BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MANCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT SAU #37

Monday, August 24, 2026 **6:30 p.m.**

1. Mayor Ruais called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. Mayor Ruais called for the Pledge of Allegiance and asked Committee Member Garrity to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. A moment of silence was observed.

4. The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Committee Members Turner, Parr, Georges, Want, Taylor, Bergeron, Stewart, O'Connell, Potter, St. John, Garrity, Hamer, O'Neil-Wong, Smith and Mayor Ruais.

Absent: Committee Member Bergeron.

5. RECOGNITIONS

There were no recognitions this evening.

PUBLIC FORUM

6. The purpose of the public forum is to give the residents of Manchester the opportunity to address the board. All people wishing to speak will have up to three (3) minutes to do so, and any comments must be directed to the chair. Any resident wishing to speak will come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized and give their comments.

Speakers may offer comments on school operations and programs that concern them. In public session, however, the Board shall not hear personal complaints of school personnel or complaints against any person connected with the District. Other channels are provided for Board consideration and disposition of legitimate complaints involving school district employees, which should be referred to the Superintendent. Speakers are requested to refrain from providing confidential information during this comment period. Any comments that are given regarding personnel matters, will not be responded to by the Board or Administration during the public meeting, as these items should be discussed in non-public session.

Sue Corby, 2094 Elm Street, stated:

I am interested in the discussion tonight on whether or not the School Board will change its policy on transgender girls or boys participating on sports teams, and I understand that is what is in front of you. Do you change the policy to conform, or do you not? I do not want to see Manchester or the Manchester School Board get in trouble with the State. We are already up against a lot of negativity because we are a city, not a small rural area, and come budget season next year, we are going to have some pressure. But I am personally very much against this law and would like to see ways to push back. I am not sure that there is not a way for this Board to do that. Has anybody tried checking with other cities, such as Bedford, Portsmouth, or Hanover? They might be the best communities to put this issue to the test because they do not have the financial difficulties that I think we have. Maybe there is an opportunity for a coalition to get together and oppose this collectively, or at least perhaps the Board could develop a statement, if you share these concerns, that opposes the bill while acknowledging that the District needs to conform to it in order to avoid lawsuits and other consequences. We cannot be the only district in the state that cares about this. My issue with the law is that it is not nuanced at all. Girls who transition before they hit puberty do not, by the time they get into high school and want to participate in athletics and be on teams, have the same male characteristics that might give them an advantage. They may have had puberty blockers and female hormones, and it probably goes the other way if you are talking about people who were born female and are transitioning to male. So, the law is not nuanced. Those people are totally left out. I cannot imagine somebody who has gone through their school years as a girl suddenly having to go play on a boys' team. There is so much left out of this type of legislation. It is simply one size fits all.
I do not know if it is entirely about philosophy or if it is also about protecting girls who are reluctant to compete against somebody they perceive might have an advantage because that person at one time had male characteristics. I understand that reaction. But again, this policy and this bill are simply not nuanced enough. Thank you for considering it. I did not expect to be the only one speaking on this, but thank you, and thank you for all that you do here.

a. If there is no one else present wishing to speak, a motion is in order to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented and to table the remaining minutes for public comment to the end of the meeting for those that have not already spoken.

*On motion of **Committee Member Turner,** duly seconded by **Committee Member Stewart,** it was moved to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented and to table the remaining minutes for public comment to the end of the meeting for those that have not already spoken. All present were in favor and the motion passed.*

7. Response to Public Comment

There were no responses to public comment, as this item is being discussed this evening.

8. PRESENTATIONS

a. Saint Anselm College and Manchester School District – Partnership – Strategic Plan 2026/2027 Update – by Dr. Jennifer Chmiel, Superintendent

Superintendent Chmiel introduced representatives from Saint Anselm College and expressed appreciation for the College's partnership with the Manchester School District. The Saint Anselm College representatives introduced themselves and explained that the College's Office of Partnerships works to develop transformative collaborations with organizations throughout the community. Those present included: Max Silton, Professor at St. Anselm and the Executive Director of the Office of Partnerships; Nikki Laura, Assistant Dean for First Year Students and Community Education; and, Stephanie Fernandez, Chief Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Officer. They stated that the partnership with the Manchester School District had been evolving for approximately 18 months and already involved numerous College departments, including community engagement, admissions, nursing, social work, and education.

The partnership was organized around three priority areas: **students, staff, and systems**.

Students

The student priority focuses on expanding college and career access, readiness, and success for Manchester students. The presenters emphasized that the initiative is not solely intended to recruit students to Saint Anselm College. Rather, the goal is to prepare Manchester students for successful postsecondary pathways wherever they choose to attend college or pursue a career.

Existing and developing initiatives include:

- Access Academy;
- college-access programming;
- collaboration with the District's Freshman Academy;
- enhanced participation in college fairs and outreach activities;
- additional student engagement opportunities; and
- consideration of a summer college-enrollment support program.

The presenters discussed the challenge of "summer melt," in which students who have completed the college-admissions process may encounter paperwork, financial, or logistical obstacles during the summer that prevent them from ultimately enrolling.

Staff

The second priority focuses on creating professional pathways for Saint Anselm College students and alumni within the Manchester School District. The College is working to expand internships, job shadowing, clinical placements, student teaching, nursing rotations, community-engagement placements, and other applied-learning experiences within the District.

The goal is to introduce college students to the Manchester School District earlier in their education rather than relying solely on traditional job postings after graduation.

They also discussed developing an MSD ambassador or student-leadership program involving Saint Anselm students who previously attended Manchester schools. The program would be intended to strengthen belonging among Manchester graduates attending the College while also encouraging them to consider returning to the District for employment.

The Board discussed how stronger recruitment pipelines could help address difficult-to-fill District positions such as teachers, nurses, social workers, counselors, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists and potentially reduce reliance on contracted service providers.

Systems

The systems priority focuses on coordinated infrastructure, funding, community partnerships, and student supports. Saint Anselm representatives discussed creating broader collaboration among Saint Anselm College, community colleges, other public and private institutions, community-based organizations, and the Manchester School District. The goal is to ensure that Manchester students can identify and access a variety of higher-education pathways throughout New Hampshire.

The presenters also discussed identifying philanthropic and grant-funding opportunities to sustain the work. Behavioral-health supports were identified as another area in which collaborative systems could strengthen services for District students.

