Merrimack School District/SAU 26
School Board Meeting
Preliminary Agenda
September 23, 2024
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room

PUBLIC MEETING

6:00 p.m.	**1. CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**	Lori Peters
6:05 p.m.	**2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**	Lori Peters
6:15 p.m.	**3. RECOGNITIONS**	Lori Peters
	- Matthew Brown	Rosemarie Rung
6:25 p.m.	**4. INFORMATIONAL UPDATES**	Lori Peters
	a. Superintendent Update	
	b. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Update	
	c. Assistant Superintendent for Business Update	
	d. School Board Update	
	e. Student Representative Update	
6:35 p.m.	**5. OLD BUSINESS**	Lori Peters
	a. Review of New Hampshire School Board Resolutions	Lori Peters
6:55 p.m.	**6. NEW BUSINESS**	Lori Peters
	a. Middle School Lunch	Lori Peters
	b. Directory Information	Everett Olsen
	c. Student Enrollments	Everett Olsen
	d. School Board Goals	Lori Peters
	e. Revised Service Learning Project (SLP)	Everett Olsen
	f. Approval of MES, RFS, TFS and JMUES Parent/Student Handbooks	Everett Olsen
	g. Other	
7:45 p.m.	**7. POLICIES**	Lori Peters
	a. Second Review of Field Trip and Excursion Policy (IJOA) and Field Trip and Excursion Procedures (IJOA-R)	
7:50 p.m.	**8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**	Lori Peters
	a. September 9, 2024 Public and Non-Public Minutes	
7:55 p.m.	**10. CONSENT AGENDA**	Amanda Doyle
	a. Educator Nomination	
8:00 p.m.	**11. OTHER**	Lori Peters
	a. Committee Reports	
	b. Correspondence	
	c. Comments	
8:10 p.m.	**12. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**	Lori Peters
8:25 p.m.	**13. ADJOURN**	

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

New Hampshire School Boards Association

Barrett M. Christina, Executive Director
Matt Pappas, President, Rochester
Holly Kennedy, Past-President, Hinsdale

25 Triangle Park Drive, Suite 101
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: (603) 228-2061
www.nhsba.org

2024 NHSBA Delegate Assembly
Saturday October 19, 2024
10:30am
Grappone Conference Center

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

13. Submitted by the Hanover & Dresden School Boards

Proposed Resolution:
Whereas all children deserve to be safe in New Hampshire schools; and

Whereas public education strives to encourage tolerance, acceptance, inquiry, and curiosity; and

Whereas all children deserve the opportunity to participate in school based extracurricular activities, including sports teams; and

Whereas several school districts in New Hampshire have already adopted inclusive transgender student policies; and

Whereas the state of New Hampshire has previously enacted anti-discrimination laws in 2018 protecting transgender people from discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodations and schools;

Therefore be it resolved that the NHSBA supports and advocates for statewide legislation and local school board policy that affirms the rights of all students to participate in education including school sponsored curricular and co-curricular activities, free of discrimination on the basis of gender identity.

Rationale:
The rights of public school students are currently at risk because of some of the legislation under consideration in Concord, and this resolution is both critical and timely.

NHSBA Response:

The NHSBA Board of Directors believes that this Proposed Resolution is similar to Resolution VI:F, which was adopted in 2021. VI:F currently reads:

> *VI:F• NHSBA supports equity and inclusion in all aspects of education. NHSBA supports adherence to all anti-discrimination laws, rules and statutes ensuring that no student is excluded or discriminated against on the basis of sex, gender identity, race, religious creed, color, marital status, physical or mental disability, national origin, economic status, familial status, sexual orientation, health condition, or native language. (January 2021)*

Alternative Resolution Recommended by NHSBA Board of Directors:

VI:F• NHSBA supports equity and inclusion in all aspects of education, ***including curricular programs, extra-curricular programs and co-curricular programs***. NHSBA supports adherence to all anti-discrimination laws, rules and statutes ensuring that no student is excluded or discriminated against on the basis of sex, gender identity, race, religious creed, color, marital status, physical or mental disability, national origin, economic status, familial status, sexual orientation, health condition, or native language. (January 2021)

NHSBA Rationale: NHSBA Resolution VI:F already speaks to NHSBA's support for equity, inclusion and anti-discrimination laws. This Resolution also includes all classes protected under state law. The NHSBA Board of Directors believes the Alternative Resolution reaches the stated goal of the proposed resolution without singling- out one of the protected classes.

14. Submitted by the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School Board

Proposed Resolution:
The New Hampshire School Board Association will ensure that NHSBA member dues are not being used for lobbying purposes consistent with RSA 15:5.

Rationale:
The resolution simply seeks to follow the statute. If member school boards do not segregate funds when paying NHSBA membership dues, thus co-mingling state and non-state funds, then those membership dues cannot be used for lobbying purposes as stated in RSA 15:5.

NHSBA Response:

√ **Adoption NOT recommended by NHSBA Board of Directors.**

First: The Board of Directors believes the objective of the proposal is not appropriate for a Resolution. NHSBA Resolutions are intended to guide NHSBA's positions relative to legislative advocacy, while this resolution would seek to direct the internal operation of NHSBA relative to its membership.

Second: The resolution would require NHSBA to somehow monitor or audit the accounts and expenditures of its member districts.

Third: The premise is based upon an open question statutory interpretation.

> RSA 15:5 states:
> I. Except as provided in paragraph II, no recipient of a grant or appropriation of state funds may use the state funds **to lobby or attempt to influence legislation**, participate in political activity, or contribute funds to any entity engaged in these activities.
>
> II. Any recipient of a grant or appropriation of state funds that wishes to engage in any of the activities prohibited in paragraph I, or contribute funds to any entity engaged in these activities, shall segregate the state funds in such a manner that such funds are physically and financially separate from any non-state funds that may be used for any of these purposes. Mere bookkeeping separation of the state funds from other moneys shall not be sufficient.

Relative to Paragraph I, NHSBA maintains that the Association is not subject to Paragraph I, as NHSBA is not a "recipient of a grant or appropriation of state funds."

Relative to Paragraph II, RSA 15:5 became law in 2006. A review of the legislative history includes no information that would indicate that paragraph II was intended to apply (1) absent a primary object of the payment to "lobby or attempt to influence legislation" by the third-party entity, or (2) when the entity's positions are not directed or even chosen by the recipient of the state funds (i.e., an individual school district/board).

