

A workshop session of the Dover School Board was called to order by Chairperson Marjorie Fisher on Monday, August 27, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. in Dover Middle School Library.

A. ROLL CALL: Present were, Marjorie Fisher, Dorothea Hooper, Audra Lurvey, Carolyn Mebert, Beth Setear, Brandon Foye, and Doris Grady.

Also present was Superintendent John O'Connor, Larry DeYoung, Patrick Boodey, Chris George, Dustin Gray, Barbara Szabunka, Sandie Crosson, and Jean Briggs

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Beth Setear led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C: CITIZENS' FORUM: No one addressed the Board.

D: SCHOOL BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT GOALS:

Dr. O'Connor asked administrators to inform School Board of their top 2-3 focus goals for the 2007-2008 school year. He talked about the district goals and how goals should all correlate to the district goals. Chairperson Fisher expressed concern about having the administrative team state their goals rather than having administrators respond to the School Board goals. Mrs. Grady expressed similar concern. After Dr. O'Connor said that he was relatively sure that once the administrators stated their goals, the School Board would see how they fit into School Board goals, the School Board agreed to the format for the meeting.

Dr. O'Connor also stated that the School Board could also go back and re-align what Superintendent, administrators and teachers are doing to meet the goals.

Dr. O'Connor distributed Administrator's Goals to all School Board members to review. Chris George discussed Dover High School goals for the school year. He was concerned with "biting off more than they can chew". He and the DHS faculty need to report changes brought forth by the NEASC committee within 2 years. This includes expanding rubrics, providing a more effective scheduling system, having an advisory program for every student, number of credits needed to graduate from DHS. The School Board discussed Block scheduling, which was brought up by Mr. George and the reasons that it hasn't been implemented. Block scheduling was originally discussed in 1996 Dorothea Hooper asked why many of these items weren't listed as his goals. Mr. George responded that Dr. O'Connor was looking for more measurable goals. Ms. Hooper questioned why the process tends to take such a long period of time.

Jim Amara, CTC Director, discussed his goals including, integration of more rigor in curriculum, offer certificates of achievement for students, new technology, digital portfolios, require presentations of upper class students with integration.

Larry DeYoung, Principal of DMS, stressed improvement of writing, reading, and math skills. Trying to improve in special education math scores. Mr. DeYoung spoke about reinforcing best practices, delivering curriculum with new technology such as smart boards, etc. Sandie Crosson talked about the use of the common assessment to raise scores. Ms. Fisher asked why we

haven't been doing this in the past to improve scores. Ms. Crosson stated that we will use common assessment as a benchmark and revise IEPS and matrices as needed. Mrs. Grady asked if the program was not successful before. Jean Briggs said that Tufts/Lesley programs had done a good job, but NECAP uses a prompt and the students aren't as well trained in prompts. The teachers are beginning to use prompts in their teaching. There will be several given to students in grades 4 and 7 this year. The teachers will also be trained in evaluation of prompts.

Prompts vs. Processed writing: Most people need both in life.

Dr. O'Connor questioned what do we do when we have the data? How do we use it in a meaningful way? One of the hardest things to accomplish is to have classroom teachers review data and use the information for more effective teaching.

Mrs. Grady asked how long it takes for teachers to get results from tests. Dr. O'Connor responded that it is immediate for tests and quizzes, NWEA scores are available within 24 hours for preliminary data and 72 hours for a complete printout.

Mrs. Grady noted that it is tough for teachers to teach to all levels. Dr. O'Connor responded that most new teachers are well trained in differentiated instruction.

Mr. DeYoung stated that DMS would be doing a better job using NWEA scores to evaluate students and create plans. He and the Deans will be checking plan books and finding opportunities to re-teach information that has been missed.

Dustin Gray is making writing a focus also. He hopes to raise NECAP writing scores also. Garrison will be doing more quick prompts. Garrison teachers will be staggering subject instruction times.

