



DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Special Session #3
Meeting Location:	McConnell Center, Media Center Room Rm. 306
Meeting Date:	Monday, March 4, 2013
Meeting Time:	6:30 P.M.

- A. ROLL CALL:** Present were Doris Grady, Ken Appel, Amanda Russell, Betsey Andrews Parker, Paul Butler, Kathy Baker and Rocky D'Andrea.

Also present were; Superintendent Jean Briggs Badger; DHS Principal Christine Boston, DMS Principal Kim Lyndes, Woodman Park Principal Patrick Boodey, HSS Principal Mike McKenney, GES Principal Dustin Gray, DTU President Maybeth Anderson, CIA Director Paula Glynn, Athletic Director Peter Wotton, Janet Mason

- B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Amanda Russell led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

- C. CITIZEN'S FORUM (LIMITED TO AGENDA ITEMS ONLY):** No one addressed the Board.

D. FISCAL YEAR 2014 BUDGET DISCUSSION:

Mr. Limanni recapped the events of the previous meeting and noted that he had spent time during the week reviewing contingencies. Many, including transportation and utilities have been reduced creating savings in the budget.

Dr. Appel asked Mr. Limanni what would happen to revenue if all projected students did not attend the full day kindergarten program. Mr. Limanni responded that the figure they used was just an estimate, but he felt it was a realistic projection.

Ms. Briggs Badger added that most parents would probably take advantage of the full day program since it is a good deal, providing lunch and bussing, as well as a full day of instruction.

Kathy Baker moved, Betsey Andrews Parker seconded to approve the Energy Savings Policy Adoption, reduce the DHS Hall Monitor, and the SAU restructure providing a savings of \$133,484. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

Betsey Andrews Parker moved, Kathy Baker seconded approving revenues including charging for high school transportation and increasing the high school athletic fees.

Ms. Russell asked Mr. Limanni how the high school transportation fees were established. He responded that he used the Concord School District as a model and added that adding a fee would also help to set routes. In order to achieve \$50,000 savings, a fee of \$125 per student would need to be charged. This would also help with planning and with overcrowding. Ms. Baker asked if this was a monthly or annual fee. Ms. Russell opposed this fee since it is an additional tax on families. She would possibly agree to a token fee, but felt \$125 is too high. Ms. Baker agreed with Ms. Russell and would feel more comfortable with a smaller token fee. She understands that there are many districts who do not offer any high school transportation and the Dover School District is fortunate to be able to offer transportation. Ms. Baker also



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stated that she also believes the token fee would help to know exactly who would be riding the bus and may also provide economies on the number of busses needed.

Ms. Briggs Badger added that the administrators had also discussed offering transportation to students within the walking radius as another way to increase revenue.

Mrs. Grady stated that she would not support any of those options. She feels that parents are already paying too much.

Mr. D'Andrea agreed that parents are being asked to pay for more and more. He also asked if the administrative burden had been taken into consideration and if the \$125 fee was also for free and reduced students.

Mr. Limanni responded that the projection was based on 400 paying students and therefore includes all students. He added that the invoicing could be automated and is fairly simple in this model.

Ms. Briggs Badger stressed that the administrators are not recommending these options. They were asked to look into these items and inform the School Board of an a possible outcome.

Ms. Andrews Parker added that the items were determined by the revenue committee and they are not in favor of any of them. These items are the least offensive of all suggested.

Ms. Briggs Badger noted that club fees were not recommended since there would be no equitable way to track and charge for these fees.

Ms. Russell stated she is not 100% opposed to a transportation fee, but is opposed to a high number such as what was proposed. With a \$125 per person fee, there could be a \$250-\$500 cost for some families. She feels that it is not fair for high school families to bear the burden of the rest of the district.

Ms. Russell added that it is "mind-boggling" that the amount left to reduce is already \$258,000.

Ms. Andrews Parker and Ms. Baker withdrew their previous motions.

Ms. Baker asked for the current fee for free and reduced students for athletic transportation. Mr. Wotton responded there is no fee for free students and reduced students pay half of the fee (\$37.50 for DHS-regular fee is \$75). Students do not receive refunds unless they are cut from the team or are injured. After two sports, they



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are not charged any additional fees. Ms. Wotton noted that there are some students who will not participate in athletics due to the fee. He believes that number will increase if fees are increased.

Mrs. Grady added that some students will not have an opportunity to participate in athletics if there are fees. She added that on some occasions, athletics are as important as the classroom experience. It would be the same as requiring a band member to pay a fee. She feels it should be equal for all activities, not just athletics.

