

**Merrimack School Board Meeting  
Merrimack School District, SAU #26  
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room  
August 9, 2021**

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**6:00 p.m. – Non-public Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) & (c)  
Matthew Thornton Training Classroom**

- **Staff Welfare**

**Present:** Chair Guagliumi, Vice Chair Rothhaus, and Board Member Barnes. Also present were Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Yarlott, and Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen.

**Not Present:** Board Member Hardy and Board Member Peters – Excused

**1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

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

Vice Chair Rothhaus led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Public Participation**

Dr. Jennifer Page, 3 Nichols Lane, suggested that the Board revisit the Mask Policy. She said she did not think it was a good idea to put children under the age of twelve, who did not have the opportunity to be fully vaccinated at risk. She said she felt having no masks and no social distancing in the schools was irresponsible.

**3. Recognitions**

Chair Guagliumi thanked both Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell and Ms. Melissa Gage, Director of Human Resources, for their help and support.

**4. Informational Updates**

a. Superintendent Update

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen explained the reason his title was that of Interim Chief Educational Office instead of Interim Superintendent had to do with some technicalities regarding degrees that a person possessed. He said he was a Superintendent for 16-years in a very highly successful school system in Massachusetts and was licensed as a Superintendent in Massachusetts for many years. He added his objective was to succeed at his job and he was not concerned about the “title.”

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said he had a remote meeting with the elementary and secondary staff as well as with some parents, adding he would have additional meetings to allow an opportunity for as many parents as possible to attend, whether it be in-person or remotely.

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen shared that he met with the Police Chief and the Deputy Police Chief and had a very productive meeting and said he would be meeting with the Fire Chief early the following week. Additionally, Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said he had a very good conversation with State Representative Bill Boyd.

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said he and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Yarlott met with area Superintendent's on a weekly basis to discuss strategies surrounding the reopening of schools and would participate in the New Hampshire Department of Public Health Services webinar to see where the state was in relation to the most recent CDC's guidelines.

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen pointed out that there would be a "Back to School Immunization Clinic" held on Wednesday, August 11<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Merrimack High School.

b. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Update

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Yarlott said the leadership team had been working very hard on the reopening of school. She added they attended a two-day retreat where they reviewed the recommendations from various task forces.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Yarlott said they were also preparing for the August Academy where they would hold four days of professional development for the professional staff and three days of professional development for the paraeducators.

c. Assistant Superintendent for Business

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell said the ventilation project was moving along and the first priority would be in the English wing at the Merrimack High School.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell shared that the Trustees of Trust Funds donated approximately \$350,000 from the James Masticola Fund for the replacement of the non-ADA compliant bleachers in the Smith Gym. He said they were ADA accessible and had railings.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell said the floor in the James Masticola Upper Elementary School All Purpose Room had been redone and new bleachers would be installed.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell said he was grateful to the Trustees for allowing them to be able to pick away at a few items on the Capital Improvement Plan without having to use taxpayer's funds.

d. School Board Update

Chair Guagliumi stated the Board had authorized an expenditure of \$1,500 to send the Policy Manual to the New Hampshire School Board's Association for review. She informed the Board that they may not receive input until September of 2022.

e. Student Representative Update

There was no update to report.

## **5. Old Business**

- a. Terms to Accept the \$34,848.32 Grant

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell explained the monies would be used for the care and keeping of the water filtration system as well as to offset the cost for lead testing.

**MOTION:** Board Member Barnes made a motion to encumber the \$34,848.32 grant for the purpose of water safety operations for the District for the upcoming year. Vice Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

**The motion passed 3 – 0 – 0.**

- b. Health and Safety Task Force Update

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said the Health and Safety Task Force would convene the following Friday where they would hear from the New Hampshire Department of Public Health Services. He said he was hopeful that Ms. Erin Olson, Health Officer would be in attendance. He said they would review the latest information from the CDC (Center for Disease Control), the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the latest statistics from the State of New Hampshire as of August 5<sup>th</sup>.

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said transportation was subject to a CDC order in that all students and drivers of schools buses and vans were required to wear a mask.

Board Member Barnes said she felt the Board needed to stay on top of the data and wanted to provide parents with up-to-date information so they could advocate appropriately for their children. Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said he intended to provide a Health and Safety update at every School Board meeting.

Chair Guagliumi suggested there be a specific e-mail address created for COVID, and health and safety questions/issues.

## **6. New Business**

- a. First Reading of Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy and Grievance Process (ACAC)

Ms. Melissa Gagne, Director of Human Resources, provided an overview of the Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy and Grievance Process. She said the policy would be posted on the website for review prior to the second reading which would be addressed at the next School Board meeting.

Ms. Gagne informed the Board that forty people, including administrators, school counselors, and special education coordinators attend a training seminar held by Legal Counsel in January.

- b. K-6 Enrollments

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said he was pleased to inform the Board that class sizes at the elementary level were quite good but would keep an eye on grade 6 at the James Masticola Upper Elementary School as he would not want to see the total amount of students per class go above 26.

c. House Bill 2 – Prohibitive Practice

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said Governor Sununu had signed House Bill 2 into law. He said the law essentially codified what they were committed to in public education: respecting the civil and human rights and dignity of all students, staff, and citizens. He said he had drafted a memo, with the assistance of Attorney Kathleen Peahl, (Labor Counsel) which outlined the law and also included the provisions of the law.

**7. Approval Requests**

a. July 26, 2021 Minutes

**MOTION:** Vice Chair Rothhaus made a motion to accept the minutes of the July 26, 2021, meeting as presented. Board Member Barnes seconded the motion.

**The motion passed 2 – 0 – 1. (Abstained – Chair Guagliumi)**

b. Educator/Administrator Resignations

Ms. Alicia Dionne, Science Teacher, Merrimack High School  
Ms. Emily Hartmann, Social Studies Teacher, Merrimack High School  
Ms. Melissa Gagne, Director of Human Resources, Merrimack School District

c. Educator/Administrator Nominations

Ms. Christine Dambach, Special Ed. Reading Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School  
Ms. Emeline Imbody, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School  
Ms. Emily Sousa, Art Teacher, Merrimack High School  
Ms. Andrea Inamorati, One-year, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher, Reeds Ferry Elementary School  
Ms. Amanda Chasse, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School  
Ms. Eva Quill, Language Arts Teacher, Merrimack Middle School

Mr. Steven Claire, Principal, Merrimack High School

**MOTION:** Vice Chair Rothhaus made a motion to accept the Resignations and Nominations as presented. Board Member Barnes seconded the motion.

**The motion passed 3 – 0 – 0.**

**8. Other**

a. Committee Reports

Vice Chair Rothhaus asked Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell if he could try to schedule School Building and Planning Committee meetings on nights other than Mondays she would be grateful.

b. Correspondence

Chair Guagliumi shared that the Board had received several emails regarding the health and safety protocols, specifically the use of masks upon the fall reopening.

Board Member Barnes shared she also received one email surrounding the use of masks and one who requested a better understanding of the use of facilities process.

c. Comments

There were no comments from Board members.

**9. Public Comments on Agenda Items**

There were no public comments.

**10. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** At approximately 7:52 p.m. Board Member Barnes made a motion to adjourn. Vice Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

**The motion passed 3 – 0 – 0.**