

DOVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
April 13, 2010

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

Member Absent: Peter Lert

Also Present: Valerie Spriggs, Superintendent  
Dr. Deb Reinemann, Curriculum Coordinator  
Christine Tague, School Business Manager  
Cheryl Chase, Librarian  
Betsy Ryan, PTO  
Steven Bliss, Assistant Superintendent  
Dave Stapleton, Warrant Committee  
Jean Conkey, Interim Technology Manager  
Steve Harte, Technology Integrator

**1. Call to order – Mr. Springett**

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

**2. Approval of Minutes**

a) Dover School Committee minutes:

- Mr. Springett requested a motion to accept the March 16, 2010 minutes.  
Ms. DaSilva moved, Ms. Ringel seconded.  
Correction: Page 2, Community Comments, change Ms. Menon to Ms. Lukenda  
**10-12 Vote: Unanimous**

b) Mr. Springett noted the March 11, 2010 Sherborn School Committee minutes.

c) Mr. Springett noted the March 2, 2010 Dover Sherborn Regional School Committee minutes.

**3. Community Comments**

- None

**4. Reports**

a) **PTO Report – Ms. Ryan**

- Chickering “Rocked the House” at Elm Bank. Over 190 tickets were sold, all the comments received were extremely positive. The event was projected to net \$60,000; we are expecting to exceed that amount. We should be able to maintain the same budget and programs as next year.
- The bus driver appreciation luncheon will be held Friday.
- The next PTO meeting is April 27<sup>th</sup>. The annual presentation of the “State of the School” will take place.
- The 5<sup>th</sup> grade plans for their graduation celebrations are wrapping up.

b) **Technology Website Preview – Jean Conkey**

Ms. Conkey provided the Committee with an update on Technology initiatives:

- DESE Education Data training has been provided by the Accept Collaborative.
- Dover as well as the other districts are involved in the Student Information Management System (SIMS) pilot which adds additional reporting requirements for EPIMS and SCS three times a year. The SIMS includes 52 data elements.
- The Technology Advisory Committee was established last summer and has had monthly discussions, including where we are today and a detailed inventory review. We have identified where we are from an equipment and personnel point of view and have looked at where we want to go. Also looking into purchasing an IT ticketing system with Accept which will gather ticket data and provide reporting.
- Professional Development day was held on November 30<sup>th</sup>. Summer Institutes are planned for Elementary and Secondary teachers. A Professional Development Day is also scheduled for November 2010. We are looking at ASPEN for PDP.
- Chickering is piloting a Moodle server (course management system) which provides a container for online content. Plan to expand the pilot to the Region and Pine Hill in the next 3-6 months. Mr. Harte spoke

about teachers being able to access all of their school documents from home. He has used Moodle for his professional development tutorials, and he shared a demonstration on mailing labels with the Committee. Expansion to the Moodle server will take place to allow student access to their network drives.

- New Dover-Sherborn Website—The site has been developed and designed with Get Fused. We are in the process of moving the content. The site will have a calendar of events that include sorting and RSS feeds on any individual page. Each district's home page looks alike except it has a different color in the banner. Go live planned for the middle of May.
- Ms. Conkey highlighted upcoming projects including:
  - Online fee schedule payment for things like athletic fees and school lunches. Ms. White will send Ms. Conkey the provider they use for lacrosse.
  - Pilot program with DESE School Interoperability Framework (SIF) which houses the data linkage back to DOE. We won't be participating in the pilot this year.
  - A subcommittee has been formed to implement Strategic Planning Goal 2. We are trying to get all the members into the right groups to see the documents that have been established.
  - ASPEN Family Portal—We are beginning discussion at the Middle and High Schools. There is a pilot for High School students selecting courses online. Teachers have put in online recommendations for students moving from 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade. The goal is to have all high school teachers/students have online recommendations and access to online course selection.
- Ms. Spriggs stated she has reviewed some of the materials, it is very impressive. It should be a challenging but interesting experience for the students. All of this is expanding our knowledge and establishes a baseline for future projections.
- Ms. Spriggs stated that there are three teachers participating in developing online course content for Moodle with the Accept Collaborative.
- Ms. Spriggs stated that an invitation has been received for two teachers to attend a summer workshop with Apple Corporation.
- Ms. Conkey acknowledged the School Committees and multiple fundraising organizations for all their support.
- Mr. Stuart asked when the ticket system will be implemented. Ms. Conkey responded it will be next year.

