



**DOVER SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Special Session #1
Meeting Location:	McConnell Center, Media Center Room Rm. 306
Meeting Date:	Monday, February 18, 2013
Meeting Time:	6:30 P.M.

- A. **ROLL CALL:** Present were Doris Grady, Ken Appel, Amanda Russell, Betsey Andrews Parker and Paul Butler. Rocky D’Andrea was absent. Kathy Baker arrived at 6:50.
- B. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Ken Appel led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- C. **CITIZEN’S FORUM (LIMITED TO AGENDA ITEMS ONLY):** No one addressed the Board.
- D. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 - 1. **Correspondence: NONE**
 - 2. **Resignations/Retirements: NONE**
 - 3. **Leave of Absence: NONE**
 - 4. **Nominations:**
 - Sheet 1: Nomination of Transfer of Christine Boston
 - 5. **Extended Travel (Student Trips): NONE**

Ken Appel moved, Doris Grady seconded approval of the consent agenda. An oral **VOTE PASSED 5/0.**

After the vote, Superintendent Briggs Badger read the nomination letter highlighting Ms. Boston’s achievements and background.

E. OLD BUSINESS:

1. FY 2014 Budget Discussion

Mr. Limanni recapped the previous week’s straw poll.

Ms. Russell asked about the possibility of reducing a guidance counselor. Ms. Briggs Badger responded that the CTC Support Services position was a potential elimination.

Mrs. Grady requested a paper copy of Mr. Limanni’s budget calculator. Mr. Limanni stated that he would that before the next meeting.

Ms. Andrews Parker asked if reading specialist can be paid with federal funds. Ms. Briggs Badger responded that currently there is .5 FTE paid out of federal funds at each of the elementary schools. Ms. Glynn added that there are limitations as to what can be funded out of the federal funds.

Ms. Andrews Parker also asked if a behavior aide can be eliminated at Garrison School. Ms. Briggs Badger summarized the behavior management employees at each school and didn’t think that it would be possible.

Ms. Crosson stated that if an aide were to be eliminated, the savings should go into adding a full time behavior specialist to Horne Street School. Ms. Crosson added that the aides are used differently in each school and all very necessary.



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Dr. Appel asked if there would be savings in our transportation costs by using drivers of the school district fleet formerly used by the Alternative School. Mr. Limanni responded that there is no savings in the budget since he is still trying to quantify what the savings could be. He believes there could be some savings in athletics and special education. Staff members would need to be trained by an in-house trainer and these staff members could transport special education students and athletes. A staff member needs to be certified to drive if even one identified student needs to be transported so all drivers would need the certification. Initial costs are being determined and the costs would come from facilities fund. There could also be revenue from this. Once the program has been outlined, he will bring the details to the Board.

Ms. Briggs Badger explained a process of sending questions to the SAU. Mr. Limanni is answering all questions submitted to the SAU by Friday of each week and emailing to all Board members.

Ms. Briggs Badger discussed some of the results of the survey sent out last week. Ms. Russell thanked the staff for answering questions.

Ms. Andrews Parker commented that she does not want the district to go backwards and does not feel that this is the way to go, but would like Mr. Limanni to research a possible fee for the full day kindergarten program. She is not in favor of a \$3,000 per student fee which was what was presented last year. She would prefer a fee of \$1,000 or \$1,500. She would like a fee structure plan with information on how families with multiple students will be charged. Mr. Limanni stated that the system would be similar to preschool tuition invoicing. He added that the district would not be hiring someone for this position.

Ms. Andrews Parker asked if this fee could go toward a flexible spending account. Ms. Briggs Badger stated that she would look into it.

Ms. Andrews Parker wished that the district started charging from the beginning of the full day kindergarten program since it is more difficult to go back.

She is also interested in perhaps charging a small bus fee for students. Ms. Russell commented that this can only be charged to Kindergarten and high school, although this would be affecting kindergarten families twice.

