

**Dover Public Schools  
Sherborn Public Schools  
Dover-Sherborn Regional Schools**

157 Farm Street  
Dover, MA 02030

**Superintendent's  
Entry Plan**

2008-2009

Submitted: November 17, 2008  
Valerie Spriggs, Superintendent

# Academic Excellence, Personal Responsibility, Civic Responsibility

## *Memorandum*

To: School Committees  
From: Valerie Spriggs, Superintendent  
Date: November 17, 2008  
Subject: Entry Plan

It is an honor to have been selected as the Superintendent of the Dover/Sherborn Public Schools. In addition to an honor, my appointment engenders a great responsibility to work with each of you, the community-at-large, the administration, teachers, staff and students both to maintain the excellence of the three individual districts and to lead them to greater achievement. As an educator who has spent her career advancing public education, I look forward to this challenge and am committed to extending great energy and dedication to this effort.

Attached you will find my entry plan. This plan comprises a multitude of meetings and interviews. I have synthesized my notes from those meetings and have developed an Action Plan that reflects the initial goals of the three School Committees enriched with information derived from those meetings. As we move forward together, our shared goals will become sharper and more clearly defined. We will find the resources we need to accomplish what we've dreamed and imagined and the result will be stronger more effective schools, the achievement of our common mission.

Thank you for your support and assistance in this transition. .

## Entry work prior to July 1, 2008

My transition to Dover/Sherborn began shortly after the School Committees made the appointment. I visited the districts three times prior to the contract starting date of July 1<sup>st</sup>. The administrative team provided me with numerous e-mails, phone calls, and US mail parcels to assist the transition.

The following provides an overview of the meetings and interviews I conducted.

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
March 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interim Superintendent</li> <li>• High School Head Master</li> <li>• Assistant to the Superintendent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewed P. Davis' exit report; rec'd update on contract negotiations</li> <li>• HS orientation</li> <li>• Initial review of grants and curriculum work</li> </ul>
April 23 & 24, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview Interim Asst. Superintendent</li> <li>• Interim Superintendent</li> <li>• Past Superintendent Perry Davis</li> <li>• Business Administrator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommend Claire Jackson to SC</li> <li>• History and orientation from Interim and Past Superintendent.</li> <li>• Exit Report revisited</li> <li>• Budget history reviewed</li> </ul>
April 29, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site visits to all schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk through, class visits, meeting staff and students</li> <li>• Opportunity for faculty to meet their new Supt.</li> <li>• To bring closure to the search and establish a presence in the schools</li> </ul>

### **Entry Plan Goals**

- I. Establish relationships and learn about the systems
- II. Analyze and understand key issues in the school systems
- III. Identify and prioritize tasks
- IV. Determine how the superintendent and districts will accomplish identified tasks

The work of entry occurs simultaneously with the responsibility of operating the School District. The duties of day-to-day operations and problem solving are in full course while entry takes place.

I met with the following people. Meetings were both formal and informal.

### **People**

1. 16 School Committee Members from all districts
2. Past Regional School Committee Chair
3. Past Sherborn School Committee Member, presently the Middle School PTO Chair
4. Interim Superintendent and Past Superintendent
5. Interim Assistant Superintendent, New Interim Assistant Superintendent
6. School District Attorney
7. Business Administrator
8. Central Office Personnel
9. School Secretaries
10. Food Service Director
11. Buildings and Grounds Director
12. Custodial Staff
13. Students
14. Principals; individually and collectively
15. Special Education Directors
16. Chickering Leadership Team
17. Pine Hill's New Assistant Principal
18. Teachers' Association President; Present, Past, and Negotiation Chair
19. Teachers
20. Athletic Director
21. New Football Coach
22. Coaches for Fall Sports
23. Custodians
24. Sherborn Selectmen/women
25. Sherborn Town Administrator
26. Sherborn Fire Chief
27. Sherborn Assistant Fire Chief
28. Sherborn Highway Superintendent
29. Sherborn Department Leaders
30. Comcast Installation Person
31. Community members
32. Dover Selectmen/woman
33. Dover Town Administrator

34. Dover Police Chief
35. Dover Police Officers
36. Dover Highway Superintendent
37. Dover Department Heads
38. Dover Warrant Committee
39. Dover Selectmen/women
40. PTO/PTA Chairs for Dover-Sherborn-Region
41. Chickering Elementary School PTO
42. Parents Group for Extended Day Program at Pine Hill
43. Community Education Director
44. TEC Director and Intern for the Directorship
45. Accept Director
46. Superintendents of neighboring communities

