

**Dover-Sherborn High School
School Council Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2009**

In attendance:

Denise Lonergan, headmaster
Beth Miaoulis
Deirdre Clancy-Kelley
Nicole Eckert
Rachel Grossbaum
Elinor Jarrell
John Soraghan

The meeting was called to order at 4:10 PM.

The March meeting minutes were reviewed and accepted.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 11 at 4:00 p.m. at DS High School in Room 113.

We spent the beginning of the meeting going over the information members had discerned from reviewing the survey results.

Nicole noted that parents and students had differing views regarding the causes of stress. In particular, 90% of students thought that academics were a major contributor to their stress while only 69% of parents. Denise encouraged the group to consider new methods of reducing stress. Some ideas were: time management course/seminar, optional yoga/wilderness courses, etc. Rachel questioned whether the rule that allows seniors to skip a final exam if they have an A in the course could be extended to Juniors. Beth suggested creating a combined a group amongst guidance advisory, the PTO's DStress group and the school council to address stress reduction.

John pointed out that while many parents expressed concern over alcohol use, few bothered to comment. The council agreed that the school does a good job at informing students and parents about the dangers, and that it's up to the students to make the right choices when they leave the school. We also agreed that the school should continue its efforts. (i.e. Speakers on the development of the adolescent brain, mother discussing the loss of her daughter due to alcohol abuse, etc.)

We moved on to reviewing the School Improvement Plan. Denise pointed out the changes to the initiatives. **Number 2**, regarding responding to the NEASC recommendations, is complete. We should include it again at the beginning of the 5-year review period.

Number 5 will be removed if we don't get DSEF funding since the school budget has no room for guidance counselor additions or trips. Last year, we did not get funding for the additional counselor but DSEF funds allowed counselors to make national college visits.

The conversation veered from the S.I.P. to college visits. We discussed whether guidance could create a questionnaire for students to complete once they visit a college. The information could be used to help counselors and students. Guidance could also keep a "college reference" file, containing the names of DS students who currently attend a particular college and would be willing to talk to current DS students about the school.

Number 6 will remain. Most departments are doing a lot of work on common assessments, but more needs to be done. Formative assessments such as clicker tests are being incorporated. Denise explained that teachers teaching the same course should have the same assessments. The tests don't necessarily have to be identical, however their form and content should be similar.

Denise concluded by asking the members to re-read the survey results and email her about any new S.I.P. initiative ideas.

The students suggested creating a school pride subcommittee. This will be revisited in the future.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.