

*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/210080496>  
Materials presented at the board meeting may be viewed at:  
<https://public.timberlane.net/sau/trsb/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2fsau%2ftrsb%2fShared%20Documents%2fSCHOOL%20BOARD%20MEETING%20AGENDA%20MATERIALS%2f2020%2d21%2f08%2020%202020%20Meeting&FolderCTID=&View=%7b8B0F59BE%2dD93D%2d4E49%2d9509%2dA6F7531FCCAB%7d>*

**TIMBERLANE REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Regular Business Meeting  
August 20, 2020  
7:00PM**

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

**Call to Order (00:00:00)**

Chairman Farah called the August 20, 2020 meeting of the Timberlane Regional School Board to order at 7:02pm and then led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Board Members Present**

Brian Boyle, Lee Dubé, Kimberly Farah, Barbara Kiszka, Sheila Lowes, Sarah Machemer, Shawn O’Neil, Kristin Savage and Jennifer Silva

**Seated at the Board Table**

Dr. Brian Cochrane, Interim Superintendent of Schools (arrived 7:51PM)

**Others Present**

Sandy Allaire, Director of Curriculum, Assessment and Professional Learning  
Lucy Canotas, Director of Elementary Curriculum (K-5)  
Tony DiBartolomeo, Director of Performing Arts  
Geoff Dowd, CFO/Business Administrator, via telephone at 8:27pm  
Angelo Fantasia, Director of Athletics  
Ken Henderson, Director of Technology  
Mark Pedersen, Director of Secondary Curriculum (6-12)  
Don Woodworth, Principle of TRHS

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES (00:01:31)**

The board reviewed three sets minutes and took the following actions:

<b>MOTION:</b>	<b>Ms. Lowes motioned to accept the Q&amp;A/Public Form minutes of August 11, 2020; seconded by Mrs. Kiszka. The motion passed 9-0-0.</b>
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<b>MOTION:</b>	<b>Mrs. Kiszka motioned to accept the TRSB public meeting minutes of August 13, 2020; seconded by Mrs. Silva. The motion passed 9-0-0.</b>
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<b>MOTION:</b>	<b>Ms. Lowes motioned to accept the TRSB Non-Public meeting minutes of August 13, 2020; seconded by Mr. O’Neil. The motion passed 8-0-1 (Silva abstained).</b>
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**DELEGATES AND INDIVIDUALS (00:03:27)**

**Maria Kendall, President of the Timberlane Teachers Association**, 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher read the following letter to the Board:

As the Timberlane Teachers’ Association Executive Board, we have been requested and authorized by our membership to communicate with the Timberlane Regional School District and the School Board about our lack of confidence in the District’s current reopening model. There are multiple questions posed by staff, parents, and community that have not been answered regarding the Blended Rotating Cohorts and Remote 2.0 models. (And our staff, our parents and our community wants to know why.)

In order to fulfill our roles and meet the needs of our students, we need answers to safety protocols, plans and procedures. We have not been given an appropriate safety plan with specifics to protect staff, students, and the community. We have received no answers regarding the specific details to a sound educational models to provide an education to all students. We are especially concerned with the lack of direction regarding the special education population and how special education and related services will be provided to identified students.

Since the July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Steering Committee on the reopening of schools, we have worked collaboratively to advocate for staff and students, and to find solutions to the serious challenges preventing the successful implementation of the Blended Rotating Cohort model. We have given the District and School Board every opportunity to work with us on developing a true comprehensive reopening plan. In spite of the hard work of so many, there are innumerable challenges that still face our district, and no comprehensive plans for the opening of schools. As a result of these conditions, the members have noted 64.3% preferring a remote opening and 91.8% authorizing the Timberlane Teachers Association Executive Board to take all necessary action and immediately convey to the School Board the membership's lack of confidence and grave concerns about the District's failure to develop a viable and appropriate safety plan to protect staff, students, and the community.

Because the community has not received answers to very legitimate questions about safety and wellbeing, the Timberlane Teacher's Association advocates that schools reopen under the Remote 2.0 model for the first six weeks of school to provide time to plan a comprehensive model that addresses the needs of all students and staff.

