

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
School Board Meeting Minutes
September 2, 2025
Monadnock Regional Middle/High School, Swanzey, NH

School Board Members Present: Kristen Noonan, Edmond LaPlante, Betty Tatro, Scott Peters, Lisa Steadman, Jennifer Strimbeck, Brian Bohannon and Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas. **Absent:** Eric Stanley, Gina Carraro, Jeff Cesaitis, Rachel Vogt and Hannah Blood.

Administration Present: J. Rathbun, Superintendent, L. Spencer, Assistant Superintendent and J. Morin, Business Administrator.

- 1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER at 7:00 PM:** S. Peters called the meeting to order.
- 2. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no public comments.
- 3. #celebrateMRSD:** J. Rathbun reported that the administration visited all of the schools on the first day. L. Sutton has been working very hard on the website. The Cell Phone Policy is going well with no major meltdowns. He attended the Varsity Boys Soccer Game and Monadnock won 5-2 against Masenic. There was a great turnout for the game. All of the Board is invited to the Superintendent's Club on October 21, 2025. There will be a meet and eat and the students in the club will receive pins. A Real estate agent has approached the district regarding the sale of Cutler. This process will go through the 3-bid process.
- 4. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION & DISCUSSION:**

a. Administration Report: Stephanie Betit-Hancock: J. Rathbun introduced the new Director of Student Services. S. Betit-Hancock updated the Board on the new Autism Program at Emerson. The name of the program is The Mosaic Program. The Program was approved by the DOE but with many questions. She would like to thank the community for trying to be creative to keep the kids here. She thanked L. Stevens, the administration and the staff for coming in and hitting the ground running. Currently, she is working on Medicare rules and regulations. It is different than in Vermont. It is a pleasure working with the staff who put children first. The schools look amazing. Thank you for welcoming me into your community. The Level 3 Autism Program at Emerson is up and running. There are 6 students grades 1-4 in the program.

b. Staffing Update: J.Rathbun reported that there are 3 staff nominations coming tonight in non-public, a para, music teacher at MRMHS and a building and grounds position. There are now 11 vacancies.

c. Review Policy FF-Naming New Facility: K. Noonan thought that maybe the new Library at Emerson could be named after Winston Wright, a former longtime Board Member. J. Rathbun mentioned that it would also be a nice idea to name the new MTC gymnasium the Cutler Gymnasium. He would ask the Board to consider. W. Wright was an educator, in the fire department and a Board Member for years. J.Rathbun feels that a ceremony for naming the library when it is complete and making sure his family and people who worked

with him have the opportunity to attend.

d. Annual Review of Student Handbook: J. Rathbun explained that the updates to the Student Handbook are to existing policies. The confusing language last year regarding eligibility has been corrected. The handbook now matches what we have been using for the last ten years. The teachers have done a lot of work on the handbook. Nice job. It was mentioned that the Athletic Handbook is not on the website.

e. NHSBA Resolution Review: The resolution that was prepared will be sent out to the Board Members for review.

5. MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION:

a. Appointment to Attend NHSBA Delegate Assembly: The Board will appoint a member to attend the Delegate Assembly on October 25, 2025 on behalf of the entire Board. The Board will appoint at the next meeting.

b. Negotiations Request-Specialists Union: J. Rathbun explained that the Specialists Bargaining Unit is requesting opening negotiations exclusively for compensation. This would be a warrant article if additional funds are approved.

S.PETERS DECLARED A RECESS FOR A NON-MEETING at 7:28PM.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION: MOTION: S.Peters **MOVED** to enter into negotiations with the Specialists Union regarding compensation. **SECOND:** K. Noonan. **DISCUSSION:** K. Noonan wanted to mention that the Board worked hard to have one bargaining unit per year. It is helpful for the taxpayers and the Unions. **VOTE:** 0/8.3/0/4.7. **Motion fails.**

c. FY 26/27 Budget Cycle-Review Motions from BC and set guardrails for adm: It was mentioned that the Budget Committee did not make any recommendations in the form of a motion regarding the upcoming budget. The administration will report at the next meeting on the research items asked for by the Board. J. Rathbun commented that the administration would like to have a target number for the proposed budget. They will hit the target, given the rules and the impact. The proposed number last year was \$400,000 more than the default. The Fin/Fac Committee suggested the default number for 2026/27 and important items proposed by the administration but to explain in order to communicate to the public the need and the importance. L. Steadman mentioned that the default may be over the \$40,000,000 number. S.Peters said we are not beholden to any number. J. Rathbun commented that the Board can give their input at the next meeting and the administration will still have enough time.

d. Approve the Consent Agenda: August 19, 2025 Minutes, Non-Public Minutes and Manifest: \$ 2,889,967.76 for FY 2026 . MOTION: L. Steadman **MOVED** to accept the August 19, 2025 Public Meeting Minutes and Non-Public Meeting Minutes has presented, a transfer request from S. Betit-Hancock in the amount of \$222,000.00 from Districtwide Placement to Contracted Services-Special Ed. (The Mosaic Program), a transfer request from S.

Betit-Hancock in the amount of \$279,880.00 from Psychologist salary and benefits to Contracted Services-Special Ed. and to approve the manifests in the amount of \$ 2,889,967.76 for FY 2026. **SECOND: K. Noonan VOTE: 8.30/0/0/4.70. Motion passes.**

6. SETTING NEXT MEETING’S AGENDA:

- a. **September 16, 2025**
- b. **Budget Process**
- c. **DOE 25**
- d. **Vote to Retain Funds**
- e. **Administration Report-Meet the administration**

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS: There are no public comments.

8. 8:05 PM Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee: MOTION: K. Noonan MOVED to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3II (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee. **SECOND:C.McDaniel-Thomas VOTE: 8.30/0/0/4.70. Motion passes.**

9. 8:10 PM ENTER INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION (c) : MOTION: K. Noonan MOVED to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely adversely affect the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting: **SECOND: B. Tatro VOTE: 8.30/0/0/4.70. Motion passes.**

10. MOTION TO ADJOURN: MOTION: C.McDaniel-Thomas MOVED to adjourn the Board Meeting at 8:21 PM. **SECOND: K. Noonan VOTE: 8.30/0/0/4.70. Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary

VOTING KEY:Yes/No/Abstain/Absent