In this regard, NHSBA is not different than any other entity – whether for profit or not-for-profit - which receives payments from a district and which spends some of its revenue on attempts to influence legislation.

Additionally, and despite the fact that public employee/officer organizations such as NHSBA were funded in the same manner as NHSBA is in the present day, NHSBA is not aware of any instance since this statute became law when the bills' sponsors asserted that RSA 15:5 was intended to apply to organizations such as NHSBA.

Nothing precludes school boards from segregating funds for NHSBA dues. Consistent with limitations on NHSBA's legal services, NHSBA recommends that boards consult with their own local legal counsel for an interpretation of RSA 15:5, II. If a local board chooses to segregate funds, the board should consult with local counsel, along with the superintendent, business administrator and district auditor to best determine how that should be accomplished. Local counsel should be involved to ascertain whether this statute would also apply to other professional organizations/associations, vendors, contractors, or other entities engaged in legislative advocacy.

15. Submitted by the Governor Wentworth School Board

Proposed Resolution:
The GWRSD School Board tonight voted unanimously to support and in so doing reaffirm the current NHSBA resolution.

My motion;

I move the GWRSD School Board vote to support and reaffirm the current NHSBA resolution which reads "NHSBA supports that the state and federal government seek and provide viable, sustainable, permanent funding to provide a school breakfast and lunch at no cost to students."
Now reflected in the minutes, during public portion of the meeting, and recorded by Wolfeboro Community Television.

Rationale:
N/A

NHSBA Response: Though this is not a proposed resolution, per se, the NHSBA Board of Directors thanks the Governor Wentworth School Board for their continued support. If Continuing Resolution #2 passes, it will become a permanent Resolution in the NHSBA Statement of Beliefs Manual.

16. Submitted by the Concord School Board

Proposed Resolution:
The board voted 8-0 to send the following proposed resolution regarding universal free lunch to the NHSBA: (Motioned by Mr. Weinberg, 2nd by Mr. Cotton).

1. "Whereas the Concord School Board recognizes the importance of nutrition for supporting the development and learning potential of New Hampshire students.

2. Whereas the Concord School Board believes it is critical to tackle childhood hunger and food insecurity.

3. Therefore, we submit a resolution to the NHSBA to advocate to the NH State Legislature to create a universal and subsidized meal program for NH public school students."

Rationale:
Support for the issues concerning food insecurity

The Concord Board is committed to ensuring that all children receive nutritious meals while at school. In seeking support from the state to fund breakfast and lunches, the Board offers the following rational.

The Board acknowledges that every student needs to start the day with a healthy breakfast and a healthy lunch to sustain learning throughout the day

Schools in the city of Concord have a significant number of students with food insecurity. The district faced a deficit in revenues from the food service program due to the inability of families to afford the meal program

The district provides breakfast and lunch to students attending summer programs at the school.

The board realizes that not all families fill out the required paperwork for a variety of reasons, having state support would lessen the burden of filing the application

NHSBA Response: This Proposed Resolution is similar to Continuing Resolution #2. However, the NHSBA Board of Directors believes that a slight amendment to CR#2 is warranted and necessary, consistent with this Proposed Resolution. Continuing Resolution currently states:

NHSBA supports that the state and federal government seek and provide viable, sustainable, permanent funding to provide a school breakfast and lunch at no cost to students. (2022)

Alternative Resolution Recommended by NHSBA Board of Directors:

NHSBA supports that the state and federal government seek and provide viable, sustainable, permanent funding to provide a school breakfast and lunch at no cost to students ***and at no cost to local school districts***. (2022)

NHSBA Rationale: Continuing Resolution #2 only addresses providing school meals to students at no cost. Over the last number of years, the New Hampshire Legislature has passed numerous laws with unfunded mandates passed down to local school districts. This proposed Alternative Resolution clarifies that any school funding programs should also be at cost to local school districts and should not be an unfunded mandate.

17. Submitted by the Concord School Board

Proposed Resolution:
Concord Board of Education Resolution
For Gun Free School Zones

A RESOLUTION of the Concord Board of Education in Concord, New Hampshire supports New Hampshire State Legislation that will enforce the Federal Gun Free School Zone Act.

WHEREAS, the Concord Board of Education has an obligation to ensure that all students are provided a safe, secure, and supportive environment in which education and school activities are conducted; and

WHEREAS, legislators are accountable to create a safe or unsafe environment in our schools, as evidenced by increasing incidents of gun violence threats and gun violence in schools; and

WHEREAS, so far this year in 2024, the United States has experienced 88 incidents of shooting in schools with 78 victims of these shootings; and

WHEREAS, the presence of firearms increases risk of such harm; and

WHEREAS, the Concord Board of Education policies #544 prohibits weapons including firearms on school properties unless under the control of law enforcement personnel; and

WHEREAS the federal government has designated schools as gun-free zones; and

WHEREAS, the federal Gun Free Schools Act prohibits students from bringing firearms into schools, and the federal Gun Free Schools Zone Act prohibits all other persons from bringing firearms within 1,000 feet of school property; and
WHEREAS, any bill set before New Hampshire Legislators that does not enforce federal law of gun free school zones, compromises the ability to maintain a safe environment.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED:

The Concord Board of Education:

- Opposes current New Hampshire state law that does not require state and local law enforcement to enforce federal law of gun free school zones.
- Urges all City of Concord's elected representatives serving in the New Hampshire State Legislature to pass legislation to keep firearms out of school zones.
- Urges New Hampshire State Legislature to pass a bill that enforces federal Gun Free School and Gun Free School Zone Acts in order to create and maintain a safe education environment.

• Commits to creation and revision of Concord School District policies that prohibit students, staff, and civilians from bringing firearms within a school zone.
• Directs the Concord School District Superintendent to distribute this resolution to city, state, and local policy makers, all members of the State Board of Education (New Hampshire); New Hampshire State School Board Association; New Hampshire Association of School Administrators; New Hampshire State Teachers Association; local print, voice, and internet media.

Adopted the day of 2024, the Concord Board of Education voted at a dully called meeting at which a quorum was present with in favor, opposed, and abstained from the Resolution.

