

THETFORD TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Tuesday April 12, 2011
Thetford Elementary School

Elise Tillinghast convened the meeting at 7:01 p.m. in the art room. The following were present: Howard Sussman, Shannon Darrah, Lisa Swett, Charlie Buttrey, School board; Keith Thompson, TES Principal; Don Johnson, OESU Superintendent.

Teachers Present: Kendra Waterbury, Linda Gerlach

Others Present: Tracy Borst, Town Clerk

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from Tuesday, March 22, 2011 board meeting reviewed MOTION: Sussman/Buttrey moved/seconded to approve minutes from the 3/22/11 board meeting (unanimous approval)

Approval of Orders: MOTION: Tillinghast/Buttrey moved/seconded to approve payable payroll orders #s 6527, 6540, 6509, 6484, 6471 and 6479 (unanimous approval).

Public Comment & Correspondence: No public comment or correspondence.

TES Mud Season Madness Presentation: Kendra Waterbury

There were 23 classes. Some were taught by TA students who showed up for every class. Sixteen TA students were involved and some were here two days per week. Discussion ensued regarding recognition of the TA students, with board members remarking that they were delighted to see this level of involvement. The program was flawless this year. Biggest challenges to continue the program include: time commitment because volunteer based, challenging groups of children in some groups, keeping on the timeline; enough classes to involve 200 + children; it is a long day for the younger children. There did not appear to be transportation issues for the children.

This program is in the enrichment budget at approximately \$2,200 or \$10.00 per child. The program came in under budget with Kendra's stipend. Supplies were \$1,276.

There was much praise for the program and Kendra. MOTION: The Board gives special thanks to Kendra Waterbury and Darla LaRoche for their many efforts on behalf of the program.. Tillinghast/Darrah move/second (unanimous approval). Tillinghast to note on Thetford listserv.

Discussion followed regarding implementing a similar program for children who do not choose to participate in the winter ski program. Tillinghast mentioned that this was one of the requests coming out of the Strategic Plan forums.

OESU Report: Don Johnson

Business manager elect has not yet signed on. Still working on the contract

Norm Andrews assisted this week to keep business moving as usual.

David Allen is working remotely from Florida with management letters, finalizing audits for some of the other districts and working on surplus issue for Waits River

Screening committees have been formed for HR and administrative assistant positions. The HR committee is meeting again next week and interviews are scheduled, with excellent candidates available.

The new special education director has interviewed a candidate for a special education position

The OESU Office may move to the CCM building across from Farmway. This is not yet confirmed. Copeland furniture and the early childhood educators would also utilize the building. Rent for this space will be a major factor in the OESU budget.

The school bus bid is confirmed with Butler. OESU is waiting on the paperwork to be processed.

In the future, as there is less crisis management work to do, Don Johnson intends to visit the schools on a regular basis and work more closely with principals. He would like to be in each school for one half day each month. This responsibility is shared with Beth Cobb.

Don Johnson is continuing to process principal evaluations.

OESU is researching rotation of the location of the leadership meetings.

TES Principal Report: Keith Thompson

Guys and Dolls 5th and 6th grade musical is performing tomorrow and Thursday night. Length is 1 ½ hours. The kindergartners and 1st graders watched the dress rehearsal. Students work on sets and all parts of the production. It is hoped that all school board members will be able to see it.

Keith met with Jamie Peyton, pro bono marketing professional for recruitment for Thetford Elementary School. She will be implementing a plan and meeting with the Board in the near future for presentation.

Volunteers: A data tool has been developed to give to volunteers so that staff will have information regarding the volunteers who are available in the community to enrich classroom and other learning; a database is in the works & the school is putting together a questionnaire for the community, similar to the TA volunteer questionnaire; the survey will be distributed via multiple venues, including the listserv.

Leadership advisory team: The team is discussing how to use the ski program time for non-skiers and when this program will start; students would not go home at 12:30 but will go home at 3:00 p.m. and have mud season type activities; can utilize enrichment dollars for this program. The board members expressed strong support for this idea and will discuss further.

PTO Movie Night: This was a great success. There were cookies, popcorn and lemonade for refreshments. The PTO made some money with this. There were between 50 – 60 in attendance and there was food in the gym. All the food was served on the stage. The children had their sleeping bags too.

PTO Dinner:: Plans are underway for this next month. Dinners planned once a quarter for parents to eat here or take home. Parents can look at displays in the hallways but not to go in the classrooms. Will work on getting more PTO members involved physically. Discussion that such events could also be helpful for TES recruitment.

Science (necaps): This testing is coming up quickly. TES does different assessments in the school throughout the year in other areas as well. Keith will do a presentation on assessments in future (May?) board meeting.

Teacher Observations and Goal Reviews: Teacher observations are completed. Reviews are all going well.

OESU Board Meeting Leadership Group: Talked about mission, vision and methodology to show their direction. Discussion regarding how the group is going to present this to staff and board members. It will be a lot of work and it is ongoing.

