Merrimack School District/SAU 26
School Board Meeting
Preliminary Agenda
August 14, 2023
Merrimack Town Hall – Memorial Room

5:30 p.m. **NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A:3, II (a) (b) (c) – Town Hall Memorial Room**

- Student Welfare
- Staff Welfare

PUBLIC MEETING

6:00 p.m.	**1. CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**	Ken Martin
	2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	Ken Martin
	3. RECOGNITIONS	Ken Martin
6:15 p.m.	**4. INFORMATIONAL UPDATES**	Ken Martin
	a. Superintendent Update	
	b. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Update	
	c. Assistant Superintendent for Business Update	
	d. School Board Update	
	e. Student Representative Update	
6:30 p.m.	**5. OLD BUSINESS**	Ken Martin
	a. Update on School Board and Administration Goal Setting Meeting	Everett Olsen
	b. Future Recognitions	Laurie Rothhaus
6:50 p.m.	**6. NEW BUSINESS**	Ken Martin
	a. Student Enrollment Update	Everett Olsen
	b. Staffing Update	Everett Olsen
	c. Update on Opening of School	Amanda Doyle
	d. School Bus Safety Video	Everett Olsen
	e. Update on Leadership Retreat	Everett Olsen
	f. Summer Projects	Matt Shevenell
	g. Date for First Meeting in September	Everett Olsen
	h. Other	
7:30 p.m.	**7. POLICIES**	Ken Martin
	a. Approval of Student Transportation Services (EEA)	
	b. Second Review of Admission of Homeless Students (JFABD)	
	c. Second Review of Education of Children in Foster Care (JFABE)	
	d. First Reading of Revision to Suicide Prevention and Response (JLDBB)	
7:45 p.m.	**8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**	Ken Martin
	a. July 10, 2023 Public and Non-Public Minutes	
7:50 p.m.	**9. ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS AND GRANTS UNDER $5,000**	Matt Shevenell
	a. Merrimack Lions Club to Merrimack High School for $1,000	
	b. Kathy Hilliard to Merrimack High School Get Set/Bridges Program for $500	
8:00 p.m.	**10. CONSENT AGENDA**	Amanda Doyle
	a. Educator Resignations	
	b. Educator Nominations	
8:05 p.m.	**11. OTHER**	Ken Martin
	a. Committee Reports	
	b. Correspondence	
	c. Comments	
8:15 p.m.	**12. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**	Ken Martin
8:30 p.m.	**13. ADJOURN**	Ken Martin

Merrimack School District
Goal Setting Summary



Primex³
NH Public Risk Management Exchange

Trust.
Excellence.
Service.

Participants

Ken Martin, Chair

Laurie Rothhaus, Vice Chair

Naomi Halter, Board Member

Jenna Hardy, Board Member

Lori Peters, Board Member

Amy Doyle, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum

Melissa Fazlic, Director of Human Resources

Everett "Bill" Olsen, Chief Educational Officer

Jason Pelletier, Director of Technology and Learning Systems

Matt Shevenell, Assistant Superintendent for Finance

The session was facilitated by:

Toni Flewelling, Member Services Consultant, Primex³

Purpose and Intended Results

The purpose of this goal setting session was to assist Merrimack School District in establishing short and long-term goals that will move the organization's vision forward. The goals and strategic objectives identified will become part of the organization's ongoing action plan moving forward.

Grounds Rules

At the outset of the session, participants identified a list of ground rules that set the stage for how to proceed. Participants chose the following ground rules for themselves:

- Respect everyone's ideas and opinions
- Listen thoughtfully
- Everyone has a voice (2)
- Be open to outside the box ideas
- Listen with intent to understand
- Be an active listener
- Allow others to express their ideas without interruption
- Listen

Chief Educational Officer Olsen provided a status update on the goals established for 2022-2023. (noted in red)

Goal Category #1: ***Create an engaged, inclusive, and collaborative district culture built on mutual trust and respect.***

Goal Summary: As part of our goal to create a positive culture, we will intentionally recruit, hire, train, and retain quality staff. The school board and district administration will see each individual staff member as a whole person to ensure they feel valued for their uniqueness and contributions. By cultivating connections, we aim to create a school community where all stakeholders are invested in the well-being of staff, students, and the community.

The individual goals that made up the category:

- By creating a safe, supportive inclusive culture where all administrators, teachers, and staff feel valued and empowered so we attract and retain exceptional educators
- Recruit, hire, and retain high quality staff
- Retain good teachers
- Ensure we have the right people in the right number of seats on the bus
- School/district culture – implement norms and a culture of inclusion and open communication
- Reshape our culture from top down to collaborate and connect
- Invest in the social and emotional development and well-being of our students, their families, staff, and community members
- Implement a robust "360" evaluation system and oversee that every employee has one that is submitted to the school board by 6/30/2023 and annually.
- Keep up to date job descriptions to ensure we are "with the times" and staff know what is expected
- Continue the strategic planning process with all stakeholders ensuring collaboration times are accessible to all
- Develop and grow a strong mental health/SEL support system supported by new staff, curriculum, and culture
- Look for patterns in staff turnover through exit interviews, exit surveys, and "stay interviews" to improve turnover and increase recruitment efforts within the district

Strategic Objective #1

WHAT: Develop district strategic plan intentionally involving all stakeholders

WHEN: June 30, 2023

WHO: School Board and Administration

The District will be collaborating with consultant/facilitator this summer.

Strategic Objective #2

WHAT: Create clear, consistent expectations and evaluations through up-to-date accurate job descriptions and evaluation model

WHEN: 1. Board access to evaluations by **June 30, 2023**
2. ADA compliant job descriptions **Septemeber 1, 2023**

WHO: Administration and HR, supported by the Board

Teacher evaluation instrument implemented. HR continues to work on updating job descriptions. Policy development continues.

Strategic Objective #3

WHAT: Invest in the social and emotional development and well-being of our staff, students, and their families

WHEN:
- Initial plan by 2nd **October meeting 2022**
- Update at **July 2023** meeting
- Annual plan by **September** and update in **July annually**

WHO: Administration in partnership with the Director of Student Wellness

Working with several consultants; work in progress – fine tuning optimal impact on students.

Strategic Objective #4

WHAT: Look for patterns to reduce staff turnover and increase recruitment efforts with the district

WHEN: Report to board in June of each year (public or non-public depending on the nature of turnover)

WHO: Human Resources

Quality of candidates. Not sure of all reasons for staff turnover – higher pay elsewhere. Stay connected with staff. Good relationship with Town Council.

Goal Category #2: *The Pathways to Graduation*

Goal Summary: Create multiple pathways to graduation that include robust course offerings, responsive programming and intervention, and engaging learning experiences for all students. This goal seeks to address the learning and curriculum gaps that exist is the course offerings and programs that lead to the successful completion of high school requirement

The individual goals that made up the category:

- Focus on the creation of an alternative education program at MHS to help those kids in peril and those who feel disengaged from the school population
- Address course offerings at the high school to increase and improve options for students at all levels and on any path to graduation

- Expand course offerings to include partnerships with community to develop and ELO program
- Develop and implement an alternative pathways program (MHS)
- Better understand the needs of our special education population and integrate them into the general education population – also vocational education program!
- Lower dropout rate by establishing multiple paths to graduation

Strategic Objective #1

WHAT: Review of MHS program of studies

Review of class size and caps for running courses

Review of class failure rates and repeats

WHEN: Building – **November 2022**; DLT – **December 2022**; School Board – **January 2023**

WHO: Building – Department Heads, Guidance, Administration, DLT, School Board

This is a priority for 2023-2024 year!

Strategic Objective #2

WHAT: Develop/create innovative ways for students to earn high school credit. This can be done through ELOs, work studies, Voc-Tech, etc.

WHEN: Proposal for **2023-2024**; Budget – **November 2022**

WHO: Guidance, BLT at High School, DLT

Great progress; Vice Chair Rothhaus helped write grant.

Strategic Objective #3

WHAT: Develop/create a system of identifying and supporting at-risk and struggling students that need an alternative path to graduation.

Number of students at risk, what is being done to support them, action plans

WHEN: **December 2022**

WHO: Guidance, Special Education, Director of Wellness, BLT, DLT

Work in progress; district has hired a new guidance director – play into Pathways Program by sophomore year.

Strategic Objective #4

WHAT: Develop and implement a true competency-based grading system that provides multiple opportunities and timelines for students to demonstrate their learning

Include review of current practices – identify areas of improvement

WHEN: Review of practices – **February 2023**

Areas of improvement – **May 2023**

WHO: Guidance, BLT, DLT

Hired consultant – NH Learning Initiative – CBL system. Shifting mindset around accountability.
Invite an admissions rep in to speak about competency-based learning.

Goal Category #3: *Improve our learning outcomes by ensuring our instruction is responsive to the varied needs of our student population*

Goal Summary: Facilitate an educational model that empowers and equips students to meet their full potential. Create opportunities for collaboration on evidence-based district priorities

The individual goals that made up the category:

- Address learning loss by implementing a screening tool with built-in educational tools to target improvement at the individual level (i.e., i-Ready) Elem
- Ensure that our instruction is responsive to the varied needs of our student population.
  - ✓ Includes visible, robust curriculum
  - ✓ Measures of progress monitoring
- Optimize our professional practice model to demonstrate a shared decision-making
  i.e., form taskforce:
  - ✓ Safety
  - ✓ Innovative practices
- Better outcomes for students – make sure our reading, math, and basics are really getting learned at lower levels, and addressing student retention at high school level
- The Merrimack School District is committed to continuing improvement by focusing on results; making decisions that are data based

Strategic Objective #1

WHAT: Create an annual district report card to track progress on key evidence of school success

WHEN: 1. Board and Administration to decide on key rubric by Summer 2023

2. Done annually in May starting May 2024

WHO: School Board and Administration

Work in progress; met with elementary staff for consistency with programming, assessment tools, etc.

Strategic Objective #2

WHAT: Implement a progress monitoring tool to provide targeted instruction for academic skills, address learning loss, and meet each student's individual needs.

WHEN: 1. Committee created by **October 2022**

2. Committee recommendation for final tool by **January 2023**

WHO: Led by Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum

Implement iReady Assessment Suite and Personalized Learning Plans in the 2023-2024 school year.

Strategic Objective #3

WHAT: Develop a process for ongoing curriculum updating and revision to include a timeline for each curriculum area

WHEN: Status report **June 2023**

WHO: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum along with committee members

Work in progress; more progress anticipated this summer.