Resources:
K-12 School Shooting Database; https://k12ssdb.org/
Concord School District Policy #544 Weapons on School Property NH RSA 192 D:2
Federal Gun Free School Zone Act 1990 Federal Gun Free Schools Act 1994

Rationale:
Support for issues concerning weapons in the schools

The Concord Board of Education is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for children and staff and in doing so supports a gun free school zone. The Board offers the following rational.

The rules that apply to students attending schools should apply to adults who enter school grounds.

The Board was faced with a situation when adults (some carrying weapons) were using a school facility over a weekend at the same time students were in the building at an event. Students observed the adults carrying a weapon and sent panic among the students and parents. The situation was quickly resolved but not without heightened anxiety on the part of students.

The district receives federal funds to support school programs and is cognizant of the rules around the Federal "Safe and Gun Free Zones" and yet NH laws allow for concealed weapons as well as open carry.

NHSBA Response: NHSBA has two resolutions relative to guns and firearms on school grounds.

Continuing Resolution #4 states: *"NHSBA will advocate for legislative action that ensures local school boards comply with federal firearm laws and policies." (2022)*

Resolution VI:G• states *"NHSBA supports legislation to restrict possession of firearms on school property, limiting possession to certified police officers only." (2020)*

This Proposed Resolution is different, however, as it speaks to local law enforcement enforcing federal law regarding firearms on school grounds

Alternative Resolution Recommended by NHSBA Board of Directors:

VI:G• NHSBA supports legislation to restrict possession of firearms on school property, limiting possession to certified police officers only. ***NHSBA further supports state legislation that would allow enforcement of the federal Gun Free School Zones Act within New Hampshire.***

18. Submitted by the Oyster River School Board

Proposed Resolution:
II:E• NHSBA proposes that the state develop an equitable and sustainable tax plan dedicated solely to education for the purpose of fully funding a constitutionally adequate education for all students in the state. (2002)

Proposed resolution amendment, edit in bold italics:

II:E• NHSBA proposes that the state develop an equitable and sustainable tax plan dedicated solely to ***public*** education for the purpose of fully funding a constitutionally adequate education for all students in the state.

Rationale:
Recent legislation and rule interpretation by the state continue to complicate the ability of school districts to fund a constitutionally required adequate education. Recent court rulings (ConVal vs. State of NH, Rand vs. State of NH) reiterate this requirement to form a tax plan and the continued failure of the legislature to do so. This lack is creating a significant and negative educational and financial impact on public school districts and local taxpayers. Therefore it is timely to make a small edit to NHSBA policy II:E to reinforce that NHSBA not only supports an equitable and sustainable tax plan to fund education, but that the tax plan should support PUBLIC education rather than private and/or parochial education. This also allows policy II:E to more fully coincide with policy I:B, which opposes the creation of vouchers (Education Freedom Accounts) and other programs that funnel tax dollars away from public schools into private and parochial schools.

NHSBA Response:

The NHSBA Board of Directors supports the intent and purpose of this Proposed Resolutions, with minor modifications.

Alternative Resolution Recommended by NHSBA Board of Directors:

II:E• NHSBA proposes that the state develop an equitable and sustainable tax plan dedicated solely to ***public schools operated by local school districts*** ~~education~~ for the purpose of fully funding a constitutionally adequate education for all students in the state.

NHSBA Rationale: The NHSBA Board of Directors believes that the alternative language clarifies that education funding be directed at public schools operated by local school districts, lest there be any confusion or misunderstanding as to what constitutes "public education."

19. Submitted by the Oyster River School Board

Proposed Resolution:
The NHSBA does not support the proposed revisions to State Administrative Rule ED 306, document #10556, as amended on 3/27/2024.

Rationale:
The proposed revisions to State Administrative Rule ED 306, as of 3/27/2024, are problematic, inadequate, and unclear in multiple areas. The proposed rule changes conflict with multiple areas of standing NHSBA policies, resolutions, and statements of belief, including but not limited to:

I:B (moving tax dollars away from public schools);

II:N and II:U (unfunded mandates and fiscal impact);

V:K, V:M, and V:N (all regarding various aspects of local control, including standards, assessment and accountability);

VI:F (equity and inclusion for students) and VI:H (diversity, equity and inclusion within curriculum;

VIII:H (decreases in content and skills tested).

The proposed revisions also can be interpreted as affecting adequate funding by shifting educational requirements to options, which significantly complicates budgeting and aspects of local control. Local control itself is challenged in the draft by limiting language allowed in crafting policies as well as altering how a credit can be earned, which are typically under local school board purview. Standards are weakened by changing "mastery" to "proficiency" in meeting competencies, where "proficiency" is now defined as a minimum requirement as opposed to a high requirement. There are also multiple changes, such as changing "instructional" to "learning", and "teaching" to "facilitating learning" that lessens the importance of classroom learning. Highly qualified and credentialed professional teachers are paramount in providing quality education; eliminating or weakening teacher preparation and licensure is a disservice to students and society and compromises the quality of the diploma issued by the school district.

Due to these and other issues and areas of concern, the NHSBA should not support the proposed revisions to ED 306 as of 3/27/2024 (5/28/2024 proposed revisions have not yet been approved at this date).

√ **Adoption NOT recommended by NHSBA Board of Directors.**

NHSBA Rationale: Not support. On Wednesday August 14, 2024, the State Board adopted the new minimum standards, rendering this Proposed Resolution moot.

20. Submitted by the Oyster River School Board and Cosponsor of the Hanover/Dresden Resolution Submitted Above

Proposed Resolution:
Whereas all children deserve to be safe in New Hampshire schools; and

Whereas public education strives to encourage tolerance, acceptance, inquiry, and curiosity; and

Whereas all children deserve the opportunity to participate in school based extracurricular activities, including sports teams; and

Whereas several school districts in New Hampshire have already adopted inclusive transgender student policies; and

Whereas the state of New Hampshire has previously enacted anti-discrimination laws in 2018 protecting transgender people from discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodations and schools;

Therefore be it resolved that the NHSBA supports and advocates for statewide legislation and local school board policy that affirms the rights of all students to participate in education including school sponsored curricular and co-curricular activities, free of discrimination on the basis of gender identity.

NHSBA Response: This Proposed Resolution is the same as Proposed Resolution #13, above. The NHSBA Board of Directors response is the same to this Proposal as it was to Proposed Resolution #13.