"It's not about the method, its about the fact that there are no answers. We support an instructional model that is safe and effective."

Dr. Farah asked how many teachers responded to the survey. 194 members responded out of 277 total members, putting it at just over 70%.

**Paul Blair of Atkinson (00:09:48)** stated that he represented a parent group of roughly two hundred people who want an in-person option for their children's education. New Hampshire's Covid rates are lower than almost anywhere in the world. They feel as though if the Hybrid Cohort model does not come together, it will never happen. He said that the everyone needs to work together to get this done because people are suffering; people cannot work and are not able to feed their families, students with special needs are not getting services at home. This virus may be around for several years and if we can not learn to adapt and go on with our daily lives, what is left? This group is not against the teachers in any way, but they need and are requesting an in-person option for their children.

**Michelle Whelan of Plaistow (00:12:00)** said that the stress on families is enormous. With this recent statement from the TTA, obviously the teachers have questions and people are now just realizing there are no answers. She stated that she had read many questions today on a variety of topics and inquired as to when the answers to those question would come tonight and if not tonight, when they would be forthcoming.

Dr. Farah explained that Delegates and Individuals is not a question and answer period. Normally the public addresses the Board during this section. Dr. Farah explained that the Board has approved a high-level plan and that it would be up to the Administration to determine the specifics and daily operations. The Administration is still in negotiations with both the TTA and TSSU and more information will be forthcoming as more of the planning process is completed. Dr. Farah acknowledged that people are nervous/anxious and looking for information. The Board is committed to trying to get the schools in session by September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

**Jeannie Mailhot of Plaistow (00:15:25)** expressed that the community has had to adapt and figure out a way to make an income and move forward. She stated that her sixth grader is struggling. She stated that we cannot just give up on kids going back to school in person. How will this affect our community in the long run with no end in sight? The kids that are pushing your carts at the grocery store, the kids that are ringing up your groceries, the people who cut your hair found ways to adapt and keep the community going and these are small things compared to our students education. She expressed that she was "blown away" that kids being at home for another six

weeks would even be an option.

**SCHOOL RE-OPENING PLAN UPDATE (00:18:43)**

Mark Pedersen, Director of Secondary Curriculum (6-12), stated that the plan was created in a way that is flexible and could change as the available data changed. Any decision to return to buildings must be predicated on data and based on health and safety guidelines. There have been some updates made to the model at the High School. The Administration believes that they can give all teachers and all students their original schedules regardless of whether in a Cohort or in Remote 2.0. This is to ensure that all students have access to their CTE programs and graduation requirements. Teachers that are fully remote would also be teaching their original schedules to ensure that the most qualified person is teaching those classes.

The Administration proposed a change to the TRSD fully remote model. TRSD will use the normal daily schedules of each school, with normal school start and end times, regardless of model. This would put all students and teachers on the same daily schedule and allows students better access to Special Education related services and CTE programs, etc.

There were some questions from the Board on transportation, how teaching in person students and remote students at the same time would work, how a teacher that is remote would teach students who are actually in the classroom, etc.

**MOTION: Mr. O’Neil motioned to change the fully remote schedule from a 9:00AM start time to the normal start time; seconded by Mrs. Savage. The motion passed 9-0-0.**

Mrs. Machermer made the following motion:

In order to provide the Superintendent and his Leadership Team time to address the TTA and TSSU questions and concerns focused on the logistics and necessary safety protocols involved in returning to school in the hybrid cohort model, thus ensuring students and staff experience a safe, smooth transition back into the buildings, the Timberlane Regional School District shall start the school year using the Remote 2.0 model for the first six weeks of school.

Ms. Lowes seconded for discussion. Dr. Farah stated that the Board would be entering a rather lengthy non-public session at the end of this meeting and suggested that it might be premature to have this discussion without hearing what needs to be discussed in non-public. Ms. Lowes withdrew her second.