Goal Category #4: *Have facilities and equipment that are safe, secure, clean, healthy, current, and appropriate for meeting the educational needs of students and staff*

Goal Summary: Create and maintain a responsible 5-year Capital Improvement Plan that addresses current and future needs for: building access and security; network infrastructure and technology needs; space utilization before, during, and after school. The plan will take into account educational programming, enrollment changes, and current projects such as the MHS/Mastricola Complex Master Plan.

The individual goals that made up the category:

- Do a total evaluation of our technology infrastructure to ensure longevity and continued viability for all students and staff.
- Expand, update, improve, and maintain facilities to meet all students' needs

Strategic Objective #1

WHAT: Create a safety committee and perform a safety and security audit

WHEN: Form committee by **September 30, 2022**; audit will need budget so may take longer

WHO: Not Stated

District-wide safety committee. Security audits completed of all buildings - report expected this summer. School resource officers are a plus. Good working relationship with Merrimack PD.

Strategic Objective #2

WHAT: Evaluate technology and create a network diagram to include:

- Inventory
- Equipment aging
- Plans to maintain student devices
- Plan to maintain operational stability of network

WHEN: September 2022

WHO: Technology Director supported by Administration

Implemented 6-year strategic plan for technology repair/replacement. Documented network inventory – integral to building budget for computer upgrades.

Strategic Objective #3

WHAT: Space utilization project

WHEN: End of October 2022

WHO: Administration

Work in progress. In early October 2023, Chief Educational Officer Olsen will be presenting a grade level re-organization for 2024-2025 school year: K-Grade 3, Grades 4-5 (upper elementary), and Grades 6-8 (middle school). Space capacity rationale; fiscal impacts; process to inform parents.

Strategic Objective #4

WHAT: Get regular updates from the Town Community Development Office about current and upcoming housing development. What will the enrollment impact be? Be thinking 3-5 years ahead

WHEN: Annually in late October

WHO: Administration

Planning Department Nov 2022. Chief Educational Officer Olsen and Assistant Superintendent for Finance Shevenell met with residential development.

Goal Category #5: *Ongoing review of existing policies to ensure they are compliant and in alignment with district practices*

Goal Summary: To allow for ease of access to up-to-date, compliant policies for all stakeholders

The individual goals that made up the category:

- As a Board, create a committee to evaluate our district policies and set up a method for ongoing evaluations of them, so that everything is reviewed every couple of years
- Review, revise, and implement policies, practices, and procedures that ensure safety and security of our schools.

Strategic Objective #1

WHAT: Form a subcommittee to develop and implement a plan for ongoing policy review

WHEN: **July 2022** – Committee members named; **Fall 2022** – Meetings begins

WHO: School Board and Administration

Policy Subcommittee formed – Admin Team and Naomi Halter

Need to develop grievance procedure policy

Strategic Objective #2

WHAT: Collaborate with New Hampshire School Boards Association (NHSBA) to "red flag" and prioritize policy review and formatting

WHEN: **Fall 2022** – initial review

WHO: School Board and Assistant Superintendent of Business Shevenell

Work in progress; great assistance from legal counsel

Strategic Objective #3

WHAT: Update district website to align with NHSBA "coding"

WHEN: **January 2023**

WHO: Interim Chief Educational Officer Olsen & Administrative Assistant Swanson

Completed

Strategic Plan Categories

Prior to the goal setting session, the following strategic plan categories were identified. The group decided that each area touched upon goals established for 2022-2023 and are noted below.

Teaching and Learning

- Goal #1 Culture, Trust, Respect
- Goal #2 Pathways to Graduation
- Goal #3 Improve Learning Outcomes
- Goal #4 Facilities

School Finance and Resources

- Goal #4 Facilities

Technology and Infrastructure

- Goal #3 Improve Learning Outcomes
- Goal #4 Facilities

Facilities and Operations

- Goal #4 Facilities
- Goal #5 Policies

Human Resources and Culture

- Goal #1 Culture, Trust, Respect
- Goal #2 Pathways to Graduation
- Goal #3 Improve Learning Outcomes

Student and Staff Wellness

- Goal #1 Culture, Trust, Respect
- Goal #2 Pathways to Graduation
- Goal #3 Improve Learning Outcomes
- Goal #4 Facilities

School Security

- Goal #2 Pathways to Graduation
- Goal #4 Facilities

Capital Improvement

- Goal #4 Facilities

One new category added for 2023-2024: Community Relations/Communications

- Goal #4 Facilities
- Goal #5 Policies

Identification and Categorization of Goals

Goals ***were defined as qualitative statements of what Merrimack School District intends to accomplish over a period of 12 to 18 months. These are "big picture" items vital to organizational success.***

Participants were asked to present two new goals to move the organization forward for 2023-2024. As each goal was presented, the individual decided whether the goal was similar to, or different from, a previously stated goal. The individual goals *(bulleted list after the collective goal name)* created a larger collective goal and narrative that took shape during the session. The goals were then named, and a narrative was created by the breakout groups and presented back in the full session for feedback and additions. Goals are presented in the order they were addressed and are not ranked for importance.

Development of Strategic Objectives for Goals

Strategic Objectives *were defined as short- and long-term quantitative results that directly support the goals. Objectives should be measurable, achievable, and consistent with the goals, and should also align with Merrimack School District's overall vision, mission, and core values. These objectives create the basis for an ongoing action plan going forward.*

Participants were broken into groups, and each group was tasked naming and summarizing the larger goal to develop at least two strategic objectives to help Merrimack School District achieve this goal. Each group was assigned to address one of the broad goals listed below. Participants then returned to report their identified strategic objectives to the full group, and the full group had the opportunity to provide additional feedback and direction on the objectives.

Strategic Objectives – Participants were asked to describe WHAT they wanted to happen, as well as WHEN the action/result should happen, and WHO is responsible. In summary:

WHAT will happen?

WHEN it will be completed?

WHO is responsible?

Goal Category #1: Create dynamic relationship between the school district and community through clear and consistent communication. (New goal identified for 2023-2024).

Goal Summary: Develop communication strategies to inform parents, connect with the community, collaborate with boards and committees, encourage engagement from community groups and individuals, and showcase and celebrate the many amazing aspects of the Merrimack School District.

The individual goals that made up the category:

- Create a plan for communicating with parents and the larger community
- District PR strategy
- Firm up and clearly communicate communication pathways for all departments
- Budget committee relations

Strategic Objective #1

WHAT: Align, streamline, and communicate communication pathways within the district to parents and staff

WHEN: Not Stated

WHO: District Communication Committee and Administration

TACTIC: Choose consistent communication template for schools

TACTIC: Establish, communicate, and enforce the appropriate chain of communication.

Strategic Objective #2

WHAT: Create District Communication Committee

WHEN: October 31, 2023

WHO: School Board and Administration

Strategic Objective #3

WHAT: Establish open working relationship with local business partners

WHEN: January 2024

WHO: CEO, Communication Committee, Pathways to Graduation Director

Strategic Objective #4

WHAT: Establish thoughtful and coordinated social media plan district-wide utilizing outside consultants when necessary

WHEN: June 30, 2025

WHO: District Communication Committee and District Administration

Strategic Objective #5

WHAT: Establish guidelines for effective presentations for committees, board meetings, and the public

WHEN: November 2023

WHO: CEO in cooperation with District Administration

Goal Category #2: *The Pathways to Graduation* (This goal was further developed from last year- noted in red.)

Goal Summary: Create multiple pathways to graduation that include robust course offerings, responsive programming and intervention, and engaging learning experiences for all students. This goal seeks to address the learning and curriculum gaps that exist in the course offerings and programs that lead to the successful completion of high school requirements.

The individual goals that made up the category:

- Focus on the creation of an alternative education program at MHS to help those kids in peril and those who feel disengaged from the school population
- Address course offerings at the high school to increase and improve options for students at all levels and on any path to graduation
- Expand course offerings to include partnerships with community to develop and ELO program
- Develop and implement an alternative pathways program (MHS)
- Better understand the needs of our special education population and integrate them into the general education population – also vocational education program!
- Lower dropout rate by establishing multiple paths to graduation
- Improve math and reading scores for all students by end of 5th grade through the use of research-based practices and robust core programs
- Improve graduation rates
  - ✓ Increase number of high school credits from 21 to 24 over the course of 3 years
  - ✓ More personalized school counseling services
  - ✓ Update MHS Program of Studies
  - ✓ Develop a robust offering of Extended Learning Opportunities for students
- Improve, modernize, and expand MHS program of studies including improving performing arts offerings
- Enhance/expand performing and theatre arts programs
- Evaluate staffing levels and distribution in line with MHS program of studies

Strategic Objective #1

WHAT: Review, improve, and modernize the MHS program of studies

Review of class size and caps for running courses

Review of class failure rates and repeats

Review graduation rates and set goals for improvement

Review staffing rates per department to ensure optimal class size for meeting the needs of students

WHEN: Building – **November 2023;** DLT – **December 2023;** School Board – **January 2024**

WHO: Assistant Superintendent for CIA, MHS Administration, MHS Department Heads, School Counseling Director, School Counselors, Director of Pathways to Graduation, DLT, School Board

Strategic Objective #2

WHAT: Develop/create innovative ways for students to earn high school credit. This can be done through ELOs, work studies, Voc-Tech, etc.

WHEN: Update November 2023, January 2024, June 2024

WHO: School Counseling Director and School Counselors, Director of Pathways to Graduation, MHS Administration, MHS BLT, DLT

Strategic Objective #3

WHAT: Develop/create a system of identifying and supporting at-risk and struggling students that need an alternative path to graduation.

WHEN: December 2023

WHO: School Counseling Director, School Counselors, Director of Pathways to Graduation, MHS Special Education Department, Director of Student Wellness, MHS Administration, MHS BLT, DLT

Strategic Objective #4

WHAT: Develop and implement a true competency-based grading system that provides multiple opportunities and timelines for students to demonstrate their learning

Include review of current practices – identify areas of improvement

WHEN: Review of practices – February 2024

Areas of improvement – May 2024

WHO: Assistant Superintendent for CIA, School Counseling Director, School Counselors, MHS Administrators, MHS BLT, DLT

Goal Category #3: ***Improve our learning outcomes by ensuring our instruction is responsive to the varied needs of our student population*** (This goal was further developed from last year-noted in red.)

