

DOVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
September 15, 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

**1. Call to order – Mr. Springett**

- Mr. Springett called the meeting to order at 7:09 pm in the Chickering School Library.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

*a) Dover School Committee minutes:*

- Mr. Springett requested a motion to accept the June 16th minutes.  
Ms. DaSilva moved, Mr. Correll seconded. **09-25 Vote: Unanimous**
- Mr. Springett requested a motion to accept the July 15th interim minutes.  
Mr. Stuart moved, Mr. Correll seconded. **09-26 Vote: Unanimous**
- July 22nd interim minutes not available for review and approval
- Mr. Springett requested a motion to accept the July 29th interim minutes.  
Mr. Stuart moved, Ms. Ringel seconded. **09-27 Vote: Unanimous**
- Mr. Springett requested a motion to accept the August 19th interim minutes.  
Ms. DaSilva moved, Mr. Correll seconded. **09-28 Vote: Unanimous**
- Mr. Springett requested a motion to accept the September 2<sup>nd</sup> interim minutes.  
Ms. DaSilva moved, Mr. Correll seconded. **09-29 Vote: Unanimous**

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

*c) The minutes were noted of the Dover-Sherborn Regional School Committee for May 5, June 9 and June 17, 2009*

**3. Community Comments -- None**

**4. Reports**

**a) PTO Report – Ms. Ryan**

- Welcome to Meg Field and Anne Nolen, co-VP's of the PTO
- Back to school picnic was held 9/2.
- Dover Days was a “washout” due to the weather.
- Back to School night will be held this Thursday; PTO is providing dinner for the teachers.
- The Spring Auction will be held 4/10/2010, planning is underway. The event will be held at Elm Bank.
- Ms. Ryan distributed the early release schedule key tag that was part of the Wacky Wednesday PTO giveaway.
- Ms. Spriggs thanked the PTO for the breakfast provided at the new parent coffee.

**b) Welcome and Introductions**

- Mr. Springett welcomed everyone to the meeting; the start of the school year has been terrific. He looks forward to working with the PTO.
- Ms. Spriggs welcomed Christine Tague, School Business Manager and Steve Bliss, Assistant Superintendent to the meeting.

**c) Park and Recreation – Mr. MacTavish**

- Dover Days Fair -- no rain date was scheduled on Sunday for several reasons, the race timer and inflatable's were not available and many volunteers in town were involved in the Cancer Walk.
- After School Ski Program – Due to the change in the early release schedule, we can't hold the After School Ski Program as planned because Nashoba requires a 6 consecutive week program. The Recreation Department has been fielding numerous calls from parents about the program. The program currently starts at 2:30p.m, students would need to leave school at 1pm. Sherborn has dropped the program. Mr. MacTavish reported that Nashoba won't modify the program to fit our early release schedule. The committee discussed options for making this program happen, including letting students leave early to participate in this program. This option would not support the changes we have just made to increase time on learning, Mr. Springett spoke of the struggle to increase instructional time, and the change to every other Wednesday as an early release (instead of every week), also the increase in aide time to support increased instruction time. The committee discussed the possibility of planning future years early release schedule to accommodate the ski season. Mr. Downing feels that adjustments to the calendar due to the ski program would be detrimental to credibility with students, parents and teachers. Mr. Stuart noted that the Middle School and High School schedules accommodate sports programs. Mr. MacTavish will check with Nashoba about moving the start time to 4:00pm, but he has concerns about the younger children traveling at a later hour. Ms. Spriggs offered to work with Mr. MacTavish and Nashoba to come up with an alternative program.
- Caryl Facility--if the Community Center is inclusive of a full size gym the Park & Recreation Commission is in favor. If not passed they would support building a community center at the Chickering property to include a gym.

**d) Business Manager's Report – Ms. Tague**

- FY'10 Budget Update—Ms. Tague is reviewing how the budget was built and how the systems work. She is unable to provide any feedback at this time on the existing reports. Mr. Springett noted that the reports provided in the past will continue to be needed to support the FY10 budget. These reports include the FY10 budget, SPED report, Utility Report and Temperature Report. Ms. Spriggs noted that everything will be caught up by the next meeting. Mr. Mathieu will be transitioning final documents, turning in his computer and meeting with Ms. Tague on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**d) Principals Report – Mr. Downing**

- The opening of school went wonderfully. Thank you to the PTO for all their hard work and support to get us open. The raffles, donations and meals for the staff are a real boost.
- Step-up day was tremendously successful; the fruits of it came through at the start of this year. Parents and staff both spoke about how great it was to make connections between students and teachers before the end of the year.
- The 5-minute adjustment to the school day has worked well. The bus routine has gotten tighter, 7 of 10 busses are here by 8:20 a.m., and 2 busses are here 4-5 minutes early. Kids are in school by 8:30 a.m. so they are ready to go for the 8:35 a.m. bell. A couple of minor route adjustments were made so that all busses are here by 2:55 p.m. Mr. Stuart noted that there was an issue about cars getting backed up at the entrance. Mr. Downing reported that this has been resolved by the busses using the bus pad instead of lining up behind each other at the curb.
- Open House is this Thursday night and will include a two-part curriculum presentation. As with last year there will be a police detail to help with the traffic flow.
- New Personnel—Valine Yorston and Kristen Varley are the new teachers for 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Nisha Hochman has joined us as an Occupational Therapist. Michelle Adams, Kim Duffy and Lindsay Boroff have been brought on in support roles.
- School Improvement Plan--The plan was presented at the June DSC meeting. Mr. Downing asked if there is any feedback, the committee will further review at the interim meeting on 10/7. DSC asked about the foreign language plan and the role of SAC.
- Curriculum Report: Dr. Reinemann
  - Draft copy of the Curriculum Coffees schedule provided. Hoping for increased attendance this year. The schedule will be distributed via e-mail blast and at open house on Thursday.
  - Curriculum Renewal--Dr. Reinemann distributed the curriculum review plan, which indicates where we've been and where we're going.
  - Assessments--Teachers are working on grade level assessment roadmaps.