### **Activities**

1. Formal meetings were scheduled forty-five minutes to one hour. I asked questions designed to garner opinions about what the districts do best, what people are proudest of, what might be done to improve, etc. I also received tremendous advice, a description of the culture and climate, and thoughts on the skills students will need for future success.
2. Many of the meetings were informal, occurring as people stopped by to welcome me or to say hello. These meetings were very informative and helpful.
3. Various groups of people scheduled meetings and I listened carefully to concerns and issues. These meetings often provided insights into how business has been conducted, and the level of success people experienced.
4. Focused, planned meetings provided insight and depth to understanding particular aspects of the public schools. In most cases these were informative, and were often enriched by written data requiring reading and reflection.
5. I took notes at the formal interviews and after informal meetings to assist in better understanding the complexity of the systems.
6. Focus groups will be conducted during the fall. The community travels during the summer months and it was suggested the superintendent postpone these meetings until families returned home.

## **Data**

The following list represents materials requested and reviewed. I will use a number of these documents as reference material for my work.

1. School Committee Policy Book
2. Dover Sherborn Public Schools Contracts
3. Regional Agreement
4. Previous SC Minutes
5. Videotapes of SC meetings
6. Dr. Perry Davis' Exit Report
7. Dr. Robert Couture's Exit Report
8. Transition files and notes prepared for incoming Superintendent
9. Dover Budget
10. Sherborn Budget
11. Regional Budget
12. Staff Handbooks for all schools
13. Student Handbooks for all schools
14. Technology Plan as submitted to the MA DESE
15. 2008 HS Yearbook
16. DSHS Student newspaper
17. College applications and acceptances
18. Guide for parents on college application from guidance dept.
19. Safety Procedures and Protocols
20. Curriculum Materials
21. DSHS Course of Studies
22. Web page and link on Chinese Exchange
23. Athletic Department Study by School Committee
24. MASC job descriptions for SC and Superintendent
25. MASC governance literature

## Previous Superintendents' Exit Report Data

<i>Headings</i>	<i>Dr. Perry Davis</i>	<i>Dr. Robert Couture</i>
<b>Educational Advocate</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop public relations plan</li> <li>• Encourage community involvement</li> <li>• Develop cooperative relationship w/local news media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop/implement mission/vision</li> <li>• Foster high level of students achievement</li> <li>• Develop comprehensive curriculum and instruction programs</li> <li>• Develop plan for review and revision of Curriculum/Instruction</li> <li>• Ensure effective classroom instruction and student assessment</li> <li>• Seek cooperation with other school systems, institutions and organizations for education benefits</li> <li>• Oversee formulation of Technology Plan/promote staff PD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Plan for goals</li> <li>• Coordinate student transitions</li> <li>• Differentiated Instruction</li> <li>• Review curriculum maps to align with MA Framework</li> <li>• Provide PD principals to improve instruction</li> <li>• Commit resources for “cutting edge” hardware and software and promote PD for staff.</li> <li>• Coordinate grants process with DSEF, seek grants with other districts, et al.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Evaluation and Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status of work done to modify teacher evaluation process</li> <li>• Turn over mid-year review of the administrators</li> <li>• Review any mid-year personnel issues</li> <li>• Orient interim on 07-08 Professional Development Plan</li> <li>• Provide PD for use of evaluation system as needed</li> <li>• Meet with DSEA revise evaluation</li> <li>• Update three SC on progress made on evaluation revision.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Education Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work w/SPED Directors for mid-cycle Coordinated Program Review by Dept. of Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Education Peer Review: Comprehensive report on status, roles and responsibilities: A to Z.</li> </ul>
<b>General Administration</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop budget with R. Mattieu for School Committee presentation</li> <li>• Provide administrator guidelines for budgets</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendation to further develop the use of subcommittees</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conclude Pine Hill project</li> </ul>

**Interviews Summary:**

Meetings were scheduled with School Committee members, administrators, and teachers. The same questions were asked of each group. It is important to remember the interviews were informal, the conversations free and occasionally, discussion naturally flowed beyond the questions. NA indicates either not asked, or not answered. .

Question 1.

