

DOVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 17, 2012

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

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

**1. Call to order**

Ms. Ringel called the meeting to order at 7:00pm in the Chickering School Library.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

a) Dover School Committee:

- Ms. Ringel requested a motion to accept the December 19, 2011 minutes. Ms. Fattore motioned, Mr. Johnson seconded. Corrections:
  - 4, b, first bullet ... There have been comments made ~~at previous Committee meetings~~ in public forums that have concerned the Special Education parents so we are taking this opportunity as a teaching moment....
  - 4, b, third bullet: ... When there is one child needing a certain type of service we look at the ACCEPT and TEC Collaboratives first, then at private placement. ....

*Vote 12-01: Unanimous*

b) Ms. Ringel noted the Dover Sherborn Regional School Committee minutes of December 16, 2011.

c) Ms. Ringel noted the Sherborn Regional School Committee minutes of December 15, 2011.

**3. Community Comments –**

- Community Member Judy Schultz spoke about the benefits of the Chorus program and the proposed addition of funding for the program. Ms. Schultz stated that the program here is outstanding; it has tremendous value to her as a parent. She doesn't know where else she could find this experience for her children.

**4. Reports**

a) PTO Report – Missy Gramer, Gina Doyle

- The PTO supported the following Curriculum Enrichment programs: Dinoman for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, Cry Innocent for 5<sup>th</sup> grade, Techsploration for 3rd grade and Wingmasters for Kindergarten.
- PTO has approved \$3,000 in grants, including: an evacuation chair that allows a child from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor to be evacuated in an emergency, a portable PA system, USB headsets for grades K, 1, 2 & 3 and Art Boards.
- Books from the Heart will take place in February.
- Auction planning is fully underway.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> grade food drive is underway.
- A Mexican themed teacher luncheon was hosted by the third grade parents.

b) Subcommittee Reports

- Ms. Fattore reported that TEC approved a new strategic plan for the collaborative. TEC has provided a synopsis of the savings we receive through them. Ms. Fattore will send the documents out to the Committee.

**5. Strategic Direction Goals**

a) Goal 1 – Academic Excellence

***Principal's Report:***

- Dr. Nugent thanked the PTO for the Teacher Luncheon, Mrs. Pappas & Mrs. Barry for their work on the Chorus event and Mrs. Delaney & Mr. Harte for their work on the Curriculum Coffee presentation on EveryDay Math.

- To provide clarification to the community, two handbook changes are included in the report. Ms. Fattore referred to the “call to request” language, it should state that written notification is required. Ms. Spriggs stated that this is for clarification only, formal changes to the Handbook will be brought to the Committee in the spring. Mr. Caffrey asked about accepting e-mail for the notes. Dr. Nugent stated that they can be scanned in and sent via e-mail so that we can verify a signature, the signature is the important part.

**Grade 2 Report**—Jane Gentilli, Melissa Baker

- A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.
  - Ms. Ringel asked how often the checklist is used, Ms. Gentilli responded that it is used for the whole unit. At the end of a unit some areas are shaded so we know what should be secure goals and what should be developing.
- b) Goal 3 – K-12 Effective and Efficient Districts
- **Superintendent’s Evaluation/Communication—Ms. Spriggs**
    - The subcommittee has met to review the evaluation and strategic goals. The evaluation tool will be sent out in advance of what is on the timeline; new members should ask their chair if they have any questions. Ms. Spriggs asked if the Committee is getting enough information. Ms. Ringel stated that they didn’t want people to get the document in the next month or two and not have enough information to complete it.
  - **Extra Compensatory Requests**
    - These requests are not a salary based allocation, they are provided to teachers taking on additional responsibilities and for taking on before or after school programs. There is an advisory council that is convened annually that consists of teachers from all levels as well as administrators, which reviews the proposals and makes recommendations to the school committees. Ms. Ringel stated that right now the chorus request is to raise the level from 1.5 to 3.5, and asked if it is not raised would it automatically be at 1.5. Ms. Spriggs responded that it would be. Ms. Ringel asked if there are other teachers who are doing extra work who have not made a request, Ms. Spriggs confirmed that the request had to be made by November 1<sup>st</sup>. Last year we received requests for band and accompaniment, the advisory council recommended not funding the accompaniment. The only piece she is bringing forward is to see if the Committee wants to override the advisory council recommendation of 1.5.
    - Ms. Spriggs provided background on the Ski Team Assistant and MARC advisors and the support given for those requests.
    - The advisory council did not support any increases to existing levels, only new stipends.
    - Mr. Johnson stated that anything that comes from the MOU process will not be implemented until the next contract.
    - Mr. Johnson asked where the funding comes from. Ms. Tague responded that it has to be budgeted as an increase in the budget. Mr. Johnson wants to understand where it is sourced from. If we decide to override the advisory recommendation and approve something different for Chickering he would want to see the proposal or the context of it before approving. Assuming the funds are in balance, then we can look at it for Chickering. Ms. Spriggs stated that she would bring the proposal to the Committee. Last year was the first year that we had extra compensatory for Chickering; previously it was only at the Middle and High Schools.
    - Ms. Spriggs thanked Ms. Pappas for her work with the chorus and stated that the proposal was well written.
  - **FY ’12 Budget Update:**
    - Ms. Tague stated that she is working to confirm some of the previously reported variances. The salary surplus has increased about \$10K.
    - OOD District Tuition and Transportation has a \$239K projected surplus. One student has left the program and five or less remained in house or their placement costs were less than anticipated.
    - Ms. Tague will provide a more detailed update on the other operating expenses next month.
    - Ms. Tague spoke of the meeting scheduled to look at funding additional items using the projected surplus, including funding the items we couldn’t do as planned because of the unexpected costs from the fall storms. Mr. Johnson stated that he is not clear what our projected net favorable variance is and also would like to know what the items are that would likely to be brought forward to fund as we work through the conversations. Ms. Ringel stated that there is a meeting on January 30<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at the Town House with representatives from the Selectmen and Capital Committee; this will be a clarifying meeting on the guidelines and how the surplus can be spent. Ms. Doherty asked if the Special Education funds would be a part of this. Ms. Ringel responded that any part of the remaining budget would be lumped in together at the end of the year. Ms. Doherty asked if the decisions will be made at that meeting or if a proposal comes back

