

# TIMBERLANE REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD

ATKINSON, DANVILLE, PLAISTOW, SANDOWN

THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2013

Regular Meeting - 7:30 PM

Pollard School  
120 Main Street, Plaistow, NH

*Dr. Earl Metzler, II, Superintendent*  
*Winfried Feneberg, Asst. Superintendent*

*Robert Collins, Chair*  
*Lori Aubrey, Vice Chair*

## AGENDA

1. **Call to Order – Chair**
2. **Roll Call – Clerk**
3. **Pledge of Allegiance**
4. **Approval of Minutes**
  - a. January 31, 2013 (public and nonpublic)
  - b. Deliberative Session (and meeting following)
5. **Delegations or Individuals**
6. **Current Business**
  - a. Department Report/Pollard– INFORMATIONAL (30 minutes)
  - b. Eagle Scout Request – ACTION (15 minutes)
  - c. Field Trip Request – ACTION (15 minutes)
  - d. 2013-14 School Calendar – ACTION (30 minutes)
  - e. Math Pilot – INFORMATIONAL (15 minutes)
  - f. Assessment Team Development – INFORMATIONAL (15 minutes)
  - g. SERESC Update – INFORMATIONAL (15 minutes)
  - h. Board’s Self Evaluation – ACTION (15 minutes)
7. **Administrator’s Report**
  - a. Update on School Activities – INFORMATIONAL
8. **Personnel Report**
9. **Committee Report/Reports of the School Board**
10. **Correspondence Folder**
11. **Vendor and Payroll Registers**
12. **Other Business**
  - a. Non-public (if needed)
13. **Future Dates**

DATE	MEETING TYPE	LOCATION	TIME
March 21	Re-organizational/Regular Meeting	Sandown N	7:00 pm
April 4	Regular School Board Meeting	SAU	7:30 pm
April 17	SAU Board Re-organizational Meeting	SAU	7:00 pm
April 18	Regular School Board Meeting	SAU	7:30 pm
May 2	Regular School Board Meeting	SAU	7:30 pm
May 16	Regular School Board Meeting	SAU	7:30 pm
June 6	Regular School Board Meeting	SAU	7:30 pm
June 20	Regular School Board Meeting	SAU	7:30 pm

*The MISSION of the Timberlane Regional School District is to engage all students in challenging and relevant learning opportunities, emphasizing high aspirations and personal growth.*

## **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

To: Timberlane Regional School Board Members  
From: Dr. Earl Metzler, Superintendent of Schools  
Date: February 26, 2013  
Re: Administrator's Report for March 7, 2013 School Board Meeting  
**1-3. OPEN MEETING** Self-explanatory.

### **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Four sets: January 31 public and nonpublic, deliberative session and meeting immediately following.

### **5. DELEGATION OR INDIVIDUALS**

### **6. CURRENT BUSINESS**

#### **a. Department Report - 30 minutes**

Pollard School administrators and students to present. *INFORMATIONAL*

#### **b. Eagle Scout Request - 15 minutes**

Boy Scout Patrick Radford would like to propose constructing a teaching circle at Pollard School for his Eagle Scout Project. *ACTION*

#### **c. Field Trip Request - 15 minutes**

Lou Broad to request student field trip to Vermont as part of science curriculum. See policy IJOA. *ACTION*

#### **d. 2013-14 School Calendar - 30 minutes**

Dr. Metzler to report on the process in developing the 2013-14 school calendar. Deb Armfield to address professional development days and Lou Broad will be available to speak to TTA's preferences. *ACTION*

#### **e. Math Pilot - 15 minutes**

Kelli Killen to present the math pilot program with follow up scheduled for next meeting. Note: These materials are on display at the SAU. *INFORMATIONAL*

#### **f. Assessment Team Development - 15 minutes**

Deb Armfield to report on the development of the District Assessment Team, including its mission and goals. *INFORMATIONAL*

#### **g. SERESC Update - 15 minutes**

Dr. Roxanne Wilson to provide update of SERESC services. *INFORMATIONAL*

#### **h. Board's Self Evaluation - 15 minutes**

Rob Collins to present process for the board's self evaluation. *ACTION*

### **7-9. REPORTS**

#### **7. Administrator's Report - Dr. Metzler to present**

- a. Update on happenings and activities with each of the district schools
- b. School Board venue schedule to be updated (still need to visit TRMS and TRHS)

#### **8. Personnel Report - Mr. Metzler to present (if needed)**

#### **9. Committee Reports and Reports of the School Board**

### **10. CORRESPONDENCE**

### **11. VENDOR AND PAYROLL REGISTERS**

### **12. OTHER BUSINESS**

Non-public (if needed)

### **13. FUTURE DATES**

## UPCOMING REGULAR MEETING AGENDAS

*This information is provided for informational purposes only. Agenda items are subject to change.  
The official agenda will be distributed one week prior to its scheduled meeting.*

<b>March 21, 2013 – SANDOWN NORTH ELEMENTARY</b>	
Department Report	<i>Sandown North</i>
Reorganizational Meeting	<i>(Ethic Statements)</i>
Policies	<i>1<sup>st</sup> reading/adoption</i>
2013-14 School Calendar	<i>If needed</i>
Review of Election Results	
Committee Assignment	<i>Request board member preferences</i>
School Board Training	<i>Determine format/timeframe</i>
Math Pilot	<i>Follow up from 3/7 meeting</i>

<b>April 4, 2013</b>	
Renominations	
Policies	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> reading</i>
Set Graduation Date	
Committee Assignments	<i>Assignments</i>
Food Service Contract	<i>Review</i>

<b>April 18</b>	
Policies	<i>1<sup>st</sup> reading</i>
Standards-based Reporting	<i>Update</i>

### Back-Burner List

Standards-based Report Card	<i>11/15, 2/7, 4/18, &amp; 6/20</i>
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**Timberlane Regional School Board**  
Atkinson, Danville, Plaistow and Sandown  
New Hampshire

**Minutes of the Deliberative Session**  
**February 07, 2013**

**Call to Order**

At the Timberlane Performing Arts Center, Moderator Steven Ranlett called the February 07, 2013 Deliberative Session to order at 7:06 PM. He then led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Moderator introduced himself and the Assistant Moderator, NH State Representative Norman Major and stated that the Deliberative Session would be conducted following Roberts Rules of Order.

The Moderator informed those present that a citizen's petition had been brought forward to him, which requested that the vote on any amendments to the operating budget be conducted by secret ballot. He explained how the Warrant Articles can be amended during the proceedings.

The Moderator stated that voting on warrant articles number 1 through number 8 will be conducted by official ballot to be held in conjunction with town meeting voting to be held on Tuesday, the 12<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2013, at the Town election polls in Atkinson, Danville, Plaistow, and Sandown, New Hampshire.

Atkinson	Voting will be conducted at the Atkinson Community Center from 7am-8pm
Danville	Voting will be conducted at the Danville Community Center from 8am-7pm
Plaistow	Voting will be conducted at Pollard School from 7am-8pm
Sandown	Voting will be conducted at the Sandown Town Hall from 8am-8pm

School Board Members in attendance: Robert Collins (Chair), Lori Aubrey (Vice Chair), Lisa Withee, Peter Bealo, Elizabeth Kosta, Michael Mascola, Roger Barczak, Kate Delfino. Absent: Nancy Steenson

Budget Committee Members in attendance: Michelle O'Neil (Chair), Gregory Spero (Vice Chair), Donna Green, Cathy Lisi, Catherine Rochford, Diane Rothwell. Absent: Dennis Francoeur, Barry Weymouth

Others present: Dr. Earl Metzler (Superintendent of Schools), Winfried Feneberg (Assistant Superintendent), George Stokinger (Business Administrator), and Mike Elwell (District Legal Counsel).

**Article One – Election of Officers**

The Moderator outlined the Election of Officers that will be voted on March 12, 2013.

