

October 1, 2026

To: MERSD School Committee

From: Michelle Cresta, Director of Finance & Operations

Copy: Pam Beaudoin, Superintendent of Schools

Re: Facilities Maintenance & Operations Update

I am writing to provide the School Committee with an update regarding facilities operations, summer maintenance projects, regulatory compliance activities, and facilities staffing.

Facilities Staffing Update

As you may be aware, Steve Hunt, our Facilities Coordinator and maintenance staff member, has resigned from the district. We appreciate Steve's service and contributions to the Manchester Essex Regional School District and wish him well in his future endeavors.

Following a review of district facilities operations and maintenance needs, administration has determined that the district will need to return to its previous facilities staffing model. The responsibilities associated with managing school facilities, coordinating maintenance and capital projects, overseeing contractors, ensuring regulatory compliance, and responding to day-to-day operational needs require dedicated management oversight.

The district is currently in the process of recruiting for a Facilities Manager position. Administration will continue to evaluate operational needs and make recommendations regarding additional staffing as appropriate.

Summer Facilities Projects

During the summer months, numerous maintenance and improvement projects were completed throughout the district in addition to routine preventive maintenance, annual service work, grounds maintenance, custodial activities, safety inspections, and general preparation of facilities for the start of the school year.

Essex Elementary School

- Replacement of 13 steam traps within the building heating system
- Replacement of multiple exhaust fans and motors serving the school's ventilation system

Manchester Essex Middle High School

- Completion of various plumbing repairs, including the replacement of faucets, a recirculation pump, and mixing valves
- Re-roofing of the storage barn
- Restoration and treatment of the wood at the front entrance
- Replacement of carpeting in the Learning Commons

Memorial Elementary School

- Refinishing of the High School tennis courts located on the Memorial Elementary School grounds

The successful completion of these projects reflects the continued effort required to maintain district facilities and preserve the condition of our buildings and grounds.

AHERA Inspection Update

The district recently completed its required three-year AHERA (Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act) inspection. As part of this process, the Manchester Essex Middle High School and Manchester Memorial Elementary School maintain AHERA management plans that are reviewed and updated every three years as required by law. Because there is no known asbestos-containing material within these facilities, ongoing asbestos monitoring is not required.

At Essex Elementary School, the inspection identified a limited amount of maintenance work involving aging pipe insulation associated with portions of the heating and ventilation systems. The scope of work includes the removal and replacement of a section of pipe insulation in one area of the building, along with wrapping repairs to insulation on select heating and HVAC system piping in the gymnasium.

This type of work is not uncommon in older school buildings and was identified through the district's routine inspection and compliance process. Licensed contractors will perform the work on October 10 and 11, 2026, in accordance with all applicable federal and state regulations. The project also includes required independent air quality testing, final clearance inspections, and proper disposal documentation.

To facilitate the work and ensure a safe work environment, Essex Elementary School will be closed on October 10 and 11 while the project is completed. The affected areas will not be returned to service until all required clearance testing has been successfully completed.

This work is preventative in nature and reflects the district's ongoing commitment to maintaining safe, healthy, and well-maintained learning environments.

Conclusion

The work completed over the summer, together with ongoing maintenance responsibilities and regulatory compliance requirements, highlights the importance of maintaining a proactive approach to facilities management and investing in the long-term upkeep of district facilities.

If you have any questions regarding the information provided in this update, please feel free to contact me or Pam Beaudoin.