Barbara Szabunka is implementing a new writing curriculum at Horne Street School. Six writing prompts will be used to ensure they are making adequate progress. Mrs. Grady asked if we are giving the entire PALS. The full battery is being given. Emphasize reading skills through use of NWEA and NECAP results.

Mrs. Grady asked if the elementary schools considered restarting non-readers at grade 4 if they are not able to read by grade 3. Many don't reach maturity until grade 4.

Ms. Hooper asked Sandie Crosson if students are being taken out of math classes. Ms. Crosson responded that they are being taken out of reading classes. We don't have the resources for supplemental reading instruction. Ms. Crosson would like to schedule based on the individual student.

Patrick Boodey would like to increase reading and math levels at WPS. He will also be doing writing prompts at WPS this year.

Ms. Crosson would like to collaborate with principals to make sure sped students aren't missing important information. She would like to help all teachers access data. She also hopes to collaborate with community agencies.

Ms. Briggs read her goals into the record:

- Oversee the Language Arts curriculum adoption process, implementation and evaluation.
- To immerse myself in new demands of curriculum position, emphasizing accountability, curriculum, alignment and classroom observation.
- To enhance my capacity to use technology as a tool to monitor student achievement and program effectiveness.

Dr. O'Connor was asked about preliminary AYP results. His first reaction was that we might be DINI in reading and math. However, we are not on the list for DINI. With all groups combined, we are in a better situation. Ms. Briggs said that DINI members really stepped up as leaders in their schools. More information will be given on AYP when results are made public.

Dr. O'Connor stated some other goal items for the district:

- ◆ Follow up on the NEASC process
- ◆ Look at the CTC twenty-year agreement. Do we wait or continue? We need to look at the course of study and make changes that are relevant.
- ◆ We need to redesign the web page for the district.
- ◆ Add data analysis to classrooms, grades, schools, etc
- ◆ Edline implementation
- ◆ Full Day Kindergarten
- ◆ 3 reading pilot programs-will be expensive curriculum.
 - Program selected needs to be supported by teachers
 - Incentives by program
 - Make sure we're using it
- ◆ Mentor new administrators
- ◆ Achievement gap-sped and socio-economic-we are not achieving as well as possible.
- ◆ Want to be on DINI

Priorities of the School Board for Dr. O'Connor:

- ◆ The physical infrastructure is in need of attention
- ◆ Question manner in which budget will be generated next year-Ms. Hooper would like the School Board to take a strong position regarding the budget
- ◆ Improve superintendent visibility in schools
- ◆ Dr. Mebert suggested we drop NWEA and try to make tests in house-Dr. O'Connor didn't feel that would be feasible. We don't have resources to make the same type of tests.

Mrs. Grady stated that the School Board keeps hearing the same words: NWEA, “No Child Left Behind”, NECAP. NWEA testing was supposed to be the best thing ever. Now we find that kids are being missed. We are forced to teach to the tests. Teaching should be more centered toward students. Mrs. Grady is frustrated for educators of Dover. Students can never reach the top level of tests. The levels are raised.

Dr. Mebert was a member of the DINI monitoring team. She never saw the team look at data. She is not sure that the \$30,000 expenditure for NWEA is needed. Dr. O’Connor offered to possibly start looking at lower cost alternatives. NECAP data is difficult to use for individual students because the data is too old. Teachers don’t feel comfortable with data. They are reluctant to have their names associated with scores, because they have thought in the past that scores of their students were used as an evaluative tool for teachers. Statistically, teachers have an extremely bright class every 7 years. Results change from year to year.

Dr. O’Connor asked if this meeting to discuss goals was beneficial. Should the same format be used next year? There was a mixed reaction from the School Board.

E. ADJOURNMENT: At 8:20 p.m., Audra Lurvey moved, Beth Setear seconded, to adjourn to Workshop Session. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

Respectfully submitted,

BRANDON FOYE, SECRETARY
Dover School Board
BF/ral
August 29, 2007