Danville Voters	School Board Member	3-Year Term
Plaistow Voters	School Board Member	3-Year Term
Sandown Voters	School Board Member	3-Year Term
Atkinson Voters	Budget Committee Member	1-Year Term
Danville Voters	Budget Committee Member	3-Year Term
Plaistow Voters	Budget Committee Member	2-Year Term
Plaistow Voters	Budget Committee Member	3-Year Term
Sandown Voters	Budget Committee Member	3-Year Term

**Article Two – Operating Budget**

The Moderator stated that there would be a change in the wording of Article Two, and that the second instance of the word "operating" in the paragraph would be changed to the word "default." Article Two with that correction will read as follows:

Shall the Timberlane Regional School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling **\$64,272,418**? Should this article be defeated, the **default** budget shall be **\$64,418,761** which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Timberlane Regional School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. Note: Warrant Article 2 (the operating budget) does not include appropriations proposed under any other warrant articles. (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

*Recommended by the School Board 9-0*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee 8-0*

***A motion by Michael Mascola, seconded by Catherine Rochford, to place Article Two on the floor for discussion.***

Michelle O'Neil, Chair of the Timberlane Budget Committee, gave a brief explanation of the duties of the Budget Committee, who the members are and how the Budget Committee operates. She introduced the members present.

Mrs. O'Neil gave a power point presentation on the proposed budget.

Resident Chris Russell of Sandown requested an explanation of why the default budget is not the amount of the previous year's budget.

Business Administrator George Stokinger explained the default law and how the default budget is determined.

The Moderator read the following list of non-voters that may speak or present information at the Deliberative Session.

Dr. Earl Metzler	Superintendent of Schools
George Stokinger	Business Administrator
Atty. Mike Elwell	District Legal Counsel
Kelli Killen	Director of Elementary Education
Scott Strainge	Director of Secondary Education
Deb Armfield	Director of Professional Learning
Dr. Roxanne Wilson	Director of Pupil Personnel
Beth Rincon	Assistant Director of Pupil Personnel
Nancy Danahy	Director of Human Resources
Michelle Gaydos	Principal - Pollard
Douglas Rolph	Principal - Sandown Central
Michael Hogan	Principal - Timberlane Regional Middle School
John Holland	Director of Technology
Tony DiBartolomeo	Director of Music
Jim Hughes	Director of Facilities
Linda Heuer	Technology Coordinator
Renzo Binagi	Director of the Evening Division
Lou Broad	TTA – Teachers' Union President
Lorraine Mascioli	TTA – Teachers' Union Vice President

***A motion by Sue Sherman of Plaistow, seconded by Jack Sapia of Atkinson, to accept the non-resident list as stated. Having no further discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.***

Resident Jack Sapia of Atkinson thanked the School Board and the Budget Committee for their service and asked for an explanation of the secret ballot process.

The Moderator explained that if there were no amendments to Article Two, the Article would be placed on the ballot as written. If there were any amendments proposed they would be decided by secret ballot. He stated that the signatures on the petition for the secret ballot had been verified by the Supervisors of the Checklists.

The Moderator stated that any proposed amendments had to be submitted in writing.

Resident Dennis Heffernan of Plaistow asked for clarification on the secret ballot process.

Attorney Mike Elwell clarified the RSA and the process.

Resident Sue Sherman of Plaistow requested more information on the increase in the SAU budget. Michelle O'Neil gave a brief explanation of the SAU Budget and the SAU Board and then deferred the question to the Chair of the SAU Board, Michael Mascola. Mr. Mascola explained that the budget included contractual payouts for the previous Superintendent as well as salary increases for three positions and a performance bonus for the Superintendent.

Mr. Stokinger explained that the rate increase in the New Hampshire Retirement System also contributed to the increase, and that 60% of the SAU budget was composed of staff salaries.

Budget Committee member Donna Green stated that the severance package the previous Superintendent received was not included in this proposed budget.

**Resident Jack Sapia of Atkinson made a motion to increase the Operating Maintenance & Grounds – Supplies line item from \$25,000 to \$175,000, an increase of \$150,000. The motion was seconded by Resident Ed Murphy (no town given).**

Mr. Sapia explained why he is asking for an increase. He would like to see the purchase of equipment which would be used for grooming the ball fields in less time than can be accomplished with current equipment and staff, and would like fencing installed around the fields.

Resident Louise Pajak of Sandown stated her support of the amendment and asked if the polls would be open for an hour for the secret ballot.

The Moderator stated that the polls would be open until he felt all people present or who had walked in had voted and he would then close the polls.

Resident Christopher True of Sandown stated that he was not in favor of passing the amendment.

School Board member Peter Bealo asked for the amendment to be re-read.

The Moderator re-read the amendment.

Mr. Bealo questioned whether or not an amendment can be made on a specific line in the budget.

Attorney Elwell explained that although a motion to amend the operating budget is an amendment on the bottom line of the budget, the person making the amendment can express their intention to change a specific line item of the budget.

Mr. Sapia clarified his intent in proposing the amendment.

School Board member Michael Mascola requested clarification on what type of equipment Mr. Sapia was proposing and whether or not he had conferred with the Director of Facilities Jim Hughes. Mr. Sapia stated that

he had not consulted with Mr. Hughes, and that the equipment was a three wheel John Deere which he had priced at \$22,000.

Budget Committee member Donna Green stated that she thought such a purchase should come out of a capital account, not the operating budget.

Resident Dennis Heffernan of Plaistow asked that if the amendment passes, does the increase have to go toward what the amendment is saying or can it be spent on anything else.

Attorney Elwell responded that the budget is a bottom-line budget, and there is no requirement that the increase be spent on the intention of the amendment.

Mr. Heffernan asked if there was any way to guarantee that the money would be spent on what the amendment intended.

Attorney Elwell stated that there was not.

Mr. Stokinger stated that in the past, the intent of amendments has been honored when the money had been expended.

Superintendent Metzler stated that if the amendment passes, the District would support its intent.

Mrs. Green made a distinction between a capital expense and operating budget, and stated that she is of the opinion that the money should come out of the capital reserve fund instead of being added to the operating budget. She is not in favor of the amendment.

Mrs. O'Neil clarified that if the equipment was purchased it would be a one-time expense and would be removed from the following year's budget.

Mr. Stokinger stated that the Capital Reserve Fund is specific to purpose and cannot be used for this purchase.

There being no further discussion, the Moderator informed the voters they would now vote by secret ballot, and that voters would have to show their voter card to receive a ballot.

The ballot results were forty-one votes for the amendment, and thirty-four votes against the amendment. The amendment passed and Article Two was amended as follows:

Shall the Timberlane Regional School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling **\$64,422,418**? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be **\$64,418,761** which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Timberlane Regional School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. Note: Warrant Article 2 (the operating budget) does not include appropriations proposed under any other warrant articles. (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

*Recommended by the School Board 9-0*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee 8-0*

***Resident Jack Sapia of Atkinson made a motion to increase the bottom line of the operating budget by \$75,000. The motion was seconded by Ed Murphy (no town given).***

Mr. Sapia explained that the purpose of the amendment was to purchase new equipment for the athletic teams and to refurbish current athletic facilities.

Resident Jennifer Caruso of Danville spoke against the amendment.

Resident Chris Russell of Sandown spoke against the amendment.

Resident Arthur Green of Sandown spoke against the amendment.

Mr. Sapia re-stated his purpose in proposing the amendment.

School Board member Peter Bealo asked if there is space to store a new tractor and other new equipment such as batting cages.

Director of Facilities Jim Hughes stated that there was available space to store the tractor and batting cages could be left outside.

Mrs. Green stated that the previous amendment that passed had increased the recommended budget so that it was now greater than the default budget.

There being no further discussion, the Moderator informed the voters they would now vote on the motion by secret ballot.

The ballot results were twenty-six votes for the amendment, and forty-eight votes against the amendment. The amendment was defeated.

