

**DOVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
May 15, 2007**

Members Present: Kathy Gill-Body, Susan Hackney, Maria Kadison, James Stuart, Bob Springett
Absent: Dr. Perry Davis, Superintendent

Also Present: Theresa Alessandro, Minutes Recorder, Mrs. Patricia Hamblett, Curriculum Coordinator, Trisha Nugent, Technology Manager, Mr. Robert Ferrari, Principal, Dawn Fattore, PTO President, Mrs. Chase, Librarian, Nancy Weinstein, Warrant Committee, Darrin Correll, Videographer.

1. Call to Order - Mrs. Gill-Body called the meeting to order @ 7:00 pm in the Chickering School Library. Mrs. Gill-Body welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes

a) Dover School Committee Minutes of April 11, 2007 - Mrs. Gill-Body moved and Mr. Springett seconded to approve the above minutes *with the following corrections: Page 3 Under Time on Learning last sentence in listing change exceptions to expectations. Page 3 Under Time on Learning last sentence remove word and.*

07-21 Votes: Unanimous. The motion passed.

b) The meeting minutes were noted of the Dover-Sherborn Regional School Committee of *April 4, 2007.*

c) The meeting minutes were noted of the Sherborn School Committee of *April 10, 2007.*

3. Community Comments – None

4. Reports

a) PTO Report – Dawn Fattore, President PTO, distributed the May 2007 newsletter and reported on the PTO events which included: A message from PTO President informing that they had a very informative PTO General Membership Meeting on May 2nd. Included in that meeting was an overview presentation of the 2007/2008 School Operating Budget given by Sue Hackney. Mrs. Fattore informed that on June 6th there will be the PTO Annual Meeting. At that meeting, a summary of the year’s activities as well as a finance statement will be presented and the 2007-2008 PTO Executive Board and Budget will be approved. Additional reporting included: Curriculum Enrichment, Getting Involved in PTO, The PTO Directory Committee looking for student art on their best memory of Chickering School -- The winner’s art will be placed on the cover of the 2007-2008 School Directory. Lastly, Community Outreach – a thank you note for all the donations gathered for Juampas, Haiti.

b) Business Manager’s Report

FY 07 Budget Update – Mr. Mathieu distributed the FY07 Summary Report by Function Code as of May 10, 2007 which included end of year expenditures. Mr. Mathieu reported on 5 function codes that show as overspent on the Budget Update: 1100 School Committee, 2110 Curriculum Directors, 2310 Teachers & Specialists, 2325 Substitutes and 9300 – Out of Town Tuitions.

Mr. Mathieu reported that the Town has \$478,284 in Circuit Breaker funds that will offset deficits currently projected for SPED accounts. This projection includes known personnel adjustments and projected spending not yet encumbered that will occur prior to the end of the year. Although the projection shows little available monies, the numbers presented are prior to any reclassification of expense against Circuit Breaker. Mr. Mathieu continues to believe we will close the year with a positive budget balance. At the inquiry of Mrs. Gill-Body, Mr. Mathieu will have budget transfers completed by the June DSC meeting.

An Electric and Oil Analysis as of 5/120/07 was included along with Chickering – Electricity Data, KWH Usage Comparison FY 05/06/07.

Mr. Mathieu reported on the FY07 Town of Dover Grants reporting that they are well projected and expenditures will be met for August 31.

