PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Note: When feasible, TRSB meetings are videotaped. These meeting minutes reflect only a basic summary of the meeting topics, discussion, and action. The Vimeo recording of this meeting can be viewed at: https://vimeo.com/trsd
Materials presented at the board meeting may be viewed at: School Board Meeting Agenda Materials

Timberlane Regional School Board
Meeting Minutes

Regular Board Meeting
September 3, 2026
7:00 PM

Superintendent's Office
30 Greenough Road
Plaistow, NH

Call to Order
Chair Knutsen called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Board Members Present
Shawn O'Neil, Marianne Springer, Alyssa Kowalczyk, Shauna Manthorn, Katie Knutsen, Don Woodworth, Jack Sapia, Mark Sherwood

Excused Absence: Paul LeCain

Seated at the Board Table
Justin Krieger, Superintendent
Sandra Allaire, Assistant Superintendent
Ginger Drechsel, Director of Student Services
Noah Darnstaedt, Student Representative

Administrators Present
Maria Watkins, Business Administrator/CFO
Mitch Mencis, Middle School Principal

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Mr. Sapia motioned to approve the August 13, 2026 meeting minutes. Seconded by Mrs. Kowalczyk. Motion passes 7-0-1 (O'Neil abstains).

Student, Staff, Family Share

Principal Mencis recognized sixth-grade students Kinsley (Sandown), Ryan (Atkinson), Ethan (Plaistow), Savannah (Danville), and Audrey (Sandown), who participated in transition tours for incoming sixth graders through the House of Representatives and Student Senate. The students discussed how the tours helped reduce anxiety about transitioning to middle school and provided an opportunity to become familiar with the building. They noted that knowing where classrooms were located and having supportive teachers were particularly helpful, while nachos were identified as a favorite lunch item.

Principal Mencis also recognized student tour guides Olivia (Sandown), Harper (Plaistow), Lyla (Plaistow), and Chloe (Plaistow). The guides shared that they participated to help incoming students and develop leadership and public-speaking skills. They enjoyed answering questions and sharing their experiences, noting that students were highly engaged.

DELEGATES & INDIVIDUALS

There were no Delegates and Individuals at this time.

MOTION: Mrs. Manthorn motioned to move the remaining 30 minutes of Delegates & Individuals to the end of the meeting. Seconded by Mr. O'Neil. Motion passes 8-0-0.

Student Representative

Noah Darnstaedt, the new Student School Board Representative, reported on the start of the school year and his goal of increasing communication with elementary and middle school administrators. He reported that the high school year began smoothly, with 93% freshman attendance at orientation, and noted some maintenance concerns, including water fountain filters. He provided updates on fall athletics, including strong early-season performances, and shared that marching band and chorus activities at the Performing Arts Center are underway, including a recent performance of the national anthem at a Fisher Cats game.

Mr. Darnstaedt reported positive energy at the middle school, with grade-level team-building activities planned at Camp Lincoln, Trickling Falls, and Adventure Lore. He also provided updates from Pollard, Sandown North, Sandown Central, and Atkinson Academy, noting successful starts to the school year, HVAC improvements, student transitions, school-wide activities, and a successful fire drill at Atkinson.

CURRENT BUSINESS

a. Secondary Culinary Curriculum Revisions: Second Read

Assistant Superintendent Allaire presented the second read of the revised competencies and curriculum components, previously presented at the August meeting. She explained that revisions were made to a competency related to job-related opportunities in food service, as the current programming and facilities do not support that specific focus. She noted that the related content and career discussions continue to be addressed.

MOTION: Mr. Sherwood motioned to the second read of the Secondary Culinary Curriculum revisions. Seconded by Mr. Sapia. Motion passes 8-0-0.

b. FY2026 Summary

Superintendent Krieger presented a summary of FY2026, including budget reductions, administrative measures, and year-end financial results. To align with the voted budget, the District eliminated 37 positions, reduced benefits by $1 million, reduced capital expenditures by $1 million, reduced school and department budgets by approximately $900,000, and reduced transportation by $900,000. Additional reductions included elementary writing and social studies resources; professional development; Navigate 360; AV equipment, projectors, and smart boards; staff computer replacements; special education equipment, supplies, and services; athletics and performing arts equipment; school-level equipment and supplies; the planned CTE bus for Pinkerton students; and portions of field trip transportation.

