

Merrimack School District/SAU 26
School Board Meeting
Preliminary Agenda
November 15, 2021
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room

Send public comments to: publiccomment@sau26.org. Comments must be received between the start of the meeting on November 15, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. and Agenda Item #9. Based on the volume of public comments received, the board chair will determine if all public comments can be read. If not, they will be incorporated into the meeting minutes.

6:00 P.M. NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A:3, II (a) (b) (c) – Training Classroom

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| • Student Welfare | Cinda Guagliumi |
| • Staff Welfare | Cinda Guagliumi |
| • Negotiations | Cinda Guagliumi |

PUBLIC MEETING

7:00 p.m. **1. CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

7:05 p.m. **2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

3. RECOGNITIONS

7:25 p.m. **4. INFORMATIONAL UPDATES**

1. Superintendent Update
2. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Update
3. Assistant Superintendent for Business Update
4. School Board Update
5. Student Representative Update

7:35 p.m. **5. OLD BUSINESS**

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Health and Safety Task Force Update | Everett Olsen |
| 2. School Board's 2022-2023 Budget Message to Administration | Cinda Guagliumi |

7:55 p.m. **6. NEW BUSINESS**

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. Capital Improvement Plan Review | Matt Shevenell |
| 2. Standards-Based Report Card Presentation
(Michelle Romein, Jeanette Cote, Debra Walter, Nicole Rheault,
Nicole Frazzetta, Holly Lubelczyk and Anders Benson) | Kimberly Yarlott |
| 3. Preliminary Information on Residential Development | Everett Olsen |
| 4. Memorandum of Understanding between School Board and
Merrimack Teachers Association Classroom Coverage | Cinda Guagliumi |

8:45 p.m. **7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. October 18, 2021 Minutes | Cinda Guagliumi |
| 2. November 1, 2021 Minutes | Cinda Guagliumi |
| 3. November 9, 2021 Minutes | Cinda Guagliumi |

8:50 p.m. **8. CONSENT AGENDA**

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Educator Resignation | Kimberly Yarlott |
|-------------------------|------------------|

8:55 p.m. **9. OTHER**

1. Committee Reports
2. Correspondence
3. Comments

9:05 p.m. **10. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

9:20 p.m. **11. ADJOURN**

* These times are estimates and may vary depending on discussion.

**Capital Improvement Plan
Capital Expenditure Summary Form - 10 YEAR PLAN**

Approved by the Planning and Building Committee 11-09-2021

Description	Replace Addition	Priority	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32
Roofing	Replace	Necessary	TFS \$ 1,600,500	MES/JMUES \$ 852,547	MES/JMUES \$ 824,901	MES/JMUES \$ 1,024,877	MES/JMUES \$ 1,211,660	MHS \$ 751,998	MHS \$ 627,440	MHS \$ 136,793		
Ventilation	Replace	Necessary										
Paving O'Gara Drive and New Sidewalk - Master Plan Step 1A	Replace	Necessary										
Bleacher Upgrade	Replace	Necessary	\$ 552,625									
			JMUES Bleachers APR DONE Bleachers in Smith Gym DONE									
Gym Floor Replacement	Replace	Necessary	JMUES APR DONE VCT or		MHS GYM \$ 195,001							
Boilers	Replace	Necessary										
									MUES (2) Units \$ 300,000			
Window Replacement	Replace	Necessary				MHS - Courtyard \$ 359,417		TBD		TBD		
Turf Field - MHS	Replace	Necessary			TBD			\$ 360,000		\$ 360,000		
Master Plan/SAU Office Study	Replace	Necessary										
Total			\$ 2,153,125	\$ 852,547	\$ 1,019,902	\$ 1,384,294	\$ 1,711,660	\$ 1,111,998	\$ 927,440	\$ 496,793	TBD	TBD

MAINT = Maintenance Building
MHS = Merimack High School
MMS = Merimack Middle School
MUES = Masticola Upper Elementary School
MES = Masticola Elementary School
RFS = Reeds Ferry Elementary School
TFS = Thomtons Ferry Elementary School

Ogara Drive Rehabilitation

Remove existing pavement from O'Gara;
 regrade existing gravel; pave 3.5" pavement
 Misc work - Assume 25% of above

Length of
 work =
 2,580 LF

Width = 24
 LF

Unit Cost
 \$20 per SY

Cost
 \$137,600.00

Total = \$ 34,400.00
 Total = \$172,000.00

New Sidewalk from existing to southern end
 of skate park gravel lot on west side of Ogara

Length of
 work =
 1,450 LF

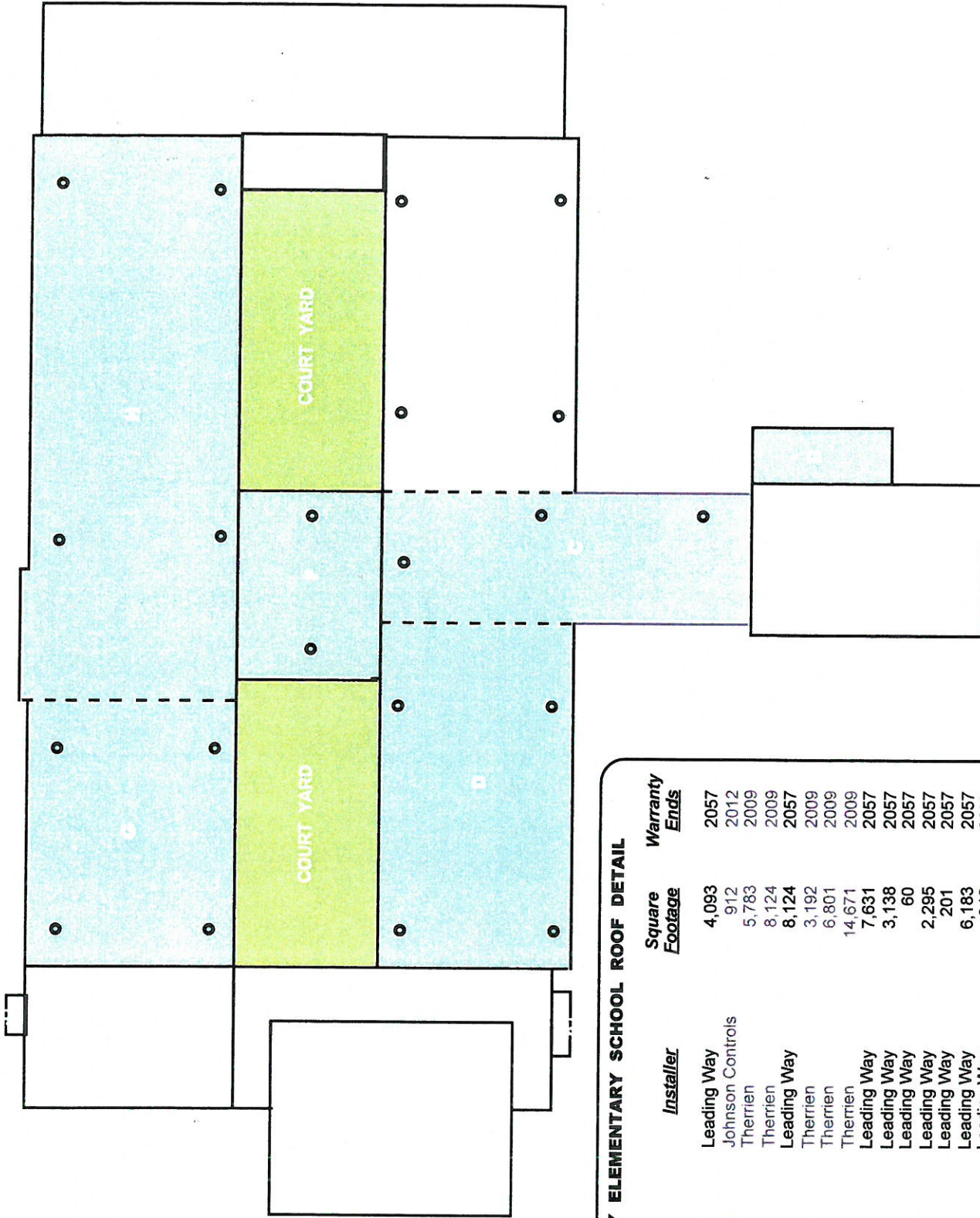
Misc Work (resetting guardrail, drainage, etc) -
 Assume 50%

\$175 per
 Linear foot

\$253,750.00

\$126,875.00

Total = \$380,625.00

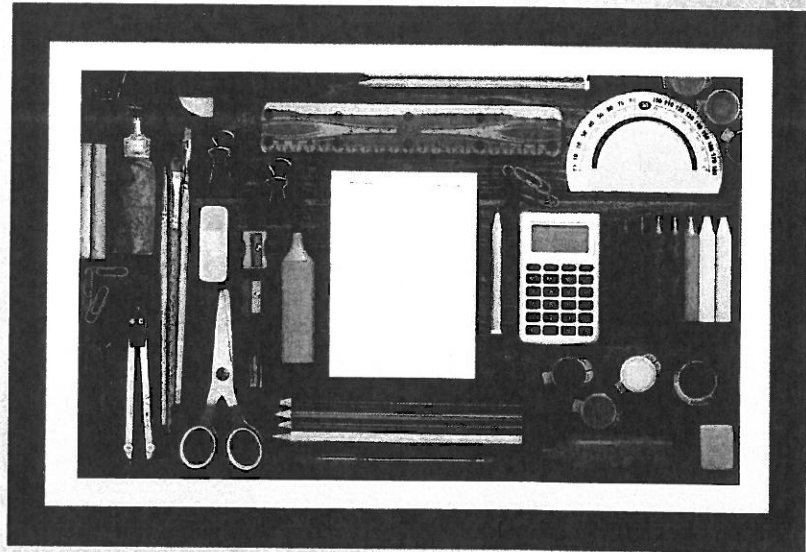


THORNTONS FERRY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ROOF DETAIL

<u>Roof</u>	<u>Year Installed/ Manufacturer</u>	<u>Installer</u>	<u>Square Footage</u>	<u>Warranty Ends</u>
A	2017 / Garland	Leading Way	4,093	2057
B	1992 / Corrugated Metal	Johnson Controls	912	2012
C	1994 / Sopreme 2021	Therrien	5,783	2009
D	1994 / Sopreme 2021	Therrien	8,124	2009
E	2017 / Garland	Leading Way	8,124	2057
F	1994 / Sopreme 2021	Therrien	3,192	2009
G	1994 / Sopreme 2021	Therrien	6,801	2009
H	1994 / Sopreme 2021	Therrien	14,671	2009
I	2017 / Garland	Leading Way	7,631	2057
J	2017 / Garland	Leading Way	3,138	2057
J1	2017 / Garland	Leading Way	60	2057
K	2017 / Garland	Leading Way	2,295	2057
K1	2017 / Garland	Leading Way	201	2057
L	2017 / Garland	Leading Way	6,183	2057
M	2017 / Garland	Leading Way	912	2057
Total Square Footage			72,120	
1.63 acres or				

STANDARDS BASED REPORTING

NOVEMBER 15, 2021



1

THE EVOLUTION OF REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

- Educators were teaching a standards-based curriculum but the report card we were using did not align.
- Parents wanted more information as to how they could support their children at home
- Educators wanted to report on progress toward grade level standards rather than a summation of work
- We wanted students to be more involved in the assessment process.

2

The standards-based report card committee consists of representatives across the district including...

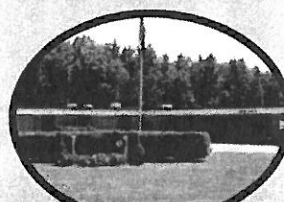
- K-6 Classroom Educators
- Special Educators
- Unified Arts Educators
- A Behavior Specialist
- Language Arts Coordinators
- Administrators



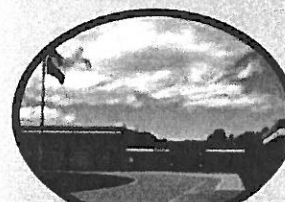
Mastricola Elementary



Mastricola Upper Elem.



