

MINUTES OF THE DURHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE RETREAT MEETING HELD TUESDAY, AUGUST 14, 2007 AT 1:30 P.M. AT THE CENTRAL OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM. (NOTE: These Minutes are not official until approved by the School Committee. Such action, either to approve or amend and approve, is anticipated at the September 13, 2007 meeting.)

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**Members Present:** Amber Snell (left at 3 :25), George Szadis (arrived at 2 :30), Linda Pfaffinger , Laurie Poissonnier; Shannon L. Welsh, Superintendent of Schools

**Members Absent:** James Beaulieu

**Others Present:**

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**CALLED TO ORDER:**

Chairperson Amber Snell called the meeting to order at 1:45 P.M. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**4. DURHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE RETREAT:**

The Durham School Committee reviewed the 2006-2007 goals report and work for the year. They then discussed work for the upcoming school year and drafted new goals for 2007-2008 .

**DURHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
GOALS for 2007-2008**

**I. Goal Area: INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT**

**To provide the foundation, framework and support for efforts toward best practices in education.**

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*Objective 1:* The School Committee will continue to support work to review and revise curricula and assessments to ensure alignment with the Maine Learning Results. This shall be done while mindful of age/grade appropriate stages of child development, the need to respect, acknowledge and accommodate for individual learning styles and the importance of ensuring appropriate access of this curriculum to all students. Curriculum and assessments should provide students with multiple opportunities to participate in integrated and applied academics.

- Administration and staff shall provide presentation(s) to the School Committee on updated curriculum and assessments. (*Administration and staff responsibility*)

- Students and staff shall provide presentation(s) on implementation of these areas and work students have completed to meet the Maine Learning Results. (*Administration and staff responsibility*)
- Administration and staff shall provide presentation(s) to the School Committee on assessment results from the MEA, the Terra Nova, and local assessments. The goal of the School Committee is to have students perform in all areas of the MEA within the top third of the state. (*Administration and staff responsibility*)
- Student progress as assessed through local, state, and national assessments will be discussed with individual teachers. Commendations and/or recommendations will be made through the evaluation process to document areas of strength and those needing improvement. (*School Committee, administration and staff responsibility*)

*Objective 2:* The School Committee will ensure staff has the skills, knowledge and materials necessary for the implementation of best practices in education by providing funding for staff development and needed materials through the budget process and through grant applications.

- Information shall be provided to the School Committee through presentations and/or administrative reports on staff needs for instructional materials to implement Durham's curricula and thus the Maine Learning Results. (*Administration and staff responsibility*)
- Administration and staff shall develop a plan for use of school and grant funds for professional development. The School Committee will be kept informed through presentations and/or administrative reports. (*Administration and staff responsibility*)

*Objective 3:* The School Committee will be informed of the impact of school programs.

- Presentations will be made about the impact on student learning of the use of technology as an instructional tool. (*Administration and staff responsibility*)
- An analysis of special education enrollment and eligibility will be completed by administration with a presentation of findings to the School Committee. (*Administration and staff responsibility*)

*Objective 4:* The School Committee will ensure a system of feedback necessary for self evaluation is in place for all employees.

- Teachers will request feedback from students regarding their effectiveness as a teacher. Teachers will provide a written reflection on the student feedback and include that reflection as part of their evaluation portfolio. (*Administration and staff responsibility*)
- Administrators will request feedback from staff regarding their effectiveness as an administrator. They will provide a written reflection on staff feedback and include that as part of their goal report. (*Administration and staff responsibility*)

*Objective 5:* The School Committee will be informed of the work staff is doing related to a school-wide literacy focus. Budget requests as a result of these efforts will be considered by the School Committee during the budget development process.

- Literacy work will include a focus on language arts, including both reading and writing. Language Arts curriculum shall include strategies for implementing reading and writing across the content areas so students develop both technical and creative skills. Administration will keep the School Committee informed about this work. (*Administration and staff responsibility*)

- Students and staff will provide presentations on the implementation of this literacy work. *(Administration and staff responsibility)*
- Administration and staff will consider student and community access to literacy materials, such as those in the library, and make recommendations, as needed, through the budget development process. *(Administration and staff responsibility)*

## **II. Goal Area: BUDGET**

### **To provide the foundation for community support of budget needs and priorities prior to Town Meeting.**

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*Objective 1:* The School Committee will communicate with the community in an effort to explain budget needs and the budget development process.

