

DOVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
June 15, 2010

Members Present: Jennifer DaSilva, Chairperson
Bob Springett
Karl Johnson
Dawn Fattore
Carolyn Ringel

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

1. Call to order

Ms. DaSilva called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm in the Chickering School Library.

2. Approval of Minutes

a) Dover School Committee minutes:

- Ms. DaSilva requested a motion to accept the May 18, 2010 minutes. Mr. Springett motioned, Ms. Ringel seconded. *10-17 Vote: Unanimous*

b) Ms. DaSilva noted the May 13, 2010 Sherborn School Committee minutes.

c) Ms. DaSilva noted the May 4, 2010 Dover Sherborn Regional School Committee minutes.

2. Community Comments--Margaret Dugan and Cindy Novich spoke as representatives of the Nutrition Task Force:

- The task force is a group of parents working in collaboration with Ms. Madden to enhance nutritional and overall quality of food service at Chickering.
- Over the last 2 years they have worked to increase communication via parent coffees, e-mail blasts and the PTO newsletter. A survey is also being worked on. They have also instituted a lunch with your child program and have begun conversations with Dr. Reinemann to include healthy choices in nutrition in the curriculum starting in Kindergarten. Nutrition education for parents is being provided through the PTO series. The group meets with SAC for feedback and direction.
- Food Services has included a food of the month, more whole grains and eliminated the blue juice and coffee milk. They are exploring farm to school options. They have joined a regional wellness taskforce. The task force plans to present to DSC in October.
- Mr. Springett asked about short term goals or impediments. Ms. Dugan stated that changes need to be made slowly due to systems and budget constraints. Mr. Springett asked if the café is self funded, Ms. Tague responded that it is supposed to be, but there is a proposal for an increase. Ms. Tague stated that there is a slight operating deficit as of May 31st; the proposed increase is to get us into balance. As of June 2009 the balance had been a \$15,000 surplus. Mr. Johnson stated it would be good to look at local communities and their capabilities and success in implementing like programs and what parents will tolerate for price.
- Ms. Spriggs spoke about the Wellness Policy and defining what an advisory committee will look like with representation from all three groups so that they are all going in the same direction so we can maximize the resources. Mr. Johnson stated that in addition to tackling the menu and choices, that there should be a curriculum component attached to it as well, can you make it a part of EveryDay Math? Ms. Spriggs talked about this being part of the Wellness program and including physical education as well.

3. Reports

a) **PTO Report** – Ms. Ryan

- The 5th grade luncheon was held last week.
- Dad's and Donuts was last Friday.
- An antique map of Dover was presented to Mr. Downing at the PTO meeting.
- \$8,000 of risers was purchased for the music and arts program.