Superintendent Chmiel summarized the partnership as an opportunity to better support students currently in the District, help Manchester graduates successfully transition to and remain in college, strengthen employee recruitment pathways, and create coordinated systems across the community. She emphasized the goal of ensuring that Manchester students can see themselves as belonging in a Saint Anselm College classroom and in other postsecondary environments.

Questions and comments of the Board included:

1. Strong support for the partnership was expressed.
2. Committee Member Want praised Saint Anselm College's history of helping Manchester students find meaningful educational and career pathways.
3. Committee Member Stewart emphasized the importance of retaining young people within Manchester and expressed appreciation for the collaborative relationship that already exists.
4. Committee Member Turner stated that the more intentional recruitment approach was particularly valuable because District vacancies often remain open and eventually must be

filled through contracted service providers. She supported creating stronger pathways from Saint Anselm College into District employment.

5. Vice Chairman O'Connell emphasized that the partnership should be viewed as reciprocal. He stated that Manchester's nearly 12,000 students are themselves an asset to colleges, universities, employers, and the broader community and that the partnership benefits both institutions. Superintendent Chmiel agreed and stated that Saint Anselm College recognizes the value of Manchester students and their contributions to the community.

Saint Anselm College representatives reaffirmed the College's commitment to serving Manchester and noted that the institution was founded in 1889 in part to serve Manchester's immigrant population.

b. Priority One Project Update – by Dr. Jennifer Chmiel and SMMA

Superintendent Chmiel introduced Jennifer Soucy, Project Manager with SMMA, to provide an update on the District's Priority One facilities projects. Ms. Soucy reviewed the history of the Long-Term Facilities Master Plan, which began in 2023. The plan was developed to support the District's long-term goal of operating three high schools, four middle schools, and twelve elementary schools.

The Priority One projects include:

- closure of Wilson Elementary School;
- construction of a new Beech Street Elementary School to serve the Beech and Wilson populations;
- additions and renovations at all four middle schools to accommodate fifth-grade students; and
- use of six temporary modular classrooms during construction.

The Priority One scope and budget were approved by the Board of School Committee and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen in fall 2023.

Hillside Middle School

Hillside Middle School is being designed to accommodate approximately 1,200 students. The project includes an approximately 40,000-square-foot addition and extensive renovations to the existing building. Site improvements include a new staff parking area, improvements to the emergency-access loop road, and upgrades to outdoor recreation areas. The project also includes mechanical and electrical upgrades, code improvements, and energy-efficiency work. A new entry canopy will be constructed, and the three-story addition will include academic space, a first-floor media center, and unified arts spaces. The first-floor media center was intentionally located to improve accessibility and allow for potential community use outside normal school hours. Existing corridors are being reconfigured to create learning commons and team-teaching areas. Ms. Soucy reported that masonry and window installation were substantially complete and that the Hillside addition was expected to be fully completed and occupied by the end of the year. Interior work includes renovated bathrooms, new flooring, plumbing fixtures, toilet partitions, ventilation, stair upgrades, painting, cabinetry, casework, and millwork.

McLaughlin Middle School

McLaughlin Middle School is designed to accommodate approximately 800 students and includes an approximately 25,000-square-foot addition and because McLaughlin is a newer facility and was already designed around a middle-school team-teaching model, the interior-renovation scope was somewhat smaller than at the other middle schools. The addition creates a new main entrance and provides connections among the gymnasium, cafeteria, and other public areas. Site improvements include circulation and bus-drop-off improvements and creation of an interior courtyard. The project also includes a new media center, maker space, updated bathrooms, improved landscaping, and outdoor classroom space.

Ms. Soucy reported that McLaughlin would be the first Priority One middle-school project to reach full completion.

Southside Middle School

Southside Middle School is being designed for approximately 1,200 students. The project includes a three-story addition, a first-floor media center, improved drop-off areas, accessible entry

improvements, parking improvements, learning commons, locker-room renovations, gymnasium wall pads, and new bleachers. The design of the main entrance incorporates imagery inspired by the White Mountains. Construction schedules at Southside and Parkside were intentionally staggered from the work at Hillside and McLaughlin. The Southside and Parkside additions were expected to be completed in approximately February 2027, with the overall projects continuing through 2028.

Parkside Middle School

Parkside Middle School is being designed for approximately 800 students and includes an approximately 25,000-square-foot addition. Improvements include student drop-off areas, playground modifications, a new media center, updated lobby and learning spaces, unified arts space, renovated bathrooms, painting, stair improvements, gymnasium improvements, and additional casework. The design incorporates references to Manchester's manufacturing and textile history.

New Beech Street Elementary School

The new Beech Street Elementary School is being constructed across from the existing school on the Sheridan-Emmett Park site. The design concept, "Edge of the Brook," was inspired by the historic brook that once ran through the site and Manchester's historic mill buildings because an underground culvert remains beneath the property, the school is being constructed along the edge of that feature rather than directly above it. The site will include parking, parent drop-off areas, bus loading, playgrounds, outdoor classroom spaces, and a full basketball court. Public areas including the gymnasium, cafeteria, platform, and media center have been designed with future community use in mind. The cafeteria will include folding glass walls that can open into the gymnasium for larger events. The second-floor media center will include large expanses of glass, shading devices, and multiple learning zones. The building requires deep foundations extending approximately 30 feet to bedrock. Between approximately 100 and 200 large foundation piles were expected to be drilled before the foundation slab and building structure could be constructed.

Ms. Soucy also advised the Board that the District would need to address relocation of the elementary-school commissary kitchen currently housed at the existing Beech Street School before that building is demolished.

Superintendent Chmiel announced that a McLaughlin Middle School ribbon-cutting date would be announced shortly and thanked SMMA, LeftField, Consigli, Harvey Construction, DPW, Tim Clougherty, Josh Gagne, and other City and District partners. She noted the strong interest from families and community members in the Beech Street construction project and stated that the renovated middle schools and new Beech Street School would significantly transform educational environments across the District.

Questions and comments from the Board included:

1. Committee Member Turner expressed enthusiasm for the extensive improvements, including bathrooms, stairs, gymnasium upgrades, bleachers, wayfinding, color schemes, learning spaces, and other details. She praised the teams responsible for the work and expressed interest in future building tours.
2. Committee Member Want thanked SMMA, Superintendent Chmiel, District staff, City officials, and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. She stated that the projects demonstrated Manchester's ability to undertake and complete significant investments in its schools and community.
3. Vice Chairman O'Connell noted that the approximately $306 million program is the largest educational construction project in New Hampshire history. He emphasized that the District had not added staff solely to oversee the project and praised the involvement of departments throughout the City, including DPW, police, fire, traffic, and health.
4. Vice Chair O’Connell also noted the economic activity generated by the construction projects and stated that hundreds of workers and numerous local contractors were participating in the work.
5. Vice Chairman O'Connell reiterated three measures he had consistently identified for the construction program: projects should be delivered on time, completed within budget, and completed safely.
6. Committee Member Potter asked about redevelopment of the existing Beech Street School site once the new school opens. Ms. Soucy confirmed that the approved plan calls for demolition of the existing school and redevelopment of the property with recreational amenities, including a soccer field and basketball courts.

