



DOVER SCHOOL DISTRICT

DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers
Meeting Date:	Monday, May 18, 2009
Meeting Time:	6:30 pm

A workshop session of the Dover School Board was called to order by Chairperson Marjorie Fisher on Monday, May 18, 2009 at 6:35 p.m. in City Council Chambers

A. ROLL CALL: Present were Marjorie Fisher, Dorothea Hooper, Audra Lurvey, Beth Setear, Carolyn Mebert, and Doris Grady. Absent was Britt Ulinski Schuman.

Also present were Superintendent John O’Connor; Principals Deborah Migneault and Larry DeYoung; Director of Pupil Personnel Services, Sandra Crosson; Middle School Dean, Christine Boston; and Middle School SPED Coordinator, Sherrie Sheehan.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Doris Grady led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

D. DOVER HIGH SCHOOL & DOVER MIDDLE SCHOOL - SCHOOL YEAR 2009-2010 SCHEDULES:

DOVER HIGH SCHOOL: Deborah Migneault presented information on Block Scheduling at Dover High School. She clarified that every teacher would teach three periods each day with one 90 minute planning period. That provides 4-1/2 hours of academics per day for each student, meeting the state standards. In response to a question from Ms. Grady, Ms. Migneault stated that each student has 4 periods per day, every day, with no study halls. The following information was contained in Ms. Migneault’s presentation:

Block Scheduling:

- 90 minutes per block, 4 blocks per day
- Y = all year (1 credit – every other day or 2 credits – every day)
- S = ½ year (1 credit – 90 days)
- Q = ¼ year (½ credit - 45 days)
- Some courses (AP’s and Biology) run ¾ year for 1 ½ credit

Sample Block:

Semester 1	Semester 2
Block 1 7:40-9:15 (includes an extra 5 minutes for morning announcements)	SAME
Block 2 9:20 – 10:50	SAME
Block 3 10:55 – 12:55 (includes 25 minute lunches)	SAME
Block 4 1:00 – 2:30	SAME

Passing Time = 5 minutes

Block 3 Lunches:

Lunch 1	10:55 – 11:20		11:25 – 12:55
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**DOVER SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

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	25 minute lunch		90 minute class
Lunch 2	10:55 – 11:25 30 minute class	11:25 – 11:50 25 minute lunch	11:55 – 12:55 60 minute class
Lunch 3	10:55 – 11:55 60 minute class	11:55 – 12:20 25 minute lunch	12:25 – 12:55 30 minute class
Lunch 4	10:55 – 12:25 90 minute class		12:30 – 12:55 25 minute lunch

Ms. Migneault then provided samples of teacher and student schedules, and then reviewed the administration’s goals for block scheduling: Ms. Migneault noted students will be able to accumulate up to 8 credits per year taking 4 classes per semester – with a maximum of 5 if taking an A/B class.

Block Scheduling Goals:

Increased Academic Opportunities

- ◆ Students will earn more credits in the course of the year
- ◆ Students will have a greater chance to take internships and college courses

Personalization

- ◆ Students will spend more time with their teachers
- ◆ Longer instructional periods will enable teachers to differentiate instruction more effectively to respond to individual learning needs and strengths

Improved School Climate

- ◆ Study halls will be eliminated
- ◆ When students are in school they will be in class
- ◆ Decreases transition time both in class and between classes (Decreases “housekeeping” tasks from 7 to 4 times a day)
- ◆ Decreased student and teacher loads
- ◆ Fresh start at midpoint of year

Multiple Instructional Strategies

- ◆ May foster interdisciplinary planning
- ◆ Teachers will have more time to do project-based instruction, role playing simulations, Socratic seminars and other techniques that involve students as active participants in the learning process resulting in more in-depth study and exploratory experiences.

Ms. Migneault summed up by stating, “We really spent time on that last piece because that will be extremely important under the block scheduling...to engage students throughout the block. If it’s all lecture format, it will be boring. Teachers know that and teachers don’t try to lecture the whole time under the block. The other thing we need to keep in mind is the increase in graduation requirements over the next four years. We did talk about that differentiated diploma that students can work for, so we’ll be coming back to you on those proposals as well.”