- The PTO is looking at playground improvements.
 - The theme for next year's PTO is New Beginnings.
 - A back to school picnic will be held 9/2.
 - The design plan for the mural is being developed with the artist, the teachers met with him today. Josh Weiner starts on 9/8.
- b) Business Manager's Report – Ms. Tague**
- FY '10 Budget Update— We are looking at approximately a \$415,000 operating surplus which is made up of \$150,000 from salaries, \$47,000 in Utilities, \$59,000 in Transportation and \$158,000 in Special Education. There were minor negative variances of \$1,770 in Business & Finance, \$332 for Library Assistance, \$199 for shipping and \$217 for library books.
 - Ms. Tague asked the Committee for direction on the lock-in rate for oil. Last year we locked in at \$1.96 at this time of year, currently the price is at \$2.37 and our budget is \$2.74. Mr. Springett spoke of the markets being unclear, and the concern of a fast rise. The Committee recommended locking in at \$2.37.
 - The Capital Outlay Committee meeting was held in May. They have a concern that operational items are being put into the capital list. They will be reviewing the list for frequent vs. infrequent and extraordinary vs. routine. Ms. DaSilva asked when the revised plan will be available, Ms. Tague stated that she will have it before the first meeting in September and will provide it to the Committee in advance.
 - FY '10 Budget Closeouts/Encumbrances—
 - Previously we had projected a surplus of \$250,000. In May there is now more confidence in where we will wind up.
 - A meeting was held with Dr. Nugent, Ms. Spriggs and Ms. Tague; they looked at Library and equipment needs and are requesting \$40,920 in funding for these needs. This represents less than 10% of what is being turned back to the town.
 - Ms. Spriggs spoke about the presentation to DSEF on the program for children to access resources. They talked about the funding for training which would support a train the trainer approach.
 - Items E and F of the request are specific to Dr. Nugent and the administrative team, the classroom visits will change by using categories in an application on the iPad. The wireless access fees are expected to be approximately \$1,000.
 - Mr. Springett asked if it is appropriate to do this at all. First, this is Town money, not School Committee's. The school has to account on a line item basis, though we manage to the bottom line. The Town has the right to expect we will spend the money on what was approved. In the past we have pre-paid future expenses, for example, last year we pre-purchased some oil; another year the balanced literacy program required us to buy a lot of books, some of which were purchased by PTO but we had some money available so we pre-bought, these things were normal ordinary school expenses or part of a five year plan that had been approved by Warrant and Town Meeting. This request is a new initiative that is part of a capital budget and we have no warrant representative here tonight to give input.
 - Ms. Fattore spoke of this request showing up and not following our normal protocol for review. It's not part of a grant that wasn't funded, or on a wish list that we are trying to find funding for. Ms. Tague stated that it is a philosophical issue for the Committee; Mr. Springett stated it is a legal issue from the protocol.
 - Ms. Ringel said that part of the request is extending a program that has been in place for a year (Chickering Reporters), so they are asking for an increase in support due to doubled enrollment. The iPad request is separate and new. The reporters request is \$13,000 for the Destiny program, Ms. Chase spoke of the difficulty of using 5 computers for the program with the increased participation and the technology they will need to access. Ms. Ringel spoke of her comfort with not knowing a year ago the technology needs of the program, she would feel more comfortable with this being an extension of the existing program and that the iPad would be part of the normal vetting process.
 - Ms. Spriggs spoke about the special needs students using the tools to regulate the size of print and auditory programs. Mr. Springett spoke of the expectation that we handle this according to protocol, he believes this should be part of the FY' 11 budget and the current funding should go back to the town. Ms. Spriggs spoke of the work that Mr. Downing did to save funds. Mr. Springett stated that some of the funds saved on substitutes were expected as a result of the increase in aide time. Mr. Johnson spoke about wanting to see more detail on the program with the application being in the early stages and that there should be more review.
 - Ms. Spriggs stated that she brought the request forward in the best interest of Chickering; she respects the Committees feedback and the variables they are looking at. Mr. Johnson spoke of the

conversation being different if it was a 2011 budget request and we went through the normal process. Ms. Fattore suggested looking at the request in pieces, and not as a whole. Ms. DaSilva spoke of the meeting a couple weeks ago and the concern about moving the budget around, there is no one here from that Committee tonight. Ms. DaSilva stated she recognizes the challenge for Ms. Chase to run the program.

