Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room
June 17, 2024

Present: Ms. Lori Peters, Chair; Ms. Jenna Hardy, Vice-Chair; Ms. Laurie Rothhaus, Board Member; Mr. Ken Martin, Board Member; Ms. Naomi Halter, Board Member; and Ms. Chase Rheault, School Board Student Representative.

Also present were Mr. Everett V. Olsen Jr., Chief Educational Officer; Ms. Amy Doyle, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum; and Mr. Matt Shevenell, Assistant Superintendent for Business.

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

At 6:00 p.m., Chair Peters called the regular meeting to order.

2. RECOGNITIONS

Chief Educational Officer Olsen presented certificates of recognition to the following students:

- **NH Seal Biliteracy Recognitions**
    - Jennifer Epstein
    - Keria Foo
    - Maeve LaRock

- **JMUES Kindness Counts Recognitions**
    - Colton Miller
    - Lilah Bisbo
    - Lilah Miller
    - Heidi Caron
    - Rylee Morrison
    - Landyn Beers
    - Gavin Finnegan
    - Noah Roe
    - Sydney Winkler
    - Coleton Lafond
    - Connor McInnis

- **JMUES Respectful Student Awards**
    - Owen Columbus
    - Donovan Merrill
    - Jacob Kleczkowski
    - Daniel Foley
    - Jayson Kellett
    - Thomas Maricic
    - Kerllon Salazar
    - Eleni Fasquelle
    - Kyleigh Lowther
    - Benjamin Weldon
    - Reece Romano

- **JMUES Good Citizen Awards**

  - Sadie Merrill
  - Jordan Burns
  - Trista Poplar
  - Jack Rondeau
  - Addison Hall
  - Thomas Hill
  - Brynn Mikolajczuk
  - Dakota Heath
  - Kaylee Haernick
  - John Sand
  - William Jaffe

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

4. OLD BUSINESS

a. Board's Response to the Merrimack Village District's Low Salt Use on Continental Blvd.

Chair Peters read aloud the original letter from the Merrimack Village District to the NH Department of Transportation as follows:

"Merrimack Village District is requesting that the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) issue a "Low Salt" or "Limited Salt" route from the Exit 10 on-ramp from D.W. Highway southbound onto Industrial Drive, continuing south on Continental Boulevard to end where Continental meets Milford Road.

The undersigned Town Officials support this change in winter maintenance as this route is within the Wellhead Protection area that provides drinking water to the businesses and residents of Merrimack."

Chair Peters noted that Merrimack Village District would like to see the DOT move away from using salt to using a brine solution prior to storms.

Board Member Martin said he felt it was important to be environmentally conscious, but it was also important to keep the school properties safe for students, staff, parents, and anyone who might visit the school.

Chair Peters suggested that the School Board draft a letter stating that they supported the reduction of salt use in the area, but they would like safety to be the first priority. Board Member Rothhaus noted that she agreed with Chair Peter's suggestion.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell noted that the district had to use salt on the sidewalks and the parking lots.

Vice-Chair Hardy stated that the Merrimack Village District was more concerned about the salt used on Continental Boulevard.

MOTION: Board Member Martin made a motion to draft a letter in support of using brine on Continental Boulevard, noting that safety was their biggest concern, via advisement from legal counsel. Board Member Rothhaus seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Merrimack High School Highlights

Mr. Stephen Claire, Principal of Merrimack High School, and Mr. Bill Maniotis, English Department Head, were present to share a presentation of the highlights from the prior year at Merrimack High School, which included:

- Mr. Claire thanked the School Board and the administration for their support as they had implemented a number of new initiatives.
- Strong staff/student relationships.
- Extended classroom learning opportunities, including visiting museums and conferences.
- In October, 140 students and teachers from South Korea visited the school for a half-day of cultural exchange.
- 68 co-curricular clubs and activities that involved over 700 students throughout the school year.
- Unified sports had returned with great success.
- 3,300 visits were made to the School Counseling office.
- First Underclassmen Awards Program.
- MHS Scholarship Program.
- Mental Health Awareness Month was held in May.
- There were 11 adult diploma graduates.
- For the first year, all students in grades 9 and 10 took the PSAT.
- All students in grade 11 took the SAT and the SAS (Science Testing)
- 133 students took 243 AP exams across eight subjects (a 25% increase over the previous year.)
- 100% of MHS students received a score of 3 or higher in 7 AP subjects.
- This year, our faculty worked with consultants from NHLI to develop competencies that aligned with the MHS curriculum.
- Completed and submitted the year 1 NEASC report.

b. Teacher Evaluation Model Presentation

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle introduced members of the Merrimack School District's Teacher Evaluation Committee team as follows:

- Ms. Nicole Rheault, Principal, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School
- Ms. Amanda Lessard, Special Education Teacher, Reeds Ferry Elementary School
- Ms. Angi Perron, Pre-School Teacher, James Mastricola Elementary School
- Ms. Bonnie Painchaud, Principal, Reeds Ferry Elementary School
- Mr. Chrigus Boezeman, Principal, Merrimack Middle School
- Ms. Laurie Silvia, Literacy Coordinator, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School
- Ms. Barbara Defrancisco, Grades 3-4 Multi-Age Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School (Retired)

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle reviewed the proposed teacher evaluation model, including:

- Goal Setting
- Observations
- Observation Rubrics
- EPEC Process for Observations Review
- Summative Evaluation Reports
- Self-Reflection for the Summative Evaluation Report
- Frequency of the Summative Evaluation Report
- Remediation & Improvement Process

Principal Rheault pointed out that from the beginning of the discussions, the message was all about growth.