to the full committee. Ms. Spriggs responded that a proposal should come back to the full School Committee to ensure everyone is clear so that there is no misinterpretation as there was last year. Ms. Doherty asked if we budget gross and assume the circuit breaker to be \$0. Ms. Ringel responded that the circuit breaker goes directly to the Town, which is not how most towns do it; we don't bank on that money and fund it entirely in our budget. The circuit breaker funding is not included in our budgets or variances. Ms. Spriggs stated that as the circuit breaker money goes back to the Town, but if we have a case that exceeds what has been budgeted, the Town will help out. Ms. Tague will provide the Committee with an estimated surplus and some items that we are looking to fund as examples to use during the upcoming discussions.

- ***FY '13 Budget Update:***

- Mr. Johnson spoke about e-mail's he received about the communication in the Chickering Newsletter that full day Kindergarten has been approved. He asked if this should be the communication since the budget isn't approved yet, this is an incremental program and is outside the level funding guideline.
- Ms. Ringel asked Mr. Stuart if there is a plan to have a separate meeting with Warrant. Mr. Stuart stated that they will have questions as a committee and it should be getting on the agenda soon. Ms. Ringel asked that if there are specific questions that Warrant has if they could send them in advance of the meeting. Mr. Stuart asked for the handout that was referred to at last month's meeting that was not included as part of the packet. Ms. Spriggs stated that she will make sure that it is posted and hard copies are available. Ms. Tague will provide the Committee with the final capital proposal in advance of Tuesday's meeting.

- ***Fixed Cost Spreadsheet:***

- Ms. Tague distributed a draft of the Fixed Cost spreadsheet to the Committee.
- Ms. Ringel stated that if we have 550 or 520 students we still have the same heating costs. The teaching staff may go down, but by contract our salaries went up by 2% so total salaries last year are  $x$ , this year  $x-1+2\%$ . She would show it as a whole number, not per student. Mr. Johnson stated that the blue bar (teachers) will be largely flat to declining, but as a percent of total cost per student it increases.
- The Committee discussed the need for different charts to show the cost per student as well as what is fixed vs. variable. Mr. Caffrey suggested the aides be moved into the bar with the teachers. Ms. Ringel stated that she wants to show that when a child leaves the costs don't go down. Ms. Doherty suggested showing the variable costs per student.
- Ms. Ringel stated that this is a good draft but further discussion is needed to determine what data we need and what we are trying to explain. Mr. Caffrey stated that we should see what the chart tells us, not make the data fit an explanation.
- Ms. Spriggs stated that when we put the data out we need to make notations that we are presenting it differently than how the Department of Education calculates it. Ms. Spriggs suggested sending the Committee the chart with the key so they can provide input and then bring it back for further discussion.

## 6. **Special Items/New Business**

### ***Policy Recommendation on Classroom Aide Ratios***

- Ms. Spriggs distributed Dr. Reinemann's memo to the Committee.
- Ms. Ringel asked for the rationale for 1 aide for 2 classes vs. 1 for 3. Dr. Reinemann responded that it provides about 3 hours a day in the classroom based on the time in class.
- Ms. Doherty stated that not long ago we didn't have any aides, they were brought in due to the swell in enrollment. Ms. Spriggs responded that some was part of the swell, and then more were brought in for RTI.
- Mr. Johnson stated that we should vote on a policy before the budget is final, if pressured we would have to provide the rationale for the ratios. Instead of documenting where we are we should put the rationale behind it, and then we could have a basis to defend budget assumptions and make it a policy.
- Ms. Fattore stated that this may not be a pupil ratio, but a classroom ratio. Ms. Doherty stated that in the presentations that have been made at the last two meetings, the aide is part of the cost of rolling out the differentiated learning programs.
- Ms. Spriggs will bring the rationale to next month's meeting.

## 7. **Future Business**

February Dover School Committee Agenda Items:

- Extra Compensatory Requests, Rationale for 1:2 Teacher's Assistants, Cognite Pilot, Grade 3 Presentation, Scores before vs. after on measurable outcomes.

- A parent proposal had been made for a survey about how things are going at Chickering. Dr. Reinemann responded that Administration ran one a few years ago. Ms. Ringel asked if it would be useful to do it every five years. Ms. Fattore reported that it was previously conducted through SAC and changes were identified and incorporated to the SIP. Ms. Doherty stated that the suggestion can be brought to SAC at their next meeting.
- Ms. Doherty stated that she received e-mail about Mrs. Pappas's work on the choral program. Parents are asking if stipends are considered in recognition of a teacher's work so they are recognized like a classroom teacher is. Ms. Spriggs spoke of the difficulty introducing this through the merit pay program. Mr. Johnson spoke of the looking at it when the MOU changes are made. Ms. Spriggs recognized the staff and teachers that are here tonight and the impact of what they do. Ms. Ringel spoke about responding to the e-mails that parents have sent and providing information about the extra compensatory discussion.

**8. Routine Business**

- a) Enrollments as of January 1, 2012—reports included in packet.

**9. Adjournment**—Ms. Ringel requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. Johnson motioned, Ms. Doherty seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:59pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Deb Savastano