

Timberlane Regional School District Budget Committee
Atkinson, Danville, Plaistow, Sandown

Special Budget Committee Meeting
May 13, 2010

SAU 30 Greenough Road
Plaistow, NH

Mrs. O'Neil opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Present: Ms. Rochford, Mr. Mullen, Mrs. O'Neil, Ms. Conte, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Balanoff, Mrs. Chaput, Mrs. Lisi and Mr. Mascola, alternate for Mr. Collins.
Absent: Mr. Murray.

Administrators present were: Mr. Feneberg, Assistant Superintendent, Mrs. Lovett, Director of Pupil Personnel and Mrs. Rincon, Assistant Director of Pupil Personnel.

Mrs. O'Neil led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Rochford made a motion to accept the minutes of April 8, 2010 with amendments, and was seconded by Mrs. Chaput.

Vote: Seven in favor, two abstain: Mr. Balanoff and Mr. Mascola.

There were no correspondences received.

There were no Delegations and Individuals to speak.

Mr. Stokinger stated under the Expenditures and Receipts Reports, he has reported to the School Board as of three weeks ago, an unencumbered fund balance of approximately 1.2 million dollars. This number was budgeted at \$900,000 last fall, but due to the mild winter and some favorable variances in salaries and benefits, the actual number seems to be approximately 1.2 million dollars. Mr. Bouchard was asking for clarification how this happens. Mr. Stokinger explained for example, that when budgeting in the fall, the group insurance rates are unknown for the next year; however the insurance company will provide a **guaranteed maximum rate** increase for budgeting purposes. This past fall the GMR came in at 22% which Mr. LaSalle and Mrs. Danahy renegotiated with the insurance company to bring down to a more reasonable number. The insurance company agreed to close the "window of experience" used to define the rate change, from two years to one year, which dropped the GMR from 22% to 13%. We then budgeted for the 13% increase in health insurance. Recently the actual rates for next year were released by the insurance company and the rates are going up 11.2%. This means there should be a surplus in the insurance line because it was budgeted at the 13% GMR.

Mrs. O'Neil suggested jumping down to New Business so Mrs. Lovett and Mrs. Rincon could do their presentations now and not have to sit through the rest of the agenda items.

Mrs. Lovett started out with a brief overview of how a student becomes coded as a special education student. First, if a child is suspected of having a disability of any kind, a referral is made to the Special Education Department which can be done by a teacher, parent, or outside doctor or therapist. The school has fifteen days to gather information and hold a team meeting to review the data collected. The team consists of a minimum of a regular education teacher, a special education teacher, a local education agency representative, a parent and any other people deemed important for this student's best interest such as OT, PT, counselors, and psychologist. This team is called the IEP team. The next phase is an evaluation which takes a maximum of 45 days. After the evaluations are completed, the results of the evaluations are brought back to the IEP team to agree and decide upon the most appropriate educational plan for the student. The agreed upon plan and related services are written into the student's IEP. The implementation of the IEP commits the District to providing the services outlined in the plan and drives the Special Education Department Budget.

57% of the Pupil Personnel Budget is out of district tuition, 23% is transportation, 8% is outside contracted services and all other expenses are 12%.

Mrs. Lovett explained that if a child fails to progress within the school district special education program and the IEP team agrees that a more appropriate educational setting for that child is recommended, then that child will be placed in an educational program outside the district and the tuition is the school district's responsibility. The outside facilities program must be appropriate for the student and be on the State of NH list of approved educational facilities. There are currently 28 special education students placed in out of district facilities. Of the 28, 7 are court ordered placements. It is federal and state law which states that all children are required to receive a free and appropriate public education. (FAPE)

Transportation to and from the educational facility, whether in or out of the school district, is also the responsibility of the school district. Currently Timberlane uses 7 dedicated special education busses. Most special education children have mild enough disabilities that they can utilize the regular school bus. Transportation and other related services for a child are determined by the IEP team.

Mr. Mascola asked about the various special education programs at each school and the designated district programs located in specific schools. Mrs. Lovett relayed there is an Autism Program at both Pollard and Danville. Atkinson and Sandown North both have an Intensive Needs Program and all schools have general special education providers and specialists such as OT, PT and speech. At the HS and MS there is an adjustment counselor to aid the emotionally handicapped students.

Currently the Timberlane school district has six psychologists (one being part-time). Of the six psychologists, one is designated the out of district coordinator who essentially acts as the case manager for the 28 out of district placement students.

Timberlane has 10 nurses (one part-time nurse is specifically for the preschool program due to the needs of that intensive program). There is one school nurse at each elementary school, two nurses for the HS and MS due to the number of students at those locations, being 1500 and 1100.

One nurse for those buildings would not provide enough coverage. It has been recorded previously that there are as many as 10,000 visits to the HS nurse in a school year. There is one doctor contracted to work with the district for staff physicals and some student needs.

Special Education Department revenue was briefly discussed. Catastrophic Aid is reimbursed to the district for students whose education costs exceed 3.5 times the state average. The district must pay the total cost up front and the state reimburses the district, at a prorated rate, during the next fiscal year. In recent years, the prorated rate has ranged from 75% to 95% of the entitlement. In regards to the students who are court placed, the school district is responsible for the first \$35,000 and any costs over this amount, per court placed student, are paid by the State.

Of the 4600 students in the Timberlane School District (including preschool), 746 are coded as special education students with IEP's. Children with 504 plans are not included in the 746 number.

Mrs. Rincon and Mrs. Lovett finished their presentation and left the meeting at 8:00 pm and Mr. Collins arrived to exchange places with Mr. Mascola.

Under the Reports and Committees section, Ms. Rochford stated she missed the last Facilities & Safety Meeting. Mr. Stokinger stated that Facilities has cancelled their last meeting for this year, but Safety is trying to organize a meeting for May 25, 2010. The next Facilities meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2010.

Mr. Collins reported that Mr. Strainge is officially the Director of Secondary Education as of the last School Board meeting. Additionally the School Board approved the expenditure of an additional \$119,700 from the unencumbered fund balance to complete facilities projects that had previously been cut, to bring the budget down.

Under unfinished business on the agenda, Mrs. O'Neil reviewed that she had not heard back on the question regarding how the various committee minutes could be made available to the Budget Committee members. She stated she would follow up with the inquiry. Mr. Stokinger stated he would get the information for the Budget Committee members. Mr. Collins stated he thought the Curriculum Committee minutes are posted on the SharePoint site.

Mr. Mullen brought up for discussion under other business, his appreciation for tonight's excellent presentation by the PPS Department and especially the question and answer portion. He believes these additional meetings are going to be quite helpful to the Budget Committee members. He was hoping to have an additional meeting once a month through the summer to have a more in depth review of both the Technology and the Facilities Departments. Mrs. O'Neil agreed she is quite interested in hearing from Facilities since summer is such a busy time for them and they now have additional funds to spend on completing additional projects. The other Budget Committee members were in agreement to invite the Facilities Department to a meeting on June 10, 2010 at 7pm for a brief presentation and update to the Budget Committee and a question and answer session. This meeting is contingent upon Mr. Hughes being available. It was also agreed that the Technology Department would be invited for the same purpose on June 24, 2010. (Not the first Thursday in July because of the holiday).

Mr. Mullen asked about reviewing the Capital Improvement Plan with the CIP Committee. Mr. Feneberg stated that there is not an active committee at this time but the School Board will be given the finalized Strategic Plan which encompasses the CIP at their next scheduled meeting. Mr. Feneberg strongly recommended that anyone interested in the CIP Committee attend the next School Board Meeting. Mr. Stokinger stated the economy and the State moratorium on funding any new school building projects, has stopped any work on CIP projects at this time. However, it was noted that Mr. LaSalle feels strongly that planning for the CIP projects should continue so that when the economy improves and the State begins funding the school building projects again, we are at the beginning of the line and have all our prep and planning work already done. Mr. LaSalle and the School Board are in agreement that since the conceptual plan is in place, it is important to move in that direction.

Mr. Stokinger reported that the Facilities Department is very busy with a number of bids out now, so when Monday June 21, 2010 comes around, they will begin work immediately on many projects such as the Atkinson Academy kitchen renovation, replacement doors, lighting, paving etc.

Mr. Feneberg stated the CIP committee is a subcommittee of the Strategic Plan Committee. He stated that anyone who would like to participate in Strategic Planning, please contact him or Cathy Belcher. He feels the more new people, the better to keep the planning fresh and moving.

Ms. Rochford made a motion and was seconded by Mrs. Lisi, to adjourn at 8:20 p.m.
Vote: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted:
Kathy Smith,
Recording Secretary
Approved September 9, 2010