

DOVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
September 21, 2010

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

Also Present: Valerie Spriggs, Superintendent
Steven Bliss, Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Theresa Nugent, Principal
Dr. Deb Reinemann, Curriculum Coordinator
Christine Tague, School Business Manager
Cheryl Chase, Librarian
Meg Field, PTO co-president
James Stuart, Warrant Committee

1. Call to order

- Ms. DaSilva called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm in the Chickering School Library.
- Ms. Spriggs welcomed Mr. Stuart as the Warrant Committee representative. Ms. DaSilva welcomed Dr. Nugent.

2. Approval of Minutes

- a) Dover School Committee minutes:
- Ms. DaSilva requested a motion to accept the June 15, 2010 minutes. Mr. Springett motioned, Ms. Fattore seconded. Correction: Page 2, 3rd to last bullet, 5th sentence, replace comfort with discomfort.
10-22 Vote: Unanimous
 - Ms. DaSilva requested a motion to accept the July 28, 2010 minutes. Mr. Springett motioned, Mr. Johnson seconded. **10-23 Vote: Unanimous**
- b) Ms. DaSilva noted the June 10, 2010 Sherborn School Committee minutes.
- c) Ms. DaSilva noted the June 8, 2010 Dover Sherborn Regional School Committee minutes.

3. Community Comments—None

4. Reports

- a) **PTO Report** – Meg Field
- The Back to School Picnic was held on September 2nd.
 - Josh Weiner arrived on September 7th; he is the visiting artist working on the lobby mosaic. The plan is to install the mosaic around October 2nd.
 - Dover Days was held on September 11th, we utilized more middle school students as volunteers than parents.
 - New Parent Coffee was held on September 10th.
 - The First PTO quarterly meeting was held on September 17th.
 - The first chorus was held on September 15th and had record participation. The new risers are now being used. Working on an instrument storage plan.
 - Working on a playground review and have established a task force.
 - Back to School night will be held on September 23rd; PTO will be bringing in dinner for the teachers.
 - Fall Fundraiser to be held on October 22nd at the Dedham Club.
- b) **Five Year Capital Plan** -- Mr. Ralph Kelley, Supervisor of Plant and Facilities reviewed the detailed 5 Year Capital Expenditure Plan with the Committee. Items discussed in detail were:
- There is a major leak in the hot water exhaust stack in the mechanical room; this is due to a flashing issue. Mr. Kelley recommends dismantling the 15 foot stack to properly repair the issue. Mr. Springett asked why we wouldn't do it now, instead of 2012 and why we've been waiting a year to fix something that is leaking. Mr. Kelley responded that this is due to the budget. Ms. Tague spoke of the contingency fund last year having \$5,600, she believes it is level funded this year, in addition there is a favorable oil variance based on the contract assuming the same usage.

- Mr. Springett requested a firm estimate from Mr. Kelley and that it be brought back to the Committee for approval.
- Cedar siding is on a rotating maintenance replacement. Mr. Springett asked about the criteria for capital spending vs. routine maintenance.
- Significant fire suppression/sprinkler & fire pump inspection needed in 2013-- Mr. Kelly spoke of the annual checks that are conducted on the system, but that this inspection would be more major.
 - Mr. Springett asked to assess if we should switch the timing of the fire inspection with main office carpet replacement.
- HVAC equipment major component replacement – There are lots of fluctuations in the power feed, brownouts have had an adverse effect on the equipment and all extended warranties have expired. Compressors, fans and electronic components may need replacement.
 - Mr. Springett asked for clarification from Mr. Kelley if the \$7,500 requested for each of the next three years is a routine or capital expense.
- Ms. Tague stated we should charge emergency repairs to the contingency account, not the maintenance account.
- Mr. Kelley spoke of Burnham Cast Iron Boilers having a nationwide problem with the boiler section; we haven't had any problems yet, but anticipate them. Burnham will provide the parts, we have to pay for the labor. The labor at the high school cost \$8,800.
- Energy Savings – Exploring LED lighting for outside the building. Various grants may be available.
- The windows are not part of this capital plan, they are structurally sound and in good condition.
- Trees have to wait till the fall or early spring to be planted.
- Ms. Spriggs stated that the Capital Committee asked for a 10/15 submission, Ms. Spriggs has asked for an extension to the day after the next meeting. She is waiting for the Technology Plan before submitting the Capital Budget.
- Mr. Kelley reported that the fire suppression major inspection is fine to wait a few years; he feels the carpet is more of a priority. 10 years out of a carpet is a good life cycle on a high traffic area.