TA Report: Shannon Darrah

TA Meeting is Thursday night.

Slafter is on the market.

Administrative team went to visit Louis Chafee School in regards to development plans.

The School Board can have one member on the TA principal search committee. Charlie Buttrey is interested in this position. Shannon stated this was a screening committee, and that she and Charlie had already discussed, agreed Charlie could be representative, however noted that TA had not yet formally requested a board member. MOTION to appoint Charlie Buttrey for this position: Tillinghast/Sussman move/second (unanimous approval). TA is still in the planning stages of how they want to conduct the search.

TA Trustee meetings are the 2nd Thursday of the month. Many Board TES members are interested in attending. TA trustees want more communication with TES. Elise noted that Gene Kadish is available to talk with any TES Board members and public generally about head search, and that she had a good conversation with him on this subject.

Strategic Plan:

Elise reported that Keith, Amy Toth and Joanna Waldman provided an excellent template for the objectives and strategies associated with each goal. They, and other board members, are taking the draft and working on it to fill out the remaining language under each goal. Elise confirmed that the draft will reflect in part the ideas and preferences expressed in the two community forums held this past winter. She also noted that the document should be a practical one, with objective criteria with which the board and school can measure accomplishments and identify concerns. Matt Senger, a committee member, has been tremendously helpful assisting with creating goals, objectives and strategies.

8:25 – 8:30

Break

8:30 – 8:45

Governance Decision Planning (timeline, responsibilities):

The board discussed that governance issue was the priority for the year, and that a timeline for this should inform the board workplan that Elise will present at the next meeting. They discussed the issue of whether to use a consultant going forward, how to integrate community input and at what stage, possibility of survey work to break down issues. The board agreed to spend an hour or more at the next meeting to review the Proulx Report., digest it as a group and decide how to move forward. Within the report, what does the Board want to take off the table. Should there be a facilitator for public input such as forums? .

The board agreed that it would tentatively seek to be done with this process by next town meeting. After the next board meeting, Howard Sussman and Charlie Buttrey may do a draft executive summary focusing on which factors are significant..

Timeline: Aim for one year but understand the Board might need to change this; eleven months could be feasible so the Board can take it to town meeting; identify options; executive summary; community education and community forums for fall of 2012;

Identify options: decide on non-forum outreach; summer and fall community outreach via forums, potluck dinners etc; narrow to one or two options; winter-spring – budget; identify options and legislative requirements; Elise will draft a timeline for board’s review as part of general workplan.

8:45 – 8:50

TES Recruitment update from meeting with Jaime Peyton:

Met with Jaime Peyton and Keith to create a strategy for recruitment of students; what does Jamie need to focus on – tuition for outside students etc; will discuss at next board meeting what issues we need to address

8:50 – 9:00

Bullying: policies at other schools, timing of bullying forum:

Lisa Swett and Charlie Buttrey put together a new policy after attending a conference at Dartmouth.

Information gleaned from conference:

- * 70% of children are not bullied. Bullying starts in 2nd third grade and peaks in middle school and then starts decreasing through the high school years
- * TES should focus the positives of our identity as opposed to a focus on decreasing bullying behaviors
- *Cyber bullying should be part of the school’s responsibility
- *Some behavior is not bullying i.e. fighting is not bullying
- *10% of bullies are children who are bullied themselves
- *How do we protect the person who is being bullied
- *Know it when we see it; know how to stop it

School District’s policy should be work with if not mirror TA policy. Lisa has forwarded a draft to the Administration at TA.

The board discussed the desirability of getting community input and participation on the bullying issue, especially in terms of procedures implementing bullying polices. They also discussed the need to align policies with TA, and discussed having events in the fall - presentations for parents, teachers and students and do this with TA and possibly other schools. Shannon will bring the draft School Board’s policy to TA trustees for comment and collaboration. Charlie Buttrey will draft/amend language for the policy including retaliation for reporting bullying as itself a form of bullying.

9:00

Other business:

Slate of teachers: Approval of contracts for TES teachers MOTION Accept Slate of TES elementary school teachers as proposed Tillinghast/Sussman move/second (unanimous approval).

Brief discussion of protocol for dissemination of future agendas, minutes, once OESU is not short staffed.

Sick Bank/seniority: Question from teachers re sick bank days; the board agreed that the teachers and Keith should discuss on how best to proceed re sick bank question not contemplated in the contract, and that OESU should be reference for Keith as needed.

Swett mentioned the desirability of adding TES policies to the TES web site, that this is should be considered as part of desirable upgrades to website

Executive Session MOTION to move to executive session; Buttrey/Tillinghast move/second (unanimous approval).

Adjournment: MOTION: Sussman/Darrah moved/seconded to adjourn (unanimous approval).

Next Meeting April 26, 2011 at Thetford Elementary School

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

Lorrie Wilkes,
Minutes Clerk

These minutes were approved by the School Board on April 26, 2011