Ms. Andrews Parker commented that athletes are penalized more than other students. She feels that music students and others should pay transportation fees also. Ms. Russell believes that they already do pay fees.



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Ms. Andrews Parker suggested a possible increase in parking fees for high school students. The Revenue Committee is in favor of an increased fee with a “Good Student Discount”.

Principal Christine Boston added that the revenue generated is to pay the parking attendants. The Board would need to look into who owns the Bellamy lot. She believes the City owns the lot and they would need to take that into consideration. The school monitors the lots.

Mrs. Grady stated that she was surprised and amazed by the results of the survey. She liked the comments regarding steering away from textbooks and going more online. She needs more time to review them, but felt the staff was very effective with their comments. There were also many similar responses and pleased with the honesty in the answers.

Ms. Briggs Badger thanks Ann Marie Hinz for her quick turnaround on the survey. The staff is also to be commended of completing the survey in such a timely manner.

Mrs. Grady appreciated the educationally directed comments about the future and appreciated the courage of the staff for offering comments.

The Board requested that the answers be consolidated.

Ms. Baker noted that one recurring theme was an energy audit to reduce costs. In the past, the Fire Department has stated that appliances and other extra items that are used in the classrooms should be eliminated. Ms. Briggs Badger commented that she will be addressing this again sharing Facilities Director Jeff White. Mr. Limanni added that Unicco did an energy audit and Tim Knowles did a behavioral evaluation of the district that could provide savings if the entire district is involved. Oyster River saved \$60,000 per quarter based on results. He has also spoken with Fire Department representative Rebecca Jalbert about this issue.

Ms. Russell asked when the district will have a savings figure if a plan is implemented completely. Mr. Limanni responded that he will have a general idea soon and can provide concrete information in a few weeks.

Mrs. Grady stated that she believed there is a policy that outlines what appliances can be used in the classrooms.

Ms. Briggs Badger commended Rebecca Jalbert for helping to make the schools safe and within policy.



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Ms. Andrews Parker asked about eliminating days from the school year and increasing minutes of each school day in order to make up the time. This idea also came up in the survey. She believes this may be a good idea since money could be saved on substitutes and transportation. She added that the district is at a point where we need to look at outrageous ways to save money. She continued to say that she hates to lose people when other things could be done. If we don't do this, programs would need to be considered for savings. Each reduced day of students attending school could save \$33,000. She understands that contractual obligations would need to be considered for any of these changes, but feels that the district really needs to look outside the box so that jobs can be preserved.

Ms. Briggs Badger asked if the district may be self-defeating by stating that there will never be an override. Ms. Andrews Parker feels the district needs an override of at least \$900,000 to preserve people. A clear message was given by the City Council at the Joint Fiscal Meeting that an override would not occur this year.

She feels that a minimum of \$800,000 is needed so that the district doesn't go backwards.

Mr. Limanni stated that if the district would increase by 1.7%, all obligations would be covered. This isn't really growing, but maintaining. He added that an override is part of tax cap language. This should be remembered when an unusual situation occurs, such as an increase in NH retirement or outdated tuition agreement..

Ms. Briggs Badger commented that the Barrington contract is from 2003 and it punishes the district since there is a ceiling but no floor. She also reminded the Board that only 19% of people voted when the tax cap was approved and even then, it was a very close vote. She has faith in the citizens of Dover and is not ready to say that there will be no override. Facts need to be provided in a thoughtful way to inform all citizens.

Mrs. Grady asked if there is an innovative idea that would provide online classrooms within the high school. This could help students to receive more credits. She also asked about replacing RN's with LPN's in the schools.

Mr. Limanni responded that it would be difficult to replace RN's since they would require a supervising RN who would be close by so that services could be provided if necessary.

Mrs. Grady also asked that information from Brian Gottlob, regarding early retirement incentive, be sent to Board members. HR Coordinator, Robin LaFleur commented that she spoke with Mr. Gottlob who provided documents about the program. To the best of



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his knowledge, the School Board, at that time, did not implement the incentive. After researching the idea, they didn't feel that it was a good option.

