SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE



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Teacher Days

- New Staff Orientation
- School/Department/Grade Level Meetings
- Training
- Classroom Preparation
- All-District Gathering
  - FY26 Focus: *Growth, Reflection & Finding Opportunity in Change*
  - *Keynote Address: A Teacher's View: Finding Opportunity in Change: Sydney Chaffee, High School Humanities Teacher at Codman Academy, 2017 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year, and 2017 National Teacher of the Year.*

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

2026-2027 Hiring

- 16 New Staff Members
  - 5 Teachers to replace retirements/resignations
  - 10 Teaching Assistants retirements/resignations/reorg
  - 1 Middle School Principal

Continuing to fill late summer retirements /resignations

- **Meet the New Staff!**

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

On the SC Agenda Fall 2026-2027

- Essex Elementary Building Project Design / Approval
- Student Activity Fees & School Choice
- Negotiations

New /Returning

EES Morning Movers: Morning before school dropoff program at Essex Elementary

Bus Company: Doherty's Garage replacing Salter. Late bus to return mid-September

Early Literacy Tutoring: MERSD is continuing participation in DESE's Early Literacy High-Dosage Tutoring program, providing daily one-on-one virtual tutoring for students below benchmark, with 21 seats distributed across Elementary Schools based on data.

ParentSquare Expansion: Secure communication platform that replaces personal device use and supports calls, texts, translation, messaging, and forms to streamline and enhance family communication.

Cell Phone Expectations: MERSD is relaunching the *Off and Away* practice at all levels, with principals sharing grade-level expectations through handbooks and parent communications.

- High School is exploring practice revisions this fall with a direction determination due by November.

Essex Elementary Building Project Update



For more information, including meeting materials and project documents, please watch our **Essex Elementary School Building Project Video Series** or visit the **Essex Elementary Building Project** website.

Community Outreach

9 Communications Working Group

3 Site Logistics Working Group

2 Sustainability Working Group

5 MEP Working Group

3 Site, Safety & Security Working Group

28 School Building Committee (SBC) Meetings



3 Educational Programming Workshops

2 Educational Plan Validation

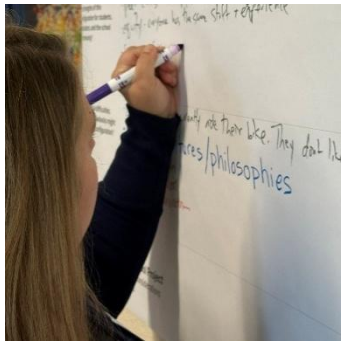


7 School Tours

2 School Board Meetings

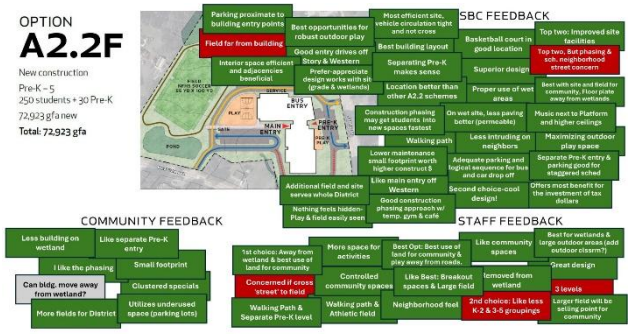
https://www.mersd.org/building-committee

2 Community Gallery Walk



7 Community Meetings





Site Plan


Wetland Edge
100' Wetland Setback
Property Line
Proposed Essex
Elementary School
Story Street
Western Avenue
Wetland Edge
Property Line
100' Wetland Setback
Property Line
Property Line
Property Line
Wetland Edge
Property Line
Property Line
100' Wetland Setback
Wetland Edge
Property Line
Property Line
Property Line

Exterior View – Main Entrance



Exterior View – Main Entrance (Pitched Roof)



Exterior View – Pre-K Entrance



Interior View – Learning Neighborhood



Interior View – Classroom



Interior View – Media Center



Interior View – Gym and Dining



Essex School Building Committee

Fall 2026 Meeting Schedule
Location: Essex Elementary Cafeteria / Webex
Time: 6:00 – 8:00 PM

September 8 (Tuesday) – Business Meeting

September 22 (Tuesday) – Business Meeting

October 13 (Tuesday) – Business Meeting

October 27 (Tuesday) – Business Meeting

October 29 (Thursday) – Essex SBC Community Meeting

November 10 (Tuesday) – Business Meeting

November 16 Essex & Manchester Fall Town Meetings

November 24 (Tuesday) – Business Meeting

December 10 – Funding Approval Ballot Vote

📌 *Note: Business meeting time is the **4th Tuesday of each month.***

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

PREVIEW 9/15 Meeting Preview

PROTECT Act: School District Requirements

- The PROTECT Act establishes new requirements for Massachusetts school districts related to civil immigration enforcement in schools.
- Since 2024–2025, MERSD has had procedures provided by school counsel outlining what administrators and staff should do in the event of an ICE visit to a District school.
- Districts received notice of the new requirements on August 21, with the legislation calling for policies to be in place by September 1.
- MASC and MASS have acknowledged the challenges of the short timeline and advised districts to complete the policy adoption process as soon as practicable.
- The required policy will be brought to the School Committee for review and adoption at the next meeting.