



**DOVER SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

## DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting  
Meeting Location: City Council Chambers  
Meeting Date: **Monday, December 14, 2009**  
Meeting Time: **7:00 pm**

Chairperson Marjorie Fisher called a meeting of the Dover School Board to order on Monday, December 14, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

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

Also present were; Superintendent John O'Connor; Business Administrator, Laurie Verville; Jean Briggs-Badger, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; Woodman Park School Principal, Patrick Boodey; Horne Street School Principal, Malcolm Forsman; Dover Middle School Co-Principal, Christine Boston; Dover High School Principal, Deborah Migneault; Dean of Instruction, James Dupille; Director of the CTC, James Amara; Dover DTU President, Deb Hackett, Robert McCrory and Ken Appel, School Board Electees; Dean Trefethen, City Councilor; Kim Stephens, Dover High School Dean; and Leslie Modica, *Fosters*.

**B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Audra Lurvey led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**C. CITIZENS' FORUM:** City Councilor, Dean Trefethen, presented Board members with Administrative Code 3-71, Joint Fiscal Committee (JFC), with proposed changes made by Councilor Weston and himself. Mr. Trefethen indicated his intent to place the item on the City Council's January meeting. He then reviewed the major changes being proposed including: the inclusion of all elected members of the School Board and City Council on the JFC; First meeting to be called to discuss annual budget on prior to February 15<sup>th</sup>; Second regular meeting to be called to discuss general fund budget prior to May 15<sup>th</sup>; Third meeting called to discuss the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) prior to November 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Trefethen then asked Board members to review the proposal and call or email him to express any concerns.

**D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Audra Lurvey moved, Carolyn Mebert seconded, to approve the following minutes:

- a. **NONPUBLIC SESSION #29, November 9, 2009 (Personnel & Contracts)**
- b. **REGULAR SESSION #11, November 9, 2009**
- c. **JOINT SCHOOL BOARD SESSION, November 30, 2009**

An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

**E. CONSENT AGENDA:** Audra Lurvey moved, Carolyn Mebert seconded, to approve the consent agenda:

1. **Correspondence:**
  - a. **Quest Martial Arts Academy letter dated November 23, 2009 re: Request for Waiver of Rental Time**
2. **Resignations/Retirements: None.**



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3. **Leaves of Absence: None**
4. **Nominations:**  
**Sheet 1: Nomination and Election of Aides (Finley to Tenuta)**  
**Sheet 2: Nomination and Election of Extra Curricular Staff (Lawrence)**
5. **Extended Travel (Student Trips):**
  - a. **Puerto Rico Island Experience, Winter Break, February 18 to 27, 2010, Preliminary Approval**

Doris Grady requested item 5.a. Puerto Rico Island Experience - February 18 to 27, 2010, be pulled from the consent agenda for discussion.

Chairperson Fisher asked for a vote of approval on the consent agenda without item 5.a., Puerto Rico Island Experience - February 18 to 27, 2010. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0**.

Ms. Grady expressed concerns that the final approval information is not in the hands of the Board and they are being asked to vote. Her main concern was where the document stated, "Upon receipt all monies will be used as payment toward expenses for the Puerto Rico Island Experiential Learning expedition and are therefore nonrefundable."

Mr. Dupille explained all money being collected is being held by Dover High School until the School Board gives their final approval. The Board's preliminary approval will simply allow them to collect the money.

Dorothea Hooper moved, Audra Lurvey seconded, to accept item 5.a. of the consent agenda. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0**.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. O'Connor reported on the following items:

- Concerns with the dates presented by Councilor Trefethen in the revised JFC Administrative Code. He indicated the February and May dates are "way too late" to meet the Board's statutory requirements, including the law requiring the Board to notify teachers by the Friday following the second Tuesday in May" of non renewal. These concerns have been discussed with Councilor Trefethen and will be further addressed by the Superintendent.
- Thank you to Richard Barrett for maintenance of the Dover Middle School memorial to teachers, past, present, and future.
- UNICCO continues to disinfect bathrooms and locker rooms nightly. They have also installed sanitizers throughout all of the schools.
- Thank you UNICCO for averting a dangerous situation a week or so ago. The Custodians at Dover Middle School, ever vigilant, noticed a stranger lurking on the property and notified police.
- Dave Tromba is reviewing the *ONE* program for possible benefits to the District and its students.



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- Monday's Snow Emergency Call Summary: Total calls placed from 5:24 am = 3300; Number of messages delivered = 3220; Message errors = 80 (most were due to incorrect numbers in MMS that are being corrected). Parents who do NOT want to be called on snow cancellation days should contact their school. However, they need to know, if they remove themselves from snow closings, they will not be notified by phone in ANY emergency situation.
- Principals provided updates on past and upcoming events at their schools.