7. Committee Member Potter requested that public drinking-water access and shade trees be included on both sides of the street, citing the need for students using the athletic spaces to have access to water and shade. Ms. Soucy stated that an exterior drinking fountain was planned at the new Beech Street School and that preliminary DPW plans for the existing-school redevelopment also included a drinking fountain and shade trees.

c. Manchester School District 2026/2027 Goals – by Dr. Jennifer Chmiel, Superintendent

Superintendent Chmiel presented the District's strategic priorities for the 2026–2027 school year under the theme **One District, One Direction: Every Decision, Every Department, Every Student**. She explained that the District sought to move away from viewing individual initiatives, departments, and schools as disconnected efforts and instead focus on how all District work contributes to improved student experiences and outcomes.

The Administration reviewed the District's student demographics and noted that Manchester serves nearly 12,000 students, including significant populations of economically disadvantaged students, multilingual learners, students with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, and students in foster care.

They also reviewed gaps between Manchester and statewide academic outcomes and emphasized that student achievement must be viewed alongside attendance, behavior, belonging, mental health, and connection to school.

The central principle underlying the goals is that **student engagement drives student outcomes**. The District's goals were organized into three priorities: Grow Our Learners, Grow Our Systems and Grow Our Educators.

Grow Our Learners

The District intends to increase student engagement through meaningful, inclusive, and high-quality learning experiences that improve achievement, belonging, and future readiness.

Focus areas include literacy, mathematics, multilingual learners, attendance, safe and supportive schools, mental-health and behavioral supports, counseling, graduation, and college and career readiness.

The Administration emphasized that student engagement can occur in many forms, including academics, arts, athletics, career and technical education, leadership opportunities, and connection to the school community.

Grow Our Educators

The District intends to develop and support highly effective educators who create engaging learning experiences and improve student outcomes.

Focus areas include professional learning, coaching, professional learning communities, leadership development, supervision and evaluation, staff well-being, crisis-response planning, recruitment, and retention.

The Administration emphasized that improving student experiences requires investment in the adults who work with students each day.

Grow Our Systems

The District intends to align systems, resources, and operations to sustain effective learning environments and improve outcomes for students.

Focus areas include financial stewardship, special education, investigations, family and community engagement, safety and security, technology, data systems, facilities, transportation, and overall operational effectiveness.

The Administration stated that the District would monitor progress throughout the year rather than waiting until year-end.

Six overarching student-outcome areas will be reviewed:

- achievement;
- growth;
- attendance;
- belonging;
- graduation; and
- postsecondary readiness.

The Administration presented a dashboard that will identify baseline data, targets, evidence of progress, and next steps for each major goal area. For Grow Our Learners, the dashboard will monitor literacy, mathematics, multilingual learners, graduation, attendance, college and career readiness, and safe and supportive schools. For Grow Our Educators, the District will monitor professional learning, coaching and PLCs, staff well-being, leadership development, and retention. For Grow Our Systems, the District will monitor financial stewardship, student services, investigations, family and community engagement, safety and security, technology and data systems, Priority One facilities work, and transportation.

Questions and comments from the Board included:

1. They expressed general support for the dashboard but requested greater clarity regarding individual metrics and percentages.
2. The committee asked for clarification that the 90 percent attendance baseline represented average daily attendance. The Administration confirmed that it did.
3. Questions were also raised regarding the multilingual-learner target. Administration agreed to review the wording and clarify whether the intended measure was the percentage of multilingual learners passing all classes.
4. The Board requested clarification regarding which committees would receive reports on individual metrics. Superintendent Chmiel stated that committee responsibilities and reporting structures would be reviewed with the Board.
5. Board members also discussed Manchester's higher levels of student need compared with statewide averages, including larger class sizes, higher rates of economic disadvantage and disability, and lower per-pupil spending.

6. Concern was raised regarding staffing ratios for school social workers and the demands placed on District employees.
7. Committee Member Hamer requested greater explanation of dashboard measures, including the financial-stewardship metric and safety-and-security percentages. Administration explained that the financial-stewardship baseline referenced the percentage of students identified for free and reduced-price meals, which affects several District funding formulas, while the safety-and-security measure was connected to Homeland Security walkthroughs and the Safe and Supportive Schools work.
8. Committee Member Parr stated that each dashboard priority should include clearer explanations of what individual numbers and percentages represent. Administration noted that additional action steps and supporting information existed behind the dashboard and could be incorporated into future reporting.
9. Committee Member Parr also raised a governance concern regarding terminology. He stated that the presentation should be identified as District goals rather than a strategic plan because adoption of long-term strategic plans is a Board responsibility. Superintendent Chmiel agreed that the document should be referred to as the District goals and acknowledged the need to distinguish among the Board's strategic plan, District goals, department goals, and school goals.
10. Committee Member Potter noted that approximately 11.37 percent of students had received an out-of-school suspension during the previous year and expressed concern that this represented approximately one in nine students. The Administration stated that behavior is included in each school's ABC goals and that the District intends to reduce negative behaviors and improve attendance.
11. Vice Chairman O'Connell expressed concern that several dashboard measures required establishing new baselines in fall 2026 and argued that the Board and public also need access to historical trend data. He emphasized that the District should be able to demonstrate how investments and initiatives have affected student outcomes over multiple years and requested a clearer synthesis of historical information related to behavior, attendance, staff retention, graduation, and other metrics.

Superintendent Chmiel responded that some new baselines were necessary because the District had identified new areas of focus that had not previously been measured in the same manner. She emphasized that the District had made significant progress on prior strategic-plan goals and stated that evolving student and District needs sometimes require new goals and new measures. She also stated that reports on behavior, attendance, curriculum, professional development, and student outcomes were already being provided through various committees and could be synthesized into a more accessible format for the full Board.