Thorntons Ferry Elem.



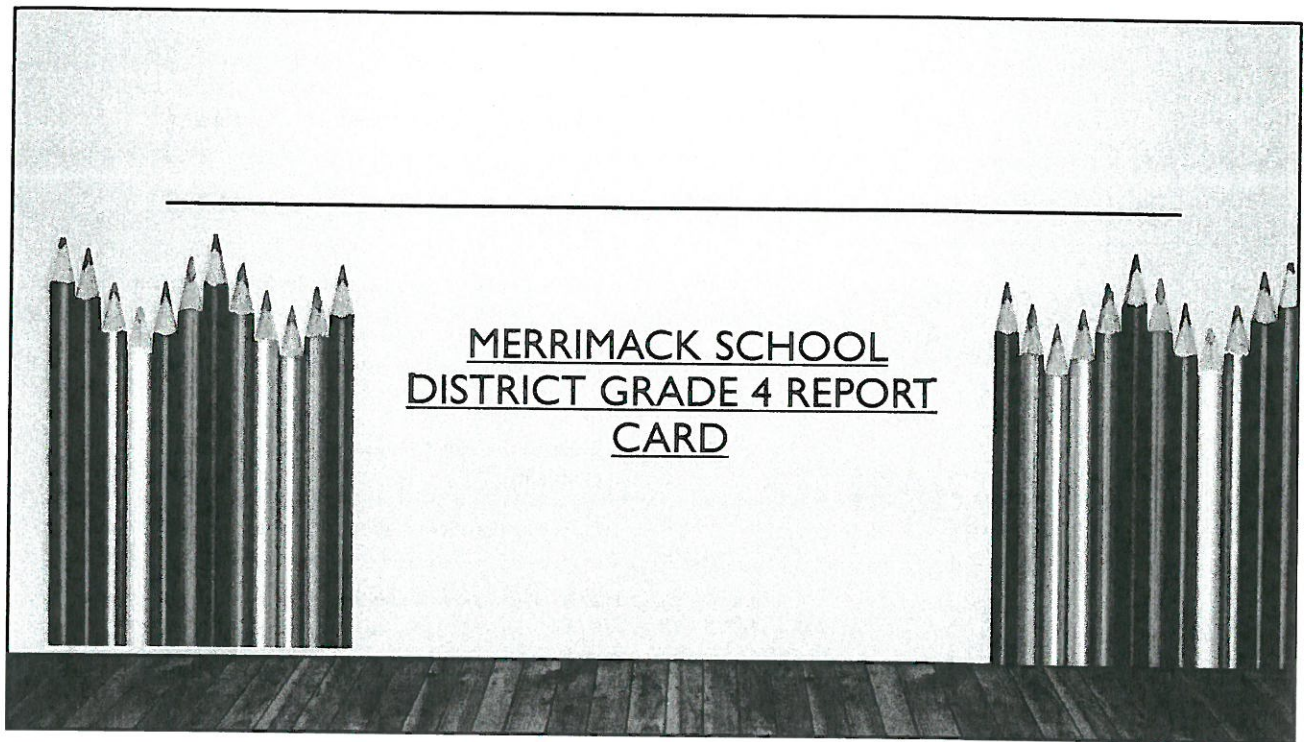
Reeds Ferry Elem.

3

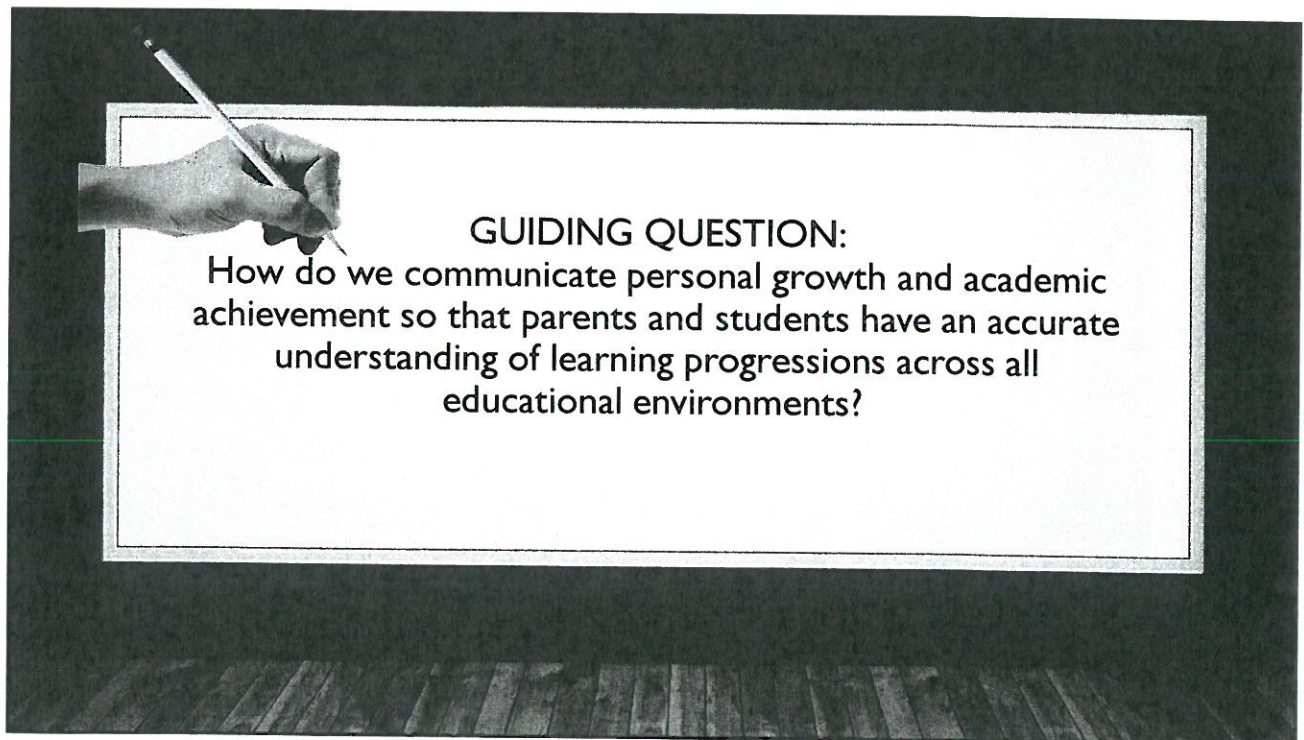
COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<u>JMUES</u>	<u>RFS</u>	<u>MES</u>	<u>TFS</u>	<u>MMS</u>
• Nicole Frazzetta	• Sherry Rosswaag	• Holly Lubelczyk	• Meghan Bohn	• Nicole Diggins
• Adam Goodman	• Jeanette Cote	• Kelly Marble	• Jennie Calnan	
• Tracy Ruyffelaert	• Allison MacGuire	• Debbie Fournier	• Kara Daly	
• Sarah Garbarz	• Noel Rosenswaike	• Kathy Theriault	• Deb Walter	
• Jennifer Monroe	• Kristen Herr	• Maryanne Sabat	• Julie DeLuca	
• Anders Benson	• Sarah Claire	• Michelle Romein		
• Marsha McGill	• Kimberly Yarlott			
• Nicole Rheault	• Laura Livie			

4




5



6

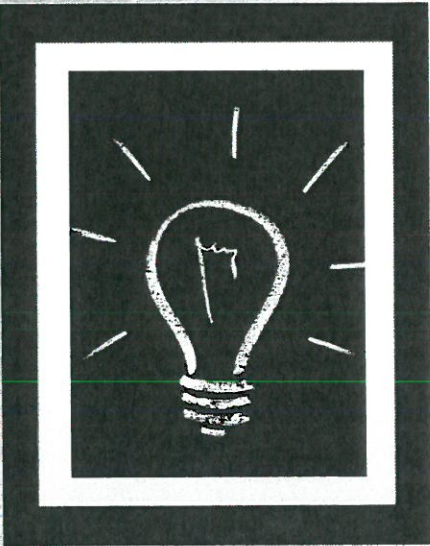
SIX PURPOSES OF GRADING



Communicate	Communicate achievement status to parents
Provide	Provide information to students for self-evaluation
Select, identify, or group	Select, identify, or group students for instruction
Provide	Provide incentives for students
Evaluate	Evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs
Document	Document students' effort of responsibility

Reference: Guskey, T.R. (2020). *Get Set, Go! Creating Successful Grading and Reporting Systems*. Bloomington, IL: Solution Tree.

7



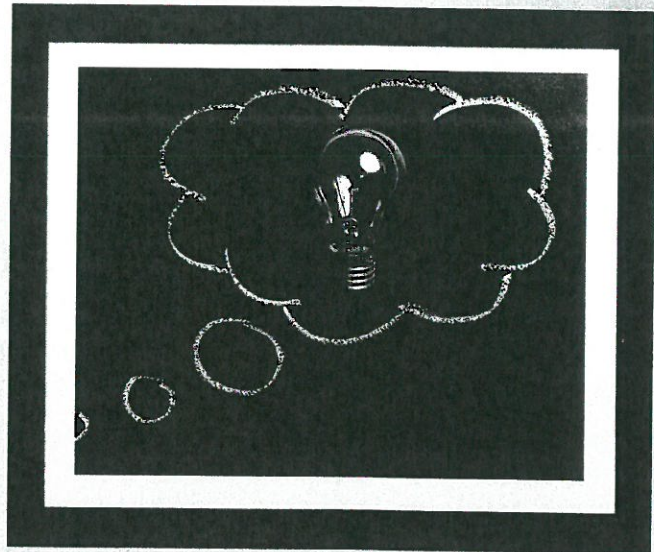
WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE MSD REPORT CARD?

The purpose of this report card is to communicate with parents/guardians and students regarding the achievement of specific standards-based learning goals. It identifies students' levels of progress, relevant to those goals, areas of strengths, and areas where additional time and effort are needed.

8

Research and Investigation

- Review of model products across the U.S. (NH, NY, PA, MA, CT, VT, TX, CA)
- Book study of *Developing Standards-Based Report Card* by Thomas R. Guskey and Jane M. Bailey
- Presence at workshops and conferences presented by Guskey
- Research of CASEL (Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning) Standards



9

Reporting Timeline

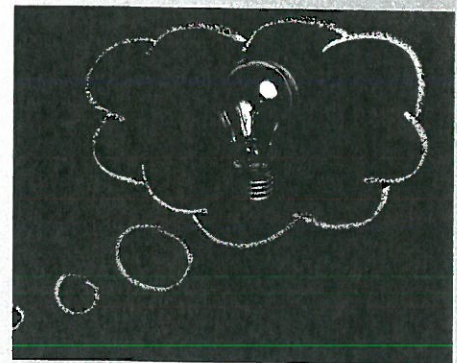
Conferences: Early/Mid-November

Trimester One: Ends December 10th, Report Cards sent home December 22nd

Conferences: Late February/Early March


Trimester Two: Ends March 25th, Report Cards sent home April 8th

Trimester Three: June 15th, Report Cards sent home last day of school.



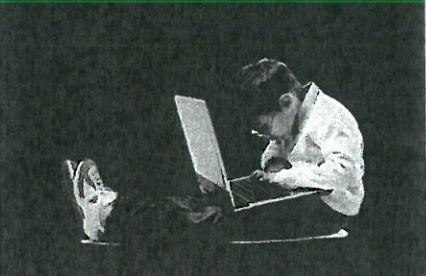
10

Reporting Standards	Curriculum Standards
Designed for Reporting on Student Learning	Designed for Planning Instruction and Assessments
Relatively Few in Number (Usually 4-6 per subject)	Many in Number (10-50)
Broad and More General	Highly Specific
Clear and Understandable	Complicated and Detailed
Expressed in Parent-Friendly Language	Expressed in Complex, Educator Language



11

REPORTING STANDARD EXAMPLE



Reporting Standard: Uses a variety of decoding and/or word analysis strategies. (Grades 1-6).