Audra Lurvey moved, Carolyn Mebert seconded, to accept the Superintendent's report. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

**G. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT:** Student representative, Olivia Loos, addressed the following:

- Block scheduling problems have all been worked out and she has heard no additional complaints.
- The recent EDLINE crash was very hard on the students. Many lost coursework that was being stored on line. However, new activation codes have been distributed for reactivation of student accounts and it seems to be fixed.
- Student Council adopted a family for the holidays and is donating over \$200 collected. Basketball Team also adopted a family for the holidays and is donating \$350.
- On a recent Friday, UNH Students set up a salad bar in the cafeteria. The students loved it and would like to have it come back!

### H. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

#### **1. Presentation of the Seacoast Firefighter and EMT Curriculum, Dorothea Hooper reporting:** Ms. Hooper gave the following report:

"On December 3<sup>rd</sup> I attended a presentation of the proposed Seacoast Firefighter and EMT curriculum. The presentation was made by Mr. James Amara, Director of the CTC Center to a group representing the fire departments of Dover, Barrington, Somersworth and Rochester. The proposal is for a two year program for juniors and seniors, a 90 hour bloc in the junior year and 180 hours for seniors. This would result in a firefighter/EMT certification. The curriculum would include fire prevention, fire and arson investigation, fire inspection, airport rescue, incident command and related careers in fire fighting.

Students would be eligible for 9 college credits (6 in fire and 3 in EMT) at participating community colleges. The James Bartlett curriculum would be used. The Dover fire department would allow the use of the Liberty North End Fire Station and surrounding communities have agreed to donate equipment for training.

The professional fire fighters around the table at this presentation were hugely enthusiastic about this proposal as there is currently a strong need for firefighters and EMT's. Neighboring towns with volunteer fire departments see such a program as a real plus to the area.



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Mr. Amara will be bringing his proposal to the board for approval in January or February. This appears to be a program that would be eligible for a variety of grants. There is such an interest in surrounding communities that they all have agreed to help. It seems to be a win/win for the Seacoast Area.”

**2. Curriculum Planning Council, Dorothea Hooper Reporting:** Ms. Hooper gave the following report:

“The curriculum Planning Council met December 3<sup>rd</sup> chaired by Mrs. Paula Glynn, Title I Program Manager. The presentation was focused on the Dover’s Growing Readers (DGR) program. A three page summary of what would be included in the DGR Grade Level Binders included a table of contents, a history of why we developed our own home-grown reading program, and a literary philosophy statement K-12.

The DGR presentation included videos, grade-level binders, essential standards, scope and sequence, an instructional calendar, and focus lessons. In addition, professional development opportunities and materials for both elementary and middle school were discussed.

Also presented to the committee was a packet that laid out a multi-tiered intervention plan for Dover’s Growing Readers. This was an overall plan to target children with reading difficulties.

The last document distributed was a revised calendar of Task Force Reports to the Curriculum Planning Committee through May of 2010. The next meeting will be January 7, 2010.”

**3. Professional Development Committee, Dorothea Hooper Reporting:** Ms. Hooper gave the following report:

” There was a meeting of the Professional Development Committee Nov. 18<sup>th</sup> at the SAU office chaired by Ms. Jean Briggs-Badger.

The committee began with a discussion of “Accommodation for Success” the professional development plan for the Special Education staff in 2009-2010. Beginning with the summer workshops on speech, language, and co-teaching, Ms. Sandy Crosson discussed the various presentations for the year focusing on writing measurable IEP goals, diagnostic reading assessment, curriculum based measurement, SPED law, assessment for intervention and mental health. Professional presenters will be working in small groups and coaching SPED teachers and will be paid by federal funds.

As a result of a needs assessment survey to staff, it was determined that faculty has 6 top professional development needs which are:

1. content area instructional strategies
2. engaging students strategies
3. interdisciplinary collegial sharing
4. children’s mental health issues
5. targeted and intensive intervention



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### 6. classroom management

An agenda was distributed for the Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> early release day at Garrison which will focus on focus lessons.

The March 19<sup>th</sup> Teacher Workshop Day topics were outlined. Joe Sassone will be the keynote speaker. His address will be followed by 3 sessions from which teachers may pick their area of interest. These sessions will include:

1. common formative assessment ---presenter Nick Hardy
2. performance tracker ---presenter Paula Churchill
3. choosing and using specific intervention programs ---presenter Melissa Farrell
4. DGR –focus lesson writing
5. strategies for teaching the English language learner
6. improving student writing across the curriculum ---presenter Fred Wolff
7. understanding NECAP questions ---presenter Deb Farrington

Our next meeting will be Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>.”

