

DOVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
October 19, 2011

Members Present: Carolyn Ringel, Chairperson
Tim Caffrey
Lauren Doherty
Dawn Fattore
Karl Johnson

Also Present: Valerie Spriggs, Superintendent
Steven Bliss, Assistant Superintendent
Christine Tague, School Business Manager
Dr. Theresa Nugent, Principal
Dr. Deb Reinemann, Assistant Principal
Cheryl Chase, Librarian
Bob Cocks, Warrant Committee
Ralph Kelley, Facilities
James Stuart, Warrant Committee
Renee Grady, DSEF

1. **Call to order**

Ms. Fattore called the meeting to order at 6:35pm in the Chickering School Library.

2. **Approval of Minutes**

a) Dover School Committee:

- Ms. Fattore requested a motion to accept the September 19, 2011 minutes. Mr. Johnson motioned, Ms. Doherty seconded. Correction: 10. Adjournment: ~~M~~ Ms. Fattore. **Vote 11-26: Unanimous.**

3. **Community Comments – None**

4. **Reports**

a) PTO Report – Missy Gramer, Gina Doyle

- The PTO sponsored the luncheon, airfare and hotel for Leon Mobley's visit.
- The PTO sponsored the first grade Audubon Walks curriculum enrichment program.
- A hospitality luncheon with a tailgating theme was hosted by the 5th grade parents.
- METCO host families have been selected. An event will be held to bring METCO and Chickering families together.
- Soliciting donations from the parent community for the annual auction.
- Ready to go live with icontact to get everyone connected to the PTO; building a PTO database which will have the entire school and by grade for those who have chosen to participate.
- A new parent reception is being held next Friday (grades 1-5).
- The first community service project will be a food drive that will be held in early November.

b) Principal's Report – Dr. Nugent

- Artist in Residence – Dr. Nugent thanked the PTO for their support of Leon Mobley's work, he comes back to Chickering as an alumni and a member of the METCO program. As part of the PTO sponsored curriculum enrichment, Leon will be here teaching master musician classes from January 30th to February 3rd. Leon would like to have a full school program at Mudge; he will also be visiting the other schools during that week.
- Math Curriculum Update – Dr. Nugent provided an online demonstration of Everyday Math. The basic service has been offered to us free for six years. We have been given access to the deluxe version this year and are asking teachers to use all the tools so that we can assess needs for the budget. Online assessments are available and can be pulled into Aspen. Ms. Spriggs stated that assessing what we have and redistributing through the core curriculum helps with fiscal responsibility. Mr. Caffrey asked if teachers are able to see how often students log on. Dr. Nugent responded that they don't have that access, but Mr. Harte is checking into it.

c) Subcommittee Reports – Ms. Fattore reported that the World Language Committee has begun site visits. The committee now has representation from all schools and parent representation from Pine Hill.

5. **Strategic Direction Goals**

a) Goal 1 – Academic Excellence

Kindergarten Presentation – Ms. Delaney’s presentation is attached. Highlights of the presentation follow:

- What do they teach: self help skills, social competency, handwriting, literacy, writing, math, science, and social studies.
- How do they teach: whole group instruction, small group instruction, and individual instruction.
- Mr. Johnson asked Ms. Delaney about differentiated learning and how many different clusters of groups she has. Ms. Delaney spoke about center activities, at each table is a specific activity which each child rotates through. In general in a class of twenty you usually have five kids that need a repeat/slower pace, ten kids will be at level, and five will be ready for enrichment activities.
- How do we know if they are learning: formal Math and Literacy assessments are done three times a year, additional literacy assessments include DIBELS, PALS, DRA; informal assessments take place every day.
- What happens when they are not making adequate progress: Weekly team meetings, parent notification, individualized instruction, consulting with staff/specialists, student support team, and referral for evaluation.
- Ms. Doherty spoke of the very rich curriculum and asked if there is sufficient time in the Kindergarten day to cover the depth of the curriculum in place today, the model was put in place over ten years ago, she asked if we need to look at the curriculum again vs. the current schedule. Ms. Delaney stated that she feels we do not have enough time; Kindergarten is now really first grade, we expect kids to have some skills when they walk in the door. We have five specials for students to go to as well, then World Language will also cut into teaching time, she would love to see full day Kindergarten, it would give kids the extra time to practice the skills and have time for social interactions since we have little time for anything but academics.
- Mr. Johnson referred to the last slide and the grade level specifics and stated he would like to see an assessment in action.
- Ms. Ringel arrived at 7:20pm