12. Vice Chairman O'Connell clarified that he was not suggesting the District had failed to make progress. His concern was that the progress was not being presented in a sufficiently clear, historical, and measurable format for the Board and public.
13. Committee Member Want agreed that the presentation should be identified as annual District goals rather than a strategic plan. She noted that the existing strategic plan was intended to be a five-year roadmap and was now beyond its original timeframe. She supported reviewing the existing strategic plan to determine which objectives had been completed, which remained relevant, which required updating, and what new priorities should be added.
14. Committee Member Want also supported making the annual goals more specific and measurable and expressed support for the dashboard concept.
15. Committee Member Stewart stated that she viewed the dashboard as a useful current-year snapshot and supported keeping it relatively simple, while adding a legend or explanatory key. She suggested that the dashboard could eventually be made available on the District website and updated regularly, with year-over-year comparisons developing as the same format is used in future years.

9. ACTION AGENDA

a. Fiscal Year 2027 City Services Agreements – by Karen DeFrancis, Executive Director of Finance

Karen DeFrancis presented the Fiscal Year 2027 City Service Agreements with the four City departments that provide services to the School District. She stated that the contract amounts were consistent with the approved budget and that Attorney Upton had reviewed the agreements.

*On motion of **Committee Member O'Connell**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Hamer**, it was moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2027 City Service Agreements.*

Questions and comments included:

1. Whether language in the School Resource Officer agreement stating that the Police Department would not charge the District for overtime also applied to police coverage at athletic events. Ms. DeFrancis clarified that the agreement before the Board applied specifically to School Resource Officers and that reimbursement was limited to the dollar amount established within that agreement.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

10. CONSENT AGENDA (ITEMS 10 – 17)

a. Mayor Ruais advises if you desire to remove any of the following items from the Consent Agenda, please so indicate. If none of the items are to be removed, only one motion will be taken at the conclusion of the presentation.

Committee Member Turner removed items 10-c, 3 and 4.

Committee Member Want removed item 10-e, 2.

b. Approval of minutes from the Board of School Committee meetings on: August 10, 2026.

c. Report(s) of the Committee on Policy, if available.

1. 2026/2027 Middle School Handbook
2. Revisions to Policy Students 511: Admission and Tuition of Non-Resident Students
3.
4.
5. Parent Group Approval for use of District Name, Logo and Likeness
6. School Safety Facilitator Job Description
7. Career Pathway and Work Base Learning Coordinator Job Description
8. 21st Century Program Coordinator

d. Report(s) of the Committee of Teaching and Learning, if available.

e. Report(s) of the Committee of Finance and Facilities, if available.

1. Treasurer's Report
2.
3. City Service Invoices ($2,020,688.76)
4. Manifest of Authorized Expenditures - June and July 2026 ($60,703,419.85)
5. Indemnification Contract Language
6. Financial Reports

f. Report(s) of the Committee of Student Conduct, if available.

1. School Resource Officer Memorandum of Understanding (2026/2027)

g. Report(s) of the Committee on Education Legislation, if available.

h. Report(s) of the Joint School Buildings Committee (City Committee).

1. Report from May 2026.

i. Special Committees, if applicable:

- Report from the Special Committee on Athletics, if available.

*On motion of **Committee Member Want**, duly seconded by **Committee Member O'Connell**, it was moved to approve the balance of the consent agenda. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

c. Report(s) of the Committee on Policy, if available.

3. Revisions to Policy Students 562: Participation in Public School Activities

Committee Member Turner explained that the policy had primarily been opened to incorporate language relating to Education Freedom Account students. She questioned existing language stating that transportation generally would not be provided but allowing a principal to make exceptions and making the principal's decision final. She stated that she did not believe transportation decisions of this nature should rest solely with an individual principal and questioned whether the District should provide transportation to EFA students at all.

Attorney Upton explained that the transportation language had previously existed in the policy and was not added as part of the EFA changes. He agreed that the language was unnecessary.

Superintendent Chmiel also agreed with removing the provisions.

*On motion of **Committee Member Turner**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Parr,** it was moved to approve item 10-c-3, the revisions to policy Students 562: Participation in Public School Activities, as amended by deleting the provisions concerning principal-approved transportation exceptions and final authority.*

1. Committee Member Stewart asked Attorney Upton to explain the effect of recent legislation on EFA students. Attorney Upton explained that State law now requires the District to treat Education Freedom Account students similarly to home-educated and charter-school students for access to District programming. As a result, EFA students may participate in District programming without being charged, and the District bears the associated costs. He further explained that an EFA student may not access more than 50 percent of a regular school schedule while remaining enrolled in the EFA program. If the student accesses more than 50 percent, the student must disenroll from the EFA program, at which point the District may receive State adequacy funding.
2. Vice Chairman O'Connell questioned why a separate distinction for EFA students was necessary when students attending charter, private, religious, and home-school programs were already permitted to access certain District services and activities. Attorney Upton explained that EFA students are legally distinct because participation in the EFA program affects obligations regarding special education, adequacy funding, and the percentage of a public-school schedule a student may access.
3. Vice Chairman O'Connell stated that although he disagreed with aspects of the law, he was not attempting to prevent approval of the policy and understood that the District was required to recognize the legal distinction.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

4. Revisions to policy Students 501: Transgender and Non-Conforming Students

Committee Member Turner stated that she had questions for District legal counsel regarding this policy and requested that the Board receive legal advice in non-public session before taking a final vote. She explained that her vote would depend upon the answers she received and that she was not prepared to vote until those questions had been addressed.

The Board discussed whether the matter should immediately move into non-public session or be held until the Board's scheduled non-public session later in the meeting.

It was noted that a related question had previously been raised in the Policy Committee and that members had anticipated receiving legal advice at the full Board meeting. The Board agreed to hold the item until after consultation with legal counsel in non-public session.

e. Report(s) of the Committee of Finance and Facilities, if available.

2. Grants, Gifts & Donations Report ($6,365,856.09)

Committee Member Want requested that the item be removed from the Consent Agenda so that several significant donations and grants could be publicly recognized. She highlighted:

- a $70,000 Build Back Better Regional Challenge Community Grant to support career outreach, counseling, and access to the growing biofabrication sector;
- approximately $250,000 from the Crotched Mountain Foundation Kids Anchor Partnership for a three-year special-education teaching residency program;
- a $100,000 New Hampshire Charitable Foundation grant supporting autism self-contained classrooms, including supplies, teacher training, and curriculum;
- $7,000 from Manchester Proud to provide books for the District bookmobile; and
- $5,000 from the Blanche Burris Trust for the purchase of a fire lift at Memorial High School.

Committee Member Want thanked the organizations and individuals supporting the District and stated that these contributions make a significant difference for Manchester students.