### **4. Joint Building Committee, Doris Grady Reporting:** Ms. Grady gave the following report:

“A meeting of about three hours was held at the SAU office on Thursday, December 10<sup>th</sup> to discuss the closing issues of the Woodman Park project and the beginning of the Horne Street Project. Whereas the project is considering the possibility of this being an energy saving project, much time has been spent on the building being CHIPS certified while at the same time listened to Clay Mitchell present his program relative to sustainable energy sources.

Discussions included the project scope including windows, roof, the Storm Drain Prevention Plan, and the contract of the present contractor. The committee was given the findings of the architect on the CHIPS program for everyone to study and make a determination as to whether or not the cost would be permissible in the program.

In addition, the Conservation Committee had many concerns about which decisions will have to be made. Just one more attempt to try to take care of the brook problem that has been addressed over and over again through the years – study after study after study at a major cost to the City.

All said and done, things are progressing and our next meeting will be held January 7, 2010. Hopefully, we will move on.”

### **I. POLICY CHANGES –None.**

### **J. POLICY ADOPTIONS:**

#### **a. POLICY EHAA – SCHOOLNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY:**

Ms. Fisher read a portion of the policy into the record. Ms. Grady asked Dr. O’Connor to review the final changes made to the policy.



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After the review, Audra Lurvey moved, Carolyn Mebert seconded, to adopt the policy in its second reading. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0**.

**K. SUBMISSION AND PAYMENT OF BILLS:** Audra Lurvey moved, Carolyn Mebert seconded, to direct the Business Manager to pay manifest #10-F in the amount of \$4,901,794.91. A roll call **VOTE PASSED 7/0**.

**L. RESOLUTIONS:** Resolutions of Appreciation - Departing School Board Members.

**a. Audra Lurvey read a Resolution of Appreciation for departing School Board member Dorothea Hooper into the record:**

### RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION

**RE:** Dorothea Hooper

**WHEREAS** Dorothea Hooper has served the children of Dover and has represented the citizens of Ward 4 for the past eight years, and

**WHEREAS** she has also served one year on the School Board as its Chairperson and

**WHEREAS** she has also served on the following committees: Joint Fiscal Committee, Curriculum Planning Committee, Dover Teachers' Union Negotiation Committee, Health, Wellness, and Nutrition Task Force, Professional Development Master Plan Committee, Curriculum Planning Committee, Dover Educational Office Personnel Negotiation Committee, Dover High School 2010 Committee, Dover Administrative Association Negotiation Committee, and the Standards Policy Review Committee, Nottingham Contract Negotiation Team, Student Discipline Committee, Program Evaluation Review Committee, Dover Paraprofessional Negotiations Committee, Dover Education Improvement Program, and

**WHEREAS** her unselfish efforts and commitment to educational excellence have contributed to the enhancement of the Dover School District,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Dover School Board that it go on record as thanking Dorothea Hooper for her many hours of dedicated service to the children of Dover, the Dover School District, and the citizens of the Garrison City;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that on behalf of the people of Dover, the School Board hereby presents to Dorothea Hooper a small token of thanks and appreciation for her dedicated service to the city.



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**b. Beth Setear read a Resolution of Appreciation for departing School Board member Britt Ulinski Schuman into the record:**

### **RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION**

**WHEREAS** Britt Ulinski Schuman has served the children of Dover and has represented the citizens of Ward 2 for the past two years, and

**WHEREAS** she provided valuable assistance in her participation on the Joint Fiscal Committee, and

**WHEREAS** her unselfish efforts and commitment to educational excellence have contributed to the enhancement of the Dover School District,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Dover School Board that it go on record as thanking Britt Ulinski Schuman for her many hours of dedicated service to the children of Dover, the Dover School District, and the citizens of the Garrison City;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that on behalf of the people of Dover, the School Board hereby presents to Britt Ulinski Schuman a small token of thanks and appreciation for her dedicated service to the city.

**c. Doris Grady read a Resolution of Appreciation for departing School Board member Marjorie Fisher:**

### **RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION**

**RE:** Marjorie Fisher

**WHEREAS** Marjorie Fisher has served the children of Dover and has represented the citizens of Ward 6 for twelve years, and

**WHEREAS** she has also served the School Board as its Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary for six of those years, and

**WHEREAS** she has also served on the following standing committees: Joint Fiscal Committee, Dover Teachers' Union Negotiating Committee, Dover Paraprofessional Union Negotiating Committee, Joint Building Committee, Dover Educational Office Personnel Negotiating Committee, Future Needs Committee, Dover Adult Learning Center, Recognition Committee, Special Education Advisory Committee, Technology Committee, Alternative School Study Committee, Student Discipline Committee, Transportation Committee, Horne



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Street School Enrollment Issues Committee, Policy Manual Review Committee, and

**WHEREAS** her unselfish efforts and commitment to educational excellence have contributed to the enhancement of the Dover School District,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Dover School Board that it go on record as thanking Marjorie Fisher for her many hours of dedicated service to the children of Dover, the Dover School District, and the citizens of the Garrison City;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that on behalf of the people of Dover, the School Board hereby presents to Marjorie Fisher a small token of thanks and appreciation for her dedicated service to the city.

