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Note: When feasible, TRSB meetings are videotaped. These meeting minutes reflect only a basic summary of the meeting topics, discussion, and action. The Vimeo recording of this meeting can be viewed at: <https://vimeo.com/trsd>
Materials presented at the board meeting may be viewed at: [School Board Meeting Agenda Materials](#)

Timberlane Regional School Board Meeting Minutes

Regular Board Meeting
March 21, 2024
7:30 PM

Superintendent's Office
30 Greenough Road
Plaistow, NH

Call to Order

Board Members Present

Donald Woodworth, Jack Sapia, Brienna Woodworth, Kim McCormick, Katie Knutsen, Mark Sherwood, Kristin Savage, Shauna Manthorn, Paul LeCain

Seated at the Board Table

Justin Krieger, Interim Superintendent
Sandra Allaire, Acting Assistant Superintendent
Armaan Anthony, Student Representative

Administrators Present

Lucy Canotas, Director of Elementary Education
Kelley Brooks, Director of Special Education
Fran DeCinto, Director of Human Resources

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Mrs. Manthorn motioned to accept the public meeting minutes of March 7, 2024 as written. Seconded by Mrs. Woodworth Motion passed: 8-0-1 (LeCain abstained)

MOTION: Mr. Sapia motioned to accept the non-public meeting minutes of March 7, 2024. Seconded by Mrs. Manthorn Motion passed: 8-0-1 (LeCain abstained)

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DELEGATES AND INDIVIDUALS

Marianne Springer from Danville, NH addressed the Board. She had attended the last school board meeting and spoke to the conversation they had regarding the CIP projects that could be completed this year with \$1.8 million they have available. She believes this could have been reserved for the next fiscal year to help ease the tax burden to the taxpayers. She requests they provide more transparency and more communication with the taxpayers. She also requests to have the maximum surplus funds be returned to the towns at the end of this year to help offset taxes. She thanked the Board members for their hard work.

MOTION: Mrs. Woodworth motioned to move the remaining 25 minutes to the end of the meeting. Seconded by Mrs. Manthorn Motion passed: 9-0-0

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Armaan Anthony presented his report highlighting the events and activities throughout the schools in the District. The following are some of the highlights. The YMCA hosted the annual Educator Celebration in Plaistow. Sandown Central held a district wide Preschool and Kindergarten information night. Danville hosted their annual kindergarten information night. At Atkinson Academy, Kindergarten through Second Grade participated in a read-a-thon and raised over \$6,000 for a local charity. Pollard School 5th Graders had a band concert. Spring sports tryouts begin next week. The high school had parent/teacher conferences on March 19th. The Junior SAT's will be held on March 27th. Mental Health Awareness Week will be recognized at the high school April 15th through April 19th.

CURRENT BUSINESS

- a. Board/Superintendent Leadership Team Standing Committee Seats

The Board members received the 23-24 Committee Assignments. Mrs. Knutsen asked the members to email her with their assignment preferences for the next Board meeting.

Mr. Sapia made a suggestion to see if they could possibly streamline some of these committees. He asked the Board about restructuring the committees or change them a little bit in how they interface with each other and do some streamlining.

Mrs. Knutsen said there has been some talk to make sure committees are more streamlined and more transparent. They are currently working on that.

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b. 2023-2024 School Board Goals

Mrs. Knutsen would like to have their new goals set at the first meeting in May. Mrs. Woodworth asked about having a workshop on this. They had one last year and it was very productive. Mrs. Knutsen will email the Board members about possible workshop dates.

POLICIES

1. First Read for Policy GCF, GCCBC, KI, JIH, and DJE

Mrs. Knutsen reviewed the list of policies and their changes/recommendations. GCF – Professional Staff Hiring; GCCBC – Family and Medical Leave; KI – Visitors on School Grounds; JIH – Student Interrogations and Searches; DJE – Bidding Requirements.