**DOVER SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

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Ms. Hooper stated, “I know you’ve done a lot of professional development and I know you have more planned. It is going to all hinge on the teachers. I think you’re going to find out very quickly that their survival in the classroom is going to depend on how much they can differentiate because you find that out by day two. If you don’t keep them engaged and interested, it’s going to be a terrible situation. I think our teachers will make it work. Our teachers work very hard all the time.”

Ms. Grady added, “I know it’s an experiment so it’s difficult to express too many opinions. I’m looking at staff members being tied up for four and a half hours and I’m looking at the students coming in and having a 25 minute break for lunch, all day long. For the above average student, it will be no problem. I’m anxious to see through the year what happens to the middle or the average student. And I’m anxious to see what happens to students who have A.D.D. and A.D.H.D. and who have emotional problems, to sit still for five and a half hours a day with no study hall, no break. I think that might be something you might want to watch. It looks more difficult for kids here than it does for staff.” Ms. Migneault noted, “Research has shown that even with the A.D.D. student, the less transitions that occur is healthier for the student. They can stay focused on the assignment at hand. I don’t want students to sit there for 90 minutes each class and only moving when the bell rings.. Teachers know this. That should not be happening under the block schedule. Students should be up-and-about, in their classrooms, working in different groups, getting things, putting things on the board, interactive white board...there should be a lot of activity. Hopefully, we don’t see students just sitting there for 90 minutes because that would be a very long day for them. Sitting and looking at a teacher means somebody’s in the front of the room. They may be sitting in their group to work, but they’ve moved and rearranged their furniture, getting their supplies, doing what they need to do to get that activity going.” Ms. Grady agreed, “It certainly can’t be lecturing for 90 minutes. I think that’s going to be difficult for staff who’s not used to working there for 90 minutes and making it exciting for kids.”

Ms. Grady asked, “At the last meeting I mentioned, does this mean that a student has those 4 classes every day, everybody’s going to give them homework and then they’re going home for another two or three hours?” Ms. Migneault explained, “If you have only four classes, and some of that is wellness, you may not have as much homework in a wellness class or in band than you would have going home with an English novel and read 30 pages. So, hopefully, it will spread out over the week. It’s won’t be all in one day that everything is given. Most of the time in the block, it’s more project-based so there’s more time to get the activity completed. I don’t think they’ll be overloaded.”

Ms. Hooper added, “At the curriculum committee meeting, I suggested that you might want to have some of the high school teachers meet with some of the elementary school teachers because elementary school teachers do this all the time...Did that ever happen? Did your teachers ever meet with the elementary school teachers to get some of these tips? They’re a wonderful resource right here in our district. They’re used to differentiation. They have to do it.” Ms. Migneault stated many of the teachers may have been in the elementary schools but she did not know if they had actual formal days spent at the elementary level. Teachers have visited block scheduling schools to observe classes and talk to teachers, noting it is an excellent resource to get together with teachers who do this every day.



DOVER SCHOOL DISTRICT

DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
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Ms. Fisher asked, “What happens with the lunch period. If all the teachers have a 90 minute block, who’s down in the lunch area with the kids? How will that work now?” Ms. Migneault noted that will be an issue. There are only a few teachers who could not match up a quarter-block who will be available, but there will be some blocks that do not have coverage. Administrators will be in the lunchroom and they may have to hire some lunch monitors to help out. Dr. O’Connor clarified that teachers have both a 90 minute planning period and a 30 minute lunch period.

DOVER MIDDLE SCHOOL: Principal DeYoung pointed out that the Next Step Learning period has been added to grade 5 through 8 schedules at Dover Middle School. He then presented the following information to the Board:

“Attached are the Master Schedules for Dover Middle School 2009-2010 school year. Please note that instructional time equals 1,026 hours (360 min – 18 min[passing time] = 342 min x 180 days = 61,560 min divided by 60 min = 1026 hours). The equivalent number of hours of instruction described in Ed 401.03 (b) is 945 hours of instruction for elementary schools and 990 hours of instruction for middle and high schools each year. Non-instructional time includes home room periods, passing time, and meals.