During the year, the District implemented a spending freeze and subsequently canceled or delayed additional expenditures, including reading assessment training and kits, academic testing technology, summer reading books, professional development consultants, most field trip transportation, snow damage and generator repairs, the Sandown North underground oil tank replacement, Danville and middle school heat pump replacements, the softball renovation, and the high school bathroom renovation. The Superintendent reported year-end variances of approximately $1.8 million in salaries, ($400,000) in benefits, and ($1 million) in operating expenses.

c. FY2026 Unassigned Fund Balance

Mrs. Watkins explained that the unassigned fund balance provides a cash-flow management tool and noted that the FY2026 balance is $1.162 million, primarily due to additional revenues. The Board may retain up to 2.5%, or $1,493,404.

MOTION: Mr. Sherwood motioned to retain $500,000 of 2026 year-end unassigned general funds. Seconded by Mr. Woodworth. Motion passes 8-0-0.

d. 2026-27 Budget Committee Presentation Calendar

Superintendent Krieger presented the 2026–2027 Budget Committee presentation calendar and announced that the Budget Committee will be asked to set goals at next week's meeting. He noted additional joint School Board and Budget Committee meetings are scheduled for September 24th and November 23rd. In addition, Mrs. Springer will serve as the School Board representative.

e. SY26-27 TRHS End of Year Dates

Superintendent Krieger presented the 2026-2027 High School end of year dates. He stated that approving the calendar enables early planning and reservations, noting that adjustments can be made later in the year as needed.

MOTION: Mrs. Manthorn motioned to approve the High School's proposed dates for the 2027 end of year events as presented with the graduation date set as June 12, 2027. Seconded by Mrs. Springer. Motion passes 8-0-0.

f. 2026 NHSBA Delegate Assembly

Superintendent Krieger noted the event is scheduled for October 17, 2026 at the Grappone Center. Chair Knutsen will be the Timberlane representative.

g. 2027 Deliberative Session Date

Superintendent Krieger explained that following community engagement and survey feedback, the School Board approved shifting the deliberative session to a Saturday at its August 13th meeting, pursuant to RSA 40:13, III and IV. He noted that the district's towns historically hold their meetings on the first Saturday, and any emergency postponements to be rescheduled within 72 hours. The Board discussed placing the change of date for the Deliberative Session as a future warrant article.

MOTION: Mr. O'Neil motioned to have the Timberlane Regional School District's 2027 Deliberative Session on Saturday, February 6, 2027. Seconded by Mr. Sherwood. Motion passes 8-0-0.

Administrator's Reports

Mrs. Drechsel detailed that their department was fully focused on welcoming students and getting acclimated for the new school year, and that summer hiring went well, with direct and contracted hires filling almost all vacancies, leaving only one open case manager position at Sandown North. Regarding the PAGS audit report received on July 9th, the district is preparing a Corrective Action Plan due October 9th, which will be presented to the board at the first October meeting. The DOE liaison noted the district fared very well, citing only 18 non-compliance findings out of 796 audited IEP areas with an approximate 2% error rate, most of which were clerical or documentation errors. Moving forward, the department is implementing process adjustments and staff professional development to address these findings and ensure consistency across all schools.

Assistant Superintendent Allaire commended the 31 staff members who participated in the two-day new teacher induction, highlighting the strong connections made. She also announced that Policy JICK will be brought to the Board following new state legislation. Because the law requires public engagement on this policy, she invited interested community members to reach out and participate in the process.

Superintendent Krieger presented the opening day report, noting 98-99% opening-day attendance across all schools. He met with the Atkinson Historical Society to explore local history initiatives and belfry access at the Academy. In addition, he noted that the district must issue an RFP for a new food service vendor as its current contract enters its final year. Following a screening of the documentary Gone Guys, he plans to present at a future meeting the national statistical trends regarding challenges facing men and boys, such as

addiction, suicide, and isolation, to evaluate how they compare with Timberlane's student body.