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

- FY '10 Budget Update
  - Ms. Tague reported no change from the previous month for budget to actuals. She is projecting approximately a \$ 200,000 surplus, which is made up of \$50,000 from special education due to increases in tuition cost that never happened and \$150,000 for cases that did not occur.
  - Ms. Tague is projecting a positive variance in Utilities. TEC is rebidding the oil due to issues with the bid. The pre-bid conference is next Wednesday and the bid award will be the following week.
  - Mr. Springett asked if we will be able to plant the trees if we have extra money left.
  - Ms. Spriggs will check to see what funds are available and if the purchase will can be allowed and will report back to the Committee.
- FY '11 Budget --some line items in FY11 vs. FY10 have been adjusted in an effort to bring the budget more in line with the actuals (Utilities, Transportation).
- SPED reports--Mr. Springett asked about the availability of the SPED reports. Ms. Spriggs stated the reports are being updated and that they will be coming back to the Committee with some revisions.
- Utility reports--Mr. Stuart requested that the color of the background on the temperature monitoring report be changed so that it will be easier to read the outside humidity data.

**d) Principal's Report – Mr. Downing**

- Mr. Downing reported that the first round of MCAS ELA went well. Ms. Keniry did a great job of handling the materials. The Teachers did a great job motivating the kids.
- Commemoration for Michelle Worthy—a mosaic project is being planned as a commemoration (not a memorial) of the school, children and the love of reading. Mr. Downing will be meeting with Mr. Kelly to be sure it won't cause facility issues. Mr. Springett asked about a commemorative for Joanne, can we think about the commemorative in a broader sense? Mr. Downing said the commemoration is not tied to a specific person.

- Mr. Downing spent last Friday with Dr. Nugent; they met the kids at the buses, visited classrooms and worked on the transition for next year.
  - Ms. Comiskey will be the Nurse Assistant and Ms. Bugajski will be moving into the Nurse position.
  - Mr. Downing has looked at resumes for the Literacy Specialist position with Dr. Nugent. They are keeping the application deadline open a couple more weeks to see if more candidates can be added to the pool. Interviews to start after April vacation, planning for a September 1 hire.
  - SAC Update:
    - Building the SIP for next year. Areas of focus include, Differentiation in Math; full Implementation of SST process; Language Based Learning Classroom (that Mr. Downing and Dr. O’Connell discussed with the Committee last month); Anti-bullying strategy—new law and implications on the elementary school level; Technology Integration (instructional)—from the technology group and strategic plan; Dr. Nugent’s entry plan—how we have moved on initiatives and keep going.
    - Ms. DaSilva asked if Differentiation in Math is a new strategy. Mr. Downing spoke about experimenting this year to set the stage for next year. Dr. Reinemann stated that this year was first steps, each grade tried different things. She has spent time with 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers looking at strengths and weaknesses and Chickering standards. For example, aligning math fact expectations and vertical alignment.
  - Professional Development & Curriculum—Dr. Reinemann
    - Curriculum coffee survey responses received. Sessions will continue to be held next year. Dr. Reinemann has confirmed that Pine Hill is not using Singapore Math and has contacted the parent who raised the idea. Dr. Reinemann stated that Dover and Sherborn supplement Everyday Math using home grown materials. Mr. Stuart asked how Singapore Math supplements differently. Dr. Reinemann responded that she is not an expert at speaking to this method; we are working to see what works for our students and teachers to achieve our end goal.
    - Balanced Literacy professional development had two coaching days last week. A Learning Walk will take place on May 4<sup>th</sup>.
    - Dr. Reinemann reported that she worked with the Academic Development Committee for 2 days on test questions for the pool of May 2011 MCAS Science questions. The group will meet again in the fall to look at the matrix of questions.
    - Mr. Springett asked Ms. Spriggs if the DOE will get MCAS data back to us in June. Ms. Spriggs responded that they are planning to.
- e) **Superintendent’s Report** – Ms. Spriggs
- Ms. Spriggs reported that this will be Mr. Stuart’s last meeting. The Technology Committee has invited him to stay on that Committee. Ms. Spriggs spoke about her appreciation for the extra work Mr. Stuart has done that was above and beyond, all the volunteering he has done beyond the School Committee and all their conversations that provided her with a learning experience. Mr. Springett said that with working with Mr. Stuart for 4 years, he is one of the few that knows how much he has done; he has put in a ton of work. Mr. Springett appreciates all his efforts, passion for the issues and the conversations they had to understand the complexities. Mr. Stuart thanked the Committee members including past members Ms. Gill-Body and Mr. Correll and current members Ms. DaSilva, Mr. Springett and Ms. Ringel. He stated that it’s a very interesting position representing the Town. Mr. Stuart thanked Mr. Downing, Ms. Spriggs and Mr. Bliss. He stated that there is good momentum to move forward, it’s been an interesting 4 years and he looks forward to being a parent in the system.
  - Last Day of School 2009-2010: Ms. Spriggs reported that we are required to fill the School Year contract, including the time on learning requirement, so we have to make up the day that was taken in October.
  - Transportation: Ms. Spriggs responded to the questions that arose at the Joint Meeting—Dover has 10 buses, the Region has 19.
  - Policy Committee Update: Ms. Spriggs stated that the Committee continues to be an amazing group of people; they regret not being able to complete their work in one year even though it takes most committee’s three years. They hope to complete their work in the fall. Ms. Ringel reported that Section J is finished, next is Section K. The next meeting is at the end of May.
  - METCO Coordinator—Mr. Bliss reported there are 16 members on the Search Committee, including current and former METCO students, parents, teachers and administrators. An organizational meeting was held last week; they discussed where we are and where we need to go, identified deliverables and wrote

sample review questions. A meeting will be held to develop a short list of applicants that everyone wants to interview. Five candidates will be interviewed the week after next. Plan to recommend three finalists to the Superintendent by May 30<sup>th</sup>.