The Next Step Learning period is a school wide intervention system. Through the training by WestEd we are ensuring that Dover Middle School has an effective intervention program to serve all students to accelerate their learning on a daily basis.

Teachers are being trained and have created essential standards and benchmark assessments in Language Arts. I have scheduled a daily intervention class (NSL) during the school day and a weekly collaboration time for teachers to plan reteach/enrichment lessons (one period a week during Team Time). Teachers will collaboratively plan five lessons for intervention classes for students at all performance levels. Using formative assessments, teachers will regroup in the grade level by teams based on the formative assessment results; students will attend intervention classes at a specific performance level on a specific standard for a set number of days.

This summer, Language Arts teachers will create a pacing and assessment calendar. In September we will use the Next Step Learning period to develop a NECAP testing culture by grouping students by their NECAP scores and in small groups work on test practice, test prep, and test taking strategies. Using resources from the Department of Ed., content library from performance pathways, and KAMICO instructional media, lessons will be created to support positive outcomes on the NECAP test. After the test window, we will have data from Language Arts formative assessments, to begin reteach and enrichment where students receive specific feedback on their formative assessment and learn how to improve their mastery of a specific standard taught in the regular class the previous week.”

Dover Middle School
5th and 6th Grade
2009-2010 Schedules

5 th Grade		6 th Grade
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DOVER SCHOOL DISTRICT

DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
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Meeting Date:	Monday, May 18, 2009
Meeting Time:	6:30 pm

7:40-9:10 (90 min) Literacy Block		7:40-8:30 (50 min) Math/Science/S.S./RA
9:10-10:00 (50 min) Math/Science/S.S./RA		8:30-9:00 (30 min) Next Step Learning
10:00-10:50 (50 min) Math/Science/S.S./RA		9:00-10:30 (90 min) Literacy Block
10:50-11:20 (30 min) Lunch 5 th Grade		10:30-11:20 (50 min) Math/Science/S.S./RA
11:25 -11:55 (30 min) Next Step Learning		11:20-12:10 (50 min) Math/Science/S.S./RA
11:55-12:45 (50 min) Math/Science/S.S./RA		12:10-12:40 (30 min) Lunch 6 th Grade
12:45-1:30 (45 min) Team Time		12:40-1:30 (50 min) Team Time
1:30-2:20 (50 min) Math/Science/S.S./RA		1:30-2:20 (50 min) Math/Science/S.S./RA

Principal Deyoung discussed the following items in the 5th and 6th grade schedule:

“With the 90 minute literacy block, we are doing it at the same time for each grade level so that we can use our resources within the building. i.e., the special ed teachers, the reading teachers, and other support staff to do in the literacy block, as the teachers are working on doing...Dover Scoring Readers, part of that is guided reading and small group discussion,. The resources that we have to make a large class of 24-25 into smaller classes during part of that literacy block.

Also you see there is a 30 minute lunch; the Next Step Learning for 5th and 6th grade will run 30 minutes and team time is a period that has been in existence since the middle school philosophy has been in place, in particular when the new middle school opened up. Team time is where band and chorus takes place; in which different types of instruction take place; and where students do home work or independent reading. Every teacher has a planning period each day when home room students are in related arts (PE, art, music and two classes of wellness for 5th grade and two classes of study skills for 6th grade with a flip-flop, wellness and study skills, halfway through the year.)”

Ms. Grady asked for Principal DeYoung to explain what Next Step Learning meant. He answered, “Next Step Learning through our professional development with WestEd, we are tying that into our SINI and DINI plan to offer all students the opportunity to learn in depth the essential standards. What the teachers have been doing through the professional development (one example is in the packet), core teachers have been trained to develop essential standards. These are the standards they get tested on the NECAP test. As we look through the essential standard, you will see that they’ve got a lot of work with the ‘I cans’, the big ideas, and the concepts, Blooms technology, and so forth. Then there is a formative assessment on that essential standard. The formative assessment will give us data on the students who have shown mastery of that standard or students who need to be grouped to be –re-taught, or a group that needs to be enriched. What’s nice about these formative assessments that are being created is that how a student



DOVER SCHOOL DISTRICT

DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

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answers the question, whether it's right or wrong, give information to the teachers. With the help of our reading teachers and the language arts teachers, we can take the data and be able to make small groups. That period is the same time of day again so we can use all of our resources in the building to help small groups of students for that reteach or enrich during the next step learning for all students."