- Mr. Springett spoke of the money being available in the 2011 budget based on the proposed oil lock-in. If we go through the process and it is vetted, then we can use that savings for something else.
- Ms. Spriggs spoke of the budget closeout process, and now that we have a handle on the final variance this is when there is usually a push to get things approved before the summer since this is the last meeting there is for the school year. She understands the Committee's frustration with getting this proposal so late in the day.
- Ms. DaSilva spoke of including this in the technology plan, and asked if we could buy these things in September. Ms. Tague stated that the FY '10 funds need to be given back to the town. There can be a special appropriation at Town Meeting. Ms. DaSilva said that we could have a discussion with Capital Budget and Warrant Committee prior to June 30th. Ms. Ringel stated that these are all really good things for the school; her concern is that the Warrant and Capital Budget Committees think that School Committee inflates the budget so they can buy things at the end of the year when it's left over. Approving this request could make them more skeptical going forward as we put numbers forward to them.
- Ms. Spriggs stated that with the issues that the Committee has raised, she respectfully withdraws the request.
- Mr. Johnson spoke of having a list together 90 days before the year closes so we can vet it in advance.
- School Lunch Price Increase—Looking for a price increase of \$.50, there has been no increase in four years. The increase is to support replacement of equipment and the recommendations of the Wellness Committee. The fund balance would become a reserve for the equipment replacement. Ms. DaSilva spoke of the Globe article that the region is going from \$2.50 to \$3.00. Ms. DaSilva requested a motion to approve the increase. Mr. Springett motioned, Ms. Ringel seconded. *Vote 10-18: Unanimous*
- FY '11 Budget Update—The budget has been opened so that requisitions can be filled for next year.
- Temperature reports—Mr. Springett asked if we have a tally of how many days were 80-85 or 85-90 over the last few years. Mr. Downing reported they don't have it, he estimates 15 days a season with these temperatures, but we could check with Ralph Kelly. Mr. Springett spoke of having a summary report with this information. Mr. Downing spoke of the impact of power outages on the data.

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

- Administrative Team Evaluation Model—We didn't use up all the funds in the Principal line items, so that would be available to fund the model.
- Mr. Downing thanked the students, parents, DSC, and staff of the Chickering School for providing him with the opportunity to be principal the last three years. He stated that he has truly been blessed to lead such a wonderful learning community. Mr. Downing stated that the teachers have been tremendous to him and they have demonstrated that they are willing to do what it takes to inspire children to learn. Mr. Downing offered his personal thanks to Perry Davis, Bob Couture and Valerie Spriggs for supporting him and helping him grow as an educational leader. Mr. Downing also thanked the parent leaders from SAC and PTO: Dana White, Wendy Darragh, Betsy Ryan, Jen DaSilva, Nancy Simms, Dawn Fattore. Mr. Downing thanked the students of Chickering and said they will always have a special place in his heart and that they are the reason he wakes up in the morning and drives to work. He feels truly blessed to have served Town of Dover and wished everyone the best for the future.
- School Improvement Plan—The SIP has been put into the new format that was reviewed at last month's Committee meeting, this includes the link to DSC goals. Mr. Downing reviewed highlights of the SIP, including new programs that are in the process of being implemented such as Balanced Literacy, common math pre-assessments for differentiated instruction and Number Worlds; the work being done around the bullying curriculums; Language Based Learning Classroom implementation; Technology Integration program to train teachers on interactive white boards and web strategies at the next level; and, Dr. Nugent's entry plan. Mr. Downing spoke of the contributions by Mr. Johnson and Ms. Fattore as a part of SAC. Ms. DaSilva requested a motion to accept the SIP. Mr. Springett motioned, Ms. Fattore seconded. *Vote 10-19: Unanimous*
- There will be 66 students in the incoming Kindergarten class. There will be four classes.
- Ms. DaSilva asked when Dr. Nugent's entry plan is due. Ms. Spriggs reported that Dr. Nugent is working on it even though she does not officially start until July.

- Foreign Language—PLES program staffing and cost options were provided. Option 1A is the most desirable, though it has the greatest demand on current instructional time.
- Acceptance of DSEF Grants—
 - Conferring with Elementary Writers (Ms. Clifford and Dr. Reinemann) --In collaboration with Pine Hills, Program supports K-5, one day for Carl Anderson to work with the teachers in a workshop format \$3,105.
 - Interactivity in the Digital Age (Mr. Harte)--Rollout whiteboard for 3rd-4th grades \$25,302.
 - Robotics – (Kindergarten teachers and Mr. Harte)--Robotics for problem solving and manipulation \$3,540.
 - District Library Program— 21st Century catalog system. \$17,500
 - Ms. DaSilva requested a motion to accept the DSEF Grants, Ms. Fattore motioned, Mr. Springett seconded. *Vote 10-20: Unanimous*
 - A grant was denied by the DSEF for a digital system similar to the one in the art room. There is a Sherborn parent associated with the Mudge fund which has agreed to fund the grant of \$1,000 Ms. DaSilva requested a motion to accept the \$1,000 grant from the Mudge Fund. Mr. Springett motioned, Ms. Ringel seconded. *Vote 10-21: Unanimous*
- Mr. Downing provided a copy of the letter to accompany the class lists that will be sent out on Thursday.
- Ms. DaSilva thanked Mr. Downing for his last three years of service.
- PLC luncheon—each team celebrated the meaningful work they have done with students. Mr. Downing spoke of the work that Mr. Harte and Ms. Chase have done with the students to blog with kids on the other side of the globe.