Goal Summary: Facilitate a data-informed educational model that includes formative and summative assessments that focus on the improvement of literacy and math skills and empowers and equips students to meet their full potential.

The individual goals that made up the category:

- Address learning gaps by using assessments and educational tools to target improvement at the individual level (i.e., i-Ready, Fundations)
- Ensure that our instruction is responsive to the varied needs of our student population.
  - ✓ Includes visible, robust curriculum
  - ✓ Measures of progress monitoring
- Optimize our professional practice model to demonstrate a shared decision-making i.e., form taskforce:
  - ✓ Safety
  - ✓ Innovative practices
- Better outcomes for students – make sure our reading, math, and basics are really getting learned at lower levels, and addressing student retention at high school level
- The Merrimack School District is committed to continuing improvement by focusing on results; making decisions that are data based
- Find ways to offer more professional development time
- Create district-wide data teams
- Create and share a district plan to shift from balanced literacy to structured literacy (include timeline and PD)
- Increase the embracement of using technology for student learning

Strategic Objective #1

WHAT: Create an annual district report card to track progress on key evidence of school success – State has iPlatform – what data is missing?

WHEN: Annually in **May**

WHO: School Board and General Office Administration

Strategic Objective #2

WHAT: Use progress monitoring data to provide targeted instruction for academic skills, address learning gaps, and meet each student's individual needs

WHEN: Building and District Data Teams meet at least four times per year

WHO: Assistant Superintendent for CIA, Building Administration, Building Leadership Teams, District Leadership Team

Strategic Objective #3

WHAT: Use the established process and tools for ongoing curriculum updating and revision to include a timeline for each curriculum area

WHEN: Annually by June

WHO: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, along with District CIA Committee, Building Administrators, Building Leadership Teams, District Leadership team, and content area committee members

Strategic Objective #4

WHAT: Complete an audit of all reading, writing, and math programs K-8 to ensure they are research-based and aligned with best practices and district initiatives.

WHEN: June 2024

WHO: Assistant Superintendent for CIA, Building Administration, District Leadership Team, and Teachers Leaders.

Goal Category #4: *Have facilities and equipment that are safe, secure, clean, healthy, current, and appropriate for meeting the educational needs of students and staff*

(This goal was further developed from last year-noted in red.)

Goal Summary: Create and maintain a responsible 5-year Capital Improvement Plan that addresses current and future needs for: building access and security; network infrastructure and technology needs; space utilization before, during, and after school. The plan will take into account educational programming, enrollment changes, and current projects such as the MHS/Mastricola Complex Master Plan.

The individual goals that made up the category:

- Do a total evaluation of our technology infrastructure to ensure longevity and continued viability for all students and staff.
- Expand, update, improve, and maintain facilities to meet all students' needs
- Performing Arts Center
- Prepare Stage 1 for budget of Master Plan
- Finalize and act on the Master Plan/New SAU Building

Strategic Objective #1

WHAT: Update Facilities Master Plan for entire district; make sure it is inclusive of all buildings

WHEN: By October 2023

WHO: Assistant Superintendent, Facilities Director, Administration

Strategic Objective #2

WHAT: Prioritize building a new SAU office by adopting a warrant article to fund construction and educate the public about the necessity. The current building is insufficient and unsafe for conducting District business.

WHEN: December 1, 2023

WHO: Assistant Superintendent, Facilities Director, Board, Planning and Building Committee, and District Budget Committee

Strategic Objective #3

WHAT: Begin researching the feasibility of building a performing arts center, including a timeline, location, cost, and community involvement such as fundraising and sponsorships

WHEN: June 2024

WHO: Administration, Board, Community partners

Wrap-Up, Recap and Action Plan

The next step following this session will be for Merrimack School District staff to work together to develop specific tactics for accomplishing the identified goals and objectives. **Tactics *describe specifically* HOW *the goals and objectives will be met.***

Concluding Thoughts

Thank you again for the opportunity to participate in this important process. Primex3 appreciates the opportunity to provide assistance to members with goal setting, and to help governing bodies develop paths to achieve their visions. A forward-looking community that is deliberate, disciplined, and strategic in developing and accomplishing its goals illustrates how *"good management is good risk management."*

MERRIMACK SCHOOL DISTRICT
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AMANDA S. DOYLE
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum

EVERETT V. OLSEN, Jr.
Chief Education Officer

MATTHEW D. SHEVENELL
Assistant Superintendent for Business

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

From: Everett V. Olsen, Jr.

Date: August 9, 2023

Subject: 2023-2024 Enrollment

I am providing you with a comparison of the enrollments that were projected in the final 2024 budget and actual enrollments as of August 8, 2023. Across the entire school district (Grades K-12) the projected enrollment 3,439 was only 36 students less than the current actual enrollment of 3,475 (as of 8/8/2023).

As expected the largest deviation between projected and actual numbers is at the kindergarten level. Having done enrollment analysis for many years, I can say that the kindergarten enrollments are always the most difficult to estimate. You will notice a significant difference in projections vs actual in the kindergarten at Reeds Ferry Elementary School (RFS). I will be requesting your approval to hire 1.0 FTE additional teacher to create seven (7) kindergarten classrooms at RFS, which will allow them to have kindergarten classes of 17:1 as apposed to 20:1.

Overall, our student teacher ratios are very good at the present time and we will monitor them carefully as we proceed toward the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year.

Merrimack School District
K to 12 Enrollments
August 8, 2023

Mastricola Elementary School

Grade	Classrooms	Students per Classroom	Total Students
K	4	14.0	56
1	5	15.0	75
2	4	20.7	83
3	4	17.0	68
4	4	19.0	76
			Total 358

Reeds Ferry Elementary School

Grade	Classrooms	Students per Classroom	Total Students
K	7	16.5	116
1	5	16.4	82
2	5	17.8	89
3	4	17.8	71
4	4	20.5	82
			Total 440

Thorntons Ferry Elementary School

Grade	Classrooms	Students per Classroom	Total Students
K	6	14.7	88
1	6	17.3	104
2	5	18.6	93
3	5	18.6	93
4	5	20.6	103
			Total 481

Mastricola Upper Elementary School

Grade	Classrooms	Students per Classroom	Total Students
5	13	22.3	290
6	11	23.3	256
			Total 546

Merrimack Middle School

Grade	Classrooms	Students per Classroom	Total Students
7	12		247
8	12		275
			Total 522

Merrimack High School

Grade	Classrooms	Students per Classroom	Total Students
9			272
10			278
11			262
12			316
			Total 1128

Merrimack School District
Enrollments (Grades K-12)
August 8, 2023

	Mastricola			Reeds Ferry			Thorntons Ferry		
GRADE	Projected Pupils	Actual Pupils	Differ-ence	Projected Pupils	Actual Pupils	Differ-ence	Projected Pupils	Actual Pupils	Differ-ence
PR									
K	81	56	-25	75	116	+41	109	88	-21
1	79	75	-4	88	82	-6	95	104	+9
2	79	83	+4	88	89	+1	95	93	-2
3	70	68	-2	72	71	-1	94	93	-1
4	78	76	-2	79	82	+3	104	103	-1
TOTAL	**387**	**358**	**-29**	**402**	**440**	**38**	**497**	**481**	**-16**

	Upper Elementary				Middle School				High School		
Grade	Projected Pupils	Actual Pupils	Differ-ence	**Grade**	Projected Pupils	Actual Pupils	Differ-ence	**Grade**	Projected Pupils	Actual Pupils	Differ-ence
5	275	290	+15	**7**	258	247	-11	**9**	269	272	+3
6	235	256	+21	**8**	272	275	+3	**10**	274	278	+4
								11	265	262	-3
								12	305	316	+11
TOTAL	**510**	**546**	**+36**		**530**	**522**	**-8**		**1113**	**1128**	**+15**

Merrimack School District
Professional Learning
2023-2024
*These activities are subjected to change with notice.

Date	Professionals	Activity	Notes
Monday, August 28, 2023 Classroom Set-Up Day	Teachers, Title I Tutors	**Classroom/Office Set-Up Day** *Teachers and all MTA covered staff report to individual schools and **prepare their professional space** to receive students.	
Tuesday, August 29, 2023 Full PD Day 8:00 am-3:00 pm	All Staff	**<u>MES, RFS, TFS, JMUES</u>** **8:00 am - 11:30 am** *Building Meetings **12:00 pm - 3:00 pm** *EnVisions Training (90 minutes) at JMUES in Rooms #122 & #128 (See Notes) *Unified Arts Teachers - curriculum work in EduPlanet 21 **<u>MMS & MHS</u>** **8:00 am - 3:00 pm** **MMS Cafeteria** *PLC/Competency Work Kick-Off with NHLI **MESSA:** Review of IEPs, MSB training	**EnVisions Training Details:** 90 minute sessions by grade level groups ***12:00 pm-1:30 pm:** K & Gr1 (Rm 122) Gr2 & Gr 3 (Rm 128) ***1:30 pm - 3:00 pm:** Gr4 & Gr 5 (Rm 122) Gr 6 (Rm 128) **Per MESSA Contract:** Over the course of 8/29 & 8/30 we need to give paras *"up to three and a half (3.5) hours must be provided for direct collaboration with their supervisor and/or designee prior to student(s) arrival. This may be done in an individual or group setting."*

Wednesday, August 30, 2023 Full PD Day 8:00 am-3:00 pm Meet & Greets at RFS, TFS, & MES	All Staff	**MES, RFS, TFS, JMUES, MMS: i Ready Touchpoint #1** *Getting Good Data* **K-8 Unified Arts:** Responsive Classroom Specials Area Teachers Workshop **MMS:** Building & Department Meetings from 8:00 am-12:00 pm (Lunch built into this block) iReady Training: 12:00pm-3:00pm **MHS:** Building & Department Meetings **MESSA:** Collaboration with supervisor *Need to confirm lunch time for presenters	**iReady Training** **K-6:** Split 3-hour sessions per grade level teams with building-based trainer **MMS:** 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm **Meet & Greet at JMUES:** 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm **Meet & Greet at RFS, MES, and TFS:** 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm **Per MESSA Contract:** Over the course of 8/29 & 8/30 we need to give paras *"up to three and a half (3.5) hours must be provided for direct collaboration with their supervisor and/or designee prior to student(s) arrival. This may be done in an individual or group setting."*
Friday, September 22, 2023 2-Hour Early Release	All Staff	**Mandatory Training:** Bullying & Harassment *Have other opportunities for new staff because they will have already done this	Vector
Friday, October 6, 2023 Full PD Day 8:00 am-3:00 pm	Teachers *NO Support Staff	**MES, RFS, TFS, JMUES, MMS (ELA & Math)** **iReady Touchpoint #2** *Using Data to Inform Instruction* **MMS:** PLC/Competency Work with NHLI **MHS:** PLC/Competency Work	

		with NHLI	
Thursday, November 9, 2023 2-Hour Early Release	All Staff	**Mandatory Training:** Blood Borne Pathogens Narcan	Vector District Nurses
Friday, December 22, 2023 2-Hour Early Release	All Staff	**Best Practices Training:** Mandated Reporting	Vector
Friday, January 26, 2024 Full PD Day 8:00 am-3:00 pm	All Staff	**MES, RFS, TFS, JMUES:** EnVisions Training #2 **MMS:** PLC/Competency Work with NHLI **MHS:** PLC/Competency Work with NHLI **MESSA: ???**	EnVisions Training: Split 3 hour sessions by grade level bands (K-3 and 4-6)
Friday, March 29, 2024 2-Hour Early Release	All Staff	**Mandatory Training:** Suicide Prevention	Options: In-Person - TBD Vector
Friday, May 17, 2024 2-Hour Early Release	All Staff	**Best Practices Training:** Avoid-Deny-Defend	Options: In-Person - TBD Vector

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: Ken Martin
Laurie Rothhaus
Naomi Halter
Lori Peters
Jenna Hardy
Shaun Evidente

From: Everett V. Olsen, Jr.