**Having no further discussion the Moderator directed Article Two be placed on the ballot as amended.**

***A motion by Louise Pajak to restrict reconsideration of Article Two, seconded by Elizabeth Kosta. The motion passed by voice vote.***

### **Article Three – Capital Reserve Fund**

Shall the Timberlane Regional School District raise and appropriate up to **\$200,000** to be placed in the School Building Construction, Reconstruction, Capital Improvement and Land Purchase Capital Reserve Fund established in 1996, with such amount to be transferred from the June 30, 2013 unassigned fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1 of this year? (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

*(The funds for this article come from the 2012-2013 school budget surplus, not from additional taxes.)*

*Recommended by the School Board 9-0*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee 8-0*

***A motion by Michelle O'Neil, seconded by Michael Mascola, to place Article Three on the floor for discussion.***

**The Moderator solicited questions or comments, having none he directed Article Three be placed on the ballot as written.**

***A motion by Michelle O'Neil to restrict reconsideration of Article Three, seconded by Peter Bealo. The motion passed by voice vote.***

### **Article Four – Collective Bargaining Agreement (Timberlane Teachers' Association)**

Shall the Timberlane Regional School District vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Timberlane Teachers' Association and the Timberlane

Regional School Board, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year:

Cost Distribution	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
Salaries	\$494,737	\$589,674	\$561,794
FICA	37,847	45,110	42,977
NH State Retirement	70,055	83,498	79,550
Medical	(204,436)	0	0
TOTAL	\$398,203	\$718,281	\$684,321

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$398,203** for the 2013-14 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at the current staffing levels? (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

*Recommended by the School Board 8-1*  
*Recommended by the Budget Committee 7-1*

***A motion by Elizabeth Kosta, seconded by Catherine Rochford, to place Article Four on the floor for discussion.***

Resident Jim Garrity of Atkinson asked if Article Four could be amended.

Attorney Elwell stated that the dollar amount of a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) Warrant Article can be amended, but under statute the consequence of that action would be to allow either party to re-open negotiations, which would in effect defeat the Article.

***Mr. Garrity made a motion to decrease the bottom line of the 2013-2014 Total Cost to \$248,203, a decrease of \$150,000. The motion was seconded by Chris Russell of Sandown.***

Timberlane Teachers Association (TTA) Union President Lou Broad stated that while he understood the spirit of the amendment, he would emphasize the serious consequences if the amendment passed. He asked voters not to support the amendment.

School Board Chair Rob Collins stated that much time and effort had gone into negotiating the (CBA).

Resident Sue Sherman of Plaistow asked voters to support the Warrant Article as written.

Resident Debra Brown of Sandown stated that she though it unfair to ask the teachers to bear the cost of the previous amendment to Article Two. She asked voters not to support the amendment.

Resident Myra Hogan of Plaistow asked voters not to support the amendment.

Mr. Collins stated that in the previous TTA contract of 2006 – 2009, the cost of the contract was just over three million dollars over three years or one million per year and the \$398,203 of the CBA on this warrant article is a fair amount of money.

Resident Jack Sapia of Atkinson asked what the tax impact of the previous \$150,000 amendment to Article Two would be.

Business Administrator George Stokinger stated that he did not have the exact tax impact figure, but that \$150,000 of a \$64,000,000 budget is a relatively small percentage. He also noted that the handouts provided showed the tax impact of the TTA contract of \$398,000 as a perspective.

Resident Arthur Green of Sandown spoke against the amendment.

***Mr. Garrity made a motion to withdraw his amendment. Ms. Russell withdrew her second to the motion.***

***Resident Shawn O'Neil of Danville made a motion to move the question. The motion was seconded by Dennis Heffernan of Plaistow.***

Mr. Heffernan asked why one person from the School Board and one person from the Budget Committee did not recommend Article Four.

Budget Committee member Donna Green stated that she opposed the Article because of the terms of the contract, not because of the money. Her fundamental reason for opposing the Article was because the pay was not merit based.

School Board Member Roger Barczak stated that his reason for opposing the Article was because of the current economic situation.

Jack Sapia stated his support of the Article.

**The Moderator directed Article Four be placed on the ballot as written.**

***A motion by Michelle O'Neil to restrict reconsideration of Article Four, seconded by Lisa Withee. The motion passed by voice vote.***

#### **Article Five - Authorization for Special Meeting on Cost Items**

Shall the Timberlane Regional School District, if Article 4 is defeated, authorize the Timberlane Regional School Board to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 4 cost items only?

*(Without this Article the District would have to petition Superior Court for a Special School District Meeting. This saves the District the expense of attorney fees and court costs).*

*Recommended by the School Board 9-0*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee 7-1*

***A motion by Peter Bealo, seconded by Michael Mascola, to place Article Five on the floor for discussion.***

**The Moderator solicited questions or comments, having none he directed Article Five be placed on the ballot as written.**

#### **Article Six – Fund Balance Retention (Surplus)**

Shall the Timberlane Regional School District vote to authorize, indefinitely until rescinded, the retention of year-end unassigned general funds in an amount not to exceed, in any fiscal year, 2.5 percent of the current fiscal year's net assessment, for the purpose of having funds on hand to use as a revenue source for emergency expenditures and over-expenditures under RSA 32:11, or to be used as a revenue source to reduce the tax rate, all in accordance with 198:4-b, II? (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

*Recommended by the School Board 8-1*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee 8-0*

***A motion by Elizabeth Kosta, seconded by Michael Mascola, to place Article Six on the floor for discussion.***

Michelle O'Neil noted that 198:4-b, should read "**RSA** 198:4-b."

Resident Shawn O'Neil of Danville requested an explanation of how the money would be pulled out of the fund.

Business Administrator George Stokinger explained that the Article comes from new state legislation. He stated that previously surplus had to be returned to the voters, but the new legislation allows school districts to retain a small portion of the surplus as a safeguard against conditions such as unexpected expenses in a tight budget year or a shortfall in revenue. He further stated that it does not increase the budget but that the legislation would allow the District to petition the Commissioner of Revenue to exceed the budget and this fund would be used to pay for that additional expense. It could also be used to offset a spike in the tax rate if foreseen for the following year. Article Six, if it passes, would allow the School Board to make a decision each school year whether or not to set aside any money from the surplus for this purpose.

Mr. O'Neil asked if there were any checks and balances on the process.

Mr. Stokinger stated there were checks and balances.

**The Moderator solicited additional questions or comments, having none he directed Article Six be placed on the ballot as corrected.**

#### **Article Seven – General Acceptance of Reports**

Shall the Timberlane Regional School District accept reports of agents, auditors, and committees as written in the 2012 Annual Report? (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

*Recommended by the School Board 9-0*

***A motion by Gregory Spero, seconded by Michael Mascola, to place Article Seven on the floor for discussion.***

The Moderator solicited questions or comments, having none he directed Article Seven be placed on the ballot as written.

#### **Article Eight – SAU Budget on Warrant Petition by Donna Green et al**

Shall the voters of the Timberlane Regional School District within School Administrative Unit number 55 adopt the provisions of RSA 194-C:9-b to allow for insertion of the school administrative unit budget as a separate warrant article at annual school district meetings? (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

***A motion by Michelle O'Neil, seconded by Catherine Rochford, to place Article Eight on the floor for discussion.***

Mrs. Green gave a brief presentation of the purpose of the Article, that purpose being to allow Timberlane and Hampstead voters to approve the SAU budget directly. She stated that the SAU budget is not vetted by the Budget Committee and this Article, if passed, would allow voters to have oversight over the SAU budget. She further stated that in nine years the SAU budget had increased by 41%.

Mr. Collins clarified that the SAU Board serves as the SAU Budget Committee, and that they do vet the budget.

Mrs. Green stated that she had seen only one meeting of the SAU Board where the SAU budget was discussed, and that the only line item discussed at that meeting was salaries.

Resident Shawn O'Neil of Danville asked if there was a similar warrant article in the Hampstead School District and what would happen if one District passed the Warrant Article and the other District did not.

Attorney Elwell stated that all of the votes for both TRSD and HSD would be aggregated and a majority of the combined votes would determine if the Article passed or failed.

Michelle O'Neil asked if Mrs. Green could tell the voters why the SAU budget is up 41%.

Mrs. Green stated that she does not know why, she has looked at the bottom line only.

**The Moderator solicited questions or comments, having none he directed Article Eight be placed on the ballot as written.**

Michelle O'Neil thanked Catherine Rochford, Cathy Lisi and Barry Weymouth for their service to the Budget Committee.

