

DOVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
October 20, 2009

Members Present: Bob Springett, Chairperson
Darin Correll
Jennifer DaSilva
Carolyn Ringel
James Stuart

Also Present: Valerie Spriggs, Superintendent
Dr. Deb Reinemann, Curriculum Coordinator
Kirk Downing, Principal
Christine Tague, School Business Manager
Cheryl Chase, Librarian
Betsy Ryan, PTO
Steve Bliss, Assistant Superintendent
Jim Kinder, Warrant

1. Call to order – Mr. Springett

Mr. Springett called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm in the Chickering School Library.

Mr. Springett thanked the faculty and administration for the support and services that have helped the community get through this difficult time, he also thanked the community at large for their support. In times of great grief like this you really appreciate what community means. Mr. Stuart spoke of how helpful the PTO was during this time.

2. Approval of Minutes

a) Dover School Committee minutes:

- Mr. Springett requested a motion to accept the September 15th minutes.
Ms. DaSilva moved, Mr. Correll seconded. **09-30- Vote: Unanimous**
- Mr. Springett requested a motion to accept the October 1st interim minutes.
Ms DaSilva moved, Mr. Correll. **09-31 Vote: Unanimous**

b) The minutes were noted of the Sherborn School Committee for September 10, 2009.

c) The minutes were noted of the Dover-Sherborn Regional School Committee for September 1, 2009.

3. Community Comments

- Ms. White commended Mr. Downing and Ms. Spriggs for making the decision to close Chickering to allow staff to attend the funeral, this allowed the entire Chickering staff to attend.

4. Reports

a) PTO Report – Ms. Ryan

- Ms. Ryan spoke of how the PTO typically receives feedback when it is negative, but not as often when it is positive. The PTO has received much positive feedback the past couple weeks. Ms. Ryan read one of the letters as a representation of the type of positive feedback they have been receiving.
- Chickering School Directories went out last week.
- The first speaker event was held. The event included a discussion and movie (“two angry moms”) about kids, nutrition and the quest to bring better foods into schools. A nutrition task force will be held through SAC. The next event will be a presentation by Dr. Lisa Jacobsen who will discuss the Gardasil vaccine.
- Planning is underway for the spring event, Rock-A-Palooza: Chickering Rocks the House, the event will be held at Elm Bank.
- The Community Book Fair will be held December 1st-3rd.

b) Business Manager's Report – Ms. Tague

- FY'10 Budget Update—Ms. Tague continues her review of the systems and budget. She reported that the actuals for salaries are still being held in the settlement account. Salary encumbrances are estimates since payroll is outsourced. Ms. Tague is working with the towns to see if improvements can be made in regards to how the systems interact. Ms. Tague is looking at how to best provide actual expenses instead of estimates.
- Temperature Reports—some data was lost during a computer swap, but has since been restored.

- Ms. Spriggs spoke of the transition not going as smooth as expected due to some items not being completed as expected. Ms. Spriggs also spoke of how Ms. Tague has done a good job problem solving.
- Ms. Tague stated that the FY09 legal services account did have the positive balance noted and that the current SPED figures are a good encumbrance.
- Utilities--Ms. Tague reported that the oil bid was locked in during May at \$1.95, based on the same volume as last year we are expecting a significant positive variance this year. The electricity bid opens October 24th, the rates have come down substantially even though our usage has increased.
- FY11 Budget—The budget requests are due back at the end of this week. Meetings have been scheduled with building administrators. The budget requests will no longer be manual, we will be using an excel spreadsheet that can be uploaded to the budget system. Looking to compile the requests for the budget books in November so that the committee can review in December and sign off in January if Warrant can support the timeline. Mr. Kinder noted that warrant is looking for the budget 12/22, but will work with the committee on deadlines.
- Ms. Teague distributed a draft report of the Capital Budget request for Technology and Facilities. Ms. Spriggs would like the committee to review and have a discussion at the next meeting.
 - Ø Mr. Springett asked for the last 3-4 years of Capital Budget requests and actuals.
- Mr. Stuart asked if there is a list of replacement and maintenance costs for the next few years out, Ms. Spriggs does not have an up to date plan but it is being developed.
 - Ø Mr. Stuart requested the existing version of the replacement and maintenance costs list.