Mr. Wotton added that the transportation fee requested from parents is only the beginning. The parents and boosters clubs pay for many other items including uniforms, ice time, etc.

Ms. Briggs Badger added that the district does not pay for music transportation either. The Dover Parents Music Club pays for all of the music transportation.

Ms. Baker asked Mr. Limanni if there would be any funds available from the current year. Mr. D'Andrea responded that this would be discussed after the motion was voted.

Betsey Andrews Parker moved, Kathy Baker seconded approving increasing athletic fees as presented. (\$125DHS/\$75DMS/\$65Red/\$25Free). An oral **VOTE FAILED 1/6 (Baker, Grady, Butler, D'Andrea, Russell, Appel opposed)**.

Ms. Russell asked Mr. Limanni if district employees could be trained to use district vehicles as a savings measure. Mr. Limanni responded that he will be presenting a program with its potential costs and savings at the next School Board meeting.

Ms. Andrews Parker stated that if the adopted budget is \$258,000 over the tax cap amount, items including the general diploma, full day kindergarten program without fees, no other additional fees, along with limited personal reductions could remain. Mr. Limanni added that the increase would be just .56% on the tax capped levy. The total budget increase would be .2%. Impact fees are already included in the budget. Mr. D'Andrea added that previously it was a negative budget and now it is a .2% increased budget.

Ms. Andrews Parker commented that schools are now being nicked and dimed. There is nothing left to cut and would recommend bringing the budget to the City Council as is.

Mrs. Grady asked if Special Education can be reduced this year since it was increased by \$600,000 last year and is projected to increase \$113,063 this year.



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Mrs. Grady asked if the general fund is still giving to the Alternative School. Mr. Limanni and Ms. Briggs Badger responded that the amount being transferred to the Alternative School has decreased this year from \$402,000 to \$392,000. Ms. Crosson will give an overview of the Alternative Program at the next School Board meeting.

She added that all other areas of the budget have been reduced this year and Special Education hasn't been cut this year. Mrs. Grady added that some Alternative Students are already attending CTC classes.

Mr. Limanni responded that it would cost more money if the District sent students to out of district placements. The District is still exploring areas that can be cut, although they need to be careful due to a potential 8% decrease to IDEA grant funding. He continued to say that the Special Education department has already been cut this year, just as all other departments have been. If more funds were reduced from the Special Education budget, services would need to be reduced. Mr. Limanni has spoken with SPED Director, Sandie Crosson about setting up Capital Reserve Funds for Out of District placements. This would help to reduce contingencies in the district budget. He is working with the City now on the Capital Reserves.

Dr. Butler commented that there may be less painful ways to cut the budget. He referred to the Survey Monkey results and brought up some ideas proposed in the survey. Some of the items included half day kindergarten and reduction of work time for elementary school specials teachers since there are some who only work 4 days per week. Another response was for administrators to spend more time in schools so that they could see "dead weight". This would show which jobs are unnecessary. Another response noted the lack of communication and the possibility of providing surveys on a more regular basis.

Ms. Russell noted that some suggestions were good, but have already been done and others bring up contractual issues. There are some comments that come from unhappy employees. Staff members have different perceptions of others' jobs.

Ms. Russell appreciated the summarization done by the administrative team and the comments made related to some of the suggestions.

Dr. Butler noted that there was also a good comment made about a USA Today article regarding offering incentives for limited teacher absences. The article suggested allowing teachers to be paid for remaining sick days rather than carrying them over.

Ms. Briggs Badger responded that she gives a perfect attendance award at the beginning of the year and always stresses the high costs associated with substitutes. She added that there should be caution with anonymous surveys since it gives



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employees an opportunity to offer comments that may not be accurate. She has faith in administrators that they understand where budget cuts can and should be made.

Dr. Butler asked if there was truth in the comment that specialists only have classes 4 days a week.

Principal Dustin Gray responded that this is the case at Garrison School because it has the fewest number of classes. Having extra people has helped to bring back the instrumental program and also provides adaptive PE instruction. These days are also used to help make up classes missed due to snow days. The teachers are always teaching and there is no down time.

Mrs. Grady asked if the vacant DMS guidance position will need to be filled since minimum standards would be met in guidance.

Ms. Briggs Badger responded that the requirements are 1:300 students at the middle school level. Mrs. Grady had thought the requirement was 1:500.