Rob Collins thanked Michelle O'Neil for her service to the Budget Committee, and thanked Lori Aubrey and Lisa Withee for their service to the School Board.

***A motion by Michael Mascola, seconded by Peter Bealo to adjourn.  
Motion passed by voice vote.***

Moderator Ranlett adjourned the Deliberative Session at 9:18pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lorna Walker  
District Clerk

# EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

By

Patrick Radford

Troop 18, Plaistow, NH

# About Me:

- ▣ Patrick Radford Plaistow NH
- ▣ Age 16
- ▣ Junior at Timberlane Regional High School
- ▣ Honor roll
- ▣ Member of Football Team
- ▣ Life Scout – Boy Scouts of America Troop 18  
Plaistow

# Project

- ▣ Build a teaching circle for Pollard Elementary school.
- ▣ A teaching circle is an area where students can gather and sit down in a circle, while the teacher instructs as the focal point in the center of the circle.

# Atkinson Academy Teaching Circle Example



# Site Location: on side of Pollard School



# Site on side of school



Existing Bench and Plant will be moved and incorporated into teaching circle.

# Benches

- ▣ Nine benches seating 3 - 4 people per bench
- ▣ Height: 15 - 17 inches
- ▣ Length: approximately 96 inches
- ▣ Easy to maintain
- ▣ Natural look
- ▣ Secure with cement
- ▣ Still researching bench options, will present to Mrs. Gaydos and Mrs. Toscano for selection

# Bench Prices Researched to Date

## Complete Benches:

- ▣ Wood/Composite: Between \$50.00 - \$400.00
- ▣ Metal: Between \$400.00 - \$900.00
- ▣ Total Costs:
  - \$450.00- \$3,600 for wooden/composite benches
  - \$3,600- \$8,100 for metal benches

# Total Cost of Project

Benches: \$450-\$8,100

Labor: Free

Cement: \$80.00

Total Estimated Cost: \$530-\$8,180 depending on benches chosen

# Fundraising

- ▣ Pollard School Jean Day: Held February 22<sup>nd</sup>, money school raised will be put towards the project
- ▣ Home Depot/Lowes grants
- ▣ Donations

# Schedule

- ▣ Expect a couple days work offsite to prepare/ assemble the benches
- ▣ Onsite- expect one to two days for installation
- ▣ Expect to complete project by late Spring to mid-Summer 2013 depending on fundraising

# Project Work Outline

- ▣ Day 1:
- ▣ Meet at site with tools, equipment and materials
- ▣ Layout Benches
- ▣ Move plant
- ▣ Install benches into ground with cement as required and let it dry overnight
- ▣ Lunch
- ▣ Complete any remaining tasks and cleanup

# Project Work Outline

- ▣ Day 2
- ▣ Finishing touches

# Next Steps

- ▣ Obtain School Committee approval
- ▣ Present Eagle Project Plan to Yankee Clipper Council for approval
- ▣ Finalize bench options
- ▣ Check with the town to see if any permits are necessary
- ▣ Secure Donations/Fundraising
- ▣ Order Benches/Materials
- ▣ Assemble Crew
- ▣ Install Benches
- ▣ Inspection by Mrs. Gaydos and Mrs. Toscano

Questions?

# ***Project: Auroral Glimpse***

## **Project Description: November 2012**

Project Auroral Glimpse is a multi-school project involving The University of New Hampshire Space Science Department (UNH), Timberlane Regional High School (TRHS), Londonderry High School (LHS) and Coe-Brown Northwood Academy (CBNA). The goal of the project is to provide significant Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics STEM educational opportunities to high school students by using high altitude balloon platforms to video and measure characteristics of near space during peak auroral activity at mid-latitudes (42 degrees North).

The project is a result of collaboration between Mr. Lou Broad (TRHS), Dr. Chuck Smith (UNH), Mr. Scott Goelzer (CBNA) and Mr. Rich Levergood (LHS) and draws heavily from similar legacy missions performed by TRHS (1999 to 2006) and UNH Project SMART (2006 to 2012).

The scope of the project mimics, to a high degree, the design, construction, and operation of real scientific spacecraft missions while providing a hands-on example of the complexity and excitement of space exploration.

## **Project Objectives:**

- Build, launch and recover up to three high altitude balloon platforms during auroral activity. (80,000+ feet altitude)
- Video auroral activity from peak altitude
- Make measurements of near space environment (may or may not be relevant to auroral activity)
- Test concepts of flight frame design, on board computer control, data systems, and video capture systems.

## **Educational Objectives:**

- Engage students in science, engineering and math (STEM) investigations by observing and participating in the collaborative engineering/scientific process.
- Expand and reinforce student exploration of introductory space science by implementing a real world project.
- Guide students through process of scientific and public reporting.

## **Participating Responsibilities:**

Contributions to the overall mission will be divided among the four schools to provide for a level of specialty, expand the ability to work through multiple design cycles, and demonstrate collaborative processes used in such 'real world' projects.

### **Londonderry High School: Microcontroller design and construction.**

Building on the expertise of Mr. Rich Levergood and his implementation of micro controllers in his school's curriculum; Londonderry students will specialize in the development of a standard micro-controller package that will allow for a variety of sensors to be flown on the missions. These will be used to gather and store on board measurements using a suite of commercially available sensors. Ideally LHS students will provide the investigative teams (THRS) with a set of 'plug and play sensors' that can be tailored to specific flight observation or experiment.

The micro-controller will also be designed to operate as a flight control computer; providing autonomous control of some flight systems, such as cameras, and especially a flight termination system. Ideally the on-board system will know where it is using GPS and current flight conditions and decide to continue or terminate the flight to ensure safe recovery!

### **Coe Brown Northwood Academy: Construct flight frames and termination system.**

Building on the expertise of Mr. Scott Goelzer in RC airplane construction and modeling techniques and his implementation of tech-based curriculum; Coe-Brown Northwood students will specialize in constructing ultra-light flight frames based a non-parachute descent design recently tested at UNH Project SMART.

Coe-Brown Northwood students will also construct and test a tether burn mechanism to act as the on-command termination system. This will be designed to join up with the computer control built by LHS.

Finally, this team will construct a radar reflector and visibility strobe light integrated with the termination system.

**Timberlane Regional High School: Conduct primary near space research observations, provide tracking, launch and recovery logistics, provide final flight analysis and principal reporting.**

Building on the expertise of Mr. Lou Broad in small high altitude balloon launch systems (25 launches over last 12 years) along with the implementation of an introductory space science class: Timberlane students will utilize the flight systems provided by LHS and CBNA to design a series of near space observations or experiments and attempt to video aurora.

- TRHS students will provide primary tracking using Amateur Radio APRS systems.
- TRHS students will integrate camera systems into the flight package. TRHS students will be responsible for final integration of the flight system. TRHS will oversee coordination of launch and recovery teams.
- TRHS students will provide analysis of all flight data and be responsible for principal reporting.

**University of New Hampshire Space Science Department: Outreach and testing.**

Building on Dr. Chuck Smith's considerable expertise in space research and as director of UNH Project SMART/Space Science; UNH will provide outreach in the form of scientific lectures, demonstrations, and advice from scientists actively involved in large scale space research (rocket, spacecraft, and balloon based platforms).

UNH will also provide some availability for near-space simulation testing using their facilities.

UNH is providing the bulk funding through the Magnetic Multi-Spectral (MMS) space mission outreach funds and the New Hampshire Space Grant Consortium.

## **PROJECT TIMELINE:**

LHS and CBNA students have already begun coordination of their activities since the beginning of school September. TRHS will begin activities at the start of the planned space science class at the end of January 2013.

The first preliminary baseline flight is planned for mid-March or early April; approximately eight weeks after the beginning of TRHS space science class. This first launch will serve as a data baseline and 'all up' flight test and practice flight. This flight will not be time dependent as it will not fly under Aurora.

The second and third flight will be targeted to fly during high auroral activity and thus will be heavily time dependent: typically envisioning between a 36 to 72 hour warning. These two flights could occur anytime between the success of the first light and the end of the school year. Ideally these flights would occur in April and early May.