Alternative Resolution Recommended by NHSBA Board of Directors:

VI:F• NHSBA supports equity and inclusion in all aspects of education, ***including curricular programs, extra-curricular programs and co-curricular programs***. NHSBA supports adherence to all anti-discrimination laws, rules and statutes ensuring that no student is excluded or discriminated against on the basis of sex, gender identity, race, religious creed, color, marital status, physical or mental disability, national origin, economic status, familial status, sexual orientation, health condition, or native language. (January 2021)

NHSBA Rationale: NHSBA Resolution VI:F already speaks to NHSBA's support for equity, inclusion and anti-discrimination laws. This Resolution also includes all classes protected under state law. The NHSBA Board of Directors believes the Alternative Resolution reaches the stated goal of the proposed resolution without singling-out a single protected class.

21. Submitted by the Hooksett School Board

Context
NH state law provides a framework for school impact fees to be established for new residential development/construction via RSA 674:21 which specifically refers to "public school facilities". Local zoning ordinances specify criteria for the assignment of fees to new construction, collection of fees from developers, retention of these fees, and the criteria for school districts to be eligible to receive these fees as revenue to offset expenses for facilities construction or improvement. In some communities, ordinances or Planning Board areas of focus are oriented towards municipal projects, and school district concerns may be inadequately considered.

Proposed Resolution
NHSBA will advocate for laws governing impact fees to be updated to require local Planning Boards to revisit impact fee methodology, policy, and schedule at least every five years, to ensure local ordinances reflect legislative or rule changes and consider other local factors and school district concerns.

√ **Adoption recommended by NHSBA Board of Directors.**

NHSBA Rationale: Impact fees stand to have a significant effect on school board budgeting, facilities planning, and school capital improvement plans. The NHSBA Board of Directors believes that by supporting and advocating for this Resolution, school boards will have better stability, uniformity and financial planning as it comes to school district facilities and infrastructure.

22. Submitted by the Mascoma Valley Regional School Board on 8/3/2024

Proposed Resolution:
NHSBA will support legislation that requires the State of New Hampshire to fund the cost of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey for all middle school students in the state.

Rationale:
Currently, the state of New Hampshire covers the cost for school districts to survey students for the Youth Risk Behavior Survey from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. This biannual, anonymous survey provides valuable information to school districts, health councils, and communities so they may be able to address underlying issues facing young people such as drug use, suicidal thoughts, self-harm, eating disorders, dating violence, abuse, bullying, vaping, addiction, and so much more. This survey is often the only way adults are able to understand the issues facing young people today because of its widespread use nationwide in an anonymized fashion. Currently, New Hampshire only funds the high school survey, leaving school districts having to fund a middle school survey themselves. An age-appropriate middle school survey is currently funded by our neighbors in Maine and Vermont, giving their communities better information to address problem behaviors earlier and build stronger risk prevention strategies by the time these students enter high school.

NHSBA Response:

√ **Adoption NOT recommended by NHSBA Board of Directors.**

NHSBA Rationale: The NHSBA Board of Directors recognizes and appreciates the Mascoma Valley Regional School Board's interest and stated desire to address problem behaviors earlier and build stronger risk prevention strategies by the time these students enter high school. However, the Board of Directors also believes that local school districts should undertake the Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey on their own volition, lest it be another mandate from the state and another task levied upon our school district staff.

23. Submitted by the Keene School Board the on 8/5/2024

Proposed Resolution:
NHSBA urges the New Hampshire Legislature to repeal all laws that usurp local control in regard to materials found in public school libraries. Further, NHSBA urges the New Hampshire Legislature to repeal all laws that usurp local control in regard to materials used to teach the curriculum established by the New Hampshire Legislature, New Hampshire Department of Education and local school boards.

Rationale:
It is our belief that our local school boards are best suited to deal with the expectations of the communities they serve and the staff they hire.

NHSBA Response:

√ **Adoption NOT recommended by NHSBA Board of Directors.**

NHSBA Rationale: NHSBA currently has two Continuing Resolutions that speak to this matter.

Continuing Resolution #5 states: *NHSBA opposes any legislations that divests local school boards of original jurisdiction relative to complaints about local curriculum, instruction, and instructional resources such as books, library materials, and other instructional resources. Further, NHSBA opposes any legislation that subjects school district staff to civil lawsuits and sanctions relative to curriculum and instruction. (2023)*

Continuing Resolution #6 states: *NHSBA affirms the qualifications of school district staff to research and select appropriate digital and printed material for schools. Literary and curricular collections should offer students information that provides a balance of cultural values. Further, literary collections should represent diverse points of view; provide a global perspective; stimulate essential thinking skills; and meet the interests, abilities, learning styles, and information needs of the learning community. (2023)*

The NHSBA Board of Directors believes these two Continuing Resolutions are related enough to the Proposed Resolution such that another resolution on the same topic is not necessary.

24. Submitted by the Keene School Board the on 8/5/2024

Proposed Resolution:
NHSBA opposes state laws that require mandatory reporting by teachers and staff to parents and guardians of conversations teachers and staff (including counseling, therapy, and school psychology) have with a student regarding the student's own status as a member of any protected class.

Rationale:
It is difficult enough to find and retain good teachers and staff, and mandatory reporting of non-criminal issues is a psychological and emotional burden to students and staff, violates confidentiality, and is an affront to professional ethics.

NHSBA Response: Support alternative language.

Alternative Resolution Recommended by NHSBA Board of Directors:

NHSBA supports legislation which prioritizes the well-being and safety of students and, while recognizing the rights of parents to make decisions about their children, also gives due consideration and weight to educators' professional judgment and their responsibility under the Code of Ethics for New Hampshire Educators to always act in a student's best interests.

Rationale: The Code of Ethics for New Hampshire Educators contains the following provisions:

- Educators are expected to have an awareness and respect of the confidential nature of material received and communicated from a variety of audiences.

- Educators are expected to recognize and respect confidential information acquired in the course of employment regarding individual student safety, education, health, and personal information of students and their families.

The NHSBA Board of Directors believes that the proposed Alternative Resolution addresses the intent of the proposed Resolution while simultaneously addresses the responsibilities of teachers and school staff under the Code of Ethics for New Hampshire Educators.

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

AMANDA S. DOYLE
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum

EVERETT V. OLSEN, Jr.
Chief Education Officer

MATTHEW D. SHEVENELL
Assistant Superintendent for Business

To: Lori Peters
Jenna Hardy
Naomi Halter
Ken Martin
Laurie Rothhaus

From: Everett V. Olsen, Jr.

