

DOVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
February 24, 2009

Members Present: Bob Springett, Chairperson  
Darin Correll  
Jennifer DaSilva  
Susan Hackney (arrived 7:11p.m.)  
James Stuart

Also Present: Valerie Spriggs, Superintendent  
Kirk Downing  
Richard Mathieu, Business Manager  
Dr. Deb Reinemann, Curriculum Coordinator  
Dana White, PTO

1. **Call to order** – Mr. Springett called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Chickering School Library.

2. **Approval of Minutes**

a) Dover School Committee minutes of January 20, 2009.

Mr. Springett requested a motion to accept the January 20th minutes. Mr. Stuart moved, Mr. Correll seconded.  
*09-03Vote: Unanimous*

b) The minutes were noted of the Dover-Sherborn Regional School Committee for January 6, 2009.

c) The minutes were noted of the Sherborn School Committee for January 15, 2009.

3. **Community Comments** -- None

4. **Reports**

a) **PTO Report** – Ms. White

- Ms. White distributed the February 2009 PTO newsletter and reported on PTO events which included:
  - Check writing campaign—the campaign is going well. \$60,000 has been committed to Chickering Administration based on the expected response to the check writing campaign and existing cash reserves.
  - PTO is having dialog with Pine Hill CSA, DSEF, and other groups about fitting the fund raising and grant requests together since all groups are requesting funds from the same sources.
  - An Interactive Whiteboard Demonstration was given at PTO Quarterly meeting.
  - Books from the Heart – 357 new books will be coming into the library.
  - Penny Drive – \$1,197 presented to Greg Mortenson, author of Three Cups of Tea.
  - Class of 2009 – the 5<sup>th</sup> grade class has selected a slogan and logo. Information about their activities can be accessed on the PTO website by clicking on “committee websites”, then “5<sup>th</sup> grade graduation”.

b) **Business Manager's Report** – Mr. Mathieu

- FY'09 Budget Update—budget continues to be in reasonably good shape. Mr. Mathieu will begin to prepare year-end projections next month.
- Utility Report—Chickering received an oil delivery in February. The budget covers 2 more deliveries. KWH usage up minimally, a cause may be more after hours use of the building. Should be in reasonable shape to close out the year.
- Temperature Reports – January report distributed, Mr. Mathieu noted that there were a couple 2:00 p.m. temperature spikes over 70 degrees.
- SPED report— Increase in contractual services due to addition of new student in February. Still on budget.
- Mr. Springett noted that in the Custodial Account, \$30,000 of the \$54,000 surplus was for recommissioning, and that most of the remaining positive surpluses are due to SPED. The remaining items are close to budget.