Mr. Sapia referred to Policy KI. He mentioned how residents walk the loop on school grounds throughout the day and use the fields all the time.

Mr. Krieger explained the policy provides school administrators with direction on how to approach and engage those people and also a process for how to gain access to school grounds.

Mrs. Savage said the schools are posted notifying those people they are not allowed on school grounds during school hours.

Mrs. Woodworth would like to have the term “school day” more defined.

Mr. LeCain would also like to have something included in the policy that directs school board members to the policy that directly pertains to them.

Mr. Sapia would like to discuss Policy DJE bidding requirements. He said this is one of the mechanisms the School Board can use to control spending. He said that about 80% of the school districts he looked at are around \$20,000. The average amount to get three quotes is roughly \$5,000 and we are at \$50,000. He believes they need to have a tighter rein in what we anticipate, what we approve, and this is a way of tapping on the breaks. He recommends they amend the policy from \$50,000 down to \$20,000 and from \$10,000 down to \$5,000.

Mrs. Savage said the \$50,000 was just recently changed in 21/22 from a lesser amount and there were a lot of good reasons why we went to that amount.

Mr. Krieger mentioned the dates of those policies from other districts go back 10, 15, and in some cases, 20 years. The dollar has changed over that time. Also, most if not all those policies had a clause where the Superintendent had the authority and power to override any of those things. The control in this District is actually more because it is not the Superintendent who has

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the authority in this policy as it is written. The authority is with a Board of nine members and not one individual.

Mr. Sherwood asked Mr. Krieger if he would want the Board to give him that authority to override any of it in the event of time constraints.

Mr. Krieger said there is a level of transparency that a group of people are in charge of versus one individual. He would be comfortable doing it, but he would not recommend going in that direction. He believes it should come from the Board and they should have a presentation and vote on those things. He can always go to the Board and request they waive policy in the event there are time sensitive things or a crisis that needs to be dealt with. That mechanism already exists.

Mr. Sapia believes that in the event of an emergency, the Superintendent should have the authority to make a snap decision and cited a septic failure as an example.

Mrs. Knutsen clarified that anything over \$10,000 requires three quotes and anything over \$50,000 requires three competitive bids. She said there is no language in the policy that addresses the issue of an emergency or if the Superintendent could waive this policy. It would have to come to the Board.

Mr. Krieger suggested if the Board wants to go in that direction and give authority to the Superintendent, then add language in the policy that would make it required to be reported out to the Board at their next meeting.

Mr. Sapia believes there should be language in the policy regarding in the event of an emergency. If they add the Superintendent in the policy, they can indicate he would need to contact the Board Chair.

Mrs. Woodworth asked if expenditures of \$10,000-\$50,000 get reported out to the Board. Mr. Krieger cited several areas where the Board is given this information, for instance, the manifest.

Mr. Krieger agrees with Mr. Sapia's comment about expanding the circle and include the Chair along with the Superintendent.

Mr. Woodworth also suggested including the wording "the Chair or the Chair's designee."

Mrs. Savage suggested Mrs. Manthorn read through the minutes when they discussed raising it to \$50,000 because there were a lot of good points as to why it should be increased.

MOTION: Mrs. Savage motioned to accept Policies GCF, GCCBC, KI, JIH, and DJE for a First Read. Seconded by Mr. Sherwood Motion passed: 9-0-0

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2. Second Read

Policy FAA – Annual Facilities Plan and Policy ECA – Building and Grounds Security was presented as a Second Read. The Board previously waived them as a First Read.

Mr. Sapia suggested getting policies early enough to give them time to be reviewed. Mr. Sherwood agreed but said for the most part, they have had a decent amount of time to review them.

The Board agreed to vote on these policies as a First Read and not as a Second Read.

