



**DOVER SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Special Session #13
Meeting Location:	Media Ctr( Rm 306) McConnell Center
Meeting Date:	<b>Monday, August 26, 2013</b>
Meeting Time:	<b>6:30 P.M.</b>

A special session of the Dover School Board was called to order by Chair Rocky D’Andrea on Monday, August 26, 2013 at 6:30 P.M. in Room 305 McConnell Center.

**A. ROLL CALL:** Present were Doris Grady, Amanda Russell, Betsey Andrews Parker, Paul Butler, Kathy Baker, Sarah Greenshields and Rocky D’Andrea.

Also present were; Interim Superintendent Antonio Fernandes; Michael Limanni, WPS Principal Patrick Boodey, CTC Director Louise Paradis, HSS Principal Mike McKenney, GES Principal Beth Dunton, DMS Principal Kim Lyndes, DHS Principal Peter Driscoll, CIA Director Paula Glynn, PPS Director Christine Boston, Athletic Director Peter Wotton, DTZ Manager Jeff White, citizens and members of the DHS Football Coaching Staff.

**B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Sarah Greenshields let the Pledge of Allegiance.

Doris Grady moved, Amanda Russell seconded to bring item F. 3. Interim Superintendent Contract Approval to the beginning of the meeting. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0**.

**F. 3. Interim Superintendent Contract Approval**

Amanda Russell moved, Doris Grady seconded ratifying the Interim Superintendent contract. A roll call **VOTE PASSED 7/0**.

Mr. Fernandes was invited to join the School Board at the Superintendent’s seat.

Mr. Fernandes thanked the Board for his appointment and stated his excitement for his new position. He enjoyed his first day and met many people. His comments included stressing the importance of teamwork and adjusting to change.

**C. CITIZEN’S FORUM (LIMITED TO AGENDA ITEMS ONLY):** No one addressed the Board.

**D. CONSENT AGENDA:**

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**1. Correspondence:** NONE

**2. Resignations/Retirements:**

a. Mary Rice, DHS

**3. Leaves of Absence:** NONE

**4. Nominations:**

Sheet 1: Nomination & Election of Teachers (Calabrese-Walker)

Sheet 2: Nomination & Election of Staff Positions (Binette-Yerardi)

Sheet 3: Nomination & Election of Coaching Positions (Andross)

**5. Extended Travel (Student Trips):** NONE



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Amanda Russell moved, Kathy Baker seconded approving the consent agenda. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

### **E. OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **1. Enrollment Update**

Mr. D’Andrea discussed the high kindergarten enrollment at WPS. He stated that each class is at 25 or more which is above the state requirements. Mr. Boodey has prepared an additional room so there is space if a teacher is added. Mr. D’Andrea continued to say that the school district has been fiscally responsible in the past two years and the district needs to find a way to make it work.

Kathy Baker moved, Doris Grady seconded adding an additional kindergarten teacher for Woodman Park School.

Ms. Baker stated that she would put her faith in the new superintendent to find funding for this position and find savings in other areas.

Ms. Andrews Parker asked if there is a teacher available to start on the first day of school. Mr. Boodey responded that WPS is ready to hire a teacher. All options were investigated before requesting a new teacher. He verified with the Dover Fire Department that the space available complied with all codes and was suitable for a new kindergarten class.

Mr. Boodey commended the WPS staff, DTZ and the other elementary schools for their flexibility and help with this last minute situation. He added that if a child has already met his or her teacher at Camp Explore, that child would not be moved to the new classroom.,

Mr. D’Andrea commended Mr. Boodey for his efforts on this issue.

Mr. Boodey added that with the new classroom, class size would be approximately 22 students per class. Mr. Fernandes stated that it isn’t feasible for students to shift to other schools because the enrollments of the other schools would then exceed the state minimum requirements. He added that the younger grades are most important for low class sizes and supported the decision to add a teacher.

Ms. Andrews Parker reiterated that redistricting should be added to the September Board meeting agenda. She also noted that the new teacher will need to move with the students to the higher grades. She added that there would be a need for at least 4 new teaching positions at Woodman Park School. This will need to be discussed when developing the budget for FY15.

Mrs. Grady stated that she is supportive of hiring the new teacher. Her experience has been that the classes will even themselves out. She thinks there will be a leveling by October 1, when the state reports are due.



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Ms. Russell noted that the numbers will stay consistent, but the population will change at Woodman Park School.

Mr. Boodey agreed adding that the population tends to be somewhat transient and there are more apartment dwellers than home owners.