Curriculum Standards

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.1.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 1 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.1.4.a
- Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.1.4.b
- Use frequently occurring affixes as a clue to the meaning of a word.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.1.4.c
- Identify frequently occurring root words (e.g., look) and their inflectional forms (e.g., looks, looked, looking).
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.4
- Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.
- Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

Image from <https://learningworksforkids.com/members/signup/>

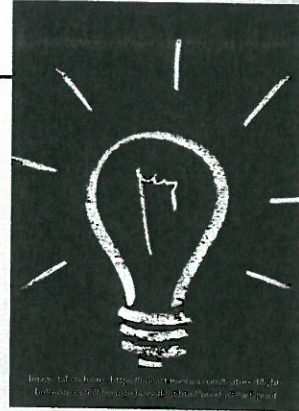
12

RELATIONSHIP OF ESSENTIAL LEARNING COMPETENCIES TO THE REPORTING STANDARDS

Each grade level Essential Learning Competency (ELC) was chosen from the curriculum standards for each grade level.

These Essential Learning Competencies were chosen as the most critical curriculum standards to teach to mastery at each grade level.

Each Essential Learning Competency aligns with a Reporting Standard and will be reported on under that Reporting Standard on the report card.



13

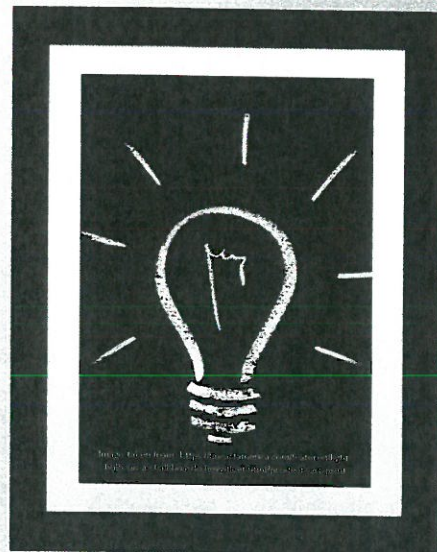
ALIGNMENT AND CROSSWALK OF GRADE LEVEL STANDARDS

Ensured that all grade level curriculum standards were aligned to a reporting standard

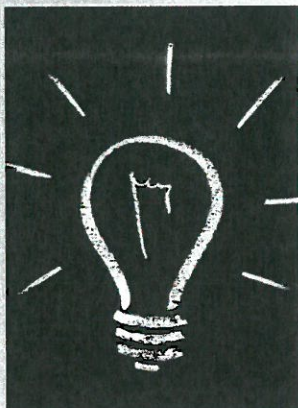
Aligned kindergarten through grade six curriculum standards to ensure they were consistently represented in the same reporting standards

Revised reporting standards accordingly

Completed process for all subject areas: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Math, Science, Social Studies, Unified Arts, and Characteristics of a Successful Learner



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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

A Guide to the Merrimack School District K-6 Trimester Report Card

MSD Family Guide to Support the Standards Based Report Card

MSD Educator Guide to Support the Standards Based Report Card

MSD Family Guide to the Characteristics of a Successful Learner

[MSD Family Guide for End of Grade 4 Expectations](#)

15

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Beginning: The student is beginning to make progress toward meeting the expectation for this trimester.

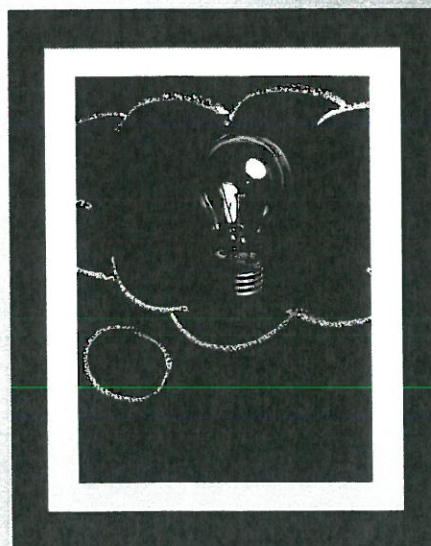
Developing: The student is progressing toward meeting the expectation for this trimester.

Meeting: The student is meeting the expectation for this trimester.

Comments: An educator may include comments to give more specific information relative to a student's performance.

The explicit standards or learning goals students are expected to be met at the end of the trimester.

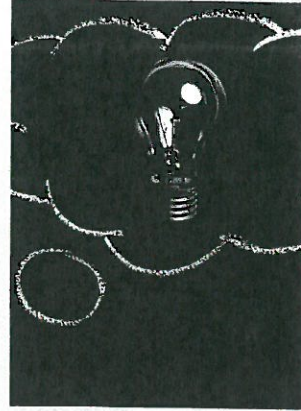
The indicators show each student's level of progress or proficiency in meeting those standards at the end of the trimester.



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NEXT STEPS...

- Creation of grade level assessment rubrics for each subject
- Gathering of feedback from educators, families, and students
- Utilizing Canvas as a communication tool



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THANK YOU



18

MERRIMACK SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Administrative Unit #26
36 McElwain Street
Merrimack, New Hampshire 03054
Tel. (603) 424-6200 Fax (603) 424-6229

KIMBERLY YARLOTT
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum

EVERETT V. OLSEN, Jr.
Interim Chief Educational Officer

MATTHEW D. SHEVENELL
Assistant Superintendent for Business

To: Cinda Guagliumi
Laurie Rothhaus
Shannon Barnes

Jenna Hardy
Lori Peters
Kaitlyn Vadney

From: Everett V. Olsen, Jr.

Date: November 10, 2021

Subject: Preliminary Information on Residential Development

I am presenting some preliminary information on the scope of residential development in Merrimack. This information has been provided by Community Development Director, Tim Thompson. I am awaiting some additional vital information which is the number of bedrooms in each respective project. This information is important to our ability to estimate the student enrollment impact to a respective school. As soon as this information (number of bedrooms) is available to us, I will forward to you our best estimate of the impact on enrollment.

Residential Construction

							District		
Project	Type	# Units	# Bedrooms	Construction Status	MES	TFS	RFS		
Bower's Landing	Detached Condos	115		Under Construction		X			
Gilbert Crossing	Rental Units	240		Completed			X		
Gilbert Crossing	Rental Units	96		Planned			X		
Merrimack Townhomes	Rental Units	45		Completed		X			
Executive Park	Rental Units	2 80		Completed		X			
Greenfield Farms	Single Family	66		Finishing Construction			X		
Merrimack Park Place	Rental Units	224				X			
Crosswoods Path	Condos Mid Rise	21					X		
Edge Brook Heights	Condos (4 story)	156 Market Rate 76 Age Restricted				X			
Chestnut Hill	Single Family	77		Under Construction	X				
360 D.W. Highway	Apartments	40		Beginning Soon		X			
Oak Ridge	Single Family	12		Under Construction	X				
Normandy Estates	Single Family	8		Approved Awaiting Construction		X			
Stage Coach Crossing	Single Family	12		Under Construction		X			

	<u>Single Family</u>	<u>Condo</u>	<u>Apartments</u>
	66	115	240
	77	21	96
	12	156	45
	8		280
	12		224
			40
TOTALS	175	292	925
UNITS		1392	



Merrimack's development boom

By KATHIE RAGSDALE Business NH Magazine

Sep 9, 2021

MERRIMACK — With its “sweet spot” location between the state’s two largest cities, a business-friendly town government and a healthy mix of residential and commercial development, Merrimack has been enjoying an economic upsurge.

And town leaders only expect that growth to continue, despite anticipated challenges with infrastructure, traffic and workforce housing demands.

Stretching along the west side of the Merrimack River, which powered the saw and grist mills that once drove its economy, the town of roughly 27,000 can thank the paved river of the Everett Turnpike for its prosperity today.

Merrimack has several exits off the turnpike between Manchester and Nashua and can draw on the talent force in those two communities, as well as that of the greater Boston area just south of the nearby state border. At the same time, its growing stock of residential housing — largely concentrated west of the turnpike — and its assortment of restaurants and services make it an ideal bedroom community for commuters.

Besides its proximity to Nashua and Manchester, “We’re an hour from Portsmouth, an hour from the White Mountains, an hour from the beach, an hour from Boston,” enthuses new Town Manager Paul Micali, who previously served as finance director for the town for 15 years. And the town is building on those assets. “We are expanding. We have lots of new construction,” he says.

Employer and development magnet

Merrimack is home to some of the state’s largest employers, including brewer Anheuser-Busch, which came to town in 1970 and employs more than 500 people, and financial services giant Fidelity Investments, the town’s largest employer, which provides jobs to some 6,000 workers. Technology

solutions firm Connection, formerly PC Connection, opened in Merrimack in 1998 and employs more than 1,000. And in 2012, The Merrimack Premium Outlets opened, offering more than 100 stores and employing hundreds.

“The town was really coming out of an economic slowdown in 2011,” says Tim Thompson, director of community development, who took over the department that year. “There was a desire on the part of the town manager to change direction to focus on customer service, taking care of residents but making sure development was welcome. That became one of my focuses.”

Robert Best, chairman of the planning board and a 20-year resident of town, says that customer service objective paid off, starting with the development or redevelopment of several “key landmarks around town that just needed new life.”

One was the old 65,000-square-foot Zyla’s discount warehouse on Daniel Webster Highway—the town’s major commercial artery — with its red and white striped facade and giant signs promoting things like “TOYS” and “TOOLS AND CANDY.” It was taken over by Vault Motor Storage, which added trees, fencing, paving and other amenities to make it look “100 percent different and better,” says Best. “Vault has been a great community citizen.”

Another was 360 Daniel Webster Highway, the site of a former Shaw’s supermarket that sat vacant for years and was redeveloped by OVP Management of Newton, Mass. into Merrimack 360, a neighborhood center that includes restaurants, a trampoline park, a credit union, hair salon and other tenants.

“We develop a fair amount of real estate in New Hampshire, and we thought this was an interesting opportunity,” says Robert Barsamian, president of OVP Management, who estimates his firm spent \$10 million on the initial redevelopment.

The plaza is now 100% leased, he adds, and the back portion of the property has been sold to an apartment developer who plans to put in 40 living units.

“My experience with Merrimack was really good,” Barsamian adds. “Between the planning board and the zoning board and all the town officials, they couldn’t be more professional or business-driven.”

Best calls Merrimack 360 “a model for what you can do with a retail strip mall,” and Thompson says it represents a high point for his tenure as community development director because “it was such a prominent location where everybody saw this vacant eyesore for so many years.... It’s phenomenal to have it turn around like that.”

Another revamp took place at 40 Continental Boulevard, formerly a commercial manufacturing research facility that sat vacant for years. Thompson says the town was able to get Atrium Maquet Getinge Group, a medical supply manufacturer, to relocate there after it started running out of room at its Hudson site. “They added over 100,000 square feet to that facility, and up to 700 employees work there,” says Thompson. “Now it’s well over 200,000 square feet.”

Likewise, the long-vacant Merrimack Hotel and Conference Center near Exit 11 off the Everett Turnpike has been redeveloped into The Residences at Executive Park, with five apartment buildings on the site, 90% leased, and Thompson says the developer told him they made the investment because “they had seen some of the transformation in the community.”

Adds Best, “There were some really big changes with those sites that were visually needed for the town to have a facelift.”

Merrimack’s business-friendly climate has also attracted newcomers like the Able Ebenezer Brewing Co., which is succeeding in an industrial park just down the road from Merrimack 360.

Co-founder Mike Frizzelle, a California native, approached former Army buddy Carl Soderberg in 2013 for help in getting a biotech job in Cambridge, Mass., where Soderberg worked. Soderberg told him he was thinking of leaving that job and starting a brewery, and Frizzelle, already a beer aficionado, signed on. Because California was already saturated with breweries, the two decided to narrow their search for a locale to Massachusetts or NH.