- We are now in year three of the Balanced Literacy program with the Tufts consultants. We will need to develop a maintenance plan as we transition more to the teachers.
  - Piloting a Teachers Assessment from Columbia College, it provides more data and takes less time.
  - Mr. Stapleton asked for the number of children for special education last year vs. this year, he is also looking for any indicators of age-out as they impact the budget. Ms. DaSilva asked if the report is available by grade.
- ⇒ Ms. Spriggs to provide available information.

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

- Back to School--Incredibly smooth opening to school. Congratulations! It was great to welcome employees in one place so that all support staff could be introduced.
- H1N1 Preparedness--working with the committee on a plan. The survey had to be resent due to glitches, it will be used to determine if parents want to have vaccinations available at one location in the community or receive it from their health care provider. The requirement to stay home 7 days has changed to staying home 24 hours after the fever breaks. Vaccination is not mandatory but highly recommended.
- Strategic Planning Update--Thank you to Mr. Stuart and Ms. DaSilva for their work. The conference will be held October 1-3.
- Policy Manual Update--Financial sections are being reviewed—will be looking to add policies.
- Professional Development--Mr. Bliss has been charged with the task of professional development. A focus group met several times over the summer, they looked at the course approval and reimbursement process, and they have refined and systematized, it will be launched this week in its final form. The goal of the process was to put a system in place to look at the syllabi, course description and lane changes as well as systematize across all four buildings. Looking for one stop shopping for the website with a district page link to professional development. Plan to rollout entire website Nov/Dec. Mr. Springett asked about user requirements for the new website, Mr. Bliss noted that the technology integrators have reviewed the needs and are reviewing ease of navigation and robustness of the content. Mr. Springett asked about having the staff input, as they are the users. The plan will go to the Technology Sub-Committee this week. Mr. Stuart asked about the timeline for input, Mr. Bliss noted they are looking for feedback during the sub-committee discussion. The agenda and supporting information will be sent in advance of the sub-committee meeting. A challenge will be to look at the existing operating budget and reallocate the funds to support this initiative.
- Board and Administrator Newsletter--Ms. Spriggs distributed a copy of this newsletter, she is looking for feedback about continuing/discontinuing this subscription.
- Mr. Springett recognized Pam Haggerty's 40 year Service Award.
- Mr. Springett spoke of how Joanne Weltman will be sorely missed by all in the Dover community.

**5. Special Items**

- a) Review and Discussion of Superintendent's Evaluation Form – Mr. Springett – The revision of the document and process were conducted over the summer. The joint committee will meet again on 9/22 and will talk about approving the document. The chairs of each committee are to review and answer questions at their local meeting. Mr. Stuart spoke of how the group looked at templates available on the internet, and selected a template from Oregon and added/deleted indicators of performance that we wanted to consider. A 360-degree evaluation process is being considered, to be further discussed at the joint meeting. Looking to move away from check boxes and give clearer indications. Need to determine how to put together objectives that represent three committees. Ms. Spriggs spoke about using the document as an instrument for improvement vs. an evaluation. Mr. Correll noted that if grades are kept, that on the front page the ratings 1-5 need to state 0-4. The committee spoke about the relationship between the administrators and school committee to achieve the goals.
- b) Chickering School Goals for 2009-10 – Mr. Springett -- meeting held 9/2 (as well as several over the summer) to discuss goals, revenue opportunities and where we were from a school committee point of view. We were not able to get to the administrations point of view on the goals. Recommendation to put the goals on the 10/7 agenda for the interim meeting and extend the length of the meeting to accommodate all the agenda items. The committee and administration need to agree on what we want to do, which should include a set of deliverables, priorities, resources and timelines. The committee also discussed the accelerated learners initiative and how we identify, implement and measure the program and the desire to develop a program for all grades across all subject areas. Mr. Springett spoke of the increase in aides to

help support this initiative. We need to get data to see if the outcomes show consistency across the classrooms in of each grade vs. getting only anecdotal information. Mr. Downing spoke of the new class that Ms. Chase offers to students who are not participating in band.

**6. Future Business**

- a) October School Committee Agenda Items

- 7. New Business** – Mr. Stuart spoke about the article on the Dover Sherborn High School observatory and how they host grade schools. Mr. Stuart asked about plans for a field trip, noting what a great resource that we have in the district.

**8. Routine Business**

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

- 9. Adjournment--** Mr. Springett requested a motion to adjourn. Meeting Adjourned at 10:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Deb Savastano