

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Merrimack Town Hall – Matthew Thornton Room
May 4, 2026**

**4:30 p.m.: Non-Public Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) (b) & (c)
Merrimack TV Training Classroom**

- **Staff Welfare**

Present: Ms. Lori Peters, Chair; Ms. Jenna Hardy, Vice-Chair; Ms. Rachel Paepke, Board Member; Ms. Naomi Halter, Board Member; Mr. Harley Hall, Board Member; and Mr. Matthew Brown, Student School Board Representative.

Also Present: Mr. Everett Olsen, Chief Education Officer; Dr. Kathleen Scholand, Interim Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum; and Mr. Matt Shevenell, Assistant Superintendent for Business.

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

At 6:00 p.m., Chair Peters called the meeting to order.

Chair Peters read aloud the Merrimack School District's mission statement into the record as follows:

The Merrimack School District will provide high-quality, future-focused education for all students in the community. Students will engage in learning opportunities that reflect both rigor and relevance and meet their cognitive, social, and emotional needs. The district will prepare students to understand, adapt to, and adjust to civic, economic, social, and technological changes worldwide. Our overall goal is to inspire, create, and encourage students to be curious, connected, prepared, resilient, and dedicated lifelong expert learners. Merrimack graduates exercise judgment; they are innovative and will become responsible contributors to society. We hope the discussions we have tonight will always align with that mission.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Mario Rahming of 1 Crosswoods Path requested a non-public meeting with the school board.

3. RECOGNITIONS

There were none.

4. INFORMATIONAL UPDATES

- a. Superintendent Update

Chief Education Officer Olsen reported the Leadership Team would be revising more sections of the Strategic Plan this week. He will present the Board with all revisions before the June 19 Goal Setting meeting.

Chief Education Officer Olsen will attempt to find a facilitator for the June 19th Goal Setting meeting.

- b. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Update

Interim Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Scholand reported on the following:

- End of year assessments will take place in May. Math and English Language Arts for grades 3-8 and Science for grades 5, 8 and 11.
- Advanced Placement exams will also take place in May.
- May 20 will be an early release day.
- June 22 will be a professional development day for staff.
- Staff are completing end of year reflections and recertification
- Progress is being made on the consolidated grant applications for Title I, II, III and IV.
- Planning for summer learning programs and curriculum will occur during May.

c. Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell Update

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell reported that he met with the President and Treasurer of the Thorntons Ferry Elementary School Parent Group to review plans for a refresh of the lower playground area at Thorntons Ferry Elementary School. He announced his approval and support for this exciting project.

d. School Board Update

Chair Peters reported the NH School Funding Fairness Project accepted the Board's invitation to provide the Merrimack Community with a presentation and an opportunity to answer questions. The event will take place on May 12, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at Merrimack High School in the cafeteria. Registration is required. Access to the registration link can be found on both the District's and the NH School Funding Fairness Project websites.

Chair Peters reported the Open Enrollment bill failed. She thanked the Merrimack Legislators who voted against the bill and expressed her appreciation to Representative Bill Boyd for also voting against the bill.

e. Student Representative Update

Student School Board Representative Brown reported the following updates:

- The high school theater department will perform Disney's Freaky Friday on May 15 and 16.
- Merrimack's 250th Anniversary Committee is offering a speech essay contest for high school and middle school students. Submissions are due on June 1st.
- Individuals interested in applying for the 2026-27 School Board Student Representative position should submit an application.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. Signing of the Merrimack Teachers' Association Master Agreement 2026-2029

Chair Peters signed the Teachers' Association Master Agreement for 2026-2029 with the request that the duration of the agreement date on page 37 be changed from 2026 to 2029. Chair Peters thanked the voters for their support.

b. Math Curriculum Pitch Day and Pilot Program Update

Interim Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Scholand reported the three pilot programs being considered are Bridges in Math, K-4 (2025), Eureka Math Squared, K-6 (2023), Math and You, 5-6 (2026). She noted the Bridges in Math and Eureka Math Squared align with On-Going Assessment Project (OGAP).

Interim Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Scholand stated that the committee will meet again in May.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. 2026-2027 School Board Committee Assignments

The Board determined committee assignments for next year. Chair Peters will distribute the final list to the Board via email.

b. Request to Hire at Will

Chief Education Officer Olsen requested that the School Board grant administration the authority to offer conditional contracts to candidates for professional staff openings for the 2026-2027 school year.

MOTION: Board Member Halter made a motion to authorize the administration to hire at will between the last Board meeting in June 2026 and the first Board meeting in September 2026. Vice Chair Hardy seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

7. POLICIES

a. 4th Review and Approval of Revised School Volunteers (IJOC) Policy

MOTION: Board Member Halter made a motion to approve the Revised School Volunteers (IJOC) Policy. Board Member Paepke seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0-0

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. April 20, 2026 – Public and Non-Public Minutes

It was noted that Interim Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Scholand attended the April 20, 2026 non-public meeting, not Human Resources Director Fazlic.

MOTION: Board Member Halter made a motion to approve the public minutes, as presented, and the non-public minutes, as amended, from the April 20, 2026 meeting. Board Member Hall seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Educator Resignation

- Allison McInnes, Classroom Teacher, Reeds Ferry Elementary School

b. Educator Nominations

- Jill O'Rourke, Special Education Teacher, Merrimack Middle School
- Kelly O'Reilly (Caverno), Special Education Teacher, Merrimack Middle School
- John Brescia, Special Education Teacher, Merrimack Middle School

c. Administrator Nomination

- Patrick Jennings, Assistant Principal, Merrimack Middle School

MOTION: Vice Chair Hardy made a motion to accept the Educator Resignation, Educator Nominations and Administrator Nomination as presented. Board Member Paepke seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.

10. OTHER

a. Committee Reports

Vice Chair Hardy attended the Curriculum Instruction Assessment (CIA). The Committee discussed the revised curriculum review cycle.

b. Correspondence

Chair Peters received correspondence regarding the NH School Funding Fairness Presentation on May 12.

Chair Peters reported that the Watkins Forest invoices were sent to the Town of Merrimack for approval and the bids will be going out later this month or early June for a late summer or early September harvest.

Chair Peters received a couple of emails from a concerned citizen about the NH School Funding Fairness Presentation and its connection to the District along with a Right-To-Know Request in relation to the event.

Chair Peters was copied on an email from a parent.

Vice Chair Hardy received an email from a parent and referred the parent to the appropriate person.

Board Member Paepke received an email from a parent that she will forward to the appropriate person.

c. Comments

Vice Chair Hardy, Board Member Paepke and Chief Education Officer will be participating in the fundraiser in support of the 250th July 4 celebration.

Board Member Paepke noted this week is Teacher Appreciation Week. She expressed her appreciation to all District staff.

Chair Peters reported there is an opportunity for Merrimack families to purchase a flag containing information of a loved one who served in the military. The flags will be displayed along D.W. Highway in time for July 4th. Information can be found on the Parks and Recreation website. Flyers are available at Town Hall and the Parks and Recreation Department.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

There were none.

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At approximately 7:50 p.m., Board Member Halter made a motion to adjourn. Vice Chair Hardy seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 – 0 – 0.