***What do we do well? What are you most proud of about the school district?***

***School Committee Responses***

- Support for the school, the community of Dover, parents willing to fill the gaps, giving of time; high expectations for students although we could do much more, there might be an unwillingness to push.
- Parents are involved, teachers really care, students attend good colleges, innovative; Chickering: good teachers, nice environment, conducive to learning, data measures show growth, MCAS plus other data.
- Institutionalize change, report on accountability, use measurable evidence, what is being tracked, hold people accountable.
- Considered to be one of the best but by what measure, got involved due to lack of communication; great institution, does not want school district to lose footing; community and towns believe in education.
- Everyday math and Balanced Literacy instituted, good feedback on progress; Kirk Downing motivating and has vision, truly supportive, doing a good job. RTI is exciting and interesting; trends are good.
- Empowering our students.

- Caring for kids, developing character and good values; wide range of academic choices.
- Doing well on course offerings, committed teachers, town supportive and supportive administrators.
- Teachers, district personnel, way children are taught, expectations, a lot of time on service.
- Community as a whole, volunteers, teachers go above and beyond, Dover Sped Program does a phenomenal job, Chickering too.
- MS/HS District sports and pride; MS teachers, drama, HS Musical.

### ***Teacher Responses***

- Staff are tops, negotiations, and the various support groups are great!
- Take lead from Kirk and Supt. on support needed and how to spend funds raised.
- Collaboration between parents, community and faculty; community investment in education, teachers are well rewarded; being a small district works.
- High performing district, respected, community support, collaboration, autonomy, HS collaboration with MS; teachers hate waste of time, will settle down with investment in sound initiatives; need visibility in halls, know students.

### ***Administrator Responses***

- Kids love to come to our school, true learning community; parents and community support tremendous; no one is satisfied; teachers are valued.
- Leadership roles are valued, core values are deeply imbedded – huge.
- Mission, balance academic with social, communication strong with team leaders and curriculum leaders and administrators.
- Outstanding education for most students, don't meet the needs of all students, emotional issues need to be better defined, acute disabilities, Metco students don't perform well, high expectations for students by parents.
- Child centered, student focused, student learning center of target, self assessments and we are committed to the child centered vision; math, balanced literacy, and RTI. consultants and resources.

### **Question #2.**

#### ***What are the three top challenges facing the district in the next five years?***

#### ***School Committee Responses***

- Challenges are to deliver top notch education with budget restraints, taking into consideration variables, implement foreign language, determine what to do for students taking elementary foreign language; can teachers excel at new initiatives and avoid burn out?
- Challenges: moving quickly to appropriate level of depth achieving the right balance, curriculum renewal cycle; science, music; keep teachers excited and strong, morale delicate (teachers need to be watched, maintained, and improved) visibility. Concerns: teaching to the test, look at our own data rather than depend on MCAS; teaching should include critical thinking, public speaking.

- Learning styles; consistency of standards and depths, depth is better than breadth.
- Instilling professional management is counter cultural; professional development, evaluation, curriculum. Financial: budget found money in SPED; what does it mean to prepare students for 21<sup>st</sup> century? Skills for children for future?
- Challenges: don't lose momentum, teachers want to improve. Kirk Downing is a positive; how do we quantify "Being the Best"?; do we really know what is the right direction?
- Financial, financial. Pressures: implement new programs, maintain programs, stay the course and keep it going, honeymoon years, keep the drive; maintain momentum.
- Budget; moving forward without getting too bogged down with assessment; caution about being data driven; define where we are going and what are next steps above and beyond MCAS; three school committees and the need for a strategic plan
- Look for challenges to move from good to great school system; no hunger for social change; valuable to look outward; embrace global perspective; reduce energy consumption, conservation, impacts; repair, reinvigorate, refresh—improve drama program and the arts
- Standards imparted by parents, senior privileges, open campus: raise grade from c-, standards of excellence, policies.
- Pressure on students, bullying, social pressure, general population prepared for life after DS, strategic plan operations: educational institution vs. business and governance, differences.
- Technology, relationships between three committees, independent; communication, funding-finance-economy.
- Improvement in equity of funding between sports and drama, are we providing too much? Test grades – low grading; study skills, students need to learn to be independent learners, top down traditions, senior to freshman-hazing, senior power down, bullying, social insensitivity, values and beliefs.