**ATHLETICS (00:34:07)**

Angelo Fantasia, Athletic Director, presented a slide show to the Board detailing proposed first dates of practice, first dates to play in each sport, best practices relative to hygiene, screening, cleaning and sanitization and compliance with illness reporting. He also stated that the Athletic Department will continue to update and modify the daily protocols associated with each sport. His presentation culminated with the request to the Board to move forward with fall sports. Dr. Farah stated it was atypical or this to become before the board and asked why it was this time. Mr. Fantasia stated that the NHIAA left it up to each individual district to determine if they are going to play. It is a District decision that must be made so Athletic Directors are all reaching to their Boards for approval.

**MOTION: Mrs. Silva motioned to move forward with fall sports at Timberlane; seconded by Mr. Dubé, subsequently withdrawn, and then seconded by Mrs. Savage.**

**MOTION TO AMEND: Mr. Dubé motioned to amend the motion to move forward with fall sports under a hybrid education model; seconded by Ms. Lowes. The motion passed 5-4-0 (Kiszka, Machermer, Savage & Silva opposed).**

**MOTION AS AMENDED: The motion as amended passed 8-0-1 (Machemer abstained).**

The Board had many questions for Mr. Fantasia. They asked clarifying questions around the presentation and what was mandated vs. suggested, what would be enforced and to what degree, would seniors be allowed to travel for sport and to see colleges without being asked to quarantine, the sizing of the teams, reporting requirements, staffing, etc.

The topic of staffing brought out a lot of questions and further discussion from the Board. Whether a teacher/coach could request to work remotely but then coach was determined to be a question that legal might need to weigh in on. Mr. Dubé asked Mrs. Silva if she would be willing to amend the motion to add in a stipulation that we do return to some Hybrid model of in person. Mrs. Silva said no because that has already been stated and voted on. Mr. Dubé withdrew his second. Mrs. Savage then seconded the motion.

Discussion on this topic was lengthy and tense with some Board members advocating for the students, some board members advocating for coaches/teachers and yet others taking the position that if the District, for whatever reason, cannot get these kids into schools for education, then they should not be out on the playing field. Dr. Cochrane offered that there could be reasons that the schools open remotely that are plan related and not safety related.

#### **KINDERGARTEN TUITION (01:21:28)**

With the cohort model, there has been a request to reduce tuition by half. There are approximately 130 students registered for full day Kindergarten, with approximately 49 of those students not paying full tuition. This would be about \$20-\$25K impact to the budget.

**MOTION: Ms. Lowes motioned to accept the reduced tuition plans for full day Kindergarten and the Pre-K (4s) to reduce by half; seconded by Mr. Boyle. The motion passed 9-0-0.**

#### **RE-OPENING OF SAU OFFICE (01:24:12)**

Geoff Dowd, CFO/Business Administrator, explained what would be done to re-open the SAU.

- Plexiglass will be installed in the lobby/reception area and some other common spaces.
- Masks will be required.
- Employees will be asked to self-screen daily.
- Visitors will be by appointment only; they will call on arrival & stay in car if possible
- Social distancing required.
- \$\$3000-\$3500 cost
- Completed on or before 9/8/2020.
- Concerns:
  - HVAC does not bring in fresh air
  - Kitchen can only accommodate one at a time
  - Bathrooms are also limited.
  - Cannot use the conference room

#### **MS-25 (01:31:15)**

Dr. Farah advised the Board there was a copy of this in the agenda packet and it needed to be signed before 9/1/2020. Mr. Dowd advised the Board they would receive an electronic signature request.

#### **AUDIT (01:32:08)**

Geoff Dowd, CFO/Business Administrator, said that they were waiting on the actuarial numbers to send to the audit firm. Areas of concern for the 2020 audit are relative to the time it takes to complete the audit. Dr. Farah indicated this would be discussed soon.

### **BUDGET DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE (01:34:40)**

Mr. Dowd stated that the Board has requested the budget for October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 and he has concerns that with all that's going on right now to get the schools ready for students, that date puts a lot of pressure on building administrators and principals. The Board requested that the preliminary budget be available on October 1, 2020 with the understanding that building principals might not be able to make that time frame and should submit by mid-October.

Dr. Cochrane explained that Zoom had previously offered their services for free but if we want to continue using it, the cost is \$25K.