Personnel Report

Mrs. Manthorn read into the record the electronically signed personnel reports dated July 31, August 5, and August 24, 2026. The Professional Nominations of Christian Peterson, Special Education Facilitator, Sandown North Elementary School; Casey Middleton, Special Education Teacher, Danville Elementary School; Jessica Roberts, Library Media Specialist, Atkinson Academy; and Leighann Maher, Interventionist, Sandown North Elementary School. The Professional Resignation of Brian Benson, Science Teacher, TRHS.

Committee Reports

Mrs. Springer reported that the Curriculum and Assessment Committee held a productive discussion on how curriculum updates are initiated, noting that additional curriculum documents will be presented to the Board in upcoming meetings.

Mrs. Manthorn reported that the Wellness Committee will schedule a meeting shortly, adding that he and Superintendent Krieger connected with Dr. Preble to review potential initiatives for the district.

Chair Knutsen reported that the Safety Committee is wrapping up its ALICE training program and will soon transition to its next project.

Mr. Woodworth highlighted the Policy Committee's review of Policy JICK and the stakeholder group required for its development, noting it must include students, parents, teachers, volunteers, and community members.

Other Business

Mrs. Manthorn asked if the Board would be open to permanently adopting an earlier schedule for their regularly scheduled meetings.

MOTION: Mr. Sherwood motioned to have the start time for School Board meetings be at 6:30 PM. Seconded by Mr. Sapia. Motion passes 8-0-0.

Mr. Sherwood requested an upcoming agenda item focusing on special education trends, dynamic growth or shifts in student service needs, legally mandated versus discretionary spending, and strategies for matriculating students out of specialized services.

Mr. O'Neil reported receiving a parent concern regarding the display of Pride and transgender rights flags in a sixth-grade science classroom. He requested for the School Board to consider a classroom flag-display policy, including the possibility of removing all non-official flags from classrooms, with the goal of minimizing distractions and keeping the focus on academics.

MOTION: Mr. O'Neil motioned to have the School Board create a flag policy for the display in classrooms. Seconded by Mr. Sapia. Motion fails 3-4-0.

Superintendent Krieger read his response to the resident's concern regarding classroom flag displays. He stated that the District does not have a School Board-approved policy specific to classroom flags and allows staff discretion in creating safe, connected, and welcoming learning environments. He also noted that there is currently no state statute limiting flag displays in New Hampshire public schools.

Mrs. Kowalczyk suggested that the matter be reviewed through the Policy Committee and potentially other avenues with broader public input. Mr. O'Neil agreed to amend his motion to direct the Policy Committee to develop a proposal for further Board discussion and possible public input.

MOTION: Mr. Woodworth motioned to have the Policy Committee look at policies relevant to this conversation and to report back to the Board. Seconded by Mr. Sapia. Motion passes 8-0-0.

Delegates & Individuals

Representative Debra DeSimone, joined by Representative Markell, commended Superintendent Krieger's focus on supporting young men and boys. She highlighted her work with Thrive, an organization supporting male victims of sex trafficking, and emphasized the need to dispel common misconceptions surrounding the issue. She noted that trafficking can begin at birth and often involves family members rather than strangers. She invited anyone interested in state-level efforts or community education to contact her, and Superintendent Krieger requested her contact information for the district.

There were no additional delegates and individuals.

MOTION: Mrs. Manthorn motioned to enter non-public under RSA 91-A:3, Paragraph II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant. Seconded by Mr. Sherwood. Motion passed 8-0-0.

The Board was polled:

Kowalczyk – yes Sherwood – yes Springer – yes Sapia – yes
Manthorn - yes O'Neil – yes Kowalczyk – yes Knutsen – yes

The Board entered the non-public session at 10:10 PM.

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

The Board returned to the public session at 10:58 PM to seal the minutes and adjourn the meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Sherwoord motioned to seal the non-public minutes of September 3, 2026. Seconded by Mrs. Manthorn. Motion passed 8-0-0.

There was no further public business. The meeting was adjourned at 10:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelly Salovitch
Recording Secretary

Approved by the School Board on 9/17/26.