*On motion of **Committee Member Want,** duly seconded by **Committee Member Turner,** it was moved to approve item 10-e, 2, the Grants, Gifts and Donations report, with thanks. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

COMMUNICATIONS

11. Superintendent's Communications.

a) Superintendent Updates:

Superintendent Chmiel advised the Board that several enrollment and staffing figures had continued to change during the day and that the verbal update would therefore contain some numbers that differed slightly from the previously distributed written memo. (Please see attached.)

1. In-District Transfers

The Administration reported approximately 194 in-District transfer requests, of which approximately 128 had been approved. At the previous update, approximately 177 requests had been received and 108 approved. Elementary schools had received approximately 95 requests, with 52 approved. Middle schools had received approximately 39 requests, with 37 approved. High schools had received approximately 64 requests, with 51 approved. The Administration stated that transfer requests would continue to be monitored as enrollment changed.

2. Elementary Enrollment and Class Size

The Administration reported that registration remained active immediately before the beginning of school, with more than 35 new registrations received on one recent evening alone. Several schools and grades were at capacity or slightly above class-size guidelines, although other schools continued to have available space. Green Acres and Weston were experiencing the greatest enrollment pressure. At the time of the meeting, approximately nine Green Acres students and twelve Weston students could not be placed at their neighborhood schools because of capacity. Most of the affected students were kindergarten students. The Administration stated that one option for increasing capacity would be to create an additional classroom. This could require moving a unified arts program onto a cart to free classroom space and transferring a teacher from another school with sufficient staffing capacity.

Questions and comments from the board included:

1. Committee Member Parr asked whether District transfer approvals had contributed to the capacity issues and questioned the number of seats being reserved for neighborhood students.

Superintendent Chmiel stated that students had not been transferred into Green Acres or Weston once those schools reached high enrollment levels. She explained that two spaces had generally been reserved where possible, with discretion based upon historical enrollment and actual building capacity.

2. Committee Member Parr suggested that the District consider reserving more space for neighborhood students in future years and requested serious consideration of creating an additional classroom at Weston.
3. Committee Member Want noted that moving fifth graders to middle schools had previously opened space in elementary buildings and asked whether the issue was primarily a lack of teachers rather than rooms. The Administration explained that some of the newly available rooms had been dedicated to unified arts programs so those teachers could work from permanent classrooms instead of carts. Creating an additional classroom could therefore require returning one unified arts program to a mobile model.
4. The Board discussed the balance between providing dedicated unified-arts classrooms and allowing neighborhood students to remain at their neighborhood schools.
5. The Administration also noted that lower class-size targets require more classrooms than when elementary classes routinely approached or exceeded 30 students.
6. Committee Member Parr asked whether the notation "full" on the enrollment spreadsheet meant exactly 20 students. The Administration explained that some classes identified as full contained 22 or 23 students, although none exceeded 23 at that time. The Board noted that this could strengthen the case for creating additional sections in certain schools.
7. Committee Member Hamer asked about the deadline for in-District transfer requests. Attorney Upton explained that standard transfer requests based primarily upon class size must be submitted by July 1. Requests made after July 1 may still be considered under the District's special-permission policy, which applies different criteria and may continue throughout the school year. The Administration stated that special-permission requests are evaluated based upon the reason for the request, enrollment capacity at both schools, and input from administrators.

3. Middle School Enrollment and Class Size

The Administration reported combined enrollment of approximately 3,316 students across the District's four middle schools. Approximate enrollment by school was:

- Hillside Middle School – 966 students;
- McLaughlin Middle School – 837 students;
- Parkside Middle School – 769 students; and
- Southside Middle School – 744 students.

Enrollment remained within building capacity. The Administration reported 38 middle-school sections with more than 25 students, primarily in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies and most frequently in grades seven and eight. District administrators were working with principals to rebalance sections where one class might contain 26 or 27 students while another section taught by the same teacher contained substantially fewer.

The Administration stated that balancing is more challenging when schedules involve Algebra or world-language courses.

4. High School Class Size

The Administration reported the number of high-school classes with 25 or more students, excluding study halls:

- West High School – 11;
- Memorial High School – 3;
- Central High School – 9; and
- Manchester School of Technology – 26.

They acknowledged that the number at MST was higher than desired.

Board questions and comments included:

1. It was asked whether any of the oversized MST classes were laboratory or CTE courses where safety considerations create lower enrollment limits. The Administration stated that many of the larger MST sections were mathematics and English courses rather than CTE laboratory courses. Three mathematics and English teaching vacancies remained at MST,

and filling those positions was expected to allow additional sections to be created and class sizes reduced.

5. Staffing

Superintendent Chmiel emphasized that the District had not added new classroom positions following the June budget reductions. The District eliminated 41 positions through attrition at the end of June 2026 and had since hired replacement staff only for vacancies in positions that remained authorized. Approximately 125 replacement employees had been hired since May, including approximately 75 teachers and 26 paraprofessionals. At the time of the meeting, approximately 30 teaching positions remained open, including 12 special-education teaching positions. Approximately 16 paraprofessional vacancies also remained District-wide. The Administration emphasized that the numbers continued to change as hiring activity occurred.

6. Transportation

The Administration reported that school teams and the Transportation Department were validating student transportation information in preparation for the beginning of the school year. The work includes:

1. Schools were comparing student rosters and transportation lists to ensure eligible students were correctly assigned and to identify students whose transportation needs had not yet been confirmed.
2. The District's IT Department had assisted in developing an automated process through Aspen.
3. Students registering through the Welcome Center who reside within the established transportation eligibility area are automatically rostered to a bus.
4. Schools can now pull transportation rosters directly from Aspen.
5. Transportation exception requests were also being reviewed.
6. Routes had been posted and were continuing to be updated as families contacted the District.

Questions and comments from the Board included:

1. Committee Member Parr requested an update on the transition to First Student's Candia facility, transportation staffing, and the possibility of providing a shuttle for bus drivers. The

Administration reported that District buses had been relocated to the Candia facility and were undergoing inspection and maintenance. Approximately 46 buses were required for the first day of school. At the time of the meeting, not all 46 were fully ready, but First Student had performed more than 250 additional hours of work over the preceding weekend in an effort to ensure the fleet was prepared for opening day. Administration reported positive feedback regarding First Student's mechanics and the developing relationship with District transportation staff.

