

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://livestream.com/trsd/trsb/videos/228562007>
Materials presented at the Board meeting may be viewed at:

**TIMBERLANE REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

**Regular Business Meeting
January 6, 2022
7:03PM**

**Performing Arts Center
40 Greenough Road
Plaistow, NH**

Call to Order

Chairwoman Farah opened the January 6, 2022, meeting of the Timberlane Regional School Board to order at 7:03PM and took roll call.

Board Members Present

Brian Boyle, Kimberly Farah, Steven Finnegan, Amy Gentile, Barbara Kiszka, Katie Knutsen, and Shawn O’Neil

Joined via Zoom

Mr. Christopher Kellan, Superintendent of Schools

The Pledge of Allegiance followed roll call.

Dr. Farah then requested a moment of silence for Jon Jenne who passed away expectedly. He was part of the team at Danville Elementary where he will be truly missed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (00:03:46)

MOTION: Mr. O’Neil motioned to accept the TRSB public meeting minutes of December 10th, 2021; seconded by Mr. Boyle. The motion passed 7-0.

MOTION: Mr. O’Neil motioned to accept the TRSB public meeting minutes of December 16th, 2021; seconded by Mr. Boyle. The motion passed 6-0-1. (Ms. Gentile abstained.)

DELEGATES & INDIVIDUALS (00:4:26)

Michael Boucher, of Atkinson, said he hoped that in this new year, we could all work together rather than resorting to bad language, threats, and drive byes. He also stated that he hoped that the HR department would be addressed as the paper makes it seem as though the HR director did her job after the fact. He would like to see the STEM events and the Diversity Committee return as both are desperately needed. He also addressed a meme that was posted online by a board member and that parents are requesting the board vote to censure Mr. O’Neil as a result.

Coral Hampe, of Danville, spoke as TTA President, read the following statement: The Timberlane Teachers’ Association and the Timberlane Regional School Board participated in mediation on December

30th in attempt to reach an agreement on a successor collective bargaining agreement which would become effective July 1, 2022. I've issued the the following statement:

"The TTA negotiating team informed the general membership at a meeting held on Monday night that they were unable to reach a settlement with the Timberlane School Board negotiating team. Our team made significant concessions and still the School Board team refused to reach an agreement. Unless something happens before January 11th, there will not be a new contract and our members will be working under the terms of the current contract for the 2022-23 school year.

"At a time when there is a severe teacher shortage, Timberlane teachers will be seeing a contract with no step movement or a cost-of-living increase until a new contract can be negotiated and presented to the voters in 2023. The lack of a contract will only exacerbate these issues. The TTA negotiating team and membership have expressed our grave concerns about the ability to retain staff and recruit quality professionals.

"Some members of the School Board negotiating team have insisted on the elimination of the early retirement incentive which has been in place for union and non-union employees for decades. This benefit has always been paid in the next fiscal year after retirement and the expense for this program has been funded by the savings enjoyed by the district when more veteran teachers with higher pay retire. It would be unconscionable to eliminate this program in its entirety for employees. The Union had even agreed to limit the total amount which could be paid each year, cap individual amounts for most employees and eliminate the benefit for new employees. None of these concessions were enough for the Board team."

"And finally, certain facts do not change, Timberlane is nowhere near competitive with surrounding districts when it comes to salaries. We are 10th out of 18 comparable districts for starting pay for a teacher with a master's degree and 17th out of 18 for a teacher at the top step for a master's degree."

"We remain committed to working with stakeholders in our community to advocate for the best possible education for the students of Timberlane. They deserve nothing less."

"On a personal note, I have been a loyal member of the Timberlane Community for over 15 years. It was disheartening to attend negotiations sessions where we had to listen to lies and negative attitudes. But, the worst, was listening to my loyalty being called an 'unfunded liability'.

Mr. Boyle gave the following response: As the TTA President mentioned, and the only thing I probably agree with her on, is that we did go to mediation. As a five-year member the Timberlane School Board, and being involved in several negotiations over the years, I was disappointed that we weren't able to come to some kind of agreement. So, I just wanted to let the people at home know some hard and fast numbers.

Six years ago, the three-year contract was \$1,969,289. My first year on the board, we put that three-

year contract up to \$2,620,207 million.

