

Tamworth School Board

1. Call to Order

A meeting of the Tamworth School Board was held at the Kenneth A. Brett School on Wednesday December 10, 2008 at 5:35PM. The meeting was called to order by Lisa Remick. Present were Lisa Remick, Dana Littlefield, Laura Pike, Dan Rowe, Gwen Poirier, Pat Kehoe, Noel DeSousa, and Kathi Brown.

2. Approval of Agenda

Laura Pike made a motion to approve the agenda. Dan Rowe seconded the motion. There will be an additional 10c to move the Non-Public Session here instead of waiting until item 15. Gwen also has an additional letter to present under communications. Motion passed.

3. Approval of Minutes (November 12, 2008; November 24, 2008)

Dana Littlefield made a motion to approve the minutes of November 12, 2008. Laura Pike seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Dana Littlefield made a motion to approve the minutes of November 24, 2008. Laura Pike seconded the motion. Motion passed.

4. Director of Special Services Update

Pat Kehoe presented and went over her report. She answered any questions and stated that the 09-10 budget is based on six students in ready readers.

5. Education Views - Middle School Team

Anne Chant explained the homework detention program for grades 6, 7, and 8. The threat of detention is effective on the kids and they have received parental support of the program. Abby Hambrook spoke of the improvement in homework grade averages and that students are using class time wisely. Johanna Vienneau noted that more kids are getting higher grades and increasing the number of students on the honor roll. Dennis O'Neil feels that the students enjoy contact with the teachers in a different setting. He is also working with Jackie Leathers on the six traits writing program. Johanna Vienneau also gave a hand out on the spring 2008 NECAP science tests and spoke about the monarch butterfly program.

6. Visitor's Comments

None

7. Committee Reports

a. SAU 9/13 Committee

Dan Rowe and Charlie Pugh met. Dan wants to set up a meeting with Noel DeSousa as they want more data to present. They will bring back more information next month.

b. Strategic Planning Committee

A meeting has been scheduled for Monday, December 15th. Information has been received and next month more information will be shared.

8. Old Business

a. Energy Policy - Adoption

Dana Littlefield made a motion to get it on the floor. Laura Pike seconded the motion. It was noted that there were no changes since the last time. Motion passed.

b. Fuel Usage Comparison

Dan Rowe felt that the data can not be evaluated until the end of winter. Lisa Remick would also be able to look at the temperature.

c. Guidance Counselor Job Description – Second Reading

No changes were made since last time. Dana Littlefield made a motion to get it on the floor. Laura Pike seconded the motion. Laura Pike inquired about where does Kennett fit into the description, and was told that it fits under #3. Dan Rowe would like to make it more specific. Gwen Poirier said it could be expanded into #10. Laura Pike will e-mail her the wording she would like to see. Next month will be another second reading.

9. Superintendent's Report

a. Expenditure Report

Gwen Poirier went over the report and identified places where \$41,000.00 could be made up to help pay for fuel oil. They were teacher's salaries, Guidance Counselor salary, Custodian health insurance, and field trips. Dan Rowe questioned why there was no overview report this month and Gwen Poirier informed him that there were no significant differences this month to report on. Dan Rowe stated that the changes are not a result of our actions and that there have been no policy changes. Dan Rowe is also concerned about running under budget in certain accounts. He needs to get specific questions to Gwen Poirier. Dan also feels that encumbrances should show known expenses and brought up the \$100,000.00 under out of district placement. Gwen Poirier will share his concerns with the finance director. Laura Pike thinks we should budget better for the contractually obligated course reimbursement line. The line should be increased based on the agreement at negotiations.

b. Other

Gwen Poirier will discuss later a letter from the NE Association of Schools. Laura Pike was given the registration form for the delegate assembly of school boards to be held on January 17th.

10. Principal's Report

a. Monthly Update

Noel DeSousa presented a student enrollment data form that the board felt was better. The chart also shows the declining enrollment in our area. Dan Rowe would like to see a cost per student over a 10 year period by school district.

Noel DeSousa spoke about the possibility of getting 8 swings for the school at approximately \$10,000.00 and that the PTA would be the principal funding. On January 10th we are thinking about hosting a girl's basketball tournament here and perhaps charging an admission fee to help cover costs. Noel also handed out copies of the newsletter with a personnel notice on the back along with permission forms for the ski, skate and snowshoe program. In the future, Noel does not want to see the PTA auction used for field trips. The field trips should be a line in the school budget.