MOTION: Mr. Sherwood motioned to accept Policy FAA and Policy ECA as a First Read. Seconded by Mrs. Savage. Motion passed: 9-0-0

WAIVE POLICY DJE: BIDDING REQUIREMENTS

Mr. Krieger presented his Executive Summary to the Board requesting they waive Policy DJE specific to the JV Baseball Field. They had Busby Construction conduct a field study due to their familiarity with the area and they tested an area of the field to help determine the reason for the low points. It was determined there are tree stumps buried beneath the field. The Board voted to approve digging up and replacing the field in its March 7th meeting. The estimated cost of the project was \$200,000.

He stated that Policy DJE requires going out to bid on projects costing \$50,000 or more. He is requesting to waive this policy for multiple reasons. The most significant is timing. The first home game is scheduled for April 8th. If they had to go out to bid, the field would not be addressed until after the season leaving the field unplayable during the spring season. Busby Construction is very familiar with the area and has their equipment onsite already for other projects they are working on. Busby Construction has a documented history of winning bids in the District and submits conservative bid numbers when compared to other vendors.

MOTION: Mr. Sapia motioned to waive policy DJE for that. Seconded by Mr. Sherwood Motion passes: 9-0-0

BUDGET TRANSFER REQUEST

Mrs. Brooks presented her Executive Summary requesting a budget transfer. She explained the reason for requesting a transfer of \$200,000 from the High School Tuition account to the Contracted Service account. The reason for the request is due to the cost of contracted service

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providers to fill vacant positions which has exhausted what had been budgeted for the 23/24 school year.

Mrs. Knutsen asked Mrs. Brooks if we have thought about negotiating multi-year contracts to possibly save some money. Mrs. Brooks explained they are all year to year contracts. There are some who we use year after year.

Mr. Krieger would like to investigate the impact of an appropriation of monies from budget cycle to budget cycle for multi-year contracts.

**MOTION: Mrs. Manthorn motioned to approve the budget transfer of \$200,000 from the high school tuition line to the contracted service line. Seconded by Mr. Sapia
Motion passed: 8-0-1 (Mrs. McCormick was not present for the vote.)**

ENROLLMENT UPDATE

Mrs. Allaire referred to Policy IIB Class Size that was approved with some minor changes specifically to class size. There is a committee to bring updates and they are actively working on this.

Mrs. Canotas presented the projected enrollments for 24-25 school year. These projections are based on the current enrollment numbers rolled up to the next grade level and early registration in our Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten, and Kindergarten sessions as of 3/11/24. She monitors this on a weekly basis.

Mrs. Knutsen referred to the enrollment for Grade 5 at Pollard and asked at what point would they be asking for an additional teacher. Mr. Krieger stated they will be coming back in April with staff recommendations.

PERSONNEL REPORT

**MOTION: Mrs. Manthorn motioned to accept the professional nomination of Leah Poulin, School Social Worker at TLC Sandown North. Seconded by Mr. Sherwood
Motion passed: 9-0-0**

MOTION: Mrs. Manthorn motioned to accept the professional resignations of Mark Verry, Math Teacher at TRHS; Melissa Lioz, Math Teacher at TRMS; David Morochnick, Math Teacher at TRHS; and Kate Farley, District Nurse who had previously submitted her retirement notice but is now submitting her resignation due to family circumstances. Seconded by Mr. Woodworth Motion passed: 9-0-0

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MOTION: Mrs. Manthorn motioned to accept the professional retirement request from Lynn Ouellette, Elementary School Teacher at Atkinson Academy. Seconded by Mrs. McCormick. Motion passed: 9-0-0

Mrs. DeCinto indicated the vacancy report will be getting a lot bigger.

Mr. LeCain asked what we are doing for outreach to professionals, colleges, graduates, student practicum. He would like to know what we have done, what we are doing, and what we plan to do. He believes they should have a baseline to go by. Mrs. DeCinto said she will put something together.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Mrs. Allaire stated they had their last Professional Development day last Friday. This day is planned by the Professional Development Committee and they made the decision it will be a day for teachers by teachers. They had 52 teachers present sessions across the day, along with some administrators and Shauna Manthorn also presented.

