

**Merrimack School Board Special Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room
August 23, 2022**

**6:00 p.m. – NON-PUBLIC SESSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH RSA 91-A:3, II (a) (b) (c) –
Merrimack TV Training Classroom**

- 1. Student Welfare**
- 2. Staff Welfare**
- 3. Legal**

Present: Chair Rothhaus, Board Member Hardy, and Board Member Halter. Also present were Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell, and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Doyle.

Not Present: Vice-Chair Peters – Excused
Board Member Martin – Excused (Arrived at approximately 8:00 p.m.)
Student Representative Vadney – Excused

Chair Rothhaus stated that Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen would be participating via telephone. She noted that Board Member Hardy would conduct the meeting.

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Rothhaus called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public comment.

3. RECOGNITIONS

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said that Jack Paepke, a fifth-grade student, had qualified to compete in the Regional 2022 Major League Baseball Red Sox Pitch, Hit, & Run Team Championship held at Fenway Park on August 13th. He added Jack won in his age group.

4. INFORMATIONAL UPDATES

- a. Superintendent Update

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said that school would begin on August 31st with staggered start times to allow students transitioning into a new school to get acclimated.

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said the leadership retreat was very productive. He said the goal over the next few years would be re-culturing the organization in a positive way.

b. Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Update

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle said the Social Studies department and the team continued to put the curriculum into EduPlanet, the Language Art team met where they performed a deep data dive into the New Hampshire SAS (Statewide Assessment System) results. She said the math team had also met and would meet again and perform a similar dive into the math data.

c. Assistant Superintendent for Business Update

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell announced that due to the increased utilization of PowerSchool, the district acquired the services of Mr. Adam Goodman who used to be the Technology Coordinator for grades 5 through 8. He said Mr. Goodman would also take on grades K through 4.

d. School Board Update

Chair Rothhaus said that the School Board was still looking for a date to meet with the Budget Committee to talk about the most crucial needs including school safety. She also said the September School Board meeting would be listed as "TBA" as they needed to make sure there was a quorum of members in attendance.

Chair Rothhaus commented that the Board wanted to thank the administrators for all of their focused work during the summer. It was very much appreciated and she welcomed the entire staff back to school.

e. Student Representative Update

There was no update.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. Student Enrollment Update

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said the enrollments at the elementary level were excellent.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. State Assessments Results (The full presentation can be found at www.sau26.org with the supportive material for the August 23, 2022 school board meeting.)

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle said the New Hampshire Statewide Assessment System was a comprehensive assessment program designed to provide information about what students knew in core academic areas. She added it was currently used for English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science. Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle explained the assessment was administrated annually in the spring and noted it was not conducted in the spring of 2020 due to COVID. She reviewed the State Assessment Results for grades 3 through 8 as summarized below: (Overall District Results)

- Grade 3 Overall Math Score: 52.5% Proficient
- Grade 3 Overall ELA Score: 55.3% Proficient
- Grade 4 Overall Math Score: 48.9% Proficient
- Grade 4 Overall ELA Score: 45.4% Proficient

- Grade 5 Overall Math Score: 28.7% Proficient
- Grade 5 Overall ELA Score: 55.7% Proficient
- Grade 5 Overall Science Score: 29.2% Proficient

- Grade 6 Overall Math Score: 46.5% Proficient
- Grade 6 Overall ELA Score: 56.7% Proficient

- Grade 7 Overall Math Score: 31.3% Proficient
- Grade 7 Overall ELA Score: 47.8% Proficient

- Grade 8 Overall Math Score: 22.4% Proficient
- Grade 8 Overall ELA Score: 43.1% Proficient
- Grade 8 Overall Science Score: 20.6% Proficient

- Grade 11 Overall Science Score: 38.9% Proficient

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle reviewed the Spring 2022 SAT scores noting that the district's overall score was 988.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle stated one of the things that may help increase the proficiency would be updating and revising the curriculum which was already being done. She also said each member of the administrative team felt an urgency to address the scores.

Chair Rothhaus said she felt it was important to find a common reading program at all three elementary schools. She also said she was concerned with the math scores, particularly in grade 5, and felt it was urgent to get support to those students who were below proficiency.