- The School Committee will inform the community in advance of the timeline for the budget development process and how the community can be involved in that process. *(School Committee and administration responsibility)*
- The School Committee will consider setting up reserve accounts or designating funds from the undesignated account to fund items for the new school such as technology; playground equipment; an extensive sound system; lighting; and stage curtains to name a few examples. The School Committee will further consider incremental increases over time in funding for the Technology Education and Foreign Language programs *(School Committee and administration responsibility)*
- The Chair will contact the Budget Advisory Chair prior to Budget Advisory meetings to determine the process the Advisory Committee will use when reviewing the proposed school department budget. *(School Committee Chair responsibility)*
- The School Committee will continue to develop a positive working relationship with the Budget Advisory Committee. *(School Committee and administration responsibility)*
- The School Committee will continue hold public meetings prior to finalizing the proposed school department budget. *(School Committee and administration responsibility)*
- The School Committee will meet the new legal requirements of a referendum vote for the School Department budget and the state-required budget reductions. *(School Committee and administration responsibility)*

## **III. Goal Area: POLICIES**

### **To aggressively review, update, develop and adopt policies necessary for the effective and efficient functioning of our school system.**

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*Objective 1:* The School Committee will review, develop and update policies as needed in order to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations as well as to address further needs specific to the smooth and effective operation of the Durham School Department.

- The Committee will continue to update policies as legal requirements change or in response to local needs. *(School Committee and administration responsibility)*

*Objective 2:* The School Committee authorizes the development of administrative procedures where appropriate to ensure policies are implemented and enforced in a clear, fair, and equitable manner.

- Administration will develop and enforce administrative procedures that will include, but not be limited to safety, fieldtrips, dances, discipline, athletics, and use of facilities. (*Administration responsibility*)

#### **IV. Goal Area: LONG RANGE PLANNING**

**To develop long range plans for the Durham School Department to ensure effective programs and to prevent potential problems from occurring.**

*Objective 1:* The School Committee will support the on-going process for addressing the building and program needs of the Durham School Department.

- The Building Needs committee will work with administration to consider educational programs that the Durham School Department might wish to implement or expand for the 2008-2009 school year. Programs to consider include Foreign Language, Tech Ed, and Living Skills (Health). Administration will present these options to the School Committee for consideration as part of the 08-09 budget development process. (*School Committee, Building Committee and administration responsibility*)
- The School Committee will receive regular reports on the work of the Building Committee. They will consider Concept Development recommendations from the Building Committee and will support public meetings to gain input from the community. (*School Committee, Building Committee and administration responsibility*)
- The School Committee will work with the Building Committee to generate support for the referendum vote on the new school. Informational mailings and meetings will be held to keep the community informed and involved in the process. (*School Committee, Building Committee and administration responsibility*)
- The School Committee will work with the Building Committee to identify local only funded items and determine the need for any fundraising efforts. Items to consider include a larger gym, pitched roof, and geothermal heating/cooling systems. (*School Committee, Building Committee, and administration responsibility*)

*Objective 2:* The School Committee will assess progress toward existing goals, at least annually, and update/revise these as necessary.

- The School Committee will review these goals and objectives at their summer workshop. (*School Committee and administrative responsibility*)
- Administration will continue to develop methods of tracking educational performance over time and present updated information to the School Committee on an annual basis. Additional Performance Indicators will be identified and tracked as the Comprehensive Local Assessment System is developed. (*Administrative responsibility*)

**V. Goal Area: CONSOLIDATION PLANNING**

**To meet the legal requirements within new state legislation on school consolidation**

*Objective 1:* The School Committee will work through and The Committee will file a “Notice of Intent” by the August 31, 2007 deadline. (*Administrative responsibility*)

- The Committee will create a Regional Planning Committee (RPC) to develop a regionalization plan with an identified partner and submit the draft plan to the Commissioner by December 1, 2007. (*Administrative responsibility*)
- At an appropriate time, the School Committee will request the Town Council hold a referendum on the regionalization plan as approved by the Commissioner of Education. (*Administrative responsibility*)
- The School Committee will work to keep the public informed throughout the process. (*Administrative responsibility*)

**4. ADJOURNMENT:**

**VOTED: (1)** To adjourn. (Pfaffinger – Szadis) (3 – 0) (3:50 p.m.)

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Shannon L. Welsh  
Secretary, Durham School Committee

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