Date: September 23, 2024

Subject: Student "Directory Information"

Recently, I sent a notice to parents informing them of their right to refuse disclosure of Directory Information as defined under the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In compliance with the federal FERPA statute, and N.H. RSA 189:1-e:

"A local education agency which maintains education records may provide information designated as directory information consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Each year schools shall give parents public notice of the types of information designated as directory information. By a specified time after parents are notified of their review rights, parents shall request in writing to remove all or part of the information on their child that they do not wish to be available to the public. Such approval shall be renewed on an annual basis. Items of directory information, which is information not generally considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed, may include":

- Name and address of a student
- Field of study
- Weight and height of athletes
- Most recent previous school attended
- Date and place of birth
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Date of attendance, degrees, and awards

This notification should have been going home annually in years past (prior to my assuming my current position) and I have been in compliance with the federal and state statutes by sending this to parents.

Some parents have inquired as to who might request Directory Information specific to a student(s). First, let me say that there are very few requests for student Directory Information. A request for Directory Information could possibly come from:

- Vendors selling school rings, photos for yearbooks
- Educational tutoring services
- College recruiter
- Military recruiter
- Public records request

As mentioned earlier, we receive very few requests for such information. We will never disclose non-directory information such as a student's social security number or a student identification number. I will be glad to discuss this with you on Monday evening.

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

AMANDA S. DOYLE
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum

EVERETT V. OLSEN, Jr.
Chief Education Officer

MATTHEW D. SHEVENELL
Assistant Superintendent for Business

To: Lori Peters
Jenna Hardy
Naomi Halter
Ken Martin
Laurie Rothhaus

From: Everett V. Olsen, Jr.

Date: September 19, 2024

Subject: Opening Enrollment

I want to provide you with a brief snapshot of our current enrollment. We have opened the 2024-2025 school year with 3,472 students in our schools with an additional 22 students in out-of-district placements and 141 students being homeschooled. A comparison of our current enrollment to the school year 2023 - 2024 is presented below.

Grade(s)	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**	**Difference**
PreK-Grade 4	1,411	1,383	-28
Grades 5 & 6	510	536	+26
Grades 7 & 8	513	483	-30
Grades 9-12	1,102	1,070	-32
			-64 Total
Out of District	20	22	+2
Home School	131	141	+10

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

AMANDA S. DOYLE
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum

EVERETT V. OLSEN, Jr.
Chief Education Officer

MATTHEW D. SHEVENELL
Assistant Superintendent for Business

To: MSD Teachers

From: Everett V. Olsen, Jr.

Date: August 29, 2024

Subject: New Service Learning Project Guidelines

For a number of years the collective bargaining agreement between the Merrimack Teachers Association, and the Merrimack School Board has provided funding (up to $150,000) for "Individual certified teachers to receive training to meet the needs of the District as determined by the Superintendent or their designee." Historically, this funding has been appropriated to the "Service Learning Project" Professional Development program.

Over the last few years, I believe that the SLP program has deviated somewhat from its original and intended purpose. An increasing number of co-curricular type activities have been funded via SLP instead of being appropriately funded with budgeted funds in co-curricular accounts. These activities will still be encouraged and supported with co-curricular funds. Additionally, I have felt that the approval and appeal process is time consuming and somewhat complicated.

We have refocused the SLP to address the four project approval criteria in the SLP information and guidelines enclosed. The intent is to fund SLP activities that will be supporting the curriculum and instruction practice, addressing School Board and Strategic Plan Goals and leveraging evidence-based educational best practices. The SLP application will be reviewed by your building principal, the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources Director, and the Chief Education Officer who will decide whether or not the project will be funded.

I do hope that you find the new SLP guidelines to be more clear and focused. We look forward to receiving and reviewing your proposed projects!

August 2024

Service Learning Project (SLP)
2024- 2025
Information and Guidelines

Background:

The Service Learning Project allows individual certified teachers to receive training to meet the needs of the School District as determined by the Superintendent or their designee. To be considered for funding, a project must address one or more of the following criteria:

- Support the Instructional Program
- Address a School Board goal(s)
- Assist in the Accomplishment of One or More Initiatives in the School District's Strategic Plan.
- Represent Evidence-Based Educational Best Practices.

Service Learning Project categories eligible for funding consideration include:

- Professional Learning Team
  - Facilitator (Tier B)
  - Data Manager (Tier ~~A~~ (B))

- Mentor
  - Torchbearer Program (Tier A)
  - Site Based Learning Plan (TBD depending on mentee needs)

- Domestic Overnight Field Trips (Tier C)

- International Field Trips (Tier B)

- Development of Innovative Content/Lessons and Innovative Instructional Practice (TBD based on project)

- Celebrations of Learning
  - Arts Nights (Tier B)
  - Showcase of Learning (Tier B)
  - Literacy Nights (Tier C)
  - Moving-on Ceremonies (Tier C)

- Homework Club/After School Support of Students (Beyond Professional Responsibilities of Extra Help) (Tier C)

- Book Study
  - Will Require Presentation and Report for Use by Staff (PowerPoint, podcast, video, etc.) (Tier D)

- Professional Development that Encourages Collaboration Among Teachers, Administrators, Parents, and Community Groups to Enrich Education (Tier B or C depending on project)

- Teaching a Merrimack-Specific Course "University of Merrimack" (TBD)

Service Learning Plan Stipends:

- Stipends for each SLP Category are listed in Appendix A and are not subject to individual negotiation, ie. the applicant accepts the allotted stipend.
- All SLP activities must be beyond the normal and customary daily professional responsibilities as determined by the Superintendent or designee.
- Stipends will be paid upon the completion of the Service Learning Project.
- District and school board committees do not qualify for a Service Learning Project stipend.
- Projects that currently receive a stipend do not qualify for an additional Service Learning Project stipend.
- Approval of any project will be at the discretion of the Superintendent or their designee and will not be subject to an appeal.

Project Impact:

The Service Learning Project must provide educational benefit to one/all of the following:

- Students
- Individual Classroom Staff
- School Staff
- District Staff

As mentioned previously, the project must address one or more of the following criteria:

- Support the Instructional Program
- Address a School Board goal(s)
- Assist in the Accomplishment of One or More Initiatives in the School District's Strategic Plan.
- Represent Evidence-Based Educational Best Practices.

