



**DOVER SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Special Session #3
Meeting Location:	McConnell Center, Superintendent's Conference Room
Meeting Date:	Thursday, January 31, 2012
Meeting Time:	6:00 P.M.

- A. ROLL CALL:** Present were Rocky D'Andrea, Kathy Baker, Paul Butler, Doris Grady and Ken Appel. Betsey Andrews Parker and Amanda Russell were absent.

Also present were; Superintendent Jean Briggs Badger; Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Director Gary Tirone.

- B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Ms. Baker led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- C. CITIZEN'S FORUM (LIMITED TO AGENDA ITEMS ONLY):** No one addressed the Board.
- D. NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1. Goals and Priority Setting:** Mr. D'Andrea and Ms. Briggs Badger began the meeting with a recap of the last meeting. Ms. Briggs Badger shared her goals with the Board for the 2012-2013 school years:

Personalize learning for all students/continue to streamline all operations for maximum effectiveness and use of resources:

Curriculum/Environment/Technology

- Suggest redesign of DHS for both academic and physical structures (create a DHS Planning Committee to answer the question: "What do we want DHS to look like in 2018?") Also, review the Alternative School Program for efficiencies and enhancements.

Instruction

- Rethink assistance and support in the classroom within the existing resources we have in place to bring coherence to RTI as a model.
- Implement a response to intervention program RTI (ensuring a continuum of interventions and using a sequential approach in assessing responses to intervention).
- Utilize our resources to increase our teachers' professional effectiveness and use of Professional Learning Communities.

Curriculum

- Strengthen transition points such as entering in K, grades 4 to 5, 6 to 7, and 8 to high school by better communication with both staff and students.

Assessment

- Report program effectiveness through evaluation process using multiple data sources. (NECAP, PALS, Benchmark, Numeracy, Common Formative Assessments, Attendance Rates, Graduation Rates, Perception Survey) Bridge assessments between grades 10 to 11 to determine readiness in core content areas.



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Environment

- Heighten emphasis on positive classroom and school wide climate of safety and respect.

Technology

- Utilize ICT (Information, Communication and Technology) standards K – 12 as integrated with our core curriculum as mandated by NHDOE, beginning with K – 4 in 2012 – 13.

CIA Director Gary Tirone talked about plans for Dover High School from last spring for discussion purposes only. They are trying to find a design that will work within the confines of the budget. Once a baseline of structure has been determined, community, teachers and staff will be brought in for feedback.

Mr. Tirone made the comment that, "It's difficult to build the plane while flying", meaning that it's difficult to continue with the scheduling process with budget cuts pending.

He continued to say that once a high school student's competencies are set, look at the student to see what other options are available for the student. The student may have met all requirements by the end of 10th grade and there needs to be other options for early completers. One option would be early graduation, but there could be others. This student may be able to graduate from DHS with an associate's degree from SNHU if they also take college credit classes. Online learning can be used also.

Mrs. Grady asked how the Freshman Academy is different than other grades. Mr. Tirone responded that it is more similar to the middle school experience. There is a team teaching approach and this may make the transition to the high school smoother for some students.

Mrs. Grady stated that this concept has been around for years and maybe hasn't always worked. She continued to say that there has never been a report back on the status of the program.

Mr. Tirone stated that, at times, there can be building limitations and in the new program would continue to sophomore year in a somewhat different form. The building limitations have for the most part, been resolved.

Mrs. Grady stated that she would not support team teaching at the high school unless there is someone there who could ensure that the teams are doing what the objective is. She believes there should a study completed on team teaching and subject teaching.

Mr. D'Andrea stated that the team structure of the middle school has helped his son grow.

Ms. Briggs Badger shared information with the Board regarding positive test scores at Dover Middle School. Scores have grown higher than any community in the state over a 4-year period. This will be discussed more at the February 13 School Board meeting. Ms.



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Briggs Badger attributes this growth to Dover Growing Readers, Next Steps Learning, Corrective Reading, NECAP Prep work and commitment of the teachers.

Mrs. Grady stated that she would like to see a goal set of trying to get older learners to increase their scores also. Test scores of students in grades 8-11 are much lower. Ms. Briggs Badger stated that this is most likely to the disengagement of students in the higher grades. They are not motivated or as competitive as the younger students. There is also a mix of students from Nottingham and Barrington who have not come up through the Dover School System.

Mr. D'Andrea asked what the correlation between the NECAP tests and the SAT/ACT tests since the students care about those tests.

Mr. Tirone commented that many students who would have normally taken the SAT/ACT tests have moved to other schools. He added that this is the second year in a row that a Dover student has been accepted to Harvard.