Then they learned that NH passed nanobrewery-friendly legislation with a separate designation for brewers of 2,000 barrels or fewer a year, allowing them to get a license for only \$250 and to self-distribute. Between that and a pledge by Merrimack officials “to get everyone you need permits from in one room together,” Frizzelle says. “That was the kicker for us.... Now, almost seven years later, we’re the largest self-distributing brewery in the state” with two delivery trucks and three full-time drivers.

COVID forced them to close their tap room temporarily during the state-mandated shutdown, but the state also agreed to allow home delivery during the pandemic to ease the burden on businesses. “Our two highest-growing revenue months were April and May of 2020 because of home delivery, something we’re continuing to do,” says Frizzelle.

Now, restaurant sales are picking up again, the tap room is open and the brewery continues to produce 12 different beers—six at any given time—and has grown from 674 barrels in 2014 to 1,145 last year.

Growing community

Meanwhile, residential development in town continues to grow, and some 1,400 units — mostly multi-family and senior housing — are in the planning stages now, according to Thompson. Mixed-use developments are also on the rise, he says.

Tom Koenig, who chairs the Town Council, points to the proposed expansion of an apartment complex at the north end of town owned by the Flatley Co., which is contemplating adding 96 units to a 240-apartment complex, and a residential and commercial development at the south end of town, Edgebrook Heights, with 232 housing units.

Ground was broken in May for a 224-unit luxury apartment complex, Slate at Merrimack, adjacent to Merrimack Premium Outlets, where a hotel and restaurants are also planned.

Keeping a balance between residential and commercial is key to Merrimack’s continued success, town officials agree, with Thompson noting, “The town has always had a good history of both promoting rural character but recognizing industrial and commercial development to make sure the tax burden isn’t completely on the residents.”

Best agrees, saying, “We’ve got this unique flavor or personality because the turnpike divides the town into east and west.

On the west side, it’s very residential, with single-family homes, and on the east side, you have commercial and condos, so you can offer something for everyone. Plus, there are a lot of parks and open spaces.”

Merrimack Public Library Director Yvette Couser (pictured), who also sits on the board of the Greater Merrimack-Souhegan Valley Chamber of Commerce, says those are exactly the kinds of amenities that drew her to move to town with her family in 2013.

Merrimack reminded her of the New Jersey town where she grew up, she says, because it was close to large cities and the ocean and was “a place where people raised their families, and there were lots of businesses and malls. When we moved here it was like, there’s a movie theater and there’s a bowling alley and there are neat green spaces and hiking trails. We could plug the kids into a lot of activities right away.”

Best notes that a high resident population also provides a labor pool — an enticement for prospective employers to move to town — as well as demand for services like restaurants and shops. “All those things are interdependent,” he adds.

Challenges

The town will be even more attractive to newcomers, town officials agree, once tolls at the one remaining Everett Turnpike exit in town are eliminated. Koenig says the turnpike has four northbound and three southbound exits in town, and only one, Exit 10, still charges tolls, down from three a few years ago. The recently passed state budget includes a provision to remove that toll. Micali says he is grateful to all of the town officials and state representatives who have been working for years to eliminate that final toll booth.

But Merrimack faces broader challenges as it looks to its economic future. The Everett Turnpike is slated to be widened in the next few years, and Thompson says residents have expressed concern over what that will mean for traffic on the parallel Daniel Webster Highway, already experiencing increased volume because of the ongoing growth in town.

Additional traffic will also increase demand on the town’s infrastructure. Koenig says the town is in the middle of a wastewater treatment project for which \$22 million in bonds was approved, but bids came in at \$26 million to \$28 million.

“We’re keeping an eye on sources of funding through grants,” he says. “We’ll get as much done as we can. Some pumping stations and clarifiers are going to be replaced. Other things might wait.”

With most homes relying on propane or electricity for heat, the town might also need to consider bringing in natural gas to meet future needs, Micali says.

Like many communities, Merrimack is also facing challenges with workforce and workforce housing. The number of new residents coming to town is helping, but there are still “more jobs out there than people,” laments Thompson.

While hundreds of housing units are being constructed in town, “most are market-rate or even luxury rate, between \$1,600 and \$2,000 a month,” he says. “The town hasn’t done anything from a regulatory standpoint for workforce housing. That may be something the community needs to look at in the next few years.”

The town may also be looking at more redevelopment, rather than new construction, in the future, says Best, as most of Merrimack’s buildable land has already been developed. Finding new ways of accessing and enjoying the Merrimack River—separated from most of the traveling public by a rail line — could also be part of a community discussion, he says.

All agree the town’s economic future looks bright. “I think it’s a pretty good place to be,” says Best. “I think it’s a pretty good success story.”

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MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

The Merrimack School Board and the Merrimack Teachers Association (“MTA”) hereby agree to amend the Master Agreement by adding the following provision, effective immediately:

8.7 A middle or high school teacher (grades 7 through 12) who agrees to teach an extra academic class at the request of administration or their designee during their planning period will be paid an additional \$40 per period. No teacher will be required to accept such an assignment. No more than one additional class per day will be assigned to a teacher.

An elementary (preschool through grade 6) teacher who covers part of another class at the request of administration or their designee for more than half a day will be paid an additional \$60. If the teacher covers part of another class at the request of administration or their designee for less than half a day, the teacher will be paid an additional \$40.

In all cases, the administrator, or their designee, will be responsible for assigning students.

Approved by

The Merrimack School Board

Chair

Date: _____

The Merrimack Teachers Association

Date: _____

President

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room
October 18, 2021**

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

-Legal

-Negotiations

-Staff Welfare

-Student Welfare

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

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Chair Guagliumi pointed out that the School Board would accept public comment via email and to do that members of the public could send emails to publiccomment@sau26.org.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Naomi Holter, 10 Everest Drive, addressed the Board and said she would be in support of putting off any strategic planning for a year or two when the new Superintendent would be in place.

Ms. Rosemarie Rung, 21 Ministerial Drive (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record)

At the Merrimack School Board meeting on October 5, Ms. Trant spoke at public participation and said that in August of 1996, the Merrimack School Board all left their positions because of what was taught in the schools. This is patently false. I was on the Merrimack School Board in 1996 and for another 8 years, during which time only 2 people resigned. One due to a job relocation and another who retired and moved south. Nothing was taught in our schools at that time which was controversial.

Many others made comments that are also untrue or misleading. It is frustrating for people watching from home to listen to what has become a concerted effort to undermine the authority of the School Board. Please continue to base your decisions on valid information, data, and sensibility and not be influenced by people who carelessly throw out statements not based on fact.

44 Ms. Shayna Debork, 89 Belmont Street, addressed the Board and said three weeks prior she had
45 started a petition to support the cancellation of the contract with 2Revolutions. She said there
46 were currently 225 signatures.
47

48 Ms. Jennifer Jobin, 42 Merrymeeting Drive (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record)
49

50 First, I'd like to say thank you to the members of the school board, school administration, and
51 teachers in our district. You continue to show up and put in time and effort for the benefit of our
52 students and our community during difficult times. It is greatly appreciated!
53

54 I've heard that there may be a motion tonight to suspend the contract for the strategic planning
55 initiative. While I wholeheartedly support the strategic planning process to outline the future of our
56 education system in Merrimack, I hope that all Board members will agree to postpone it. While
57 we continue to deal with the pandemic, there is added stress on all of you, on our educators, our
58 students, and our community. We want to have all of those groups involved in the process and
59 be able to commit the time and energy that is needed to formulate a robust plan that meets the
60 needs of all of our students.
61

62 Since the district is currently searching for a permanent superintendent, a delay will allow the new
63 Superintendent to be in place to lead the process.
64

65 This will also allow time to better educate the community on what will and will not be involved in
66 the strategic planning process, which will lead to a more positive experience and better community
67 involvement.
68

69 Ms. Jennifer Motyl, 27 Ellie Drive, addressed the Board and said she read the aforementioned
70 petition and said she did not like to categorize students by what letter grade they had. She said
71 they were whole children and they all mattered.
72

73 Ms. Sara Lock, Cota Road (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record)
74

75 There has been an awful lot of distraction and stress placed on our educators and admin lately
76 — bless them for rising above, and continuing to do the best they can for our children.
77

78 With that in mind, I encourage the board to support the suspension of the contract with
79 2Revolutions for the 21/22 school year. In an effort to alleviate the stress of multiple outside
80 matters being hurled at our teachers and admin, and refocusing on educational matters, while in
81 the midst of the district's superintendent search, I think it's best to take another look at that at a
82 different time — this isn't it.
83

84 I also want to take a moment to thank Michaela Champlain, TFS, and the Merrimack Police
85 Department for their swift response at Thornton's Ferry last week. It was extremely irresponsible
86 and shocking to arrive at the school and see a disruption to the drop-off line at the elementary
87 school, caused by an unnecessary "protest" of sorts. The community should be reminded that
88 these actions are banned from taking place on school property, and that alarming small children
89 is no way to gain support.
90

91 My daughter is thriving at TFS, and I look forward to bringing educational matters back into
92 focus at these meetings.

93
94 Ms. Heather Callahan, 5 King Henry Court, addressed the Board and said she felt masks on
95 children may do more harm than good.
96

97 Ms. Ashleigh Lowe, 2 W. Chamberlain Road (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record)
98

99 First, I would like to thank the entirety of the Merrimack School district faculty and staff for their
100 efforts over the past 18 months. Every single one of the people in the employ of the district made
101 sure our students received the best education possible under enormously stressful conditions.
102 Teachers, paraprofessionals, office staff, food service, custodial staff, and many more. They all
103 made the past 18 months more bearable and never gave up, they never quit. They showed up
104 for their students. I sincerely thank them all.
105

106 Secondly, I want the School Board to extend their pause on implementing 2Revolutions into our
107 curriculum. This is causing a rift within town like I haven't seen recently, and I think people on
108 both sides of the issue could use time to learn as much as they can about it. If this divisiveness
109 continues, I worry that Merrimack will lose more of the sense of community that we have had in
110 town. No matter the content of the program, maybe it is just not good for the town if it is causing
111 so much fighting and disagreement amongst the town population. We are all residents, all
112 neighbors, and it would be a shame to have something threaten that.
113

114 Thirdly, and lastly, I would like the board to consider implementing a mask mandate within school
115 buildings for the coming months. New Hampshire had a very mild flu season last winter, largely
116 because of distancing and making use. Flu symptoms are nearly impossible to distinguish from
117 covid symptoms without a test. Students will be sent home from school for a cough, sniffle, runny
118 nose, etc., and likely won't be able to return until a covid test comes back. This will cause them
119 to lose time out of the classroom. Masking would help control the spread of flu as well as covid.
120 Recently, after an outbreak in the district, Bedford NH had to go to universal masking for a two-
121 week period. It worked, their outbreak cleared and cases dropped. Masks will help protect our
122 students from not only becoming ill but also prevent them from losing time out of class while they
123 await test results.
124

125 Mr. Robert Reisman, 8 Iris Drive, addressed the Board and expressed gratitude to the teachers
126 and the school staff.
127

128 Mr. Dan Coakley, 89 Back River Road (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record)
129

130 Opinions are like body parts; we all have them. Many have fought and died for us to have them,
131 even when they are wrong. Including some from right here in Merrimack.
132

133 Subjective evaluations of meetings are just that, subjective, and will vary based on the number of
134 people evaluating. Google research is an oxymoron, as is Facebook research.
135

136 Anecdotal evidence is not research, though we must accommodate the needs of all students,
137 medical, mental, and social. Many years ago, as a younger man, I marched on Washington for
138 Civil Rights. We accomplished some change, but that challenge is unmet.
139

140 I also marched against a war that we ended and had a President refuse to run as a result of our
141 protests. I marched to defeat a President who ultimately resigned, and I attended Woodstock. I

142 tell you this because I lived in those troubled times and in my opinion (remember opinions from
143 above?) we would never see such divisive times again. I was wrong.
144

145 Today we face the most divisive times in our history. (In My Opinion) Tip O'Neil said "All politics
146 are local" so the national divisiveness has landed right here in our town.
147