c) Business Manager's Report – Ms. Tague

- FY' 11 Budget Update—Encumbrances are being put in place, the first report to the Committee will be in October.
- FY' 10 Budget Update-- Ms. Tague reported that FY '10 closed out with a surplus of \$765,626 (9.73%). This included the return of \$275,505 in circuit breaker funding, after this adjustment the operating surplus is \$490,121 (6.23%). The largest savings were from the following items: Utilities \$62,779, Transportation \$81,251 (special education \$57K, regular \$23K), Classroom Teachers \$112,805, Teacher Specialist \$53,751 and Substitutes \$15,055. Mr. Springett spoke of how we fully fund the special education expenses, so the \$490,000 is the actual operating surplus. Mr. Springett talked about breaking down the variances by regular, special education and shared services.
- FY' 10 Budget Transfers--Ms. Tague reviewed the details of the FY2010 transfer report. Mr. Johnson asked why we have to zero out accounts where we have variances. Ms. Tague stated that she would like not to do these transfers; she is doing what has been historically done. Mr. Springett said it is not clear what the accounting protocols are, or should be, and what the role of the Committee is and that we need to understand how the systems and controls work to ensure we have account integrity and we need to get better educated on how it's supposed to work. Ms. Spriggs spoke of the DOE and other regulations. Mr. Johnson spoke of an accounting practice issue which seems illogical vs. what's required by the government. Ms. Tague stated that every year the Town of Dover is audited and receives a management letter which is used as a tool to identify changes. Ms. Spriggs spoke of having a workshop as things relate to the warrant items, guidelines from the DOR and DOE, the end of year report and the ratios that are used for the following years. Ms. Spriggs stated that most districts do not provide the actuals the way we do. Mr. Springett stated that the Town of Wayland is going through an extensive audit.
 - Ms. DaSilva to contact Glen Koocher to get further insight.
- Ms. Tague reported that the Oil price was locked in at \$2.465. Today's price is \$2.37, but we are still in good shape compared to the \$ 2.74 that was budgeted.

d) Principal's Report – Dr. Nugent

- Ms. Keniry has announced her retirement effective December 31, 2010.
- Personnel Updates—the quality of the individuals coming in is amazing. Many of the instructional aides that left did so for teaching positions. We hired one of our aides to teach a Kindergarten class.
- Kindergarten Enrollment is at 67, there are 3 classes of 17 and one with 16 students.
- SAC has two parent openings.

