

Dover School Committee Interim Meeting

January 6, 2010

Chickering School

Present: Jennifer DaSilva, Carolyn Ringel, Robert Springett, James Stuart

Attending: Jim Kinder, Dave Stapleton, Kirk Downing, Christine Tague, Ginny Keniry, Valerie Spriggs, Dana White, Betsy Ryan, Dawn Fattore

Meeting Called to Order: 9:07 AM

- 1) Community Comments Ms. Fattore asked if there could be extra copies of the agenda at the Tuesday evening School Committee meetings so that members of the public could follow along. Ms. Spriggs stated she thought that would be possible.
- 2) Ms. Spriggs handed out packets regarding the advertising of the position of principal for Chickering School. The School Committee needs to approve the salary range for the position. A question was raised as to the salaries being advertised for the nearby schools that will be competitors for the candidates (Wellesley, Newton, Weston). Ms. Spriggs will research this question. A vote was taken to approve the current listed salary range (\$105-115K) with the understanding that such range can be increased up to but not to exceed \$125K based on this research. Ms. DaSilva moved; Ms. Ringel seconded. Motion passed (4-0).
- 3) Ms. Spriggs pointed to the Position Description in the packet and stated that she welcomed comments but that the description was very comprehensive. Mr. Springett confirmed that the description was updated very recently.
- 4) Mr. Stapleton and Mr. Kinder stated that the Chickering budget has gone up approximately \$300K/year. The main drivers of this cost increase are salaries and transportation.
 - a. A discussion followed regarding the timing of the new bus contract. It is likely there will not be a final contract until March as that is when the Joint Meeting of the 3 School Committees will meet. If a final vote is needed sooner an additional meeting can be scheduled.
- 5) Tab 6: Legal Services
 - a. There is some confusion about amounts requested being substantially higher than amounts spent in years previous. In part that stems from a prior misallocation of funds after the fact which distorts the actual number spent.
 - b. Mr. Kinder and Mr. Stapleton asked about the issue of medical insurance co-pays in the teacher contracts. Ms. Spriggs confirmed that there has been investigation into this issue but that as this will be a matter for negotiation it was not an appropriate topic for discussion at present.
- 6) Tab 7: Question about lack of increase in salary request

- a. Ms. Spriggs stated this is in negotiation, will be funded from the Legal Services account and allocated back
- 7) Tab 8: SPED spending.
- a. There was a question about the number of Chickering students in SPED; the number is believed to be around 83.
 - b. Mr. Kinder raised the question of why we have 3 SPED Directors, one for each school. A discussion followed in which Ms. Spriggs explained that she had questioned this issue herself, had researched it very thoroughly and had concluded that because of the nature of the 3 school districts and the issues involved, it was necessary. Mr. Springett stated that the issue has been researched by 2 prior superintendents as well who had reached the same conclusion.
 - c. Mr. Stapleton and Mr. Kinder raised the question of why Chickering has more aides than Pine Hill, both regular and SPED. Mr. Downing, Ms. Spriggs and Mr. Springett all explained why the schools could not be compared and why the number of aides Chickering employed was necessary to the education of the students.
- 8) Tab 14: Library/Librarian Salary. There was a question as to whether this increase was due to a steps and lanes increase. The answer was yes.
- 9) Tab 16: There was a question regarding the large increase in textbook spending. Answer: textbook spending for the prior year was reduced and the books were pre-purchased. This year the textbook amount has been reinstated. Also, some 09 purchases were charged to the wrong account, further increasing the disparity.
- 10) Mr. Stapleton asked for a clarification regarding supplies provided by the school and supplies provided by the parent. Mr. Downing responded that parents provide day to day supplies. He stated that a full inventory was taken of the school supplies so that they will be ordered and used efficiently. The current budget request reflects a need to re-supply the school inventory as well as the fact that parents will again be asked to buy day to day supplies.
- 11) Tab 26: A question was raised regarding ACCEPT transport and the fact that it should not have a cost increase of 30%, but is more likely to have an increase of 4-5%. This change will reflect a large dollar amount. Ms. Spriggs stated we should have an accurate number later this week.
- 12) Ms. Spriggs praised Ms. Tague's role in putting together these documents as well as Fran Rush's role and recommended discussing Ms. Rush's employment at the School Committee meeting of January 19.
- 13) Mr. Stapleton and Mr. Kinder indicated that they would appreciate further discussion on those areas where budget requests are much higher than actual for the prior year.

Adjourned 10:40 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carolyn Ringel