

To: Dover School Board

From: Dorothea Hooper

Re: School Board Report

The Dover School Board met in Workshop Session January 23, 2012 to begin their budget process. At a retreat on the prior Saturday, Board members got their first look at the proposed cuts to the school budget.

During Citizens Forum: Deeana Strand, Director of Dover Adult Learning Center explained to the School Board that cutting funds from DALC "would likely cause the demise of the center." The proposed cut of \$174,000 typically brings in six times that amount from alternative grants from the state and national government.

Presentation of planned cuts by the Superintendent Jean Briggs-Badger: The Superintendent was directed by the City Manager to bring in a "tax-cap" budget. In an attempt to do this, the administration looked at what the state mandates they must provide and then began to target what was not required by the state. Based on those mandates, they began looking at the following services for possible cuts:

1. Full day kindergarten reduced to half day
2. Transportation to the high school
3. Athletic transportation at DHS and DMS
4. Aides ---library and A/V services
5. All co-curricular activities
6. Dover Adult Ed
7. ROTC program
8. High School renovation plans
9. Reducing the school year from 180 to 175 days (for students)
10. Freshman Academy
11. Professional Development
12. ESOL teacher
13. Literacy intervention
14. Gifted and Talented Program
15. Career Tech supplies and field trips
16. Library supplies
17. Classroom furniture
18. Etc.

This would equal a total reduction of about 2 million.

Neither the Superintendent, the Principals, or the Business Manager were happy about this proposal nor were recommending it. It appeared to be the only answer in paring the budget down to tax-cap level.

Part of the problem is the rising health care costs, retirement costs, and the decrease in revenues.

Members of the School Board had obviously done their homework and were prepared with questions:

1. Do test results show our literacy program is successful? (statistics will be compiled)
2. Will the proposed cuts impact class size? (no)
3. What will happen to student fees? (they will go up)
4. If we stayed at zero would we still have to make drastic cuts? (yes due to revenue losses and contract obligations)
5. Could more outsourcing save us money ? (no)

There was a request for the addition of a cosmetology teacher as it brings in revenue.

The board decided to hold further discussion for the next meeting when more data can be collected and facts could be digested.

Superintendent Briggs –Badger gave the dates for the rest of the budget meetings (can be found on the School Board website) and also announced a community coffee night, Thursday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, From 6 to 8 pm the public can hear and participate in a budget discussion.