Mrs. Allaire highlighted the work of the students and the student leadership teams who have been working with the Center for School Climate and Learning with Dr. Bill Preble. The teams put together surveys that went out to students, parents, and staff. They are looking at the data and making determinations. They will set goals based on the data.

Mr. Krieger informed the Board they have a Thought Exchange email that has gone out and posted on all their social media accounts.

Mr. Krieger mentioned that the families who qualify for Free and Reduced lunch have an opportunity in the summer to go up to Franconia, NH and attend Copper Canyon Camp at no cost to the families with students. The information is on the community page and under the individual schools.

Mr. Krieger described the 4-phased process they are using this year for staffing.

He reminded the Board they can access the budget to actual monthly reports on the website and it is posted on monthly basis.

They had budgeted 12.5% for the guaranteed maximum health rate and received the notice from Health Trust it will be 12.5%.

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Mr. Krieger said there is a lot of momentum here with substitutes and our fill rates have eclipsed 80% which is good and they want to try to build off that momentum.

Mr. Krieger informed the Board they have outstanding tuition balances from families in our District and outstanding balances from Food Service. The tuition is for getting into preschool or the kindergarten program. The Food Service deficit is \$80,000 and the Tuition deficit is \$100,000. He wants the Board to consider partnering with a Collection Agency. It is not in our best interest to have our schools reaching out and engaging with these families. This will be discussed further in April.

Mr. Krieger said with regards to facilities, we have had three committees operating (CIP, Construction Committee, Facilities Committee). He will bring back a recommendation to the Board to consider how we will streamline that communication and improve communication between committees if they continue to exist in their current forms and how they are reported out at the Board level.

There are two RFP's that are out. One is for the mowing and grounds work. Bids for that are due on April 30, 2024. The other is for Wayfinder and those bids are due May 7th. It is for signs to help people who come to this campus to help them find where they need to go. The results and recommendations from these RFP's will then come before the Board.

Mr. Krieger spoke on the major renovation work to be done at the high school this summer. EEI has said they will need every waking second in order to be done for the return of students in August. Since the high school will be a construction site, the ESY programming and summer school programming will all be held out of the middle school.

Mr. Krieger recognized our performing musicians who went to a Jazz Festival at UNH. Timberlane came home with 15 awards. Four ensembles performed.

Mr. Krieger is joining Mr. Broad up north, possibly Colebrook, to take a group of students. They are going to run through a couple of experiments he has lined up but mostly it will be to watch the eclipse.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Sherwood – The Insurance Committee met on Monday. A lot of the employees were not fully aware of the health benefit portion of it. They decided to see if there are options that still provide the same level of services for the employees at a lower cost. He said the Mrs. DeCinto has done a lot in organizing this. Health Trust and School Care are coming in to re-present. He read to the Third Grade class at Sandown North and it was great.

Mrs. Manthorn – She has received a lot of feedback on policies tonight to bring back to the Committee. Their next meeting is April 4, 2024. She asked if any of the Board members want

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to email or call her with their feedback they can. She wants to be sure to bring back the right feedback. The Committee reviewed 11 policies so there will be more to come as First Reads. Wellness Committee meets on April 10, 2024. She thanked the Professional Development Committee for the opportunity to present. Mrs. Manthorn commented on the outstanding performance by the Jazz group.

Mrs. Knutsen – Safety Committee met and with the weather getting warmer, there will start to be fire drills throughout the District.

Mrs. Savage – Safety Committee met and the Facilities Committee met. She asked Mr. Krieger if the detailed list of projects by Mr. Ingoldsby could go out to the schools. Project Hope was very successful and raised \$18,000.

