

THETFORD TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Tuesday, March 27, 2018
Thetford Elementary School
DRAFT MINUTES

Shannon Darrah convened the meeting at 6:35 p.m. The following were present: Julie Acker, Charlie Buttrey, Shannon Darrah, School Board; Kevin Petrone, TES Principal

PUBLIC PRESENT: None

AGENDA REVIEW: Agenda approved with amendments.

MINUTES REVIEW: MOTION: (Buttrey/Acker) moved/seconded to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2018 Board meeting (unanimous approval).

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF ORDERS: MOTION: (Acker/Buttrey) moved/seconded to approve accounts payable orders #6389 and 6376, and payroll warrant # 6385 (unanimous approval). Accounts payable #6388 (a GMP bill is in question) is on hold.

PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE: The Board received an inquiry regarding a TA tuition waiver. The family is building a house in Thetford but not living in Thetford yet. They have not broken ground. Darrah denied the request, responding that residency is where one is currently living. The student's current school district could be petitioned to pay TA tuition. If by the end of the next school year the family is close to occupancy, Darrah suggested they revisit a waiver request at that time.

All OESU boards received an email from Melanie Elliott regarding changes to VHEI insurance. The process has been frustrating for the teachers. An excerpt from Elliott's email with explanation follows: "On Wednesday, March 7, our SU office and many across the state received notice from Future Planning Associates that they would no longer provide Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA), Health Savings Account (HSA), or Flexible Spending Account (FSA) administration to VT school districts as of May 31, 2018. VEHI took the lead and has worked with Future Planning's recommended solution, DataPath. There will be essentially no change in what employees need to do as a result of choosing this vendor. This change will take effect on May 1."

The Board received notification that Vermont's Secretary of Education, Rebecca Holcombe, has resigned.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (Kevin Petrone): The school calendar for next year is complete, and includes 177 student days. The State requires 175 days. The first day for students is August 29. There are usually four teacher in-service days prior to the first student day, two in house and two with OESU. Since there is no new superintendent yet, the plan has not been finalized. June 12 is

the last day, barring school cancellations. There are no snow days built into the calendar. This calendar is very close to TA's, but TA is starting a little bit earlier. Vacations align. Discussion followed. The math committee is making progress getting a program in place for next year. Petrone is very pleased and commended the leadership of Laura Sharpless. They have decided to use a K-5 math curriculum. Two choices have been narrowed down: Investigations 3 (this is the newer version of what TES used to have) and Bridges 2.0. Both programs are in use by other area schools. TES borrowed Bridges materials from the Newton School. For grades 6, 7, and 8 (in collaboration with TA for grades 7 and 8) the choice has been narrowed to College Prep Math and Illustrative Math. The Newton School uses College Prep Math. It would be beneficial for both TA feeder schools to have the same curriculum as TA. Sharpless offered to present to the Board. Friday is an in-service day, and is the last day of responsive classroom training with Ramona McCullough from the Center for Responsive Schools. She will visit classrooms the day before to give feedback regarding implementation. In response to a brief discussion at town meeting regarding increased special education spending, Petrone met with school psychologist, Cynthia Dale, and Ray Chin. They decided they would like to hold a school forum on Wednesday, April 25 at TES. Dr. Chin is preparing a presentation about factors influencing children today. There will be a round table discussion including local community members like pediatricians and preschool teachers. Chin is also working at TA. TA's special education director hopes to attend.

BEGIN PLANNING FOR NEW STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THETFORD SCHOOL

DISTRICT: Darrah stated that despite being in transition, a new strategic plan is overdue. TA is launching their own strategic planning process now. A TTSD Board member is on that committee. The last strategic planning committee had the advice of a strategic planner (not sure if he was paid). Buttrey likes the idea of having a consultant. Buttrey stated it is unwise to start the process until there is more Act 46 information, but a committee could be formed in the meantime. The new plan would start July 1, 2019 and last for five years. A message could be posted on the listserv to invite two community members to serve on the committee. Ideally there would be a balance of teachers, staff, community members, students, and a TA trustee. The last committee had nine members. Darrah will talk to the VSBA about the process. Petrone will bring it up at a future staff meeting.

REVIEW OF PHONE CALL WITH SECRETARY HOLCOMBE: Holcombe did not offer any opinion on which SU TTSD should join. Holcombe resigned the next day, giving a one week notice. The Board summarized for Holcombe what they have done as part of the Act 46 process. Holcombe asked what cost saving measures TTSD has taken going forward, and what collaborations would encourage more student opportunity. Holcombe acknowledged the pros and cons of each SU. TTSD needs data about the SU's to make an informed decision. WRSU probably will not get much bigger, but OESU could get a lot bigger, which affects financials. Acker speculated that with Chelsea and Tunbridge now being choice towns, and potentially sending students to TA, there may be more in common now. Buttrey added that the special education staff are already in OESU and could be kept by TES. Darrah stated that the new special education bill may force TTSD to re-allocate special education services. Unlike OESU,

many SU's move special educators around a lot. Discussion followed. Petrone reported there was one interviewee for the open special education position, and because staying at TES could not be guaranteed, that person declined the position. Acker stated a timeline was discussed. The AOE plans to have a draft of the district map in May. TTSD will be allowed to make comments and the map will be finalized in November. Strafford is requesting to keep their current structure.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Para-educator negotiations): MOTION: (Buttrey/Acker) moved/seconded to go into Executive Session at 7:16 p.m. to discuss para-educator negotiations, the premature dissemination of which may place the Board at a substantial disadvantage. Out of executive session at 7:25 p.m. No action taken.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Principal contract): MOTION: (Buttrey/Acker) moved/seconded to go into Executive Session at 7:26 p.m. to discuss the principal contract. Out of executive session at 7:35 p.m. No action taken.

ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: (Buttrey/Acker) moved/seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 p.m. (unanimous approval).

FUTURE MEETINGS:

04/03/18 OESU Meeting	6:00 p.m.
04/10/18 Thetford Town School District Meeting	6:30 p.m.
04/24/18 Thetford Town School District Meeting	6:30 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Amy Bosco, Minutes Clerk

These minutes are not official until approved by the School Board.