2. Committee Member Hamer asked whether the number of bus stops had been reduced because some families had reported longer walks to stops. The Administration stated that the District had the same number of buses and routes and asked families experiencing problems to contact the Transportation Department so individual situations could be reviewed.
3. Regarding staffing, administration stated that transportation appeared fully staffed compared with the previous year and that no resignations were expected to affect first-day service. Drivers had been surveyed regarding interest in a shuttle from Manchester to the Candia location. Interest was limited, and administration was continuing to evaluate possible options.
4. Vice Chairman O'Connell expressed appreciation for the progress and asked whether schools and drivers would have accurate rosters before the beginning of school. The Administration confirmed that rosters would be available and that principals had received training on how to access the information through Aspen.

7. Athletics

The Administration reported that the fall athletic season was off to a strong start. Regular-season competition was scheduled to begin that Friday with field hockey and soccer, while football jamborees were underway. They wished student-athletes, coaches, and teams a safe, successful, and memorable season.

8. Opening of School

Superintendent Chmiel reviewed upcoming back-to-school dates. New staff were scheduled to participate in District-level professional development the following day. All staff were scheduled to return on August 27 for professional development continuing through September 2. Students were

scheduled to return on September 3. Schools would be closed on September 7 for Labor Day and September 8 for elections.

12. Board of School Committee Members' Communications.

a. Job Openings List

Vice Chairman O'Connell asked about several positions listed on the job-opening report and how the vacancies could affect course delivery. He specifically asked about the horticulture CTE vacancy at MST, the auto-body/collision repair CTE vacancy at MST, and the Grade 1 French immersion teacher vacancy at Weston Elementary School.

The Administration reported that two eligible candidates were being interviewed for the French immersion position. No qualified or interested candidates had yet been identified for the horticulture CTE vacancy. An eligible candidate was being considered for the auto-body/collision repair CTE position.

Committee Member Potter raised concern regarding three crossing-guard vacancies near Bakersville, noting the danger of the intersection. The Administration stated that existing crossing guards had been asked whether they could transfer from lower-volume intersections, particularly locations with traffic signals, to provide coverage at the higher-risk intersection.

b. Superintendent Evaluation Form

*On motion of **Committee Member O'Connell,** duly seconded by **Committee Member Turner,** it was moved to approve the Superintendent Evaluation Form. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

c. Board Goals 2026/2027 School Year - The Board will be meeting with the New Hampshire School Board Association on Monday, August 31st, from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

It was stated that the Board goals meeting is set for August 31st, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the District office.

13. Personnel Report.

Committee Member Turner requested that Items 42 through 45 on the supplemental personnel report be removed for separate consideration.

Before moving the balance of the Personnel Report, Vice Chairman O'Connell noted that several school food-service workers were being hired at $15 per hour. He recalled that the Board had established a $15 minimum wage approximately four and one-half years earlier and stated that inflation had reduced the real value of that wage. He suggested that the Board revisit the minimum hourly wage in the future.

*On motion of **Committee Member O'Connell,** duly seconded by **Committee Member Potter,** it was moved to approve the personnel report and supplemental report as submitted. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

The approved report was as follows:

RESIGNATIONS/RETIREMENTS: CERTIFIED STAFF

Name	Position	Location	Salary
Meryl Shea	ESOL Teacher	Southside	$83,947.00
Shea Downing	2nd Grade Teacher	Parker Varney	$46,350.00
Inas Dirani	Physical Science Teacher	Memorial	$49,748.00
April Zapora	5th Grade Language Arts Teacher	Parkside	$47,480.00
Selena Sheehy	5th Grade Math & Science Teacher	Hillside	$48,611.00
Gabrielle McNulty	Guidance Counselor	Beech	$58,100.00
Inas Dirani	Physical Science Teacher	Memorial	$49,748.00
Nicholas Sullivan	Special Education Teacher	Southside	$55,284.00
Nicole Gammella	5th Grade Social Studies/LA Teacher	Parkside	$59,897.00
Hailey Brunk	Family and Consumer Science Teacher	Central	$55,284.00
Kayla Westhoff	Special Education Teacher	Central	$63,732.00
Laurie Buote	Special Education Teacher	Parkside	$46,350.00
Shawnda Hopkins	Special Education Teacher	Southside	$88,035.00
MaryAnn Hatab	Technology and Engineering Teacher	Southside	$94,777.00

LEAVES OF ABSENCE: CERTIFIED STAFF

Name	Position	Location	Salary
Alyssa Clement	4th Grade Teacher	McDonough	$87,340.00

NOMINATIONS: CERTIFIED STAFF

Name	Position	Location	Salary
Meryl Shea	Assistant Director of Multilingual Learner Education	District	$101,000.00
Lauren Grosse	Instructional Coach - EL/Multilingual Learners	District	$85,948.00
Reilly Swislosky	2nd Grade Teacher	Beech	$47,741.00
Meghan Fernandes	Physical Science Teacher	Memorial	$65,743.00
Alison Downin	2nd Grade Teacher	Parker Varney	$47,741.00
Michelle Sousa	6th Grade Social Studies Teacher	McLaughlin	$51,241.00
MaryAnn Hatab	CTE Manufacturing Technology Teacher	MST	$94,777.00
Shawnda Hopkins	CTE Teacher - Game Design & Graphics	MST	$88,035.00
Shelbee Hogan	4th Grade Teacher - 1 Year Position	Bakersville	$47,741.00

NOMINATIONS: MEA NON-CERTIFIED STAFF (EA)

Name	Position	Location	Salary
Joli White	Biology Teacher	Central	$52,993.00
Margie Sanabria	Dual Language Immersion Teacher - Kindergarten	Bakersville	$71,890.00
Lorena Franco Canales	Dual Language Immersion Teacher - Kindergarten	Bakersville	$77,622.00
Charlotte Goble	Dual Lanuage Immersion Teacher - Grade 1	Bakersville	$47,741.00
Maria Mireles	Dual Lanuage Immersion Teacher - Grade 2	Bakersville	$84,182.00
Amy Herrick	Family & Consumer Science Teacher	McLaughlin	$47,741.00
Moira Casey	Guidance Counselor	Beech	$47,741.00
Emma Dunne	Self Contained Special Education Teacher	Highland GF	$47,741.00
Kelly Williams	Social Worker	Weston	$62,843.00