Deadline:

SLP project requests must be submitted no later than March 30th through the "SLP Submission Request" form.

Appendix A

Stipend Tiers and Amounts

TIER A	**$1,000.00**
TIER B	**$750.00**
TIER C	**$500.00**
TIER D	**$250.00**

Important notes about compensation for stipends:

- SLP Submission Request form must be submitted by March 30th
- Compensation for Tier A activities will be paid in two installments, typically in December and May
- Compensation for Tier B,C, and D stipends will be paid in one installment, typically in May.
- If multiple staff members agree to split an assignment/activity typically completed by one person, compensation may be divided among participants

MERRIMACK SCHOOL DISTRICT
MERRIMACK TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT SUBMISSION REQUEST
2024-2025

The Service Learning Project (SLP) is intended to bring a mutual benefit to the educator and the district as a whole, and can be a variety of activities. Please complete the form below to be considered for compensation for completion of a SLP.

Employee Name	
Work Location	
Date	
TItle of Activity	

1. Please Select Which Category Your SLP Request Falls Into:
   - ☐ Professional Learning Teams (Facilitator, Data Manager, ETC)
   - ☐ Torchbearer Mentor
   - ☐ Site Based Learning Plan Mentor
   - ☐ Overnight Field Trip
   - ☐ Participation in the Development of Innovative Content/Lessons/Instructional Practices
   - ☐ Celebrations of Learning (Arts Nights, Showcase of Learning, Literacy Nights, Moving-On Ceremonies)
   - ☐ After School Support for Students (Homework Club or other After School programs above and beyond professional responsibilities or general student help)
   - ☐ Book Study (Will Require Presentation and/or Report for Use by Staff
   - ☐ Professional Development that Encourages Collaboration Among Teachers, Administrators, Parents, and Community Groups to Enrich Education
   - ☐ Teaching a College Level Course "University of Merrimack"

2. What is the intended outcome of this project?

3. What is the approximate time commitment of this project?

4. Describe how this activity will help you grow as an educator.

5. Describe the benefit that this project will bring to the staff and students of the Merrimack School District.

6. Any other information you want to share to explain your request?

Project Reviewed By:

Building Administrator	
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum	
Human Resources	

Response to Submission - Superintendent/Chief Education Officer

☐ Approved
☐ Not-Approved*

*Reason:

Chief Education Officer	

Form Revision Date: 8.30.2024

Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Merrimack Town Hall – Memorial Room
September 9, 2024

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

- **Student Welfare**

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

Also present were Mr. Everett Olsen, 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. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were none.

3. RECOGNITIONS

There were none.

4. INFORMATIONAL UPDATES

a. Superintendent Update

Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated that the school year was off to a great start. He added the following:

- Cable programming would begin the following week.
- Enrollments at the beginning of the year (minus homeschool and out-of-district) were down by approximately 55 students.
- Ashley Poirier, an employee at the Timberland Corporation, was awarded a grant to supply teachers with classroom supplies, including hats, sunglasses, and over twenty backpacks for the schools. He noted that Ashley was the daughter of Cindy Poirer, a long-time employee of the district. He expressed his sincere gratitude to Ashley and the Timberland Corporation.
- Received a communication from Beth Tamulevich, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School, who stated from her perspective that she was very impressed with the administration, curriculum coordinators, and technology teams.
- The Merrimack High School's online bookstore was open for business.
- Varsity Field Hockey had started.

DRAFT

- Merrimack High School would be hosting the Granite State Challenge for the 2024 – 2025 season.
- A chapter of the National Honor Society would be starting at Merrimack High School.
- Revised the Service Learning Project program, which detailed the types of activities that it could be used for.
- The 4th-graders at the James Mastricola Elementary School were very involved with lunch and bus buddies.
- The choir from the Merrimack High School had been invited to share a concert with the University of New Hampshire's Chamber Singers on November 21st at the University of New Hampshire.
- Leenie, a student who was working on becoming an Eagle Scout, had completed her first project, which was the installation of a Gaga Ball Pit at the Reeds Ferry Elementary School.
- Civics students had the opportunity to earn bonus points by going to the polls to observe the voting process.
- The 1st-grade students at the Reeds Ferry Elementary School had the opportunity to earn "Terrific Tickets," which was an idea shared with her by her mentor teacher.
- Chief Educational Officer Olsen respectfully recognized that the 23rd anniversary of 9/11 was the following Wednesday, and the people who lost their lives on that date would always be remembered.

b. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Update

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle stated that staff had three full days of professional development prior to the students starting school. She said one of those days was "classroom set-up day," one was regarding district initiatives, and one was building initiatives.

c. Assistant Superintendent for Business Update

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell said they were well prepared for parking on Election Day. He also said there were no issues at all with the buses on the first day of school.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell thanked the custodial staff for all of their hard work over the summer months and for making the classrooms in the district ready for the students.

d. School Board Update

Chair Peters commented that the Merrimack High School's FIRST Robotics Competition, Chop Shop 166, would hold the Mayhem in Merrimack event on Saturday, September 14th from 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the high school gymnasium.

Chair Peters stated that the School Board should have received an email from the NHSBA (New Hampshire School Board's Association) with the first set of resolutions. She noted that the resolutions would be reviewed at the next School Board meeting.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. Approval of 2024 – 2027 Strategic Plan

Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated that the strategic plan had been presented to the School Board at their last meeting. He said he made one change, the addition of a planning and feasibility process for a Performing Arts Center. He requested that the School Board approve the strategic plan so that it could be made public.

MOTION: Board Member Martin made a motion to approve the strategic plan for 2024 – 2027. Board Member Rothhaus seconded the motion.

Board Member Martin said he thought the plan was very well put together.

Board Member Rothhaus said she felt it was a very comprehensive document and was impressed with the hard work that went into it.

Board Member Halter noted that 27 people representing all of the stakeholders sat on the committee.

Chair Peters said she was very happy with how transparent the plan was.

CALLED THE QUESTION: Chair Peters called the questions, and all members voted in the affirmative to approve the strategic plan for 2024 – 2027.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated that he would provide the School Board with updates on the strategic plan throughout the year.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Tri-op Hockey Team (Merrimack, Hollis-Brookline, & Derryfield)

Mr. Adam French, Athletic Director, addressed the Board and said the numbers in the hockey program were very small, and he suggested that a Tri-Op hockey team be developed. He said the proposed Tri-op hockey team would work out very well for Merrimack.