Board Member Hardy commented that she felt it was important to have multi-tiered support for academics. She also said she felt it was important for the district to look into something like the i-Ready Program. Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle replied that the district did have a multi-tiered approach to providing support for students. She also said it may be a good idea to look into the cost of hiring math interventionists.

Board Member Halter commented that everyone's goal was to improve outcomes for the students.

b. Student Handbooks

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said the student handbooks should be completed by the end of the week.

c. Leadership Retreat

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated the leadership retreat was held on August 3rd and August 4th and included an extensive presentation from Mr. John D'Auria entitled "The Impact of Culture." He said it included the art of balancing psychological safety and accountability. He further said the district was working on creating and enhancing a professional approach to resolving all issues.

d. Summer Projects Update

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell reviewed the summer project updates as summarized below:

- Concession stand had been painted.
- The windows project at Merrimack High School was complete.
- The Thornton's Ferry playground was complete sans a little bit more mulch and curbing.
- Drainage at the southern courtyard at Reeds Ferry Elementary School had been mitigated.
- The annual audit was done. Last year the district returned \$8.163 million to the Town of Merrimack to reduce taxes.

Recorder's Note: Board Member Martin arrived at the meeting at approximately 8:00 p.m.

e. First Meeting in September

Chair Rothhaus said the first meeting in September would be announced at a future date.

f. Other

Chair Rothhaus commented that the Board wanted to give students at the high school the opportunity to have extended learning credits.

7. POLICIES

There were no policies to address.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. July 25, 2022 – Public Meeting

MOTION: Board Member Halter made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 25, 2022, meeting, as presented. Board Member Martin seconded the motion.

The motion passed 4 – 0 – 0.

9. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Teacher Nominations

Richard Loftus, In-School Interventionist, Merrimack Middle School
Inas Dirani, Science Teacher, Merrimack High School
Carolyn Guerette, Grade 2 Teacher, James Masticola Elementary School
Micayla Eason, Math Teacher, Merrimack High School
Beth Haverkamp-Powers, English Teacher, Merrimack High School
Hayley Smith, One-Year Music Teacher, Reeds Ferry Elementary School
Kayleigh Roper, Language Arts Teacher, Merrimack Middle School
Karl Safko, Social Studies Teacher, Merrimack High School
Cheryl Craig, Digital Learning Specialist, Reeds Ferry & James Masticola Elementary
Melanie Smith, Speech & Language Pathologist, Student Services

Racheal Allen, Preschool Teacher, James Mastricola Elementary School
Katy Angelone, Grade 5 Teacher, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School
Sarah Fegen, Special Education Teacher, Merrimack Middle School

b. Professional Staff Resignations

Kimberly Chouinard, Preschool Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School
Christina Lopez, Guidance Counselor, Merrimack Middle School
Athena Anger, Technology Education Teacher, Merrimack Middle School
Michele Sheremeta, Special Education Teacher, Merrimack High School
Kyle Morrill, Social Studies Teacher, Merrimack High School
Stephanie Carberry, Social Studies Teacher, Merrimack High School
Lindsey Seibert, Social Studies Teacher, Merrimack High School
Alexandra McCafferty, Grade 5 Teacher, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School

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

The motion passed 4 – 0 – 0.

10. OTHER

a. Committee Reports

Board Member Halter stated that she had attended the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting where they discussed their five-year capital improvement proposal.

b. Correspondence

Chair Rothhaus said she received a piece of correspondence from someone thanking the Board for their efforts and felt that the School District and the School Board were working very well together.

Board Member Hardy said she received correspondence from a parent who had concerns about the high school Computer Usage Policy. Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell commented that they were going to walk the policy back a bit and see how it went in the current school year.

c. Comments

Chair Rothhaus thanked Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle for all of her work surrounding the data collected regarding the state reporting.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

There were no public comments.

12. ADJOURN

MOTION: At approximately 8:12 p.m. Board Member Halter made a motion to adjourn. Board Member Martin seconded the motion.

The motion passed 4 – 0 – 0.