

**Merrimack School Board Special Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room
October 3, 2022**

Present: Chair Rothhaus, Vice-Chair Peters, Board Member Hardy, Board Member Halter, and Board Member Martin. Also present was Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Doyle, Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen, Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell, and Student Representative Vadney.

7:00 p.m. – Public Hearing to Accept/Expend Gifts/Grants of \$5,000 and Over

- Gift of \$6,000 from the United Way of Nashua, NH, Smart Start Coalition to the Merrimack School District to Support Kindergarten Programs.

Vice-Chair Peters asked if there were members of the public who had questions or comments. There were none.

MOTION: Board Member Martin made a motion to accept the gift in the amount of \$6,000 from the United Way of Nashua, NH, with the School Board’s sincere appreciation. Board Member Hardy seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Rothhaus called the meeting to order at approximately 7:15 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

3. RECOGNITIONS

There were none.

4. INFORMATIONAL UPDATES

a. Superintendent Update

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated that he participated in his first program on Cable TV the prior week and he would continue to do a program once every two weeks for informational purposes as to updates regarding the school district.

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen explained that he had sent out the “Observe and Conserve” initiative to the staff regarding the rising cost of energy.

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen shared that the varsity football team had a big win over Keene at a score of 34 – 7. He added the girls' varsity soccer team had a win over Windham.

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said the Athletic Department would hold its Senior Recognition ceremonies the following week.

b. Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Update

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle said later in the month the Social Studies Curriculum team would be meeting and moving the curriculum along for peer review. She said the Science Curriculum team would also meet to review where they were at, and she would keep the Board up to date on the progress. Additionally, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle said the Language Arts and the ELA had their initial meeting with regard to using EduPlanet 21 and it went very well. She said the elementary and middle school Language Arts coordinators would be meeting on October 7th.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle commented that some elementary school teachers were participating in training on the new Envisions pilot program. She said there would be a professional development day on Friday, October 7th.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle shared that the district's CIA Committee had met, and they established a task force to address one of the district's goals, Strategic Objective #2.

c. Assistant Superintendent for Business Update

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell thanked Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle for attending the dedication of the Thorntons Ferry Elementary School.

d. School Board Update

Chair Rothhaus commented that she had heard that there were some disparaging comments made on the "Merrimack Forum" regarding the Memorandum of Understanding and the Paraprofessional contract. Further, Chair Rothhaus said that she did not agree with the misinformation and disparaging comments made.

e. Student Representative Update

Student Representative Vadney said the Homecoming celebrations all went very well. She added that the Student Council held an open meeting for freshmen and new upperclassmen who had an interest in joining the Council and Student Council was also starting to look into Disney Leadership training opportunities for the upperclassmen.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. Goals and Objectives Presentation (Presentation available on the district's website)

Chair Rothhaus reviewed a PowerPoint presentation regarding the School Board's goals and objectives as summarized below:

- Goal #1 – To Create an Engaged, Inclusive, and Collaborative District Culture Built on Mutual Trust and Respect.
- Goal #2 – Pathways to Graduation.
- Goal #3 – Improve our Learning Outcomes by Ensuring our Instruction is Responsive to the Varied Needs of our Student Population.
- Goal #4 – To have Facilities and Equipment that are Safe, Secure, Clean, Healthy, Current, and Appropriate for Meeting the Educational Needs of Students and Staff.
- Goal #5 – Ongoing Review of Existing Policies to Ensure that they are Compliant and in Alignment with district practices.

In conclusion, Chair Rothhaus said the School Board and the district leadership were committed to:

- To the Improvement, Advancement, and Achievement of the District.
- To the Social and Emotional Development of Students, Staff, Faculty, and Families.
- To the Open Communication between Stakeholders as we Move in New and Improved Ways Towards the Future.
- To the Integrity of Processes, Policies, and People as we Work Together to Make the District Great.
- To Move through these Goals with Regular Updates to the Public, believing they will Prepare the District for a New Era.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Board's Response to Gift of \$6,000 from the United Way of Nashua

Vice-Chair Peters commented that the School Board was very appreciative of the United Way for choosing Merrimack to be the recipient of the \$6,000 gift.

