Merrimack School District/SAU 26
School Board Meeting
Preliminary Agenda
January 2, 2024 (Tuesday)
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Rm

PUBLIC MEETING

6:00 p.m.	**1. CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**	Ken Martin
6:05 p.m.	**2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**	Ken Martin
6:15 p.m.	**4. BUDGET PRESENTATIONS**	Ken Martin
	a. Maintenance	Tom Touseau
	b. Technology/Library Services	Jason Pelletier
	c. Student Services, Student Wellness	Sarah Reinhardt, Sara Parrotto
	d. District	Matt Shevenell
8:00 p.m.	**5. OLD BUSINESS**	
	a. Board's Response to the 2024-2034 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)	Matt Shevenell
8:15 p.m.	**6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**	Ken Martin
	a. December 11, 2023 Public and Non-Public Minutes	
8:25 p.m.	**7. CONSENT AGENDA**	Amanda Doyle
	a. Educator Nominations	
8:30 p.m.	**8. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**	Ken Martin
8:45 p.m.	**9. ADJOURN**	Ken Martin

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

January 2, 2024
Budgets to be reviewed: Maintenance, Technology/Library Services, Student Services, Student Wellness, District

Budget Questions For _____

Submitted by:

Page #	Account Number	General Questions/Comment

Capital Improvement Plan
Capital Expenditure Summary Form - 5 YEAR PLAN
Approved by Planning and Building

Description	Replace Addition	Priority	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Roofing	Replace	Necessary	MES/JMUES $ 707,135	MES/JMUES $ 786,642	MES/JMUES $ 1,292,838	MHS $ 903,000	MHS $ 669,338
Gym Floor Replacement	Replace	Necessary		MHS GYM $ 275,000			
Boilers	Replace	Necessary			MHS (4) Units $ 600,000		Units $ 450,000
Window Replacement JMUES 32 windows	Replace	Necessary	JMUES $ 212,000	MHS-Courtyard $ 359,417		TBD $ 360,000	
Technology Infrastructure	Replace	Necessary	$ 1,236,163	$ 1,013,940	$ 904,440	$ 888,340	$ 907,340
Turf Field - MHS/ TRACK	Replace	Necessary			$ 2,250,000		
HVAC = Split Systems 12	Replace	Necessary	$ 212,000				
MHS Locker Rooms - Upgrade	Replace	Necessary	STUDY				
Safety/ Security - Cameras	Replace	Necessary	$ 150,000	$ 160,000	$ 165,000		
Safety/ Security - Lock Sets	Replace	Necessary	$ 300,000				
Score Boards/Campus Signage	Replace	Necessary	$ 250,000				
Master Plan/SAU Office	Replace	Necessary	SAU Office TBD	MHS Sidewalks/Lights	O'Gara Drive plus sidewalks		
Total			$ 3,067,298	$ 2,594,999	$ 5,212,278	$ 2,151,340	$2,026,678

MAINT = Maintenance Building
MHS = Merrimack High School
MMS = Merrimack Middle School
MUES = Mastricola Upper Elementary School
MES = Mastricola Elementary School
RFS = Reeds Ferry Elementary School
TFS = Thorntons Ferry Elementary School

12/15/2023

Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room
December 11, 2023

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

- Staff Welfare
- Negotiations

Present: Vice-Chair Laurie Rothhaus, Board Member Lori Peters, Board Member Jenna Hardy, and Board Member Naomi Halter. Also present were Chief Educational Officer Everett Olsen, Assistant Superintendent for Business Matt Shevenell, and Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle.

Not Present:

Chair Ken Martin (Excused)
Student Representative Shaun Evidente (Excused)

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice-Chair Rothhaus called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

3. RECOGNITIONS

Chief Educational Officer Olsen recognized the students who participated in the New Hampshire Jazz All-State Festival Auditions and presented students with certificates of recognition. He also recognized the music teachers.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen recognized the students who participated in the New Hampshire All-State Music Festival Auditions and presented students with certificates of recognition. He also thanked the coaches.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen recognized the students who participated in the Tri-County League Division 1 Girls' Soccer Championship New Hampshire and presented students with certificates of recognition. He also thanked the coaches.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen recognized the student(s) who participated in the Middle School Division 1 Girls' Cross-Country Championship and presented students with certificates of recognition. He also thanked the coaches.

The School Board collectively congratulated all of the students who received recognition.

4. INFORMATIONAL UPDATES

a. Superintendent Update

Chief Educational Officer Olsen wished people a Happy Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanza.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen commented that the staff had been busy working on the Strategic Plan and would be meeting again the following Wednesday and noted that they would be meeting with the School Budget Committee on the following Tuesday evening.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen congratulated Ricardo, a student at the James Mastricola Upper Elementary School, who won the winning piece of artwork regarding its anti-bullying campaign.

b. Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle Update

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle stated that the following Friday, December 22nd, would be an early release, and during that time, the staff would be completing training on the Identification, Intervention, and Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and how the staff could support students who were experiencing homelessness.

c. Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell said a couple of weeks ago, they had a meeting with the Planning and Building Committee where they presented them with the Capital Improvement Plan, and it was approved. He said the plan would be presented to the Board shortly.

d. School Board Update

Vice-Chair Rothhaus said the residents of the Town of Merrimack had recently received their tax bills, and they saw a substantial increase. She said a large part of the increase was due to the fact that certain segments of the commercial/industrial properties in the town had decreased in value while the residential properties value continued to climb. She further stated that the town had a decrease in value of $75 million on the commercial/industrial side.