RESIGNATIONS/RETIREMENTS: NON-CERTIFIED STAFF

Name	Position	Location	Salary
Janijke Britz	Paraeducator I	Highland GF	$17.51
Alicia Nichols	Paraeducator I	Parkside	$17.51
Alysha Augusta	Paraeducator I	Webster	$17.51
Abigail Chretien	Paraeducator II	Hillside	$18.03
Connor Lyons	Paraeducator II	Memorial	$18.03
Channon Evans	Paraeducator II	Webster	$18.03
Amber Cotnoir	Registered Behavior Technician	Parker Varney	$30.90
Kayla Picard	Registered Behavior Technician	Mill Falls Charter	$30.90
Beth Ryan	Behavior Support Technician	Parker Varney	$19.06
Malika Ziemba	Paraeducator I	Green Acres	$17.51
Valbona Qyteti	School Food Service Worker	Central	$16.11
Kathleen Paul	School Food Service Worker	Memorial	$15.45
Barbara Condon	School Bus Driver	District	$28.00
Samantha Welch	School Bus Driver	District	$28.00
Maria Sarfraz	Paraeducator II	Hillside	$18.03
Thomas Conley	School Food Service Driver	District	$18.16

NOMINATIONS: NON-CERTIFIED STAFF

Name	Position	Location	Salary
Amanda Theodore	Paraeducator I	Highland GF	$18.04
Jocelyn Thomas	Paraeducator I	Highland GF	$18.04

Zorydenisha Caraballo	Paraeducator I	Jewett	$18.04
Tanya Swann	Paraeducator II	Jewett	$18.57
Kathleen Castillo	Paraeducator II	Parkside	$18.57
Luis Emanuelli	Girls Soccer Coach	McLaughlin	$1,804.00
Samantha Welch	School Transportation Specialist	District	$55,000.00
Maria Sarfraz	Administrative Assistant III - Federal Projects	District	$22.53
Kristyann Tardiff	Licensed Practical Nurse	District	$30,265.00
Julian Velez	Paraeducator I	Highland GF	$18.04
Viviana Caceres Diam	Paraeducator I	Hillside	$18.04
Morgan DiPasquale	Paraeducator I	McLaughlin	$18.04
Jashline Valentine	Paraeducator I	Parker Varney	$18.04
Cyarra St. Cyr	Paraeducator I	Webster	$18.04
Amber Briggs	Paraeducator I	Webster	$18.04
Travis Gendron	Paraeducator I	West	$18.04
Rosanne Farse	Paraeducator II	West	$18.57
Molly Shetler	Registered Behavior Technician	Green Acres	$31.86
Mariela Hernandez	School Food Service Worker	Central	$15.00
Suzanne Lajoie	School Food Service Worker	Memorial	$15.00
Lisa Dubois	School Food Service Worker	Parkside	$15.00

TRANSFERS: CERTIFIED STAFF

Name	Current Assignment	Current School	Effective Date
Benjamin Jones	7th Grade Math Teacher	Southside	08/27/26
Sarah Morse	7th Grade Science Teacher	Southside	08/27/26
Tracey Lamarre	Special Education Teacher	Parkside	08/27/26
Suzanne Provost	Math & Science Teacher	Parkside	08/27/26

14. TABLED ITEMS

There were no tabled items this evening.

CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC COMMENT- 9:01 P.M.

There was no one else wishing to speak.

15. NEW BUSINESS

Vice Chairman O'Connell —

1. **Celebrate Ed -** Vice Chairman O'Connell recognized the recent Celebrate Ed event and expressed regret that he had been unable to attend. He noted the large number of community

partners participating and praised the event and those involved in supporting Manchester students and schools.

16. NON-PUBLIC SESSION

9:02 p.m.

*On motion of **Committee Member Turner**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Parr**, it was moved to go into non-public session under the provisions of RSA 91-A:3 II (a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted; (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee; (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting; (i) Consideration of matters relating to the preparation for and the carrying out of emergency functions, including training to carry out such functions; (j) Consideration of confidential, commercial, or financial information that is exempt from public disclosure under RSA 91-A:5, IV in an adjudicative proceeding pursuant to RSA 541 or RSA 541-A; (k) Consideration by a school board of entering into a student or pupil tuition contract authorized by RSA 194 or RSA 195-A and RSA 91-A:2, I (a) Strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining; and, (b) consultation with legal counsel.*

Roll Call: Committee Members Turner, Parr, Georges, Want, Taylor, Stewart, O'Connell, Potter, St. John, Garrity, Hamer, O'Neil-Wong, Smith and Mayor Ruais voted yes. Committee Member Bergeron was absent. Motion passed.

Present: Administration: Attorney Matt Upton, Karen DeFrancis, Ryan Roth, Dr. Espinola, Michelle Evans and Daley Frenette (Mayor's Office).

Present for item 1: Chief of Police.

Items discussed include:

1. *Discussion on the District Emergency Operations Plan was had with the Chief of Police and Dr. Espinola, which is exempt from public disclosure under the provisions of RSA 91-A:3 II (i) Consideration of matters relating to the preparation for and the carrying out of emergency functions, including training to carry out such functions;*
2. *There was discussion with legal counsel, exempt from public disclosure under RSA 91-A:2, I (b) consultation with legal counsel.*
3. *There was discussion on the items removed from the personnel report, which were exempt from public disclosure under the provisions of RSA 91-A:3 II (a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted; (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee; (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting.*
4. *There was discussion on items which were exempt from public disclosure under the provisions of RSA 91-A:2, I (a) Strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining; and, (b) consultation with legal counsel.*
5. *There was a discussion on a student matter, which fell under the provisions of RSA 91-A:3, II (k) Consideration by a school board of entering into a student or pupil tuition contract authorized by RSA 194 or RSA 195-A There was discussion on a legal matter, exempt from public disclosure under RSA 91-A:2, I (b) consultation with legal counsel.*
6. *There was discussion on a personnel matters, which fell under the provisions of RSA 91-A:3 II (a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted; (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee; (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting.*

17. A motion is in order to call the meeting back to order.

9:39 p.m.
*On motion of **Committee Member O'Connell**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Hamer**, it was moved to call the meeting back to order. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

*On motion of **Committee Member Turner**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Parr**, it was moved to approve items 42-45 of the personnel report. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

*On motion of **Committee Member O'Connell**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Potter,** it was moved to approve item 10-c-4, the revisions to policy Students 501: Transgender and Non-Conforming Students, while noting and re-emphasizing the School District's commitment not to discriminate against students based on gender or gender identity.*

It was noted that the Board would proceed directly to a roll-call vote. A point of information was raised that many districts were looking to Manchester regarding this decision, and Board members were urged to vote no. It was clarified that this was the policy change previously discussed to align District policy with State law. It was further clarified that the motion was to approve the policy while emphasizing the District's commitment not to discriminate against transgender students, consistent with existing District policy.