148 You as Board members are right in the crosshairs of this divisiveness. I don't envy your positions.
149 Your goals should be the education and safety of ALL the students of Merrimack. And in my
150 opinion, you strive to do just that. But I fear that the pressures you are under will lead to reaction
151 rather than pro-action and that will not serve your goals of education and safety of ALL students.
152 That would be failure.
153

154 I know and have worked with some of you and though we do not always agree, I respect your
155 positions. Please keep the goals of education and safety of ALL as you vote on all issues. Try to
156 ignore the misogynistic bullying that seems to have entered the discussions. (As difficult as that
157 may be) Stand your ground on your goals of the education and safety of ALL students.
158

159 Compromise can be like "kissing your sister" but is a political process and attempts to appease
160 both sides of an issue. But if the goals and compromise conflict, your goals must be the answer.
161 Thank you for serving in this most challenging of times, stay safe, good health, and success in
162 your endeavors.
163

164 Ms. Heather Robitaille, 45 Springfield Circle, thanked the members of the Board for all of their
165 hard work and dedication to the community. She also thank the teachers and the school staff.
166 She also said she felt wearing masks reduced illnesses. Additionally, she said she did not feel it
167 was the right time for the district to address strategic planning.
168

169 Haylee, student, Merrimack Middle School (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record)
170

171 Thank you for giving me this opportunity to comment on my thoughts! I would like to just say
172 that I am not opposed to either side, whether it's wearing a mask, or not wearing a mask, and I
173 feel that since we are in a country of freedom, WE should have the freedom to choose. We all
174 may choose one of the above for different reasons, as some may find that they are not able to
175 change their mask or sanitize every 20 minutes, while others may have different health conditions,
176 or simply just not like wearing one. I also think that everyone should have the right to choose,
177 whether it's students, teachers, staff, or substitutes.
178

179 I have also seen some of my classmates that don't wear a mask have rude comments made to
180 them or be bullied about it, and I have also experienced it. Things have been said such as "Pull
181 your mask up. I don't wanna get sick from you." "I don't know if you're vaccinated. Can you prove
182 it? Can I see your vaccine card?"
183

184 I've also been TOLD by a classmate to put my mask on despite them knowing I have an opt-out
185 and medical issues. I think it's very unfair that when we have this choice to do what feels
186 comfortable for ourselves, and we choose to not wear a mask, people are getting bullied for it. I
187 think that we should be able to choose without having to worry about others judging, or getting
188 mad no matter which side of the argument we are on.
189

I feel this is just the beginning of a larger problem to come in the future. If we could come to a better understanding that we all are American citizens and that we all live in a free country and have the right to choose what's best for ourselves, then we will be able to find our way back to the normal that we all know and are comfortable with before this turns into an uncontrollable situation.

Thank you again for your time in reading my comment aloud, and God Bless America.

Ms. Michelle Caracatos, 25 Swift Lane, said she was against hiring 2Revolutions because the money could be better used for what the district needed, like a psychologist and therapist. She also said she felt parents were the ones who needed to make medical decisions for their children.

Mr. Chris Brown, 15 Four Winds Road (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record)

Let me first thank all the School Board members and the Merrimack School District teachers and staff for their continued hard work through this very difficult time. Your efforts and commitment to Merrimack families are very much appreciated by many in this community.

On September 17, 2021, the Merrimack School Board was presented with a petition for a Special Meeting pursuant to RSA 197:2 regarding the use of face coverings in all school properties by all individuals. In reviewing the agenda, I see it will be discussed tonight.

Merrimack is an SB2 community. It would require a two-step process: a Special Meeting and a Town Wide Election. I am concerned about this for the following reasons.

First, there is a significant cost. According to School District personnel, the cost of the Special Meeting alone would be approximately \$12,000. A Town-Wide Special Election would cost tens of thousands of dollars for the printing of ballots, election staff wages, polling place set-up and break down, and police details. Does the school budget have money allocated for this already and if not, where would the money come from?

Secondly, I am very concerned about what sort of precedent this will set for future decisions made by the Merrimack School Board. Our School Board members are elected and are, therefore officials that the majority of Merrimack citizens have chosen to represent them. Mr. Olsen reported during the School Board Meeting on October 4, 2021, that about one-third of the children in the Merrimack School District have been opted out from wearing a mask by a parent or guardian. This leaves a clear, two-thirds majority of parents and guardians who support their children wearing a mask at school.

It is my hope that moving forward, the School Board is able to focus on providing a strong education that meets the needs of all Merrimack students. Thank you for taking a few moments to consider my feedback.

Ms. Jeanie Fandozzi, Mitchell Street, addressed the Board and said she felt the children should have the right to exercise their freedoms regarding whether or not they should wear a mask.

236 Ms. Rachel Paepke, 67 Tinker Road (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record)

237
238 I would like to first thank all of our teachers, educators, support staff, and administrators; their
239 hard work and dedication to our children and each other does not go unnoticed. I truly
240 appreciate what they do for all of our students each and every day. I would also like to
241 recognize the hard work of the curriculum team at Thorntons Ferry School and the district for
242 embarking on a new literacy program to provide phonemic instruction to all K-4 students
243 through the Heggerty Program. I know many parents who are excited to see and hear about
244 the work their children are doing through this new curriculum! I have one last shout out for a
245 group of parents who volunteered their time through the Parents & Teachers of Thorntons
246 Ferry School to help paint stencils and create a new outdoor sensory obstacle course at TFS
247 just last week! Their hard work means the students have an updated space to see colorful
248 artwork and a place to take movement breaks as they transition from various locations
249 throughout the back of the school!

250
251 I would also like to express my support for terminating the 2Rev contract at this time as I believe
252 a contract intended for strategic planning should be considered only after Merrimack has a new
253 Superintendent in place. This will not only allow the new leadership team to have input and say
254 into strategic planning, but will also allow teachers and educators the time to focus on teaching
255 this year, as well as the time to regroup from the past 1.5 years of students being hybrid, full-
256 remote, and/or in-person. Thank you for your consideration.

257
258 Ms. Donna LaRue, Pond View Drive, addressed the Board and said the Board was surrounded
259 by many people who were professionals.

260
261 Mr. Michael Susalka & Ms. Caroline Herold, 31 Valleyview Drive (Board Member Barnes read
262 aloud into the record)

263
264 Our household would like to publicly thank the front-liners: the teachers & building administrators
265 who are navigating this insane situation, solely to keep the schools open and the students safe.

266
267 They do this in spite of differing opinions, disparate messaging, and a variety of opinions on
268 masking. We would also implore the Board to NOT treat masking as a political issue--because it
269 should not be. It is a matter of public health, of keeping the community safe. Please continue to
270 follow the science, and ignore misinformation--regardless of the volume!

271
272 Ms. Bonnie Dunham, 16 Wren Court Drive, addressed the Board and said she felt it was important
273 to wear masks, especially for those people who were most vulnerable.

274
275 Ms. Michelle Colón, 2 Jonathan Circle (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record)

276
277 First, I'd like to thank the teachers and School Board for their hard work and perseverance during
278 these challenging times. I do wish the Board would stand up against the opposition to wearing
279 masks during School Board meetings and ask those that refuse to wear masks to leave the
280 meeting. Not enforcing masking is causing attendance at the meetings to be skewed towards
281 anti-maskers because many people do not feel safe attending.

282
283 I have a child in middle school and I would like to voice my support for wearing masks in school,
284 as recommended by the CDC. The community should do everything it can to help protect

immune-compromised students. It is callous to think that it is worth potentially sacrificing a child's life just so other children do not need to wear masks. From what I have seen, many children aren't as bothered by masking as adults. My daughter is vaccinated and wears a mask to school. She wants to wear her mask and do her part in trying to end the pandemic.

I'd also like to voice my support for the 2Revs contract. There was a comment during the last meeting opposed to how 2Revs wants to 'make teachers look different than they currently do. The speaker insinuated that diversity among teaching staff would be a negative thing. I was shocked when people clapped after that statement was made. Clearly, we have some work to do. I admire 2Revs commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Most Fortune 500 companies have Equity, diversity, and inclusion goals and promote these values. Diversity provides additional perspectives that can only benefit our children. And, please note that equity doesn't mean the same outcome for every child. It means the same opportunity for every child. I believe children should be educated about racism because it does exist in our community and they will eventually encounter it. People can try to refute that significant inequalities exist, but facts are facts, systemic racism exists, and why shouldn't that part of history be taught? Knowing the facts will help children be more compassionate and empathetic toward others.

Ms. Sabrina Bebe, Wire Road, addressed the Board and said she was grateful that the district was allowing at-home COVID testing. She also said she did not support the 2Revolutions contract.

Mr. Ken Martin, Woodward Road (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record)

Unfortunately, I am not able to attend tonight's important meeting but I did have a few comments to share with you through email regarding 3 topics.

1. If you have not been able to watch the video of the Merrimack High School Marching Band's performance at the Salem Marching Band Invitational last weekend, I strongly suggest you do so. They put on what was easily one of the best performances of the night and continue a long standing tradition of high-level musicianship here in Merrimack. Congratulations to all the students and staff on a great performance.

2. In regards to the revisitation of the masking policy for the school district I implore you to continue to listen to the advice of the DHHS and look at the local data regarding transmission. At the last meeting, Mr. Olsen stated that $\frac{1}{3}$ of the families in Merrimack have opted out of the masking policy, leaving $\frac{2}{3}$ of the community following the school district's recommendations. I believe this one bit of data tells you all you need to know in regards to how the families that send children to our schools feel about the masking policy.

3. I support the decision to place a pause on any kind of contract with 2Revolutions at this time. After what has been a tumultuous couple of years our teachers need to focus on teaching and connecting with our students, not implementing a huge philosophical overhaul. Additionally, any major examination of our systems in place will require the support and cooperation of a permanent superintendent, whoever that may be. Their buy-in is essential and until we know who that is, I suggest we pump the brakes. Thank you for your time and thank you for all of your hard work and effort.

334 Mr. William Pfingston, Jessica Drive (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record)

335
336 Please read Hailey's email again. That 8th grader had more common sense in her email than
337 most other comments tonight. Well-spoken Hailey!

338
339 P.S. Just say "NO" to 2Rev and no to mandatory masking.
340

341 **3. RECOGNITIONS**

342
343 There were no recognitions.
344

345 **4. INFORMATIONAL UPDATES**

346
347 a. Superintendent Update
348

349 Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated that all of the schools were recognizing Anti-
350 Bullying month. He said Marsha McGill, Principal at the James Mastricola Upper Elementary
351 School informed him that the students were constructing 1,000 paper cranes to capture and
352 celebrate their hopes and dreams for the 2021 – 2022 school year and they would be displayed
353 at the school.
354

355 Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen also said Steve Claire, Interim Principal at Merrimack High
356 School said an extraordinary number of students had signed up for after school activities. He
357 added that Bonnie Painchaud, Principal at the Reeds Ferry Elementary School had asked him to
358 recognize the Merrimack Hawks Cheerleading Organization for their generous donation of
359 supplies to Reeds Ferry Elementary School.
360

361 Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said he and Ms. Yarlott were continuing with their
362 "listening tour" where they were visiting each school and talking to staff about what was working
363 well and what they could improve upon.
364

365 Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said he attended a Parent Advisory Council meeting with
366 Heather Barker, Director of Special Education, and found it to be very beneficial.
367

368 b. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Update
369

370 Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Yarlott stated the focus had most recently been on
371 professional development. She said some teachers had attended the Universal Design for
372 Learning Program (UDL) lab with the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) in Concord.
373 She added they would also be working with the staff regarding cognitive coaching, and they would
374 begin training surrounding Envision the following day for new educators.
375

376 Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Yarlott said staff continued to work on Canvas updates
377 and she would be providing training with the Heggerty Program, which was a phonemic
378 awareness program with all three lower elementary schools.
379
380
381

382 c. Assistant Superintendent for Business Update

383
384 Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell said the grid for the following year's budget had
385 been built and the preliminary information had been sent out to the schools.