School Security – Mr. Mathieu informed the DSC that the cost for a keypad security system would range between \$2k - \$3k and an additional \$2k - \$3K for labor for a total of \$5K installed. He informed that there is a software piece that will need to be managed. Mr. Mathieu will provide 3 written quotes to the DSC for their review and approval. Mr. Springett informed that the Chief of Police is on the Joint School Committee Meeting agenda to give a presentation on school safety to ensure we are providing a secure environment. This information along with the quotes and what other schools are doing should assist in purchasing and a system to be used at Chickering.

c) Principal's Report

Time on Learning – Mr. Ferrari gave a comprehensive report on the Time on Learning informing that, as stated in last month's DSC meeting, since November 2006, the Leadership Team has been working with Dr. Stephen Gould, an educational consultant for the Massachusetts Elementary School Principal's Association and former Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Principal, and the teacher with expertise in leading standards-based K-12 reform efforts. In the DSC's packets, Mr. Ferrari included a draft of their latest efforts in developing a conceptual overview and summary of the curriculum, assessment, and instruction conversations that need to be undertaken during the next school year as well as the proposed schedule changes and revised organizational structure to bring this about in a coherent and systematic manner.

Mr. Ferrari informed that they are proposing that next year's conversations among grade level teams and cross grade level curriculum teams be centered on the development and implementation of a Standards-based Instructional System Model. The major components of the model include the following:

1. The identification of content standards in each area of the core curriculum.
2. Discussions about instructional strategies aimed at designing varied learning opportunities for all students.
3. The development and use of standards-based assessments including those that are created by grade-level teams and those that are commercially available.
4. The development of explicit support and enrichment interventions.
5. Instructional decisions driven by data analysis that both guides and informs daily instruction and provides a gauge of program effectiveness.

Mr. Ferrari stated that this is a comprehensive model that will assist the faculty in revisiting the collective instructional efforts in each area of the core curriculum with a particular focus on identifying the so called "power standards" in each curricular area along with a more focused discussion about the common instructional approach aimed at meeting the varying learning needs of all students. An important distinction in these conversations is to arrive at a clear understanding of the difference between content standards prescribed topics to be covered and performance standards (skills, abilities, and specific expectations that students will demonstrate by certain grades).

Mr. Ferrari informed that the packet also included:

- A schematic diagram with five text boxes. In each box, there are between two and five essential questions that have been posed to frame the teaching conversations that need to occur around the implementation of each component of the model.
- "Framework for Continuous Improvement" This schematic was developed two years ago by Chris Brandt and the current members of the Leadership Team. These conversions were "put on hold" last year as the focus shifted to analysis of 2004 ELA and Mathematics MCAS scores and subsequent program changes.
- Elements of a Standard-Based Instructional System.
- Organizational changes that they are proposing that will support this work. In addition, through the work of the Scheduling Committee - they have developed a weekly common planning time for each grade level team and created cross-grade level curriculum vertical teams organized by curriculum area: ELA, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Added is the area of social competency to this vertical team arrangement to acknowledge the importance of students' social-emotional development and the role of the Open Circle Program. Vertical teams would meet twice monthly after school. The importance to note of the understanding that the work done this year by the Data Management Team, the Report Card Committee, and the Time on Learning Committee will be "folded into" the conversations that will occur in vertical teams.
- Monthly faculty meetings will provide a vehicle to share the work done by the grade level and curriculum teams so that there is a continuous feedback loop. Mr. Ferrari informed that in looking at the issue of time on learning, it became clear that, in addition to identifying the power standards for each curriculum area, they needed to maximize the instructional time they now have in order to determine if more time is needed. This has been done through the careful design of a forty-minute block schedule and the establishment of clear guidelines for each grade level as to the instructional time necessary in each curriculum area.
- Examples of what first grade team member's and a fourth grade team member's respective schedules might look like were included. The examples illustrated that they are able to realize the large blocks of instructional time needed for ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies. Also included was a weekly Open Circle meeting. Mr. Ferrari noted that it should be understood that they are not proposing a rigid schedule that ignores the developmental needs of the students at each grade level and that they are suggesting that time needs to be used efficiently and effectively so that student's academic, social and emotional and physical needs can be appropriately served.

The Leadership Team will develop both quantitative and qualitative ways to evaluate these schedule changes and the adequacy of instructional time blocks. He proposes that quarterly reports be made to the School Committee about the effectiveness of the schedule on student learning. Surveys will need to be developed that measure teachers' and parent's opinions as well. Mr. Ferrari acknowledged Ms. Keniry for all of her hard efforts. Mrs. Hackney congratulated the Leadership team for work well done.

