

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

Regular Meeting
March 19, 2009
7:30 PM

SAU 55 Office
Plaistow, NH

Call to Order

Madam Chair Kosta called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm at the SAU office.

Roll Call

Roll call was taken.

Board Members Present

Mrs. Aubrey, Mr. Baldwin, Mrs. Champey, Mr. Collins, Mrs. Kosta, Mr. Mascola, Mr. Paone, Mr. Porcelli, Mrs. Withee and Student Representative Joseph Delfino

Absent: None

Administrators Present

Mr. La Salle, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Coker, Director of Secondary Education
Mrs. Kelli Killen, Director of Elementary Education
Mr. Stokinger, Business Administrator
Mr. Hogan, Principal of TRMS
Mr. Fantasia, Director of Athletics

Approval of Minutes

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

Voted: To approve the minutes of March 5, 2009 Timberlane Regional School Board public meeting with changes.

Mr. Paone stated he was disappointed that he had made important points at the March 5th meeting and they were not listed in the minutes.

Having no further discussion the motion was passed eight in favor and one opposed (Mr. Paone).

Delegations and Individuals

School Report

Ms. Jackie Eframson, TRHS student and Community Agent informed the public that eight members of the student council recently returned from the LEAD conference in Pennsylvania, where they learned great leadership skills and enjoyed meeting students from around the nation. Members from the student council will be helping out at the upcoming job fair by escorting the candidates to their scheduled appointments. She went on to report the students have chosen the big buddies for the upcoming Big Buddy Little Buddy for the Sandown North third graders. She also noted that the Mr. Southern New Hampshire event is scheduled for April 3rd and will be followed by Kids Night Out on April 4th. The board thanked Ms. Eframson and invited her to stay and enjoy the remainder of the board meeting.

Mr. Delfino reported that the Hockey team, for the first time ever, achieved the Division II State Champs designation. The Basketball team ended a great season with a lost to Salem; they are looking forward to next year. The Destination Imagination teams are the first and second in the region and will move on to the State finals. The PTSA Reflection Arts program has several winners and will move onto the National Championships. The Timberlane Players will star in "Burial at Thebes." The senior class dodge ball tournament was held today to raise funds, and Pie Day, which also was a success, raised over \$2,000. Mr. Delfino thanked all who participated.

Current Business

TRMS NEASC REPORT PRESENTATION

Mr. Hogan reviewed the process for the NEASC visitation by explaining that the visit in November was a product of a process that began two years earlier. The dedicated faculty of the middle school worked hard to prepare for this important visit. The self study took two years of devoted work to complete and answered the questions "Who we are and where we want to be in the future." The team will analyze the many commendations and recommendations in the final report - their primary focus is always the middle school students.

He went on to say that they set up plans for professional development to focus on instruction, thus the team will continue to develop literacy programs and play an important role in the development of the five year strategic plan. The team expressed their concerns regarding the condition of the building and came away with the thought that they will use this building to the best of its ability. They ended their preparation with the support of the leadership of the project, school and district. He stated the visiting NEASEC teams noted the ASD suite and the clean and well maintained building, even though it is in its last cycle of life. They also thanked the middle school team for their fine housing, meals and hospitality. Mr. Hogan concluded his presentation by thanking the board and public for their continued support.

Election Results

Mr. La Salle thanked the residents of all four towns for their support of the education process, budget and capital reserve fund. He welcomes again the new board member, Mr. Porcelli, and noted the three new budget committee members. He then noted that a member of the budget committee will need to be appointed since the write-in candidate with the most votes was not able to accept the position. The vacant committee seat will need to be filled by a resident of Plaistow.

2009-2010 school calendar

Mr. La Salle and Mr. Coker reviewed five draft calendar options presented for the 2009-2010 school calendar. A determination was made that the final decision for the 2009-2010 calendar must be made on the April 2nd meeting date. Mrs. Withee inquired if the start of school could be September 1 instead of August 31st to which Mr. La Salle replied it could but that it would create a domino effect to the other dates in that school year.

Mr. Mascola inquired if there was any information relative to the affect a non-traditional vacation week would have on area businesses, as posed in a few of the draft calendars. Mrs. Kosta inquired if the off schedule vacation would have an effect on parents who work in other districts. She noted that childcare could be a hardship for some families. Mr. La Salle noted that families face this problem every time the district experiences a snow day. Several changes to the calendars were suggested, to which all would be considered in time for the April 2nd meeting when a final decision would be rendered. Mr. Mascola noted that the quality of instruction is the most important consideration in the decision making process.