386
387 Board Member Barnes asked if the CIP had been reviewed by the Planning & Building Committee.
388 Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell replied it had not been put together yet but they
389 were working on it.

390
391 d. School Board Update

392
393 Chair Guagliumi stated they were still working on the Superintendent search and she noted there
394 were stakeholder surveys on the website and the deadline to fill them out was the following day.
395 She said the goal over the next few weeks was to get a timeline put on the website to make it
396 clear how the process was moving along. Chair Guagliumi said the process would include
397 stakeholder input at every level.

398
399 e. Student Representative Update

400
401 Kaitlyn, Student Representative said a few weeks ago some high school students put together a
402 display of artwork and woodshop works for the Derryfield Fair and said they won 1st Place in the
403 high school division. She also said a Red Ribbon Week would be coming up and the purpose
404 was to encourage students to abstain from underage drinking and drugs. In closing, Kaitlyn said
405 the high school would be having a "Spirit" week leading up to the Homecoming/Halloween dance.

406
407 **5. OLD BUSINESS**

408
409 a. Health & Safety Task Force Update

410
411 Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said he met with the Health & Safety Task Force the
412 previous week and the data still indicated that Merrimack was a community of substantial
413 transmission. He recommended continuing with the current mask policy through the month of
414 November.

415
416 b. 2Revolutions

417
418 Chair Guagliumi said 2Revolution presented a proposal at the May 17, 2021, School Board
419 meeting and two weeks was allowed for public feedback and voted the first week in June. She
420 pointed out that she abstained from the vote because she knew one of the founders and she
421 would continue to abstain from voting on the item.

422
423 **MOTION:** Board Member Peters made a motion to sever the contract with 2Revolutions with a
424 thirty-day notice according to the contract. Board Member Barnes seconded the motion.

425
426 **Discussion:**

427
428 Board Member Barnes said she felt all steps should be taken to recover any funds paid to
429 2Revolutions for work not yet conducted.

Board Member Peters read aloud from a prepared statement as summarized below:

I am in support of ending the contract with 2Revolutions for several reasons. First, information has come to light that was not previously accessible to the Board in May and June when we first interviewed the vendor. This information for the sake of neutrality I believe has given pause to contracting with 2Revolutions. Secondly, because the issue of Critical Race Theory is so divisive it is best to distance this community and district from any appearance of partnership with these values. Lastly, the goal of creating a strategic plan within the community and with all stakeholders requires mutual respect and cooperation, and the current contract with 2Revolutions is failing to provide that mutual respect and cooperation.

That being said, I am very disappointed with the way in which we have come to this moment. I would never be in favor of the CRT worldview. I appreciate that people have become more involved in attending School Board meetings, however, in the last several weeks' much misinformation has been shared regarding what 2Revolutions would and would not do regarding the strategic plan for the district. Even after the communication from administration was sent out, many in this community sought the same level of divisiveness as CRT by continuing to communicate this misinformation regarding the strategic plan planning process and members of this Board on social media both nationally and locally. In communications with this Board, both in person and by email, it is clear that we have been divided by outsiders in social media that is riddled with misinformation. I am also disappointed by those who know me personally but never picked up the phone to ask questions about the process and what influence, in any, that 2Revolutions would have on our district's core values and mission. Rather, many jumped on the bandwagon of misinformation and accused Board Members, including myself, of beliefs and values we do not hold. If we are to move forward in unity we must all do our due diligence to seek accurate information and wise counsel from those who seek to unite and not divide.

Board Member Hardy said she would defend Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion every day in the school district because that was what it was about 100% of the time.

The motion passed 4 – 0 – 1. (Abstained – Chair Guagliumi)

c. Third Review of Use of Masks by Students and Staff Policy (EBCVM)

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated the masking policy as it pertained to "Interscholastic Athletics Policy" was changed to:

For indoor interscholastic athletics conducted in the Merrimack School District, students will be distanced while on the sidelines and no masks will be required. When an athlete is in competition, in Merrimack, no masks are required; however, participants may opt to wear a mask at their discretion. No masking is required for outdoor interscholastic sports conducted in the Merrimack School District.

Board Member Barnes asked if parents chose for their children to opt out of mask wearing in the classroom would it be held against the student if they chose not to sing so they could keep their masks off. Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen replied it would not and he would be sure to make that clear.

MOTION: Board Member Hardy made a motion to approve the Use of Masks by Students and Staff Policy. Board Member Barnes seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Initial Thoughts from School Board Regarding 2022 – 2023 Budget

Chair Guagliumi requested that each School Board member send her anything they would like administration to consider as they prepared the budget.

b. Early Release Days in January and March

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen said he was proposing two early release days (as an amendment to the school calendar) for mandatory training. He said the first training session, January 14th, would be for suicide prevention training and the second proposed early release day, in March, would help them comply with the new Student Discipline Law amendments that went into effect on July 1, 2021.

Board Member Barnes requested the item be tabled for future discussion as she did not agree with Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen's position that it did not fall under professional development. Chair Guagliumi replied the item would be placed on a future agenda.

c. Partnership between Merrimack School District & Greater Nashua Mental Health Center

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen introduced Ms. Fern Seiden, Director of Student Wellness, and Ms. Heather Barker, Director of Special Education.

Ms. Seiden explained that the Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF) was the multi-tiered model for partnering with community mental health and youth-serving agencies to reduce barriers and increase access to prevention supports and intervention services.

Ms. Seiden said the "System of Care Law" was passed in 2016 due to the serious mental health issues not only in New Hampshire but in the entire country. She also said the Department of Education (DOE) supported the effort by supporting districts in established multi-tiered systems by providing coaches in each region.

Ms. Seiden said the Greater Nashua Mental Health Center had started hiring school-based mental health counselors and they had been talking with them since the summer to better understand what they had to offer.

Ms. Barker explained some of the benefits of students partnering the GNMH (Greater Nashua Mental Health) such as reducing geographic barriers for students to access needed supports without disrupting the school day, early, effective interventions to increase students wellness, and success, and to eliminate wait times for mental health supports in the community by bypassing waitlists.

Mr. Barker further explained it could mean instead of families trying to access mental health services in the community on their own there could be services located in the school building. She said they would not be employed by the district but because they were co-located within the building they could help facilitate the referrals to a clinician. She said the services would be paid through insurance and the programs had processes in place to help families get the insurance.

Ms. Barker said the next steps would be to have a Memorandum of Understanding for 2021 – 2022, noting there would be no budget implications, and develop a “co-located” relationship. Further, Ms. Barker said the goals for 2022 – 2023 would be the expansion of the Memorandum of Understanding, a decision of making process to determine the expanded role, and what the budget implications would be.

Vice Chair Rothhaus commented that she was very in favor of the plan.

Board Member Barnes also commented that she thought the information and the plan were very good but asked if the reason the expanded role and possible budget implications were not in the 2021 – 2022 budget. Ms. Seiden replied in order for the plan to rise up and be successful the co-located services were the first step in a bigger plan that would take some time.

Board Member Barnes asked if they had identified the spaces within the district in which they wanted to use and if there were things they could currently do to prepare those spaces to be welcoming spaces.

Board Member Peters asked for clarification regarding protecting parental rights for permission to treat, and permission to screen. Ms. Barker replied it was not a school counselor in a school office that a student could go see anytime they wanted to but rather it is an appointment with the Greater Nashua Mental Health Center which is simply co-located in the school. She said confidentiality was of the utmost importance and school staff in any capacity would only be involved with the permission of the parent.

Board Member Hardy said she was in favor of the proposed partnership. She said there was a huge need for the plan.

Chair Guagliumi said she too was very supportive of the plan and felt it being student-centric was very important.

d. Guaranteed Maximum Rate for Health & Dental Insurance for 2022 – 2023

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell said the guaranteed maximum rate for 2022 – 2023 would be a decrease of 1.4% for health insurance, and 1.5% for dental insurance.

e. Construction Update on Woodbury Street and the Roundabout

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell commented that the work had already begun and trees had been grubbed out. He said there would be 1,250 linear feet of sidewalk that would be 5 feet wide and the width of the road would be increased to 24 feet. Additionally, he provided an update surrounding the roundabout project that the Town of Merrimack was doing.

f. Position on Proposed Warrant Article via Petition

Chair Guagliumi said the Board received a petition which had approximately 150 signatures on it regarding the topic of making masks optional at all times during school hours and on all school district properties for students, staff, and visitors.

MOTION: Vice Chair Rothhaus made a motion that the Board decline the petition to request to hold a Special Meeting on the Citizen's Petition to make the wearing of face coverings on school property optional for all students, staff, and visitors and it does such for the following reasons:

- The Board, not the Citizen's Meeting, is responsible for adopting the policies of the district. The legislator and the Department of Education have granted policy-making authority to the School Board.
- The legislator has not granted policy-making authority to the school district meeting.
- The petition article goes beyond the authority granted by the legislator to the meeting. The Board's current policy is lawful and it is a subdivision of the state, the district is following the health recommendations of the Department of Health & Human Services.
- The citizens of the district should not be required to participate in a Special Meeting where a yes vote would produce an unlawful outcome.

Board Member Hardy seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Vice Chair Rothhaus stated the cost of a Special Meeting would cost the district between \$25,000 to \$30,000 and the Board would not have to accept the outcome of the vote. She said the School Board was the elected body for the Merrimack School District. She also said it could become a very slippery slope to elect a School Board and then have petition Warrant Articles to change the decisions of the Board.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

g. Other

Board Member Barnes stated when she initially joined the Board the members of the Board were assigned to different curriculum areas. She said a few years prior the Board decided to receive quarterly curriculum updates from administration regarding the curriculum work being done throughout the district. She asked that those updates resume.

Board Member Peters asked that they receive a refresh on how the budget process works and what the responsibilities were from the School Board and the Budget Committee.

Chair Guagliumi commented there had not been an update on the Youth Risk Behavior Surveys and ask that it be done. Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated he was in complete agreement.

Chair Guagliumi stated there was usually a grade point average that students had to have to participate in sports activities. She said she wanted to look at perhaps providing a little bit of extra grace as it applied to some students. Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen replied he would be happy to have a discussion with administration and the Athletics Director regarding the matter and would report back to the Board.

7. APPROVAL REQUESTS

a. October 4, 2021 Minutes

MOTION: Board Member Barnes made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 4, 2021, meeting. Vice Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

There were no items to address.

9. OTHER

a. Committee Reports

Board Member Barnes commented the Professional Development Committee had met the previous Thursday where they reviewed subcommittee reports regarding recertification, individual professional development plans, technology updates, and making sure the committee was properly represented by paraprofessionals.

Board Member Barnes also said the Master Plan Revision Committee also met and reviewed some special projects and funding. She said funding for special projects were approved at the high school.

Board Member Barnes said the previous Saturday she represented the School Board as the delegate to the New Hampshire School Board's Association Delegate Assembly and everything went as planned. She said a resolution was presented and passed to keep an option for remote participation so members could dial into the meetings if need be.

Board Member Peters said the Budget Committee had made its schedule for the upcoming budget season and the first meeting would be on November 16, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. at the Merrimack High School.

b. Correspondence

Chair Guagliumi said she the entire School Board had received several emails that related to:

- 2Revolutions - 1
- Against masking requirements – 2
- Concern for lunchroom and/or recess protocols – 2

- Follow-up regarding the status of the mask optional petition – 1

Chair Guagliumi said she personally received an email regarding the assistance needed for historical finance records from one of the Booster Clubs at the high school and she referred that person to Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell.

Chair Guagliumi said she also received an email that expressed support for continuing the protocols around allowing families to opt-out of masks.

Chair Guagliumi said she and administration received an email from a parent who was following up on previous communications regarding their child who was a high school student.

c. Comments

There were no comments made.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Evan Fulmer, Woodbury Drive (the beginning of his comment was inaudible) said he relied on paper yet did not receive information in paper form anymore. He also said he did not quite understand the issue of masks in that he felt they were necessary.

Ms. Brittany Damon, Turnbuckle Lane (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record)

Please remember that equity does not mean equality. Make sure you understand the difference before you decide to support 2Revolutions.