Mr. Tirone distributed a handout showing comparisons between communities with tax caps. It highlighted the dropout rates, graduation rates, and percentage of graduates attending college. In terms of tax cap communities, Dover is in the upper 3rd.

Mr. Tirone added that as students start to look at choices for other schools, Dover becomes less competitive.

Mr. Tirone finished reviewing the chart he had distributed about the vision of the high school and said that there could end of being several schools within a school, such as the CTC does now. There will be a need to have certain teachers doing different types of teaching making different salaries depending on the job that they are doing. This would be a flexible schedule and could provide large savings.

Dr. Butler noted that some colleges and universities such as MIT, are offering all online classes at no charge. This would not include credits, but would provide learning opportunities.

Mrs. Grady asked how evaluations would take place with these different types of teaching. Mr. Tirone responded that they would occur in pretty much the same way.

Ms. Briggs Badger continued the conversation stating that the district is trying to think outside the box. This financial crisis could help the district to streamline. The district needs to take this opportunity to do something positive.

Mrs. Grady commented that some colleges are complaining because they have to hire additional professors just to teach their students to read and write.

Mr. D'Andrea responded that they are just looking at a future vision.



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Dr. Butler asked what the students in Dover must pay for college credits that they are receiving now. Mr. Tirone responded that the students are paying a much reduced rate of \$75 for a 3 credit SNHU class. This represents a savings of 90%. It could cost a student as little as \$2100 for the first two years of college.

Dr. Butler asked if Dover could get a kickback for bringing students to SNHU. He realizes this may not be possible, but is just looking for ideas.

Mr. Tirone felt that the best way for Dover to increase revenue would be to attract Barrington and Nottingham back to Dover.

Mrs. Grady recalls that schools within schools were done more in the 1970's and will research to see if they were more successful.

Ms. Baker commented that at that time, there wasn't the technology that is available now.

Mrs. Grady asked if there had been a follow up done for students that graduate from Dover High School and drop out of college during their freshman year.

Mr. D'Andrea suggested that they could drop out for several reasons.

Mr. D'Andrea started the process of defining goals as he listed them on a chart. Goals are in bulleted areas.

- Engage Barrington, Nottingham, and possibly Rollinsford in discussions.

Ms. Baker thought that distributing a survey for feedback from parents of students in those communities may be helpful. Mrs. Grady requested adding Dover to the list of survey respondents. Ms. Briggs Badger stated that the Perceptions Survey is completed in the spring by Dover parents and can be amended to include new questions.

Dr. Butler referenced the website schooldigger.com as a resource for looking at school rankings. They rank based on NECAP scores. He also referenced greatschools.org as another resource. These websites compare rankings for area schools in different grades.

Dr. Appel asked how much of a difference would demographics make.

Dr. Butler responded that he agreed that was a good question, but if a person has a good brain, they can learn no matter how poor.

- Look at feasibility of bringing grade 5 back to elementary schools. Restructure to include only grades 6-8 in middle school

The capacity of the buildings would need to be researched. A committee was established and provided a report. This will need to be reviewed to determine a timeline.



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- Measurable data on reading, writing, and mathematics within the schools. Evaluation of curriculum to determine if the money spent was worth it.
- Public speaking added to curriculum. This is a skill that is needed by everyone no matter what their vocation.
- "Try to allow young children to be children again"-integrate physical activity into learning. New type of active curriculum, more playtime, wellness

Dr. Butler referenced an article by Kristen Copeland in the Journal of Pediatrics who wrote a report on the problems of lack of exercise for very young children. The report stated that young children are at their desks 97% of the time. This goes against evolution and human nature.

- Find a way to evaluate teachers in an objective way/Merit pay instituted

Dr. Butler would like to see a test at the beginning of the year and a test at the end to show progress of the students. Ms. Briggs Badger commented that there are ways to evaluate students at the beginning and the end of the year.

Mrs. Grady discussed the current evaluation system and noted language in the current contract that says, "when a supervisor enters the classroom of a teacher engaged in teaching, the teacher shall assume that the supervisor is there for the purpose of evaluation" which was just added.

- Evaluate all 3rd grade students in reading and math. If they are not at grade level, they will receive individualized instruction for needed skills only

Mrs. Grady stated that if this was done, there wouldn't be as many problems in 9th grade Ms. Baker asked if RTI (Response to Intervention) was used on a daily basis for this purpose. Mrs. Grady responded that she would also like a pre and post test.

Ms. Briggs Badger discussed a similar program called "must knows" that occurs even before 3rd grade. Students are tested until they know the skill. Mrs. Grady preferred this program starting until grade 3 since this is when many students mature. She thinks that most students in this program will have caught up by 5th grade.

Dr. Appel asked how many students can be handled in one class. Mrs. Grady thought that 25 or 30 could be managed.