### *Teacher Responses*

- Curriculum coordination, articulation between grade levels, vertical communication, cross communication perhaps through professional development, 6<sup>th</sup> grade students needing assistance would be identified prior to transition.
- NA
- Retaining quality teachers and continue to attract best teachers. Teacher evaluation and honoring evaluation dates per contract, new staff turnover. Parents must follow procedures and protocol in place, they need to contact the teacher or coach, then the dept. head or AD, followed by the Headmaster.
- Bring forward new leadership, Teacher Leader for the future, building leadership, open door; create vision for self and towns, develop with representation from all stake holders; **bring peace and harmony to the three school committees**; use the Assistant Superintendent well. Students' stress on applications for colleges, parents expectations high, teacher stress sometimes by parent expectation, there is some legitimacy to this.

### ***Administrator Responses***

- Fiscal, limit our ability to limit positions that are valuable, reading workshop model, fiscal constraints, space issues, enrollment stable, keeping focus on learning, authentic, learning to differentiate instruction for students.
- Articulation across K-12, professional development committee has helped, Building: emergencies procedures that include training and have a district safety coordinator. Technology: use as a tool for processes and interventions.
- Challenges, complex issues, budget issues, focus-vision-stable leadership; three SC daunting, thin levels of leadership, expectations of parents; managing data as we develop IEP for all students, time for planning, lack of unification, Supt. time needs to be freed up, and balance.
- Taking assessment plans to develop growth plans for ALL kids. Utilizing effective technology instruction so kids are going to be successful. All district K-12 culture, investment in all students, 3 different calendars, one big picture, three SCs cause problems and appears inefficient.

Question #3.

***What traditions and values must we preserve as we move forward? Why are these important?***

### ***School Committee Responses***

- Academic excellence and high expectations for children; honor, respect, and kindness
- NA
- NA
- Community values education, not only parents, but community members who do not have students attending; Sherborn SC struggles with funding, Dover SC does not.
- Care and concern about the children; important for development and self concept; focus on individual; personal place, positive nature and spirit.
- NA
- NA
- NA
- NA
- Value teachers; respect each student individually.
- Excellence and instruction

### ***Teacher Responses***

- Work ethic, hard working, Middle School's three R's, values and traditions hover around academics, student stress level is high; fun, school spirit needs to be improved.
- NA

- Trust for teachers by School Committee and administrators, autonomy given to teachers, believe in teachers and trust them.
- Excellence – it is some times taken for granted, “90% of attention is on 10% of the picture.”

#### ***Administrator Responses***

- Core values, all school meetings, safety and comfort, high expectation for teachers and students, parents, inclusive school for all students.
- Values: teachers are respected, there is collaborative feeling between them, proactive, they figure things out, union relationship; striving for excellence. Community support and on-going striving for success; broader picture of why we do what we do-MCAS should not define us. Use data formatively, do you do your BEST?
- Tradition values teachers, create environment using professional development, hire most highly qualified teachers, small class sizes. We are not contract readers; we do so much more than the contract
- Moments of celebration

Question #4.

***What is the one thing you would change or improve so that we can provide a world-class education for all students?***

#### ***School Committee Responses***

- Add foreign language earlier and raise standards.
- NA
- Provide time for mastery, quality instruction, challenging curriculum, assessments both formative and summative, communication with parents needs to be improved, HS report cards.
- Decrease class size, increase the number of teachers; what is the right class size number? Smaller classes.
- Change focus from MCAS to what makes students love to learn and want to learn. MCAS, more of a job, rather than education remaining fun of learning.
- NA
- All students, general population prepared for life after Dover Sherborn.
- Communication across the board; student cohort in the middle; harness and get them to be who they are capable of being. Guidance counselors invest in each child.
- Top down traditions from Seniors to Freshmen which is socially insensitive, hazing, and bullying. Equality between sports and arts.

#### ***Teacher Responses***

- I am a huge supporter, perception is that the guidance dept. not as effective as could be in college programs.
- Communication, who is in charge of the Three Cups of Tea, Mortenson? We could do a great job across all schools with that project, I do not know all the HS is doing, so I am not sure how to support and help our students.