Date: August 9, 2023

Subject: School Bus Safety Cable Program

During the week of August 14th, I will be doing a cable program on school bus safety with STA Operations Manager, Michelle Bancroft. We will be "on location" at the STA office and will be using a school bus to discuss safety topics. These topics will include:

- 10-foot danger zone
- Items falling under a bus
- Seating "compartmentalization"
- Seat belts on buses
- Emergency exits
- School bus evacuation training

I look forward to providing students and parents with important school bus safety information.

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To: Ken Martin
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From: Everett V. Olsen, Jr.

Date: August 9, 2023

Subject: Leadership Team Retreat

On August 3rd and 4th the School District's Leadership Team participated in our "August Retreat". The Team participated in two days of lively engagement outlined below:

August 3rd

Mark Dolan from the New Hampshire School Boards Association facilitated a five-hour Strategic Plan exercise which involved significant reflection and discussion by the entire Leadership Team. It was an excellent beginning to a comprehensive process that will involve a number of district and community conversations over the next six months. Mark's summary report is enclosed for your review.

August 4th

On the second day of our retreat, Cultural Proficiency Coach Dr. Kalise Wornum provide a two-hour professional development session on "Addressing Student Microaggression". We asked Dr. Wornum to work with us so that the staff and students can more effectively address student comments and behaviors that are inappropriate and/or aggressive in nature. Dr. Wornum is a nationally known, highly respected consultant and our Leadership Team has thoroughly enjoyed engaging in meaningful conversations with her.

It is important for me to mention that the work from both days of our retreat will continue throughout the entire school year!

Merrimack School District

Strategic Planning

Leadership Retreat

Summary Report

August 6, 2023

Prepared by Mark Dolan

Strategic Planning and Innovation Facilitator, NHSBA

In support of the Strategic Planning process, the Merrimack School District Leadership Team begin the process during their August 3rd and 4th Retreat. The work described in this Summary Report will serve as the foundation for the work done later by the Strategic Planning Committee. The information in this report came about through collaboration and conversations about the present challenges of the school district along with a look ahead to future opportunities that need to be addressed in the Strategic Plan.

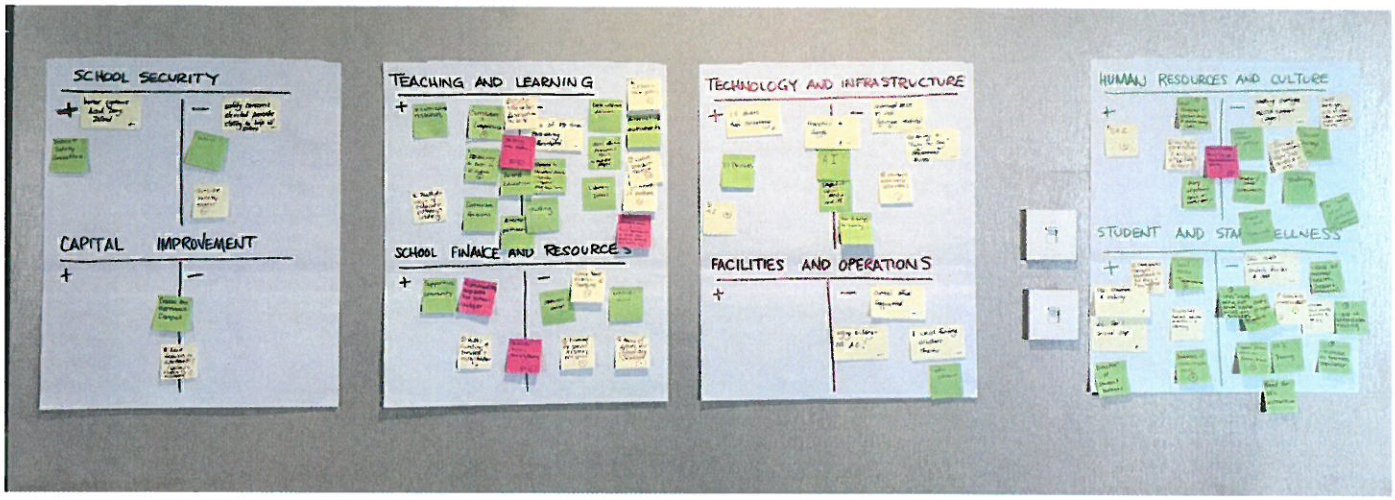
Retreat Attendees

Everett Olsen	Chief Educational Officer
Amanda (Amy) Doyle	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction
Michelle Romein	Principal at James Mastricola Elementary (K-4)
Kathleen Ortega	Assistant Principal at James Mastricola Elementary (K-4)
Bonnie Painchaud	Principal at Reeds Ferry Elementary (K-4)
Laura Livie	Assistant Principal at Reeds Ferry Elementary (K-4)
Julie DeLuca	Principal at Thorntons Ferry Elementary (K-4)
Brooke Ross	Assistant Principal at Thorntons Ferry Elementary (K-4)
Nicole Rheault	Principal at James Mastricola Upper Elementary (5-6)
Meaghan Fowler	Assistant Principal at Mastricola Upper Elementary (5-6)
Chrigus Boezeman	Principal at Merrimack Middle School (7-8)
Kathy Hoppa	Assistant Principal at Merrimack Middle School (7-8)
Pattrick Jennings	Dean of Students (7-8)
Steve Claire	Principal at Merrimack High School (9-12)
Jill Hanlon	Assistant Principal at Merrimack High School (9-12)
Richard Zampieri	Assistant Principal at Merrimack High School (9-12)
Sarah Reinhardt	Director of Student Services
Melissa Fazlic	Director of Human Resources
Jason Pelletier	Director of Library Media and Technology
Sara Parrotto	Director of Student Wellness

To build understanding and awareness of the current state of the School District, a Trend Mapping exercise was conducted. The purpose was to identify factors in our environment that can affect what

people think is or is not possible using the collective knowledge of those in the room. We assessed trends through 6 distinct lenses – Social, Economic Climate, Technology, Emerging Student and Community Needs, Educational, and Uncertainties and then grouped them into 8 Strategic Planning categories. Each trend was identified as having a positive or negative impact on a particular category. This provided a high-level view, from multiple perspectives, of the environment in which the Merrimack School District operates.

The completed Trend Map is shown below.



Next, working in small groups, using a technique from the field of Appreciative Inquiry called S.O.A.R. which stands for Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results, the leadership team discussed the most important strengths of District, the best opportunities in the next 1-3 years, their aspirations for the district and the results they considered to be an indicator of success.

Appreciative Inquiry is the study and exploration of what gives life to human systems when they function at their best. It is based on two concepts:

1. What you seek, you find more of – The more positive and inspiring the strategy development process, the more innovative ideas that will be created and possibilities that can be explored.

2. People commit to what they help to create – The more participative the plan creation, the more committed people will be to implementation success.

Each group shared the following results of their S.O.A.R. chart:

Strengths. What are our most important strengths?

- **Looking honestly at data and being open to new and vertically aligned data**
- **Improve all tiered systems**
- **Capable, committed, loyal educators**
- **Creative and caring educators**
- **Strong student supports (SEL, Mental Health, Special Ed.)**
- **Curriculum work – aligned, accessible, public facing**
- **District Leadership Team is a high functionality Professional Learning Community (PLC)**
- **Resource rich! (people, support)**

- **Supportive School Budget**
- **Strong commitment to students**

Opportunities. What are our best possible opportunities in the next 1-3 years?

- **Strengthening and deepening our Vision of a Leaner and Vision of a Graduate**
- **Building strong relationships between all constituency groups**
- **Increasing professional development to align instruction**
- **Completion of MESSA contract- competitive wages**
- **Aligning processes and interventions to support/reduce at-risk populations**
- **Finding a balance between student/staff wellness and achievement**

Aspirations. What do we care deeply about?

- **"Future ready" students (readers, mathematicians, writers, scientists, career literate)**
- **Aligning resources for ALL students**
- **Educating All students**
- **Grounds and facilities that meet our needs and represent our community**
- **Student engagement through rigorous and equitable curriculum**
- **Curious, dedicated, resilient, prepared, connected learners – in action!**
- **Competitive compensation for all staff**
- **100% graduation rate**
- **For Merrimack to be <u>THE</u> place to work**

Results. How will we know we are succeeding?

- **Improved graduation rates**
- **Lower turnover**
- **Emotional availability for teaching and learning**
- **Improved attendance**
- **Stable, consistent staffing with high attendance**
- **Increase in student engagement as measured by attendance, test scores, disciplinary referrals etc.**
- **Lower dropout rates**
- **High employee retention**

Establishing initial Focus Areas

The Leadership Team members discussed a set of priorities, referred to as Focus Areas, that will set direction for the school district and will require sustained effort and energy directed to them over the next 1- 3 years. As a school district, this means that rather than focusing on improving every little thing, we focus on a few key areas that will serve as catalysts to change the rest of the school district. These are the vital few, major areas that will guide the Strategic Plan.