Mrs. Grady stated that there is a possibility that she will put \$3,000 of donated funds for audio equipment since she feels the money could be well spent in this area. Younger



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students ears don't develop and they are not hearing as well as they could be. This is causing some younger students to fail.

At this point, the School Board reviewed the goals listed and made recommendations on how to implement them.

- Meeting with Nottingham and Barrington—Rocky recommended meeting at least 2 times per year
- Possible restructuring of elementary and middle schools—create a committee to research. Mr. D'Andrea thought that Ms. Russell would like to be on the research committee. Mrs. Grady commented that it needs to be a variety of people from the community. Ms. Briggs Badger had chaired the last restructuring committee and at that time, parents did not want to get away from neighborhood schools. Ms. Baker suggested trying to sell the idea fiscally with an emphasis on using our resources. There should be a report by November. Dr. Butler asked how much money restructuring would save. Ms. Briggs Badger stated that it would not necessarily save money, but would save on Title I services, professional development and other related costs. Dr. Appel commented that restructuring may help to even out classes. Ms. Baker added that it may be a way to have consistent class size also. It might be easier to cut classes with a different structure. Mrs. Grady felt that restructuring may help to limit constant redistricting and all schools would be viewed on the same level.
- Measuring data on reading, writing and mathematics—NH State Assessment will be the tool used for measurability. Ms. Briggs Badger stated that the state is looking toward a growth model and the district should probably do the same. Mr. Tirone recommended that the Board might want to target cohort groups. He also noted that there will be significant changes in core standards over the next few years. The intent of the district is to go to competency based K-12. Ms. Briggs Badger stated that it takes time, vigilance, professional development and holding teachers accountable to see a change. She recommended increasing the number of students gaining proficiency by 5%. Another recommendation would be to increase the district schooldigger.com rating from 87 to 100 out of 142.
- Public Speaking—Ms. Briggs Badger recommended starting the implementation of public speaking in the fall of 2012. It can begin with grade 6 the first year, and add grade 7 the next year, and 6, 7, and 8 in the following year. The public speaking should be tied to reading and writing curriculum and there can be an honor associated with it at the end of the year. Mr. Tirone will research the process of implementation. Mrs. Grady also recommended adding a course in life skills at the high school. Ms. Briggs Badger stated that there is a consumer math course at Dover High School.



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- Integration of Physical Activity into Curriculum—Dr. Butler would like to focus on younger students such as kindergarten. For example, hopscotch could be integrated with math. Dr. Butler noted that he will be in favor of reducing full day kindergarten to half day. He would also be in favor of eliminating high school bussing.
- Vehicle to Rate/Evaluate Teachers—Mrs. Baker suggested forming a committee. Ms. Briggs Badger responded that the state has a teacher effectiveness task force with a report on this subject and should be mandated by summer. Mr. Tirone commented that there could be many negatives such as teachers who may not want to have certain difficult students. A skills test was recommended to measure growth of students. Mr. Tirone also stated that requirements for teacher license renewal would be changing to show effectiveness. A master plan will be developed that will correspond with a new evaluation program.
- Evaluate all 3rd Grade Students—This will be known by seeing results. It will be measurable if the program is in place. Achieve success for all students who failed up to that point.

Mr. D'Andrea recommended voting in 3 goals. Ms. Briggs Badger added that they could phase them in so that they do not become overwhelmed

- Research why there is a drop in testing scores in math and reading in grades 8-11

Mr. D'Andrea suggested prioritizing the goals. His top choice would be meeting with Barrington and Nottingham since revenue is involved. Mrs. Grady stated that many of the goals would be implemented by the administrators and that she agreed that one of the highest priorities was to sell our school district by meeting with Nottingham and Barrington. Mr. D'Andrea stated that the deepest goal for him was the evaluation of 3rd grade students.

Ms. Briggs Badger commented that most of the goals listed aligned well with her goals.

Mr. Tirone added that an exemplary RTI program could start at 3rd grade which may help to satisfy that goal.

Mr. D'Andrea suggested writing the goals and vote on them at the February 13th School Board meeting when all members are present.

Ms. Briggs Badger will also align them with the District Action Plan. These will be 2-year goals.

Mrs. Grady read a list of City Councilor Mike Crago's goals and for the most part, align with the goals of Ms. Briggs Badger.



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Rocky D'Andrea moved, Kathy Baker seconded a motion to table the vote until February 13 School Board meeting. An oral **VOTE PASSED 5/0**.

- E. ADJOURNMENT:** Kathy Baker moved, Doris Grady seconded a motion to adjourn the Special Session at 8:08 P.M. An oral **VOTE PASSED 5/0**.

Respectfully submitted,
Rocky D'Andrea, Chairperson
RD/ral