



Dover Union Free School District Safety

Improving school safety is an annual goal; this year is no exception. After the Newtown tragedy, the District held several emergency board meetings and safety audits with State Police, Sheriff's Department, and other experts to re-assess and re-evaluate our current situation. During the last six years, the District improved its safety procedures and policies and is now one of the models for Dutchess County. Recently, we have added more safety measures and hired Dutchess County sheriffs to be present in each building. We will remain diligent in our safety efforts, and I want to thank everyone who participated in the meetings or made suggestions on this topic.

To review the District Safety Plan, please go to the District Offices link on our district website (www.doverschools.org).

With the 2012-2013 school year at its halfway point, it is a good time to reflect on the actions already taken toward our annual goals and look ahead at our plans for the coming months. This issue of Dover School Talk will also include updates on our academic action plan, safety, character education, and facility upgrades.

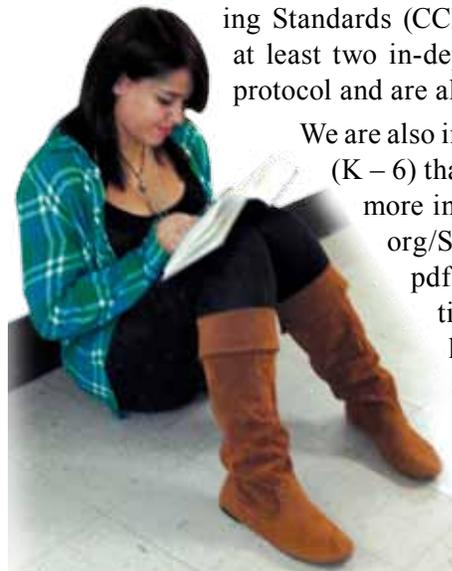


Mike Tierney
Superintendent of Schools

District Academic Action Plan

I am proud to report that we have met goals and timelines in all six areas of our Academic Action Plan (available for viewing on our district website www.doverschools.org, under the District Offices link).

The plan includes actions for administering the Developmental Reading Assessments (DRA) and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and using the collected data to inform reading and math instruction. The teachers have received training in administering and using the assessment data and are meeting regularly in Professional Learning Communities to determine appropriate instruction based upon student results. Parents are being informed periodically about their child's progress toward grade-level proficiency and beyond. The Action Plan also includes steps taken to implement the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Each grade-level team (K – 8) has developed at least two in-depth unit plans that adhere to the District-developed protocol and are aligned with grade-level literacy standards.



We are also in our second year of implementing the GoMath! series (K – 6) that is aligned to the NYS math learning standards. For more information on CCLS, please visit http://www.questar.org/StaffDevelopment/Common_Core_parent_brochure.pdf (also accessible from the District website News section). This guide has great explanations, tips, and web links that can be a terrific resource for parents. All six initiatives in our Action Plan are inter-dependent and systematically organized to improve student achievement. I want to thank the administrators, teachers, and students for all their efforts in working towards these rigorous goals.

Furthering Energy Conservation Measures

The District is exploring the scope of an Energy Performance Contract (EPC). An EPC is a building project that improves the energy efficiency of the facility by upgrading the equipment within. After a yearlong process involving proposals and interviews, the District named Ameresco as its energy performance contractor. Ameresco identified eleven energy conservation measures that will save the District over \$145,000 annually in utility costs. The cost of the project is fully funded by these savings, so there is no additional cost to the District. The two measures that drive the “lion’s share” of these savings are interior lighting systems and building management controls. Additionally, the District will use the EPC to address wall and soft

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fit infrastructure concerns and replace windows on the oldest portions of the Middle/High School.

On another positive note, in addition to the annual savings of over \$145,000, the building project will generate annual building aid for the next fifteen years!

Character Education

A very important part of having a safe school is our character education program. Character education addresses all types of issues including anti-bullying, personal goal development, active listening, conflict resolution, peer mediation, and other important character qualities for leading a successful life. Each school has a unique, age-appropriate character education program. Character education updates and programs are often mentioned in the school newsletters. Remember, it takes all of us to keep our community safe.

SCRUBS CLUB INITIATIVE

In our last issue of Dover School Talk, we introduced this initiative established through collaborative efforts with the Foundation for Community Health, Eastern Rural Health Network, and the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation. There was a terrific response at the high school, as 25 students enrolled and will participate in a full slate of ten activities for the remainder of the year. Mrs. Murray is the program’s coordinator who will be overseeing the various events, site visits, and field trips. I want to thank our partners for their time and efforts in making this program become a reality.