d) Superintendent's Report – Ms. Spriggs

- Ms. Spriggs spoke about her appreciation for the smooth transition between Mr. Downing and Dr. Nugent.
- Graduation took place on June 3rd. A listing of the college acceptances is included in the SC packet.
- Congratulations to Mabel Ellis on her retirement.
- Strategic Plan Update—There are some goals that will continue to be worked on this summer to fine tune action plans. Fall presentation planned to the Committee.
- Policy Manual Update—Wellness Policy was distributed for the Committee to review, the italicized text has been added since it was approved in 2006. Ms. Spriggs requested that the Committee review prior to the Joint Meeting.
- MCAS Report—Overviews have been presented about interventions based on performance data. Test scores will be public in the fall, not in June as previously communicated by the State.
- METCO Coordinator Update—Ms. Claire Toohey has accepted the position. The 16 person team has remained intact; they will welcome Ms. Toohey at a meeting this Thursday.
- E-mail Guidelines—Mr. Downing and the PTO have presented a guideline that Ms. Spriggs has reviewed. Ms. Spriggs would like to review the guidelines with Dr. Nugent prior to School Committee presentation.
- Ms. Spriggs spoke about how much she appreciates Chickering and the tribute this week for Joann Weltman, it was both respectful and lovely with the auditorium filled with her friends and family, it was a wonderful tribute. Mr. Springett spoke about how great it was to see the different shots of her on the screen, it was very well done. Mr. Downing spoke about the wonderful job that was done organizing the tribute.

5. Special Items

- a) Vacation Plans --The Committee provide their vacation information to Ms. Spriggs.
- b) Goals for 2011 – Ms. DaSilva
 - Foreign Language Phase 2
 - Accelerated Learners—more consistency across all grades with this program
 - Process for assessing benchmarks and performance standards

6. Future Business

- a) September Dover School Committee Agenda Items -- Ms. DaSilva
 - Five Year Capital Plan
 - E-mail Guidelines
 - Initiatives
- b) School Committee Interim Meetings – Ms. Fattore recommends we have the interim meetings as needed vs. scheduling them. Mr. Springett provided the history that we didn't have enough time and that evening

meetings were lasting till 10 or 10:30 and that scheduling an ad hoc meeting was difficult. Mr. Johnson spoke of needing the time back and consolidating it to once a month. Ms. Ringel is fine with not having it as a placeholder and having it on an as needed basis; she recommends trying it for six months and revisiting to see if it works.

7. New Business -- None

- **Contract Negotiations**—Mr. Johnson --both towns have expressed an interest in the process with the budgets being tight. By statute they have the right for each contract to have a representative. They have one vote to help ratify, and they become a part of the School Committee. Past practice has been to have two members as part of the negotiation. It is a bit unclear what role they will ultimately plan. We will need to formally vote on our negotiation team with one of the selectmen there as part of this process. As we get into the process, we will need to be sensitive to how many people are a part of the negotiation process so we should have a follow-up meeting after Tuesday to talk about where we are, our involvement and town involvement. Ms. Spriggs stated that we are looking for dates from all three Committees over the summer to meet.

8. Routine Business

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

9. Adjournment—Ms. DaSilva requested a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deb Savastano