

Kensington School Board Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2017

In Attendance: Board Members –Tina Favara, Benjamin Cole, Jennifer Ramsey and Administrators – Esther Asbell and Becky Ruel

Manifests were signed.

Mrs. Favara called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm

No other visitors wishing to address the board

Minutes – Mrs. Ramsey moved to approve the minutes from November 7, 2017. Mr. Cole seconded. All in favor.

Budget Review – Mrs. Asbell presented re-worked budget figures that were discussed and included changes made at the November meeting. Currently, the overall increase is 10.5%. This figure includes a reduction in OT/PT costs, an additional \$500 in School Board expenses, the SNAP Program for the school nurse, and LP gas for the food service program, as well as contractual obligations which are non-negotiable.

The new teacher contract will increase \$48,819.42 the first year, however there will also be a savings of \$28,002.00 due to the switch in health care providers.

The proposed budget was reviewed page by page. There was discussion. Changes were made. Mr. Markiewicz recommends having an external audit, therefore funds should be included to cover that. A safe figure would be \$8000.00

There was also discussion about adding a stipend of \$700.00 for the elected position of School District Auditor.

Additional funds have been added for an additional water/sewer tank which is anticipated to be in need of replacement.

There was discussion about the Kensington Town Selectmen's decision to no longer plow snow for the school. Mr. Cole has attended Kensington Town Selectmen's meetings, and in his opinion, it would be better for KES to hire their own independent contractor to plow rather than going through the Town.

Mrs. Favara said she finds the behavior of the Kensington Town Selectmen to be "disturbingly unethical".

There was discussion regarding the large increase for roof repairs, boiler pumps and HVAC.

Mrs. Ruel presented information obtained from PRISM Lighting and put together by Janet Lukas. This project is for the replacement of basic lighting/fixtures to LEDs. The no frills estimated cost to KES will be \$19,792.18 with the expectation that there will be a quick return on the investment annually of \$5792.27. There is also currently a decent rebate program in place.

Mrs. Asbell will obtain a figure of encumbered expenses that the district is aware of. Mrs. Ruel will then be able to speak with Ms. Lukas with a better idea of funding availability to secure dates if able.

Mrs. Ruel reported that she is having difficulty securing a nonproprietary bid for HVAC Controls, including the lack of response from the current contractor Trane.

There was discussion regarding Special Education transportation and out of district placements, as well as discussion regarding transportation in general.

There was discussion about reducing the allowance of the line for electrical costs. There will be savings based on improvements. It was decided to reduce that line.

Mrs. Ruel shared that a \$19,000 Reap Grant earmarked for technology has been received and with those funds she will order the new iPads needed for the additional incoming kindergarteners.

There was discussion regarding a possible typographical error under media and periodicals.

Mrs. Asbell will double check those figures.

In summary, Mrs. Asbell will make the following changes based on discussion tonight: Audit figure will be changed, electrical allowance will be reduced, she will double check media/periodical figures, and will reduce the figure for technology as discussed.

Mrs. Ruel shared that a grant for \$1100 was received to replace a refill station.

Mrs. Asbell has approval to post the preliminary budget as a *draft*.

Mrs. Ruel requested that funds be budgeted under the kitchen needs to include a single person insurance plan and a point of sale program. The cost would be approximately \$7800

Mrs. Ruel would like to be able to offer this to the kitchen manager. She shared that she has been doing a wonderful job with creative ideas as well as increasing student and staff utilization.

There was discussion regarding revenue covering costs.

There was brief discussion regarding the upcoming 2018 ballot. Mrs. Favara shared that after thoughtful consideration, she will not run for another term.

The position for School District Auditor for a term of (1) one year should also be on the ballot for 2018.

Committee Reports – Mrs. Favara shared that the search is still ongoing for a Superintendent. The Committee is close to recommending finalists.

Policy Committee – Mrs. Asbell shared that policy GBAA –revision, should be addressed as soon as possible. She said many districts have already approved it. Mrs. Ramsey said she reviewed the policy and looked up the statutory guidelines. She found that Kensington is in compliance as the policy is written. She explained that the changes had more to do with the Right-to-Know law. Mrs. Asbell also explained that the foremost reason for the change was the policy should apply to staff only, however students were included in the wording.