Instrumental Music Fee 2007-2008 – Mr. Ferrari reported that the Instrumental Music Program currently includes a total of 57 fourth graders and 36 fifth grade students for a total of 93 students. Students pay a yearly participation fee of \$175. Lessons are scheduled during the instructional day for most students. Twenty-four students have lessons scheduled after the instructional days has ended. It is clear from a review of the past two years' enrollment data that the current fee is insufficient to cover the costs of the program. A total of approximately \$14,962.50 has been collected in fees this year. Given the numbers of students opting to participate in the program over the last few years, it is necessary to consider an increase in the fee for next year in order to insure that the program can be self-sustaining. Mrs. Gill-Body moved and Mrs. Hackney seconded to increase the Instrumental Music Fee 2007-2008 from the current \$175 to \$290 in order to cover the cost of the program at Chickering School.

07-22 Votes: Unanimous. The motion passed.

At a future DSC meeting, discussions and input (perhaps in the form of a survey) to the parental community will need to be established as to how we will change or adopt an after-school enrichment program option for instrumental music similar to that of the Pine Hill School in Sherborn for the 08-09 school year.

Kindergarten Enrollment – Update – Mr. Ferrari reported that the projected kindergarten enrollment for the 07-08 school year has reached 84 students with 21 students per classroom.

d) Report Card Update – Dr. Hamblett gave a Report Card Update which included:

- Background: The current Chickering Reporting System includes three report cards, two parent conference and one October contact. Parents and teachers also communicate with each other as a different needs arise and in various formats (phone calls, emails, notes, etc.) throughout the school year. In the month of January, a parent survey was posted on the Chickering Website. The purpose of the survey was to gain feedback from parents on the Chickering Reporting System. There were 111 responses to the survey. The results of the parent on survey were shared with the Dover School Committee on April 11, 2007.

- A survey was given to teachers that asked five specific questions on the existing Chickering Reporting System. Members of the report card committee met three times to review both the parent feedback and teacher feedback in order to create recommendations about the existing Chickering Reporting System. Next, the report card committee met with the entire staff on April 11, 2007 to discuss both the parent and teacher survey results and the committee's proposed recommendations.

- The report committee presented their work on the Chickering Reporting System to the School Advisory Council at a meeting on Monday, April 23, 2007.

- The report card committee had one last meeting on Wednesday, April 25, 2007 to refine and finalize their recommendations. Dr. Hamblett shared the results of the teacher survey and the recommendations for the Chickering report card systems committee as result of an analysis of the data from both the parent and teacher surveys. The teacher survey was given to 29 teachers and the report committee received 17 responses. Specialists were given a different survey that reflects their portion of the report card. The curriculum coordinator is meeting with the specialists on May 22 to review any proposed changes to their portion of each report card.

Dr. Hamblett informed that they examined practices in other districts, reflected on the impact of each considered proposal and thoughtfully considered some specific choices. A substantial change in the number of report cards and conferences has multiple impacts. While they agreed that these were important and necessary discussions, they finally realized that it is a matter of timing. Since they are currently in the midst of major school initiatives that will further define the make-up of the report card through the veridical teams' work with standards and assessment, it is their recommendation that the discussion continue next year in order to determine a possible future change to the reporting system, but that no change be made to the current system of three report cards and two conferences and one October contact. Another recommendation was to change the name of October Contact to Fall Contact.

