June 12, 2026

To: MERSD School Committee

From: Michelle Cresta, Director of Finance & Operations

Copy: Pam Beaudoin, Superintendent of Schools

Re: Vote to Approve Resolution for BMO Bank P-Card Program

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I am writing to request that the School Committee vote to approve a new Purchasing Card (P-Card) program through the Bank of Montreal (BMO). This program will replace our current single credit card setup. Transitioning to a P-Card system will clean up our tracking, protect district funds, and give us much better control over daily school purchases. This program is recommended for school districts by the Massachusetts Association of School Building Officials (MASBO). In addition, I have personally utilized this program in previous school districts with great success.

If approved, the program will be jointly managed, listing both the Superintendent and the Director of Finance & Operations as account administrators.

Currently, the district operates with just one standard credit card managed out of the Business Office. While this works for emergencies or online-only orders, it creates a few major headaches:

- **Tracking Guesswork:** Staff frequently borrow the physical card or card number. This makes it hard to look at a monthly statement and figure out which school or person made the purchase.
- **Security Risks:** The account relies on a single credit limit. If that number gets compromised, our entire line of credit is open to fraud.
- **No Vendor Restrictions:** A standard credit card allows purchases anywhere, meaning we cannot automatically block unapproved spending categories.

The BMO P-Card Program will resolve these issues by replacing our single card with individual accounts for specific schools and/or specific administrators.

- **Better Tracking and Accountability:** Instead of sharing one card, secure cards will be issued directly to authorized school principals and department heads. Every transaction will immediately tie back to the specific cardholder and their school building, making auditing straightforward.
- **Built-In Controls and Real-Time Adjustments:** We can set a specific daily or monthly spending limit for each card based on that school's budget. Even better, the BMO online portal lets the Superintendent and me block certain vendor categories entirely—like travel, dining, or entertainment. If a limit needs to be changed or a card gets lost, we can adjust or freeze it instantly online.

- **Financial Perks:** The BMO program has no annual fees to implement or maintain. Additionally, the district will earn a percentage-based cash back rebate based on our annual spending volume, turning a routine process into a small revenue source.

To establish an account, BMO Bank requires a formal voted resolution from our School Committee. I recommend that the Committee vote to approve the resolution below.

If you should have any questions about the program or the required resolution, please let me know.

Proposed Motion:

*Motion to approve a Resolution Authorizing Issuance of Individual Procurement Cards**.***

*Whereas, the School Committee of the Manchester Essex Regional School District has the authority to enter into an agreement with the Bank of Montreal for purchasing cards.*

*Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Manchester Essex Regional School Committee that the Superintendent and Director of Finance and Operations are authorized to enter into an Agreement with the Bank of Montreal to secure Procurement Cards for each authorized employee of the district under such terms and conditions as approved by the Committee.*

*The Committee authorizes the District's Director of Finance and Operations to execute a P-Card program agreement on its behalf.*

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**Resolution Authorizing Issuance**

**Of**

**Individual Procurement Cards**

WHEREAS, the School Committee of the Manchester Essex Regional School District has the authority to enter into an agreement with the Bank of Montreal for purchasing cards.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Manchester Essex Regional School Committee that the Superintendent and Director of Finance and Operations are authorized to enter into an Agreement with the Bank of Montreal to secure Procurement Cards for each authorized employee of the district under such terms and conditions as approved by the Committee.

The Committee authorizes the District's Director of Finance and Operations to execute a P-Card program agreement on its behalf.

Approved this Sixteenth day of June 20 26

Ayes_____

Nays_____

School Committee Chair_____Date_____

The Manchester Essex Regional School District does not discriminate in its programs, activities or employment practices based on race, color, age, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability.