

TIMBERLANE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Atkinson, Danville, Plaistow and Sandown, New Hampshire
Minutes of the Deliberative Session
2026 Deliberative Session, held at the Timberlane Regional Performing Arts
Center, 40 Greenough Road, Plaistow, NH,
February 5, 2026

District Moderator Robert Harb called the February 5th to order at 7:23PM. The Moderator led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance, which was followed by a performance of the Timberlane Regional High School Chamber Choir.

School Board Members in attendance: Chair Katherine Knutsen (Plaistow), Vice-Chair Mark Sherwood (Sandown), Shauna Manthorn (Plaistow), Alyssa Kowaszyk (Plaistow), Marianne Springer (Danville), Brienna Woodworth (Danville), Jack Sapia (Atkinson), Paul LeCain (Sandown) and Donald Woodworth (Atkinson).

Budget Committee Members in attendance: Chair Liz Kosta (Plaistow), Vice-Chair Karen White (Sandown), Julie Hammond (Atkinson), Peter Bealo (Plaistow), Katherine Consalvo (Atkinson), and Sabrina Alberg (Danville)

Also seated with the Board: Superintendent of Schools Justin Krieger, Business Administrator Maria Watkins and District Legal counsel Attorney Gordon Graham.

MOTION: Chair Knutsen made a motion, seconded by Mark Sherwood to allow the following non-residents to speak during the meeting: District Legal Counsel Attorney Gordan Graham, Justin Krieger (Superintendent), Chris Martin (Director of Operations and Special Projects), Ginger Drechsel (Director of Student Services), Fran Decinto (Director of Human Resources), Mark Pedersen (TAU Representative), Tracy St. Clair (TCSU and TAAM Representative) and Christine McNee (TSSU Representative).

PASSED by card vote.

Moderator Harb read the Mission statement of the Timberlane Regional School District. He then reviewed the rules of the meeting to the qualified voters in attendance and directed all makers of motions and seconds state their names for the record.

With no objection, the standard moderator rules were adopted for the conduct of the meeting. General comments are limited to 3 minutes. Makers of motions must state their name and address. All votes will be conducted by raising the voting card. If it is close the assistant moderators on the floor will count.

To the inhabitants of the School District of the Towns of Atkinson, Danville, Plaistow, and Sandown, New Hampshire, qualified to vote in District affairs:

The first session of the annual meeting, the Deliberative, you are hereby notified to meet the Timberlane Performing Arts Center, 40 Greenough Rd, Plaistow, NH on Thursday, the 5th day of February 2026, at 7:00PM. This session shall consist of explanation, discussion, and debate of warrant articles number 2 through number 18. Warrant articles may be amended subject to the following limitations: (a) warrant articles whose wording is prescribed by law shall not be amended, (b) warrant articles that are amended shall be placed on the official ballot for a final vote on the main motion, as amended, and (c) no warrant article shall be amended to eliminate the subject matter of the article.

Second Session of Annual Meeting (Voting)

Voting on warrant articles number 1 through 18 will be conducted by official ballot to be held in conjunction with town meeting voting to be held on Tuesday, the 10th day of March 2026, 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-8pm
Plaistow	Voting will be conducted at the Plaistow Fish and Game Club from 7am-7pm
Sandown	Voting will be conducted at the Sandown Town Hall from 8am-8pm

ARTICLE 1 – ELECTION OF OFFICERS

To choose the following school district officers:

Atkinson Voters	School Board Member	3-Year Term
Danville Voters	School Board Member	3-Year Term
Plaistow Voters	School Board Member	3-Year Term
Atkinson Voters	Budget Committee Member	3-Year Term
Danville Voters	Budget Committee Member	3-Year Term
Plaistow Voters	Budget Committee Member	3-Year Term
Plaistow Voters	Budget Committee Member	1-Year Term
All Towns	District Moderator	3-Year Term

ARTICLE 2 – OPERATING BUDGET

The average cost per pupil for the preceding year as calculated in accordance with RSA 189:75, I(a) is \$23,256.
 ELA Proficiency: 55%; Math Proficiency: 41%; Science Proficiency: 32%

Shall the voters of the 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 **\$87,970,069**? Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be **\$89,347,430**, 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 7-1-1

Recommended by the Budget Committee 6-0-0

Estimated Education Tax Impact will be an increase as follows:

If Article passes – Atkinson: \$1.56, Danville: \$4.11, Plaistow: \$1.94, Sandown: \$2.97 per \$1,000

If Article fails – Atkinson: \$1.75, Danville: \$4.54, Plaistow: \$2.15, Sandown \$3.30 per \$1,000

MOTION: Chair Katie Knutsen made a motion to put Article 2 on the ballot as written; seconded by Brie Woodworth

Superintendent Justin Krieger (1:00:24) brought back up the slide with the names of the candidates on it to highlight the open positions and the names of those that are running.

He spoke about HB 751, open enrollment, the house was supposed to vote on that today but from his information they did not. They will now be voting on it next Thursday or it will be moving to conference committee. If this passes it will require Timberlane to send tax dollars to communities outside of TRSD. This will result in unexpected revenue or expense impact for the district.

(1:01:53) He wants to unpack the supplemental budget package that was presented for tonight's meeting. This package contains the full warrant, the complete FY27 proposed and default budget, tax rate trend reports, actual expenses trend report, positions and enrollment reports.

(1:07:35) Mr. Krieger wants to explain what it is we do at Timberlane. They educate 3,200 students in grades preschool-12 and employ 700 people. There are 9 buildings, 7 schools, and 650,000 square feet.

TRSB Katie Knutsen (1:13:12) spoke on the default budget and the budget drivers.

MOTION: Julia Doherty (Academy Ave Atkinson)(1:14:48) moved to amend Article 2 by deleting \$87,970,069 and replacing with \$88,054,569; seconded by Larry Gladhill (31 Pollard Rd, Plaistow).
VOTE BY BALLOT COUNT: Yes 587 No 325 **AMENDMENT PASSES**

Chris Tardif, Conley Rd Atkinson, (1:17:15) talked about how last year a group of individuals came in and succeeded in cutting over \$6 million from the proposed budget which included 52 positions being eliminated, reduced AP and special education classes. Are we fighting to reduce taxes or to defund public schools? They are not fighting for affordability. They're not fighting for your taxes, and they're not fighting for seniors. They're trying to make it impossible to run this district. The Budget Committee and school board already tried to avoid this exact situation from happening by cutting over \$5 million from their original budget. But that's not good enough. The roof of this building right here, this beautiful building that we just packed \$700,000 to repair. It gone. We're not doing it. Sandown Elementary School sprinkler system needs to be repaired. Guess what? Gone, not happening, it's already been cut. But that's not good enough. We are better than this. I support this motion. Our education system didn't fail us. We can't be the ones to fail it for our children.

Ryan Holder, 197 Long Pond Rd Danville, (1:19:44) wanted to say I was here last year. I look at this room; it's a packed house. I just see a lot of people care about seniors. They care about kids education. They care about their neighbors. And I think that's amazing. I love this passion. Some people also really care about the fiscal responsibility, which I think is important, but it was here at the meeting last year, and we did say that it wouldn't impact the students, and that there was stuff worked into the budget. And we did lose 37 positions, and some of those people did work with the kids, and now we're proposing, even at this level, losing well, now it would be 20 positions. I think that's a deep dive. I think that's a deep cut. I think everyone's getting hurt. I think my town of Danville is getting hurt a lot. I think that our students are getting hurt. And I'm sad that it's that way, but I also think we can't cut our kids education off at the knees. We have got to help them too, and this is gonna be tough.

Sheila Lowes, Hawkewood Rd Sandown, (1:23:00) point of clarification on two things. Number one the budget committee reduced the budget by \$3,887,476, that is the actual number not \$5 million. I have a question for the CFO, Maria, looking at the sheet with all the things that we add and take out. I am also looking at an email that we on the budget committee received. Somehow I still see this \$844,000 for the lease. It should not be there because it was decided that we were going to postpone the payment until next year.

Maria Watkins, Business Administrator (1:23:59) replied yes, the increase that is in the 2027 budget is to pay for the payments of phase 2 and phase 3 that are due this year.

Sheila Lowes, Hawkewood Rd Sandown, (1:24:24) Ok, I have a question now for the Attorney for the district. We passed a special warrant article to raise and appropriate \$2,061,000 to pay for the lease every year for 20 years.

Attorney Gordan Graham, (01:25:36) responded that it is not being double paid. When you approved the original lease, what you're doing is warning voters what the lease payments could be. You're not saying you're obligating the district to pay that amount each year, in the event that there are changes in the future, based on interest rates, based on prepayments, based on a variety of things, that number can fluctuate.

Steve Maglio, Schoolhouse Lane Sandown, (1:28:11) I was in favor of the \$82 million budget last year, wonderful reduction. It seems like we made it and still had \$7 million to carry over. We couldn't decide the effect that the cuts made, they're the ones that decided how. We are way too top heavy, there is still room for savings. We need to bring the budget down not up.

Larry Gladhill, 31 Pollard Rd Plaistow, (01:29:43) I'm here to speak on behalf of the children in our district. The children that don't have representation and that are on special education and that have IEP's. If you recall the population that the Superintendent shared, that is equivalent to the entire middle school. 22% of our district have kids that need extra help just to have equitable access to education. What world do we live in that we take these resources away from children.

Ryan Labrecque 174 Main St Plaistow, (1:30:39) thank you superintendent for your presentations. I would also like to unpack the budget. What it really boils down to, everything boils down to a single reality, can this community afford more, compounded every year? In my opinion that answer is no. I would argue that eventually even the budget supporters will hit their breaking point as well, when they're broke.

Kelly Diver, 15 Hickory Lane Danville, I want to know when we hit too much. What I am looking at here is that the average cost per pupil is \$23,000. In-state tuition for UNH is a little over \$15,000. I could send my son to school at UNH, and he could get a better education, because what I'm looking at here is that the proficiency for ELA is 55%, Math is 41% and Science is 32%. I'm not saying that people don't care, these teachers here care very much, and so does the community, but we also understand when we're not getting a good product.

TRSB Mark Sherwood, (1:35:35) I just want to respond to a couple of comments and to put things into perspective. In 2025 18 positions were cut, and in 2026 37 positions. And in order to get to this number in 2027 budget committee recommended cutting 25 more, 21 of which are real people that are working with our children every day.

John Downing, Phillipswood Rd Sandown, (1:38:21) how much can we afford? That's the biggest question. People will make an argument that the majority of people weren't here. Well, the majority of the voters spoke when they voted in the polls. The majority said that we need to cut. When we cut that last year, we cut it, when we saw the proposed budget this year to restore the money cut last year. A cut is a cut, not meant to be added back in the next years budget. How many dollars do we spend to run the district each year Mr. Krieger?

Maria Watkins, Business Administrator, (1:41:47) to answer the question if you turn to page 58 in your packets, that is the summary of the total expenses for the Timberlane Regional School District. This is the money that has been spent each of the years from 2017-2025 in all of the programs that the district runs. The most recent year, FY2025, the actual expenditure for the district was \$86,134,265. As of today, Feb. 5th 2026 our actual expenses for FY2026 are \$42,018,630.

Michael Boucher, North Broadway Atkinson, (1:43:39) I've been hearing a lot of people talk about how they're struggling, how they support the schools and it makes me wonder how much of a community we really are. Some people talk about how they don't have enough money to pay for things, how they're on fixed incomes. The last deliberative that I was here, I was one month away from being laid off. Today, here I am laid off. The one thing that I'm thinking to myself is that this school district is not my problem. The reason why the budget is so high is because of all the same economic reasons we're all dealing with.

Erica Stack, 20 Partridge Lane Plaistow, (1:46:45) I am in favor of the amendment. I have lived in Plaistow for 45 years and went through Timberlane as a student, returned as a teacher, stepped away for 12 years to raise my family, and now working back at the district again. All five of my children have gone through the Timberlane district. For the sake of time, I'm only going to speak about two of them right now. My oldest son graduated in three years and is now a licensed pilot working towards a commercial airline career. My second child is a senior who's been accepted to all eight colleges he applied to, many with scholarships and honor program. He's an Eagle Scout and has been deeply involved in the music and theater department. So why do you care? Brady never took his SATs. Cameron chose not to submit his test scores to many of the colleges, and yet here they are successful, capable, contributing young adults, neither of them relied on standardized test scores to define their success. Recently, I had a conversation with my 18-year-old, and I said, well, you're graduating this

isn't going to affect you. He immediately corrected me and said, "But it's not about me, Mom", it's about the education of our community and our children. I found that incredibly poignant, because if an 18 year old understands that, surely, we can too, because we keep hearing that our test scores aren't great, and why should we fund these schools? Our kids are more than their test scores. A test can't tell you that a child didn't sleep because their parents were fighting. It can't tell you the student didn't eat breakfast because they couldn't afford it at home or show the teacher who quietly slipped them a granola bar because they care. A test can't show you the student who struggles in math but thrives in music, or the one who struggles in science but finds their voice on the stage, or the one who is challenged by history but can excel on the court. When we cut school budgets, we don't cut numbers we cut opportunities, support and lifelines. Timberlane schools shaped my life. They shaped my children's lives. And this isn't about my kids or your kids. It's about our children and the future of our community.

Dave Cosio, 9 Belknap Dr Atkinson, (1:49:47) I'm in favor of the amendment. My wife, Kelly and I had four kids go through the school district. Our youngest, at 10, was diagnosed with an executive function disorder. She successfully went through the school district with the interventional program, had some interventional help in the younger grades, and then went on to Plymouth state where she graduated magna cum laude with a degree in K through eight education. She's now back here teaching where she got her education. She's a fifth-grade teacher at Pollard. She's in that room right now, and she was hoping that we can possibly get this amendment passed because of how it benefited her personally. But to tell you that these kids need the help that they can get from every bit of that education, and especially in the special ed we have another daughter who's a special ed teacher. It is one of the most critical things that we can do as a community when we help those that need it the most. And that goes for the state too. We're all quite angry about the way the taxes have gone up. The state has also shirked its responsibility to fund public education.

Evan Karupus, Little Mill Rd Sandown, (1:51:34) I am in favor of this amendment. I live in Sandown, but I teach out of district and having an interventionist is like having an extra parent at home. Nobody in this building who has a child at home would say no to having extra help that you know is only beneficial in the most positive ways. And to rob that child of extra help and education, that is an equitable thing for that child to keep pace with everyone else, is rude and selfish.

Kayla Gallagher, 9 Stonewall Terrace Atkinson, (1:54:37) I am opposed to this amendment. So, I keep hearing that this amendment will bring out better results. So, I have a question for the Superintendent, can you guarantee us that your results will be better next year? Mr. Krieger- no, of course not. Can you guarantee us that the hundred incidents of violence that occurred in the district last year will be reduced? Mr. Krieger- I can say that we will be working on it, but I cannot make that guarantee.

Emily Blair, Squirrel Run Rd Plaistow, (1:57:13) I stand before you as a former educator and a former Timberlane graduate. Not that anyone was wondering, but I have to say that the reason I went into education, not only did I come from a line of teachers, but there was a teacher here who convinced me to go into it. I was a foreign language teacher, and I credit my foreign language teacher throughout the course of high school for the reason I became an educator. I know that we're currently facing a teaching shortage throughout the country, so I am in support of this amendment, because always having an extra set of hands in the classroom is an extraordinary aid. I taught six classes of 30 students or more every single day, never with a para or with any support. So, I am strongly in support of having an extra hand that can roam around the building and assist as needed.

TRSB Jack Sapia, (1:58:22) I want everyone to realize when you say acts of violence, please understand what constitutes that, what makes that up. And I don't think the majority of those cases, one act is too many, but understand what that is, that's two kids having a scuffle in the playground, etc, etc, Relative to the proficiency rates I don't know of anyone that's happy with them, but just remember, this didn't happen this year. The 11th graders that took the SATs, that happened over the course of a decade. So, we're all in that together, parents, teachers, administrators, school board. We all have to work together to get those test scores up, and I'm going to dedicate the next few years, if I'm lucky enough to do just that. That's where our focus needs to be. It affects everything we do. It affects our reputation and the pride that we have in our community. So, I hope that parents and everyone and the teachers all work together to get these things. And it's not just Timberlane, it's the entire country that's on a slide that we can't afford to go down. So, let's work on this together.

Vince Edwards, Caleb Drive Danville, (2:00:03) calls the question.

Moderator Harb calls for a vote.

MOTION: Michael Richeson (10 Sleepy Hollow Atkinson) moved to amend Article 2 by deleting \$88,054,569 and replacing it with \$85,570,069; seconded by Nolan Pelletier (North Rd. Plaistow).

VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT COUNT: Yes 334 No 592 AMENDMENT FAILED

Julie Doherty, Academy Lane Atkinson, (2:18:51) calls the question.

Moderator Harb (3:18:02) results by secret ballot:

MOTION: Julia Doherty (Academy Ave Atkinson) moved to end debate and move Article 2 to ballot.
seconded by Larry Gladhill (Pollard Rd Plaistow)
VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

MOTION: Liz Kosta (TRSD Budget Committee) moved to restrict from reconsideration.
Seconded by Katie Knutsen (TRSB)
VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

MOTION: Mark Sherwood (TRSB) moved to move Article 18 up.
Seconded by Shauna Manthorn (TRSB)
VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

ARTICLE 18 – 2.5% Local Tax Cap by Petition

Shall Timberlane Regional School District (TRSD) vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 32:5-b, and implement a tax cap whereby the governing body and budget committee shall not submit a recommended budget that increases the amount to be raised by local taxes, based on the prior fiscal year's actual amount of local taxes raised by more than 2.5%.

Recommended by the School Board 0-9-0

MOTION: Nolan Pelletier (North Rd Plaistow) made a motion to put Article 18 on the ballot as written;
seconded by Jessica Pelletier (North Rd Plaistow).

Nolan Pelletier, North Rd Plaistow, (3:22:47) Good evening, Mr. Moderator, school board members, budget committee, and fellow Timberlane residents. My name is Nolan and I am a resident of Plaistow. I am the one who gathered the signatures for this Citizens' Petition. Thank you for the chance to speak in support of my warrant article, the 2.5% tax cap for the TRSD operating budget. Let me be absolutely clear from the start, this is only about putting reasonable limits on how fast the school portion of our property taxes can rise each year. Let's take a quick step back in history to 1773, that's right, we're time traveling folks. So, I'd like to take a quick step back to 1773 British passed the Tea Act, forcing American colonials to pay a small tax, three cents per pound on tea. It wasn't a huge amount, but it was imposed without real consent, and it represented unchecked power over the people's pockets. What was our forefather's response? We all know revolution; they dumped tea in the Boston Harbor and fought for independence because taxation without accountability is unacceptable. We're not calling for relic. We're not calling for revolution today, but the principle is still the same In Timberlane, school taxes keep climbing faster than most families can afford, while many of us struggle with rising costs and stagnant wages. A two and a half percent tax cap is like guardrails on the highway. It helps keep spending on a sustainable, predictable path. It doesn't freeze everything. It just prevents us from veering into unaffordable territory year after year. And let's be clear, this is not a death sentence for education. The tax gap has built in mechanisms for flexibility. If the district truly needs to go beyond two and a half percent plus allowances for new growth like added students or developments, they can propose an override. Under New Hampshire law like RSA 32:5-b that override requires a strong three fifths majority vote at the ballot. That's simple and it's fair. It means the majority of the community has to agree to extra spending that is truly necessary. It keeps real accountability

with the voters who pay the bills. Now let's talk about real numbers, numbers that hit home for the taxpayers. When I take the full school district budget and divide it by our current student population, we're looking at roughly \$28,000 per student. That's my straightforward calculation, no fancy adjustment, just total budget divided by kids enrolled. The State often shows lower figures, around \$21 to 23,000 per student in recent years, but that's because they exclude certain line items or make adjustments for statewide comparisons. But those exclusions do not change the reality for families paying their property tax bills. We're already investing a substantial amount per child, more than enough to deliver a strong proper education with good teachers, programs, facilities and support, but yet our scores are unfortunately not so great. Proficiency rates have around 50 to 60% in reading levels, but math is weaker, often around 30 to 40% proficient district wide and even lower at the high school, with some recent data showing 27 to 34% proficiency in math. We're spending well above in many places, but the results are not matching the investment. We've got dedicated teachers and staff, but endless budget increases haven't magically boosted test scores or closed those gaps. This is exactly why throwing more and more money at a problem rarely, if ever, solves it. It's the classic government go to, spend more tax, more repeat, but smarter, efficient solutions work better. I might alienate some of you with this reference, but I believe it is a great example of thinking differently to solve an issue. I think back to Nintendo in the day when competitors poured huge money into complex, expensive encryption systems that still got cracked. Nintendo used a simple, low cost, purple dye on small disks for copy protection. Low cost, low effort, extremely effective. They didn't throw endless money at the problem. They solved it smarter, and they dominated the market. Some of you might ask, what does this video game company have to do with our schools? Well, besides our High School's video game team, it shows ingenuity and how to use creative problem solving coupled with cost effective solutions that can yield extraordinary results. The die made it impossible for most optical lasers readers to recognize the discs and the size of the disc made it nearly impossible for CD or DVD players to even read the data. Simple, cost-effective measures that yielded superior results. That is why it's relevant. That is why it's important. And this is what we need to pursue in our district. Again, throwing money at a problem rarely ever fixes it. We can apply the same logic here. A two and a half percentage cap encourages the district to prioritize classroom essentials, cut waste, negotiate better contracts, find efficiencies and focus on what actually improves learning, not just grow the budget automatically. If more is truly needed for proven results, propose an override and let the voters decide. Some might say that last year, this very petition was pushed over to a study, and the findings of the study show that a tax gap is not sustainable or feasible at any level. To me, this is a clear example of backwards planning. The outcome was predetermined from the start, and then the work to justify it was filled in to reach the goal. I would argue that a tax cap is necessary. Despite the community's overwhelming support for a budget reduction last year, the response from the district management was to load everything back in this year and propose an initial \$92 million budget. A tax cap sends a serious message that they need to sharpen their pencils and limit the increases reasonably. A shot across the bow, if you will. This petition is not radical. It's common sense, taxpayer protection modeled after proven tools like Massachusetts proposition two and a half, where overrides exist for real needs. It puts power back with the voters, not just administrators or boards. In closing, I was close to 10 minutes in closing support keeping this article as written. Let's give Timberlane families the guardrails we need, predictable taxes, accountable spending and the ability to override when the community truly agrees it's necessary. Thank you.

Chris Tardif, Atkinson (3:31:21) I'd like to take us back, way back in time to 2025, to when we formed a tax cap committee made up of school board members, budget members, and two people from each town. Yes, I was on that, and so was my friend Shawn O'Neil, and we came to a consensus that this would not work. It would restrict the district, and we would not be a sustainable community. I'm just doing everyone a favor and maneuvering the decimal point over one point and fixing the grammatical error. So, we need to knock this off. There are two school districts in this state that have a tax cap right now, Hollis Brookline is one of them. They are 8% and right now they don't know how to take care of their teachers because they have a CBA coming up that surpasses that. So right now, there's two, two in the entire state, and here we are arguing over a 2.5% tax cap that would just ruin everything we just voted through. So, I need you all to stay here and do this vote when we're all done with whatever's going on over here. Thank you.

MOTION: Chris Tardif (Atkinson) moved amend Article 18 by deleting 2.5% and replacing it with 25%.
Seconded by Larry Gladhill (Plaistow)

VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT: **Yes 519** **No 193** **AMENDMENT PASSES**

Marianne Springer, TRSB, (3:33:01) Alyssa Kowalczyk and I were on the tax cap committee that Mr. Tardif just mentioned. We want to just reveal some of the highlights of the findings. So, the 12-member committee consisted of

representatives from all four towns, including the sponsor of last year's original two and a half percent tax cap petition school board members, budget committee representatives and SAU administration. We presented our findings on October 16 at the school board meeting, and a full report is available at Timberlane.net. The committee concluded that a two and a half percent tax cap under the current RSA would increase risk and uncertainty in the budget process and would not enable the district to maintain staffing program and service levels. This impact on staffing program and service levels, especially when inflation exceeds 2.5% annually, as it has recently, would not be a one-time one-year impact. It would repeat every year. The highlights of the RSA, the implementation of a tax cap and a tax cap override require a three-fifths majority vote. If a tax cap is implemented in subsequent years, the budget committee and school board can only submit warrant articles whose total tax impact will not increase the appropriation by more than what they estimate the tax cap, dollar limit to be. In the RSA language, the override pathway and impact if an override fails to meet the three fifths majority threshold is unclear. Since this is new RSA language there are no school district experiences to review.

Alyssa Kowalczyk, TRSB (3:35:25) And then just to touch on a few other points, just some general information, the tax cap percent, that is not taken off the total operating budget from the previous year. It's taken off what portion of that is raised by taxes. So, for example, last year, the voted budget was \$82 million. That is not what the 2.5% would be taken off of, it would be taken off of \$61 million, approximately, which is what was raised by taxes. So, I just want to make sure everyone is understanding that calculation. Estimates of the tax cap dollar limit would be based on an assumption that revenues remain stable, however, state revenue has fluctuated in the past. Calculation of the tax cap limit depends on information that is not available when the budget process begins. Key budget components, like health care cost increases and any collective bargaining agreements, costs are not known until late in the budget process. These factors increase uncertainty and risk throughout the budget. If a tax cap is approved, the budget committee and school board members may not recommend articles that will make the amount higher than the tax cap limit. For example, if there was a two and a half tax cap presented for the FY27 this would mean that the total budget would only be allowed to be \$83,525,000 subtracting the CBAS that we currently have from that the operating budget would only be able to be \$82,325,000. The tax cap would have a significant impact on negotiations with CBA since health care, cost increases have averaged 11.5% increase annually over the last two fiscal years.

Ryan Labrecque, Main St Plaistow (3:38:26) this deliberative session, by design, historically, attracts the people who have something to personally gain from attending. District management does everything in their power to ensure that employees are able to attend the meeting and are present to vote for whatever monetary and scope expansions they decide to pursue, including all the unions associated, I think there's eight of them. I believe there are 700 employees in the district. Said earlier, 315 of them are teachers in the district, and they all have spouses, so that's 600 instant voters. We got about 600 here tonight. The reason I'm speaking for the tax cap and the reason why this applies is because the unions fill this room every year. They were taken off guard last year. I love the tax cap. There's a blatant effort to keep staff in this building to support the cause. Some points to mention, regarding the tax cap. There's an inverse relationship between increased budgets and performance after a certain point of no return. While I agree that an underfunded system would not produce results, an overfunded system does not increase results. There are other states with much lower budgets. \$9,500 per student in Idaho is one. So, they clearly know how to do something with the money that they have. Also, the state funding piece. They receive \$7,000 per student state funding, so does New Hampshire. Timberlane spends 234% comparatively and produces negligible, negligibly better results. That's a difficult pill to swallow. And regarding the budget tonight and the tax cap, you know, we're going back in history. History tells us that you know the taxpayer, the non 600 sympathizers in the room. There's 30,000 more of us.

MOTION: Todd Szahun, Maple Ave Atkinson, moves to call the question.
Seconded by Paul Sedillo, Meditation Lane Atkinson.

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

Moderator Harb called for secret ballot.

MOTION: Laura Mall (Bittersweet Lane Atkinson) moved to end debate on Article 18 and move to ballot as amended.

Seconded by Michael Boucher (Atkinson)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

MOTION: Katie Knutsen (TRSB) moved to restrict Article 18 from reconsideration.
Seconded by Mark Sherwood (TRSB)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

MOTION: Michael Boucher (North Broadway Atkinson) moved to move up Article 14.
Seconded by Larry Gladhill (Pollard Rd Plaistow)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

ARTICLE 14 – Full-Day Kindergarten

Shall the School District vote to amend the Timberlane Regional School District's Articles of Agreement and to implement a full day kindergarten in the District as follows (existing language that is removed is ~~struck through~~):

Amend the first sentence of Article 3 of the Articles of Agreement for the Timberlane Regional School District as follows:

The Timberlane Regional School District shall be responsible for the public education of pupils in Kindergarten through grade 12 ~~as mandated by the State of NH.~~

and further raise and appropriate the sum of \$271,012 to implement full day kindergarten? (TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Recommended by the School Board 7-0-2

Recommended by the Budget Committee 5-1-0

Estimated Education Tax Impact will be an increase as follows:

Atkinson: \$0.04, Danville: \$0.08, Plaistow: \$0.04, Sandown: \$0.07 per \$1,000

MOTION: Katie Knutsen made a motion to put Article 14 on the ballot as written; seconded by Mark Sherwood.

Shauna Manthorn, TRSB, (4:25:42) The district has an opportunity to extend kindergarten to full day for all age eligible students in the district. The total cost of the warrant article is \$271,012. The cost would require no additional staffing and no additional infrastructure to give it a student context, students who attended half day kindergarten but were eligible in 2025-2026 school year, 36 students in 2024-2025 48 student students and 2023-2024 school year, 61 students and the 2022-2023 academic year, 58 students. For a total of 203 students in the state of New Hampshire, over 99% of school districts provide a full day kindergarten opportunity for their residents.

Michael Boucher, Atkinson, (4:26:40) I don't have to say much about this. This is long overdue. I fully support full day kindergarten for all students in our district. There's 220 to 240 students who can benefit from this. This is probably the most cost-effective thing that we'd ever do for any of the children in our district. We just need to support getting this moved forward.

Kayla Gallagher, Stonewall Terrace Atkinson, (4:28:18) half of my job is research. So, I really love evidence-based approaches and looking at the evidence for this, I'd like to discuss that a little bit. There's a lot of opinions about this. Opinions, frankly, do not matter. You can have an expert opinion, and that is the lowest level of research. So, what I would like to say is large nationally representative studies using federal education data have been found that full day kindergarten can show early academic gains that disappear in third or fifth grade between all the studies that they have done. More importantly, these same studies found that the children who actually did attend full day kindergarten demonstrated worse nonacademic outcomes over time compared to their peers who did not attend full day kindergarten. Those outcomes include behavioral issues and mental health problems, including anxiety and depression into adulthood. You guys can sit here. You can say it's not right, but apparently you guys don't like facts and facts don't really care about your feelings. I can give you them. I have them. So specifically, full day kindergarten attendance has been associated with lower self-control, weaker interpersonal skills and higher levels of behavioral problems throughout elementary years. These effects were

identified in analyzes conducted by researchers using national longitudinal studies, and they raised legitimate concerns about our social and emotional development, not just our test scores also are not great either. So I'd rather catch our youth up academically by third and fifth grade, because that's what happens when you don't attend your back there by third or fifth grade, than to face mental health problems into adulthood. There have been arguments that everyone else is doing that. That's what we heard. Well, you know, sometimes it's good not to follow the crowd. As my mom always said to me, if everyone jumped off the bridge, don't do it. So maybe we should think for ourselves for once, and look at the evidence and not just our opinions. Thank you.

MOTION: Todd Szahun (Atkinson) moved to call the question.
Seconded by Paul Sedillo (Meditation Lane Atkinson)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: **PASSES**

MOTION: Katie Knutsen (TRSB) moved to restrict Article 14 from reconsideration.
Seconded by Liz Kosta (TRSD Budget Committee)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: **PASSES**

Article 3 – 2 Year Collective Bargaining Agreement (Timberlane Support Staff Union)

Shall the voters of the School District approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Timberlane Support Staff Union 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:

Fiscal Year	<u>2026-27</u>	<u>2027-28</u>
Estimated Increase	\$787,915	\$400,136
2-Year Total		\$1,188,051

And further to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$787,915** for the 2026-27 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 8-0-1 Recommended by the Budget Committee 6-0-0

Estimated Education Tax Impact will be an increase as follows:

Atkinson: \$0.11, Danville: \$0.24, Plaistow: \$0.12, Sandown: \$0.19 per \$1,000

MOTION: Katie Knutsen made a motion to place Article 5 on the ballot as written, seconded by Mark Sherwood

Mark Sherwood, TRSB, (4:44:44) So this is a group of folks that generally don't get a lot of love. They're the workhorses that are in the front, taking care of our kids, our students, and assisting our teachers do their jobs, spending the extra time educating, mentoring, tutoring and teaching life skills to our students. With a great deal of collaboration and some frank and very honest discussions, some of the time a little bit heated, we did come to a compromise here. We were able to compress their salary schedule from 24 some odd steps, with an ability to concentrate on the starting steps. The reason for this is, as you know, anybody that's following our initial pay is woefully inadequate for this group. As a matter of fact, as we began negotiations just down the road, Cumberland Farms was hiring people at a higher rate than Timberlane was offering. So this is where we began. We also put an increase in a focus on educational achievement, and differentials for educational achievement. Additionally, they will be working another day during the year and working an extra half an hour during the day. Currently the way their contract is, every single minute they are in the school, they are essentially student facing, which gives them zero time to coordinate with parents, with special education folks, with the IEPs, with the teachers, to check in and see on how students are doing. So their work day has been extended as well. Hopefully, with this agreement, we will be able to keep more folks in house. This allows for some efficiencies, both in teaching, providing

education support, but also economic efficiencies, because it is cheaper to have somebody who's a Timberlane employee, rather than outsourcing. So I would encourage everybody at the polls to support this most hard working group.

Ryan Labrecque, Plaistow, (4:48:16) how many employees are associated with the \$787,915, approx. 132. What is the wage increase? What positions? Special education paraeducators. Has the district considered reducing SAU pay to pay for this increase?

Julia Doherty, Atkinson, (4:51:47) I am just up here to support this article. Nobody knows what paraprofessionals do every day. I don't think even teachers fully understand it. They are the backbone of our schools. They deserve much more than we are giving them here, but it's a positive start. I will keep it super short, because it is late. They deserve 20 minutes, more than that, talking about how wonderful they are. But from my own personal experience, I have three kids that are at Atkinson Academy, and each of them talk about the different parents that work in their classroom. They share stories about them, and you can tell how much love and comfort they give to my three kids each and every day, and they are the unsung heroes, and my family is so thankful for the work they do each and every day.

Evan Karupus, Sandown, (4:52:35) I started my career in education, helping paras and special ed you get bit, spit on, punch, kicked, dragged through the mud and yelled at by parents. You have everything thrown at you, but at the end of the day, they still love you, and you're the person that gets them through their day. You're the person that helps them grow their mind. And I make a motion to vote on the article as it's written.

MOTION: Evan Karupus (Sandown) moved to call the question.
Seconded by Sheila Lowes (TRSD Budget Committee)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

ARTICLE 4 – Authorization for Special Meeting on Cost Items

Shall the voters of the School District, if Article 3 is defeated, authorize the Timberlane Regional School Board to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 3 cost items only? (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Recommended by the School Board 9-0-0

ARTICLE 5 – 3 Year Collective Bargaining Agreement (Timberlane Administrative Assistants/Secretaries and Skilled Maintenance Employees)

Shall the voters of the School District approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Timberlane Administrative Assistants/Secretaries and Skilled Maintenance Employees' Union 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:

Fiscal Year	<u>2026-27</u>	<u>2027-28</u>	<u>2028-29</u>
Estimated Increase	\$192,738	\$172,221	131,992
3-Year Total			\$496,951

And further to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$192,738** for the 2026-27 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 8-0-1

Recommended by the Budget Committee 6-0-0

Estimated Education Tax Impact will be an increase as follows:

Atkinson: \$0.03, Danville: \$0.06, Plaistow: \$0.03, Sandown: \$0.05 per \$1,000

MOTION: Shauna Manthorn made a motion to put Article 5 on the ballot as written; seconded by Sheila Lowes

Don Woodworth, TRSB, (4:56:43) pertains to the CBA for the TAAM union, which is comprised of technology assistants and specialists, administrative assistants and secretaries and skilled maintenance workers. These folks support the faculty, the staff, administrators, parents and ultimately, the students in the district through their work. Union consists of 48 employees. This three-year agreement provides clarity to a step and track placement of new hires and existing employees. It contains modest pay increases. It comes in line in that regard with the other unions, and it also contains adjustments to contractual agreements regarding sick leave, bereavement leave, on call, availability for substitution and for longevity, severance pay and vacation days. So it was a lot of work, a lot of discussion, and the group really worked hard to make this work. The resulting agreement is intended to support the employees and to attract qualified candidates for future open positions.

Tracy St Clair, (4:58:08) I'm a non voting speaker tonight. I am a field representative with Teamsters local 633 we proudly represent five bargaining units within Timberlane School District. We are asking for the voters for this collective bargaining agreement, this covers the admin assistants, it tax skilled maintenance members. These members include HVAC specialists, plumbing, electrical system specialists, and technology staff that handle the technology for the staff, for all of the employees, for the students, which is vital, and the admin assistants, which frankly provide too many duties to list; everything from attendance to accounts payable. So each of these people provides a vital service, not only to the school district, to each and every one of the students. All of these positions could garner more wages and benefits in the private sector, yet each of these employees has decided that they would like to focus their dedication on the children and to the communities which a lot of them actually live in, which has been brought up previously. And I would like to say of the 45% of the employees that are covered by contracts or are members of the school district and receive their benefits and wages are also taxpayers, and even if they are not homeowners, they in another form or method, pay that as well. Again, we're just asking for the support we worked very hard as the board members spoke earlier to come to this agreement, and we're just asking for your support as well. Thank you.

Ryan Labrecque, Plaistow, (5:00:05) So I fear for these folks and for the folks in the previous article. While I understand that many of you are giddy this evening for driving more people out of their homes. I'm not saying I don't support this, because I believe that these folks are probably deserving of a raise, as are the previous article. So why do I fear for these folks is this may get voted down because of the activities that occurred this evening, and it's unfortunate for them, because they're also the folks that probably can least afford the \$1,500 to \$3,000 increase that you all want to bring to the district. So that is quite unfortunate, obviously, admin assistants, secretaries, skilled maintenance employees, all necessary for the operation of this district, as are the Para educators, and they are all probably some of the lowest paid individuals of the 700 in the district, and it's unfortunate that we haven't been able to pay them more, and that's because of, quite frankly, we have too high of of an employee ratio to the amount of students, and we have \$5 million dollars of non teacher, administrative SAU folks that aren't contributing directly to the education of the students. Not saying they're not all working hard. Everyone probably is, there may be some outliers, but I feel a little sad for the potential for these to pass because of the fact that we're continually voting outsized budgets that don't reflect the actual spending necessary for the district. We're going to end up with over taxation, and then we're going to end up with surpluses, \$16, 19 million, 12 million last year, whatever it is. And these folks may likely be the bearer of not receiving their raises because it could be voted down.

MOTION: Sheila Lowes (Sandown) moved to call the question.
Seconded by Kayla Gallagher (Atkinson)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: **PASSES**

MOTION: Katie Knutsen (TRSB) moved to restrict Article 5 from reconsideration.
Seconded by Don Woodworth (TRSB)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: **PASSES**

ARTICLE 6 – Authorization for Special Meeting on Cost Items

Shall the voters of the School District, if Article 5 is defeated, authorize the Timberlane Regional School Board to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 5 cost items only? (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Recommended by the School Board 9-0-0

MOTION: Chair Katie Knutsen made a motion to put Article 6 on the ballot as written; seconded by Vice Chair Mark Sherwood.

MOTION: Sheila Lowes (TRSD Budget Committee) moved to move up Article 11.
Seconded by Liz Kosta (TRSD Budget Committee)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: **PASSES**

ARTICLE 11– Capital Reserve Fund by Surplus

Shall the Timberlane School District vote to discontinue the School Building Construction, Reconstruction, Capital Improvement and Land Purchase Capital Reserve Fund established in 1996, said fund with accumulated interest to the date of withdrawal are to be transferred to the School District's general fund; and further, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$490,937.20, (which is the total amount in the Capital Reserve Fund to be discontinued) to be placed in a Capital Reserve Fund established under the provisions of RSA 35:1 to be known as the "Timberlane Regional School District Capital Improvement and Maintenance Fund" for the purpose of funding the construction, reconstruction, improvement, and maintenance of the School District's buildings and grounds; and to authorize the use of that amount from the June 30 Unreserved Fund Balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, and further to name the school board as agents to expend this fund? No amount to be raised from additional taxation. (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Recommended by the School Board 9-0-0

Recommended by the Budget Committee 6-0-0

MOTION: Chair Katie Knutsen made a motion to put Article 11 on the ballot as written; seconded by Mark Sherwood.

Marianne Springer, TRSB, So this article accomplishes two changes. Land purchase is removed from the fund name and the school board is named as agents to expend this fund for a specific capital project. Currently, voter approval is required to use the funds.

Brenda Legare, Kingston Rd Danville, (5:08:04) moved to amend article 11, capital reserve fund by surplus to read, shall the Timberlane school district vote to discontinue the school building construction, reconstruction, capital improvement and land purchase capital reserve fund established in 1996 said fund with accumulated interest to the date of withdrawal, are to be transferred to the school district's general fund, and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$490,937.20 which is the total amount in a capital reserve fund to be discontinued, to be placed in a capital reserve fund established under the provisions of RSA 35 one to be known as the Timberland regional school district capital fund for the purpose of funding the construction and reconstruction of the school district's buildings and grounds. No amount to be raised from additional taxation. Seconded by Sheila Lowes, Sandown.

MOTION: Brenda Legare (Danville) motion to amend article 11 to read: shall the Timberlane school district vote to discontinue the school building construction, reconstruction, capital improvement and land purchase capital reserve fund established in 1996 said fund with accumulated interest to the date of withdrawal, are to be transferred to the school district's general fund, and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$490,937.20 which is the total amount in a capital reserve fund to be discontinued, to be placed in a capital reserve fund established under the provisions of RSA 35 one to be known as the Timberland regional school district capital fund for the purpose of funding the construction and reconstruction of the school district's buildings and grounds. No amount to be raised from additional taxation.

Seconded by Sheila Lowes (Sandown)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: **FAILS**

Sheila Lowes, Sandown, (5:11:30) The issue is that this is capital money and before this article came about, the school board would have to put up a warrant article and ask the voters if they could do something with that capital reserve money that takes the voters out of it. It is now going to be the school board that makes the decision. It totally removes the voters from making a decision whether they want to use the money on that or not. The last time we expended money out of this, we did a boiler at the high school, and it went through fine, money was raised so I don't want to take the voter out of there. I think the voters should have a choice on how their money is spent. The other part of this is that I'm not particularly thrilled about is that now instead of the money just coming out of surplus capital funds, you're taking it out of all the surplus funds, which is operating funds too, which are raised and appropriated differently. So I'm not a big fan of that either. I think it should be just coming out of the capital lines.

Jack Sapia, TRSB, I think the boilers are a great example of why I think we should be putting the school board members in charge of spending those funds. We had six boilers at the high school. Four had completely failed. The other two were on their last legs. If one more boiler had failed, we would have had to close the high school. We put I believe it was \$900,000 and change into redoing that entire boiler room, but again, not having that resource available for us, in the case of emergency. We've had a complete septic system failed quarter of a million dollars. Again, some of these things around here were on their last leg. So, you want to tie the hands of the school board and of the district and maybe affect the students ability to come to school. I think that's something that needs to be considered.

Ryan Labrecque, Plaistow, (5:20:41) So the reason why I support this amendment is simple. This board has continually spent millions, many millions of dollars in funds that were not voted on by the voters of the district. \$11 million and change surplus last year, I believe \$4 million was spent on things not discussed with the voters a handful of days prior to the deadline. Same thing happened the year before. We had a \$19 million surplus.

Dena Fleno, Sunset Dr Atkinson, (5:22:38) I'd just like to ask the attorney for the District if taking out improvement and maintenance violates the RSA, which includes items in there for the ability to be used for the fund. That's my first question. No, because it would now be limited for construction and reconstruction and not improvement and maintenance. So you couldn't maintain things, but you could reconstruct them.

MOTION: Dena Fleno (Atkinson) moved to call the question.

Seconded by Larry Gladhill (Plaistow)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: **PASSES**

MOTION: Larry Gladhill, Plaistow, moved to amend the meeting procedures to limit individual comment and discussion to one minute.

Seconded Shauna Manthorn (TRSB)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: **PASSES**

MOTION: Katie Knutsen (TRSB) moved to restrict Article 11 from reconsideration.

Seconded by Shauna Manthorn (TRSB)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: **PASSES**

ARTICLE 7 – 3 Year Collective Bargaining Agreement (Timberlane Cafeteria Workers' Union)

Shall the voters of the School District approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Timberlane Administrators' Union 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:

Fiscal Year	<u>2026-27</u>	<u>2027-28</u>	<u>2028-29</u>
Estimated Increase	\$142,148	\$133,498	\$141,201
3-Year Total			\$416,847

And further to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$142,148** for the 2026-27 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 7-0-2 Recommended by the Budget Committee 6-0-0

Estimated Education Tax Impact will be an increase as follows:

Atkinson: \$0.02, Danville: \$0.04, Plaistow: \$0.02, Sandown: \$0.03 per \$1,000

MOTION: Chair Katie Knutsen made a motion to put Article 7 on the ballot as written; seconded by Vice Chair Mark Sherwood.

Katie Knutsen, TRSB, (5:29:41) this is a group of individuals that is here from July 1 to July 1. They're in our buildings all year long. They are also on call if anything happens to their buildings, students or what have you. This is the second contract for this group, which is comprised of principals, assistant principals, curriculum directors, PAC analytics and technology. These, again, like I stated, they work from July 1 to July 1. Some items to mention about this contract is that the language is cleaned up from the first contract. A salary matrix was developed using the categories of experience and responsibility in order to provide stability and cost control over time. This membership is 28 members in the unit, with an average cost per employee over three years of \$14,887.

Kayla Gallher, Atkinson, (5:30:43) can I ask a question to Marianne, the school board rep. So, my question is, when I was watching the school board meeting, I think it was on the 22nd she had said that this is the only union contract that made no insurance concessions. Am I correct in that?

I did state that this contract had no concessions in it.

I just think it's really sad that these are, I believe, the highest paid people in our district, and they're the only ones not to make concessions, rather than the people that we just had heard about, the janitors and honestly, the teachers and whoever else, we shouldn't be asking them to make concessions. We should be asking the administrators to make those concessions.

Ryan Labrecque, Plaistow, (5:32:21) what is the average salary of this group? Is it ever discussed that some unions should forgo raises in order to save positions.

John Downing, Sandown, (5:34:18) Just a point of information on this particular union I'm neither for or against. It's just information. When you look at the employer paid on the employee behalf, and you look at the total sum of the 28 employees in the TAU, the sum is \$4.5 million for 28 employees. The funny part here is 28 teachers with the same package put together is 2.6 million, which is 43% lower than the administration the TAU. It's pretty simple. The admin is getting 43% more than the teachers. I'm here speaking on the teachers behalf that are getting hosed.

Michael Boucher, Atkinson, (5:35:14) I'm going to try to make this as brief and possible. You know, I support teachers, I support para professionals, I support the administrators. I support the custodians. I support the occupational therapists and the speech therapists, etc.

MOTION: Michael Boucher (Atkinson) moved to call the question

Seconded by Larry Gladhill (Pollard)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

ARTICLE 8 – Authorization for Special Meeting on Cost Items

Shall the voters of the School District, if Article 7 is defeated, authorize the Timberlane Regional School Board to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 7 cost items only? (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Recommended by the School Board 9-0-0

ARTICLE 9 – 3 Year Collective Bargaining Agreement (Timberlane Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants and Speech Language Pathology Assistants)

Shall the voters of the School District approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Timberlane Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants and Speech Language Pathology Assistants Union 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:

Fiscal Year	<u>2026-27</u>	<u>2027-28</u>	<u>2028-29</u>
Estimated Increase	\$61,378	\$17,292	\$18,303
3-Year Total			\$96,973

And further to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$61,378** for the 2026-27 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 8-0-1 Recommended by the Budget Committee 6-0-0

Estimated Education Tax Impact will be an increase as follows:

Atkinson: \$0.01, Danville: \$0.02, Plaistow: \$0.01, Sandown: \$0.02 per \$1,000

MOTION: Shauna Manthorn made a motion to put Article 9 on the ballot as written; seconded by Katie Knutsen.

Shauna Manthorn, TRSB, (5:39:26) This one article pertains to a collective bargaining agreement covering certified occupational therapy assistants and speech language pathology assistance. The bargaining unit includes 10 employees and represents a newly organized union within the Timberlane district, or recognized union. Excuse me, the agreement clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of these staff members across the district. It also increases the amount of time the employees are present in our buildings, allowing for expanded direct support to students in both general education and special education settings, including those students on IEPs or Individualized Education Programs. Additionally, the agreement establishes competitive wages intended to support employee retention and attract qualified candidates. So over time, this is expected to reduce the district's reliance on contracted services, and I yield my time.

Tracy St.Clair, (5:40:33) Thank you for those of you who remained again, we're asking for support for this warrant article, for the collective bargaining agreement, for the speech language pathology assistance and the certified occupational therapy assistants. The importance of these employees in the lives of the students they work with is immeasurable. They the occupational therapy assistants and speech language pathology assistants work with these students that have disabilities to improve fine motor, sensory and functional abilities, speech, language, voice and language fluencies. These are all vital skills for life. These are very, very important items that we take for granted at times. These are just a limited amount of employees that cover so many aspects with these kids, and they have dedicated so much to them again. These are positions that in the public sector make much, much more money, and these employees have chosen to dedicate their time and their expertise to these kids time and time again. Some of these employees have been here for plenty of years. Thank you.

Ryan Labrecque, Plaistow, (5:42:06) again, probably very, I'm sure, very deserving group. And again, I fear for this group as well as I believe that with the activism on the budget side, I think it will turn off the voter base and result in a activism against increases on warrant articles.

MOTION: Chris Tardif (Atkinson) moved to call the question on Article 9.
Seconded by Shauna Manthorn (TRSB)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

ARTICLE 10 – Authorization for Special Meeting on Cost Items

Shall the voters of the School District, if Article 9 is defeated, authorize the Timberlane Regional School Board to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 9 cost items only? (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Recommended by the School Board 9-0-0

ARTICLE 12 – Capital Improvement and Maintenance Fund

Shall the Timberlane Regional School District raise and appropriate up to \$250,000 to be placed in the Timberlane Regional School District Capital Improvement and Maintenance Fund, with this sum to come from the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2026? No amount to be raised from additional taxation. (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Recommended by the School Board 8-1-0

Recommended by the Budget Committee 6-0-0

MOTION: Shauna Manthorn made a motion to put Article 12 on the ballot as written; seconded by Mark Sherwood.

Marianne Springer, TRSB, (05:44:49) a warrant article similar to this has appeared on the ballot since the year after a capital reserve fund was established in 1996 from 1997 to 2015 the warrant articles were similar to this wording, where the unassigned fund balance was the source of the funds from 2016 to 2025 the funds eligible for transfer were only funds that were apportioned as capital expenses, so this article is a change to that.

MOTION: Chris Citorik (Wood Dr Atkinson) moved to call the question.

Seconded by Evan Karupus (Sandown)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

MOTION: Katie Knutsen (TRSB) moved to restrict Article 12 from reconsideration.

Seconded by Mark Sherwood (TRSB)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

ARTICLE 13 – Fund Balance Retention

Shall the School District vote to authorize, indefinitely until rescinded, to retain year-end unassigned general funds in an amount not to exceed, in any fiscal year, 2.5% of the current fiscal year's net assessment, in accordance with RSA 198:4-b, II? (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Recommended by the School Board 8-0-1

MOTION: Katie Knutsen made a motion to put Article 13 on the ballot as written; seconded by Mark Sherwood.

Katie Knutsen, TRSB, (5:47:17) So last year, there was a warrant article that originally the board had an ability to keep 5% there was a warrant article that rescinded that it was the intentions of those petitioners to actually have it revert back to the two and a half percent. Unfortunately, DRA stated that since that language was not in there, we could not go with intent. So therefore this past year, we were not able to retain anything. So this year, we're putting the warrant article back on so that we have the ability to retain two and a half percent. Just a couple quick things about a fund balance retention, there's just a couple purposes it can be used for cash flow management, emergency reserves and budget stabilization.

John Downing, Sandown, (5:48:02) make a motion to amend Article 14 to: shall the school district vote to authorize indefinitely, until rescinded, to retain year end, undesigned general funds in the amount not to exceed in any fiscal year, 1% of the current fiscal year's net assessment in accordance with RSA 198, colon, four, Dash b2, majority vote required.

MOTION: John Downing (Sandown) moved to amend Article 14 to: shall the school district vote to authorize indefinitely, until rescinded, to retain year end, undesigned general funds in the amount not to exceed in any fiscal year, 1% of the current fiscal year's net assessment in accordance with RSA 198:4-b majority vote required.

Seconded by Nolan Pelletier (Plaistow)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: FAILS

John Downing, So I was the original Petitioner last year, and there was a lot of confusion. We did after the vote, and all the confusion try to get this back to an amount of money, a percentage that would actually be fair. We weren't trying to strap the administration on this one. So what I wanted to do is get it to 1%. If it stays at 2.5%, we could be talking a million plus on a typical budget. If we go to the 1% it should calculate into the hundreds of thousands, probably won't go past a million in the next few years. We're just trying to keep it down into the hundreds of thousands of dollars and not strap the administration.

MOTION: Chris Tardif (Atkinson) moved to call the question.

Seconded by Julia Doherty (Atkinson)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

MOTION: Katie Knutsen (TRSB) moved to restrict Article 13 from reconsideration.

Seconded by Paul LeCain (TRSB)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

ARTICLE 15 – Interest on Invested Lease Proceeds

Shall the Timberlane Regional School District vote to raise and appropriate, a supplemental appropriation for the current fiscal year **up to \$80,000** for the purpose for capital projects? This amount will be funded from existing revenues and represents the interest earned on the proceeds of the Lease Purchase Agreement authorized by a vote on Article 3 at the March 14, 2023 school district meeting. No amount to be raised from additional taxation. (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Recommended by the School Board 9-0-0

Recommended by the Budget Committee 6-0-0

MOTION: Katie Knutsen made a motion to put Article 15 on the ballot as written; seconded by Mark Sherwood.

Paul LeCain, TRSB, (5:52:15), Article 15 allows the district to appropriate up to \$80,000 for capital projects using interest that has already been earned on previously approved lease purchase financing. This is not new borrowing, and it does not raise taxes, because this financing is structured as tax exempt municipal financing there are federal IRS rules that govern how interest earned on those funds can be used. In short if we don't properly authorize and spend the interest within the required time frames for capital construction purposes, the district may be required to give that interest back under federal arbitrage rules. This article ensures we remain compliant with those IRS rules and allows the district to retain and apply the interest toward capital projects instead of losing the money. Our district's legal counsel has provided guidance on this. Both the school board and the budget committee recommended this article unanimously. This is about compliance stewardship and using funds wisely, not increasing taxes.

MOTION: Kayla Gallagher, Atkinson moved to amend Article 15 to say: shall the Timberlane Regional School District vote to raise and appropriate a supplemental appropriation in the amount not to exceed \$80,000 for the sole and exclusive purpose of Pollard school bathroom vanity Capital Improvement Project. This appropriation shall be funded from existing interest earned on the proceeds of the lease purchase agreement authorized by a vote on Article 3 on March 14, 2023, school district meeting, no portion of these funds shall be expended for any other capital project or purpose. No amount to be raised by additional taxation.

Seconded by John Downing (Sandown)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: FAILS

Nola Whitman, Hawke Lane Danville, (5:59:24) can that money be encumbered? This project got cut and they are trying to put it back in.

Ryan Labrecque, Plaistow, (6:01:28) I think the purpose of this, the purpose of the amendment, was instead of just leaving this open for you all to decide whatever you plan to use it for, it was to establish something to actually earmark it for that would get done, If it needs to be expended by May 26, what are your plans for spending? What project are you going to use the funds for? And why won't you just list it in this warrant article for the use of this, so that the voter can say yay or nay whether they approve the use of these funds for that specific purpose, instead of leaving it open ended.

Sarah Browning, Montana Dr Sandown, (6:03:49) so I'm new to this, and so I don't mean to ask ignorant questions, and I don't want to sound like I'm pointing fingers or anything like that. But just to kind of piggyback off of what Ryan was saying, you know, I'm kind of seeing a lot of bucketized areas where money can probably go that we may or may not need to use, but we have potential projects that we might want to look into getting done, but we've got to use the money by a certain time. We have to use it or lose it, but then it's going to take two weeks to get the RFP, then we got to sign the contracts. I hear a lot of bucketizing and theorizing and a lot of padding for where money could go where it could be used, where it might be used, it might not and so I just, you know.

MOTION: Chris Tardif (Atkinson) moved to call the question.

Seconded by Evan Karupus (Sandown)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

MOTION: Katie Knutsen (TRSB) moved to restrict Article 15 from reconsideration.

Seconded by Mark Sherwood (TRSB)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

ARTICLE 16 – In-District Full-Day Enrollment by Petition

Shall the voters of Timberlane Regional School District authorize the district to develop and implement policy to remove all financial burdens from in-district full day enrollment in order to fill available full day enrollment slots whenever possible before the start of a new school year?

Recommended by the School Board 0-7-2

MOTION: Michael Boucher made a motion to put Article 16 on the ballot as written; seconded by Kane Guthrie.

Michael Boucher, Atkinson, (6:10:09) First, I want to discuss the problem, identify an opportunity, explain my intent for this article and talk about its benefits. I have a few slides to accompany what I have to say. So here's the problem, there's an academic learning gap at the early education level due to financial differences among families. Every parent has a different relationship to education. Some families prioritize the need for early education and have the financial means to provide it for their child. This means some children receive early education as soon as six months old through private care, some families enroll children when they are toddlers, also through private care, some wait until age three when they can enter preschool. The district offers half day tuition based offers a tuition based preschool program. Private providers offer full day and half day tuition-based preschool there are free, limited space and limited time programs that exist. Our local libraries with parents present both public and private. Options exist for four year olds at the pre-kindergarten level, by the time a child is five years old, public in private, full day tuition-based kindergarten is available. Half day kindergarten will be the first and only meaningful free option to receive early education within the district. There are many options. We have already funded these enrollments. I view the situation as a way to be more efficient with our money we've already spent instead of letting the money go to waste. Let's have a few children have an opportunity. Why should we consider this article? Let's talk about the benefits of full day kindergarten versus half day kindergarten in general, is better than no exposure to education. Children who experience a school setting for the first time in first grade typically struggle regardless of the academic or cognitive regardless of their academic or cognitive abilities. Children who are new to the school in first grade need extra time to adjust to structure in order to be successful and learn. Kindergarten provides these children with an opportunity to learn classroom structure and expectations. Full day kindergarten has an advantage over half day kindergarten by a regular length of day, allowing for extra learning opportunities such as unified arts, small group instruction, science and social group activities. While half day kindergarten has value, full day kindergarten will always

have the advantage. Here are some of the benefits of full day kindergarten. Improved reading and math scores as a result of extended instructional time, better social emotional development and skills by interacting with peers. Longer and more opportunity to learn from teachers how to navigate feelings. Reduce achievement gaps as a result of more instructional time, providing opportunity to identify students in need of early intervention, higher graduation rates as a result of establishing a positive relationship with education at an early age, and greater parent involvement as a result of having an additional grade which tracks student progress. And I mean, that's all I really say about this particular petition. I do want to say that the school board's petition is the correct way to go, because my petition is really kind of putting a band aid on a problem. We really should be offering kindergarten to everyone, providing an opportunity to everyone, and if we really do care about the success of our children, this is definitely the best way to go about doing it.

MOTION: Nola Whitman, Danville moved to amend the article to read: ~~Shall the voters of the Timberlane Regional School District~~

If Article 14 fails, to allow the Timberlane School Administration to do an in-depth study to allow the district to develop and implement policy to remove all financial burdens from in-district full day kindergarten enrollment in order to fill available full day enrollment slots whenever possible before the start of a new school year. This study must include a review of section 3 of the Articles of Agreement regarding "Pupils in the pre-existing district shall be assigned by the Regional Board to attend elementary schools in the pre-existing district in which they reside..."

Seconded by John Downing (Sandown)

VOTE BY CARD: Yes 75 No 105 **AMENDMENT FAILS**

Ryan Labrecque, Plaistow, (6:20:16) The reason why I believe this should be advisory is, is pretty simple. Actually, by implementing this, you are creating a situation where you are, I guess, assigning to who I don't know, the ability or the task of figuring out who is more deserving of the slot the few slots that may be available. And so I feel that that could be very discriminatory. I also feel that they could bring some litigation to the district for parents that may not be selected for the open slots. So for that reason, I think there needs to be more consideration of how this would be implemented, and more language associated with that to clarify and ensure that's not the case.

Nick Wormwald, Pine Ridge Circle Sandown, I think overall this there should be some type of committee put together, unpaid All right, to talk with you people, the board and the administrators, about what's going on to build up the trust in the community, and then at that point, I'm sure everyone's salary will go down, because we'll probably get new people.

MOTION: Evan Karupus (Sandown) moved to call the question.

Seconded by Dena Fleno (Atkinson)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: **PASSES**

MOTION: Michael Boucher, Atkinson moved to amend the article to read: Timberlane is mandated by the state to offer tuition free half-day kindergarten for all who want it. Timberlane also offers optional tuition-based full day kindergarten per a previously passed warrant article. Classrooms and teachers are established at every elementary school as needed. These classrooms often have "open" enrollment spots that could be filled which will have no additional cost to the district.

Shall the voters of Timberlane Regional School District authorize the district to develop and implement policy to waive all financial obligation from in-district full day enrollment in order to fill available open full day enrollment slots before the start of a new school year.

Seconded by Bill Smith (Atkinson)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: **AMENDMENT FAILS**

Jim Garrity, East Rd Atkinson, (6:29:54) I love you, and I love your passion for this, but I'm against this amendment for two reasons. It's too long and too it's going to confuse the voters. And secondly, I know this because I'm a moderator and in town, we have to pay to have the budget of the ballot printed. This is going to take up more space in the school district ballot, which means it will probably cost more to print it. And so I'm a cheapskate, and I think the one you have in here is just fine. The wording just so that's why I'm against it.

MOTION: Chris Tardif (Atkinson) moved to call the question.
Seconded by Paul LeCain (TRSB)

VOTE BY CARD MAJORITY: PASSES

ARTICLE 17 – Taxpayer Funds for Overnight Student Trips by petition

To see if the District will vote that no taxpayer funds shall be used to support, subsidize, or reimburse any costs associated with overnight student trips, including lodging, transportation, meals, staff supervision expenses, or incidentals, regardless of educational purpose, and to require that all overnight trips be funded exclusively through non-taxpayer sources; and to authorize the School Board to implement policies consistent with this restriction. This article is intended to promote fiscal responsibility and ensure that taxpayer funds are used equitably for core educational purposes, while allowing families and organizations to support optional overnight travel experiences independently.

Recommended by the School Board 0-9-0

MOTION: Kayla Gallagher made a motion to put Article 17 on the ballot as written; seconded by Nolan Pelletier.

Kayla Gallagher, Atkinson, (6:34:37) I put forth this petition because although this is not a significant portion of our budget, every dollar does add up. Every dollar we spend should be analyzed and determined if it is a necessary expense. I believe it is unacceptable to ask the community and struggling families and older adults living on Social Security to pay for something that they cannot afford themselves. I wonder how many taxpayers have been able to travel to Europe this past year, Washington, DC, or any trips in general, yet you are asking them to cover the cost of students when they cannot afford that themselves. You ask them to pay for trips for students, when they are choosing between buying food and paying for their heating bill. The mentality of it's just 30,000 a year is exactly why I think we're in this financial mess. The other thing is the equitable the equitability, so we pay for I was told half of the government clubs funds to go to conferences. However, we require other programs to completely fundraise their own program. So it does not seem very equitable to me, so I will urge taxpayers to vote yes on this bill. This bill does not stop overnight field trips from occurring or affect any day field funding at all, despite Chris Tardif thinking it would, there was no ulterior motive. It simply stops the taxpayers dollars from being used towards overnight trips. It's that simple, kids can still go on these trips. It's just does not come out of our wallets. That is it.

Brian Stack, Partridge Lane Plaistow, (6:37:07) I'm the president of probably the largest booster organization that sends students on overnight trips. I can tell you that not a single dime of taxpayer money is used when we send kids on music trips to Walt, Disney World or wherever else they go. They're funded by families, with one important exception, if we have a student on a medically fragile 504, IEP and they need assistance from the district that is provided by the district as required by law. I'm worried that this, as written, puts us in potential liability.

Nolan Pelletier, Plaistow, (6:38:00) , I am in favor of this warrant article, and I think what she said makes sense, and I'm going to be relatively quick. I'm going to use some of my time for a point of privilege, and the point of privilege is I think it would behoove the board to make it on a Saturday. All the other towns have already had their deliberative and I believe that's this Saturday would have been the last Saturday. Whether or not you agree with me or I agree with you, I appreciate the debate, but I think it should be done in the daylight.

The 2026 Deliberative Session of the Timberlane Regional School District concluded at 12:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Heather Greenfield
Timberlane Regional District Clerk