Kensington currently has a policy in place. Mrs. Ramsey will write up some information for Mr. Cole to take to the Policy Committee for consideration.

There was discussion on policy GBAA, but no decision was made at this time.

The Competency Based Committee will reconvene in May. In school performance assessments are a large piece and the next level the group will focus on.

Principal's Report – Attachment 1 - Mrs. Ruel shared

Teaching and learning – A new law has been passed requiring screening/treatment for dyslexia. This is not a new practice for KES. KES needed only to purchase an additional screening tool, at a cost of approx. \$150.

During the early release today, staff had an excellent afternoon continuing to design performance assessments in math and validating each other's assessments.

Instructional Rounds, originally scheduled for December 5 have been postponed until January 31, 2018.

Health and Community - Mrs. Ruel shared that the community has been extremely generous in support of the Jingle Bell Jaunt.

The hot lunch program is regularly experiencing 75% participation, 82% on pizza days, 90% on breakfast for lunch days, and nearly 100% on holiday meal days!

The new fire chief, Jon True, assisted students with an evacuation drill to the library. This was done on a day the library was closed so as not to disrupt patrons. He also came to do the annual fire safety inspection on December 4, 2018. He will supply Mrs. Ruel with an "occupancy load" figure to post for the Multipurpose Room.

The Scholastic Book Fair was very successful. Profits were approximately \$800.00. Turnout was particularly good during Friends and Family Day. Thank you to all the volunteers who made the event possible.

Design/Philosophy/Governance – Mrs. Ruel participated in a regional Seabrook Emergency Drill to ensure surrounding communities' plans and procedures are current and up to date.

Mrs. Ruel shared that KES will re-qualify for Title 1 benefits next year. In the past the figure has been as much as \$14,000. These funds have previously been used to fund a math tutor position.

There has been a delay in the launch of the new KES website due to legal legislation requiring ADA compatibility. It is hoped that this will be resolved soon.

Tomorrow, Thursday December 14, the 4th grade will be presenting students with their journey to find a KES mascot. Voting will take place on Monday December 18, 2017. The reveal date and time have not been determined yet.

Mrs. Ramsey shared that she likes the format of the Principal's Report.

Enrollment – Enrollment is at 119, there is one additional preschool student that has been identified. The incoming kindergarten (fall 2018) is holding firm at 28 students.

Calendar –

The Holiday Concert will be held December 18, 2017.

Assistant Superintendent – Mrs. Asbell shared that budgets are being worked on in almost every town. January 10, 2018 will be the Kensington Budget Hearing immediately followed by the Regular School Board meeting. Brentwood and Stratham still participate in Town Meeting. All other towns are SB2 communities.

Mr. Jerry Frew has been coming in to the SAU office a couple of days a week to help out.

Personnel – Mr. Furbush is a finalist for Superintendent in Pelham, NH. He should know their decision by the end of the week. Interviews have already been held.

Mrs. Asbell has withdrawn her name from consideration for the Superintendent position in Somersworth.

Mrs. Asbell publically thanked Mr. Paul Flynn for his many years of time and effort serving the Kensington students and community. She shared that she is very appreciative of Mr. Flynn's guidance and support which made her transition to KES that much easier.

Mrs. Ruel shared that KES is working on dedicating the multi-purpose room/gymnasium to Paul Flynn. When plans have been finalized more information will be shared.

Old Business – Board Goals have been tabled until January 2018 and will be on the top of the agenda. Goals should be "measurable".

Mr. Cole moved to adjourn. Mrs. Ramsey seconded. All in favor. Mrs. Favara adjourned the meeting at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan M. Lalime
Kensington School Board Secretary

Kensington Elementary School

Principal's Report

December 2017

Teaching/Learning

- With the recent passing of **HB 1644**, all school districts in NH must select a **screening tool** to identify students in Kindergarten and First Grade who may be at risk for various learning difficulties.

Screening and Treatment for Dyslexia and Related Disorders.

