

TIMBERLANE REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD
Atkinson, Danville, Plaistow, Sandown
New Hampshire

Regular Meeting
November 4, 2010
7:30 PM

SAU 55 Office
Plaistow, NH

Order

Chairwoman Kosta called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm at the SAU office.

Roll Call

Roll call was taken.

Board Members Present

Mrs. Aubrey, Mr. Collins, Madam Chair Kosta, Mr. Mascola, Mr. Porcelli, Mrs. Steenson, Mrs. Withee and Mr. Briggs (Student Representative). Absent: Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Paone

Administrators Present

Mr. La Salle, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Feneberg, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Stokinger, Business Administrator
Mrs. Killen, Director of Elementary Education
Mr. Strainge, Director of Secondary Education
Mr. Woodworth, Principal, TRHS
Mrs. Moriarty, Special Education Department Chair, TRHS
Mr. Hogan, Principal, TRMS
Mrs. Janet Hart, Curriculum Coordinator, TRMS

Pledge

Madam Chair Kosta led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Mrs. Withee, seconded by Mr. Mascola

Voted: To approve the minutes of the October 21, 2010 regular meeting with corrections. **Having no further discussion the motion carried 6-0-1 (Mrs. Aubrey abstained).**

Delegations and Individuals

Student Council Report

Student Council member, Nick Delfino, reported the Trick or Canning event was very successful as they collected 667 canned goods items that were donated to the Holy Angel's food pantry. He announced upcoming events which included ice cream sales by the student council members and the Waterville Valley conference scheduled for November 11th and 12th.

School Report

Mr. Briggs, TRSB student representative, reported on football playoffs, wrestling and band activities.

Sidewalk Grant Proposal

Plaistow Town Planner Leigh Komornick presented a proposal to apply for a grant to fund the installation of sidewalks from the south side of Greenough Road to Danville Road. She indicated if the project is approved and grant monies received, the project would be implemented in phases with phase one being from the Superintendent's Office to Bryant Brook Estates. She offered cost breakdowns as well as copies of a feasibility study conducted by the Middle School, the Town of Plaistow and the NHDOT. Sidewalk placement and logistics were noted along with safety concerns for Timberlane pedestrians. Ms. Komornick concluded her presentation with the request for School Board support in the form of a letter to the NHDOT. The consensus of the board was to support the project and submit a letter of recommendation as requested.

Current Business

Hawaiian Exchange Trip

TRHS teachers Pat Deyermond and Jen Clark presented plans for a Hawaiian exchange trip for April vacation that would include members of both the junior and senior classes. They indicated the departure date has

changed to take advantage of a cost savings (\$600-\$700 per student).

On a motion by Mrs. Aubrey, seconded by Mrs. Withee

Voted: To approve the Hawaiian Exchange Trip as presented and to further grant permission for the students attending to miss school on Thursday, April 21st.

DISCUSSION: Members noted the trip would expose students to the social and historical culture of Hawaii which would provide access to many opportunities. As a school-sanctioned trip, student responsibility was noted.

Having no further discussion Chairwoman Kosta called the vote. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Middle School Report Card

Mr. Hogan presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Middle School's plans to develop a standards-based report card that fairly assesses student achievement. He spoke on assessment practices related to grading and how middle school report cards will be developed to accomplish this. He presented the correlation between grading and assessment, their goals in assessing in the areas of homework, class participation, quizzes and tests, projects and presentations, and using current research to develop systematic reform of their current grading system.

Board members posed questions relative to the current grading scale, how standards are taught, and the 4.0 scale as opposed to the 100.0 scale. Mr. Strainge indicated the High School is working towards the same goal. As they continue to deliver high quality curriculum a standards-based report card will provide an accurate and useful assessment of the students' learning.

More discussion ensued on opening the conversation to standards and clarifying the standards so students understand what is expected from them. Mr. Feneberg added that assessment is not grading by number; it is complex work to effectively measure student progress. In order to hold to a high standard of excellence, one needs to understand the standard.

Middle School SINI Update

Mrs. Hart began her presentation outlining growth in math at the Middle School. To address the areas in need of improvement they have acquired new resources for instruction (Glenco math resources), implemented ongoing professional development supplemented by additional training, and they are working to improve parent/community involvement. Teacher training is funded by a Tuft's grant and a new math enrichment teacher position was added in the 2010-11 school year. Parents' math nights have been scheduled to improve communication to the home and to educate the parents on use of help resources.

High School SINI Update

Mr. Woodworth reported he has submitted the high school's SINI report to Concord which details their response to the two areas in which the high school scored below the benchmarks set by the DOE. Regarding Math and Reading for students with learning disabilities, he stated Grade 11 results in last year's test indicated a 2-3% increase in scoring levels of proficient and above in reading and math; however they are still below AYP levels.