- 2010 Budget Update—Report distributed for review. The potential changes to SPED net to an increase of \$33,813, additional costs for changing to full day Wednesdays \$12,800 net, for a combined increase of \$45,000. Projected offsets represent \$14,000, resulting in approximately a \$31,000 increase to the initial draft budget of \$8,019,038, for a revised budget request of \$8,049,937. Mr. Springett asked that the Committee take another run at the budget at the interim meeting March 5<sup>th</sup>.
- FY '10 Budget presentation to the Warrant Committee – Mr. Springett presented the Chickering budget on February 11<sup>th</sup>. Additional information was requested or supplied to Warrant Committee. Most increases are related to SPED or salaries. All other line items netted out or had a surplus. Revenue projections that Warrant Committee has received have raised concern due to changes in our tax base and a decrease in growth, because of this it's hard to know where the school and other operating budgets are in relation to the revenue projections. SPED is a wild card in the budget process. To cut the budget in a meaningful way impacts people and programs. Mr. Stuart would like to have all the committees/departments get together and discuss all town budgets, so that each are could understand what is being given up. Mr. Stapleton stated that Capital Budget Committee and Warrant Committee are going back to departments to look at what is discretionary, though most of the budgets are fixed costs. Mr. Stapleton also stated that 60% or more of the towns' budget is in the schools. Mr. Springett stated that the town will need to prioritize, in the past the town has been able to fund what was requested, but this may be different now. Mr. Stapleton stated that Warrant Committee looks at budget projections two years out and one year back to get a sense of future budget needs. No expectation of additional federal funds for federal education programs.
- **Principals Report** – Mr. Downing
  - Time on Learning
    - Teachers need more time to do the work with the students. Discussions have been taking place on the need to have more instructional hours while balancing professional development.
    - Propose taking two Wednesdays a month and making a full day. Estimated to cost \$12,500-\$13,000
    - Will have to evaluate alternative time for instrumental music.
    - Ms. Spriggs has been contacted by the Teacher's Association; they would like to review the proposed change vs. the contract since it's a change of assignment in teaching load. Mr. Springett stated that Sherborn already has this teaching load and they have the same teaching contract.  
⇒ Ms. Spriggs to get the provisions in the contract for DSC review.
    - Mr. Springett requested a motion to accept Mr. Downing's recommendation to change from 39 ½ day Wednesdays to 22. Ms. Hackney motioned, Mr. Correll seconded.  
**09-04 Vote: Unanimous**
    - In addition to e-mails, communication should be in the local paper, should include top 3 reasons for the change. Change will also be announced at Kindergarten orientation.
    - Early Release schedule will be the same as at Pine Hills.
    - Should we reconvene the Time on Learning Task Force?
  - Curriculum -- Dr. Reinemann
    - ELA—A group from Chickering has been to Broadmeadow School in Needham. The Special Education teachers shadowed their staff to see how balanced literacy is being utilized.
    - DIBELS and Galileo data /monitoring being looked at. Data is easy to look at to see progress. No big surprises. Should we retest students who have “maxed out” on their first assessment? What's next for those students?
    - Galileo – 4<sup>th</sup> grade non-fiction assessment is about half way through. Altering 2<sup>nd</sup> half to accommodate weaknesses.
    - Vocabulary program assessment—all classes were reassessed, students were moved (in groups)—the program is word study, not a vocabulary program. DSC still getting feedback from parents that the program is perceived not to be increasing in complexity. A survey was sent out today to parents re: Safety, Leadership & Instruction in the school, hoping to get feedback on the vocabulary program through that survey.
    - Transition –5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers will meet with Pine Hill 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers and the sixth grade teachers to discuss where they are coming from and how to make the transition smooth. DSC discussed implementing more common learning experiences for 5<sup>th</sup> grade from Chickering and Pine Hill, such as the summer

reading assignment that's already in place. Ms. DaSilva asked about adopting the writing strategy used at Pine Hills – the FAC's. Dr. Reinemann stated that it's on the agenda tomorrow for discussion.

- Mr. Springett wants to identify alternative ways of providing the Foreign Language program, further discussion at March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting as part of the discussion of strategic initiatives.
- Curriculum teams have met vertically, now the horizontal teams will be meeting.

c) **Superintendent's Report** – Ms. Spriggs

- NESDEC Enrollment Projections
  - Currently we are at 580 students; the projection shows a decline of over 100 children by 2018. Mr. Stuart asked about their prediction record. NESDEC's states within the memo that they state they were previously off by 5%.
  - Strategic Planning –dates to be sent out tomorrow.
  - Technology Workshop March 17<sup>th</sup>–Ms. Spriggs is looking for representative from DSC and will send agenda to DSC members and other SC members.
  - A meeting has been scheduled on November 30, 2009 with Dr. Bill Daggett, President, International Leadership Academy—a leading speaker on technology and school improvement. Ms. Spriggs would like all school committee members present.
  - Technology Advisory—should have a date for an initial meeting within the week.
  - Ms. Spriggs received letters from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students about the inauguration. The span and scope of what the children observed was so diverse. It was amazing what the children captured.

**5. Special Items**

- FY '10 Budget presentation to the Warrant Committee – Mr. Springett—discussion included under Business Manager's report above.

**6. Future Business**

a) March School Committee Agenda Items

- Standard reports
- Preliminary feedback from Whiteboards and Galileo—value, worth, staff feedback.
  - ⇒ Mr. Springett to provide Mr. Downing with 5 specific questions that define what he would like the presentation to cover.
- Future meeting: Ms. Spriggs would like to have an informal night with 5<sup>th</sup> graders so that DSC can get insight from them about what they have learned.

**7. New Business** -- None

**8. Routine Business**

- a) Enrollments as of February 1, 2009—reports distributed.

**9. Adjournment**-- Mr. Springett requested a motion to adjourn. Ms. Hackney moved, Mr. Correll seconded. Meeting Adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Deb Savastano