Ms. Grady asked for clarification – next step learning is for reading. Mr. DeYoung stated that was correct. Ms. Grady noted she was under the impression it was for math. Mr. DeYoung stated, "For this year, we're going to focus on reading because it does take a little time to understand how to create the formative assessments and to use that data. We hope to do, in two years from now, is do both reading and math. In the cover letter I sent you, the first part of the year, we are going to have a NECAP culture where students will stay in their homerooms and work on preparing for the NECAP test, practice test, looking at practice tests that have been released from our state and other states. After that, start on doing the formative assessments in reading." Ms. Grady asked if those assessments would be similar to those provided in the Board packet. Mr. DeYoung stated that was correct. Ms. Grady added, "I have to admit, I started taking that and I couldn't do it. So, I'm looking at youngsters who are in the eighth grade, who have reading ability of grades four and five, and I'm going to spend time on this, I would hope it would go back to the NECAPS and you would break down the weak areas, and group your children according to the weak areas if that's going to be a remedial...so that they start to grow in what their weak area are that they're not passing. We've already had four years of a school in need of improvement. Number five, I think the staff and everybody has to remember, if we don't make it this year, then we're going to have some state people step in. That's not going to be as much under our control as it is right now. I think the staff, administration, families, parents, everybody's got to pitch in in this instance because we're in trouble and a failure if we don't make it this year."

Mr. DeYoung then moved on to the 7th and 8th grade schedule:

Dover Middle School
7th and 8th Grade
2009-2010 Schedules

	7 th Grade			8 th Grade		
White	Green	Gold		White	Green	Gold
Related Arts Period 1 7:40-8:30 (50 min)	Period 1 7:40-8:35 (55 min)	Period 1 7:40-8:35 (55 min)		Period 1 7:40-8:35 (55 min)	Period 1 7:40-8:35 (55 min)	Period 1 7:40-8:35 (55 min)
Period 2 8:30-9:25 (55 min)	Related Arts Period 2 8:35-9:25 (50 min)	Period 2 8:35-9:30 (55 min)		Period 2 8:35-9:30 (55 min)	Period 2 8:35-9:30 (55 min)	Period 2 8:35-9:30 (55 min)
Period 3 9:25-10:20	Period 3 9:25-10:20	Related Arts		Period 3 9:30-10:30	Period 3 9:30-10:30	Period 3 9:30-10:30



DOVER SCHOOL DISTRICT

DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

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 Meeting Time: **6:30 pm**

(55 min)	(55 min)	9:30-10:20 (50 min)		(60 Min)	(60 Min)	(60 Min)
Period 4 Lunch 10:20-10:50 (30 min)	Period 4 Lunch 10:20-10:50 (30 min)	Period 4 Lunch 10:20-10:50 (30 min)		Related Arts Period 4 10:30-11:20 (50 min)	Period 4 10:30-11:25 (55 min)	Period 4 10:30-11:25 (55 min)
Period 5 Next Step Learning 10:55-11:25 (30 min)	Period 5 Next Step Learning 10:55-11:25 (30 min)	Period 5 Next Step Learning 10:55-11:25 (30 min)		Period 5 Lunch 11:25-11:55	Period 5 Lunch 11:25-11:55	Period 5 Lunch 11:25-11:55
Period 6 11:25-12:25 (60 Min)	Period 6 11:25-12:25 (60 Min)	Period 6 11:25-12:25 (60 Min)		Period 6 11:55-12:55 (60 Min)	Related Arts Period 6 11:55-12:45 (50 min)	Period 6 Next Step Learning 12:00-12:45 (45 Min)
Period 7 12:25-1:30 (55 min)	Period 7 12:25-1:30 (55 min)	Period 7 12:25-1:30 (55 min)		Period 7 Next Step Learning 1:00-1:30 (30 min)	Period 7 Next Step Learning 12:45-1:30 (45 Min)	Related Arts Period 7 12:45-1:30 (45 Min)
Period 8 Team Time 1:30-2:20 (50 min)	Period 8 Team Time 1:30-2:20 (50 min)	Period 8 Team Time 1:30-2:20 (50 min)		Period 8 Team Time 1:30-2:20 (50 min)	Period 8 Team Time 1:30-2:20 (50 min)	Period 8 Team Time 1:30-2:20 (50 min)