Chair Peters stated that while she very much appreciated the collaboration in building trust between the teachers and the administration, she felt there was another constituency that they needed to build trust with, which was the parents. She asked if that was in any part of the evaluation. Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle replied that parent and student surveys had not been discussed.

Vice-Chair Hardy asked if teachers were able to provide their feedback on how they thought things were going.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen commented that he felt the committee had done an excellent job at creating the new teacher evaluation, which provided accountability without being punitive.

c. Discussion of Chief Education Officer Olsen's Performance

Chair Peters stated that the School Board had provided feedback regarding Chief Educational Officer Olsen's performance. She said the School Board had rated Chief Educational Officer Olsen in educational leadership, culture, school district goals, district management, budget & operations, and communications as distinguished. She further said that the Board was thrilled to have Chief Educational Officer Olsen on board and that he had a great deal of integrity and moral fortitude.

Chair Peters added that the past budget season was a tough one for everyone, not just in Merrimack, yet Chief Educational Officer Olsen was able to listen to the taxpayers and make the appropriate adjustments in order to meet the default budget.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen commented that he felt any success he had was because of the great staff he had, along with excellent teachers. He also said it was quite refreshing to work with a School Board that had the same goals as he did, which was what was best for the students.

d. Other

There was none.

6. POLICIES

a. First Reading of Promotion and Retention of Students Policy and Procedures

Chief Educational Officer Olsen explained that the district had never had a Promotion and Retention of Students Policy.

MOTION: Board Member Martin made a motion to waive the first reading of the proposed new policy regarding the Promotion and Retention of Students Policy and Procedures. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

7. INFORMATIONAL UPDATES

a. Superintendent Update

Chief Educational Officer Olsen congratulated the class of 2024 on their graduation.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen also congratulated Matthew Brown, as a few years prior, he had suggested to Representative Rung that there should be an eating disorder hotline number placed on student identifications. He said the legislation had passed, and Matthew would be attending a future meeting.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen also wished that everyone would have a great summer vacation!

At approximately 7:43 p.m., Chair Peters stated that Board Member Martin had been excused from the meeting.

b. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Update

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle stated that the New Hampshire SAS Literacy results were available in the family portal.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle said Wit & Wisdom had arrived, and teachers were reviewing the information. She also said there would be a team of staff members who would attend the Reunification Training. (Crisis Management)

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle also congratulated the class of 2024.

c. Assistant Superintendent for Business Update

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell said the staging for the new roof at the James Mastricola Upper Elementary School and the James Mastricola Elementary School would start the following Thursday. He added that the materials from the Safe School Grants would also be arriving over the summer months.

On another note, Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell pointed out that the amount of PFOA's (perfluorooctanoic acid) in the school district water was zero.

d. School Board Update

Chair Peters said that she and other members of the Board had the pleasure of attending the adult diploma graduation ceremony. She thanked the administration for the creation of the Pathways to Graduation Program. She also congratulated the class of 2024, and it was a wonderful day of celebration.

Chair Peters commented that the School Board's Goals Meeting would be held on June 20th, and there would be a non-public meeting beginning at 8:30 a.m.

e. Student Representative Update

Student Representative Rheault stated that graduation went very well. She also said the graduating class had a fun week prior to graduation.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Board Member Halter made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 20th public minutes, the May 28th non-public minutes, and the June 3rd public minutes 2024. Board Member Rothhaus seconded the motion.

Edit:

Line 156 – To be removed in its entirety. (Board Member Halter)

MOTION CARRIED: 3 – 0 – 1. (Abstained – Vice-Chair Hardy)

9. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Teacher Nominations

o Sheridan DiLeo, English Teacher	Merrimack High School
o Samantha Parker, Elementary Classroom Teacher	JMUES
o Stacey Darwent, Elementary Classroom Teacher	JMUES
o Heather Davis, World Language Teacher	Merrimack High School
o Diana Harden, SEL Support Specialist	Reeds Ferry
o Emily Edwards, Art Teacher	Merrimack High School
o Kieran Mulligan, Social Studies Teacher	Merrimack High School
o Caitlin Moran, Videography Teacher	Merrimack High School

b. Resignations

o Nicole Frazzetta, Classroom Teacher	JMUES
o Mallori Niemaszyk, Social Studies Teacher	Merrimack High School
o Louis Esposito, Special Education Teacher	Merrimack High School
o Katy Angelone, Classroom Teacher	JMUES
o Marissa Fogg, World Language Teacher	JMUES
o Karl Safko, Social Studies Teacher	Merrimack High School

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

MOTION CARRIED: 3 – 0 – 0.

10. OTHER

a. Committee Reports

Chair Peters commented that she had attended the Joint Loss Management Committee meeting. They discussed that there was an overall decrease in slip and fall claims, but there was an increase in other types of claims that the administration was working on mitigating. She said teachers were encouraged to fill out incident reports when appropriate. She said there would be a safety policy coming sometime in July.

Chair Peters noted that the Board still did not have reports for the SAU and student services buildings from the Fire Marshall.

b. Correspondence

Chair Peters commented that she had received a number of emails from parents who had some concerns and forwarded them to the administration. She said there were also a couple of teacher concerns that were also forwarded.

c. Comments

Board Member Rothhaus commented that she would like to invite Chase Rheault to the meeting in July.

Chair Peters commented that each Board member had a copy of the proposed strategic plan draft and asked them to review it prior to the Goals Meeting.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

There were none.

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At approximately 8:03 p.m., Board Member Halter made a motion to adjourn. Vice-Chair Hardy seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.