They were asked to consider these questions:

> ***Of all of the important areas to include in our plan, what is considered one of the few most important areas?***
>
> ***How much will this focus area influence other aspects of the school?***

The following 5 Focus Areas were identified and include:

1. The title of the Focus Area
2. A set of attributes that better define the elements of the Focus Area
3. An opportunity statement, framed as a "How Might We" question aimed at inviting broad exploration and inspiration into plausible ways to address this Focus Area
4. A set of beliefs that underpin how we think about this Focus Area

Focus Area – **Improving and Broadening Student Outcomes**		
Defined as: - **Academic Flexibility** - **Social and Emotional Learning** - **Metacognition** - **Students have the skills and confidence to be successful contributing citizens**	Opportunity Statements: - **How might we fill gaps and build confidence?** - **How might we engage students?** - **How might we promote self-efficacy and ensure students can envision a path for themselves?**	Beliefs: - **All educators have good intentions** - **All kids can learn at high levels** - **Vulnerability is not a weakness**
Focus Area – **Provide Facilities that are appropriate to meet the need of students, staff and community**		
Defined as: - **Safe Secure Schools** - **Appropriately sized, well apportioned classrooms** - **Innovation Lab space for staff and students** - **Playground and fitness areas** - **Performing Arts Center** - **Childcare space** - **Afterschool "Create Space"**	Opportunity Statement: - **How might we reimagine school facilities?**	Beliefs: - **Facilities should have design flexibility along with security**

Focus Area – **Fostering a culture that is dedicated to the wellbeing of all (contributes to retention and recruitment success)**		
Defined as: - **Students: Physical and emotional safety, sense of belonging, empowerment, strong tiered systems, extended opportunities for success** - **Staff: Financial Security, clear evaluation process/recertification, growth opportunities, work-life balance, belonging** - **Community: Awareness and connection to available resources, trends and processes as they relate to student success, sense of belonging**	Opportunity Statements: - **How might we communicate clearly and equitably?** - **How might we foster and maintain strong relationships?** - **How might we broaden our view of success?** - **How might we remain competitive (salaries, quality of life, resources)?** - **How might we support the hopes and dreams of students and staff?**	Beliefs: - **All students can succeed** - **We can build the culture of belonging**
Focus Area: **Continuous alignment (vertically and horizontally) of curriculum, practices and systems**		
Defined as: - **Common Assessments** - **Curriculum Mapping; competencies, K-12** - **Common academic language**	Opportunity Statements: - **How might we align curriculum (vertically and horizontally), practices and systems?** - **How might we develop high functioning PLCs?** - **How might we ensure effective professional development?**	Beliefs: - **Our systems for curriculum and practices must remain scared to ensure alignment**

Focus Area: **Strengthen and Deepen our Vision of a Learner and Vision of a Graduate**		
Defined as: - **The integration of these 5 attributes into daily practices - Curious, Dedicated, Resilient, Connected, Prepared** -	Opportunity Statements: - **How might we see the other Focus Areas through this lens?** - **How might we integrate this into Advisory?** - **How might we weave these into staff meetings and professional development? (For Elementary – District Report Card and vision alignment)** - **How might we add these attributes to our family, staff, and student communication?**	Beliefs: - **We are 100% all in!** - **Consistency across the district** - **Words in our Visions need to extend to actions** - **All adults must model these attributes** - **All work must be intentional**

This information will be provided to the Strategic Planning Committee to support the development of a Strategic Plan.

Next Steps. The NHSBA facilitator will meet with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent to discuss establishing a Strategic Planning Committee.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The District shall provide transportation for pupils to schools in the District consistent with applicable state law, including the provisions of RSA 189:6, RSA 189:8, RSA 189:9, and RSA 189:9-a.

The Transportation Coordinator is hereby designated as the School District Transportation Coordinator; the Transportation Coordinator may be contacted at 603-424-6200.

General Operating Policy

Bus routes shall be established by the Superintendent or their designee in cooperation with the pupil transportation contractor, subject to review by the Board. Routes will be developed annually and posted. The Superintendent or designee may modify approved routes, stops, and/or schedules during the school year if conditions warrant such a modification.

Bus stops will be established in accord with RSA 189:8. Approved bus stops shall be located at safe and appropriate intervals in places where students may be loaded and unloaded. ~~Bus stops shall be established and authorized under the direction of the Superintendent.~~ Drivers may not load or unload pupils at other than authorized bus stops.

Pupils attending private schools up to and including the twelfth grade shall be entitled to the same transportation privileges within the District as are provided for pupils in public school within the District. Likewise, for students residing within the District and attending chartered public schools within the District, transportation shall be provided to the chartered public schools by the District on the same terms and conditions as provided for non-chartered public schools in the District and utilizing the same regular bus schedules and routes that are provided to pupils attending non-chartered public schools within the District

Student Conduct on School Buses

Bus drivers have the responsibility to maintain orderly behavior of students on school buses and will report, in writing, misconduct to the School District Transportation Coordinator and/or the school principal. The School District Transportation Coordinator and/or school principal will have the authority to suspend the riding privileges of students failing to conform to Board rules and regulations. Said suspension shall not begin until the next school day following the day notification of suspension is sent to the pupil's parent or legal guardian. The Board must approve suspensions of the right to ride the school bus that continue beyond twenty (20) days.

Any removal of students with disabilities will be in accordance with state and federal laws concerning the discipline of students with disabilities.

In the event a student has been denied the right to ride a school bus for disciplinary reasons, their parent/guardian shall have the right to appeal this suspension to the Superintendent within 10 days of the initial discipline decision. Until the appeal is heard, or if the suspension of pupil's right to

ride the school bus is upheld, it shall be the parents' or guardians' responsibility to provide transportation to and from school for that pupil for the period of the suspension.

Depending on its nature and severity, student misconduct on school buses may also constitute grounds for additional forms of discipline which would be governed by Board Policy JICD

~~Parents of children whose conduct on school buses endangers the health, safety and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of school bus riding privileges in accordance with the student discipline code.~~

~~**Resolution of Conflicts**~~

~~Parents who wish to request a change or exemption from any of the Student Transportation policies shall direct that request to the School District Transportation Coordinator. If the School District Transportation Coordinator's ruling does not satisfy the parent, he/she may appeal the ruling within five days to the School Business Administrator. If the parent is again not satisfied by the ruling, he/she may appeal to the Superintendent within the next five-day period. As a last appeal, the parent may request to appear before the Board's Transportation Committee.~~

Instruction on School Bus Safety

The Superintendent or their designee is directed to implement procedures ensuring that each school instruct all pupils, who are transported by the district as provided in RSA 189:6, in the following:

1. School bus safety
2. The evacuation procedure for buses in emergency situations
3. Any other matters regarding the safety of pupils being transported to school

Legal References:

RSA 189:6, Transportation of Pupils
RSA 189:6-a, School Bus Safety
RSA 189:8, Limitations and Additions
RSA 189:9, Pupils in Private Schools
RSA 189:9-a, Pupils Prohibited for Disciplinary Reasons
RSA 194-B:2, Chartered Public Schools; Establishment, Parental Choice; Admission
~~RSA 200:40, Emergency Care~~

1st Reading: May 21, 2007
2nd Review: June 4, 2007
Adopted: June 18, 2007

Policy Revision
1st Reading: June 19, 2023
2nd Review: July 10, 2023
Revised: August 14, 2023

ADMISSION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS

~~To the extent practical and as required by law, the district will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs.~~

It is the policy of the Board to ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths attending its schools. By adopting this policy, the Board seeks to remove barriers to the identification of, or the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of, homeless children and youths, including unaccompanied youths. The District shall take reasonable steps to ensure that homeless students, including unaccompanied youths, are not segregated or stigmatized and that educational decisions are made in the best interest of those students. The Board hereby authorizes the Superintendent or designee to adopt procedures to implement this policy as needed.

~~Homeless students are defined as (per NCLB definitions) lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:~~

I. Homeless Students and Youths

Under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and guidance provided by the New Hampshire Department of Education, the term "homeless children and youths" means "individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence." This term includes:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship, or a similar reason;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Are abandoned in hospitals;
5. Having a primary nighttime residence that is a ~~Awaiting foster care placement~~ public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
6. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
7. Are migratory children living in conditions described in previous examples.

Children awaiting foster care may also fall within this definition if they meet other criteria as set forth above. See also Board Policy JFABE, Education of Children in Foster Care. For purposes

ADMISSION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS
(continued)

of this policy (JFABD), "homeless students" shall refer to and include "homeless children and youth" and "unaccompanied youth" as they are defined under federal law. See 42 U.S.C. § 11434a. (defining "unaccompanied youth" as a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.)

II. District's Homeless Liaison

The Superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the District's liaison ("Homeless Liaison") for homeless students and their families.

~~To the extent feasible, homeless students will continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in which attendance area the student is actually living, or other schools.~~

~~If there is an enrollment dispute, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or guardian shall be informed of the district's decision and their appeal rights in writing. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.~~

The duties of the Homeless Liaison shall be as provided in state and federal law, as well this policy and any procedures subsequently adopted. The duties of the Homeless Liaison include, but are not limited to ensuring the following:

1. Homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel through outreach and coordinated activities with other entities and agencies;
2. Homeless children and youths are enrolled in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, schools of that local educational agency;
3. Homeless families and homeless children and youths have access to and receive educational services for which such families, children, and youths are eligible, as outlined by applicable law and this policy;
4. Homeless families and homeless children and youths receive referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services:
5. The parents or guardians of homeless children and youths are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;

ADMISSION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS
(continued)

6. Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated in locations frequented by parents or guardians of such children and youths, and unaccompanied youths, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens, in a manner and form understandable to the parents and guardians of homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths;
7. Enrollment and/or eligibility disputes are mediated in accordance with this policy;
8. The parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, and receives assistance in accessing these services;
9. School personnel providing services under this policy receive professional development and other support; and
10. Unaccompanied youths
    a. are enrolled in school;
    b. have opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic standards as the State establishes for other children and youth; and
    c. are informed of their status as independent students under section 1087vv of Title 20 and that the youths may obtain assistance from the Homeless Liaison to receive verification of such status for purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aide described in section 1090 of Title 20. See 42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A).

Consistent with the above, the District's Homeless Liaison shall coordinate with local social services agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families, other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers, and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. The District's Liaison will also review and make recommendations related to District policies and procedures that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

III. Enrollment and School Stability

Homeless students are eligible to attend their school of origin or any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the homeless student is actually living are eligible to attend.