11. Review of Proposed 2009-2010 Operating Budget

Gwen Poirier went through the report and pointed out changes from last time

Notes:

On page 3 under tutor salaries: cut the Title 1 aide to 85% and cut the Alt. Ed. Aide to 65%.

Dan Rowe wants to know why budget more than spent in tutors. From 07/08 there is a difference of \$27,000.00. How many personnel?

On page 5, health insurance changed.

Dan Rowe spoke about substitute teachers, he wanted to know if they are any more than babysitters and can they really do anything? He stated that by virtue of definition a substitute is a baby sitter.

Lisa Remick explained to him how substitutes work and that they do teach from plans that the teachers leave them.

Dana Littlefield said that substitutes are on an as needed basis so you can not encumber the wages.

On page 7 under pupil services – the MWV School to Career has been eliminated in conjunction with other towns.

On page 8 a change was made to Special Program Fees – FFF.

Dan Rowe would like to check the piano tuning for 07-08 and how much is really needed to tune it.

On page 9 Ready Readers has been changed to reflect 2 less students. The administration does not support bringing Ready Readers to in house. Lisa Remick has a copy of a proposal she will give to other board members. Gwen Poirier noted that any change in program would eliminate the program as it is SAU wide. Laura Pike asked if we are obligated to be in it. We can change, but it would need to go to the joint board.

On page 9 there was a change in Spanish materials.

Dan Rowe suggested that due to economics, we should reduce 20% on all costs of materials.

Supplies were discussed along with the bidding process we use to get the best price for the bulk of materials for the school.

Noel DeSousa explained the process of reimbursement and that the auditors don't like it. There needs to be a purchase order and requisition. If we are given the software and PO processing it would make things better and faster. This would require other board support also.

Dana Littlefield spoke of the auditors concerns, re internal controls. Always get supplies as cheaply as possible.

Laura Pike would like to get the other names of schools to see how it works. She wants to use cost effective methods, and get them in place.

Noel DeSousa spoke of school wide supplies, bid list, supply catalogs, and proprietary materials.

Lisa Remick stated that a lot of lines are level funded. No increase in lines to keep up with inflation.

On page 8 the Kennett figures Gwen now has which includes bond and tuition is \$52,390.00. Per student is not calculated out.

Dan Rowe wants the per student cost.

Lisa Remick said it can't be done as it is not figured that way any more.

Gwen Poirier had a chart showing the cost per student in 07-08 to be \$9,800.00 and in 09-10 a proposal of \$10,000.00. As of October 1st there were 123 kids at Kennett.

On page 10 the Physical Education is less allowed per student.

On page 11 the art textbooks is less.

On page 11 the language arts has an increase.

On page 13 the Physical Education materials is less.

On page 14 the Special Education portion. Suggest reducing one position. All positions are IEP driven. Pat Kehoe looked at the IEP's and Paraprofessionals which are all mandated.

Lisa Remick stated that the out of district costs can not be reduced as Dan Rowe wants and we have been lucky so far. Pat Kehoe has to put it in the budget.

Dan Rowe asked about using the capital reserve fund and budgeting for reality.

Lisa Remick spoke about what would happen in the event a student comes in now, which is not planned for.

Laura Pike wants more information on Ready Readers and it not being in house.

On page 20 the Gifted and Talented program change in dues and fees.

Co curricular salaries took out intramurals and drama.

Page 21 less athletic awards.

Dan Rowe says we should ask the truant officer to be a volunteer. It was noted that Dan Poirier gives this money back to the Dare Program. Dan Rowe would like to see it under special program fees.

On page 23 Guidance Counselor supervision, tests and supplies are less.

On page 25 there are notes about the % reimbursed by Freedom & Madison under Psychologist.

On page 25 Dan Rowe would like to only give health supplies \$500.00. Need to check with the nurse.

On page 29 ed. Grant is reduced. Lisa Remick & Gwen Poirier explained the program and the discretionary funds.

Dan Rowe wants to take the money from other accounts. Lisa Remick told him that you can't do that as the auditors will come down on us. Dan Rowe said that he will deal with the auditors. Gwen Poirier said that there are parameters you must go by. Dan Rowe wants Gwen Poirier to e-mail him the auditors name so he can talk with them.