## **FLIGHT SCENARIOS:**

Auroral activity peaks at around 1 AM therefore a launch to photograph would need to occur at approximately midnight with termination at approximately 3 AM. A typical launch crew would consist of 8 to 12 students and 4 to 6 adults that would leave school around 6 PM for arrival at launch site at approximately 9 PM and then take three-hours to set up for launch.

Meanwhile a recovery crew would position themselves in the likely touchdown area at also approximately 9 PM. A recovery crew would ideally consist of two cars with radio tracking and computer equipment a portable high gain antenna radio system, and computer Internet radio and amateur radio connect-ability to launch team and control team.

A data control team and launch control team would be positioned at TRHS and LHS, with students and adults manning those stations. LHS is ideally situated for a high gain radio telemetry tracking system due to their central location and altitude. This will serve as a great backup in the event Internet tracking was down. TRHS will serve as a control center, with amateur radio, data telemetry and Internet access controlling the entire operation.

After the launch team has released the balloon system they will then pack up and may leave anytime, although the first five to ten minutes a data is typically captured by this team. A 12 AM flight launch will result in students returning to school at approximately 3 AM.

The forward recovery teams would monitor the flight and place themselves as close to the predicted touchdown as possible so as to record the GPS position. From there the recovery teams leader would decide whether to proceed with a recovery or wait for a better opportunity.

### **FLIGHT MEASUREMENTS:**

As of November the planned flight measurements include

- Flight altimeter

GPS

- Geiger counter

three axis acceleration meters

carbon dioxide measurements

cameras to capture flight performance characteristics

cameras to capture auroral activity

external pressure and temperature

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

In addition to the resources being used at the four schools the project will rely on the meteorology classes at Timberlane high school, and the engineering classes with their capability of 3-D printing and CNC construction.

Each school system is providing some independent funding, primarily to cover transportation costs for visiting UNH and transporting students to launch site and back.

### **Federal aviation administration approval and safety considerations:**

As with all previous legacy missions FAA rules regulations and guidelines will be strictly followed. Recent communication with the regional safety data office has confirmed that our current plans fall under guidelines. Prior to launch a notice to airmen (NOTAM) Will be filed, local air traffic control will be notified 24 hours before launch one-half hour before launch, at launch, and the termination of flight.

Safety is paramount to all operations and safety protocols will be strictly followed. Balloon launches of this type are very safe. Students will be thoroughly drilled in safety protocols and strictly observed by adults at all times.

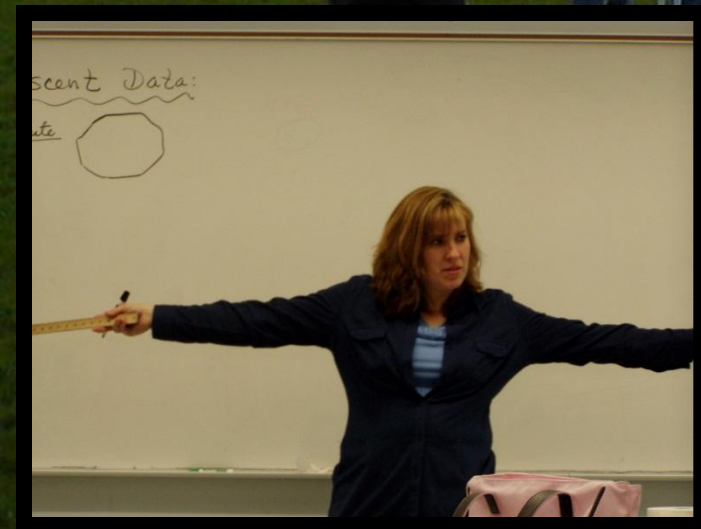
All other district requirements will be followed.

# ***Auroral Glimpse***

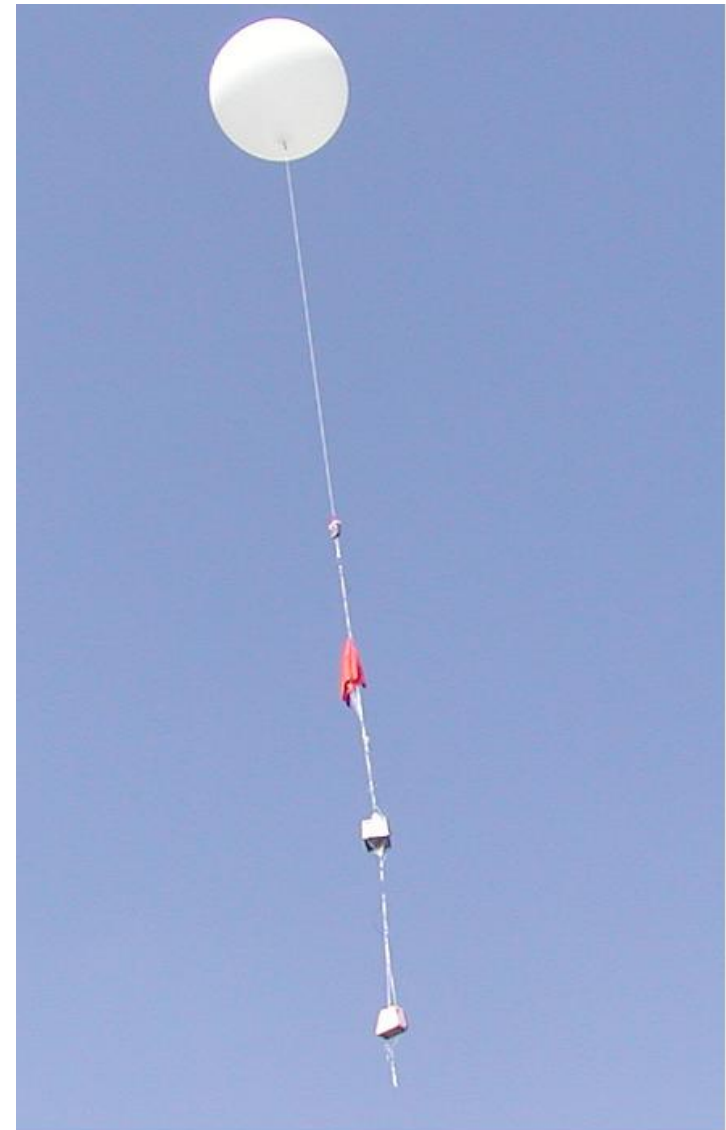
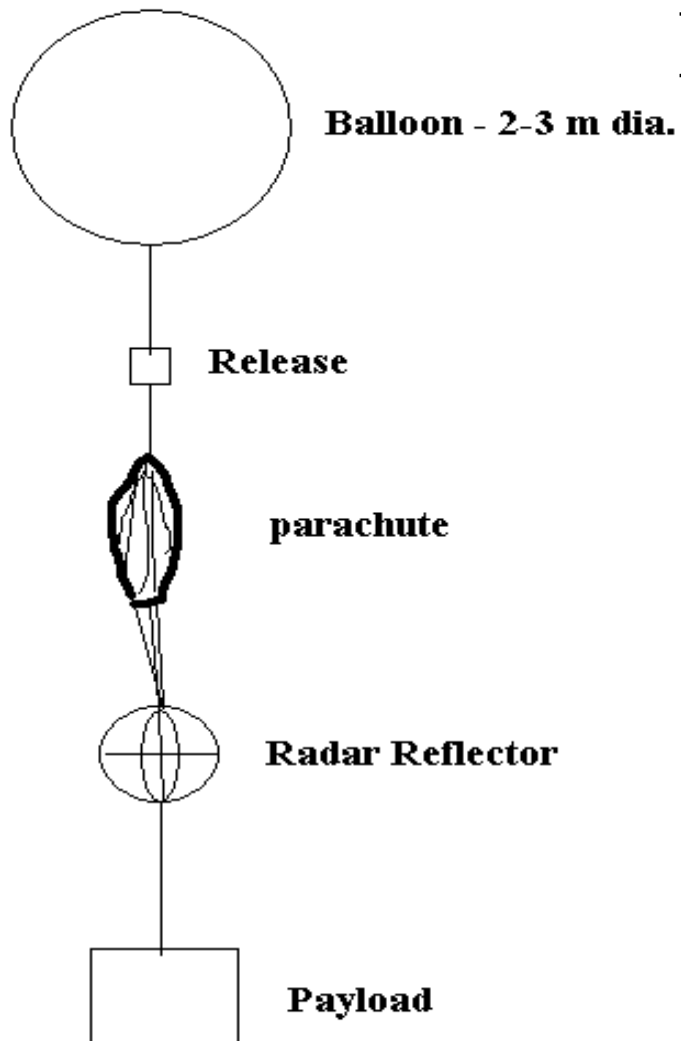


