

From: Ann Pierson <a.pierson@dover.k12.nh.us>
Sent: Monday, August 31, 2020 8:58 AM
To: Peter Driscoll <p.driscoll@dover.k12.nh.us>
Cc: Linda Madden <l.madden@dover.k12.nh.us>
Subject: resignation
Importance: High

Good Morning Peter,

This is not an easy email for me to write, but it is something I must do. I have been up most of the night contemplating a return to school and have decided to submit my letter of resignation for the following reasons. First, the statistics are clear around COVID-19. I understand there are school protocols in place that will serve to mitigate the spread of this virus. But, as I've said before, mitigation only serves to slow the spread, it does not eliminate it. This means, at some point some people will become ill or worse. Of the people who have died of COVID-19, 80% have been over 65. These odds are not in my favor.

Even with the published statistics I've stated, I do not qualify for the accommodation to work remotely from my home. I am fearful and anxious about going into the building, even though for now it is only staff. As waves of students return to the building, my fear and anxiety will only increase. This will not only negatively impact my health, it will negatively impact my teaching and ultimately my students.

Second, my teaching assignment has once again changed. I am scheduled to teach two sections of pre-Algebra. I am not a math teacher, I am not certified in math, and I do not even like math. As I recall, the collective bargaining agreement the district has with the DTU specifically states a teacher cannot be asked to teach outside of their area of certification. As you know, I am a certified reading and writing specialist whose skill set, as I have discussed with you previously, has been severely underutilized by Dover High School over the past several years. In fact, for the past five years, I have not taught the same class two consecutive years or even any reading class. I venture that few other teachers have been placed in this position.

Third, the move to the 4 x 4 schedule, compounded with my new teaching assignment and increasing case management responsibilities, does not set me or my students up for success. We went down the path of a 4x4 schedule 12 years ago. It didn't work then and it is not going to work now. It does not allow for special ed services. Advisory is not going to remedy that. With 15 students in a 40 minute advisory block, that allows for less than three minutes per student. This is hardly enough time to provide any type of individual support. Further, not all identified students are scheduled in the classes taught by special educators. There will simply not be enough time to provide special education services. I have expressed these concerns to Linda Madden several times over the summer, whose only response was that "we need to be creative". The last time we went to a 4 x 4 schedule, we had a year of professional development before transitioning. Pacing guides were developed to help teachers determine what content could remain and what could not under the schedule. Now we are to move into this schedule again, without the PD and in a virtual environment.

For these reasons, I am submitting my resignation from Dover High School and the Dover School District effective today, August 31, 2020.

Please let me know if I need to submit a separate email to the school board and or Dr. Harbron.

I would like to thank you and the Dover School District for enabling me to pursue my passion for teaching for the past 16 years. Let's work together to find a time when I can come into the building to gather my personal belongings and return my computer, keys, etc. In the meantime, I'm happy to help with any transitioning remotely.

Dear Dr. Harbron,

I'm forwarding you the resignation letter I sent to Peter Driscoll this morning. Resigning was, without question, the most difficult decision I've had to make and not one that I have taken lightly. The risks to me associated with COVID, my ever changing teaching roles in areas outside of my certification and area of expertise, and the foreseeable challenges that the high school schedule will bring this year all contributed to my decision. I encourage you to read my resignation letter for further details.

Without question, I love teaching and it is hard to imagine a world in which I will no longer have this in my life. I have taught at Dover High School for the past 16 years and in that time have made many friends and taught many wonderful students. I will truly miss this.

I would like to mention a little something about my student services colleagues. The special education case managers I work with are truly an exceptional group of dedicated, passionate teachers. The role of case manager is ever increasingly demanding. They are among the unsung heroes of the high school. When the traditional Apple is awarded at our faculty meetings, it is rare to almost never that any special educator is recognized for dedication to their profession and service to our students. Please keep them in your thoughts.

Please accept my letter of resignation.

Best,
Ann

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