What the TTA walked away from was an increase of \$2.3M to that. \$4,928,980. So, we just almost doubled the dollar amount that it cost the taxpayers over the last three years. Doubled it.

Yes, I am part of the people are heavily against the retirement incentive. It should be called a retirement bonus. What I attempted to do with the team is to protect the top 68 people. We have approximately 300 teachers. We were going to protect the top 68 and leave the remaining staff at 1 \$15K cap which puts it at the highest in the state. That's what we were doing, and I hope this Timberlane School Board will continue that.

As the father of a teacher, I respect the teacher's contrary to what you might think of this negotiation, but I also have to negotiate as a member of management, as a member of the Timberlane School Board. What we put together, there is no question in my mind, was a solid offer. Again, it was \$2.3M more than three years ago, thank you.

Nolan Pelletier, of Plaistow, again spoke about parental choice and unmasking children. He discussed the efficiency of masks, saying that cloth masks are no more than decorations and yet the board continues to keep our children muzzled up. He said that the board is more concerned with parents wearing ineffective masks than they are about safety in the schools. He brought up the last teacher who was arrested for child pornography.

David Kiley, of Atkinson, also discussed how masks are inadequate and does not protect people from this virus. Mr. Kiley wants the board to look outside their biases and remove masks. Children are not vectors of transmission. He asked the board to please reconsider taking the masks off the children because they are being harmed by them.

Shawn O'Neil, of Danville, stated that he wished the board had surveyed parents at the beginning of the year when it was asked for. He is submitting a Citizen's Petition tonight and everyone is going to have the opportunity to say what they want.

ANNUAL MEETING WARRANT (00:22:13)

Dr. Farah stated that this needs to be finalized and posted by the 11th of January 2022.

Article 2 - Operating Budget:

MOTION: Mr. O'Neil motioned to approve \$75,753,607 as the School Board's recommendation for the operating budget; seconded by Mr. Boyle. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Article 5 – Three Year Collective Bargaining Agreement (Timberlane Custodian's Union)

MOTION: Mr. Finnegan motioned to ratify the collecting bargaining agreement as agreed to by the Custodian's Union and the Board and recommend the same for the warrant; seconded by Mr. Boyle. The motion passed 7-0-0.
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Article 6 – Authorization for Special Meeting on Cost Items

MOTION: Mr. Boyle motioned to recommend authorizing a special meeting as worded in Article 6; seconded by Mr. Finnegan. The motion passed 6-1-0. (Mrs. Kiszka opposed.)

Article 7 – Three Year Collective Bargaining Agreement (Timberlane Food Service Workers Union)

MOTION: Mr. Finnegan motioned to ratify the collective bargaining agreement as agreed by the Food Service Workers Union and the Board and recommend the same for the warrant; seconded by Mr. O’Neil. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Article 8 – Authorization for Special Meeting on Cost Items

MOTION: Mr. Finnegan motioned to recommend authorizing a special meeting as worded in Article 8; seconded by Mr. O’Neil. The motion passed 6-1-0. (Mrs. Kiszka opposed.)

Article 13 – Capital Reserve Fund by Surplus

MOTION: Mr. O’Neil motioned to ratify and recommend Article 13; seconded by Mr. Finnegan. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Article 14 – General Acceptance of Reports

MOTION: Mrs. Kiszka motioned to ratify and recommend Article 14; seconded by Mr. Finnegan. The motion passed 7-0-0.

FACILITIES UPDATE (00:29:21)

Dr. Farah brought the Board’s attention to an executive summary provided by Mr. Ingoldsby. She also thanked him and his team for their hard work this year. Mrs. Kiszka noted that they are still looking for a community member with building inspector/contractor knowledge to sit in on the Performance Contract Review team. Once the audit is complete, they will need assistance prioritizing issues with the money they have. The request was made for any interested parties to email or call the SAU for more information.

SCHOOL GOALS PRESENTATIONS (00:32:50)

Athletic Department – Angelo Fantasia

Goal 1: By June 30th, 2022, The Athletic Department will upgrade its Emergency Action Plan to ensure alignment with Senate Bill 148-FN. This bill take effect on September 1, 2022.