Ms. Grady then asked to read the following statement:

“At the end of a long period of service to the children of the City of Dover for two of our Board Members, Marjorie Fisher and Dot Hooper, I would like to take time to thank them for their exceptional devotion to the Dover School District and, the students in particular, who have always been the main focus of their service. This has been both a pleasant and exciting educational experience working with the both of you.

Many times we were not in agreement but developed and maintained an understanding of one another’s thoughts and decisions and respected one another throughout all of these years. It is this cooperative effort that I believe has been the success of this Board.

Each of you brought a special form of expertise to this Board. Margie, your counseling, special education knowledge, and your general knowledge of the school system and the City were areas where we looked to you for guidance.

Dot, it seemed that your interest was so high in the general knowledge of curriculum that our children had access to that you were on every committee and followed up on the progress that everyone was making – both the students and the staff. You are an experienced educator and carried that knowledge to each and every one of us. This contribution was invaluable to the other members sitting on the Board with you.

Oftentimes, one volunteers their time and effort without adequate recognition of the superior value of citizens like you, who devote their time to such an important goal. I can assure you that both of you WILL be remembered for a long, long time. Your contributions took this system through many tough decisions and, yes, through some exciting decisions.

The introduction of kindergarten, its increase from half-day to full-day; additions to Horne, Woodman, Garrison, and the high school; the building of a new middle school; changes in our total curriculum; the advancement of our Career Tech program in order to provide our students with careers pertinent to the present needs of the community; NJROTC; contract negotiations;



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and school district boundary changes – just to name a few, are examples of your accomplishments. Some were exciting to do while others were controversial, but the Board always came through with that quality of accomplishment and agreement among us.

We, the Board, wish to thank you for all of your contributions, your successes, your service, and most of all, for just giving of yourself. Thank you both so much for just being you.

Britt – you have been with us such a short time and I must say, you will be remembered as developing into a superior representative of this body in this very short time. Your contribution to each of us has been like a member with many years of experience. You are aware that I told you how disappointed I was that you chose not to join us another term as you possess the superior quality of a seasoned and experienced member. Your integrity and honesty certainly will be missed.

It was not too many years ago that our paths crossed in grade seven and, who would have thought we would be sitting here at the same table making educational decisions for other students? This was really a joy to me that no one else here could have experienced.

Hopefully you will consider, at another time, to serve once more and the children of this city will benefit from your experience. Again, I have to say, I am sorry you chose not to join us and must tell you that the new Board will many times refer to your name. Thank you so much on behalf of the students of this city for your service to them. We will be watching for the day you are leading the Boston Marathon. I know you will make it!"

### **M. OLD BUSINESS:**

**1. APPROVE DRAFT 2010-2011 SCHOOL CALENDAR::** Dr. O'Connor advised the error found during the last meeting had been corrected (March 31<sup>st</sup> added to calendar). Ms. Grady questioned whether the calendar should be left for review and approval by the incoming Board. Dr. O'Connor stated the calendar is always approved by December to meet the Union requirement to provide eight months notice to teachers, and because parents are looking for the information now to plan vacations. He also noted the calendar being presented had been discussed with the Dover Teacher Union President who agreed to the start and end dates.

Audra Lurvey moved, Carolyn Mebert seconded, to approve the Draft 2010-2011 School Calendar in its second reading. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0**.

**2. REVISED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) FOR THE HUB FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER:** Laurie Verville, Business Administrator, advised the title MOU has been revised to read, Fiscal Services Agreement. She referred to Page 2 of the agreement - section IV, which requires HUB to maintain a line of credit. HUB has procured a line of credit with a local bank. Ms. Verville asked the Board to approve the new Fiscal Services Agreement between the Dover School District and the HUB.



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Ms. Fisher asked how many employees were on the payroll. Ms. Verville stated there were between 22 and 32 checks cut per pay period. Ms. Fisher asked why HUB does not do handle their own finances. Ms. Verville explained that maintaining their association with the District, the HUB is able to use our Tax ID # and save on other services (like insurance). They also reimburse the District for other items.

Audra Lurvey moved, Carolyn Mebert seconded, to approve the Financial Services Agreement between the Dover School District and HUB. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0**.

(It was noted by Ms. Grady that the signatures of HUB Board members were illegible. Ms. Verville stated she would get a list of the members to provide to the Board.)