Passive Permission Slips

TRHS Counselor, Mr. Lena and TRMS Counselor, Mrs. Binette thanked the board for their ongoing support. They expressed their understanding of the board's concern relative to passive permission slips being used for the National Risk Behavior Surveys for both middle and high school students. They would like to find a solution that is acceptable to all members of the board, parents and students. They noted concern about participation results should active permission be required. Mr. Lena noted research that shows if active permission was the accepted method, the results often are not a representative of the general population and are essentially "meaningless." The protocol for passive permission slips was developed by the Center for Disease Control and used to obtain the most valid data possible. It has been shown that active permission slips result in a lower response rate; in some schools as low as thirty percent. The lack of participation is not necessarily a reflection on parents not wanting their children to participate as much as it is the management of sending out and retrieving slips for every individual in the school. Tracking who has returned the slips, who has permission, and who does not is a logistics nightmare. Three solutions were proposed:

Option 1 - Current practice of passive permission direct mailing with report cards. They do propose communicating through newsletters, TEN and the Website to try to make sure every parent is aware.

Option 2- At the beginning of every year a notice would be put in the student handbook explaining the school participation in these kinds of surveys on a bi-annual basis. A section would be inserted at the emergency card that instructed the parents to complete this section with the students name and the parent's signature stating the child could not participate in the surveys. The section would be part of the emergency card for future reference. Reminders would be sent out to all parents regarding the voluntary survey.

Option 3 - Similar to the previous option, requiring the active signing of the emergency card, but also an active permission slip. This would be a logistics problem since there are sanctions with failure to return the emergency card; many person hours for checking off yes or no and then informing the English teachers who is allowed to take the voluntary survey; and finally hope that the response rate is large enough to be considered valid.

The board inquired if the questions could be put on the website so parents can make an informed decision. Mrs. Champey stated she felt there was no reason to change the current method since our goal is to achieve good data that is used to fund programs that help students. Mr. Paone agreed. Mr. Collins asked if an AlertNow message could be sent to all parents informing them of the survey.

On a motion by Mrs. Champey, seconded by Mr. Paone

Voted: To approve the addition to the student handbook of an explanation of the passive permission slips to communicate with parents by different electronic means Alert Now, Ten, Website, etc. regarding the survey and the usage of passive permission slips.

Having no further discussion the motion passed unanimously.

Timberlane Regional School District Policies

Mr. Fantasia, the Director of Athletics addressed policy JJIB, the Inter-scholastic Athletics. He reported to the board that the annual physicals required by the current policy do not take into consideration that insurance companies will only pay for a student to have a physical once every two years. The proposed policy would ask parents to complete an athletic medical history and emergency information packet instead of an annual physical every year.

The second policy Mr. Fantasia addressed was policy JJIC. He informed the board how important he feels that students connect to programs so they feel they belong. He holds all students responsible for their actions and the system encourages students to get involved and connected to programs. However, not all students excel at academics and their struggles are worsened when they cannot remain in the program because they failed a subject. If a student receives one or two failing grades they are not allowed to participate in the programs until they can show their improvement to their coach/advisor every two weeks for their entire course. Mr. Fantasia suggested the following changes to the policy:

Students must take five courses and pass a minimum of four in a ranking quarter. No participation in co-curriculum activities if student failed more than two courses in a quarter. Any student receiving three or more failing grades will be ineligible for all after-school athletics and activities until the next report card.