Ms. Jen Motyl, Ellie Drive, addressed the Board and thanked the Board for their service. She also said she was thankful for the partnership between the Merrimack School District and the Greater Nashua Mental Health Center. She shared that in Nashua, with parent permission, the school nurses were administering COVID tests so the kids could get a swab and go back to class if the test was negative. She also suggested that the Board take a look at perhaps raising the pay for substitute teachers and paraprofessionals to be more competitive. Ms. Motyl said she was grateful that Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Yarlott were going to each school to talk with teachers and that type of communication was very important.

Ms. Lila York, 46 Belmont Drive (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record)

I'm not sure what we are really supposed to say anymore to get all of the people on the Board to understand that we are fighting for choice. Clearly, we have a School Board member who thinks we are being unreasonable. We are trying to fight for everyone's choice to mask. Like I said before, we are all in the same storm but not in the same boat. What might be best for one person might not be for another. I don't think anyone in this room right now is right or wrong. We are clearly in a time where scientific data is being used to fuel every side. I have worked in the food industry my entire life. I have had training in the cross-contamination field and it has been etched in my brain for years. For 15 years I worked in food service in a nursing home. I was also educated on the health side of it as well. I can tell you I have seen so much cross-contamination going on it baffles my mind. Even the people who think they are doing a good thing are spreading

germs like wildfire. As soon as you touch that mask on your face you are supposed to wash your hands right away and that's not happening. They would also teach you to throw it away as soon as you touch it and get a new one. Kids are fidgeting with them as well as grown adults. We could possibly be spreading it around more than we know, not to mention that the studies done on masks found E-coli and other germs as well. Last year we had strict mask policies in place throughout the state. My child still got sick two times last year which was the same as she always does. Not once was it COVID which I am thankful for, but if masks work so great, how did this happen when COVID is much more contagious? How did a normal cold manage to sneak under her mask twice and get her sick? My guess is it's due to cross-contamination. I'm also concerned about the guidelines we are following for quarantine. How is this making any sense to people? It has already been determined that the vaccinated people are spreading it just as much as the unvaccinated people. Can you not see the hypocrisy? Look at the studies coming out of Israel, they are ahead of the US and are already into their third booster shot and talking about the fourth one because it's not helping. How is it that we are letting people who could be wrong or be persuaded with money or an agenda to tell us what to do or believe? I find it very concerning that we are listening to a bunch of people who are all being funded by each other to follow the science – it's their science. Let's stop pretending that these people have our best interests at heart because they don't. Again, if it was about our health, the borders would be closed. Millions of people wouldn't be pouring into our country spreading the virus we have all been trying hard to fight. There are people with money and power who manipulate people into doing what they would like. I leave you with these thoughts. Hitler was once in government and millions of people listened to him. Jeffrey Epstein was covered up by people in the government and young girls were continued to be taken advantage of. Dr. Death (aka Dr. Christopher Dutch) was a real story in the US and people tried to stop him but money was more important. The movie Concussion was based on a true story and the deaths of athletes were hidden and covered up because money was more important because of the NFL funding money to our government. Pizer paid the largest criminal fine in US history when they agreed to pay out \$2.3 billion. Make no mistake, people might be gaslighting us. All we want is the freedom to choose for everyone in our community and country for vaccines and masks.

Ms. Rosemarie Rung, 21 Ministerial Drive (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record)

I want to thank the School Board for their common-sense decision to deny the Special School District meeting. I am very concerned that the cost of holding this meeting and an extra election day would take tens of thousands of dollars away from our students. Any vote is advisory anyway and to spend tax dollars when most parents agree with the mask policy is an absurd waste of money. I hope in the future that anyone considering such a petition for a special meeting would do their homework and consider the burden on the taxpayer before moving forward.

11. Adjournment

MOTION: At approximately 9:30 p.m. Board Member Hardy made a motion to adjourn. Vice Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room
November 1, 2021**

5:30 p.m. – Non-Public Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) (b) (c) (I)

1. Consultation with recruiter regarding applicant qualifications and compensation

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

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Chair Guagliumi pointed out that the School Board would accept public comment via email and to do that members of the public could send emails to publiccomment@sau26.org.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Joanne Grobecker, 27 Craig Drive, (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record). I am in support of a strong public education system that benefits all kids. I want to thank the school board for all their time and care they have put into this school year. I would also like to thank administration for working tirelessly to ensure all students in Merrimack receive a quality education. You are all appreciated.

I have two daughters who attend Mastricola Elementary School and they have had a great start to the school year which is credit to Michelle Romein who works nonstop to ensure all students receive a quality education in a positive and caring environment. I would like to thank every single staff member and therapist at Mastricola, and every school, who show up every day excited to teach their students. Mastricola has managed to keep parent involvement even in a covid year having popsicles on the playground during open house and a Halloween parade outdoors that all parents could attend.

I want to thank the district for the focus on literacy and handwriting as a way to address learning loss from a pandemic and strengthen skills for all kids. I appreciate that Merrimack is moving towards using a handwriting curriculum. The program "Handwriting without Tears" is being piloted in all elementary schools in select Kindergarten classes. My kindergartener at Mastricola Elementary School has benefited greatly from the program and her teacher's purposeful instruction. Having a consistent handwriting program, like Handwriting Without Tears, will benefit all kids and decrease referrals to special education for occupational therapy, especially after so many kids spent a year on devices.

I am pleased that Mastricola Elementary School has an existing phonics and phonemic awareness program and fluency program in place K-4 and structured literacy interventions for those who need extra support. I am hopeful that the district will follow Mastricola's lead in adopting a district-wide structured literacy program so all students can learn to read.

55 In NH in 2019 38% of 4th graders were at or above the NAEP Proficient levels. (source
56 [nces.ed.gov](https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/data/ipedsreports/naep/) nations report card). I'll repeat that so you can hear it again in 2019 only 38% of
57 4th graders in NH could read proficiently. Merrimack's shift to having structured literacy in all
58 elementary schools, and not just Mastricola, will benefit all kids by increasing math scores in
59 middle school, decreasing the dropout rate in high school and enabling our children to be
60 successful and productive members of society.

61
62 I am in support of a strong public education system that benefits all kids. I want to give a
63 HUGE Thank you to the teachers and therapists for all you do every day.

64
65 Ken Martin, Woodward Road, thanked the budget committee for going through tedious budget
66 process. He asked that priority be given to academic recovery programs and advance student
67 learning to make up for lost time during the last year and half. He stated that test score for math,
68 reading and writing have decreased. This is a perfect time to reevaluate various program that will
69 help increase test scores up.

70
71 Heather Callahan, 5 King Henry Court, noted that parents believe that mandating wearing of
72 masks interferes with the parents' right to make medical decisions for their children. She asked
73 the board to take a stand now to defend medical freedom and the parents' right to choose.

74
75 Robert Reisman, Iris Drive, thanked teachers, staff, and the School Board for all they do. He
76 stated his child is having a great experience this year. He supports the literacy program structure.
77 He expressed his excitement over the partnership between the Merrimack School District and
78 Greater Nashua Mental Health.

79
80 Cheryl Kurdec, 11 Roberta Drive, spoke in support of recording daily classroom instruction for the
81 benefit of students having to quarantine due to COVID.

82
83 Rachel Paepke, 67 Tinker Road (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record). I first want
84 to extend a huge thank you to all of our teachers, educators, support staff and administration
85 teams. I have a handful of examples where teachers and other staff members both at Thorntons
86 Ferry Elementary School and James Mastricola Upper Elementary School took an few extra
87 minutes of their day to connect with not only my children but me, to ensure the needs of my
88 children were being met from an emotional wellness standpoint and academic standpoint. It was
89 amazing to see such a positive impact that each of those connections had on my children.
90 Emotional wellness is an important factor for any child to be in the right state of mind to be able
91 to progress and learn. To that point, I really appreciated the work that Fern Seiden and Heather
92 Barker did to present what a partnership with the Greater Nashua Mental Health would look like.
93 I think this would have a positive impact for students within the Merrimack School District to have
94 access to resources that the Greater Nashua Mental Health Center provides within school
95 communities.

96
97 I would also like to show my support for the teaching staff by asking that the School Board put
98 emphasis to the Budget Committee on the importance of sufficient funding for all teacher
99 positions as supported by the Merrimack Teacher Association (MTA). Since the Merrimack
100 Teachers Association Master Agreement with the School Board expires in July 2022, it should
101 be one of the top priorities of the School Board to ensure that the next agreement remains
102 competitive in all areas of the MTA Master Agreement. This will not only ensure the Merrimack
103 School District retains our highly qualified teachers but will also attract top educators to bolster
104 instruction throughout our district as vacancies exist.

106 **3. RECOGNITIONS**

107
108 There were no recognitions to report.
109

110 **4. INFORMATIONAL UPDATES**

111
112 a. Superintendent Update
113

114 Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen reported that he and Assistant Superintendent for
115 Business Shevenell and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Yarlott continue to attend school
116 staff meetings to listen to staff input.
117

118 Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen attended a celebration at Thorntons Ferry Elementary
119 School where employees were presented with recognition pins for 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40 years of
120 service.
121

122 Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen thanked the high school administration, staff, and students
123 for a successful Homecoming Dance at Merrimack High School. He noted over 400 students
124 participated.
125

126 Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen informed the Board of his campaign to conserve energy
127 in all buildings.
128

129 b. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Update
130

131 Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Yarlott expects to focus on curriculum instruction
132 assessment that address individual student needs and curriculum. Work on the Health
133 Curriculum and the World Language Curriculum have resumed. All elementary schools are
134 working on the Essential Learning Competencies (ELC). The ELCs will drive instruction and
135 assessment. All elementary schools will use the same English and Language Arts (ELA)
136 instruction and programs. All curriculum revisions will progress towards the vision of a
137 graduate. The assessment calendar is posted on the district's website for public access.
138

139 Board Member Hardy expressed her gratitude for the alignment of the ELA curriculum between
140 all elementary schools. She is grateful and supportive of the portrait for a graduate.
141

142 Board Member Rothhaus asked if the portrait of a graduate is the survey freshman take relative
143 to career goals when they leave high school?
144

145 Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Yarlott clarified the portrait for a graduate is unrelated
146 to the freshmen career goals survey. She added that the high school has been working on the
147 portrait for a graduate over the last year and a half as part of the New England Association of
148 Schools and Colleges (NEASC) review. The portrait of a graduate is being looked at in grades
149 PreK through 12. The portrait for a graduate is expected to come before the School Board in
150 December.
151

152 Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell explained that work on the portrait for a
153 graduate began prior to the COVID pandemic, was put on hold during the COVID pandemic and
154 now the work resumes.
155

156 c. Assistant Superintendent for Business Update

157
158 Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell highlighted the sidewalk construction on
159 Woodbury Street. He reported the round-a-bout at the intersection of Baboosic Lake Road and
160 Turkey Hill Road is complete. He felt a similar round-a-bout might be beneficial at the intersection
161 of Old Blood Road and Madeline Bennett Lane.

162
163 Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell reported the LED (Light-emitting diode) lighting
164 retrofit project has begun after a delay of materials. The lighting retrofit will save energy and allow
165 teachers the ability to adjust the lighting in their classroom.

166
167 Chair Guagliumi stated conversations regarding how to approach the intersection of Old Blood
168 Road and Madeline Bennett Lane took place several years ago. She asked if a modification to
169 the intersection needed to go before the Planning Board.

170
171 Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell recalled attending a meeting a few years ago
172 where he was informed that the plans were approved by the Planning Board several years ago
173 and those plans were final and, if it does not work out well, then adjustments might be
174 reconsidered. There are no plans currently to bring the Olde Blood Road and Madeline Bennett
175 Lane intersection before the Planning Board.

176
177 Board Member Barnes clarified that the traffic engineering study report was not in favor of a stop
178 sign at the intersection of Olde Blood Road and Madeline Bennett Lane. The local committee
179 decided to go against the traffic engineering study's recommendations.