**3. APPROVAL FOR THREE PERCEPTION SURVEYS IN JANUARY – MARCH 2010:** Jean Briggs-Badger explained she had researched the Board's question regarding the availability of data from the contractor, Education for the Future (EFF). The response from Bradley Geise, author of the Perception Surveys was, "for this year, we are able to get our data from EFF in raw form or any form we request."

Ms. Briggs-Badger requested the Board approve her request to conduct the three perception surveys in January through March 2010.

Audra Lurvey moved, Carolyn Mebert seconded, to approve the request to conduct the three perception surveys in the Dover School District during January to March 2010. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0**.

**4. ACCEPT BUS DONATION FROM FEDERAL SAVINGS BANK FOR BUILDING TRADES:** Dr. O'Connor referred to School Board policy that addresses acceptance of donations, noting that under Advertising in the Schools #2, it says, "The schools may accept and use educational materials, supplies, and equipment which bear only simple mention of the producing or sponsoring business. In instances where the Superintendent questions the appropriateness of such acceptance or use, the materials, supplies, or equipment may be declined, or the matter may be referred to the School Board." Dr. O'Connor also noted that this would be a substantial donation, a bus, from one of the local banks. They have asked that a small sign be attached to the bus that indicates they are the donator of that particular piece of equipment. Dr. O'Connor asked CTC Director, Jim Amara, what size advertisement the bank was requesting. Mr. Amara stated it would be whatever size the Board designated it to be. He stated it could be as small as 3" X 5" to 2' X 1' sign, tastefully done with the Federal Savings Bank logo and a little mention of the donation to the Dover Trades Department.

Ms. Hooper noted more and more schools are now dealing with this situation and more and more of them are caving into advertising. The north end fire station is furnished by McIntosh donations. Private individuals have donated to the CTC Center without asking for any kind of recognition. She stated she was surprised that a local business supported by the community would make this a condition of a donation. Mr. Amara stated that it was not a condition of the donation, but they just asked the question. He continued, "As I told Dr. O'Connor, we could put



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in on the inside of the bus, too. From my point of view, I think it's important that the kids see where some of this comes from as well. One of the prime objectives of the CTC is to get community involvement; community donations. When they do step up to the plate, it is good to recognize them in some particular fashion."

Ms. Fisher asked, "When we approve or not approve this, do we give you any directions for the size of the sign?" Dr. O'Connor stated that could be part of the motion...to accept with a limit on the size of the sign or the location.

Dr. Mebert stated, "I think that it should be visible...in part because I think this is actually a good signal to the community that community businesses are contributing to our school activities; a very worthwhile activity of our students. So, it might even provide incentive for others to donate to do the same the same thing. Therefore, I think it should be a clearly identifiable size sign."

Beth Setear added, "Can we leave it to you, Jim, to develop something that is tasteful and not encompassing the whole bus?" Mr. Amara indicated yes, and assured that it will be tastefully done.

Dr. O'Connor cautioned, "I just think it important that we reflect on the past...It was about 6 or 8 years ago that we solicited from local businesses and on our baseball field during baseball season had signage. Companies bought a plywood sign and they were put all around. It raised money and it basically paid for the baseball program. However, there was a lot of community feedback about that advertising in the schools, and the following season, the Board did not allow advertising, nor has it allowed advertising in the past; to the point where the Board has spent probably an hour or two in discussion at least over the last ten years on scoreboard signs that are donated - Pepsi, Coke?...It is an issue that I know Boards have dealt with in the past. Clearly, this is a little different. This is a vehicle – it is an expensive piece of equipment that's being donated, but you just have to make sure that somewhere down the road, there may not be other groups that donate that will want recognition as well."

Ms. Setear asked if it would be possible for the Board to say 'yes' to this particular signage for this particular piece of equipment, but indicate it is not at all precedent setting. Dr. O'Connor noted the Board can say whatever they want on this issue.

Ms. Lurvey stated, "I was here when we had the scoreboard discussion as well, and I feel that in a lot of ways, that was pre-tax cap; and I think as we go forward, we're going to have to come up with some more creative ways of funding large ticket items. I don't have a problem having a tasteful sign on a bus that we can't afford to buy at this time."

Ms. Hooper added, "Then I really think we need to revisit our policy. I don't have a problem with what anybody's saying. I just think that we need to stay within our policy limitations. So maybe you need to revisit that and see."

Britt Ulinski Schuman stated "I thought the policy was clear enough that it referred to the School Board. That indicates to me that it's a case-by-case basis. That if it doesn't adhere to the policy,



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it can be referred to the School Board and then it's up to the School Board to make a decision. So I don't think it's anything that sets a precedent so that now everything's approved. I think it's case-by-case."

Ms. Fisher asked, "Can we approve it with the idea that the sign will be brought back to us for our approval before it's put on the bus?" Dr. O'Connor reiterated, "An artist's rendition of the sign, dimensions and so forth? Sure."

