

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room
June 21, 2021**

6:00 p.m. – Non-Public Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) (b) & (c) – Memorial Room

- **Staff Welfare**

Present: Chair Guagliumi, Vice Chair Rothhaus, Board Members Barnes, and Hardy. Also present were Superintendent McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell, and Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio.

Not Present: Board Member Peters - Excused

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

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

Chair Guagliumi led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Guagliumi pointed out it was Superintendent McLaughlin's last School Board meeting and thanked him for his service to the Merrimack School District and wished him the very best in his endeavors.

2. Face Masks at School Board Meetings

Chair Guagliumi stated face masks were no longer required in the Matthew Thornton Room and wearing them was optional.

MOTION: Board Member Hardy made a motion that the guidelines for wearing masks during School Board meetings be consistent with Town Hall standards. Vice Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

The motion passed 4 – 0 – 0.

3. Face Masks and Summer Instruction

Board Member Hardy stated there were multiple summer programs and while the mask policy was still in place she felt there needed to be further discussion. She said she felt there should be some type of policy in place with regard to the younger children who could not be vaccinated.

Board Member Barnes commented they did not have enough data to make a decision and there was no risk assessment.

Superintendent McLaughlin stated the CDC had recently shared concerns relative to the Delta variant of COVID that affected young people more than others.

Chair Guagliumi commented that the item would be tabled until the next School Board meeting, date specific, to July 12, 2021.

4. Guidelines for Public Participation for Remote Meeting

Chair Guagliumi asked the Board how long they felt they should allow public comment to continue via email. Vice Chair Rothhaus said she felt comfortable with the public attending meetings. Board Member Hardy and Board Member Barnes also stated they agreed.

MOTION: Vice Chair Rothhaus made a motion to have in-person public comments at School Board meetings beginning July 12, 2021. Board Member Hardy seconded the motion.

The motion passed 4 – 0 – 0.

Chair Guagliumi 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.

5. Public Participation

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

Ms. Rosemarie Rung, 21 Ministerial Drive

- Granite State Challenge – Merrimack High School won the state championship.
- Requested that the results of the lead content in the District's water be made public on the School District's website.
- Contacted the Chairman of the Merrimack Village District to proactively communicate to families the need to check household water.
- Requested that the School District issue a statement regarding how they handled allegations regarding a coach who had been arrested for sexual assault and child pornography charges.
- District and Merrimack High School administrators had prohibited a graduating senior from participating in the high school graduation ceremony that was held on June 12th. She said it was her opinion that the decision was based on exerting administrative power than it was about consequence and justice. She requested that the School Board adopt a policy that prohibited withholding participation in graduation ceremonies as a form of student punishment, at least without School Board review and approval.

6. Granite State Challenge

Ms. Sharon Putney, Principal, Merrimack High School explained that Granite State Challenge was a quiz game hosted by John Cannon on PBS and it recognized academically talented students. She congratulated the students who won the challenge as well as the coaches, Dr. Sara Campbell, and Kyle Harvell.

7. New Hampshire Art Teacher of the Year

Ms. Putney said the New Hampshire Art Educators Association was a non-profit professional organization whose mission it was to promote quality art education in New Hampshire.

Ms. Putney congratulated Ms. Aimee Piccolo, Photography Teacher at Merrimack High School who received the 2020 Art Educator of the Year Award.

8. LED Lighting Proposal

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell introduced EMC (Energy Management Consultants, Inc.) as the company chosen to provide the Board with a presentation regarding LED lighting.

Mr. Carl Edin, Project Developer/Electrician from EMC (Energy Management Consultants, Inc.) addressed the Board and said the Project Development would include:

- Site visit walk-through to identify opportunities.
- Re-design and specify the correct products for the application
- Maximize utility incentives to minimize capital budget improvements.
- Reduce electrical energy consumption.
- Reduce maintenance costs.
- Improve the quality of light.

Mr. Edin reviewed the payments options and noted Smart Start Rebates were available.

Board Member Barnes commented she felt whatever they could do to improve the facilities net neutral to the taxpayer should be done.

MOTION: Board Member Barnes made a motion for the District to finalize the contract documentations and to waive the two-week rule. Vice Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

The motion passed 4 – 0 – 0.

9. Granite State College Partnership

Ms. Tara Payne, VP of Enrollment Management, Granite State College, shared that all of their Degree Programs could be completed 100% online and students could be part-time and still received financial aid. She said Granite State College would provide a tuition discount to not only

the faculty and staff in the Merrimack School District, but also to their family members. She said further information could be found at info.granite.edu/Merrimack-school-district.

10. Roadmap for Reopening Plan 2021 – 2022 School Year

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio reviewed the reopening plan and said there would be numerous Task Force Groups that would send their recommendations to the Steering Committee and the Administrative Team would consolidate the recommendations into a unified plan. He said the first meeting was held that day.