Mr. Baldwin suggested the recommended changes would be defeating the purpose. Mr. Mascola believes that it sends the wrong message to students. If they are failing then they need to re-focus their academic efforts. Mr. Fantasia respectfully disagreed with Mr. Mascola and stated that he is not aiming for mediocrity; however, some students work very hard and focus their attention to achieve a passing grade. Mr. Fantasia would like every child to achieve to their full potential. But, the District needs to address students who achieve their best at a lower level. Mr. Paone questioned that if you lower the standard and allow them to play with a failing grade then what incentive will they have to do better and work for a passing grade? Mr. Woodworth explained the history of the policy, noting that in the 1980's if a student received a failing grade, and then if he could prove in one week that progress was being made, he would be able to re-join the program. This resulted in students signing onto easier classes and not challenging themselves. They would do this so they would be able to receive a passing grade when their season for sports would come around. Mr. Woodworth stated that we want students to challenge themselves and be involved in their academics. Mr. Collins believes the bar should be raised and not lowered and that we should adopt NHIAA standards or better. He also believes we are sending the wrong message. He posed that students receiving a failing grade should only be able to participate in practice but not play at games. Mr. Mascola wants students to prepare for the real world; if they do not achieve, they do not get the advantage. He suggested the policy be remanded back to committee.

Mr. La Salle suggested that if students are on track to graduate and are in good standing they can participate in the co-curriculum activities. If one credit short they must get assistance and if two credits short then they will not be able to participate in co-curriculum activities. Mr. Baldwin would like to see the wording more positive/encouraging.

On a motion by Mr. Collins, second by Mr. Mascola

Voted: To refer policy JJIC back to the group/committee for change.

Having no further discussion the motion passed eight in favor and one abstention (Mr. Porcelli)

Policy IIA

Mr. Coker reported that this policy was amended by the board in 1995 but the revisions were never made and the changes should be effective for the 2009-2010 school year.

On a motion by Mrs. Champey, second by Mr. Baldwin

Voted: To accept the first reading of policy IIA

Having no further discussion the motion passed unanimously

On a motion by Mr. Collins, second by Mrs. Aubrey

Voted: To accept the first reading of policy JJIB

Having no further discussion the motion passed unanimously

Mr. La Salle recommend accepting policy DBJ for a second reading, Mr. Stokinger explained how the account numbers work to identify monies for a specific purpose. Mr. Collins was concerned that monies were transferred from text books to a construction project which would mean monies were transferred from the capital budget to the operational budget.

On a motion by Mr. Collins,

Voted: Any transfer of funds other than grant monies between object account codes that are in excess of \$5,000 or more to be approved by the school board

No second to the motion, Mr. Collins withdrew the motion

It was suggested that policy DBJ be returned to the policy committee for further consideration.

The following proposed policy and changes were accepted as the first reading:

Policy EGA (Also IJNDB)	School District Internet Access for Students
Policy EGA-R	Acceptable Use Procedures
Policy EHAA	Computer Security, E-Mail and Internet Communications
Policy KDC	Web Site Publishing Policy

The Board chose to table the following proposed policy changes;

JLF	Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect
JICK	Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention Policy

On a motion by Mr. Baldwin, seconded by Mr. Collins

Voted: To approve the second reading and accept policy FF Naming New Facilities, as proposed.

Having no further discussion the motion passed unanimously

On a motion by Mrs. Champey, seconded by Mr. Baldwin

Voted: To approve the second reading and accept policy GBEBE (also see KHA) Staff Gifts and Solicitations, with changes as proposed.

Having no further discussion the motion passed unanimously

Administrator's Report

Mr. La Salle chose not to report due to the late hour and additional business must be attended to.

Personnel

None

Committee and Reports of the School Board

The board chose not to report due to the late hour and additional business must be attended to.

Correspondence

None

Vendor and Payroll

Done

Other

Mr. La Salle informed the board that school board training opportunities could be provided to them by NHSBA. He reviewed the subject matter that can be addressed and the option for a training session at the SAU office by having the NHSBA provide on-site training. The board asked to have the training scheduled and Mr. Collins requested to invite Mr. Sargent (Moderator) to provide training on Roberts Rules.

On a motion by Mrs. Aubrey, second by Mrs. Kosta

Voted: To go into a non-public session regarding 91A:3II(c) Reputation

The board was polled and the membership enter into a non-public session at 10:30 pm

On a motion by Mr. Mascola, second by Mrs. Aubrey

Voted: To exit the non-public session at 11:00 pm
The board was polled and the membership exited the non-public session

No action was taken during the Non-Public session.

Mr. Collins inquired if personal email addresses on the TRSB website could be addressed at this time. Mrs. Kosta thought it best to address this subject at the school board training session. Until a decision can be reached the current protocol will be followed.

With no further business to discuss, Mrs. Kosta adjourned the meeting at 11:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Nancy Danahy
School Board Clerk