



## May 2009 NEWSLETTER

### Key Dates

May 19: 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Mingle in the Middle 7pm  
May 19: School Committee Meeting 7pm  
May 25: No School / Memorial Day  
May 27: Arts Night 3:30 - 7:00pm  
June 1: Field Day (no rain date)  
June 17: Dads 'n' Donuts 8:00 am  
PTO Annual Meeting 9:00 am  
June 24: Last Day!

The following is a recap of the April 16<sup>th</sup> PTO Quarterly Meeting, held in conjunction with the Chickering "State of the School."

It was a *very* informative evening with presentations by Dover PTO-VP-Betsy Ryan, Valerie Spriggs-Superintendent DS Regional Schools, Page Kolligian-DSEF Representative, Kirk Downing-Chickering Principal, Dr. Deb Reinemann-Curriculum Coordinator, Nancy Simms-Student Advisory Council and Bob Springett-Dover School Committee Chairman. As expected, the information presented showed that Chickering is on the way to becoming an exemplary school (in fact, they are exploring the qualifications for the National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence). Over the last four years, Chickering has undergone major revisions to its math, reading, writing and word study curriculum. The teachers and administrators have reviewed the time-on learning in the school day and made modifications to the schedule. The school continues on its path to excellence following a continuous curriculum renewal, with student learning as the central focus of improvement.

However, these challenging economic times could make future town budget cuts more severe to our school. Chickering is the largest single component of the town's budget. Of particular note, the School Committee's recommended 2010 school budget at \$7.9 million, which represents an increase of 1.72% from 2009. 45% of the budget is tied to regular education staff and salaries, 22% is Special Education expenses for out of district placements, 13% is Dover Special Education expenses and 20% is District Shared Services. There are very few costs that can be cut without affecting the number of teaching staff in the classroom. The School Committee was able to keep its budget in line with a non-override budget this year by eliminating building reserves and changing delivery methods on some Special Education services.

In this economic climate, it is likely that Chickering will be looking to DSEF and the Dover PTO to fund more routine, operational items. Balancing the budget will become increasingly difficult in future years. The town will have to prioritize how we will invest in education in the future. The School Committee and Superintendent will work with the town and the schools to plan for future financial support of the Dover Schools.

Our mission statement, *Chickering School is a place where children learn, laugh, grow, care, and make a difference* aptly describes the learning environment. The PTO, in conjunction with the School Committee, DSEF, and the School Advisory council, support the school on its path to excellence.

### We've changed the Date!

The PTO Annual Meeting has been changed from June 3 to June 17 to coincide with our second round of "Dads n Donuts." At the Annual Meeting, we will present a summary of the year's activities as well as a financial statement. Both the 2009-10 PTO Budget and 2009-10 PTO Executive Board will be presented for approval. We hope to see you there!

### Calling All Artists!

The PTO Directory Committee is looking for student art that best captures our Chickering Pride!

The winning art will appear on the cover of the 2009-10 School Directory.

Look for details on the contest and the entry form going home in student backpacks on May 22. The contest ends Monday, June 1. Please encourage your young artists to submit their work!

Reminder: Please let the office staff know by e-mail at [odonnellk@doversherborn.org](mailto:odonnellk@doversherborn.org) if any of your directory info has changed.

### Spring Curriculum Enrichment

Our fourth graders were treated to a presentation by Katie Smith Milway, author of *One Hen*. She spoke to the students about the importance of microfinance and how kids can make a big difference in the world. The children broke into small village groups to role play what it would be like to be part of a trust group. Back in the classroom, the students will develop their own ways to raise and donate money to support a local cause. To add to the excitement, ABC World News filmed the presentation for their *Person of the Week* segment featuring Katie Smith Milway. It aired last Friday night.

On Friday, May 8th, *Breaking Though*, a musical showcasing the talented students at the Carroll School, was performed for our fourth and fifth graders. The message of the play focuses on the philosophy that everyone is different and that is why the world is such a wonderful place. It promises to open our eyes and embrace differences in ourselves and others.

### Last Call for Box Tops!

The last Box Tops contest of the year is underway! Send in your Box Tops by May 29 to claim the trophy AND win a popsicle party for your class!



### PTO Leadership Positions - Call for Nominations!

The Dover PTO Needs YOU! We are looking to fill a number of Executive Board positions, namely: Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Communications Chair, Community Outreach Chair, Curriculum Enrichment Vice-Chair and Fundraising Vice-Chair. Committee leadership positions are also available in finance, communications, volunteer services, curriculum enrichment, community outreach and fundraising functions. We need a wide range of talents to accomplish our mission!

A flyer will be coming home in your child's backpack with further information. Check out the job descriptions at [www.doverpto.org](http://www.doverpto.org) under "Who we are," and nominate yourself for a position that matches your interests.

Nominations are due by Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, following which the Nominating Committee will compile a single slate of Executive Board candidates to be voted on at the PTO Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup>. Following the election, the Executive Board members will begin filling the Committee Chair positions.

Any questions can be directed to one of the following members of the Nominating Committee: Jennifer Friesen ([Jennifer\\_L\\_Friesen@comcast.net](mailto:Jennifer_L_Friesen@comcast.net)), Michele Mandel ([micheleragomandel@comcast.net](mailto:micheleragomandel@comcast.net)), Laura Rinaldi ([laurarinaldi@verizon.net](mailto:laurarinaldi@verizon.net)) or Shelly Windle ([windle1@comcast.net](mailto:windle1@comcast.net)).

### "Spring Cleaning" Used Book Drive

Are your children's bookcases overflowing? Create some shelf space and assist Chickering by donating your child's gently used books to the Dover PTO's Used Book Drive! During the week following the Memorial Day holiday (Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup> - Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup>) we will be collecting K - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade level books that are in "like-new" condition. Suitable books will be put to use in the classrooms, the library and the book room. We hope that you will consider reusing your children's books in this valuable way. Please see the flyer in your child's backpack for further information.