Board Member Hardy, who serves on the Curriculum Assessment and Technology Team (CIT) stated she was very impressed with the expediency of the plan going forward.

11. Update on Unexpended Warrant Articles during the 2020 – 2021 School Year

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell reviewed the unexpended Warrant Articles as summarized below:

Article #3 – To raise and appropriate an amount of up to \$150,000 not-to-exceed 10% of the unencumbered surplus funds remaining at the end of fiscal year 2019 – 2020, and to transfer that amount overtime the School District Repair Capital Reserve Fund, previously established for the purpose of providing unanticipated and/or emergency repairs to all School District facilities.

Article #4 – To raise and appropriate the sum of \$265,000 for the purpose of Window Replacement at the Merrimack High School that were original to the 1970 addition and have cracked seals and manual locking systems that are not operational.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell commented if the Board wanted to move forward with the window replacement it would have to be sent out to bid which would take approximately four months.

Board Member Barnes commented it was the will of the people who understood the need for the window replacements.

MOTION: Board Member Barnes made a motion, in light of the approval of Article #4 from the June 2020, election, to encumber \$265,000 for the purpose of window replacement at Merrimack High School. Vice Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

The motion passed 4 – 0 – 0.

Article #5 – To raise and appropriate the sum of \$82,500 for the purpose of hiring an engineer to collaborate with the public in open community forums designed to develop a Master Plan Study to include a series of options for the use of the Merrimack High School property and School District property along O'Gara Drive focused on optimizing student and staff parking, promoting citizen safety, considering placement of office space, improving traffic flow, analyzing/optimizing field space resulting in the selection of a community-driven comprehensive plan for the reconfiguration/redesign of the site.

12. Interim Superintendent Update

Chair Guagliumi stated she was pleased to welcome Mr. Everett “Bill” Olsen as the Interim Superintendent of Schools as of July 19, 2021. She said Mr. Olsen had over 50 years of experience and was coming from the position of Superintendent of the Westford, MA public school system. She further stated Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell would assume the Superintendent’s duties until Mr. Olsen began, adding they had received permission from the Department of Education to do that.

13. Approval of Minutes

- **June 7, 2021 Meeting**

MOTION: Vice Chair Rothhaus made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 7, 2021, School Board meeting as presented. Board Member Hardy seconded the motion.

The motion passed 4 – 0 – 0.

- **June 16, 2021, & June 18, 2021, Non-Public Meetings**

MOTION: Board Member Hardy made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 16, and June 18, 2021, School Board meetings as presented. Vice Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

The motion passed 4 – 0 – 0.

14. Consent Agenda

Educator Resignations

- Meredith Davine, Special Educator Coordinator, Reeds Ferry Elementary School
- Breda Holland, Social Studies Teacher, Merrimack High School
- Ryan Piper, Special Education Teacher, Merrimack Middle School

Educator Nominations

- Karen Baldasaro, Special Education Coordinator, Reeds Ferry Elementary School
- Adam Thibeault, Grade 3 Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School
- Morgan Sansing, Kindergarten Teacher (1-year) James Masticola Elementary School
- Jaime DeVita, Art Teacher, Merrimack High School
- Ana Arsenault, Grade 3 Teacher, James Masticola Elementary School
- Allison Canavan, Grade 2 Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School

MOTION: Board Member Barnes made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Vice Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

The motion passed 4 – 0 – 0.

15. Other

a. Correspondence

Board Member Barnes stated the Board (copied Commissioner Edelblut) received an email from a constituent concerning the School District hiring the services of 2Revolutions.

b. Comments

Regarding Ms. Rung's earlier comments, Superintendent McLaughlin stated student and staff welfare issues needed to be taken very seriously and said he did not feel her remarks were responsible as she had very limited information regarding the matter.

Superintendent McLaughlin said in light of the fact that it was his last School Board meeting he wanted to acknowledge and thank his wife, Christine who was seated in the audience. He also thanked his sister Libby, brother-in-law Jim, brother Tim, and his two sons.

Superintendent McLaughlin also thanked Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio and Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell for all of their support and work.

Board Member Hardy thanked Superintendent McLaughlin for his hard work over the past 16 months. She wished him all the very best in his future.

Board Member Barnes said the District was lucky to have him as a Superintendent.

16. New Business

There was no new business to report.

17. Committee Reports

Board Member Hardy said the Healthcare Cost Containment Committee had met and the gift card lotteries were completed and noted they were a huge success. She said Merrimack came in second place in the 100 Miles Across New Hampshire Slice of Life Campaign.

Board Member Hardy commented she would assume the role on the committee in the future.

Board Member Hardy said the CIT and noted it was discussed earlier in the meeting.

18. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments.

MOTION: At approximately 9:00 p.m. Board Member Barnes made a motion to adjourn. Vice Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

The motion passed 4 – 0 – 0.