When selecting the school a child or youth experiencing homelessness should attend, the choice must be made according to the child's or youth's best interest. In determining the best interest of an eligible child or youth, the District shall presume that keeping the student in the school of origin is in their best interest, except when doing so is contrary to the request of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth. The school of origin is defined as:

1. The school that a child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child our youth was last enrolled, including a preschool.

ADMISSION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS
(continued)

2. When a child or youth completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the school of origin includes the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools.

The District shall consider student-centered factors related to the child or youth's best interest, including factors related to the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health and safety of homeless students, giving priority to the request of the parent or unaccompanied youth. Homeless students shall not be required to attend a separate school.

The school selected in accordance with this section shall immediately enroll the homeless child or youth, even if the child or youth:

1. is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, records of immunization and other required health records, proof of residency, or other documentation; or
2. has missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness.

Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with District policies.

Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the District Homeless Liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student's previous school shall *immediately* be requested from the previous school on enrollment. Information about a homeless child's or youth's living situation shall be treated as a student education record and shall not be deemed to be directory information under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA").

Any record ordinarily kept by the school, including immunization or other required health records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs, regarding each homeless child or youth shall be maintained:

1. so that the records involved are available, in a timely fashion, when a child or youth enters a new school or school district; and
2. in a manner consistent with FERPA.

IV. Educational and Other Services

Each student who is homeless shall have access to and shall be provided education services for which the student is eligible comparable to services provided to other students in the school, including (to the extent applicable) vocational and technical education programs, gifted and

ADMISSION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS
(continued)

talented education programs, school nutrition programs, Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, and education for English learners. Transportation services for students who are homeless shall be provided in accordance with applicable law and as generally described below.

V. Transportation

The District shall provide adequate and appropriate transportation to the school of origin upon the request of a parent or guardian, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, upon the request of the Homeless Liaison. If the school of origin is in a different district, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his or her school of origin in the Merrimack School District, the Merrimack School District will make reasonable efforts to reach an agreement on a method to apportion the responsibility and costs for providing the child or youth with transportation to and from the school of origin. If the Districts are unable to agree upon such method, federal law states that the responsibility and costs for transportation shall be shared equally. If transportation is provided to a school other than the school of origin, the Merrimack School District shall provide transportation services comparable to other non-homeless students.

VI. Dispute Resolution

If there is a dispute with respect to a student's status as a homeless student (an eligibility dispute) or where a homeless student should attend school (an enrollment dispute), the student shall be *immediately* enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth pending resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals. Moreover, the student shall have the right to participate fully in school and receive all services for which they are eligible. All disputes shall be resolved as expeditiously as possible and in conformance with this policy. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the Homeless Liaison shall assist the youth in the dispute process.

If more than one school district is involved in a residency dispute, the Merrimack School District Superintendent will work with the superintendent from the other District to make such a decision.

A. Homeless Liaison's Initial Determination

The Homeless Liaison will make all initial determinations with respect to eligibility and enrollment of homeless students. All schools within the District shall direct enrollment requests involving potentially homeless students to the Homeless Liaison.

In the event the Homeless Liaison's determination with respect to eligibility or enrollment is in conflict with the wishes of the homeless student's parent/guardian, or, if applicable, the

ADMISSION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS
(continued)

unaccompanied youth, there shall be a right to an appeal. In such circumstances, the District shall provide the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth with written notice including:

1. A succinct explanation of the District's placement/eligibility decision;
2. Contact information for the District Homeless Liaison and the New Hampshire Department of Education State Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youth;
3. Notification of the parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth's right to appeal this determination to the Superintendent, as well as a description of the District's dispute resolution procedures and instructions on how to initiate the same;
4. Notification of the parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth's right to appeal the Superintendent's determination to the New Hampshire Department of Education after the District's dispute resolution process has been exhausted.
5. Notification of the right to enroll in the school of choice pending resolution of the dispute;
6. Notification of the right to participate fully in school and receive all services for which they are eligible at the school of choice pending resolution of the dispute; and
7. A summary of this policy.

B. Appeal to the Superintendent

Upon initiation of an appeal to the Superintendent, the Superintendent shall meet with the homeless student's family or unaccompanied youth. This meeting shall occur within 5 days of the District's receipt of the appeal. Following this meeting, the superintendent shall make a determination with respect to the eligibility or enrollment dispute.

The Superintendent's decision shall be provided to the parent/guardian or accompanied youth within 10 days of the parties' meeting. The parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth shall be provided a brief, written explanation of the Superintendent's decision, which shall be in the language that is direct and comprehensible, but not intimidating. This explanation shall include:

1. A succinct explanation of the decision and the reasons behind the determination;
2. Notification of the right to enroll in the school of choice pending the resolution of the dispute;
3. Notification of the right to participate fully in school and receive all services for which they are eligible at the school of choice pending resolution of the dispute;
4. Contact information for Homeless Liaison and the State Coordinator's Office for Education of Homeless Children & Youth;

ADMISSION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS
(continued)

5. A statement regarding the right to appeal the decision to the New Hampshire Department of education, and instructions on how to do the same; and
6. A copy of this policy.

~~The parent or guardian shall be informed of the district's decision and their appeal rights in writing. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.~~

The Superintendent shall also notify the copy of the New Hampshire Department of Education's State Coordinator's Office for Education of Homeless Children & Youth on any notification of the Superintendent's decision which is contrary to the wishes of the parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth.

~~Once the enrollment decision is made, the school shall immediately enroll the student, pursuant to district policies. If the student does not have immediate access to the immunization records, the student shall be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student's previous school shall be requested from the previous school pursuant to district policies. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies.~~

The District shall maintain copies of all written decisions, appeals and notifications concerning eligibility or enrollment requests made under this policy for the same period as it does for Title I records.

C. Deadline to Appeal

Parents/guardians of homeless students and unaccompanied youth will have 5 business days to appeal any determination of eligibility or enrollment by either the Homeless Liaison and/or the Superintendent. This appellate timeframe may be extended for good cause, as determined by the District. If the District does not receive notice of the parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth's intent to appeal before this deadline, the District's decision will become final.

VII. Written Notice and Dissemination of Policy

~~Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If the school of origin is in a different district, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his or her school of origin in this district, the districts will make reasonable efforts to coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student.~~

~~The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social services agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing~~

ADMISSION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS
(continued)

~~agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. The district's liaison will also review and recommend to the district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.~~

The District shall provide written notice, at the time any child or youth seeks enrollment in such school, and at least twice annually while the child or youth is enrolled in such school, to the parent or guardian of the child or youth (or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the youth) that sets forth the general rights provided by the McKinney-Vento Act and this policy, including the following:

1. Information on the choice of schools homeless children and youths are eligible to attend;
2. A statement that no homeless child or youth is required to attend a separate school for homeless children or youths;
3. A statement that homeless children and youths shall be provided comparable services as provided to non-homeless students, including transportation services, educational services, and meals through school meals programs; and
4. A statement that homeless children and youths should not be stigmatized by school personnel; and
5. The contact information for the Homeless Liaison and the State Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youths.

This notice shall be in a manner and form understandable to such parent or guardian (or youth), including, if necessary and to the extent feasible, in the native language of such parent or guardian (or youth), and it shall be signed by the parent or guardian (or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the youth).

In addition, the District, in consultation with the Homeless Liaison, shall review and revise its policies and procedures to remove barriers to the education of homeless children and youth, including barriers to enrollment and retention due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences.

VIII. Professional Development and Training

The Homeless Liaison shall be required to participate in professional development and other technical assistance activities as provided by the New Hampshire Department of Education. Other staff providing services under this policy, including all school enrollment staff, secretaries, school counselors, school social workers, and principals, shall receive training on the legal requirements for enrollment. School nutrition staff, school nurses, teachers, security guards, and bus drivers shall receive training on homelessness that is specific to their field.

ADMISSION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS
(continued)

Legal Reference:

~~*No Child Left Behind Act, 2002*~~
Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, 20 U.S.C. § 6301, et seq.
McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. § 11431. et seq.
RSA 193:12, Legal Residence Required
NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.04(a)(19), Homeless Students

1st Reading: December 4, 2006
2nd Review: December 18, 2006
Adoption: January 2, 2007

Policy Revision:
1st Reading: July 10, 2023
2nd Review: August 14, 2023
Adoption:

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

It is the Board's intent to remove barriers to the identification, enrollment and retention in school of children who are in foster care. All staff shall take reasonable steps to ensure that children in foster care are not segregated or stigmatized and that educational decisions are made in the best interests of those students. The Board hereby authorizes the Superintendent or their designee to create procedures and/or protocols to implement this policy.

A. Definition.

Under guidance issued jointly by New Hampshire Department of Ecucation (NHDOE) and the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NHDHHS), and for the purposes of this Policy, "foster care" shall mean "24 hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians for whom the child welfare agency has placement and care responsibility. This includes children in foster family homes, shelters, relative foster homes, group homes and residential facilities regardless of whether the foster care facility is licensed or whether payments are made by the state." To the extent required under applicable law, a child in foster care under this policy also includes children whom an appropriate child welfare agency indicates are awaiting a foster care placement. (Note: children awaiting foster care may also qualify as homeless under policy ~~JFABE~~ JFABD).

The District shall coordinate with other districts and with local child welfare agencies and other agencies or programs providing services to students in foster care as needed. The coordination requirements apply to both situations (i) when a student who is a resident of the District is placed in foster care in another district, or (ii) when a student residing in another district is placed foster care in a home within this District.

The Superintendent is responsible for providing any required assurances to applicable state and federal agencies that the District is complying with applicable requirements related to ensuring the educational stability of children in foster care; and for reasonably monitoring compliance with such assurances. In doing such, the Superintendent is entitled to reasonably rely upon the information and assurances provided to her/him by District staff, including the District's "Foster Care POC", described in Section B of this policy.

B. District Point of Contact with Child Welfare Agencies.

The Superintendent shall designate a staff member to serve as the District's point of contact (the "Foster Care POC") between the New Hampshire Division of Children, Youth and Families ("DCYF"), NHDOE, other districts, and other child welfare agencies. This Foster Care POC shall not be the same individual as the Homeless Liaison in Board Policy JFABD. The main duty of the Foster Care POC is to facilitate the prompt and appropriate placement, transfer, and enrollment of students in foster care, pursuant to applicable state and federal statues, regulations, and guidance. Additionally, the Foster Care POC shall work with the Superintendent or designee to monitor regulations and guidance related to this policy and

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE
(continued)

may be issued by the applicable state and federal agencies (e.g., DCYF, NHDOE, and the U.S. Department of Education).