Mrs. Woodworth – Attended a Strategic Planning Committee meeting today. They have done a Thought Exchange and they have received great feedback. It closes on Tuesday. They are looking for more partnerships throughout the community. She attended the play “How Does Your Garden Grow” and the kids did a great job.

Mrs. McCormick – Curriculum and Assessment met on Monday. They are looking at K-5 Science. They took a first look at a book to go with World Studies. They took a first look at the Health and Intro to Fitness and are trying to streamline them as there are a few redundancies.

Mr. Woodworth – The Curriculum and Assessment met and great work is being done. He attended the Grades 5, 6, and 7 concert and said it was unbelievable the talent they all have.

Mr. Sapia – The Construction Committee met and they had a vendor, NRM Technicians, come in. They put computerized systems in all the walk-ins and he described how that works. The Committee supported going in that direction. The window replacement at the high school may have to be done in two phases this year and next year. They also reviewed potential things for Phase 3.

OTHER BUSINESS

MOTION: Mrs. Woodworth motioned not to submit an RFP on the football field lights that was previously approved on May 7, 2024. Seconded by Mr. Sherwood

Mrs. Woodworth would like to direct the Interim Superintendent to go back to the CIP with those funds for their suggestions. There are more immediate things brought about by administration and one of which is potentially three months from now that should be taken care of. She would like a new list from the CIP to see if they have different suggestions.

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Mr. Sherwood talked about his constituents in Sandown and he sees these lights not as a need, but as a want. He cannot justify spending \$290,000 to replace lights when we still have some other major issues.

Mr. Sapia agrees which is the reason for his earlier suggestion to have a workshop between the Construction Committee and the CIP.

Mrs. Knutsen explained the reasons behind the request for the lights. She said as with anything that is aging, it becomes obsolete and it gets more difficult to get parts. Eventually this will have to get fixed, but she is fine sending it back to the CIP.

Mr. Woodworth said we have a lot of competing needs. That becomes an issue and as soon as you do one, it comes to light what you are missing. He gave the example of getting new track equipment but no storage place for it.

Mrs. Savage agrees with Mr. Woodworth. She had thought the CIP had looked at this and had spent the time on it. Things should come to this Board after the Committee has done the research. Sending this back to the CIP to put a list of priorities together makes the most sense.

Mr. Sherwood's recollection of the discussion with the CIP was they did not overwhelmingly support the lights. They agreed to bring it forward, but it was not one of their recommendations. He doesn't believe now is the time or place because we are having a hard time buying lightbulbs. It was Mr. Ingoldsby who asked the CIP to bring it forward to the Board for consideration because the CIP was undecided.

Mr. Sapia would rather fix the high school walls first and the second floor walls at Atkinson Academy need fixing.

Mr. LeCain said there are other things we need with that money. If he was on the CIP Committee, he would need to understand the estimated annual cost for the lights and understand how we are defining hard to get stuff.

The Board voted on the Motion.

Motion passed: 9-0-0

Mrs. Woodworth would like to charge the Interim Superintendent with bringing forward a proposed draft form to the CIP. She would like to see a more streamlined approach to the proposals they bring to us. She would like it to have signatures from the Budget Committee and the School Board and the projects should be listed with their rankings to see where they fall on the list. She wants the CIP to see this draft and to get input from them to see what they come up with.

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Mr. Sapia read the CIP Mission Statement.

There was no further public business before the Board.

MOTION: Mrs. Manthorn motioned to enter non-public under 91-A:3, Paragraph II (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. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant. Seconded by Mrs. Savage Motion passed: 9-0-0

The Board was polled:

D. Woodworth – yes Knutsen – yes Sherwood – yes McCormick – yes Sapia – yes
B. Woodworth- yes Manthorn – yes Savage – yes LeCain - yes

Motion passed 9-0-0 to enter non-public at 9:19 pm.

The public meeting adjourned at 9:19 pm and will not be returning to public session.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Mahoney
Recording Secretary

Approved by the School Board on April 8, 2024