Goal 2: The Athletic Department will provide a minimum of three diverse student – leadership training opportunities for TRMS and TRHS students throughout the school year, including a basic training session and a minimum of one advanced training session.

Goal 3: By July 31, 2022, the Athletic Department, in conjunction with the Athletic trainers from Exeter Hospital and Core Physicians, will create and implement a new injury tracking system to record and manage any students -athlete injuries.

Music Department – Kurt Schweiss

Goal 1: The Music Department will improve communications with all music community stakeholders by augmenting and enhancing our digital and social media footprint, as measured by the creation of a website and new social media accounts with at least one update every two weeks.

Goal 2: The Music Department will evaluate secondary music elective offerings to utilize more effectively shared staffing and resources between buildings, as measured by increased enrollment and student interactions for the 22-23 school year.

Goal 3: The Music Department will evaluate traditional performance offerings and determine the safest means to conduct student concerts, as measured by successfully completing the same or more student performances as were held prior to the 19-20 school year.

Performing Arts Center – Eric Constantineau

Goal 1: The PAC will be a hub of student-centered art through student art submissions from all schools ranging from first grade to the high school's AP Art classes. By next September, will have display cases for three-dimensional art and sculptures.

Goal 2: The PAC will be presenting an ongoing series started this year called the Timberlane Alumni Performance Series in which Timberlane Alumni who are working in the performing arts will come back to the PAC to present classes, workshops, and performances.

Goal 3: Establish a student entertainment committee who will be given the responsibility of picking, booking, and running all aspects of bringing in a professional act in the performing arts for a show. Students involved will learn aspects of the performing arts they have not formally been privy to.

Mrs. Kiszka expressed that she would like the PAC to operate in a break even or making money format. Ms. Gentile asked about offering CTE courses within this area. Mr. Boyle stated he wasn't worried about breaking even with the PAC, it was never about that. Dr. Farah also requested that the Administration bring the interim Music/Performing Arts discussion back before the board in the next two months to better define roles moving forward.

Evening Division – Scott Strainge/Sandy Allaire

Goal 1: The Evening Division program will develop a dual enrollment program, as measured by the addition of two college level offerings for students in the Evening Division Program in the 22-23 school year.

Goal 2: The Evening Division Program will expand offerings to support the completion of diploma requirements as measured by the addition of Art and World Language courses.

Goal 3: By August 2022, TRHS will complete the necessary steps to become a HiSET Testing site for the state of NH, as measured by certification of the school as a testing site by ETS. The company that administers the HiSET exam.

Dr. Farah wondered why the HiSET cap is 15 students. Mrs. Allaire indicated it was self-imposed, but she

wasn't sure if it was budgetary, staffing levels or something else.

SAU ADMINISTRATION (00:55:42)

The Board successfully negotiated with Mr. Kellan to become the Superintendent of Schools for the term commencing January 1, 2022, extending through June 30th, 2025. Congratulations Mr. Kellan!!!

Mr. Kellan thanked everyone for the support he has received since arriving in July. He is excited about the level of talent that we have in the district. He looks forward to working together to realize the potential that we have as an incredible school district. Improving communication out to our community, engaging the community in the decision-making process, and making Timberlane the best place it can be are all key components for Mr. Kellan moving forward.

POLICIES (00:58:28)

MOTION: Ms. Gentile motioned to accept policy ADB (Drug-Free Workplace & Drug Free Schools), for first read; seconded by Mrs. Knutsen. The motion passed 7-0-0.
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MOTION: Mrs. Kiszka motioned to approve policies BGC (Policy Review and Evaluation), BGE (Policy Dissemination), JFA (Residency), and ACAC (Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy and Grievance Process) for second read; seconded by Mr. Finnegan. The motion passed 7-0-0.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT (01:01:06)

Mr. Kellan reported that unfortunately we are struggling with staffing at all our schools as well as with the busses. He expressed his appreciation to the Administrators, to the Principals, Assistant Principals who are working day and night to ensure there is staff in place to meet the needs of our students. He is grateful to all the staff for doing everything they can to be in school.

Mr. Pederson received some new documentation on Covid-19 protocols. The Administration is reviewing it for any changes that might be implemented because of these new protocols.

If tomorrow is a snow day, it will be a traditional snow day, not a distance learning day.