Noel DeSousa spoke of the after school program funding and summer grant programs.

On page 30 the media aide is now at 50%. Dan Rowe asked if the position can be eliminated and Lisa Remick explained the purpose of the aide, and that it can not be eliminated.

On page 33 computer support, there is an increase for website maintenance.

Laura Pike questions if the global chalkboard/bascom system is effective and user friendly.

Noel DeSousa explained that it is a sophisticated firewall and since we are five years into it, now would be a good time to take a look at it.

Dana Littlefield suggested that it may be too technical, not antiquated.

Dan Rowe feels that computer support should be reevaluated yearly to be sure that we have the best and cheapest programs available.

On page 33 under AV supplies, we have ink cartridges for a few big printers. Dan Rowe would like someone to look into this, maybe it should be \$1,000.00 less.

Lisa Remick spoke of the SAU fees Dan Rowe wants to eliminate. Is it a duplication of effort? There is no duplication of services. Gwen Poirier stated that we go through First Student for our buses.

Gwen Poirier spoke of the assistant principal stipend and how they have assigned duties and certification. Dan Rowe wants to see a copy of the job description.

On page 37 the secretary has been changed to 5.5 hours per day.

On page 39 postage is reduced.

On page 40 dues and fees, Gwen Poirier explained what is covered. Dan Rowe feels that they are discretionary, not required, and should be eliminated. Gwen Poirier will speak with Noel DeSousa about this line.

On page 41 it now shows a list of custodial staff.

On page 43 the telephone. The printout Gwen Poirier had was not helpful to Dan Rowe.

Dan Rowe wants details on the principal supplies.

On page 43 the recycling is less. Laura Pike wants a better understanding of the nature of the program and it is the right thing to do, but could it fall under custodial duties. Dan Rowe would like the custodians to do this. Lisa Remick stated that this program was started at an annual meeting. Noel DeSousa stated that he can't require personnel to use a private car.

Dan Rowe spoke about contracted services and has the custodian looked at these items to find the most inexpensive way?

Dan Rowe would like to see the fuel oil budget reduced by 15%. Lisa Remick would like to wait until February to see what happens with the market.

Gwen Poirier said that a special board meeting is coming up for fuel. Dan Rowe said this is pre-mature and we need to wait – don't make a commitment.

Lisa Remick stated that the floor scrubber is falling apart and that is why it needs to stay in the budget.

Carpeting being taken out – coming from an employee to a board member, not through administration. The proper channels need to be taken.

Laura Pike cautioned where feedback is coming from. Need open communication by the community.

Lisa Remick on general maintenance. We need to keep it due to roof issues.

Noel DeSousa spoke about carpeting being able to wait one or two years. The scrubber is not self propelled and some of the custodial staff can not push it.

On page 45 the athletic trips is less.

Dan Rowe asked about the grounds maintenance in the spring and wanted to know if the board agrees to pay \$500.00 to the 8th grade class to do it. He wants it to go into the specs for the landscaping bid. Dan Rowe also handed out a printout showing the changes he would like to see happen in the budget.

On page 46 the interest on debt. Dana Littlefield asked about the bond amounts. Gwen Poirier will get the figures for him. The capital reserve funds are at the discretion of the board.

On pages 47 and 48 the food service department was discussed.

Lisa Remick comments. Miscellaneous service is our portion of food service. Would like to go over the revenues. Mark who the paraprofessional is that Madison is paying for. Also, the warrant articles need to be brought back next month as figures need to be put into them.

Noel DeSousa comments. The maintenance account has already been overspent this year. The roof quote is \$57,900.00. Only just enough in CRF to do this. Need to get around to the report card modules. It will be done this school year.

Dan Rowe comments. He wants a 5 year analysis of CR account for payout, age of building, past history, by category. Gwen will e-mail the information to him. It will be discussed at the next school board meeting.

Laura Pike asked about the grading system on the computer.

12. Visitor's Comments

Don Harte - The PTA auction was great. During hard times we all have to be creative and think outside the box. Must raise money to spend money. Need open communications.