b) Goal 2 – Outstanding Teachers

Action to Support Teachers

- Ms. Spriggs referred the Committee to the one page overview included in the packet.
- Evaluations are very thorough and provide an opportunity for onsite visits.
- Ms. Spriggs stated that the Committee may want to spend time in a workshop setting for more depth on this topic.
- Ms. Ringel asked how support needs are identified. Ms. Spriggs responded that sometimes teachers come and ask for help, support needs can also be identified through formal assessments or informal discussions with administration and staff. If the instruction isn’t where it should be the administration may reach out to the Superintendent and ask for help.

c) Goal 3 – K-12 Effective and Efficient Districts

- FY ’13 Capital Budget Request—Plants & Facilities:
 - Mr. Kelley reviewed the list included in the DSC packet. Items 1, 2 and 3 have been prioritized, the remainder is not.
 - Item 1: Completion of Phase 2 Painting--Because of the current labor costs, we can complete Phases 2 and 3 together for the same cost as originally budgeted for Phase 2 alone, \$20,000.
 - Item 2: The Library carpet has passed its ten year life cycle, on high humidity days we get buckling in the carpet. Mr. Kelley recommends using 2x2 carpet tile replacements. The estimate of \$16,500 includes money for moving books and shelves.
 - Item 3: Asphalt work--repair of cracks and road edge repair, \$10,000.
 - Item 4: Main Power supply surge protector, \$15,000. Mr. Johnson asked how much of the assets would be protected by this surge protector. Mr. Kelley provided an example, replacing a compressor could be \$3,500-\$4,500 per compressor and each unit has four.
 - Item 5: Ongoing cedar siding preventive maintenance, rotating four year cycle, \$7,500.
 - Emergency Generator: We currently have no emergency generator or the wiring in place to accept one. Mr. Johnson asked what it would take to wire the building to accept a portable generator. Mr. Kelley responded that we would need the circuitry; the best thing to do for the building would be to purchase a self contained generator with all the necessary switchgears, the estimated cost is \$250,000. Mr. Kelley will provide a breakdown of what the wiring alone would cost.
 - Ms. Fattore asked if there is anything on last year’s plan that we are not picking back up. Mr. Kelley responded that some items have been moved from the Capital Budget to the Maintenance Budget.
- Mr. Kelley reported NStar will be conducting an energy audit, which includes replacing lighting. We would receive a rebate of \$25 per fixture, we have 1,200 fixtures. NStar estimates a 35% savings, which would be a savings of \$16,000-\$17,000 per year; Mr. Kelley will have the final figures available for the next meeting.