Mr. Pederson spoke to the Board about the updated guidance. If you are confused about how this affects you, please contact your student's health office. These changes will not be implemented until at least Monday.

SCHOOL BOARD RESIGNATION (01:13:40)

Mr. Boyle has given his resignation, effective March 7, 2022. This allows for someone from Atkinson to run for his seat. It will be a one-year term. He has been a work horse on the board and will be very much missed. Mr. Boyle thanked the residents of Atkinson.

PERSONNEL REPORT (01:15:30)

MOTION: Mr. O’Neil motioned to accept the resignation of James Pelletier, Assistant Principal, Pollard Elementary, with thanks and gratitude for his service; seconded by Mr. Finnegan. The motion passed 7-0-0.

MOTION: Mr. Finnegan motioned to accept the professional retirements of Marcia Blutstien (School Counselor, Pollard Elementary), Lee Daneau, (Math Teacher, TRHS), Patty Deyermond (English Teacher, TRHS), Brooke La Monica (Math Teacher, TRMS), Terri Spear (Special Ed – Elementary Evaluator, Atkinson Academy/Pollard) with gratitude and thanks for their service; seconded by Mr. O’Neil. The motion passed 7-0-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/REPORTS TO THE SCHOOL BOARD (01:17:26)

The Board negotiating team will continue to work with the unions through January 11, 2022. The Budget Committee cancelled their meeting and will proceed to the public hearing on the budget on January 13th, 2022. There was a great Curriculum & Assessment meeting. Elementary Tech will come back for a second read next month. Mr. Mencis & Mr. Woodworth proposed a middle school scheduling change, potentially for next year. They are going to research it further and bring it back to the C&A committee. There were some discussions around summer learning that got passed on to policy. It was sent to policy to redefine the policy to address inequities. Policy met today. They will meet again in February where they are looking to add an extra meeting to get more policies through the process.

We know that we have had tremendous loss of learning over the last eighteen months due to the pandemic. We know we have funds that should be used to promote and try to bring those students back up. Dr. Farah would like, in the next two months, to have a discussion, or a presentation to the board, about where we feel we are and to see what our plan is to do some summer work or to provide opportunities for students to enhance their learning, especially those who may have suffered more academically than others due to remote learning.

Mr. O’Neil asked about bussing and the numerous transportation issues currently affecting the district. Ultimately, we have a contract with them, what are they doing to correct the issues? Mr. Kellan spent a good amount of time speaking with both companies over the past two days. This is absolutely a staffing issue that’s been compounded by Covid. He is hoping that some of the strategies they put in place this week will help but they are still down several busses.

Ms. Gentile asked people to be mindful of supporting the teachers and staff. When we do that, we support our students. It’s been really challenging. We are still in the middle of a pandemic, and we have teachers and staff that go way beyond daily just trying to keep kids in school and to support other staff. Flexibility, patience, grace, and gratitude are needed right now.

MOTION: Mr. O’Neil motioned to go into non-public under 91-A:3, Paragraph II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person; seconded by Mr. Finnegan. The motion passed 7-0-0.

The Board was polled:

Boyle – Yes Farah – Yes Finnegan - Yes Gentile – Yes

Kiszka – Yes Knutsen – Yes O’Neil - Yes

The motion carried 7-0-0 and the Board entered nonpublic session at 8:36PM.

MOTION: Mrs. Kiszka motioned to exit the non-public meeting; seconded by Mrs. Knutsen. The motion passed 7-0-0.

The Board was polled:

Boyle – Yes Farah – Yes Finnegan - Yes Gentile – Yes
Kiszka – Yes Knutsen – Yes O’Neil - Yes

The motion carried 7-0-0 and the Board re-entered public session at 9:05PM.

MOTION: Mr. O’Neil motioned to seal the non-public meeting minutes by reason that divulgence would likely affect adversely the reputation of someone other than a member of the Board; seconded by Mrs. Knutsen. The motion passed 7-0-0.

The Board was polled:

Boyle – Yes Farah – Yes Finnegan - Yes Gentile – Yes
Kiszka – Yes Knutsen – Yes O’Neil - Yes

With no other business before the Board, Chairman Farah adjourned the meeting at 9:07PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kat Lancaster
Recording Secretary

Approved by the Board on 1/20/22.