- Improve communication; better K-12 communication. Open to communication what we are working on, it is better if we are in it together. Seek out input, hear our thoughts, be helpful.
- Reading, writing, challenge, teachers' use of technology.
- More time for teachers to talk about students, demand is increasing, more time to teach and plan.
- ***Administrator Responses***
- Get everyone on one page. It is about: we and us.
- Hiring of dept. heads that would cover 6-12, share best practices; teachers teaching teachers.
- NA

Question #5.

***What is one piece of advice that would help me be effective in my new role?***

***School Committee Responses***

- Three different school committees, multiple agendas, be fair and equitable; be aware of the competitive nature of Dover and Sherborn.
- Advice: know what is going on in the schools; don't get too bogged down with parents and school committee individual needs; minimize what takes you away from schools; ask SC to minimize interference, SC will respect pushback.
- The district is not on fire, listen and learn and observe and internalize; provide principal mentors, take a hard look at the high school and middle school, provide middle school support and mentoring.
- Listen.
- Listen to School Committee members and community; don't get too overwhelmed with delicate balance to be responsive and maintain balance.
- Be willing to tell SC members what you believe is right for the school district
- Provide direction and pedagogy, setting goals and following through, schools looking for direction.
- Listen, talk with people, get to know the School Committees, provide real support for teachers and administrators, and plan.
- Rob Evans was helpful to the SC in bringing us together.
- Keep smiling; be open minded and listen.
- Listen. Set a vision.

***Teacher Responses***

- Be visible.
- Visibility; teachers want to hear from Superintendent.
- Life skills, most will be taken care of, but some are not; broad base of education, include the arts and athletics.
- Continue to talk to us, listen, be visible.

### ***Administrator Responses***

- Visibility and setting appropriate limits and boundaries among the School Committee members.
- Listen, don't let people rush you, this is a type A place.
- Listen; visibility and balance
- Stay positive, presume positive intent.

Question #6.

***What skills and qualities will our students need to thrive in the future?***

### ***School Committee Responses***

- Global awareness: we are in a bubble, need to know what is happening outside our communities. METCO program is not vibrant, we could do better.
- Students will need to be comfortable with a small world, able to collaborate, use resources; recognize the world is small, have a comfort with other cultures, and recognize science and math are increasingly important.
- Challenge to think and solve problems; work collaboratively; creative, artistic, music, etc.
- Brain, science and technology, ability to think, change, be flexible; provide children discipline.
- Children need to be exposed to broad base of learning experiences; let them run with what they are able to pick up and excel at; provide expansive offerings.
- Critical thinking, belief in themselves.
- Good character and values.
- NA
- Skills for all students to be prepared for a successful and productive life after DS.
- Open minded, worldly in thoughts, compassionate, thinkers, depth of thought.
- Study skills, students need to learn to be independent learners.

### ***Teacher Responses***

- Perseverance, working hard and ordinary values.
- NA
- NA
- NA

### ***Administrator Responses***

- Lifelong learners; understand how to learn, access information, outside the box thinking, confidence, collaborate and work in teams, social competency program.
- Communication skills, readers for information and as screeners who determine good-valid-garbage; technology.
- NA
- Creativity and innovation, bolster the arts and technology and math.

Question #7.

***How would you describe the culture and climate of the school district? (for example, open, welcome, resistant to change)***

### ***School Committee Responses***

- Surface is very positive, undercurrent of people who'd like to get out of here, everyone feels they have more than the other, pull back from children engaging, feel very isolated in the community. Dover loses 20% of their students to private schools; there is a sense of belonging in sports, others areas may not be the same; perceptions die hard, there is an undercurrent of not belonging.
- Success oriented, friendly, a little myopic.
- Pulling together PTO and SAC to optimize work and support; alignment with goals of school.
- Ready to move forward to the best; want to do more, do better, improve; leadership is guiding.
- Pro-kid, can do culture, positive climate..
- Supportive community, parents, teachers and staff; students supportive of each other; high stress among students, joy of learning sacrificed, not a lot of school spirit, bonfire for Thanksgiving.
- NA
- NA
- NA
- Excellent, more school spirit needed.
- History of work with school committee, principal, and superintendent; need for a clear and well communicated vision guided teachers and others.