180
181 Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell stated a design was completed by Steve Keach
182 that showed a round-a-bout at the intersection of Olde Blood Road and Madeline Bennett Lane.
183 Which he believes was approved by the Highway Safety Committee. Something changed. A
184 design by Ken Clinton of Meridian Construction was implemented.

185
186 d. School Board Update

187
188 Chair Guagliumi reported the School Board has a tentative schedule for the Superintendent
189 search. The final schedule will be posted on the District's website.

190
191 e. Student Representative Update

192
193 Student Representative Vadney congratulated the Juniors and Seniors who were accepted into
194 National Honor Society this week. The Class of 2023 is having a Texas Roadhouse Rolls
195 Fundraiser to raise funds for the upper classman's prom to be held in the spring. Orders can be
196 placed using the QR code on paper flyers or by accessing a link on the Merrimack Class of 2023
197 Facebook page. Orders must be placed by Sunday. Pick up will be at Merrimack High School
198 the Monday and Tuesday before Thanksgiving.

199
200 **5. OLD BUSINESS**

201
202 a. Health & Safety Task Force Update

203
204 Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen reported the current data from the Department of Health
205 and Human Services indicated that Merrimack was still a community of substantial transmission,

314 cases per 100K population over a 14-day period. The statewide antigen and PCR positivity rate over 7 days is 4.3%.

b. School Board's 2022-2023 Budget Message to Administration

Chair Guagliumi announced this agenda item would be deferred to the November 15, 2021 school board meeting.

c. Early Release Days in January and March

Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen reported that both the Merrimack Teachers Association (MTA) and the Merrimack Educational Support Staff Association (MESS) agreed with the early release days on January 14, 2022 and March 25, 2022.

Board Member Barnes suggested using the Election day in April to schedule both trainings.

Interim Chief Educational officer Olsen explained using the Election day in April as a training day would extend the last day of school by one day. The two early release days do not impact the last day of school.

MOTION: Vice Chair Rothhaus made a motion to approve early release days on January 14, 2022 and March 25, 2022. Board Member Hardy seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Year End Budget Review for 2020-2021

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell reported a surplus of \$8,163,070 for the year-end 2020-2021. He noted a higher than normal surplus was the trend throughout the statewide. A large portion of the surplus was a result of not being able to hire professional staff during the COVID pandemic. He also noted that the 2020-2021 budget included a 9.3% increase (the guaranteed maximum rate) for health insurance premiums. The actual rate for health insurance premiums was 5.2%. Other contributing factors for the large surplus include less costs for FICA, NH retirement, Medicare, trash removal, fewer lunches, out of district placements were not available to students, contracted services, professional development, equipment repairs and transportation.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell is not expecting another large surplus for year-end 2021-2022. He noted that the large surplus will not be used as a baseline for the 2022-2023 budget.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell also reported that approximately \$150,000 was transferred from the general fund to the food service account. He explained the Federal Government's reimbursement of \$3.53 per free lunch was not enough to cover the cost of lunch expenses.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell stated that it would be helpful if the District could retain a percentage of the surplus to use to offset lean budgets in the future.

Board Member Barnes noted if the District did retain the year-end surplus the School Board, unlike the Town, would not be agents to expend the funds.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell clarified that the Commissioner of Education would have the authorization to allow spending of the surplus funds.

Board Member Barnes added there are limited and specific things that the School Board can petition the Commissioner of Education to authorize spending of surplus funds.

Chair Guagliumi suggested Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell's budget video from last year be rebroadcast.

b. Budget Preparation Meeting Dates

Interim Chief Educational Office Olsen announced the School Board budget meeting dates and the Budget Committee budget meeting dates.

c. 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) Results

Chair Guagliumi introduced the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

Interim Chief Educational Officers Olsen reported the Youth Risk Behavior Survey is coordinated through a partnership between the New Hampshire Department of Education and the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. The survey is generally administered to high school students in the spring (every 2 years). The results are anonymous. He noted 951 (79%) of Merrimack High School students participated in the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey assesses student behavior in the following areas: Drug use; alcohol use; sexual and dating violence; sexual risk; suicide; sadness and helplessness; tobacco use; vehicle and bicycle safety; physical inactivity and unhealthy dietary behavior; bullying, electronic bullying and fighting and other health risks.

Chair Guagliumi noted that the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results can be found on the District's Web page www.sau26.org.

Vice Chair Rothhaus asked if a guidance counselor is available on demand for students in crisis at the middle and high schools. She stressed the importance of someone checking in with students who need that type of support.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Yarlott reported the District has a suicide protocol currently in place.

Board Member Barnes clarified that the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey have been reviewed by the School Board every two years with the exception 2020 due to the COVID pandemic.

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey was not administered in March of 2021 due to the COVID pandemic. It is expected that the next Youth Risk Behavior Survey will take place in the spring of 2022. The results of the 2022 Youth Risk Behavior Survey will be made available in 2023.

Board Member Barnes noted the District has made consistent progress in the area of support since the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey was administered and will continue support progress while waiting for the results of the 2022 Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

Board Member Peters expressed concern that the results of the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey could be very different post COVID Pandemic. She asked if it was possible to get a pulse on the status of the student population relative to suicide, sadness and helplessness.

Interim Chief Educational Officers Olsen responded the topic of suicide, sadness and helplessness would be discussed at the Leadership Team meeting this week. He will provide the school board with an antidotal update with regards to current suicide, sadness, and helplessness.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Yarlott stated that it is often the teachers that refer students to counselors, maintaining confidentiality.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Yarlott reported that she and Director of Student Services Barker and Director of Student Wellness Seiden attended a two-day Social Emotional Learning (SEL) conference.

Board Member Peters felt the Behavioral Warning Sign document should be given to all teachers.

Board Member Hardy expressed her desire to accelerate the progress relative to supporting the Social Emotional Learning needs of students.

Interim Chief Educational Officers Olsen stated the reason for the January 14 early release day was to provide staff with 2 hours of suicide prevention training.

Student Representative Vadney agreed with comments from all board members. She said teachers are trying to make sure students are ok and keeping up. It would be best for students if there were a way that more teachers could check in with them. Many students do struggle with stress, anxiety and other mental health issues that seriously impact their school work and how they act in a school setting. She explained last year one of her teachers took 5-10 minutes at the beginning of the class to ask students how they were doing. This time was very valuable to the class. She felt this practice would be beneficial to other students districtwide.

d. Other

There were no other agenda items.

7. APPROVAL of MINUTES

1. October 18, 2021 Minutes

Chair Guagliumi stated the approval of the minutes would be deferred to the November 15, 2021 meeting.

351
352 **8. OTHER**

353
354 a. Committee Reports

355
356 Vice Chair Rothhaus reported the Halloween event sponsored by the Parks and Recreation
357 Department had been rescheduled to November 6 due to a forecast of rain.

358
359 Board Member Hardy attend a Curriculum Instruction Assessment (CIA) meeting. She noted
360 there is a rubric and process for approval of new curriculum.

361
362 Board Member Barnes reported the New Hampshire School Boards Association (NHSBA) Board
363 of Directors authorized the Executive Director to withdraw from the National School Boards
364 (NSBA) due to operational concerns. She emphasized the NHSBA will advocate for schools
365 without NSBA.

366
367 b. Correspondence

368
369 Chair Guagliumi reported that each Board member received the same two emails. One
370 expressed concern for the validity of facts given by some members of the public during public
371 comment. The other expressed thanks for taking input during these times, for withdrawing from
372 the 2Revolutions contract and for keeping masks in place.

373
374 c. Comments

375
376 There were no comments to report.
377

378 **9. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS**

379
380 Heather Robitaille, Springfield Circle, expressed her appreciation for the help given to students
381 through difficult times. She is grateful for the Social and Emotion Learning interventions. She
382 requested more information be made available to parents such as the recent Lynn Lyons
383 presentation.

384
385 Kathy Komar, Belmont Drive, (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record). I don't
386 know if the school board is aware but the masks that our children are being given from the
387 schools if they forget their mask are made by Saint Gobain. Given their history do we want
388 those particular masks on the faces of our children? Have they been tested for
389 Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) before being given to our children?

390
391 Naomi Holter, 10 Everest Drive, expressed gratitude for recognizing teachers for years of
392 service.

393
394 Sarah Locke, Cota Road (Board Member Barnes read aloud into the record).

395
396 I want to start by again thanking our amazing teachers and administrators for showing up
397 every day, chins up, smiles on and ready to do their best for our children.

398
399 I also want to voice my support for a task force to study the district's mental health wellness,
400 and programming, to support our kids at both home and in school, and the impact on their

401 learning. From K-12, this will lead to a better understanding of our dropout rate, testing
402 success, literacy rate and more.

403
404 Chuck Mower, 4 Depot Street, stated students should have the money for what they need in
405 their educational environment. Funding sources come from residential, commercial, and
406 industrial property taxes. He noted that commercial and industrial companies cannot vote on
407 the budget, only the residential taxpayers are able to vote. The school district needs to fund
408 education in a contemporary world in Merrimack.

409
410 Carol Kurdek, 11 Roberta Drive, noted guidance counselors are academic counselors. Each
411 school should have a non-academic counselor to be able to talk with students.

412
413 **10. ADJOURN TO NON PUBLIC SESSION**

414
415 **MOTION:** At 9:15 p.m. Board Member Hardy made a motion enter non-public session. Vice
416 Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

417
418 **The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0 on a roll call vote.**

419
420 **MOTION:** At 10:03 p.m. Board Member Barnes made a motion to adjourn the public meeting.
421 Board Member Peters seconded the motion

422
423 **The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0.**
424

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**Merrimack School Board Special Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Merrimack High School – Main Office Conference Room
November 9, 2021**

6:05 p.m. – Public Session

Present: Chair Guagliumi, Vice Chair Rothhaus, Board Member Hardy, Board Member Peters, and Board Member Barnes and Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen

1. Administrator Nomination

MOTION: Vice Chair Rothhaus made a motion to hire Jason Pelletier as Director of Technology and Learning Systems at an annual salary of \$115,000 (prorated). Board Member Peters seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

MOTION: At 6:07 p.m. Vice Chair Rothhaus made a motion to adjourn the public meeting. Board Member Peters seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

MERRIMACK SCHOOL DISTRICT MONTHLY ENROLLMENTS 2021-2022

November 1, 2021

Enrollment On

Enrollment On	PRE	K	1	2	3	4	Total	5	6	Total	7	8	Total	9	10	11	12	Total	ODP	HSS	TOTALS
November 1, 2021																					
MES	53	76	73	73	80	68	423														423
RFS	30	87	75	78	94	80	444														444
TFS	39	93	98	105	102	95	532														532
MUES								244	263	507	275	281	556	262	281	272	342	1157			556
MMS																					507
MHS																					556
PR-12 Total																					1157
Student Services ODP**																			15		3619
Home Study (HSS)																				136	15
Total	122	256	246	256	276	243	1399	244	263	507	275	281	556	262	281	272	342	1157	15	136	3770

**Out-of-District Placement

MONTHLY ENROLLMENTS 2021-2022

Month	*PRE	K	1	2	3	4	Total	5	6	Total	7	8	Total	9	10	11	12	Total	SSP	HSS	TOTALS
September 13, 2021	118	253	245	258	277	248	1399	242	264	506	274	286	560	262	279	276	352	1169	14	134	3782
October 1, 2021	118	256	245	258	277	246	1400	242	264	506	274	282	556	263	280	271	344	1158	13	136	3769
October 4, 2021	118	256	245	258	277	246	1400	242	264	506	274	282	556	263	280	270	344	1157	13	136	3768
November 1, 2021	122	256	246	256	276	243	1399	244	263	507	275	281	556	262	281	272	342	1157	15	136	3770

BUS SUSPENSIONS FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER

	MHS	MMS	JMUES	MES	RFS	TFS
Fighting			1			
Vandalism						
Disrespect/Disruption			3	1	1	1
Unsafe Behavior						
Other						
TOTAL	0	0	4	1	1	1