Roll Call: *Committee Members St. John and Want voted no.*

Committee Members Garrity, Hamer, O'Neil-Wong, Smith, Turner, Parr, Georges, Taylor, Stewart, O'Connell, Potter, and Mayor Ruais voted yes. Committee Member Bergeron was absent.

Motion passed.

*On motion of **Committee Member O'Connell**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Turner**, it was moved to approve the Emergency Operations Plan. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

ADJOURNMENT

18. If there is no further business, a motion is in order to adjourn.

On motion of ***Committee Member Turner,*** *duly seconded by* ***Committee Member Stewart,*** *it was moved to adjourn. All were in favor, meeting adjourned at 9:42 p.m.*

True Copy. Attest.
Respectfully Submitted,

Angela M Carey

Clerk of Committee

MANCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

NH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT 37
20 HECKER STREET, MANCHESTER, NH 03102
TELEPHONE: 603-624-6300 | **FAX:** 603-624-6337

Jennifer Chmiel, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Manchester Schools

To: Board of School Committee
From: Dr. Jennifer Chmiel
Date: Monday, August 24, 2026
Subject: BOSC Memo

Good afternoon-
The purpose of this memo is to provide the BOSC and the public the data we are sharing at the BOSC meeting tonight (8/24/26).

Students

In-district transfer requests

The requests have continued to come in. Per policy we have maintained 2 spaces at each classroom (whenever possible) to accommodate in-district moves. At this time we have had approximately 194 requests with128 approved. At our 8/10 meeting we had a total of 177 requests with 108 approved.

- At the elementary schools - 95 requests with 52 approved. Up from 86 with 40 approved
- Middles had 39 requests with 37 approved - which has not changed from our earlier report out.
- High schools had 64 requests with 51 approved. Which includes one new approval since 8/10.

We will continue to review requests and update you at our next meeting.

Class sizes

- **Elementary**- Registration continues to progress well as we prepare for the start of the school year. Just last Thursday evening, we had more than 35 new registrations come through, so we continue to see strong enrollment activity across the district. We have several grade levels and schools that are currently at capacity, with a few classes slightly over our class-size guidelines. At the same time, we still have space available across the district, which gives us some flexibility as enrollment continues to change.
    - We are also continuing to monitor the number of overflow students, students who cannot be placed at their home school because a grade level is at capacity. Right

now, **Green Acres** has the largest number of students who need to be placed at other elementary schools (9). **Weston** is close behind.

- **Middle-** As of today, the district's four middle schools have a combined enrollment of **3,316 students in Grades 5–8**, with enrollment distributed relatively evenly across the four grade levels. **Grade 5 has the largest enrollment at 848 students, followed by Grade 7 with 837, Grade 8 with 829, and Grade 6 with 798 students.** Enrollment remains within building capacity; we are monitoring individual class sizes closely.

  Current enrollment by school is:
  - **Hillside Middle School:** 966 students — 238 in Grade 5, 254 in Grade 6, 225 in Grade 7, and 249 in Grade 8.
  - **McLaughlin Middle School:** 837 students — 210 in Grade 5, 190 in Grade 6, 227 in Grade 7, and 208 in Grade 8, with 2 additional Grade 9 students.
  - **Middle School at Parkside:** 769 students — 213 in Grade 5, 194 in Grade 6, 182 in Grade 7, and 178 in Grade 8, with 2 additional Grade 9 students.
  - **Southside Middle School:** 744 students — 187 in Grade 5, 160 in Grade 6, 203 in Grade 7, and 194 in Grade 8.

- **High School-** High School- Schools are excited and ready to welcome students back. Looking at classes that are over 25 at our four high schools, the numbers are as follows:
  - West High School- 11 over 25
  - Memorial High School- 3 over 25
  - Central High School- 9 over 25
  - MST high school- 26 over 25

Staff

We have not added any ***new*** positions. I want to draw a distinction between the "New" and "Replacement" language. MSD eliminated 41 positions ***by attrition*** as of the end of June 2026. MSD hired ***replacement staff*** for any resignation/retirement position that was not eliminated in the 41 from June. All of those new hires are listed on the Personnel Reports from the BOSC Meetings.

- Total replacement staff hired since May 2026 for 2026-27 school year: 125
  This includes 75 teachers and 26 paraprofessionals

Systems

- This past Thursday, we participated in Manchester Proud's annual **CelebratED** event at Victory Park. During the three hour event, 1,000 backpacks were handed out, 372 books were distributed by the Bookmobile, and 150 hair services provided. Thank you to all of the community partners and local businesses who made the event such a success.
- The ribbon cutting ceremony for **McLaughlin Middle School** is set for Thursday, September 24th at 10 a.m.
- **Transportation routes** have been created and are currently being synchronized between our systems to ensure schools have access to the most accurate and

up-to-date student roster information. Our IT Department has been instrumental in developing and implementing this new process.

- Transportation exception requests are also being received. Our immediate priority will be ensuring that routes are operating smoothly and that eligible students are being transported safely and efficiently at the start of the school year.
- Families who received an exception last school year will need to submit a new request for the 2026-2027 school year.
- Bus practice runs will be completed this week

Elementary Class Size Projection
August 24, 2026

	K	1	2	3	4
Bakersville	9 DLI spots/Mono full	Full Mono-1DLI Spot	Full-	8 spots	13 spots
Beech	25 plus spots	4 spots open	2 spots open	Full	10 spots open
Gossler	20 spots	Full	Full	Full	Full
Green Acres	Full	8 spots open	Full	Full	Full
HGF	6 Spots	4 Spots	Full	Full	2 Spots
Jewett	10 spots open	4 spots	1 spot	Full	Full
McDonough	2 spots	Full	4 spots	9 spots	Full
Northwest	12 spots	Full	5 spots	8 spots	8 spots
Parker Varney	15+ Spots	Full	1 Spot	7 spots	Full
Smyth	Full	Full	10 Spots	5 Spots	11 Spots
Webster	15 spots	4 spots	Full	3 spots	8 spots
Weston	Full	Full	Full	Full	5 spots

Board of School Committee
August 24, 2026
Projected Class Size for the 2026 - 2027

School	Projected Enrollment	Classes over 25
Central	1050	9
Memorial	1288	3
West	693	11
MSTHS	354	26

DRAFT

Middle Schools - Over 25 Students			
School	Classes Over 25		
Hillside	5		
McLaughlin	9		
Parkside	14		
Southside	10		