Ms. Boston stated that there is currently a Novanet lab used for credit recovery. Students are always able to use the lab, although most prefer to do the work at home.

For more online learning, the high school would need more space, proctors, and computers.

Ms. Russell commented that reducing required credits at DHS and half-day kindergarten are moves that would be going backward.

Ms. Russell reviewed responses from survey and noted that the survey was produced because there is nowhere else to cut and ideas are needed. This is an emergency situation and the council should look at an override for the school budget as well as the city. The streets are in need of repair and the city is also looking at an increased retirement cost to NH retirement.

Ms. Andrews Parker asked if a bus could be eliminated at every level. Ms. Briggs Badger responded that the busses are already at capacity. They could review the walking radius to determine if they want to extend it. She also noted that if busses are overcrowded, there are more discipline issues and there was also a bus eliminated this year.

Mr. Limanni stated that a transportation committee has been established to review and change policy if needed. Many of the larger solutions discussed will not help this year's budget cycle.

Ms. Russell asked if stipends for coaching could be the same for all sports and a fee added to offset costs.

Athletic Director Peter Wotton explained how the stipends were established (12-14 years ago with a committee) and added that the sports are on different schedules with some being a much shorter season. Different sports warrant different salaries. This stipend is already very low considering the time commitment for many of the sports.

Ms. Andrews Parker inquired about eliminating sports or activities that don't meet minimum requirements. Mr. Wotton would need to research what the specific minimum requirements are for high schools.



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Ms. Andrews Parker noted that many families live in Dover because of the athletic and other requirements.

Mr. Wotton stated that he doesn't agree with fees, but understands the reason for them. He would prefer to change the fee structure rather than to eliminate the sport.

Some students have stopped participating in sports because of the fees, and they be more, if the fee increases, but it's difficult to know how many.

Ms. Briggs Badger added that the sports make it attractive for Nottingham and Barrington students to attend Dover High School.

Ms. Andrews Parker commented that everything is being placed on the table so that there is a transparent budget process.

Ms. Baker asked for a consolidated survey list. She added that there were some items in the survey that were not accurate. She requested a recommendation also next to some of the items.

Ms. Briggs Badger clarified a few of the responses including no lifetime health benefits for SAU office staff, the outsourcing of bussing, facilities and food service. Changing any of those programs would not save any money. She also noted that the McConnell Center was renovated with building aid and the district is committed to paying the bond no matter where the staff is located. The district could possibly ask for a rent waiver.

Ms. Russell clarified that job shares don't really save money since medical and dental is offered for one of the people involved.

Ms. Baker noted that one of the survey responses asked about a wage freeze. Mr. Limanni stated that there has been no increase in 4 years for most employees. People not at top of scale have only been receiving steps. There has been no merit pay or bonuses.

Ms. Baker added that one of the survey responses asked about renting out building space. This is a process that already happens. Ms. Briggs Badger stated that we sometimes lose rentals due to the poor condition of the buildings.

Ms. Russell asked what process the Board wanted to take at this time. Should they move forward with the cuts and find the \$940,000 or say that they have gone as far as they can go before cutting the credits and core programs.



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Mr. Limanni stated that the budget is being scrubbed for savings in the current year, which parallels the FY14 budget in many areas. He is noticing savings in utilities and payroll by eliminating the safety, saving about \$100,000 and may be able to provide more options by March 1. This would leave \$639,399 left to cut with the current straw votes.

The reductions would include the change in funding of facilities coordinator, courier, CTC guidance, and track changes.

This total does not include revenue—parking, kindergarten, and bussing

Dr. Butler commented that they should work a bit longer at the process. He asked if students can pay a fee for courses where they earn college credit. Ms. Boston responded that there are fees for CTC courses and \$100 per course for university credits.