- Five Year Capital Plan—Plants & Facilities: Mr. Kelley reviewed the list included in the packet:
 - Item 1: Site repairs and improvements--includes widening portions of the fire road, replacement of faded signs, \$25,000, FY '15 .
 - Item 2: Recommission MEP systems, \$30,000, FY '14.
 - Item 3: Fire Pump, Major Overhaul, \$7,500, FY '16.
 - Item 4: New Floor buffer--trade in and get more efficient unit, \$15,000, FY '14.
 - Item 5: Siding, \$7,500 each year.
 - Mr. Kelley handed out materials on projects completed last fiscal year.
 - Structural components are in good shape, he doesn't foresee any major replacements five years out.
 - Mr. Johnson asked what last year's FY 13 plan was vs. this year's. Ms. Tague reported that we have already completed \$52,000 this year that has come off the list; she will provide the figures at the next meeting. Ms. Spriggs spoke about the information included in the packet related to maintenance vs. capital and the discussions with Warrant. Ms. Spriggs would like to forward the request to Capital tomorrow. The Committee agreed with the list. The generator will not be part of the request as it is being explored. Ms. Tague's submission will outline what was presented last year and what we are requesting this year.
 - FY '13 Capital Budget Request—Technology
 - Ms. Ringel referred to the request for Technology Hardware and the costs being kept the same vs. going down since some of the technology now costs less. Ms. Spriggs spoke about the assessment to see what the need is for laptops vs. net books vs. Macs, the final touches are being put on the technology plan, and then we can make more definitive decisions and bring it to the Committee.
 - Ms. Fattore noted the addition of the White Boards that were not on last year's plan. Ms. Spriggs stated they want to fully implement the White Boards in all the primary grades, not just grades 2-5. Pine Hills now has them in all grades.
 - The Committee agreed to have Ms. Tague forward this request to the Capital Committee as a place holder.
 - Ms. Fattore asked for further explanation of the whiteboards that it is a new item added.
 - Mr. Johnson asked about using tablets or net books vs. laptops and their reduced costs as a part of how we are looking at the overall strategy.
 - FY '12 Budget Update:
 - Ms. Tague reported that she is working on the salary encumbrances; the next report will include those variances, if any.
 - OOD: Currently Dover has 22 students in grades K-12; there are no pre-K OOD placements.
 - Dover received a circuit breaker reimbursement of 65% vs. the 40% expected; this represents an additional \$179,000 for the Town's free cash.
 - Mr. Caffrey asked if we have any buying power where we may have eight or ten kids in one school. Ms. Spriggs reported that tuition is regulated by DESE, first we look at schools through the collaborative and the student's needs vs. what they offer, the collaborative has a lower rate. Ms. Doherty asked for clarification on Pre-K. Ms. Tague reported that there are some students that we are supplementing tuition for Pre-K.
 - The oil rate is locked in at \$3.09; with the same usage as last year we could have a \$20,000 savings. For the FY '13 budget, Warrant Committee recommends \$3.95 a gallon.
 - Mr. Johnson asked Ms. Tague if she had a sense of how much of the tuition covers the facility vs. hands on teaching for an OOD placement. Ms. Spriggs stated that she would have no hesitation bringing the students back in. We have to have the cohort to support having that class. Ms. Caffrey gave an example of bringing ten kids back in with two teachers and asked if we could contract it year by year. Ms. Spriggs spoke of a 1:1 support system they had in place and then the child moved out of state, at the same time another child was identified as needing more services so we were able to have that staff member move to that student. Mid-year assessments also can impact the budget, needs and staffing.
- d) Goal 4 -Technology
- Thank you to Mr. Mosher, Mr. Stengel and Mr. Johnson for their support of the Technology Advisory.
- e) Goal 5 – Diversity
- Proposal for Nature's Classroom: Last year students traveled outside the state, this year it will be in state. Ms. Spriggs requested the Committee's approval. Mr. Caffrey asked about costs for families that may not be able to afford it. Dr. Nugent reported that there are scholarships available. Ms. Fattore motioned, Ms. Ringel seconded. **Vote 11-27: Unanimous.**

6. Special Items

Budget Preparation – Declining Enrollment

- Ms. Spriggs distributed a revised regional enrollment report. We are looking at the elementary schools and the shifts in the trends. We need to be sensitive to the staff in these conversations. Further discussion to take place at the next meeting.
- Ms. Doherty asked where the census comes from. Mr. Bliss responded that they get the census data from Town Hall.
- Ms. Spriggs spoke of the move-in/move out variable, private school students that transfer in and, parents who have their children attend full day Kindergarten outside of Chickering and then bring their kids here in first grade.
- Mr. Johnson asked if we want to entertain full day Kindergarten for next year in the budget assumptions. Ms. Spriggs stated that she has not discussed this with Dr. Nugent yet, they plan to discuss and bring to the Committee in November. If the funding were there she would like a full day model. Ms. Fattore spoke of looking at the offsets for the buses and other costs of the half day program.
- Ms. Spriggs asked Mr. Stuart and Mr. Cocks if an increase in the Kindergarten day would be an increase to level services, and would Warrant entertain this. Mr. Stuart offered to discuss with Warrant before the next DSC meeting.

7. Future Business

- a) November Dover School Committee Agenda Items –
 - ½ day /full day structure for Kindergarten
 - MCAS
 - Language Arts and Reading
 - Strategic Direction Updates
 - Enrollment Report
 - December – Dr. O’Connell SPED presentation for a trend on budget

8. New Business – None

9. Routine Business

- a) Enrollments as of October 1, 2011—reports distributed.

10. Adjournment—Ms. Ringel polled the Committee to adjourn to Executive Session. Mr. Johnson-yes, Ms. Ringel-yes, Ms. Fattore-yes, Mr. Caffrey-yes, Ms. Doherty-yes. The meeting adjourned at 8:41pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deb Savastano