Mrs. Grady noted that the lack of an Assistant Principal may be a more pressing issue due the state minimum standards. When enrollment in an elementary school increases to more than 500, an assistant principal is generally required. She is concerned about 619 students enrolled at WPS and the October 1 numbers will need to be reviewed carefully.

Mr. Boodey stated that is important, but he is more concerned with the mental and physical needs of the students. He agreed that this topic will need to be addressed when developing the budget.

Ms. Russell asked Mr. Limanni where there may be savings so that a few teacher can be funded. Mr. Limanni responded that there are many items that have not been budgeted and is unsure where the budget stands at this point. This is due to the high employee turnover. Much of the budget savings from turnover has already been calculated within the budget. He is unsure as to where the money will come from at this point.

Mrs. Grady asked Mr. Limanni if there are unencumbered funds from FY13 that will be turned back that could possibly be used.

Mr. Limanni responded that there is still work to be done, but it looks like there will be approximately \$160,000 left. He added that if there is a state requirement for a new position, the District may want to request use of the fund balance from the city council.

Mrs. Grady added that in the past, the School Board has requested additional funds from the City Council and they have granted this.

Ms. Russell commented that a paraprofessional would also be needed for the new kindergarten class increasing the amount of funding needed for this position from \$55,000 to \$75,000.

Kathy Baker moved Doris Grady seconded to amend the motion to include a kindergarten paraprofessional to the original motion to add a kindergarten teacher to WPS. A roll call **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

### **F. NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **1. Football Program Discussion and Vote**



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Dr. Butler stated that he made this motion because by having a football program, Dover would be condoning football and he feels that this isn't a moral stance.

Dr. Butler apologized for bringing this topic up again, but his research has shown that football is more dangerous than other sports because football uses the head as a weapon.

He added that he knows that Mr. Wotton and his staff are trying to teach proper technique but doesn't feel that this is used all of the time. Dr. Butler has seen many recent articles on the topic and even though he played football in high school and college feels he has a personal responsibility to explain this to the public because of his role as a surgeon who treated trauma for many years.

Dr. Butler noted that he has read reports that state that helmets are part of the problem.

When there are a cumulative amount of hits to the head of an athlete, there can be significant damage. Another finding is that some of the biggest hits are not resulting in concussions. It has been recommended that a "hit count" be taken on players.

Dr. Butler added that some players may have different genetic dispositions that protect them from this. There is more research being done on this.

When his children were young, he would have allowed them to play football and thought of a head injury as something similar to a bruise. With more research being done on the subject in recent years, he is more troubled by the issue.

He is concerned that we are putting children in danger. He has no motivation other than to try to make it safer for children.

Dr. Butler added that rules can be changed in other sports to make them safer without ruining the game. He realizes that the benefits from football are strong, but feels that other activities could provide the same benefits.

Mr. D'Andrea commended Dr. Butler for his research and thoughts on the subject even though it's an unpopular topic.

Mrs. Grady referred to an article in the New York Times called, A Simple Device to Detect Concussions by Gretchen Reynolds. She noted that this article came about from a study published recently in The British Journal of Sports Medicine. This study showed how the likelihood of a football player having sustained an on-field concussion can be assessed.

The device was made by attaching a hockey puck to a long wooden dowel and marking centimeters in ink along the length of the dowel. An evaluator would hold the device in front of the athlete who is seated at a table with one arm resting on the surface and his hand at



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the table's edge. The evaluator would align the puck with the bottom of the athlete's hand and let it go. The athlete would catch the falling stick after which the evaluator marks where his hand lands and this would give the coach or trainer a baseline measure of reaction time. If it was thought that a player may have had a concussion, this test would be repeated and if the response time was slower, it would be concluded that he or she was likely to have had a concussion. This cost of this test would be only \$5.00.

It has been found that this dowel-puck system has been a fairly reliable indicator of a concussion.

Mrs. Grady found another article that estimated a huge increase in concussions. There has been an estimated 3.8 million sports related concussions a year. They have doubled in 8-13 year old children and increased over 300% in 14-19 years old. These are only for concussions reported to hospitals. There are at least 40% more that are missed which is at least 280,000. The sports in this study included football, basketball, baseball, soccer, volleyball, cheerleading, lacrosse, and gymnastics.

When Title IX was established, girls were involved in sports more and the number of concussions increased.

68% of children have had at least one concussion by the time they enter hospital,. Mrs. Grady continued to say that she understands Dr. Butler's passion on the subject. He has had the unique position of seeing concussions from the physician's point of view.

She added that this issue isn't just Dover's. It's all over the country and emails have been difficult to answer. Mrs. Grady stated she respected Dr. Butler but isn't at the point where she would support eliminating football. She wants to look at all sports in the future.