Vice-Chair Rothhaus said the previous year, they passed the much-needed teacher's contract that brought the teachers from the bottom of the scale to the middle of the scale in the State of New Hampshire. She said that recently, the Department of Education had

released a list of 19 schools that were in the most need of improvement, and it did not include any schools in the Town of Merrimack.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. Update on the Proposed New Central Office Building

Vice-Chair Rothhaus said the reason for the proposed new central office building was due to safety concerns, lack of space, and rooms that would allow for confidential conversations, and it was important for the administrative team to have a functioning building in order to do the work they were expected to do. She added that the School Board had been asked to take a formal vote in support of the proposed building.

b. Board's Response to the Proposed New Central Office

MOTION: Board Member Halter made a motion to acknowledge the need to build an adequate, safe, and appropriately confidential space for the administrators to work and direct the administration to provide the Board with options so that it may be on the ballot in April. Board Member Hardy seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

Vice-Chair Rothhaus noted that the Board had talked about forming an Ad Hoc Committee to support the Planning and Building Committee, and they currently had eight citizens who were interested in sitting on the committee.

MOTION: Board Member Peters made a motion to support the creation of an Ad Hoc Committee to discuss listening to the information of stakeholders regarding the SAU building. Board Member Hardy seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Board Member Peters pointed out that the Ad Hoc committee was not an elected body, and all citizens of the Town of Merrimack were welcome to add to the discussion.

Board Member Peters called the question.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

Vice-Chair Rothhaus asked if any School Board members would volunteer to bring the project forward to the Planning and Building Committee in an effort to help them understand the need for the project. Board Member Peters replied that she would be happy to do that. Board Member Hardy also expressed that she may be available to do that, but she would have to check her schedule.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. House Resolution Requesting More Robust Climate Education in NH

State Representative Wendy Thomas addressed the Board and said she sat on the Science, Technology, & Energy Committee and was also a member of Merrimack's Fledgling Energy Committee. She said she was joined by four young activists/advocates from 350 New Hampshire. She said the advocates had reached out to her the previous summer because they wanted to put a bill in to mandate a more robust climate change curriculum in public schools.

Representative Thomas noted that she felt it was not the right time to initiate a mandate for public schools. She said they decided they would take the ideas and put them in a House Resolution, which would be an official document from the House of Representatives in New Hampshire to Mr. Frank Edelblut, the Commissioner of Education. She said that although there was an existing climate change curriculum in New Hampshire, it was a little outdated. She said renewable energy would be one of the things that would be focused on.

Representative Thomas introduced Dante, a senior at Nashua High School South; Taylor, a senior at Nashua High School North; Sonja, a senior at Nashua High School North; and Elizabeth, who was the Youth Organizer with 350 New Hampshire. (A presentation was given and is available to view as part of the video available on Merrimack TV.)

Chief Educational Officer Olsen, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle, and the entire School Board collectively thanked the students for their impressive presentation.

b. Guaranteed Maximum Rate for Health Insurance

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell explained that the Guaranteed Maximum Rate for the current year was 15.9%.

c. Deliberative Session Dates (between March 2nd through March 9th.)

MOTION: Board Member Peters made a motion to hold the Deliberative Session on Monday, March 4, 2024, and to have a snow date of Thursday, March 7, 2024. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

d. Overview of Proposed 2024 – 2025 School District Budget

Chief Educational Officer Olsen provided a very high-level review of the budget process. He said the step would be for the School Board to take action on the proposed budget and then send it to the School Budget Committee.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen commented that many factors went into the preparation of the budget, including making sure that the district had highly qualified, trained, and well-prepared staff. He also said it included having competitive wages to recruit and retain quality staff.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen said some of the priorities in the 2024 – 2025 budget would include the MESSA contract, continuing to have safe and secure facilities, hiring & retaining staff, and having a research-based literacy program.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle stated that the district would be moving from a balanced literacy approach to a structured literacy approach, which would include the purchase of a core literacy program called "Wit & Wisdom."

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell stated that the roofing projects would continue in the next year, which would include the James Mastricola Upper Elementary School. He also said there would be some (32) window replacements at the James Mastricola Upper Elementary School, and building security, including lock sets and cameras, would be installed. He added that they included $1.2 million in the budget for technology.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated that the district had a clear sense of direction of what they wanted moving forward and was sequencing as fiscally responsible as possible as they felt what was needed.

Board Member Peters asked if there was a possibility of hiring permanent substitute teachers at the high school. Chief Educational Officer Olsen replied that the line item would be best suited as part of the high school budget.

Vice-Chair Rothhaus noted that the district's graduation results had improved, going from 84% to 87%. She also noted that the turnover rate had decreased in recent years. She also noted, however, that the district needed to do better with diversity.