Chairperson Fisher asked if the Board was unanimous in that decision. There were no objections – all members of the Board were in agreement with Ms. Fisher's suggestion. Mr. Amara will bring the plans back to the Board for final approval as soon as he can.

**5. FRESHMAN ACADEMY UPDATE:** Dean Kimberly Stephens provided an update on the effectiveness of the Freshman Academy from 2000-2001 through 2009-2010 to date. Her presentation follows:

You will leave knowing...

1. A decade worth of student outcomes during the 9<sup>th</sup> grade transition
2. A sample of student perceptions regarding their 1<sup>st</sup> year of high school
3. More about the events that make up the 9<sup>th</sup> grade transition
4. The role of Dover High School's Freshman Academy

In 2000-2001, the essential question was, what steps might the high school take to increase grade 9 promotions?

**Freshman Decade Data**

		<i>TRUE</i>	<i>Academy</i>
<i>Year</i>	<i>enrollment</i>	<i>Freshmen</i>	<i>Promotion rate</i>
<i>2000-01</i>	499	unknown	
<i>2001-02</i>	474	70	85.2%
<i>2002-03</i> <i>100 pupil pilot</i>	453	68	85.0%
<i>2003-04</i> <i>full enrollment</i>	506	55	89.1%
<i>2004-05</i>	483	58	88.0%
<i>2005-06</i>	477	11	97.7%
<i>2006-07</i>	500	75	85.0%
<i>2007-08</i>	440	51	88.4%
<i>2008-09</i>	442	52	88.2%



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2009-10	425	TBD	TBD
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## Bench Marking Our Progress

2003-04

89.1% Dover High School Freshmen Promotion Rate  
US Freshman Graduation Rate Range 57.4% - 87.6%

2005-06

97% Dover High School Freshmen Promotion Rate  
US Freshmen Graduation Rate range 55.6% - 87.5%

2005 Small Learning Community Cohort Study & short-term trends report realistic 9th to 10th grade expectations are typically 85%  
DHS Freshmen Academy Promotional Average\*  
89.4%

*Dover District MMS database, SchoolDataDirect, and National Center for Educational Statistics*

## The 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Experience at a Glance

- Transition Events
- Guided Adult Interaction
- Guided Peer Interaction
- Planning Strategies
- Involvement
- Personal Recognition
- Academic Assistance

Specific activities include:

- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Information Night, Course Information Night
- High School Counselor visit, Career Technical Center Tour, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Visit to the High School
- Freshman Summer Camp (2008), Freshman Orientation, Team Building with Team Teachers, Additional Help from Teacher(s), Proximity of Classes to Locker
- Working with Ms. Phoenix, Wildcat Youth Mentors, Guidance Presentations
- Student Tour Guides/Ambassadors, Student Mentors, Student Tutors
- Team Goal Setting, Guidance 4-year Planning, Club, Sport, Library Mathematics & English Center, Add/Drop/Transfer of Class/Team

## Student Perception

Sample Break Out:

Adult Interaction rated 3 or higher in value on a scale of 0-5.



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### Team Building

*(last four years beginning with seniors)*

20%,42%,30%,35%

Additional help sessions

45%,53%,48%,48%

Proximity of classes

30%,43%,60%,53%

Guidance presentation in the Classroom

53%,45%,40%,50%

*Student Perception Survey administered 12/3/2009 also available upon request*

### **Key Pieces of the Freshman Puzzle**

- Familiar middle school model
- Improved communication from sending schools
- Early identification of at-risk behaviors
- Yearlong intervention planning
- Common planning time
- Proximity of classes

Ms. Grady noted she had concerns with the student perceptions. She read from the last page: "Adult interaction is rated 3 out of a 0-5 scale. That's only average. The one that really bothers me is the guidance presentation in the classroom. You can look at 40% - that means 60% were not happy with the guidance presentation in the classroom. Their perception of the program may be something you might want to work on. I think those scores are low when you look at variances. As they say, from the mouths of babes often comes the truth. It would be something that I might investigate in that program."

Dr. Mebert agreed with Ms. Grady on that. She asked Ms. Stephens to define the 0-5 scale used in the survey. Ms. Stephens stated there was an "N/A" option and then the 3 was fair/average up to 5 being an excellent experience.

Ms. Grady added she felt it was a good idea that Ms. Stephens had conducted the perception survey to get the student's reaction to the program and maybe a committee of the kids and adults can sit down and talk about what they can do to improve things.

Dr. Mebert asked if the perception survey was given as part of the student behavior survey. Ms. Stephens stated it was a separate survey but was given at the same time because students were already taken out of class for the behavior survey. Dr. Mebert noted, "Using the Behavior Survey, you can look at those school climate questions that are in there and see how those correspond to the ones you reported here, since they're asking slightly different questions."