Peg DeLong - Wanted clarification about the auction funds. She was told that this year they are for field trips and enrichment, in the future the field trips should be as a budget item. SAU - have you compared positions, bus person, as we get some services, but not much for our portion? Tamworth is 37.8% at all SAU positions.

Lori Palmer - Wanted to know what the bus administrator does for us. It is administrative duties. We are not getting 37% of his time. Lisa Remick stated that his appointment is RSA driven.

Heather Booska - She read a letter from the K-1-2 team re the teacher cutbacks. They would like the board to reconsider cutting the grade 1 teacher and cut one paraprofessional instead. The letter also proposed an intervention program for Kindergarten in place of Ready Readers.

Gail Marrone - Asked if we were combining grades K and 1. The answer was no. She supports Ready Readers in house and that you should look at the specialized programs to reduce money.

Lois Maxner - Asked about the internet provider, digital phone service and anti virus programs. She was told that we currently get free internet service as it is free to public entities and that digital phone is not yet available.

Lori Palmer - At the annual school district meeting the dollar amount saved was insignificant on tax bills. You need to weigh the money versus the impact on the children.

Dan Rowe - You need to be careful what you are comparing numbers to, but it is down from last year.

Peg DeLong - Wanted to know what is the cost of the after school program. Donna Ulitz told her that it was about \$6,000.00 not including the bus with about 100 kids per session. Peg feels that you can save money if Ready Readers is in house.

Heidi King - Twenty kids will be impacted by one less teacher or 4 Ready Reader kids. The per student ratio in lower grades is more involved.

Marcia McKenna - Replied to an earlier comment about the art supplies, they are spread out over the year as there is no place to store them if you buy them all at once. In regards to substitute teachers, it takes a long time to write sub plans as they are very involved. You can't give kids a day off just because the teacher is not there. We have excellent subs.

Kelly Sharman - It is too much work to take a day off as you need to write plans and prepare the class for the day.

Noel DeSousa - We have 5 to 6 subs we use on a regular basis and 5 to 6 that we use on occasion and the other not much at all. We know who we can depend on.

Gail Marrone - Appreciates the board looking to save money. Wanted to know if the staff will be looked at. The answer was yes, at leadership.

Peg Delong - Asked about the procedure change in letting staff know they would not be rehired, used to be in the spring. Lisa Remick stated that it just keeps everyone better informed.

Chris Kennedy - Regarding the \$500.00 for spring clean up. You need to look beyond the service to the value to the students. He feels that the budgeted amount for school board conference fees should be left in the budget as it is important for new members to obtain learning and experience by attending them.

Marcia McKenna - Asked about the change in the Gifted and Talented account from last time of \$7,762.00. It was an error from last time and it has not really changed.

Donna Ulitz - Regarding the school board members being volunteers, she stated that the board can donate their stipends back, like Dana Littlefield did last year to help with a special project.

13. Board Comments

Laura Pike - Stated that Heather Booska's letter offered options. She applauded the administration for the small changes from last time. Would like to see options versus elimination of staff, as to provide healthy discussions. To make a decision as a board to least impact education. Wants to see several staffing options.

Dan Rowe - The board challenged administration to reduce costs. Costs here are excessively high. One of the top 5 expensive schools in New Hampshire. Costs are too high and we can not continue like this, wants to see alternatives. Last year was a charade. Move costs in the right direction. Board's job is to support the administration. Ideas need to be sold.

Lisa Remick - Disagreed with Dan Rowe's comment. Last year was not a charade.

14. Communications

a. Jesse Lyman Company

A letter was given to board members. Dan Rowe still thinks we were taken advantage of. Dana Littlefield would like a more in depth letter with specifications.

Kennett High has been awarded continued accreditation.

15. Non-Public Session RSA 91 – A: 3 II a, b, c, d, e

This will wait until the next board meeting at it is very late.

16. Action as a Result of Non-Public

Non-Public did not meet.

17. Personnel

Dan Rowe would like a different way to limit items in Ed views. Devote more time to present in a meaningful way.

Laura Pike would like to give the Ed view teams a template to follow with a 10 minute window. This would cover the highlights and challenges. Likes the hands on showing, gives a window into a classroom. She will draft up a suggested guideline.

18. Adjournment

At 9:25PM Dana Littlefield made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Laura Pike seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathi Brown, Recording Secretary
Draft pending Board Approval