- MCAS Report:
 - Mr. Bliss has done an outstanding job on this website and has provided invaluable information and analysis. Information can be accessed at: <http://www.doversherborn.org/index.cfm/page/MCAS/pid/12887>.
 - At first blush we see improvement in ELA and Math in the 3rd, 4th and 5th grade trends. Each teacher has been given their students data. We're discussing what we need to build into our professional goals. The first is a team goal on the open response questions. Discussions during tomorrow's half day will be looking at open response questions and helping the staff to develop a meaningful goal. The 2nd goal is on curriculum instruction. Looking to improve the process of rubrics and assessment for ELA. We are in the final stage of the Tufts project this year. We still need to meet the needs of the students at risk and also look at the children who need to be "stretched".
 - When looking at the Cohort report of growth over time of the same class, for the current 6th grade (last year 5th) there is a positive shift to the left. The current 5th grade (last year, 4th) is being looked into to see if the increase in the needs improvement is an anomaly or a trend. On the ELA side, there are two pretty positive trends, the needs improvement has dropped in current grades 6 and 5.
 - Mr. Springett asked how the DIBBLES and Galileo data corresponds to MCAS, since MCAS is backwards looking, and how our internal standards map to MCAS. Dr. Nugent stated that she will answer this in next month's presentation. Mr. Springett asked about the subgroup that has poor results. Mr. Bliss replied there are two subgroups that are being worked on. Mr. Springett asked about getting 6th grade data by Chickering and by Pine Hill so we can track them through middle school. Ms. Spriggs stated that she and Mr. Bliss are working on how to look at the data by student #, which is assigned for confidentiality. Mr. Bliss talked about the demarcation between Dover and Sherborn schools and the Dover Sherborn district level when going from 5th to 6th grade. They are hoping there will be a codification of the SASID # so that they may link back to a student. Ms. Spriggs stated they are trying to get in touch with people at the DOE that can help with this data. Mr. Bliss stated that when there is no demarcation from districts, they are able to pull the data. Mr. Springett talked of the analysis of what we do vs. the state; he wants to look at what we do vs. the best schools. Dr. Nugent spoke of the District Analysis and Review Tool (DART) that is generated by the state that compares like districts. Ms. Spriggs spoke of the existing report that we use of five schools that have similar demographics which are used for comparison. Mr. Springett noted that we are getting to good!
- e) **Superintendent's Report** – Ms. Spriggs
 - Professional Development Plan 2010-2011—Annual approval is needed from the Committee for the Professional Development (PD) handbook for 2010-2011. Working with the PD Committee to develop the 11/29 professional development plan. Ms. Spriggs spoke of when they started online registration for PD they expected some resistance, but they have received none. All the PD requests for certification are handled through the system. It involves all the staff, not just the teachers. Changes to this year's plan were: page numbers, committee members, alignment with the strategic goals and a PD activity log. Ms. DaSilva requested a motion to approve the Professional Development handbook for 2010-2011. Mr. Johnson motioned, Mr. Springett seconded. **10-24 Vote: Unanimous**
 - Bullying Legislation—Joann Kenney from the Dover Sherborn Regional Schools will chair a committee to bring the plan together. We have a jump start on this work already based on last year's superintendent's goals. The state has provided a model that they would like used for a plan including reporting, parent notification, law enforcement notification and guidance. The plan will be brought back to the Committee at the November meeting to read over what has been written, get feedback which will be incorporated, and then be brought back in December for final approval in order to honor the DESE deadline. Ms. DaSilva asked if there is a way to have assemblies or workshops to be proactive. Dr. Nugent talked about open circle being used and the blue ticket program. At the elementary level it's about positive relationships and positive image—it's daily for them. There were assemblies held for the student body last year; the PTO held "The Power of One." Parent training has been held along with the DA's office. Coaches will be required to attend training this year. Cyber bullying is a difficult area, Ms. Spriggs reported the DA's office helped with this; we had a user policy for the students but not the adults, so that has been updated. By June, we will need to have a policy approved that goes hand in hand with the plan that will be approved in December. Mr. Johnson spoke of cyber bullying, Ms. Spriggs said it is the most difficult to address, help is needed from parents as well, for example on Facebook, parents can help by being on as a friend so they can monitor activity.
 - E-mail Guidelines—a guideline was submitted to Ms. Spriggs, it needs further refinement and the approval process needs to be revisited. Planning to bring back to the Committee in October. Dr. Nugent spoke of the E-blast reminder during the transition while we move to the hot links. There is still an issue of what content should be included for posting on the website.

Initiatives:

- Fit Kids will begin in January. Thank you to Reebok for their support of the project and to Sarah Stuart for securing the sponsorship for the program. The children will get together before school to work on a wide variety of physical activities.
- MCAS Open Response—a discussion was held at the district principals meeting, all four have identified this as an area requiring help; we will be bringing more information to the Committee.

5. Special Items -- None

6. Future Business

- a) October Dover School Committee Agenda Items – MCAS report; Technology Report that ties to Capital Expenses; E-mail content policy; and, Financial Audit, Controls and Processes.
- b) September 28, 2010 Joint/Union School Committee Meeting Agenda – update on the Strategic Plan, Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee Presentation & Report.

7. New Business -- None

8. Routine Business

- a) Enrollments as of September 1, 2010—reports distributed. We should look at the low numbers of Kindergarten and the increase to First grade to understand what is happening including Montessori and other impacts.

9. Adjournment—Ms. DaSilva polled the Committee to move the meeting to Executive Session. The poll was unanimous and the Committee adjourned to Executive Session at 8:44p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deb Savastano