Principal Deyoung discussed the following items in the 7th and 8th grade schedule:
 “The 7th and 8th schedule is similar except there is no 90 minute literacy block. All periods were lengthened to 52 or 53 minutes (with 3 minute passing time per period). Currently we have 50 minute periods... They also have a Next Step Learning period and team time.”

Principal Deyoung added that two years down the road, he will bring to the Board a proposal to move band and chorus to after school and removing team time to have even longer classes for 7th and 8th grade. That would involve bringing back the late buses at an expense of approximately \$36,000. It would also involve adding a .5 FTE related art teacher. That proposal will be brought to the Board in “a couple of years.” He added that there is also discussion about adding special ed staff to the school. That would allow two teams of 5 for 7th and 8th grade, with each team having a special ed teacher.

Ms. Grady asked why Mr. Deyoung was referencing ED 401.03 and a number of minutes of instructional time when the Dover Schools use calendar days. Dr. O’Connor explained Mr. DeYoung’s reference to



**DOVER SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
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ED 400 rules (gave school districts the opportunity to look at either the number of days or the total number of hours) was to show that regardless of which system our District followed, days or hours, that the middle school schedule is meeting, if not exceeding the total number of hours allocated for middle schools.

Ms. Grady then asked whether 18 minutes of passing time is included on the schedule. Mr. DeYoung stated that was correct. The classes showing 55 minutes would actually be 52 minutes in length. Ms. Grady also stated, “On team time and next step learning, I certainly would want to see a breakdown of actually what skills you’re going to work with, how you’re going to assign them to staff, and unless everybody’s using team time, and I don’t believe they are right now, unless everybody is, I think we have to find another solution for team time. And then you made the comment, ‘if we had band after school, it would create an extra cost as far as the bus and a teacher to cover planning periods for the related arts people.’ I think we’re getting more money from the feds, Title I monies, and maybe if we sat down we could figure out a way for us to compensate for those two things with our money – to study to see if that’s possible – so that team time could come in with actual learning time. Maybe you need that 50 minutes for reading, and that next step learning time for math skills. Our kids seem to make it right up to fourth grade. They’re not gaining skills from 5th to 8th. So we’ve got to find out why and – to me, I’m looking at this and it looks very similar to what, for four years I’ve asked to see change. I don’t see it changing that much here.”

Dr. O’Connor cautioned Title and IDEA funds cannot be used to supplant educational programs or personnel with these funds. Ms. Grady clarified her intent: “If these additional monies are coming in and this is going to be considered a Title I school, and we’re going to get the federal money, I know there are strings tied to it, but if we could improve our program so that our kids grow and the bus and the teacher could somehow come out of our budget, that way the special ed monies can cover some of the things that we would have had to cover that will still follow the federal rules. I believe that can happen.” Dr. O’Connor stated, “Again, there are very clear restrictions on how. By taking existing money and reallocating it into something new, does not necessarily qualify for the of these funds. We then can’t take those funds and basically cover the expenses of things that we were already paying. That is supplanting. That is not allowed. On the point where we hope to reinstate Dover Middle School as a Title I school, means there will be funds available to the school...unfortunately, we cannot spend a penny of that until the State Department of Education signs off on a plan that will be presented to them. We anticipate, based on the best case scenario, that will not happen until mid- to late October, if not later. We have to submit documentation to the state with a Title I plan. That will not be signed off until October or later. We can’t spend a dime until we do that at the middle school. To think about making some of these changes by August 25th when the students arrive is not necessarily going to happen this year.”