The District shall provide training opportunities and other technical assistance to the Foster Care POC and other appropriate District staff regarding the District's obligations to students in foster care.

C. Best Interest Enrollment Determinations, Disputes and Enrollment.

Generally, a student in foster care will remain in his/her school of origin, unless there is a determination that it is not in the student's best interest. The Foster Care POC shall assist DCYF or any other child welfare agency to make a "best interest determination" education decision, particularly the determination of whether or not it is in the best interest of the student in foster care to remain in his/her school of origin or to enroll in the new school. Unless local procedures are established in accordance with state and federal law, the District will use the model procedures prepared jointly by the NHDOE and DCYF.

If the determination is that the best interest of a child is not to remain in the school of origin, and instead placed within a new school within this District, the child in foster care shall be immediately enrolled in the new school ("receiving school"), even if any documents or records otherwise required for enrollment are not immediately available. The receiving school shall then immediately contact the school of origin to obtain relevant educational and other records.

If there are disputes between two different New Hampshire school districts ~~regarding a determination~~ regarding the best interest determination for a child in foster care, it is expected that DCYF and the separate school districts, both sending and receiving, will work collaboratively at the local level to resolve the issue. Should there be no resolution, RSA 193:12, V-b, requires the Department of Health and Human Services to request in writing that the two Superintendents involved resolve the dispute. If the residency dispute remains unresolved 10 days after such request, the Department of Health and Human Services shall request that the Commissioner of the NHDOE ~~Department of Education~~ determine the residence of child for purposes of school enrollment.

If a school within the District is a receiving school, such receiving school shall accept the student's certified coursework as if it had been completed at the receiving school. To the extent such coursework is not aligned with the curriculum, the awarded credit may be elective, but it must be counted toward required credits for advancement or graduation.

D. Transportation.

When the District is notified that a student in foster care needs, or may need, transportation to a District school, the Foster Care POC will take steps to establish an individualized plan that

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE
(continued)

addresses transportation to maintain the student in his/her school of origin. This plan will ensure that transportation will be arranged, provided, and funded for the duration of time that the student in foster care is attending his/her school of origin.

In establishing such a plan, the Foster Care POC and other District staff shall follow any existing transportation procedures, systems-level plan or agreement that the District, acting in collaboration with DCYF and/or other departments of human services, has adopted or otherwise expressly agreed to implement for the cost-effective transportation of the student. Out of District transportation of children in foster care shall be provided in accordance with DCYF's or other child welfare agency's authority to use child welfare funding for school of origin transportation.

If there are disputes regarding the provision or funding of transportation, the ~~school~~ District Foster Care POC, ~~point of contact~~ and child welfare agency representative will contact their respective Supervisor and Superintendent ~~of the school~~ to resolve the dispute. To the extent feasible and appropriate, the school district involved should ensure that a child remains in his or her school of origin while the disputes are being resolved to minimize disruptions and reduce school transitions.

Nothing in this policy should be construed as obligating the Merrimack School District to take on any transportation obligation, other than those required by law.

Legal References:

~~20 U.S.C. §1232g (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act – "FERPA")~~

~~20 U.S.C. §1701-1758 (Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 – "EEOA")~~

20 U.S.C. § 6311 (g)(1)(E) and 6312(c)(5) (provisions in Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) regarding obligations to students in foster care)

42 U.S.C. § 671 (a)(~~10~~ 30) and 675 (1)(G) (child welfare agency requirements related to supporting normalcy for children in foster care and ensuring educational stability of children in foster care)

~~42 U.S.C. §11431 and §11432 (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act – Education for Homeless Children and Youth)~~

Public Law 110-351, The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008

~~34 C.F.R. 200.30 (f)(1)(iii) (ESSA's definition of "foster care")~~

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE
(continued)

~~Plyler v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202 (1982)~~

RSA 193:12, Legal Residence Required

RSA 193:28, Right of Attendance

RSA 169-C:20-a, Notice to School District of Out-of-Home Placement; Development of Transition Plan

"N.H. Guidance on ESSA and Foster Care to Ensure that the Educational Needs of Children and Youth in Foster Care are Being Addressed", January 2017, NHDOE and NHDHHS

"Non-Regulatory Guidance: Ensuring Educational Stability for children in Foster Care." U.S. Department of Education and US Department of Health and Human Services, June 23, 2016

1st Reading: July 10, 2023
2nd Review: August 14, 2023
Adoption:

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Purpose, Intent and Scope

Through this policy, the District seeks to join with families and the community ~~in this important work~~ to protect the health, safety and welfare of its students and the school community. The District understands ~~understanding~~ that suicide prevention is an integral component of ~~the trauma-informed System of Care and Learning Supports that promotes student social-emotional health and wellbeing and equitable access to education.~~ this goal, and this policy supports the federal, state and local efforts to provide education on youth suicide awareness and prevention to establish methods of prevention, intervention, and response to suicide or suicide attempt ("postvention") and to promote access to suicide awareness, prevention and postvention resources.

In implementing this policy and plan, the Merrimack School District:

- Recognizes that physical and mental health are integral components of student outcomes, both educationally and beyond high school graduation;
- Believes that only through a collaborative, proactive approach can the problem of youth suicide be addressed; and
- Pairs this policy with other policies and laws that support the overall emotional and behavioral health of students.

A. District Suicide Prevention Plan and Biennial Review. The Superintendent (or their designee) has developed a committee to review a District Suicide Prevention Plan (the "Plan") to include guidelines, protocols, and procedures with the objectives of prevention, risk assessment, intervention and response to youth suicides and suicide attempts. This policy is intended to guide the development and implementation of the coordinated plan to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide; the Plan shall conform to the components required of public schools by RSA 193-J:2.

1. Specific Requirements for Plan Contents: The District Suicide Prevention Plan shall include content relating to:

   a) Suicide prevention (risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, referrals);

   b) Response to in-or-out-of-school student suicides or suicide attempts (postvention, suicide contagion);

   c) Student education regarding safe and healthy choices, coping strategies, recognition of risk factors and warning signs of mental disorders and suicide (in oneself and in others) and help-seeking strategies for oneself or others including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help.

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE
(continued)

d) Training of faculty and staff, designated volunteers, and contracted personnel ~~on the issues of~~ in youth suicide risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, post-intervention and resources available within the school and community;

e) Adherence to confidentiality protocols and statewide Code of Ethics for New Hampshire Educators;

f) Designation and identification of trained personnel within each school, to act as points of contact when students are believed to be at an elevated risk of suicide;

g) Information regarding state, and community resources for making referrals, crisis intervention, and other related information available for students, parents, faculty, and staff, and school volunteers;

h) Dissemination of the Plan or information about the Plan to students, parents, faculty, staff, and school volunteers and contracted personnel;

i) Promotion of cooperative efforts between the District and its schools, other school districts and chartered public schools, and community suicide prevention program personnel;

j) Such other provisions deemed appropriate to meet the objectives of this policy (e.g., student handbook language, reporting processes, "postvention" strategies, memorial parameters, etc.).

2. Biennial Review: No less than once every two years, the Superintendent or their designee, with input and evidence from community health or suicide prevention organizations, and District health and counseling personnel, shall update the District Suicide Prevention Plan. All provisions within this policy and in the Plan shall be evidence-informed.

B. Suicide Prevention Coordinator and Building Level Liaisons:

1. District Suicide Prevention Coordinator. The (title of position goes here) shall serve as the appointed District Suicide Prevention Coordinator, who, along with the Superintendent or their designee, shall be responsible for compliance with this policy.

2. Building-Level Suicide Prevention Liaison. The Building Principal or designee shall be designated as the Building-Level Suicide Prevention Liaison and shall serve as the building point-of-contact person when a student is believed to be at an elevated risk for suicide. Any employee

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE
(continued)

3. who has reason to believe a student is a risk of suicide, or is exhibiting risk factors for suicide, shall report that information to the Building Liaison, who shall, immediately or as soon as possible, establish and implement a response plan with the District Suicide Prevention Coordinator.

4. Annual Staff Training. The Superintendent or their designee shall assure that beginning with the 2020-21 school year, and continuing annually thereafter, all school ~~building~~ faculty and staff, including designated volunteers (i.e., all those who have regular contact with students) and contracted personnel ~~and any other personnel who have regular contact with students, including contracted personnel or third-party vendors,~~ receive at least two hours of evidence-informed training in ~~evidence - informed~~ suicide awareness and prevention. Such training may include, but is not limited to, such matters as youth suicide risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, intervention, response procedures, referrals, ~~and~~ postvention and ~~local~~ resources available within the school and community. The District will allow the use of self-training materials in fulfilling the annual training requirement of this policy, and the District may determine how to both administer the annual training requirements and ensure that such training requirements are met.

~~5.~~ Dissemination. Student handbooks as well as the District and each school's websites will include: ~~information about the District's Suicide Prevention Plan and how to access the Plan.~~

   1. A copy of this policy,
   2. Information on how to access the District's Suicide Prevention Plan
   3. Contact information for the District Suicide Prevention Coordinator and Building Suicide Prevention Liaisons, and
   4. Contact information for State and community crisis or intervention referral intervention resources.

   The District Suicide Prevention Plan will be made available on the District's, and each school's respective websites.

6. Identification Cards. For each school within the District that serves any students in grades 6 through 12 that issues student identification cards, these identification cards shall include on either side of the cards the telephone number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline as follows: National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255 or 988. This requirement shall apply to any student identification card issued for the first time and for replacement cards issued for damaged or lost student identification cards.

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE
(continued)

7. Statutory Considerations. In adopting this policy, it is the intent of the District to fully comply with the provisions of RSA 193-J and to fulfill its statutory role in suicide prevention education as defined by RSA 193-J:2. In doing such, the District does not assume any duty beyond that set forth in RSA 193-J.

Legal References:

RSA 193-J Suicide Prevention Education
~~RSA 193-F: Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention~~
NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. ED 510: Code of Conduct for NH Educators
~~School Volunteers Policy (IJOC)~~

1st Reading: January 19, 2021
2nd Review: February 1, 2021
Adoption: February 15, 2021

Policy Revision
1st Reading: August 14, 2023
2nd Review:
Revision:

Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Merrimack Town Hall – Memorial Room
July 10, 2023

5:15 P.M. NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91A:3, II (a) (b) & (c) – Memorial Room

- **Staff Welfare**

Present: Ken Martin, Chair; Laurie Rothhaus, Vice-Chair; Naomi Halter, Board Member; and Jenna Hardy, Board Member. Also present were Matt Shevenell, Assistant Superintendent for Business; Amy Doyle, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment, and Student Representative Sean Evidenti.