### **N. NEW BUSINESS:**



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**1. DIFFERENTIATED DIPLOMAS (EFFECTIVE CLASS OF 2010-2011):** Principal Migneault reminded Board members that on December 8, 2008, the Board approved the Dover High School Program of Studies that introduced a multi-tiered diploma system. The multi-tiered system will support our students in their academic endeavors as well as their personal goals. The basic diploma allows students to graduate with the minimum state requirements of 20 credits. Struggling students will apply for the basic diploma in their junior year, indicating the struggles that swerve as impediments to graduation. The majority of Dover High School seniors will earn the credits required for the standard diploma. The criteria for the diploma with distinction was not determined and, therefore, not included in the approval process last year.

The administration at Dover High School proposed the following criteria for discussion and Board approval.

### **Proposed Differentiated Diplomas (effective Class of 2010-2011)**

- Basic Diploma 20 credits  
State minimum requirements (through an application process to administration with the recommendation of their counselor and/or case manager.)
- Standard Diploma  
Credit requirements 26 credits (2013)
- Diploma with Distinction  
In order to merit a Diploma with Distinction, students must:
  - A. exceed standard credit requirements by 2 or more credits
  - B. earn a 3.3 cumulative GPA or above (calculated Senior Year at the end of Semester 1)
  - C. earn no grade below a “C” or NECAP Proficiency in Writing, Reading and Math

Dr. Mebert stated, “I just find it a little odd that proficient is associated with a diploma of distinction. Proficient is proficient; it’s not distinguished. I would be more comfortable with having the 4<sup>th</sup> category associated with it – just level 4, in all three areas. I hope that students are proficient by the time they get out of school, no matter what kind of diploma they’re getting. But if they’re getting this diploma with distinction, I really think it should be *distinct*.”

Ms. Grady asked, “Has this been run by the student council or the student rep yet so that we don’t have their opinion before we’re called upon to...” Ms. Migneault stated it was not yet reviewed by the students and explained: “Just with what we had discussed last year, talking about the diploma with distinction but not the final criteria. We wanted to come back with some ideas.” Ms. Grady questioned, “28 credits, looking to your block scheduling and the amount of time a student would have to spend to earn those 28 credits...” Ms. Migneault noted students can earn up to 32 credits in their four years. Ms. Grady added, “32 would be without any break in time, pretty much an impossibility?” Ms. Migneault answered, “Well, it’s 4 a semester which I



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would expect every student to take – 4 classes a semester to get the most out of their high school.” Ms. Grady continued, “I do have difficulty with that NECAP proficiency in writing and reading and math. I don’t think anybody in the United States has really agreed to that NECAP result. As I recall in their presentation, they said that they would constantly change the top of proficiency – that it would never be the same and once the child reached proficiency, they were going to change it so they are still reaching. So, I would have difficulty with ....if we have to vote on it tonight, that in itself would prevent me from saying ‘go with it’.

Ms. Setear noted, “Just as a point of clarification, you know under block scheduling, nobody gets study hall any more. So if you pass your classes, you will get 32 credits. You won’t get credit if you *fail* a class.” Ms. Grady commented, “We ask our kids to do that, and everybody who works in our system, and anybody who works out in the field, by law, has to be given 30 minute breaks during the day and sometimes a 15 minute one in between. Yet we’re asking our kids to do something the adults don’t want to do.” Ms. Migneault corrected Ms. Grady, “They do have a lunch; they do transition every 90 minutes.” Ms. Fisher clarified, “The 32 credits is with a lunch period, right?” Ms. Migneault stated it was. Ms. Grady asked, “How long is lunch?” Ms. Migneault stated it was 25 minutes with 5 minutes passing. Ms. Grady noted, “They get no study halls, so all this work is done at home. I just have trouble with the no family time. There isn’t anybody who works in the United States that comes home and does all that homework at night. I just think we’re asking a lot.” Ms. Migneault noted her belief that a lot of people do take things home from work. There was general agreement throughout the room.

Ms. Grady added, “When we did block scheduling it was supposed to be a lot of hands-on; not to be used as a study hall. I’m getting reports that in many classes, yes it is a study hall at the end of the class. I could be wrong. Maybe (the student representative) can clarify it for me.” The student representative explained she does have time in each class to work on homework at the end. If they finish activities early or finish their work early, most teachers allow the time at the end of the class to start homework.

Ms. Hooper noted, “There are a lot of teachers sitting on this Board right now who take home TONS of work outside their job on a daily basis. I think this is a ‘little piece of life.’” She also disagreed with Ms. Grady adding, “I think study halls are the biggest waste of time we ever had in the public schools. I don’t have any problem with this. The only thing that bothers me is the C; The average grade on number three. If you took out that third line there, you might have something that we all have consensus on.”