Mrs. Baker agreed that she would probably not support eliminating football at this time. She quoted defensive tackle Kevin Vickerson in an article by Lem Barney on ESPN.com. He stated, "They're trying to make the game safer, but it's a gladiators' sport and there's only so much safety you can bring to it."

Ms. Baker added that she received a lot of community input and is concerned with all repetitive injuries where impact isn't known for years. She believes there will be great changes to football in the years to come.

Athletic Director Peter Wotton discussed the packet that is given to athletes. In the packet there is a Fact Sheet for Parents which serves as a guide to concussion in sports.

He also added that the item that Mrs. Grady referred to would most likely be used in districts where there isn't an athletic trainer. He explained the process that the athletic trainer uses when an athlete is suspected of having a concussion. It is a complex process that uses a battery of tests. Mr. Wotton added that there are risks in everything we do and the District



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tries to do as much as possible to make it safer. The helmets are re-conditioned every year even though the requirement is for every two years. People are educated as much as possible about concussions. Much of the contact has been eliminated from practice.

Mr. Wotton stated that Dr. Fred Brennan will be speaking at DHS auditorium from 5:45-6:30 pm on September 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss Sports Concussions.

Mrs. Grady stated that her statistics came directly from CDC and thought there may be some conflict in the statistics provided.

Ms. Greenshields stated that she was an athlete and did not wear a helmet at the beginning of her career, but did toward the end of her career. She stated there was an HBO documentary on the recovery process of someone who had a concussion and would recommend to everyone. She commended Dr. Butler for his research and felt there would be changes in the future.

A citizen in the audience asked if Citizen's Forum could be re-opened since some citizen's just arrived.

Motions were not withdrawn so citizen's forum was not-reopened.

Paul Butler moved, Kathy Baker seconded that the School Board takes steps to disassociate with football in Dover schools. A roll call **VOTE FAILED 1/6 (Grady, Andrews Parker, Greenshields, Russell, Baker, D'Andrea opposed).**

Mr. D'Andrea stated that he is a representative, not a politician. In his vote, he noted the outrage of the community on this subject.

Mrs. Grady moved, Paul Butler seconded to direct the Athletic Director and Trainer to study the feasibility of the use of this discovery in which she referred to earlier, in all sports and report back to the Board at the September Regular Board meeting. An oral **VOTE FAILED 2/5 (Greenshields, Andrews Parker, Russell, D'Andrea, Baker opposed).**

Ms. Russell asked Mr. Wotton if Dover students are being evaluated. Mr. Wotton responded that they are being tested and Dover, as a Division 1 school, has resources such as an athletic trainer that smaller districts do not have. Mr. Wotton added that the athletic trainer stated they have tests that evaluate reaction time. He continued to say that if a student has even a headache after a hit, they are done playing.

Mrs. Grady added that she just wants something to say that the Board is directing the Athletic Director and Trainer to research the evaluation method for all sports she discussed earlier and bring their findings back to the Board.



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Mr. D'Andrea noted that Dover already does more than what Mrs. Grady is asking.in regards to her motion.

Dr. Butler ask how many trainers are in Dover. Mr. Wotton responded that there is one trainer who handles all of the sports on adjacent fields. At away games, the home school's trainer handles the issues. Mr. Wotton added that all coaches are trained as well.

Mrs. Grady reiterated that she just wants some research done that could possibly save someone's life.

Mrs. Baker reiterated that Mr. Wotton has taken steps that are above and beyond what is in the article.

Ms. Andrews Parker feels confident that her son is safe playing football and feels that it is the parent's choice and responsibility when a child plays sports. She agrees that Dover goes above and beyond and the students are well-protected in Dover.

Ms. Greenshields asked Mr. Wotton if they do similar tests as stated in the article. He verified that they do and Dover's systems are more sophisticated that the item highlighted in the article.

### **2. Alternative School Reallocation of Revenue**

Ms. Boston requested that revenue from additional tuition (\$77,000) be reallocated to fund a social work position. Without this reallocation, she would not be able to fund this position which is a needed position for students with behavioral and emotional disabilities. There will be a buffer of at least one student not represented in the revenue calculation if no additional out of district students are added.

Mrs. Grady reviewed the partnership with Strafford Learning Center and stated that for FY13, the program costs almost \$1 million with a maximum of 19 students (12 Dover/7 Tuition). She asked for a quarterly report in May 2012 and noted that \$400,000 is transferred from the general fund to the Alternative program. After a certain amount of time, the program would not need to be subsidized by the general fund. She had difficulty trying to interpret the figures given for this request.

Mrs. Grady continued to say that three students were on 504 plans and at \$32,725 each, the cost was almost \$98,000. They were not moved to an At-risk program as was previously stated.