Mr. French said for the time being, they would have the names of Merrimack, Hollis-Brookline, & Derryfield, but that could change in the future.

Mr. French said that he had contacted the Hockey Committee as well as the NHIAA (New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association), who had informed him that in order for the topic to be considered, they would need no less than the minutes of the School Board meeting.

Board Member Rothhaus said she had wonderful experiences in the past with Tri-op hockey teams and was very much in favor of having hockey programs in the Northeast.

Chair Peters asked how the cost of the program would be shared between the three teams. Mr. French replied that it would depend on how many athletes from each school participated.

Vice-Chair Hardy asked if the same thing could be explored with the swim team. Mr. Adams replied he would look into it.

MOTION: Board Member Martin made a motion to approve the Tri-op Hockey Team proposal. Board Member Rothhaus seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

b. Approval of Joint Loss Manual

Ms. Melissa Fazlic, Human Resources Director, addressed the Board and said a committee of twelve people sat on the Joint Loss Management Committee. She said the manual itself was approximately 20 pages and was available on the school district's website under supporting materials.

Ms. Fazlic said there were two main RSAs the district was required to address regarding the safety program: **RSA 281-A:64** that addresses worker's safety:

- The process of warnings, suspension, & termination.
- What happens when there is a violation of safety rules & regulations.
- Plans for responding to violent acts.

RSA 277:

- The overall health and safety of all employees and the Merrimack School District's responsibility, as the employer, was to ensure safe working conditions for all employees.

Ms. Fazlic explained that the main components of what the Joint Loss Management Committee was responsible for and covered in the safety property were as follows:

- Review workplace hazards and perform building safety audits.
- There must be at least ten people with equal numbers of employers and employees.
- Review the prevention of accidents in a confidential nature.
- Ensuring safe working conditions are a top priority.
- Welcome feedback.
- The importance of reducing worker's compensation claims as a whole.
- Reporting workplace injuries. There is no negative impact on the employee for reporting an injury.
- The manual must be reviewed every two years, at a minimum.

Ms. Fazlic said in addition to the Joint Loss Management Committee and the safety program that she was seeking to get approved, they also had school-based safety committees that looked at the day-to-day things that may pose a hazard to anyone entering the building.

- A districtwide Crisis Response Team
- Emergency Management Procedures
- Working with student services to provide CPR training for employees.

Ms. Fazlic asked if members of the Board had any questions or comments.

Vice-Chair Hardy asked if building safety audits included the administration buildings. Ms. Fazlic replied in the affirmative. She said she would provide the audit to the Board once it was complete.

Chair Peters clarified that if a staff member was getting hurt in a classroom, they very much encouraged those staff members to report it. She noted that the School Board supported the staff.

MOTION: Vice-Chair Hardy made a motion to accept the Merrimack School District Safety Program. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

c. Overview of New Core Programs

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle reviewed the three new core programs as described below. She noted that all three programs were evidence-based and routed in research.

- Wit & Wisdom – Comprehensive Standard-Based English Language Arts Program
    - Focuses on reading, writing, listening, speaking, and vocabulary.
- OpenSciEd – Middle School Science Program
    - A phenomenon-based curriculum including simulations and data collection.
    - Engineering imbedded into each unit.
    - Based on the principles of Universal Design for Learning.
    - Top rating from EdReports.
    - High marks in everything related to Next Generation Science Standards.
    - The following day, an on-site Implementation Specialist would be visiting the district from Activate Learning, which OpenSciEd approved.

- Vista – K through 12 English Language Learners

    - The core program for the growing population of English Language learners designed to help K – 12 students.
    - Focus on vocabulary, learning, listening, speaking, writing, and grammar.
    - Authentic media, rich print, great digital platform, among others.
    - Purchased four different components of the Vista Program:

        - Get Ready Program – for newcomers
        - Connect Program – for striving readers
        - Bridges Program – for middle school students
        - Engage Program – for high school students

    - Evidence-based program

The School Board and Chief Educational Officer Olsen thanked Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle for such a comprehensive presentation.

d. Recap of Leadership Retreat

Chief Educational Officer Olsen said two very busy days were devoted to discussing the issues that they were being faced with. He said that among those discussed were the strategic plan, goals, and detailed plans regarding safety and that the staff attended a safety training meeting called "I love you guys." Chief Educational Officer Olsen said they also had a successful leadership team meeting.

7. POLICIES

a. Field Trip and Excursion Policy (IJOA) and Field Trip and Excursion Procedures (IJOA-R) 1st Reading

MOTION: Vice-Chair Hardy made a motion to waive the first reading of the Field Trip and Excursion Policy (IJOA). Vice-Chair Hardy seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

b. Revision of Promotion and Retention of Students Policy (IKE)

Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated that legal counsel had recommended adding the following sentence to the end of the second paragraph:

"and the district's academic standards as approved consistent with RSA 192-E:2-a,IV."

MOTION: Board Member Rothhaus made a motion to approve the revision to the Promotion and Retention of Students Policy (IKE). Board Member Martin seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

c. Guidance Pertaining to Comfort/Support Animal

Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated that service animals, primarily dogs, were assigned to a person to address a specific disability. He said that was very different from bringing a family pet.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated comfort animals had been becoming more frequent in helping support students in times of crisis. He said legal counsel had advised him that the subject did not belong in the policy because there were no statutory rights associated with a comfort animal. He said, however, the information would be provided in the student handbook.

MOTION: Board Member Martin made a motion to accept the language regarding Comfort/Support Animals. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. August 12, 2024 – Public and Non-Public Minutes

MOTION: Board Member Halter made a motion to accept the public and non-public minutes from the August 12, 2024, meeting as amended. Board Member Martin seconded the motion.