Ms. Setear stated, “That was my question – whether or not administrators had considered simply A and B.” Ms. Migneault stated they had. Ms. Setear added, “If we’re looking at diplomas with distinction, what is the percentage of who would actually qualify if we were to apply that (A & B).” Ms. Migneault responded 50 to 100 students would fit in that category. That is 1/3<sup>rd</sup>. “Ms Migneault added, “We looked at 3.5 GPA and that represents about 50 students.”

Ms. Fisher asked, “Would that be the same as the National Honor Society?” Ms. Migneault responded that National Honor Society is 3.2 GPA and the Athlete Scholars’ is 3.33 GPA in



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New Hampshire. Ms. Fisher noted that students on the National Honor Society would be the ones that get diplomas with distinction.

Dr. O'Connor added, "I would advocate leaving in the NECAP on the diploma with distinction. Keep in mind that there are states that require students to pass this test at a proficient level to graduate. We don't do that. I think it's important to our student body and to our community to identify students who *have* achieved distinction at Dover High School, and one of the ways in which they demonstrate that is through the NECAP testing." He added his opinion that he understood the concern about level 3 proficient and it should be at level 4, above proficiency.

Dr. Mebert added, "I think that's what the Deans were speaking about, to get the students to take the NECAP more seriously. It's an important test for the district. If that will contribute..." Dr. O'Connor noted, "That's why I think the proficient is a more attainable target for a lot of industrious students. They may not be the highest performing students, but they can achieve that proficiency level."

A request was made to table the item until the January workshop to allow time for a more in-depth study. Principal Migneault was also asked to bring information to answer the following questions:

- How this is handled in other districts?
- Do colleges view the diplomas differently?
- How many high schools in the area offer differentiated diplomas?

A motion was made and seconded to table the item until the January 25<sup>th</sup> workshop. There was no objection.

**2. NESDEC 2009-10 ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS:** Dr. O'Connor provided Board members copies of the NESDEC 2009-10 Enrollment Projections and presented the following information:

"NESDEC's enrollment projection totals from fall of 2008 came within 1.9% of the actual K-12 enrollment total for fall, 2009 (4110 projected v. 4031 actual). The two factors at work which will have the greatest effect upon most future New Hampshire enrollments are: a decline in the number of births to local residents; and b. the possible resumption of in-migration. The first of these factors is not an issue in Dover...where births have grown. In the decade from 1994-2003, Dover averaged 328 births per year; more recently (and expected over the next 6-7 years) are about 364 – 403 births annually. The ever-changing relationship between Dover births and Kindergarten enrollments is displayed on a graph provided. Over the past decade, Dover has registered about 60 Kindergarteners for every 1000 Dover births (five years previous); in 2009 the ratio rose to 75 for every 100 births.

The K-12 enrollment total grew by 211 pupils over the past ten years; it is forecast to grow by 463 students over the next decade. Enrollment in grades K-4 may increase by 94 over a decade, grades 5-8 may grow by 181 students over a 10-year period; and enrollment may increase by 189 students in the high school...all over the next decade.



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These projections are based on previous patterns. Will these patterns really last for as long as ten years? Probably not. As soon as the economy and real estate situation improve, even stronger in-migration may return to Dover. The moderate decline in building permits appears in the 'Additional Data' chart provided. There is a direct connection in school districts between the number of new families moving into either new or turn-over residences and a rise in school enrollments. Many communities in the area are experiencing only 60-70% as much turnover of real estate as in 2004-2007, yet this pattern will change."

Ms. Grady referred to information contained in the NESDEC report: "On page four, the reliability of the projections. They are telling you right here that one year out is about a 1% variance; two years out, a 2%; you go out to ten years, it's about a 10% variance in the numbers that they come up with throughout those years. I'm wondering if they took into consideration, one of the jumps was the numbers in Barrington and Nottingham. In doing this projection, we don't know what Barrington's going to do...and we don't know what Nottingham's going to do. So to look at those as real figures, and if you turn around and you take 10% of those numbers at the end, you're going to come up with about the same numbers that we have. The very first paragraph says, 'Projections are generally most reliable when they're closest to the time of the current year. Projections six to ten years out may serve as a guide to future enrollment.'"

Dr. Mebert asked if someone from the Planning Board hadn't presented information to the Board about the available land of building land in Dover. Dr. O'Connor agreed that Christopher Parker presented that information a few years back when the Board was looking at kindergarten and enrollments. The Board ended up redistricting with Horne Street School. He added that NESDEC provides the same projection service for those two communities and are well aware of their enrollment projections.

**O. ADJOURNMENT:** Audra Lurvey moved, Carolyn Mebert seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 P.M. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Beth Setear, Secretary  
BS/kgb