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Message to Middle School Parents

Dover Middle School is now participating as a Title I school. This change will provide us with additional resources and programs for our middle school students in reading and English Language Arts. As part of the requirements of having a Title I school, We are required to inform parents that they would be entitled to school choice if there was another middle school within our district; however, there is not. Over the next few weeks, we will be planning additional teacher professional development and opportunities for student remediation, AIS, and skills classes which will focus on increasing student achievement in these areas. Parents are encouraged to contribute their ideas at our MS Improvement Team meeting that meets the first Thursday of every month.

Eagle Scout Project Goes the Distance

As part of his Eagle Scout community service project, Peter Sander, a senior at Dover High School, raised money, planned, and built an additional shot-put and discus landing for the track and field team. I want to thank Peter for the great job and his contribution to the school. Additionally, DHS students Christopher Odell and Thomas Marston have earned the prestigious rank of Eagle Scout.

Congratulations!



MS/HS Water Supply

Last year, parents at the Middle/ High School received notification that the drinking water at our MS/HS complex had elevated nitrate levels. I am pleased to report that a filtration system has been installed and is working well, thereby eliminating the problem. We will continue to test the water periodically to ensure that the nitrate levels are appropriate.

Student Success Starts with Attendance

According to many state and national education journals, attendance has a major impact on student achievement. What appears to be common sense is well-documented (Education Week, December 12, 2012, Missing Even a Few Days of School Seems to Make a Difference in Whether Eighth Graders Perform at the Top of Their Game); students need to be in class to do well. Research has shown that even a 1% increase in a school's student attendance can have a profound positive impact on student achievement. Each of our schools is stressing attendance as an important factor in your child's education. On the other hand, this is by no means an attempt to get you to send your child to school when he/she is sick! We do, however, want everyone to plan not to miss school if it is at all possible.



E-LEARNING

Dover Schools has been awarded a consortium grant with Ulster BOCES to provide several online advanced placement courses for Dover High School students. We are pleased to report that, if all goes well, we will be able to offer online AP classes in art history, computer science, human geography, psychology, comparative government, and statistics. We will have more details shortly.



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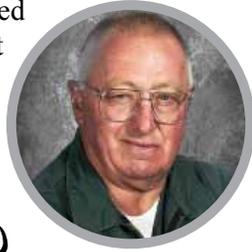
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Pre-Sort

Mr. Gary Anderson has retired after 25 years of employment in the district. Mr. Anderson has always been Dover's #1 fan and kept the fields and grounds in outstanding shape for all to enjoy.



GOODBYE
Gary Anderson!

Founder's Day Awards

Every year the PTSA acknowledges Dover Community members and school employees for their hard work, volunteerism, and dedication to the tenets of the PTSA. This year, the Founder's Day Awards were given to four deserving recipients: **Mrs. Lisa Borner, Mrs. Penny Dye, Mr. Michael Horn, and Mr. Jack Zangerle.** Congratulations and thank you for your dedication to our students and the Dover Community.

Noteworthy News

★ **Universal Pre-K applications** are now being accepted for the 2013 – 2014 school year. Applications are available on the District website's registration page.

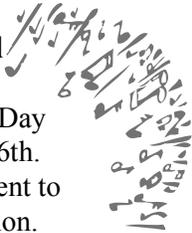
★ **Kindergarten registration** will take place during the week of March 18 – 21.

★ Every Friday in March is **Parent/Special Friend Lunch at Wingdale Elementary School.** Parents and/or special friends are encouraged to come to school to enjoy lunch with the children.



★ March is **Read Across America** month in honor of Dr. Seuss's birthday. Throughout the month, students in Wingdale and Dover Elementary Schools will be participating in special activities to celebrate and encourage reading.

★ Members of the **Middle and High School bands** will be marching in the St. Patrick's Day Parade on Saturday, March 16th. This is always an exciting event to watch in person or on television.



Relay for Life

We are very excited to announce that we will be hosting a Relay for Life in collaboration with the American Cancer Society. The event will take place at the Dover High School Track on Saturday, May 4th from Noon to 9:00pm. This is a community-wide event.

Our goal for this first year is to successfully recruit 20 teams to walk at the relay and raise \$20,000. If you would like to be part of this amazing event by either forming or joining a team, please visit our personalized Relay for Life website: www.relayforlife.org/doverny



For up-to-the-minute information, please go to
www.doverschools.org/ptsa.