c) Seatbelts on Busses

- Many of the pre-K buses are equipped with seatbelts, the Chickering busses are not.
- Ms. Menon has researched pros and cons and asked for a voluntary subcommittee to provide a recommendation to the school committee.
- Ms. Ringel asked about the role of the driver in enforcing the use of the seatbelts and if the drivers will be able to help the kids that can't do it themselves.
- Ms. Spriggs has spoken with Mr. Connolly of Connolly Bus Service. They do provide seat belts to towns that request them. Only one of Connolly's school districts has requested seat belts, Mr. Connolly finds that many times the students don't wear them and push them out of the way into the seats. In regards to how are the children safe on the busses, Mr. Connolly informed Ms. Spriggs that the frame of the bus is up higher, the children are cushioned and compartmentalized and the padding has a specific impact design.
- Ms. Spriggs also has NHTSA information that children are hurt more outside the bus than on the bus. Ms. Spriggs would be willing to support a task force if school committee recommends it. Mr. Stuart asked if there are any rollover statistics, Ms. Spriggs reported there were not any available.
- Mr. Matt Stover offered to compile data and who it was obtained from.
- Ms. Carol Jannetta asked if there is any information about children who wear their backpacks on the bus.
- Mr. Springett explained to the audience that this would impact all three school committees. An assessment will need to be done to determine risks, costs, etc.
- Mr. Correll asked about the availability of data for shoulder harnesses vs. lap belts.
- Additional open issues from this discussion include a timeline and how the seatbelts would be paid for (will it be donations or part of the fees we pay Connolly). An update will be provided in November.

d) Principals Report – Mr. Downing

- The faculty and staff send their appreciation to all that have helped us during the last week.
- We have begun looking at how to bring literacy support into the building.
- SAC kickoff will be held November 5th. Topics for discussion will include foreign language, accelerated learning, nutrition and wellness.
- Professional Development
 - § We are looking at data and how we are meeting the needs of highest achieving kids in Math. On 9/23 a presentation was given to the staff on the plan to identify these students via pre-assessment for the upcoming unit on the Everyday Math program for grades 1-5. Grade level teams have met and identified the students, the materials and are ready to implement.
 - § Ms. Ringel asked how the preassessment is done; Mr. Downing responded that Galileo will be used because it best serves the purpose.
 - § Mr. Springett asked how we track and report progress. Mr. Downing responded that we will look at periodic dipsticks to measure progress. Grades 2-5 have or will be looking at identifying data this week and regrowth exercises will begin this week.

§ Mr. Stuart asked what this will do to teacher workloads. At another school system using Everyday Math they use a regrouping strategy to shift units/students/teachers, but the administrative burden was too great. Our teachers will determine who will obtain each exemplar so that workload will be more evenly distributed, this will be done during the weekly common planning meetings. Dr. Reinemann noted there will be a greater burden on the teachers. Mr. Stuart asked if there is anything that could be used in technology to ease the burden on the teachers. Dr. Reinemann stated that this will be experiment at this point to determine what works best. Galileo cost \$8 per student in grades 3-5 for Math & ELA.

- The bus schedule adjustments are working well.
- Curriculum coffees will be held the next two Wednesdays.

d) MCAS Report --Mr. Bliss

- Ms. Spriggs reported that there are pieces of the report that we are pleased with, and pieces that need improvement.
- Mr. Bliss distributed the Chickering Spring 2009 MCAS report and reviewed the report with the committee.
- The performance index for Chickering reflects positive growth and trends for 2008 vs. 2009. ELA increased .9 points and Math increased .5 points.
- A new tool is available to drill down to standards and question types for the individual student.
- Weekly grade level meetings will be in place to support the individual needs of students with demonstrated deficiencies.
- Mr. Stuart asked how we go back and teach standards to a student from the previous year. Mr. Downing spoke about using the pre-assessment to fix the gap, including curriculum gaps. Ms. Spriggs spoke of the responsibility being with the new teacher to make sure the students are taught the curriculum in these gaps. Dr. Reinemann spoke of how Everyday math spirals through each grade.
- An Educational Performance Plan (EPP) must be developed for any student in the class of 2010 and beyond who does not meet or exceed the Proficient level (a minimum scaled score of 240) on the grade 10 ELA and/or Mathematics tests.
- Mr. Springett noted that he’s not sure if we have a consensus on what the performance goals should be. Mr. Bliss had indicated 76% as strong performance, if you use that as a yard stick we come up short. Mr. Downing’s strategies are the right approach, and with the addition of aides & instruction hours can we now drive Chickering to the top 25 in the state as a goal? Mr. Springett highlighted the following scores:

Grade	Subject	Chickering Advanced/ Proficient Score	Top 25 Public Schools Advanced/ Proficient Score
3	Math	75%	90% or better
3	ELA	76%	88% or better
4	Math	67%	83% or better
4	ELA	69%	90% or better
5	Science & Technology	76%	--
5	Math	83%	90% or better
5	ELA	86%	92% or better

- Mr. Stuart asked about an example of a discrepancy in the data—of the discrepancies that have been identified, two had blank sheets that were submitted to the DOE. We do know in one case a child wrote in the test booklet instead of on the answer sheet, so the answer form was blank, and a test administrator can’t queue the student that they are doing this incorrectly. We also suspect a student may have turned two pages. Also, discrepancies can occur if student moved on to another section such as open response and then didn’t go back to complete the previous section.
- 10th grade statewide MCAS results are increasing over time; Mr. Stuart asked how the SAT scores are over time and also stated that learning walks are an effective strategy for teachers; how does that affect MCAS results?
- The class of 2016 (current 6th grade class) has reduced the number of students in the ELA Needs Improvement category over time, while increasing the number of students in the Above Proficient category.
- Mr. Correll has been compiling our trends vs. the 20 grade schools we had previously identified and will send out to the committee. When looking at the us, Sherborn and the 20 other schools high school performance, we shoot way beyond them, their performance moved down. Class of 2017 scores are going down while 2019 is going up. Mr. Correll also noted that in the past 4 years our students have continued to have problems

with open response and geometry. Ms. Spriggs recognized that more work needs to be done to fix these problems. Mr. Springett would like to see the scores of Dover 6th graders relative to others.

e) Superintendent's Report – Ms. Spriggs

- Thanks to Sherborn CSA, guidance and neighboring superintendents for their support during this difficult time.
- Strategic Planning Update—the conference was held October 1st-3rd. Thank you to Mr. Stuart and Ms. DaSilva for their work. The conference was well attended, a follow-up meeting will be held on 10/21.
- Policy Manual Update—work continues.
- Apple, Inc. Briefing – Cupertino California—Ms. Spriggs and Mr. Bliss have been invited to attend a briefing at Apple. They will be visiting high tech schools and attending sessions on instruction and learning. Apple covers the expenses except for airfare. Mr. Springett made a motion to acknowledge the superintendent's disclosure to visit Apple for an Executive Education briefing; most expenses once deplaned covered by Apple, the district will cover airfare of \$500 for two tickets. Ms. DaSilva motioned, Mr. Stuart seconded. **09-32 Vote: Unanimous**
- Future agenda items—SPED (November), Technology (February), Professional Development (March).
- Data Warehouse--Growth measures to be released, but have not arrived yet.
- METCO position to be advertised after the first of the year.
- Technology Committee---September minutes included in packet; Ms. Spriggs to send out October minutes to the committee; further discussion to take place at the interim meeting. Discussion took place about the availability of electronic materials to generate copies directly to a printer vs. being copied from workbooks. Costs, contracts and other issues need to be looked at by IT and the Business Manger. Further discussion to take place.
- Mr. Springett spoke of how we need to get performance standards data to teachers on a timely basis.

5. Special Items -- none

6. Future Business

- a) November School Committee Agenda Items—SPED update, Bus Seatbelt update, Budget, Nutrition update and Capital Budget

7. New Business – none

8. Routine Business

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

9. Adjournment-- Mr. Springett requested a motion to adjourn. Meeting Adjourned at 10:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deb Savastano