**MOTION:** Mrs. Savage motioned to move forward in obtaining Zoom for \$25K for students and staff; seconded by Mr. Boyle. The motion passed 9-0-0.

### **MUSIC UPDATE (01:48:00)**

Tony DiBartolomeo spoke to the protocols that they will be using in the music program. Marching Band will look very different and is predicated upon what happens in Athletics. They will see each student only one day a week but will do the best they can with whatever hand they are dealt. They are working on mitigation protocols for instrument condensation. Band camp is happening but being truncated. It will take place from August 31<sup>st</sup> to September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, from 3PM to 5PM and 3PM-6PM for percussion. They are still waiting on the NHIAA to tell them what they can do. Chorus will take place in the PAC with masks and social distancing. For students who are 100% remote, they will use smart music and they are working on bringing some technology in house to merge students playing instruments remotely.

### **SUSPENSION AUTHORIZATION (01:56:25)**

**MOTION:** Mrs. Savage motioned to authorize the Superintendent and his designee to continue the suspension of a student for a period in excess of ten school days as provided for in RSA 193:13(b); seconded by Ms. Lowes. The motion passed 8-0-1 (O'Neil abstained).

There are some policy conflicts that need to be addressed. This policy is not the one that will change.

### **BOARD MEETING LOCATIONS (01:59:55)**

The Chair and Vice Chair discussed moving all meetings, except for one meeting a month that will be in person, back to Zoom because of the additional work put on the staff to clean the PAC. It is a strain on the Administration as well given the hours they are working to get the schools open and the increased meeting schedule. Also, public comment is asking for Zoom calls again saying that this meeting is hard to hear with the masks on. The Chair will work on a schedule.

### **ADMINISTRATORS REPORT (02:04:06)**

Dr. Cochrane indicated that the focus is on opening schools, personnel, filling vacant positions, they are now to the point where they can begin to break out students into cohorts by school. They are working on negotiating with the TTA and TSSU unions. The Board inquired as to the timeline on answering the questions posted by the unions. He understands that the level of angst is real and that at this point, its about developing a punch list and developing and writing policies for each one. The Board also inquired as to the number of parents that have notified the District that they will not be attending TRSD. Dr. Cochrane indicated that there has been a significant increase in the number of parents who have chosen to homeschool. He has received 30-40 so far. That number does not include the number of students going to other schools.

### **PERSONNEL REPORT (02:15:13)**

Dr. Cochrane brought forth the following:

**Nominations:**

Jessica Lacroix – Atkinson Academy Grade 4

Jane Stewart – Atkinson Academy Grade 1

**MOTION: Ms. Lowes motioned to approve the nominations; seconded by Mr. Boyle. The motion passed 9-0-0.**

**MOTION: Mr. Boyle motioned to grant the leave of absence as requested by Elizabeth Bisbing; seconded by Mrs. Kiszka. The motion passed 6-0-3 (Dubé, Lowes & Savage abstained).**

**MOTION: Ms. Lowes motioned to go into non-public under 91-A:3, Paragraph II, (I) (consideration of legal advice in writing or orally even when legal counsel is not present); seconded by Mrs. Savage.**

The Board was polled:

Boyle – Yes	Dubé – Yes	Farah – Yes	Kiszka – Yes	Lowes- Yes
Machemer – Yes	O’Neil – Yes	Savage – Yes	Silva – Yes	

The Board went into Non-Public at 9:20PM.

**MOTION: Mr. O’Neil motioned to exit the non-public meeting; seconded by Mr. Boyle. The motion passed 8-0-0. (Ms. Lowes had already left the meeting.)**

**The Board was polled:**

Boyle – Yes	Dubé – Yes	Farah – Yes	Kiszka – Yes
Machemer – Yes	O’Neil – Yes	Savage – Yes	Silva – Yes

**The motion carried 8-0-0 and the board ended the meeting at 10:05PM.**

With no other business before the board, Chairman Farah adjourned the meeting at 10:05PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kat Lancaster  
Recording Secretary

Approved by the Board on September 3, 2020.