Dr. Hamblett noted that they do recommend a smaller change in order to even out the number of days per term and to shorten the time between issuing report cards and conferences using a one year schedule that they have devised. This schedule proposes a change of using only two Wednesday conference dates after the first report card issued in order to accommodate the holiday season.

e) ELA Update – Mr. Ferrari gave an ELA Update and reported that an informal full-day visit by Tufts University consultants, Martha Winokur and Marica Uretsky took place on Tuesday, April 24. The purpose of the visit was to

provide the consultants with “ a picture” of what literacy instruction looks like in our K-5 classrooms. A secondary purpose was to help them better understand teachers’ perspective so that they can tailor the Summer Literacy Institute Professional Development Session to meet their needs with regard to the implementation of a balanced literacy approach during the next school year. Under the auspices of Dr. Hamblett, they conducted a series of “classroom walkthroughs.” In addition, they also met with grade level teams during lunch period focus groups. Ms. Winokur visited classrooms and met with teams in grades 3, 4, and 5 while Ms. Uretsky did likewise in grades K, 1, and 2. The consultants sent a letter to the staff on April 26th that summarized their impressions, reflected the comments made by grade level teams, and outlined the content that would be addressed in the Summer Literacy Institute. The letter was well received by the staff and established a reassuring, supportive, and positive tone as a context for their collaboration with them. Ms. Winokur returned to Chickering School on Tuesday, May 15 to meet with the ELA Literacy Committee Facilitated by Dr. Hamblett. The purpose of the meeting was to respond to implementation questions regarding the ordering of instructional materials and other procedural questions raised by grade level teams.

f) Everyday Math Update – Dr. Hamblett issued the Everyday Math Data as of May 15, 2007 which included units tested along the data for grades 1-5 to the DSC for their review.

Park and Recreation Request - Out of Order – Mr. Springett informed that he got a call from Dave MacTavish regarding a request to spray pesticides on all Chickering Fields on May 26 – all fields would be closed the entire weekend. Mr. Springett informed that school and parents would require a 5 day notice. Mr. Mathieu instructed Mr. Springett to have Mr. MacTavish contact Ralph Kelley to discuss the materials being used. Mr. Ferrari will prepare notices to parents with a tear off portion for return to school acknowledging that this will be occurring. Dover Cable will be notified along with the Town Newspaper.

g) Data Management Update – Mr. Corning gave a Data Management Update that included a walkthrough model which showed: Set-Up Unit Test, Enter Data Report on Unit, Mass Standard Reporting, Learning Goals Success Percentage. The plan is for Mr. Corning to update the DSC with a final report to include a written outline for next year at the June DSC meeting.

h) Superintendent’s Report

Curriculum Coordinator Search – In Dr. Davis’s absence, Dr. Hamblett reported that they received 21 applications. Dr. Davis and Dr. Hamblett will meet to screen candidates. Overall they are pleased with the response.

5. Special Items

a) Superintendent Search Consultant Contract – Mrs. Gill-Body informed DSC members to review and comment on the Contract prior to signing at the upcoming Joint School Committee meeting..

b) Town Meeting Update – Mrs. Gill-Body gave an update informing that Article 4 - Operating Budget was approved. She also informed that our Capital Expense was approved and no questions were asked.

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c) Special Education Budget – Mr. Stuart gave an update informing that templates are being prepared that will be helpful in managing the program and for next year’s reporting to the DSC.

6. Future Business - None

a) June Dover School Committee Agenda Items – Ms. Gill-Body – The following are agenda items for June: Follow-Up Security System - Mr. Mathieu, Written Summary on Data Management - Mr. Corning, School Improvement Plan, Everyday Math, Data Management and Time on Learning, ELA.

b) Agenda Items for Joint/Union School Committee Meeting May 22, 2007 - None

7. New Business None

8. Routine Business – Enrollments as of May 1, 2007

9. Adjournment – Mrs. Gill-Body moved and Mrs. Kadison seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 pm.

07-23 Votes: Unanimous. The motion passed

Respectfully Submitted,
Theresa Alessandro

5-15-07 DSC School Committee Meeting Minutes

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From: Theresa Alessandro
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Taking and transcribing:

Minutes of the Dover School Committee Meeting on 5/15/07 **\$100.**

Richard Mathieu, School Business Manager

Date

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