***University of New Hampshire***

***Timberlane Regional High School  
Londonderry High School  
Coe-Brown Academy***



# Basic Balloon System





Zone of  
Limited  
Niceness

Zone of  
Reasonable  
Niceness

Zone of  
Unlikely  
Recovery





ARCHER®  
AC ADAPTER  
CAT. NO. 273-MS9C  
FOR USE WITH CLASS 2 OR CLASS 1  
INPUT : 120V AC 60HZ 8W  
OUTPUT : 9V DC 300mA  
CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER  
1-800-828-8888

MR BROAD

Bob Ness @ KB1DLX

# CHECKLIST / COUNTDOWN!!!

- ✓ FLIGHT BOSS
- ✓ FLIGHT BOSS
- ✓ FLIGHT BOSS
- ✓ FLIGHT BOSS
- ✓ REMOVE
- ✓ ASK
- ✓ CAPCOM
- ✓ BACK UP
- ✓ TRACKING
- ✓ HAM RADIO A
- ✓ FLIGHT BOSS INSPECT
- ✓ FLIGHT BOSS INSPECT
- ✓ FLIGHT BOSS INSPECT CONFIRM
- ✓ BEGIN TRACKING DATA
- CONFIRM WITH CAP COM FOR STRAGS ( TIME, LONG, LAT ALT )
- ✓ FORCE MEASUREMENT
- ✓ READ BY FLIGHT BOSS
- ✓ CAPCOM GO / NOGO
- ✓ BACK UP GO / NOGO
- ✓ TRACKING GO / NOGO
- ✓ FLIGHT BOSS GO / NOGO
- ✓ BEGIN 10 SECOND COUNTDOWN!!!



- ✓ -ALTITUDE
- ✓ TURN CAMERA ON
- ✓ TEST CAMERA ( COORDINATE WITH CAP COM )
- ✓ BOSS CHECK ON CAMERA + EQUIPMENT
- ✓ CONTINUE TO CHECK GPS LOCK ( TIME, LONG, LAT, ALT )



