

To: Dover City Council

From: Dorothea Hooper

Re: School Board Report #1

The Dover School Board met February 13, 2012 in regular session.

Citizens Forum: Ann Schultz, DALC board member, spoke in behalf of the program and its contributions to students and community. She read two case studies showing how much DALC classes allowed students to succeed beyond their expectations. She also noted how much DALC does with very little resources.

The second speaker was a mother/school volunteer who noted that teachers were asked to do more and more with less and less. She noted the need for full-day kindergarten especially for at-risk students.

The board voted to accept the negotiated contract with the para-professionals in the district. Stipends at the top were the only increase.

New Business: There was a report on the success of the home-grown literacy program that Dover teachers put together rather than using an expensive commercial product not geared specifically for Dover students. Dover Growing Readers was deemed a success. The board asked for information on the types of assessments being used. NECAP tests, common assessments, and PAL's were among the tools used. The report was followed by a slide show illustrating how to assess student growth.

The Director of Special Education gave a very comprehensive report on programs, resources, professional development and services of that department.

Two Woodman Park staff members explained their plan for creating community partners. You (business or individual) can log on to Supportourschools.org and adopt a school or program. They have already collected \$2,000 in donations and asked for board support for this effort.

Budget Discussion: Board members began to raise questions -----

1. What does the \$9,000 on the PTO's line cover (background checks)
2. What does the \$2300 on a catering line cover (new teacher's breakfast, back to school muffins and coffee, retirement gifts)
3. If you reduced the school year for students to 175 what would the teachers be doing for the other 5 (professional development ----would make workshop and early release days unnecessary and save on substitutes)?
4. Has anyone asked the teachers for some creative ideas on possible cuts?
5. Are we paying retirement costs for coaches (only those on staff)?
6. Could the social studies curriculum be phased in over a two year period as the Math in Focus program was?
7. Why not cut the resource officer at the high school as he is not mandated by the state>
8. Is it fair to charge a fee for the 2nd half of the kindergarten day putting the burden of the budget on only 200 families?

It was obvious that the board was going line by line to try and find some savings they might have missed.

High school staff requested permission to run the behavior survey that has been done annually. A question was raised by a board member as to the changes such a survey has made to the school. The survey does not cost the district. Information is shared (on drugs, alcohol, sex) with the police department for guidance with preventative programs. The board gave its approval.