- Superintendent’s Evaluation: Mr. Springett and Ms. Spriggs had a conference call with Legal Counsel to better interpret the finding on the Wayland Case. The finding clarifies that the Superintendent evaluation is done in public and the subcommittee can take the remarks and summarize them in executive session. The summary is to be given to the Superintendent and is not a public document. All contract negotiations are to be done in executive session. Ms. Ringel asked if answers can be changed based on discussion that takes place during the public session. Mr. Springett responded yes, but the notes are taken by the subcommittee to the executive session. Mr. Springett spoke of the need to arrange a meeting for the three School Committees before the town elections.
- Transition: Ms. Spriggs thanked Mr. Downing for his work on the transition. It was very nice to have someone from the Department of Education give feedback about how great the transition is happening.
- E-mail guidelines: Ms. Spriggs reported that meetings have taken place; they are looking at existing policies.
  - An update to the Committee will be provided in June.

## 5. Special Items --None

## 6. Future Business

a) May Dover School Committee Agenda Items – Mr. Springett

Mr. Springett identified topics for discussion for the May 5<sup>th</sup> or May 23<sup>rd</sup> meetings:

- Determine if there will be an Interim Meeting May 5<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Springett is unable to attend.
  - Reopen the Contract Negotiation Committee
  - Superintendent Evaluation
  - Capital Budget meeting will take place May 23, a location needs to be reserved
  - Time on Learning—need to discuss impact of Foreign Language program, including contract implications.
  - Initiatives—need to collect where we are as a way to help Dr. Nugent and help shape initiatives for the next school year. Updates suggested are: approach for accelerated learners, benchmark standards, full day K, and foreign language.
  - RTTT—inclusion of student achievement in teacher evaluations—we need to have this capability.
  - Understand the things done since October MCAS to address student learning issues (revisit the 9 questions)
  - The Committee reviewed the Open Action items list; updates are included within that document.
- Additional discussion on MCAS progress included:
- Data that is needed is embedded in MCAS, though some is not. The Education Data Warehouse may be a potential tool.
  - Do we have a population of student who haven’t reached the level of grammar instruction needed as they move through? Developing a plan to address.
  - Need to report out what analysis is being done and results
  - There is anecdotal information from kids via parents that Chickering kids are behind – Mr. Downing to discuss with Mr. Randall, could also be addressed at the regional meeting.
  - Now pulling specific items from action plans—trends, item analysis and looking to cross-reference plans from building to building to close gaps. Ms. Spriggs said these conversations hadn’t previously happened and that the Administrative team has been very supportive of building a plan for children at all levels.
  - Ms. Spriggs stated that both schools have things they can learn from each other, we are moving in an extremely positive direction by looking at best practices.
  - Mr. Springett spoke about it being systematically built up; we have grade level and vertical teams. You want the data that helps support instruction in the classroom.
  - Mr. Springett asked if we can jump the gun on the DOE requirements, Ms. Spriggs stated that we already are.
  - Mr. Bliss spoke about the vertical teaming being compartmentalized and next year doing it K-12 for Dover-Sherborn schools and taking best practices. Mr. Springett spoke about having consistent output across each grade.

- Ms. Spriggs stated that there are high quality teachers that stay in the system that look for that challenge and professional learning community.
- Ms. DaSilva asked about the timing of the plan and the impact to 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Mr. Bliss talked of developing a pre and post test for 6<sup>th</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade and determining reasonable expectations, to be developed this spring and rolled out in the fall.
- Ms. Ringel asked if the grammar rules will now be addressed in the elementary schools through writer's workshop, Mr. Bliss said it's not the traditional grammar rules, it is individual needs. Ms. Spriggs said they are looking to identify gaps and how to fill them, not to get rid of good programs.

**7. New Business**

**8. Routine Business**

- a) Enrollments as of April 1, 2010—reports distributed.

**9. Adjournment--** Mr. Springett polled the Committee to enter into executive session. Ms. Ringel, yes; Mr. Stuart, yes; Ms. DaSilva, yes; Mr. Springett, yes. The meeting adjourned at 9:20p.m, not to return to open session.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Deb Savastano