Edit: Remove the verbiage that Board Member Rothhaus was present.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 –1. (Abstained – Board Member Rothhaus)

9. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Teacher Nominations

o Matthew Castonguay, Elementary Classroom Teacher	JMUES
o Jill Tacy, Preschool Teacher	Reeds Ferry
o Elizabeth Tamulevich, Elementary Classroom Teacher	JMUES
o Geraldine Goguen, Technology Teacher	Reeds Ferry

b. Resignations/Retirements

o Tracy Griffenhagen, Special Education Coordinator	Thorntons Ferry
o Heather Sylvia	Merrimack Middle School
o Kathleen Donegan, Elementary Classroom Teacher	Reeds Ferry
o Steve Lebel, Elementary Classroom Teacher	JMUES

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

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

10. OTHER

a. Committee Reports

Board Member Rothhaus commented that she had attended the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting, where they provided an update on the summer programs, which were very successful. She said they also discussed increasing the fees for the rental of their buildings. Additionally, Board Member Rothhaus said they discussed their vision for new initiatives for Parks & Recreation.

Board Member Rothhaus stated that she had attended the Planning & Building Committee, where they discussed the rehabilitation of the administration buildings. She added that it was not a viable option due to safety concerns.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell said that the district had engaged the services of an architect, Marinace Associates, who designed the Merrimack Middle School, looked at the central office building as well as the special services offices, and offered the following opinion:

"The current state of the buildings is very poor. The condition and quality of exterior finishes and windows, the worn-out state of interior finishes, lack of fresh air, lack of compliance with ADA dimensional requirements, appropriateness of stairs, lack of safe exits, inadequate spaces, lack of elevators, old mechanical systems, and a general state of degradation of buildings that are very original to their construction in the 1950s or 1960s, indicates the significant need for major upgrades or building replacements."

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell added that Marinace Associates provided the service free of charge. He said it would cost more to rehabilitate the buildings than it would to replace them with no additional space. He added that Marinace Associates said it would cost approximately $4 million to rehabilitate the buildings, but that did not include asbestos abatement, overruns, and problems with the foundation.

Chair Peters reminded the public that they were welcome to attend Planning & Building Committee meetings.

b. Correspondence

Chair Peters commented that she and members of the Board had received multiple emails regarding when school would start and at what time, as well as questions about transportation. She said she directed the questions to the appropriate people.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

There were none.

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At approximately 7:51 p.m., Board Member Halter made a motion to adjourn. Board Member Martin seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

DRAFT

FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

The Merrimack School District encourages off-site educational experiences that expand the school curriculum and that also educate the whole child. Such experiences are viewed as class time in another location. It is the responsibility of each Principal to assure that such student experiences are thoroughly planned in the interest and protection of the pupils involved and that the behavioral expectations are the same as in the classroom. Educational alternatives will be provided to students who do not attend a field trip.

The Principal and the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment will approve or disapprove any field trip request.

Legal References:

1st Reading: September 9, 2024
2nd Review: September 23, 2024
Adoption:

FIELD TRIPS PROCEDURES

Academic Field Trips

The Merrimack School Board recognizes that academic field trips are an extension of the classroom experience that expand and reinforce concepts learned in the classroom and provide new and unique experiences not available in the classroom setting. An academic field trip is defined as a visit to a location not on school grounds that have a direct relationship to a curricular field. There are two types of academic field trips: core curriculum trips that are an integral part of the curriculum, and enrichment curriculum trips that require teacher approval for student participation. An example of an enrichment curriculum trip is language immersion in ~~a foreign~~ an international country. Merrimack School District will sponsor academic field trips for students only when trips meet the following criteria:

Curriculum Standards - The learning activities associated with the field trip map to the curriculum standards and satisfy instructional hour requirements.

Affordability/Accessibility Standards - All core curriculum trips must be provided free of charge to all students. The Merrimack School District may request voluntary contributions from students and families to defray the cost of core curriculum field trips.

Enrichment curriculum trips should be affordable and accessible to all qualified and interested students. Students may be encouraged to participate in fund raising efforts to defer the cost of an enrichment trip.

Educational Alternatives - Students who cannot participate in core curriculum trips will receive educational alternatives that have related academic value.

Health and Safety - The health and safety of students and staff is given utmost consideration in the approval, planning and conduct of all school sponsored trips. Students participating in any type of field trip are required to adhere to general school rules and regulations.

Supervision - Staff from the requesting school direct the trip, and a staff member is identified as the Staff-in-Charge and is in attendance to ensure compliance with this policy.

Non-Academic Field Trips

A non-academic field trip is defined as attendance at contests or regional events outside the school grounds that is not a part of the curriculum and does not count toward meeting the instructional hour requirement. Every effort should be made to mitigate the effect of non-academic field trips on instructional hours.

Related Definitions

Chaperone - A person, other than a teacher and instructional assistant, age 21 or older, who accompanies and supervises the students on a field trip.

Staff - All paid school personnel.

Staff-in-Charge - The teacher attending the trip designated to ensure compliance with this policy.

Approval Criteria

The table below lists the terms used for trips of various lengths and the approval required. Note that out-of-state travel requires School Board approval regardless of the trip length. In no case will a trip exceeding five school days be approved.

Trip Length	Principal	Asst Supt for Curriculum	Supt	School Board
Day - Within the school day. *				
Academic	X	X		
Non-Academic	X			
Extended - A visit extending beyond the school day but not overnight.				
Academic	X	X		
Non-Academic	X			
Overnight - A visit that involves an overnight stay.				
Academic	X	X	X	X
Non-Academic	X		X	X
Foreign - A visit to a foreign country.				
Academic	X	X	X	X
Non-Academic	X		X	X

* All Academic field trips, longer than half of the school day, require the approval of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment.

X Approval is required by the indicated person.

Approval

Approval for all trips requiring School Board approval must be received prior to the school year in which the trip is to take place and prior to making any final financial contractual arrangements. All field trips must be approved in writing by the appropriate authority as specified in this policy.

The initial documentation to request a field trip must include:

Documentation

1. The purpose of the trip including a mapping to the curriculum frameworks.
2. Proposed dates.
3. Proposed itinerary.
4. Estimated number of students expected and percentage of eligible students participating.
5. Cost per student (if applicable).
6. Ratio of chaperones/teachers to students.
7. Description of transportation arrangements.
8. Description of arrangements for meals and lodging (if applicable).
9. Means of financing.
10. A draft copy of any contract associated with the trip.
11. A description of the educational alternative and mapping of that alternative for students not attending the trip.
12. A satisfactory criminal background check is required of all chaperones.
13. A description of the process that will be used to determine student eligibility. After the initial trip approval, subsequent approval documentation must include information detailing how the above trip conditions have changed since the initial trip was approved.