### ***Teacher Responses***

- NA
- Appears there is a drop off on the Dover side, MS and HS students are going to private schools, parents are highly invested in developing children's talents.
- Intense expectations of parents, high accountability of students and parents, they want the BEST. Reward teachers, good pay, staff outing do not get large turn out, we could improve by building community, build relationships.
- NA

### ***Administrator Responses***

- Positive, excitement and energy that pervades building, core values, school in good place, revising, alignment of maps, math and literacy good, Science and Social Studies we are still working on.
- Respect for education, more than words, pride-proud of district, value and trust educators; 5 to 10% create challenges, but 90% are supportive and trusting parents.
- NA-covered in part in question #1.
- NA

Question #8.

***What is one issue that, if we dealt with it, would improve the effectiveness of the school district?***

### ***School Committee Responses***

- Quality would improve if we provided foreign language earlier, perhaps elementary entry; setting higher standards.
- Language taught five days a week at an early age; better dialog between elementary school and middle school; Have we been successful in preparation?; build good relationships, being pro-active is a priority, cyber-bullying and open circle.
- Determine what the best means quantitatively, best globally not just in state, align curriculum for global standards, provide time for learning.
- N/A
- “Each year is precious for a child, you can not be in limbo for a year.” Early intervention to save students, and RTI.
- NA
- Wide range of academic choice to include extra curricula activities beyond sports.
- Budgets and the residence; fixed cost, initiatives to be pursued, tough decisions; school vision, strategic plan, include stakeholders and townspeople; multiple school committees.
- Strategic plan addressing differences: transitions between schools, from 5 to 6 and from 8 to 9, parents’ and student survey seeking data on how the transition went for the student, communication and orientations are done in a timely manner, prior to students making decisions to enroll in private schools; ample staffing?
- Drinking and drugs are a problem; concern about car accidents; need to work with police on the issue.
- Set vision for excellence and instruction.

### ***Teacher Responses***

- NA
- A Gifted and Talented Program
- Communication that follows a protocol: parents to teacher, teacher to administrator, students to teacher. Evaluations of teachers by administrators, be there and do it; administrators be there for teachers; don’t let parents tell teacher how to do work.
- Working together, communication, three school committees working harmoniously.

### ***Administrator Responses***

- In the past superintendent, supervision of SPED Directors was a problem, be thoughtful; early release: maximize every minute for professional development.
- NA
- Wish the assistant administrators might share between schools

## Superintendent's 2008-2009 Action Plan

### Entry Plan Goals

- I. Establish relationships and learn about the systems
- II. Analyze and understand key issues in the school systems
- III. Identify and prioritize tasks
- IV. Determine how the Superintendent and Districts will accomplish identified tasks

#### **I. Goal: Establish relationships and learn about the systems:**

1. Establish relationship with the School Committees and individual members.
2. Establish relationship with administrators, staff, parents, and students.
3. Establish a working relationship with the union leadership, past and present.
4. Establish a relationship with the town officials, selectmen/women, members of the warrant and advisory committees.
5. Establishing a relationship with the community at large.
6. Establish a relationship with the press.

#### **II. Goal: Analyze and understand key issues in the school systems**

##### A. Education:

1. *Know the strengths of the three districts; collectively and independently.*
  - Alignment with Curriculum Frameworks
  - Are there standards designed to move DS to a higher level of student achievement?
  - What is in place for literacy? Is it working? How can it be improved?
  - What is in place for math? Is it working? How can it be improved?
  - What is in place for science/technology? Is it working? How can it be improved?
  - Early childhood development: What are we doing? Are we accredited?
  - Full day Kindergarten status?
  - School Councils: Are they in place and being used effectively?
  - Technology: Do we have an action plan? Are we staffed adequately to deliver needed services? Do we have the resources?
  - Professional Development: Is the PD aligned with the vision, mission, goals? Is PD being tracked and evaluated? Are we developing in-house learning labs for teachers? Is the PD impacting student learning?
2. *What is being done with MCAS data? Is it used to inform instructional practice? Have patterns been identified and further analyzed to assist with student instruction? Have teachers formed Professional Learning Communities to assess effectiveness of lessons taught, feedback, and changes to maximize student learning?*
  - Are there internal assessments? What is done with the data? What instructional changes are made? What impact does change have on student achievement?
  - Has school clearly defined curriculum for the year? What measures of progress are in place? What safety nets are in place? How do we know they are working?

- What accountability is in place? Benchmarks, Audits, Measures for grade levels, schools, district
- Licensing and certification Issues: EPIMS report? Are all teacher licensed in the discipline they are teaching?
- No Child Left Behind: Have we met AYP in all schools? Why, or why not?