Board Member Halter commented that she appreciated the attention that was being paid to the upkeep of the district's buildings.

7. POLICIES

Chief Educational Officer Olsen commented that since the first reading, there had been no comments, and legal counsel had also reviewed it.

a. Second Reading of Evaluation Requirements for Children with Specific Learning Disabilities (IHBAA)

MOTION: Board Member Peters made a motion to approve policy (IHBAA) – Evaluation Requirements for Children with Specific Learning Disabilities, as presented, given its 2nd reading. Board Member Hardy seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

b. Second Reading of Special Education Evaluations (IHBAB)

MOTION: Board Member Hardy made a motion to approve policy (IHBAB) – Special Education Evaluations, as presented, given its 2nd reading. Board Member Peters seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

c. Second Reading of Evaluation Requirements for Children with Developmental Delays (IHBDA)

MOTION: Board Member Halter made a motion to approve policy (IHBDA) – Evaluation Requirements for Children with Developmental Delays, as presented, given its 2nd reading. Board Member Peters seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

d. First Reading of Revised Admission of Tuition and Non-Resident Students (JFAB)

MOTION: Board Member Peters made a motion to waive the first reading of policy (JFAB) – Revised Admission of Tuition and Non-Resident Students. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

e. Third Reading of Revised Use of Physical Restraint/Seclusion (JKAA)

MOTION: Board Member Halter made a motion to approve policy (JFAB) – Revised Use of Physical Restraint/Seclusion, given its 3rd reading, with the removal of lines 122, 124, and 125 to remove redundancies, and bullet #6 would start on line 111. Board Member Peters seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Board Member Hardy suggested that the policy should begin with a statement that read as follows:

"The Merrimack School District affirms the right of all children to be treated with dignity."

Chief Educational Officer Olsen replied that he would seek legal counsel's opinion on the proposed addition, and it would be placed on the agenda of the next meeting.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. November 6, 2023, Public and Non-Public Minutes

MOTION: Board Member Peters made a motion to approve the public and non-public minutes of November 6, 2023, as amended. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

Edit:

- Page 3 – The Planning & Building Committee named a School Board member as a member of that committee needed to be added. (Vice-Chair Rothhaus)

MOTION CARRIED: 3 – 0 – 1. (Abstained – Board Member Hardy)

9. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Educator Resignation

- Ms. Kimberly Morgan, 7th-grade Science Teacher, Merrimack Middle School

MOTION: Board Member Hardy made a motion to accept the resignation of Ms. Kimberly Morgan. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

b. High School Principal Role Description

Discussion:

Vice-Chair Rothhaus requested that the following language be added to the High School Principal Role Description:

*"The principal evaluates and supervises the Director of Guidance."

c. School Principal Role Description

d. Assistant Principal Role Description

MOTION: Board Member Peters made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda, as *amended. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

10. OTHER

a. Committee Reports

Board Member Hardy commented that she attended the CIA (Curriculum, Assessment, & Instruction) Committee meeting on November 21st, where they discussed Read, Write for Google and how it would benefit the Merrimack School District. She said Ms. Sara

Parrotto, Director of Student Wellness, gave a presentation regarding the SEL (social-emotional learning) curriculum. She also said they discussed Algebra I and how they would address some concerns.

Board Member Halter commented that she attended a School Budget Committee meeting on November 14th, where they reviewed how the budget process went the prior year as well as the first quarter of the current fiscal year. She said one of the things that came up was the SAU project, and she conveyed that the entire School Board was completely in favor of the project and asked them to support it as well.

Board Member Halter also commented that she attended multiple Strategic Planning Committee meetings to fine-tune the goals that were established the previous year by the School Board.

Vice-Chair Rothhaus said she had attended a Building & Planning Committee meeting where they created a PowerPoint presentation regarding the SAU building that would be shared with the public. She said the next meeting would be held on December 20th.

Board Member Peters asked if they had identified who would be on the Title Board Stakeholder Group Committee. Board Member Hardy said she would be on the committee.

Board Member Peters asked if there was a private school leader on the committee. Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle replied there was one private school in Merrimack, and they did not elect to receive any funds, so nobody needed to sit on that committee.

b. Correspondence

Board Member Hardy commented that she received correspondence from concerned parents regarding a safety issue, and she passed the concern along to the administration. She said the other concern was regarding a teacher issue, which she also forwarded to the administration.

Vice-Chair Rothhaus said she received correspondence regarding a question about the NHIAA, the importance of Athletic Directors following the policies, and, when schools do not comply, how it affects the outcome of NHIAA competitions.

Board Member Peters commented that she received correspondence from two people who questioned why the SAU building Ad Hoc Committee meeting was canceled. She said she passed that along to the administration.

c. Comments

Vice-Chair Rothhaus shared that she had attended an 80th birthday party for Dottie Zyla, who was a third-grade teacher at the James Mastricola Elementary School for many years. She noted how teachers are able to have such a positive influence on students.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

There were none.

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At approximately 7:48 p.m., Board Member Halter made a motion to adjourn. Board Member Hardy seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.