elections for the following year and were in the process of finalizing representation to the committee for 2021 – 2021.

13. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments.

At 8:15 p.m. Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Nunez) to adjourn.

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