*B. Special Education:*

- Analyze existing Special Education structures.
- Ongoing update on regulations, review with directors, and administrators.
- Review the budget, out-placed students, and programs on campus.
- Monthly meetings; explore accountability during updates

*C. Budget:*

- Know what is in place, become familiar with three different budgets and the towns and region budget procedures.
- Establish good working relationship with Business Manager.
- Include administrators in formulation of budget, and process.
- Analyze current budget in relation to state and national economy.
- Listen to towns and School Committee members regarding guidelines for FY2010 budget.
- Work with Business Manager to bring forward a fiscally responsible budget for School Committees.
- Work with School Committee on budget presentation and budget assessments. Listen and learn, what has been successful.
- Work with Business Manager and School Committee on establishing long range look at finances for the three school districts.

*D. School Committee:*

- Understand each school committee's leadership and structure.
- Analyze the organization and preparation for each SC meeting.
- Respect and value expertise of School Committee.
- What are the roles and responsibilities of SC and Superintendent?
- Understand unique relationships in the three Districts: School Committee, Superintendent, Principals/Headmasters, and Schools.

**III. Goal: Identify and prioritize task (This will be on going throughout the transition process.)**

*A. Education*

- Instruction
- Learning
- Curriculum
- Assessment align with instruction and curriculum
- Special Education

*B. School Committee and Superintendent Relationships*

- A common understanding of roles and responsibilities to assist the transition.
- Dover/Sherborn Public Schools policy book needs update and alignment.
- Establish a common, clear, measurable vision and strategic plan. Maintain focus on beliefs and vision:
- Improve Instruction and learning and assessment will show improvement in student achievement.
- Honor desire of educators to work collaboratively to better the Dover/Sherborn Public Schools, and prepare all students to achieve high standards.

*C. Budget*

- National and state economic impact on towns and school budgets, be prepared to be pro-active if, and when needed.
- FY 2010 fiscally sensitive to economy and the needs of the students in both communities.
- Establish long range look at finances for three districts.

*D. Central Office*

- Human Resources: Problem area identified by Business Manager Richard Mathieu study, past Supt. P. Davis, and interim Supt., R. Couture comments. All information was taken into consideration. The Superintendent met with the Assistant Superintendent and Business Manager and the following actions were taken:
  - Meetings with all personnel handling human resources and related work: location of documents and current practices focus.
  - Files are relocated, secure, and accessible for the staff members needing frequent access to perform their work.
  - Re-assign responsibilities creating more balance among existing staff.
  - New hires system difficult and problematic, changes made to minimize the number of people a new hire works with to process paper work.
  - The Assistant Superintendent is the primary contract person for human resources. The Business Manager shares responsibility.
- Buildings and Grounds implemented
- Purging and cleaning records and files. The law requires retaining records for a specific time period. Due to limited storage space the Central Office files, materials, etc. must be reviewed and reduced. (Technology will be researched for storing records.)
- Cleanliness of facility has improved. The carpeting and painting helped. The Business Manager and Director of Buildings and Grounds established standards that are being met.

*E. Regional Buildings*

- High school planetarium structure problem. The planetarium wooden floor is no longer safe to walk on, and the equipment can not be used with unstable flooring. Corrective action will be brought forward to School Committee.

#### **IV. Determine how the Superintendent and School Committee will accomplish identified task**

##### *Education:*

- Superintendent gathering answers to questions in Goal II. Focus on Literacy, Math, Science/Technology.
- Professional Development systemized, planning, and for 2010 will be aligned with instruction.
- Researching International Standards to be used as guide for DS. Standards are not in place for district, State Frameworks are in place.
- Technology plan submitted to the MA DESE needs to be expanded, and districts need to review departments' human resources.
- Challenge: Establish high academic, internationally competitive schools, while lowering student stress and raising school spirit.

##### *School Committee and Superintendent:*

- The School Committee and Superintendent attended a workshop by Mr. Jim Hardy, MASC, to review roles, responsibilities, and policy. Upon the approval of the school committees the policy work will be contracted with MASC and collaborated with the members of the policy subcommittee.
- Unified School Committees vote to work with consultant Paul McGowan will provide a process to establish short, clear, measurable vision and strategic direction. This is an important beginning in moving the districts forward.
- Communication and respecting differences will move policy makers and superintendent closer to achieving the identified task.