- *I. All students, including English for speakers of other languages students, enrolling in New Hampshire's public schools shall be screened using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) or an equivalent cost effective screener for the identification of characteristics that are associated with risk factors for dyslexia, related disorders, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia upon entering kindergarten or first grade, and at appropriate times thereafter, to monitor progress. The screening required by this section shall begin no later than January 1, 2018.*
- *II. The student's school district shall provide best practice intervention and support services for any student who is identified as having characteristics that are associated with risk factors for dyslexia, related disorders, dyscalculia, or dysgraphia.*

We are fortunate that our Reading Specialist, Amy Danusis, has lead the coordination of these screenings and intervention development with our students for many years and this is not a new practice for KES. We have, however, purchased an additional screening tool (PALS) to meet the requirements of this law. For more information, please follow this link -

<https://legiscan.com/NH/text/HB1644/id/1287970>.

- Teachers continue to actively design quality **performance assessments** in mathematics. These type assessments are an integral part of our **competency work** as they are strategically created to assess a student's ability to integrate their knowledge and skills. In its simplest terms, a performance assessment is one which requires students to **demonstrate** that they have mastered specific skills and competencies by performing or producing something. Kelsey Plourde and Elizabeth Mosher serve as KES representatives on the SAU Performance Assessment Committee and will be leading professional development for the staff on our upcoming early release on December 13th.
- KES was originally scheduled to participate in **Instructional Rounds** on Tuesday, December 5th. With the passing of Associate Superintendent Paul Flynn this week, those Rounds have been rescheduled for January 31st.

Health/Community

- This year, Nurse Heather coordinated the delivery of 7 Thanksgiving turkey dinner baskets to local families in need. In addition to the backpacks provided by 68 Hours of Hunger, KES is pleased to be able to help children and families during these special holiday meals.
- More in the spirit of giving...Students ran 883 laps around the track this past week for our Annual **Jingle Bell Jaunt**. These laps translate into food donations from KES families and Kensington neighbors which are then donated to St. Vincent dePaul. Last year, we collected nearly 5,000 non-perishable items and expect at least that many this year again.
- On November 16th, a record setting 101 students ordered hot lunch from our kitchen for our annual Thanksgiving Feast. We are averaging a **75% daily participation rate** for school lunches. 82% on pizza days, 90% on breakfast for lunch days and nearly 100% on our holiday meals.
- Kensington's new **Fire Chief, Jon True**, assisted students with an evacuation/relocation drill to the Kensington Public Library on Monday, November 27th. Chief True also completed our required annual **Fire Safety Inspection** on Monday, December 4th. He will provide us with a list of recommendations and is required to submit the Inspection to the state by December 15th.

- The KES PTO had a very successful **Scholastic Book Fair** in November! We had not hosted a book fair here at school for nearly 6 years and we exceeded \$3100 in sales. From that amount, the PTO anticipates approximately \$800 in profit. The students thoroughly enjoyed having a “store” at school and sales were particularly good on Friends and Family Day! Thank you to all of the PTO volunteers who manned the register all week!

Design/Philosophy/Governance

- On November 30th, I participated in a mock **Seabrook Emergency Drill** at Kensington’s Emergency Operations Center located at the newly renovated Town Hall. In conjunction with the Office of Emergency Management, Seabrook conducts these drills multiple times a year to ensure that adjacent communities (within a 10 mile radius) have procedures in place to respond to an event or emergency at Seabrook Station. Representatives from FEMA were on hand to observe the drill and provide feedback to its participants. KES has a comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) in place which is reviewed annually by the state.
- Due to an increase in the number of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch as of October 1st, I have been informed that Kensington will likely qualify again next year for **Title One** funding. In the past, we have used this money to hire an additional Math Tutor to support instruction in grades 3-5. Once we receive confirmation of the funding, we will decide how to best use that money to support our current student learning.
- There has been a delay with the launch of our new **KES website**. The SAU has learned of legislation requiring that our websites comply with ADA accessibility guidelines. Unfortunately, the platform we had chosen for our new websites, Google Sites, is not yet compliant. We hope to publish a Google version of our school sites in the future, however we need to pursue another option in the interim. This has delayed our original timetable and roll-out of a new site.
- Mark your calendars! **Thursday, December 14th at 1:00pm** - 4th graders will be presenting about their journey to discover a **new KES mascot!**

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Ruel
Principal