Mr. Limanni and Ms. Briggs Badger recommended making the straw votes permanent. Mr. Limanni also wanted to include the School Resource Officer in the vote. Dr. Butler asked for Ms. Boston's opinion on the SRO at the high school. Ms. Russell expressed her opinion on that position and was in favor of keeping it. The SRO is the first responder and the city shares the cost with the city. Ms. Boston added that the SRO is a huge presence in the school and sees him as a positive part of the school. He carries a firearm and Ms. Boston takes comfort having him in the building as a principal and a parent. When is out, a replacement is provided.

Mrs. Grady would rather not vote on items at this meeting since they just received results of the survey. She would prefer to have a total list and go through the list and vote on each item. She added that it may be better to wait until the Community Chat on Thursday night to get input from the community.

Ms. Baker commented that there are a few items that they need additional feedback on a few items, but she is comfortable voting at this meeting.

Ms. Andrews Parker feels that they owe it to the administration and staff to let them know what's happening with their future. She also wants to be able to let people know outcome of some votes at the community chat.

Betsey Andrews Parker moved, Kathy Baker seconded keeping the SRO at DHS. An oral **VOTE PASSED 6/0.**

Mr. Limanni noted that they can add these items back at any time also if they choose to do so.



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Betsey Andrews Parker moved, Kathy Baker seconded reducing track changes by \$20,000. An oral **VOTE PASSED 6/0**.

Mrs. Grady stated that the list is not broken down by priority and it is difficult to rationalize where the cuts will be coming from. She is uncomfortable voting at this time. Mr. Limanni will email his cut calculator to the School Board in order to make clearer.

Betsey Andrews Parker moved Ken Appel seconded to increase facilities coordinator funding from 50% to 100%. An oral **VOTE PASSED 5/0 (Grady abstained)**.

Ms. Russell recapped the parking lot supervisor duties including parking, lunch duty and hallway supervision.

Dr. Butler asked for Ms. Boston's opinion on the CTC Counselor position. She commented that the person mostly counsels area students. This position doesn't provide many services for Dover services and is more of a career counselor. Ms. Boston felt that the other similar position could cover the duties.

Kathy Baker moved, Betsey Andrews Parker seconded eliminating the DHS CTC Support Services Coordinator (Guidance) position. An oral **VOTE PASSED 5/0 (Grady abstained)**.

Ms. Briggs Badger asked Ms. Boston if a hall monitor at DHS could be eliminated. Ms. Boston responded it may be a possible reduction to consider.

Betsey Andrews Parker moved, Kathy Baker seconded eliminating the courier. An oral **VOTE PASSED 4/1 (Appel opposed, Grady abstained)**.

A possible option for the courier position would be for the Facilities Coordinator to pick up the mail at each school. Ms. Andrews Parked brought up the idea of putting a tote on a bus and have it delivered to each school. Mr. Limanni commented that there would be an issue of confidentiality with this option. The tote would also need to be secured on the bus in a locked box.

Ms. Andrews Parker commented that items could be scanned if the district had the capacity. All options need to be reviewed.

Ms. Baker approved of the idea to add courier duties to the tasks of the facilities coordinator and would like to further investigate the elimination of the DHS hall monitor at the next meeting.



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Ms. Russell commented that there are too many questions remaining to vote on anything else at this meeting.

Items including increase in parking fees, energy plan, hall monitor, club fees, kindergarten fees, will be discussed at the next meeting.

Ms. Briggs Badger added that an analysis of fees would be completed for the next meeting.

Ms. Andrews Parker also requested more research on minimum state standards regarding athletics in the district.

There will also be an Alternative School update at the next meeting. Mr. Limanni added that an additional savings of \$10,000 was added from the reduction of the general fund transfer to the Alternative School. This will be discussed in greater detail in March.

F. SCHOOL BOARD MATTERS OF INTEREST: None

G. ADJOURNMENT

Kathy Baker moved, Ken Appel seconded to adjourn at 8:37. An oral **VOTE PASSED 6/0.**

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda L. Russell, Vice Chairperson
ALR/ral