- b. Strategic Planning Update

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle said the Strategic Planning Framework included implementing a Strategic Planning Committee that would be representative of district leaders, building leaders, one parent from each school, two School Board members, and two community members. She also said from that group a five to seven-member Steering Committee would be implemented.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle said the committee would meet monthly beginning in November of 2022 and continue through May of 2023, and the hope was to present the Strategic Plan to the Merrimack School Board and the public on June 5, 2023.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle added that the district had retained the facilitation services of Mr. Bill Wilmot, who had consulted with the district for many years.

c. Civics Assessment

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle explained that House Bill 157:1 would be effective as of July 1, 2023. She said the Bill would require students to pass a locally developed competency assessment in Civics and pass the naturalization examination developed by the 2020 United States Citizen and Immigration Service with a 70% or better, to graduate from high school.

d. PRIMEX Contribution Assurance Program (CAP) for FY 2024 – 2026 for the Property & Liability Program

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell explained that PRIMEX had offered the Merrimack School District the option of participating in the Contribution Assurance Program (CAP) for the next three coverage period years.

MOTION: Board Member Hardy made a motion to accept the PRIMEX Contribution Assurance Program (CAP) for FY 2024 – 2026 for the Property & Liability Program, as presented. Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

e. PRIMEX Contribution Assurance Program (CAP) for FY 2024 – 2026 for the Workers' Compensation Program

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell stated that PRIMEX had offered the Merrimack School District the option of participating in the Contribution Assurance Program (CAP) for the Workers' Compensation Program for the next three coverage period years.

MOTION: Chair Rothhaus made a motion to accept the PRIMEX Contribution Assurance Program (CAP) for FY 2024 – 2026 for the Workers' Compensation Program, as presented. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

f. Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Merrimack and the Merrimack School District

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen shared that the Town of Merrimack's School District had entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Merrimack Police Department regarding the goals and objectives of the School Resource Officer (SRO).

MOTION: Chair Rothhaus made a motion to accept the Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Merrimack's School District and the Town of Merrimack (Merrimack Police

Department.) Board Member Hardy seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

g. Other

Chair Rothhaus requested the Board to consider writing a policy where there would be a parking ban effective the night before elections at the schools to make it easier for the people who need to set up.

Chair Rothhaus also requested that the COVID update be removed from the website. Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen replied he would remove the update, but he would keep the Board and the public informed if there were any concerning trends.

7. POLICIES

MOTION: Board Member Hardy made a motion to waive the 1st reading of the “Use of Physical Restraint/Seclusion Policy (JKAA)” and “Public Participation at Board Meetings Policy (BEDH)” into the record. Board Member Martin seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

a. Use of Physical Restraint/Seclusion (JKAA) – 1st Reading

Chair Rothhaus commented that she felt it would be important to make sure staff were trained in CPI (Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Program) on a yearly basis. Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen replied that it was much more time and cost-effective to have people who were already trained to train others.

b. Public Participation at Board Meetings (BEDH) – 1st Reading

Board Member Halter commented that she felt the following language should be included under “Rules & Order”:

- All speakers needed to be residents of Merrimack.
- Speakers should read their names and address into the record.

The Board collectively decided not to allow public comments submitted via e-mail.

Vice-Chair Peters said the policy would appear on a future agenda for a third reading.

c. Review of Change of Class or School Assignment Best Interest and Manifest Hardship (JCA) – 2nd Reading

Board Member Halter commented that she would email her suggested edits to Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen as well as Ms. Sandra Swanson, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. September 12, 2022 – Public & Non-Public Minutes

MOTION: Chair Rothhaus made a motion to approve the public and non-public minutes of the September 12, 2022, meeting, as presented. Board Member Martin seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

9. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Teacher Nominations

- Ms. Stephanie Scherr, Science Teacher, Merrimack Middle School
- Ms. Nicole Soucie, Special Education Teacher, Merrimack High School

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

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

10. OTHER

- a. Committee Reports

Board Member Halter shared that she attended the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting where they discussed the intersection of Wire Road and DPW Highway and options for improvement. She also said the Halloween Party would be held on Saturday, October 29th from 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. at Wasserman Park.

Board Member Hardy said she attended the CIA (Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment) Committee meeting on September 22nd. She said the focus of the meeting was to set priorities for the year.

Vice-Chair Peters added that the Professional Development Committee had met but she was unable to attend the meeting due to an injury.

- b. Correspondence

Chair Rothhaus said she received correspondence questioning why the COVID website was not updated.

Board Member Hardy said she received correspondence from a parent who was concerned about the release of student private information.

Vice-Chair Peters said she received correspondence regarding an athletic coach as well as the release of student private information.

c. Comments

Board Member Martin commented that the following Saturday, the Merrimack High School Marching Band would be performing in their biggest performance of the year at the Salem Marching Band Invitational.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

There was none.

12. NON-PUBLIC SESSION

MOTION: At approximately 8:25 p.m. Board Member Hardy made a motion to go into a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) (b) (c) in the Merrimack TV Training Classroom. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

- Legal
- Staff Welfare

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

13. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At approximately 8:50 p.m. Board Member Hardy made a motion to adjourn the public meeting. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0