Ms. Baker asked about the ratios at Dover High School in the area of guidance. Ms. Briggs Badger noted that the previously eliminated high school guidance position has been changed to “change in guidance structure” and may not be the personnel change that had been discussed.

Ms. Boston responded that she only included 6 guidance counselors when looking at ratios since the CTC guidance staff does not carry a case load like the other counselors at DHS. Ms. Russell commented that the figure is still below the 1:300 required ratio.

Dr. Butler asked if a buyout for teachers not taking health insurance could be offered to provide some savings. This was another recommendation from the survey. Mr. Limanni responded that the district has researched this option and it was determined that the district could potentially lose money.

Ms. Baker returned to the subject of high school guidance. She asked if eliminating one additional guidance counselor could be considered. Eliminating an additional counselor could bring the ratio to 1:247 which is below the state minimum standards.

Mr. D’Andrea doesn’t like always having to go to the “minimum”.

Ms. Boston commented that with a reduction in counselors, there would be a decrease in the quality of service offered to students. Wait times would be longer for schedule changes, and well as extended learning opportunities for students. The counselors do not take a prep period and are busy all day.



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The reduction of another guidance counselor in the district would only save approximately \$55,000 since it would be the least senior staff member.

Mr. D'Andrea asked what the School District asked the City Council for last year for a budget override. It was unclear as to what the exact amount was. He asked the Board what the direction should be since there is only one more meeting before the budget is due to the City Council.

Record Note: The amount was \$870,367

Betsey Andrews Parker moved, Amanda Russell seconded to not charge for kindergarten in the FY14 school year. An oral **VOTE PASSED 5/2 (Grady, Butler opposed)**

Dr. Butler noted that he would vote against the motion since every choice will hurt someone and for him, the priority is education, specifically, the 3rd grade child. A 3rd grade child is in trouble if reading issues are not caught by that time. He feels that an afternoon kindergarten session is nice to have, but would rather have the money for children who are falling through the cracks. Ms. Russell responded that an investment in kindergarten program will decrease the number of students in the upper grades who are having difficulty. She continued to say that parents can only do so much. The full day program helps children without access, while giving them time to play. They can go further in curriculum and is worth the expense.

Mrs. Grady asked what would happen if the \$615,000 in revenue is removed. It was determined that this number was not included in the total still needed to cut.

Mr. Limanni added that there are three different options for kindergarten tuition that would provide different savings opportunities.

Mr. D'Andrea commented that at some point, President Obama would like to add uniform preschool. At that time, there would need to be a kindergarten program in place.

Ms. Baker requested that the reduction of another guidance position be added to options to consider.

Betsey Andrews Parker moved, Kathy Baker seconded charging a sliding fee (\$50/\$20/\$10) for high school transportation. An oral **VOTE PASSED 5/2 (Grady, D'Andrea opposed)**.



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Ms. Andrews Parker stated she is in favor of \$50 because it is high enough to be a serious number and would also give the district a guaranteed number of bus students.

Mr. Limanni stated that 25% would be free, 5% reduced and 70% full pay for a savings of \$15,400. (\$10, \$20 and \$50 respectively)

This item can be revisited if money becomes available.

Ms. Andrews Parker also added that she likes the idea of picking up students along the routes who are in the walking radius for additional revenue.

Betsey Andrews Parker moved, Amanda Russell seconded charging \$177 per year for high school parking with a good student discount of 25%, (remaining on the honor roll all year and good attendance). An oral **VOTE PASSED 6/1 (Grady opposed)**.

Currently, there is a GPA requirement of 2.5 and no more than 5 tardies to keep a parking permit at DHS.

Ms. Briggs Badger recommended a 20% discount if students are on the honor roll.

Mr. Limanni reminded the Board that the revenue will go to the Facilities fund. This could help to recoup her salary.

Ms. Boston added that the student would need to stay on the honor roll. Ms. Briggs Badger recommended a rebate at the end of the year if the student remained on the honor roll. Ms. Russell determined there would be an increase of \$33 over the current rate if the student made the honor roll. This would be an approximate \$7,000 in revenue to the Facilities fund. Mr. Limanni believes that the district billing software should be able to handle the bookkeeping for this task. Ms. Andrews Parker noted that seniors would be the only students who would receive a rebate. Juniors would be credited for the following year.

E. SCHOOL BOARD MATTERS OF INTEREST: None

F. ADJOURNMENT

Amanda Russell moved, Paul Butler seconded to adjourn at 8:16. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0**.

Respectfully submitted,
Rocky D'Andrea, Chairperson
RD/ral