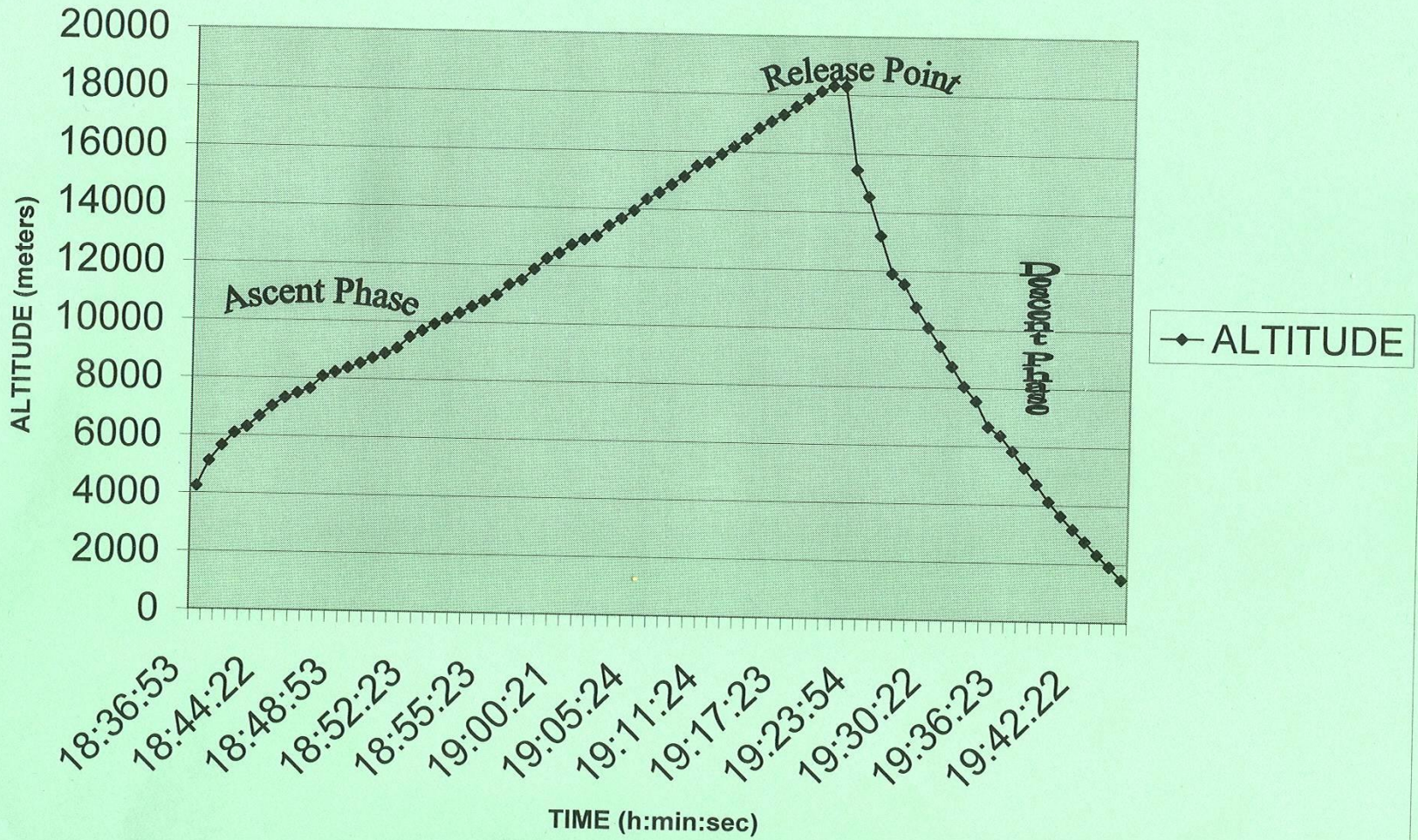
7-201

PHOTO

PHOTO

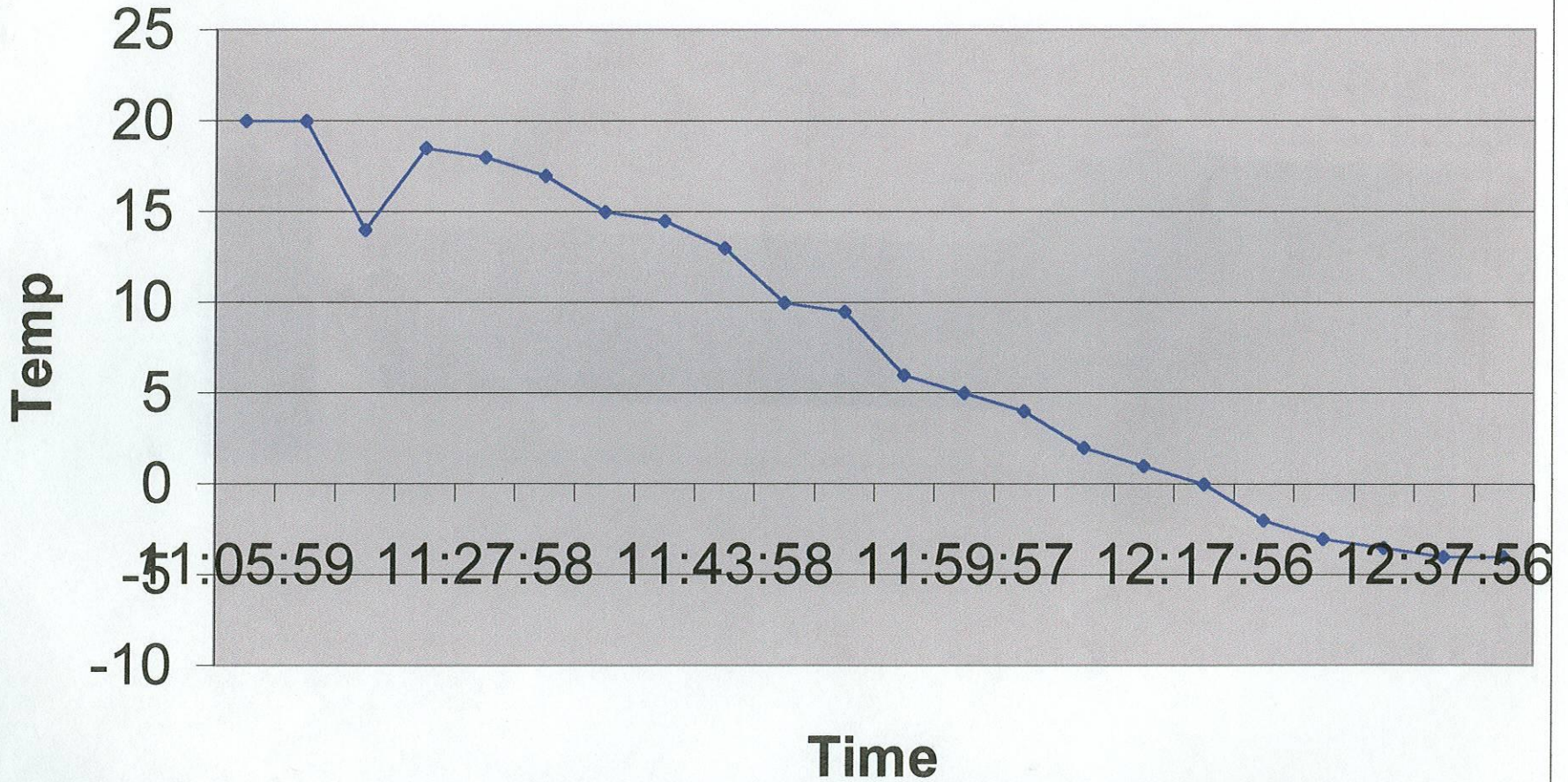


# ALTITUDE vs TIME



# Temp vs Time *Breno*

Temp vs Time



*K. Stone*



# Coordinated Algebra & Physics

1999 - 2006

20 balloon flights

## UNH PROJECT SMART SMARTSATS

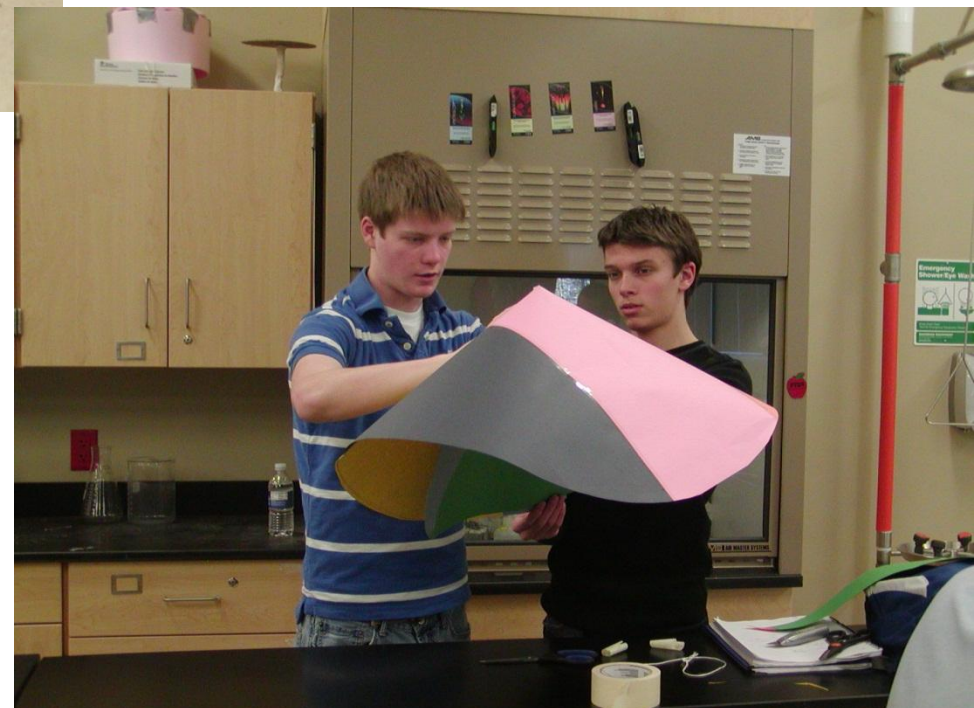
2006      2009      2010

2011      2012



“If you want students to be creative, assign it!”

Dr. Woody Flowers, MIT



48 students, 1 week

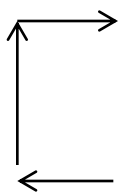


1: Design

2: Build

3: Test

4: Redesign



**REPORT RESULTS**



# SMARSAT V





SMARTSAT V 105,700 feet!





*NASA*

# Project: *Auroral Glimpse*

Spring 2013



Timberlane Regional High School  
Londonderry High School  
Coe-Brown Academy  
UNH Space Science Department

# Project: *Auroral Glimpse*

Build and launch three balloon systems

Make measurements of aurora and near space environment

Test flight gear (computer systems, flight frame)

Londonderry: Design and build computer systems

Coe-Brown: Design, test and build flight frames

Timberlane: Integrate systems, design experiments, photo, video, tracking and reporting

- Educational opportunities

- Modeling spacecraft missions: design, build, fly, analyze, report

- Examine sun-earth connection and near space properties

- Participate in an applied science/engineering endeavor.

# Project: *Auroral Glimpse*

Costs: Transportation, incidentals

(UNH Providing primary construction and flight costs ~\$3000)

Request to Board:

Permission for field trips:

3 trips (aprx. 10 students per trip) to Vermont (short notice!)

Depart 6:00 pm

Return to school 4 am – 5 am

Use of school facilities 8 pm to 3 am!

<b>Timberlane Regional School District</b>	<b>Policy Code: IJOA</b>
<b>Adopted: 10-15-86</b> <b>Revised: 05-02-91</b> <b>Reaffirmed: 02-24-05</b>	<b>Page 1 of 2</b>

## STUDENT TRIPS

Field trips designed to stimulate student interest and inquiry and provide opportunities for social growth and development are considered appropriate extensions of the classroom. To the extent that they provide the most effective means for accomplishing general curriculum objectives of the school, the building Principal may authorize field trips.

To be educationally beneficial, a field trip requires thoughtful selection, careful advance preparation of the class, and opportunities for pupils to assimilate the experience during and at the conclusion of the trip. To this end, teachers and principals will be expected to consider the following factors in selection of field trips:

- (a) value of the activity to the particular class group or class groups;
- (b) relationship of the field trip activity to a particular aspect of classroom instruction;
- (c) suitability of the activity and distance traveled to the age level;
- (d) mode and availability of transportation; and
- (e) cost.

Chaperons for field trips will be assigned at the discretion of the Principal according to the type of trip involved.

### Sanctioning Student Trips

- A. School-sponsored trips are defined as student trips that have been organized, scheduled or otherwise promoted by the School Board, Superintendent of Schools, or building Principal. Examples would be athletic trips, band trips, class trips, etc. Only those trips that are deemed to have significant educational value and that are directly related to existing educational programs shall be sponsored. Any trip involving travel of over 300 miles, overnight travel, or a overnight trip requiring a student's absence from the school building during normal school hours shall require the prior approval of the School Board. Overnight trips and/or trips over 300 miles that are held annually shall require the approval of the Superintendent rather than the school board.
- B. School related trips are defined as student trips organized; scheduled, or sponsored by a school club or other organization connected with the school whose advisor is salaried by the District or whose advisor has been appointed by the school administration. Only those trips directly related to existing educational programs shall be sponsored. Any trip involving fund-raising and/or a student's absence from

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the school building during normal school hours shall require the prior approval of the School Board. The building Principal or Superintendent of Schools, who may consult the Board or request general Board approval for a series of field trips or general type of field trip, may approve other school-sponsored trips.