Ms. Grady summed up: “What I see here tonight, is a very slight variation from what I’ve seen for four years when I’ve asked us to reach the state standards in our middle school. If anybody can sit down and prove to me that it’s going to be different, I’m interested in our kids making the grade come next year. I don’t want to see the state have to come in every month and tell us what we have to do and what we can’t do. And I don’t think the staff wants that either. I think as soon as the staff is made aware we have a



**DOVER SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers
Meeting Date:	Monday, May 18, 2009
Meeting Time:	6:30 pm

problem and it's going to take the staff to correct that problem or we're going to be in a failing school area. I don't want to be there."

Mr. DeYoung added, "One of the things we're currently doing also with our Special Ed is that, for some students, they're receiving more intensive interventions during team time or for some, during related arts. We used to service students with more intensive interventions during social studies and science, which we cannot do per the state's requirements."

Ms. Grady spoke: "We need to service 1000 kids in that building exactly the same way as we do special ed so that the other kids have the same opportunities as the special ed or the kids on the top who are extremely high. Everybody at this point in that middle school needs attention. Whether they're on the top and you let them fly with their wings, or whether it's on the bottom and we have a lot of help for them; part of the reason is right now, are those kids in the middle deserve part of that team time, part of the work on the skills that they're not making it on, as well as the others and I think that has to be part of the program. That's what I've asked for for a long time and I don't see it happening."

Superintendent O'Connor stated, "The vast majority of our students at Dover Middle School are performing at or slightly above state average. With one exception, that has been for a number of years now, the cohort of children, primarily those with special needs, who have been underperforming, not just in comparison to other students in our district, but in comparison to other special education students across the state. That's the group that we are working with. That is the group that has caused the district to undergo this Focused Monitoring process that includes the teaching staff, special education staff, the administrative staff in the district."

Ms. Setear stated, "I would like to applaud the middle school for taking a systematic and organized approach to intervention. What we do know is that as educators we are working really hard – special educators work really hard – they intervene with students – but never before have districts begun to look at it in a very systematic and organized way. I do think we will see improved results with our special ed kids, but also with our kids who can move from proficient to proficient with distinction under this model. So, I am glad to see – even though it's only 30 minutes and maybe you consider grabbing some team time next year to make it 45, at least to see that 30 minute block in 5th and 6th grade and then 40 minutes in 7th and 8th to try to

Ms. Fisher asked for clarification on one item concerning the number of minutes for each period. She asked if the passing time (3 minutes) was included in the times shown on the schedule. Ms. Boston explained that first period is 50 minutes. Second period and beyond are actually 52 minutes, not the 55 shown on the schedule. The 55 minutes includes the passing time.

Ms. Fisher then asked for a definition of Team time. Ms. Boston explained it is a block of time in the day when band and chorus are held in 7th and 8th grade. The identified population also use this time for a bit of "pull-out" instruction or time to work on specific skills tied to their IEP. Ms. Fisher asked, "What happens to the child who is not special ed and is not the "high end" child. What happens to those children during team time?" Ms. Boston explained, "If they're not involved in band or chorus, they do individual



**DOVER SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

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Meeting Date:	Monday, May 18, 2009
Meeting Time:	6:30 pm

or guided reading, they're also doing some grouping on long-term team projects"...and their homeroom oversees this work. She added, when you remove the band, chorus, and identified students from a given block, there are about 12 to 15 students left in the classroom. She added, "Kids tend to move between homeroom and their teams. If my child has a question on math, he might go to the math classroom to work with that math teacher during team time. They tend to break off into groups depending on what they need to accomplish during that block."

Ms. Grady asked, "If I walked in at 8th period during team time, and I visited all your classrooms during team time, how many study halls would I run into?" Ms. Boston stated you might run into one that looks like a study hall.

Dover Middle School Special Education Coordinator, Sherrie Sheehan, provided an example of how intervention worked well for an unidentified fifth grade student who was reading 2-1/2 grades behind. The student worked with his classroom teacher and has improved to within 1 grade level over a 6 week period and continues to improve.

E. ADJOURNMENT: At 7:38 p.m., Audra Lurvey moved, Carolyn Mebert seconded, to adjourn. An oral **VOTE PASSED 6/0.**

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Setear, Secretary