Not Present: Lori Peters, Board Member

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Martin called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no public comments.

3. RECOGNITIONS

There were no recognitions.

4. INFORMATIONAL UPDATES

a. Superintendent Update

Chief Educational Officer Olsen said the summer programs had begun in earnest, pointing out that most of the classes were being held at the Merrimack Middle School because it had air conditioning.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen also pointed out that the Brentwood building was in the process of being razed, and the roofing project at James Mastricola Upper Elementary School had begun. He thanked the town for supporting the roof project.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen said that he and Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle would be meeting with Ms. Mackenzie Murphy who was the Admission Coordinator for the New Hampshire Community College. He said the hope was to strengthen their partnership.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen thanked the Board for giving him a very supportive evaluation and said he felt it was a privilege to work in Merrimack.

b. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Update

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle stated that they had already had some really great professional development thus far, including a 4-day Elementary Course for Responsive Classroom, and a 1-day training for a leadership seminar. She continued by saying that the current week they were a host district for OGAP (Ongoing Assessment Project) training which

was math professional development for teachers in grades K through 8. She thanked all of the teachers for ensuring students were closing some learning gaps over the summer months.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle said curriculum teams were meeting and all of the core content areas had scheduled times that they were already meeting. She said there was a lot of work being done, not just in Merrimack, but in the state, from Performance Plus which was their "warehouse of sorts for assessment data" to Performance Matters.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle commented that she had an opportunity to meet many new administrators and directors who had started in the roles beginning on July 1st and their energy was just amazing.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen added that they were also developing a new teacher evaluation process. Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Doyle said they were partnering with the MTA to gather input from them as well.

c. Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell said the roof at the James Mastricola Upper Elementary School was underway. He noted that Teamcraft Roofing was awarded the bid because they came in at the lowest bid, but added they were a quality organization.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell also said the demolition of the Brentwood building was underway.

Vice-Chair Rothhaus asked how much it had cost per year to keep the Brentwood building going. Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell replied that it was about $12,000 per year.

d. School Board Update

Chair Martin said a fun time was had by all on the 4th of July parade. He said a few members of the Budget Committee, and the Planning & Building Committee joined the School Board in the parade.

Chair Martin said the School Board had its goal-setting meeting on June 22nd and it went very well.

e. Student Representative Update

Student Representative Evidenti said the Class of 2025 would hold a car wash fundraiser on Saturday, July 15th behind Burger King.

Student Representative Evidenti said the students were wondering about having an "open campus" and would like the School Board to provide updates to the students in a more efficient way. Board Member Hardy replied she felt Student Representative Evidenti should be updating the student population via social media. Vice-Chair Rothhaus said having an "open campus" would be up to the principal of the high school and not the School Board.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. Review of June 22nd Goal Setting Meeting & 2022 – 2023 Goals Update

Chair Martin said they had a very productive Goal Setting Meeting, noting that a representative from Primex was present, and they started by reviewing the 2022 – 2023 goals update. He said all of the goals had been met or were in the process of being met. He said new goals included:

- Communication
- Assessment & Accountability
- Administrative Facilities (SAU Office)

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Approval of MESSA Memorandum of Agreement for 2023 – 2024

Chief Educational Officer Olsen explained that the Covid-19 pandemic had an extraordinary impact on labor markets in certain segments of the economy and the education field felt a negative impact. He said they found that the district was very uncompetitive in terms of the contract that represented the support staff employees. He said although some changes were made to the contract, he still felt it was less than uncompetitive and he said it had to be addressed in the upcoming collective bargaining process.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen recommended that the School Board approve the Memorandum of Agreement that was already in place for the last fiscal year to the current fiscal year.

MOTION: Vice-Chair Rothhaus made a motion to accept the Merrimack School District and the Merrimack Educational Support Staff Association's Memorandum of Agreement for the next school year. Chair Martin seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

b. Crossing Guard Discussion

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell said there had been discussions in the past regarding crossing guards and the Merrimack Police Department did not feel they should have to fund the position as it was a school function. He further said that Chief Educational Officer Olsen and himself had recently met with Chief Brian Levesque, and Deputy Chief Matthew Tarleton on a few other issues, and Chief Levesque asked if they would be willing to "pick up the cost of the crossing guards" and felt that all of the school crossing guards should go with the district. He said long ago the School Board did not like that idea, but that he spoke with a representative from N.H. Primex who informed him that normally it was, in fact, a town function. He requested that the School Board consider the information.

Chief Educational Officer Olsen said in his experience, the funding for crossing guards was the function of the police department.

Board Member Halter said her concern was where the training for crossing guards would come from.

Board Member Hardy said her concern was the same as Board Member Halters. She added that she did not feel that the title of crossing guard was appropriate as the people were actually directing traffic, and not just safely directing the children to cross the street. She also said she felt there needed to be a skilled crossing guard who could direct traffic and she did not feel it was the school district's responsibility.

Vice-Chair Rothhaus also said she did not feel it was the school district's responsibility to fund the crossing guard positions.

Chair Martin commented that he too felt it was traffic control and not a crossing guard and therefore, did not feel it was the responsibility of the school district.

MOTION: Board Member Hardy made a motion to continue to ask the Merrimack Police Department to support and fund the traffic control guards. Vice-Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

c. Other

Chair Martin commented that there was some conversation about having another joint Budget Committee/School Board meeting to go over the procedure of how the two committees worked together, ideally with some type of mediator. He asked if that was something the School Board still wanted to do. The School Board collectively decided to move forward with scheduling another meeting.

Vice-Chair Rothhaus requested that Mr. Jim Bailey be recognized at the September meeting as he was such a valuable member of the community. Chief Educational Officer Olsen replied he would do that.

7. POLICIES

Chief Educational Officer Olsen pointed out that all of the policies had been reviewed by legal counsel.

a. Approval of Fund Balance Policy (DIA)

MOTION: Vice-Chair Rothhaus made a motion to approve the Fund Balance Policy (DIA), as presented. Chair Martin seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

b. Approval of Wellness Policy (JLCF)

MOTION: Board Member Hardy made a motion to approve the Wellness Policy (JLCF), as amended. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Vice-Chair Rothhaus suggested that adding the words "supports the development of lifelong wellness practices such as mental and social-emotional well-being" be added to the first paragraph.

Vice-Chair Rothhaus also suggested (on page 5 of 7) that the sentence reading "the district recognizes that social-emotional health" should be changed to "the district recognized that mental and social-emotional well-being".

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

c. Student Transportation Services Policy (EEA) 2nd Reading

Chief Educational Officer Olsen stated that they had not received any public comment regarding the Student Transportation Services Policy (EEA) and the School Board did not need to take any action at this meeting.

d. Admission of Homeless Students (JFABD) 1st Reading

MOTION: Chair Martin made a motion to waive the first reading of the Admission of Homeless Students (JFABD). Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

e. Education of Children in Foster Care (JFABE) 1st Reading

MOTION: Chair Martin made a motion to waive the first reading of the Education of Children in Foster Care (JFABE). Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. June 19, 2023 – Public and Non-Public Minutes

MOTION: Board Member Hardy made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2023, public and non-public meetings, as presented. Vice-Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

9. ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS AND GRANTS UNDER $5,000

a. Jeanine Marie Briggs to Merrimack High School for $800.00

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell stated that Ms. Jeanine Marie Briggs' yoga class raised and wished to donate $800.00 to Merrimack High School to be used for Mr. Phil Carle's Wood Tech Program in memory of Xander Venedam.

MOTION: Board Member Hardy made a motion to accept the donation in the amount of $800.00 with the Board's sincere gratitude. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

10. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Educator and Administrator Resignations

- Ms. Fern Seiden, Director of Student Wellness, Districtwide
- Ms. Diane Darius, Special Education Teacher, Merrimack Middle School

MOTION: Board Member Hardy made a motion to accept the resignations. Vice-Chair Rothhaus seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

b. Educator Nominations

- Ms. Jennifer Ruscito, Special Education Coordinator, Merrimack Middle School
- Ms. Kathryn Lambert, Speech Language Pathologist, Reeds Ferry Elementary School
- Ms. Cinzia Bibb, Part-Time School Nurse, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School

MOTION: Vice-Chair Rothhaus made a motion to accept the educator nominations. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

c. Administrator Nominations

- Ms. Sara Parrotto, Director of Wellness, Districtwide
- Ms. Kathleen McCall-Ortega, Assistant Principal, James Mastricola Elementary School

MOTION: Vice-Chair Rothhaus made a motion to accept the administrator nominations. Board Member Halter seconded the motion. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

d. Approval of District Registrar Job Description

e. Approval of Director of School Counseling Job Description

f. Approval of Middle School Dean of Students Job Description

g. Approval of Reading Interventionist Job Description

MOTION: Vice-Chair Rothhaus made a motion to approve the above-listed job descriptions (d through g) with the following recommendation to (e) Director of School Counseling Job Description: "Work with the Athletic Director to train and oversee all NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) compliances."

Board Member Hardy seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.

11. OTHER

a. Committee Reports

Vice-Chair Rothhaus said she attended the Parks & Recreation meeting where they discussed the parade, summer camp, and the following year after school program.

b. Correspondence

Board Member Hardy said she had a parent reach out to her regarding energy drinks in the vending machines at the high school. She said she contacted the Director of Food Services and was waiting to hear back.

c. Comments

Board Member Hardy asked if Chief Educational Officer Olsen's meeting with Mackenzie Murphy would include a discussion about expanding the dual enrollment opportunities. Chief Educational Officer Olsen
replied that would be discussed.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Cindy Poirier, 5 Hickory Lane, addressed the Board and said was the President of MESSA. She thanked the School Board for giving them the retention bonus, and the sign-on bonus would bring people to the district.

Student Finnegan Haddad addressed the Board and said that the Governor's scholarship would provide two free STEM classes at NCC for dual enrollment. He said he did not feel that the Guidance Department did not share that information with students.

13. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At approximately 7:02 p.m. Board Member Hardy made a motion to adjourn. Board Member Halter seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 4 – 0 – 0.