- C. Any other trips, including those that may involve participation of students from the Timberlane Regional School District or employees of the Timberlane Regional School District that are not explicitly approved by the School Board, the Superintendent of Schools, or the building Principal in accordance with the above procedures, are not school-sponsored or school-related trips and shall not be represented as such. Planning for, recruitment of participants for, or any other activity related to such trips shall not take place within the schools of the District or utilize District facilities unless approved by the Principal. It is the obligation of the planners of such trips to ensure that any literature about such trips, announcements of such trips, or recruiting materials for participants in such trips shall make it clear to parents and guardians, and students that the trip is being organized and sponsored by a private individual or group and not by the Timberlane Regional School District. Parents, guardians, and students must be told explicitly that the District accepts no responsibility, financial or otherwise, for the trip.

Financing Student Trips

- A. The cost of school-sponsored trips shall be the responsibility of the School District and will be provided for in the regular annual budgetary process. In cases where funds are limited, the school administration may assess a fee to participating students in order to recover costs or may permit fund-raising by the student organization involved.
- B. The cost of school-related trips shall be the responsibility of the sponsoring club and/or organization. The process by which funds are raised and expended must be approved in advance by the building Principal and/or Superintendent of Schools.
- C. Solicitation is prohibited within the Timberlane Regional School District facilities or during regular school hours by Timberlane employees or students for funds for any but school-sponsored or school-related trips for which fund-raising is explicitly approved in accordance with this policy.

# Timberlane Regional School District

Atkinson, Danville, Plaistow, Sandown

## 2013 - 2014 School Calendar

The *MISSION* of the Timberlane Regional School District is to engage all students in challenging and relevant learning opportunities, emphasizing high aspirations and personal growth.

	M	T	W	Th	F		M	T	W	Th	F
<b>August</b> (3)	D-PD	B-PD	28	29	30	<b>February</b> (15)	3 9 16	4 10 17	5 11 18	6 12 19	7 13 ER X
<b>September</b> (20)	X 9 16 23 30	3 10 17 24	4 11 18 25	5 12 19 26	6 13 20 27	<b>March</b> (20)	3 10 17 24 31	4 11 18 25	5 12 19 PD	6 13 20 27	7 14 21 28
<b>October</b> (22)	X 7 14 21 28	1 8 15 22 29	2 9 16 23 30	3 10 17 24 31	4 ER 18 25	<b>April</b> (19)	7 14 21	1 8 15 22	2 9 16 23	3 10 17 24	4 11 18 ER
<b>November</b> (17)	X 4 11 18 25	5 12 19 26	6 13 20 PD	7 14 21 X	8 15 22 X	<b>May</b> (19)	5 12 19 X	6 13 20 27	7 14 21 28	X 8 15 22 29	X 9 16 ER 30
<b>December</b> (15)	X 2 9 16 X X	3 10 17 X X	4 11 18 X	5 12 19 X	6 13 20 X	<b>June</b> (10)	2 9 16 MU MU	3 10 17 MU MU	4 11 18 MU MU	5 12 13 MU MU	6 13 MU MU
<b>January</b> (20)	6 13 X 27	7 14 PD 28	X 8 15 22 29	2 9 16 23 30	3 10 17 24 31	<b>180 + 5PD + 2 FLEX = 187</b>					

PD = Professional Development Day (no school for students)  
 D-PD = District Professional Development NT= New Teacher Day  
 B-PD = Building Level Professional Development  
 X = Holiday/School Break MU = Make-up Day

Student Year = 180 days Teacher Year = 187 days  
 Quarters: November --, January --, April --, and Last Day of School  
 Trimesters: December --, March --, Last Day of School

August 22	New Teacher Orientation	January 20	Civil Rights Day
August 26-27	Professional Development	January 21	Professional Development
August 28	▲ First Day of School	Feb 23-27	Winter Break
September 2	Labor Day	March 26	Professional Development
October 14	Columbus Day	April 28-May 2	Spring Break
November 11	■ Veteran's Day Observed	May 26	■ Memorial Day Observed
November 27	Professional Development	June 13	Last Day of School **
November 28-29	Thanksgiving Break	June 16-27	Make Up Days
Dec 23 -Jan 1	Holiday Break		

▲ Per TRSD Policy IC/ICA: Instructional days will begin the day after Labor Day when Labor Day falls on September 1, 2, or 3 and will begin the week before Labor Day when Labor Day falls on September 4, 5, 6 or 7. POLICY WAIVED \_\_\_\_\_.  
 ■ Required day out of school per RSA 288:4 \*\* Subject to change due to school closures  
 Early Release days: October 11, February 20, April 25 and May 23.

Approved by the Timberlane Regional School Board \_\_\_\_\_.

## ***Memo to the Timberlane Board***

***From Dr. Roxanne Wilson***

***Date: January 13, 2013***

### **What is SERESC?**

The Southeastern Regional Education Service Center (SERESC) located in Bedford NH is a non-profit educational collaborative, established in 1974, that provides quality professional development and consulting services to school districts. Its original mission was to help meet the needs of member school districts related to the federal special education legislation. This original mission still exists today, but SERESC has expanded to provide extensive professional development and consultative services in program improvement to over 100 school districts.

### **Membership**

Member districts include Bedford, Merrimack, Londonderry, Litchfield, Hudson, Hooksett, Candia, Auburn, Pelham, Windham, and Timberlane. The Superintendent of each school district serves on the SERESC Board of Directors and Executive Committee.

The annual membership fee is assessed at \$3.60 per student enrolled in the district. This rate has not increased since 1974. Timberlane's membership cost is currently budgeted at \$14,760 for 2013-14.

### **Membership Advantages:**

Membership in SERESC provides districts priority access to various services and programs, as well as voting rights for developing the direction of the agency through the Board of Directors. Members also receive a discount on consultative rates and fees associated with renting rooms at the Professional Development Center (PDC).

#### **Consultative Services**

- Member districts receive a \$10 per hour discount for SERESC consultants' services. Timberlane currently pays \$80, instead of \$90, per hour for speech services. This will result in approximately a \$5,000 savings.
- There is a 5% reduced rate for vision services for member districts. The savings for next year will be approximately \$3,500.

#### **Professional Development Center (PDC)**

- If Timberlane uses the PDC and orders lunch as part of the program, the room rental and technology fee is waived.
- If Timberlane uses the PDC and does not order food, we receive a 15% discount in the room rental fee.

## Student Services

SERESC offers experts in special education for autism, vision, speech, behavior, counseling, assistive technology, and multi-handicapped conditions. It is helpful to know the assistance is available, even though it is not always needed. Timberlane uses several of the consultants for students who require services beyond the expertise of our school-based personnel.

Service Type	Description	Consultant	Approximate budget cost 2013-14
<b>Speech Therapy</b>	Specialized focus on feeding and swallowing  3 Student IEPS Consultation Evaluations	Judy Mikami	\$ 39,500
<b>Vision Services</b>	Teachers of students with visually impairments  11 Student IEPS Consultation Evaluations	Kathy Downes Kris Herrick Marcia Emerson	\$63,000
<b>Evaluations</b>	For children with multiple disabilities  Functional vision assessments and Assistive Technology	Dr. Mary Morse  Doug Vesely	\$1,500  \$1,500

## Staff Services

Timberlane staff attend a variety of workshops in special education, curriculum, assessment, and instruction at reasonable costs. SERESC received a \$100,000 grant from the NH Department of Education to assist districts with implementation Common Core State Standards.

Timberlane participates in a variety of professional learning groups at SERESC.

- Southcentral Superintendents,
- Southcentral Special education Directors,
- Southcentral Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment,
- PTAN: Preschool Technical Assistance Network
- NH Responds Grant: RTI initiative

At this time, membership in SERESC provides the Timberlane District with “hard” cost savings for certain student services and “soft” advantages in knowing there is an agency that will be responsive to specific needs for special education students, programs, and staff.