Ms. Boston responded that at this time, all students in the Alternative Program have IEP's and if there was a 504 student, there would be an outside placement.

Mrs. Grady stated that \$400,000 covers Dover students and if that money isn't there, the students will need to go to outside placement at a higher cost.



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Mrs. Grady would like to see a monthly or quarterly report with complete figures including the cost of Strafford Learning Center.

Ms. Boston responded that she would be able to provide this to which Mr. Fernandes agreed. He added that the counseling services are critical and supported the request of Ms. Boston.

Mr. Limanni added that the Business Office would also be providing financial reports.

Mrs. Grady expressed her appreciation for the financial reports that Mr. Limanni has been providing, commenting that they have been the most helpful of any that she has received in the past.

Ms. Russell summarized Ms. Boston's' request stating that the cost to run the Alternative Program is \$500,000 and the budget is based on receiving tuition from 4 students. However, there are 7 students currently that will be bringing in tuition to the Alternative school, so Ms. Boston is requesting that the revenue from 2 of the students be used to help fund a social worker for the school. This would still leave a cushion of \$38,500. The general fund will not be impacted with this request.

Amanda Russell moved, Kathy Baker seconded to approve the Alternative School reallocation of revenue. A roll call **VOTE PASSED 6/1 (Grady opposed)**.

### **3. Interim Superintendent Contract Approval—Moved up in agenda**

#### **4. Dover Middle School Structural Update**

Mr. Limanni read a statement by Fire Chief Richard Driscoll saying that the two opinions received confirmed that the sloping floors are not structural and there are no further issues with the rooms. The rooms are safe to use.

Ms. Russell asked that the statements be placed on the DMS website.

Mr. D'Andrea thanked Mr. Limanni for obtaining a second opinion.

Mrs. Grady asked how the tiles would be fixed. Mr. White responded that the tiles would be replaced over time and noted there are no foundation or roof issues.

#### **5. Library Book Swap Program**

Mr. Limanni stated that the library books that have been transported to the schools and the Dover Public Library is not able to happen this year since the courier was eliminated from the budget.



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Mr. D’Andrea asked how often the books were transported. It was determined that the books were delivered daily and there were approximately 3,0000 books transported throughout the school year. He noted that perhaps a community volunteer would be able to transport the books.

Ms. Andrews Parker asked why the position was eliminated if there would be this result. Mr. Limanni stated that it is sometimes good to bring up the repercussions of eliminations as they affect students and other community members.

Mr. D’Andrea asked the process for using a volunteer for this. Mr. Limanni responded it would be the same process as for any volunteer including a background check.

### **6. Intern Background Check Fee**

Mr. Boodey addressed the Board and reconfirmed the importance of the courier position. He noted the frustration for everyone on these issues.

He summarized the situation with the UNH interns stating that due to a budget reduction last year, all volunteers and interns are required to pay a \$25.00 fee for their background check. The district uses approximately 20 UNH interns and also provides many programs with no cost to the district. Mr. Boodey continued to say that if we ask the interns to pay the fee, they are paying to work for us. The cost is low for all of the services that we get from the interns. He added that Dover is in competition with other area schools for the interns and they may choose to work for other schools because of the cost.

Mr. Boodey continued to say that the parent groups already pay for many fees and feels that it is wrong for the district not to pay the fee. It is a small amount of money for an important service and something the district doesn’t want to risk losing.

Mr. Boodey added that the District should do the right thing and pay for the fee.

Mrs. Grady stated that it ridiculous for the students to pay UNH tuition and in addition have to pay for their Dover background checks.

Ms. Andrews Parker asked that a campaign be started to raise money for the interns. She offered to write a check for \$25 to cover an intern’s fee.

Mr. D’Andrea commented that this fee will be covered one way or another. There are enough organizations that would be willing to cover these fees and he promised that he would find a way to pay for these fees. Board members

Amanda Russell moved, Doris Grady seconded to approve funding of intern background checks and added encouragement for others to donate money to the cause. A roll call  
**VOTE PASSED 70.**



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### **O. SCHOOL BOARD MATTERS OF INTEREST:**

Mr. D'Andrea discussed the events of Teacher Return Day and commended Mr. Fernandes on his presentation to the teachers and added that he is proud of the teachers and staff for their positivity in spite of financial reductions and other issues.

Mr. D'Andrea commented that change can be a good thing and thanked everyone in the district for their efforts.

### **P. ADJOURNMENT:**

Kathy Baker moved, Doris Grady seconded to adjourn the Special Session at 8:32 p.m. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Betsey Andrews Parker, Secretary  
BAP/ral