

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room
July 12, 2021**

6:30 p.m. – Non-public Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) & (c)

- **Staff Welfare**

Present: Chair Guagliumi, Vice Chair Rothhaus, Board Members Barnes, Hardy, and Peters. Also present were Interim Superintendent Shevenell, and Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Kimberly Yarlott.

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.

2. Public Participation

There were no comments.

Prior to moving forward, Chair Guagliumi announced that John Fabrizio had resigned from his position as of June 30, 2021. Chair Guagliumi, on behalf of the entire School Board, wished Mr. Fabrizio the very best in his future endeavors.

Chair Guagliumi also stated the School Board had appointed Ms. Kimberly Yarlott, who had previously served as the Principal of the Reeds Ferry Elementary School, to the role of Assistant Superintendent.

Chair Guagliumi further said that Mr. Bill Olsen, will be serving the district in an interim capacity as Superintendent for one year with the title of Interim Chief Educational Officer due to some licensing differences between Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

3. Revised Professional Development Master Plan 2021 – 2026

Ms. Lisa Perrault, Professional Development Chair, Mr. Chris Rheault, Ms. Jenn Saucier, Ms. Molly Azotea, and Assistant Superintendent Yarlott provided the School Board with a presentation that detailed updates regarding the Merrimack School District Professional Development Master Plan for 2021 through 2026.

Ms. Perrault explained the Professional Development Master Plan was a guiding document for the Professional Development process that is updated every five years.

Health and Safety Task Force Report

Ms. Julie DeLuca, Principal, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School, and Ms. Kelly Grassini, School Nurse at Reeds Ferry Elementary School, provided the School Board with a presentation that detailed updates and recommendations regarding the Safety Task Force Proposal.

Vice Chair Rothhaus suggested they look at smaller class sizes if possible.

Board Member Barnes asked how they would monitor children whose parents wanted them to wear masks. Ms. DeLuca replied that situation had yet to be discussed with the leadership team.

Board Member Peters asked if the policy would remain that if a child exhibited COVID-like symptoms they would either have to quarantine for 10-14 days and then have a test or provide a doctor's note indicating they did not have COVID. Ms. Grassini replied that would be the intention but would rely more heavily on having the child see a physician who could state the child did not need to be tested or the child tested negative.

4. Face Masks and Summer Instruction

MOTION: Vice Chair Rothhaus made a motion (seconded by Board Member Hardy) for the use of face masks to be optional for summer school starting the following day (July 13, 2021).

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

5. Consideration of Leasing PTA Kindergarten Building (McGaw School) to the Town of Merrimack Historical Society

Interim Superintendent Shevenell stated he felt it would be appropriate for the Merrimack Historical Society to use the PTA Kindergarten building.

Board Member Barnes commented she felt in the future it was something that should be on a Warrant Article to transfer ownership of the property to the Town of Merrimack. Vice Chair Rothhaus suggested that legal counsel provide an opinion on the possible Warrant Article.

Chair Guagliumi asked if there were any outstanding repairs that needed to be done. Interim Superintendent Shevenell replied they would test for lead in particular areas but the outside of the building was fine.

MOTION: Vice Chair Rothhaus made a motion (seconded by Board Member Barnes) to lease the PTA Kindergarten building (McGaw School) to the Town of Merrimack's Historical Society for a sum of \$1.00 annually.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

6. Board Consideration of Board Policy Review Services by New Hampshire School Boards Association (NHSBA)

Board Member Barnes stated she would recuse herself from the discussion as she actively served as an immediate past president of the NHSBA.

Chair Guagliumi commented that one of the services the NHSBA offered was that a staff attorney would review a School Board Policy Manual and provide a written report that covered content, format, organization, and style for a \$1,500 flat fee.

MOTION: Board Member Peters made a motion (seconded by Vice Chair Rothhaus) to authorize the School Board to ask the New Hampshire School Boards Association for a policy review for a cost of \$1,500.

The motion passed 4 – 0 – 0.

Board Member Barnes returned to her seat as a full voting member of the School Board.

7. Board Feedback on Concurrent Learning

Chair Guagliumi said the results of a survey indicated that there were a small number of families who were interested in remote learning as well as concurrent learning.

Vice Chair Rothhaus commented she felt the District should return to pre-Covid teaching and assessments in the classroom.