He went on to report that in Reading, the tests revealed the weakest area was the analysis of material. He then offered plans for improvement which included replacing a two-year Algebra I delivery with a team-taught Algebra 1 class and Algebra lab, supporting Geometry and Algebra students in the Math Lab, offering additional support to students in English, increasing the number of SPED co-teaching situations in English and math to support all students, engaging high school staff in professional development on instruction and assessment, testing 8th grade students to identify basic math skills, using READ180 to raise the reading levels of both regular education and special education students, implementing competency assessment at the high school for students who need additional, continued use of Learning centers, working with the middle school to flag both special education and regular education students who are two grade levels below grade level.

NECAP Science

Mrs. Killen, Mrs. Hart and Mr. Strainge presented NECAP science results for elementary, middle and high school students.

Elementary

Mrs. Killen focused on the science domain comparison and noted each of the categories (physical science, earth/space science, geography, and life science). All elementary schools are at or above the 60% mark in scoring in the categories of physical science, earth science and life science; however they fall short in the area inquiry piece (lab experiment kit). They are looking to see if there is a disconnect between the district and the state. They will also continue to look at the kit and instructions to see how they can improve student preparedness. She stated that the Reading Street curriculum is rich in science as well as reading to build a science background for students prior to them taking science classes.

Board members noted score discrepancies between the elementary schools and asked how they plan to level them out. Mrs. Killen responded they would observe, dialogue with teachers, and look at the curriculum pieces to confirm that all science topics are being taught adequately at each of the schools.

Middle School

Mrs. Hart reviewed the middle school scores noting the overall comparison results for levels 4, 3, 2 and 1. She stated they are still working to understand how students are not meeting score standards. Board members questioned that if no one in the state is scoring above the 1% mark in distinction, then wouldn't that speak to the test itself? Mrs. Hart agreed and noted over 49k students took the test and only 187 scored a level 4. She said she finds this perplexing as they are committed to seeing students tested fairly; they are pleased with the strategies students are using when taking the test but then are devastated when they get the score results.

High School

Mr. Strainge concurred and noted the 45k high school students were tested and only 402 scored with distinction. In a testing pool of 1092 students, only 5 scored with distinction. He went on to say that high school scores went up in the areas they focused on – they refocused in biology and life science and student scores went up in those areas. Board members requested the curriculum team to look at the other three NECAP states to see how they are testing in this area.

Mr. Strainge reviewed the high school scores and trends and noted that students tested in their junior year have not yet had rigorous teaching in the areas of chemistry and physics – those are generally taught in the junior and senior year. Furthermore, the state does not provide designation on subject areas to be included in the test.

Mr. La Salle spoke to the creation of standardized testing and the theory behind it. He noted experts who say the best way to address a topic that is very broad is to offer a rich curriculum that is executed on a daily basis and to not do what the state teaches which is to analyze data, target proxies and teach to those proxies. The effect of the state's method will do more harm as it will prohibit the rich teaching of all areas of that broad subject.

Policies

Mr. Feneberg presented four policies for first reading: BB – Board Legal Status, BDC – Appointed Board Officials, BDH – Consultants, and BEDC - Quorum. He explained that policies BB and BDH were last reviewed in 1998; the language has not changed, but should be reaffirmed. Policies BDC and BEDC require updating to reflect district practice and state law.

On a motion by Mrs. Aubrey, seconded by Mrs. Steenson

Voted: To approve the first reading of policies BB, BDC, BDH and BEDC. **Having no further discussion the motion carried 7-0.**

Administrators Report

Mr. La Salle and Mr. Stokinger provided an overview of the first draft of the 2011-12 proposed budget increases noting the budget items in which were non-discretionary (salaries, retirement, special education tuition, transportation, employee insurance, employee benefits, SAU costs, bond interest, and capital reserve). Areas where cuts were made to keep the budget baseline down included professional services, bond costs, books and information technology, equipment, renovations and projects. He commended the administrative staff for putting together a responsible budget.

Board members and administration engaged in dialogue concerning raises for non-affiliated staff members. It was noted that union employees would receive raises on an annual basis regardless of the economic climate, while non-affiliated staff members might not. This led to concern over the fairness of rewarding one category

of staff members and not another. The Budget Sense program and its pay scale financial tool were explained. Mr. La Salle ascertained that allowing a 2% salary increase for non-affiliated staff members would calculate to approximately \$150k against a \$62 million budget (included in the proposed 2011-12 budget). He provided his reasons for including the raise. Board members requested the Budget Committee look at what the surrounding towns are proposing for salary increases.

Mr. La Salle stated that staffing is reviewed annually to be sure it correlates with enrollment numbers.

Committee and Reports of the School Board

Board members reported on events and committee meetings they attended.

Correspondence

None

Vendor and Payroll

Done

Other

None

With no further business to discuss, Chairwoman Kosta adjourned the meeting at 10:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy Danahy".

Nancy Danahy
School Board Clerk