

APPROVED 10/1/2013

Dover Sherborn Regional School Committee

Meeting Minutes of September 18, 2013

Sherborn Sandwich Company

Members present: Richard Robinson, Michael Lee, Dana White, Lauren Balk

The meeting was called to order at 9:18 AM. Discussion ensued about the challenges in measuring excellence and progress towards it in a high-performing school system such as ours.

Salient points made included:

- there is an important distinction between measuring inputs (eg, dollars spent, teacher credentials) and measuring outputs (eg, test scores, student and parent satisfaction)
- aspects of system excellence not captured by the metrics of Boston Magazine might include the level of stress, and student ability to manage it; healthy behaviors (for instance as delineated in the Metro West Health Survey); development of critical thinking; development of divergent thinking; broad engagement in a variety of extracurricular activities; high performance in subjects beyond those measured by current standardized testing.
- a comprehensive and meaningful list (which the above is not) would need feedback from multiple constituents
- the value of different aspects of an excellent system will differ among constituents
- student and alumni feedback may be a valuable source of data

Members agreed to investigate different aspects of this issue, including how one or more private schools in the area track their own pursuit of excellence; how Tripod develops meaningful surveys for obtaining student input; thoughts from key regional administrators; and the methodology of US News in their rankings.

The meeting adjourned at 10:40.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Robinson