Board Member Peters said she agreed with Vice Chair Rothhaus but also felt they needed to look toward their leadership team to encourage the teachers to harness the technology already adopted and incorporate it into the classrooms in an effort to mitigate absences. She added she felt the District needed to provide other opportunities (i.e. VLACS, etc.) for families who wanted to continue with a fully remote option.

Board Member Barnes commented that she agreed with Board Member Peters wholeheartedly. She said there were 39 families who were under the impression that their student (s) could learn concurrently and said they needed to reassess the needs of those families.

Assistant Superintendent Yarlott stated she was the Chair of the Instructional Task Force and said they were looking at neighboring Districts as to how they were handling remote/concurrent learning. She said some of the families had already been contacted by the administration. She said the Instructional Committee would present their recommendations at the next School Board meeting.

Board Member Hardy also expressed that she felt the adopted technology should be used in the future.

8. Approval of June 21, 2021, School Board Minutes

MOTION: Board Member Barnes made a motion (seconded by Board Member Hardy) to approve the minutes from the June 21, 2021, meeting.

Edit(s) - Page 1 – “Vice Chair Barnes” was Changed to “Vice Chair Rothhaus” and “Board Members Barnes and Hardy was also added.

The motion passed 4 – 0 – 1. (Abstained – Board Member Peters)

9. Consent Agenda

Educator Nominations:

- Ms. Hailey Fallon, School Counselor, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School
- Ms. Michelle Martineau, Preschool Coordinator, Student Services

- Ms. Lauren Moores, Grade 1 Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School
- Mr. Brent Whitney, Math Teacher, Merrimack High School

Administrator Nominations:

- Mr. Everett V. Olsen, Interim Chief Educational Officer, Districtwide
- Ms. Kimberly Yarlott, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Administrator/Teacher Resignations:

- Mr. John Fabrizio, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
- Ms. Kristine Colburn, Special Education Teacher, James Mastricola Elementary School
- Ms. Collette Flanders, Grade 1 Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School
- Mr. Daniel Leone, School Counselor, Merrimack High School
- Mr. Kristine Thibault, Kindergarten Teacher, Reeds Ferry Elementary School

Teacher Retirements:

- Ms. Paula Carelli, Grade 3 Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School
- Ms. Orisia Luhovy, World Language Teacher, Merrimack Middle School

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

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

10. Acceptance of Gifts/Grants under \$5,000

- Lions Club of Merrimack to Merrimack High School for \$1,000

Interim Superintendent Shevenell stated Amy Larkin-Perez was awarded the Educator Grant in honor of Cheryl Pearsall to purchase a CPR manikin.

- Merrimack Friends and Family to Merrimack School District for \$4,000

Interim Superintendent Shevenell said the gift was to be used for the needs of students in transition (homeless students) in the Merrimack School District.

MOTION: Board Member Barnes made a motion (seconded by Vice Chair Rothhaus) to accept the gifts with the School Board's extreme gratitude.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

11. Other

- a. Correspondence

Chair Guagliumi said the School Board received a letter from a parent who requested a meeting with the Board regarding a situation.

Chair Guagliumi said they also received an email from a State Representative regarding lifting the mask mandate for kids. She also said correspondence was received regarding against requiring vaccines for staff and students.

In addition, Chair Guagliumi indicated she received multiple emails from parents regarding the topic of the mask policy.

Vice Chair Rothhaus said she received an email regarding a question on New Hampshire Scholars.

b. Comments

Interim Superintendent Shevenell mentioned there would be a “back-to-school” vaccination clinic held on August 11th from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Merrimack High School.

12. New Business

There was no new business to report.

13. Committee Reports

There were no committee reports.

14. Public Comments on Agenda Items

Mr. John Lastowka, President of the Merrimack Historical Society, 183 Amherst Road, addressed the Board and thanked the Board for allowing the Historical Society to lease the PTA Kindergarten building (McGaw School).

Ms. Jennifer Page, 3 Nichols Lane, a pediatrician, addressed the Board and said she would appreciate it if pediatricians were not put in the position of determining whether kids had COVID or not without testing them. She added there was a possibility that the numbers of COVID would increase due to the variant.

Mr. Chuck Mower, Vice President of the Merrimack Historical Society, 4 Depot Street, addressed the Board and expressed his sincere thanks to the Board for allowing the Historical Society to lease the PTA Kindergarten building (McGaw School).

MOTION: At approximately 8:35 p.m. Board Member Barnes made a motion (seconded by Vice Chair Rothhaus) to adjourn.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.