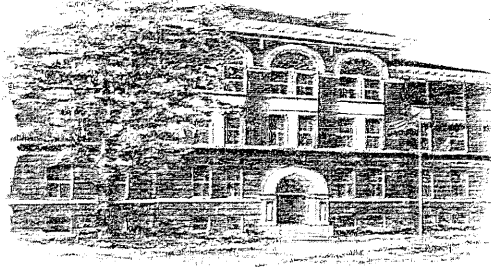


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TO: Dover School Board
FR: Dr. Elaine M. Arbour, Superintendent of Schools
RE: Budget Questions #2
DATE: January 5, 2015

Please find a list of the questions I have received since sending out the responses to Board questions resulting from the 12/8/14 School Board meeting. I have included all questions verbatim to ensure that the intent is not inadvertently changed. Please let me know if you would like additional clarification or information, as my goal is to provide you with all of the information you need to finalize an effective and responsible budget for the Dover School District.

1. **We are taking funds out of reserves. Are we putting any in? I couldn't find a line for adding money.**
We are putting in \$75,000. It is on the last page in the "Summary by Object" tab, Transfer to Capital Reserve line.
2. **The Asst. Principal will be shared by WPS & GES?**
In the email I sent on 12/23/14, I made a change to the original presentation so that HSS and WPS would each have its own Assistant Principal.
3. **Must all of the DMS Lit. Facilitator come from local funds? (I know the grant funds will have already been committed to something else).**
We can keep .5FTE of the Literacy Facilitator position in Title IIA and move the remaining .5FTE to the local budget. This will reduce the salary needed by approximately \$23,000. We are required to move the other .5FTE out of the Title I grant, as he is teaching two general education related arts courses.
4. **How much more money are we demanding of the City in comparison to last year?**
The total increased revenue we anticipate from local taxes is estimated at \$723,722. (Can be seen on the "Summary by Function" document in budget binder, revenue page, "Local Property Tax" line.) This is based on the tax cap formula of the Consumer Price Index and a local number for demolition and construction.
5. **Reading the materials you have sent I was wondering "What is the proposed budget amount without the "Special revenue" included? This would give us a better idea to configure comparisons.**
The proposed budget without the Special Revenue is currently \$51,560,464. This includes the Operating

Budget Expenses and Debt Service Expenses. The FY14 proposed budget without the Special Revenue was \$48,129,104.

6. **Rather than have to continue to refer to slides and summaries, would you please forward to me and the Board should they desire one) a copy of the line items as they refer to the summary sheets? These summarizations and slides tell me nothing as to the educational output to our kids. I would appreciate this. Being a visual learner, it would erase all this transfer difficulty this budget presents to me. Whereas the finances of education is one of my duties and that of the Board, this will help and allow us to follow the rules and regulations of the Board in relationship to overseeing finances as they affect the students that are our concerns.**

The summaries provided are the same reports as last year's budget binder, with the exception of the "Summary by Function" report, which we have used because it shows more detail than last year's report. We will email the line item budget as it exists to date to save on the paper. We did not provide it initially, as the Board had said it was not necessary at a previous meeting.

7. **DHS Health/Wellness (.5 to 1) \$21,549: When did we add or lose .5? I think we may have reduced or eliminated the position in the FY13 budget? I know this position has been requested repeatedly. How have they managed so far?**

We added .5 this year to take the pressure off our Health Teacher who had ten classes averaging 29 students and to allow MJ Hippern to teach fewer health classes (she still teaches one) and teach more PE, particularly as it allows us to continue to offer our Unified PE class (also taught by MJ Hippern) which meets every day. Eric Goodman teaches two athletic training classes and two health classes. We managed with huge numbers and struggling to have enough sections for students to get PE credits.

8. **DMS Noon Supervisors \$10,620.00/WPS Noon Supervisor \$4,425.00: Do we really not have enough staff to cover duties at all schools? With multiple teachers per grade level, can we not cover lunch and recess with current staff? It seems we should be able to do so and still allow for duty free lunches for staff.**

- a. **DMS:** With the current schedule, we barely have enough people to cover the duties we have now. That is why it was essential to hire the two noon supervisors that we currently have. The additional two noon supervisors are requested to help supervise students in two locations the lunchroom and gym (recess). This is the only way to provide safe coverage. Right now we have about 4-5 people on each lunch (duty and noon supervisors combined), which is not enough for 2 locations. Years ago, both special ed teachers and para-professionals all were assigned one duty per day. With the volume of special ed needs, this no longer happens. At that point we lost about 20 possible duty people.
- b. **WPS:** Next school year, we will have at least two grade levels where the grade level population is at or over 120 students. With four noon aides, we are under the recommended student to supervisor ratio until an adult has to bring in a student to the nurse's office etc. Also, during the warm weather at the playground, a staff member is tied up at the crosswalk full time for the students that have to go to the bathroom, etc. This one person assigned to the crosswalk has the adult out of active supervision of the students. Our main issues are both our campus and student size. We have a large area and a large number of students to supervise before and after school (Crosswalk duties alone take up valuable staff). We have our staff maxed out in regards to duties. In fact, I do two duties a day to help out with the minimum coverage. Some staff volunteer to do extra duties when they can. We are making do now with the four noon supervisors but are not compliant when a staff member is pulled from active duty. We are making due now, but if an accident happens then we are out of compliance. We have investigated moving some of the students to another lunch recess, etc. but the possible solutions created additional issues.

9. **DW Courier \$8,325.00: How many days and hours?**
3 hours per day for 261 days

10. DW Elementary \$35,231.00: Not sure based on the enrollment report. Shift seems better. From looking at the enrollment chart, it seems shifting staff may be the best way to go. We'd need a Kindergarten spike or an awful lot of students moving into one grade level at one school to really support this. Yes, I'd love to see all our elementary class sizes decrease, but I cannot see a fair way to add only 1 position at this time.

We may be able to handle any increases in student population with shifting positions. Our real "unknown" at this time is kindergarten, as it was for the current year. This placeholder is to give us flexibility of the population warrants it. We can certainly talk more about this.

11. GES Art (.8 to 1) \$5,989.44: Unless there are multiple classes added and a schedule shows that this position is teaching an equal number of hours as other elementary teachers, I cannot support this. I feel that elementary schedules should also be re-evaluated. Why are kids not considered tardy until 15 minutes after the start of school? Why don't related arts start right away in all 3 buildings?

This is also a placeholder (as in #10) to ensure that we can pay for the related arts teacher if classrooms are added at GES. If they are not added, we would not need this. We will continue to look at the related arts, tardy, and other scheduling decisions at the schools to ensure consistency.

12. Are we paying off any debt service in the present budget???? How much, if any, is remaining in debt on the present Dover High School building, inclusive of new gym, new roof, new office area, Freshman Academy addition, alt school etc. Are there payments due for some this year???? I am aware that we have put several millions of dollars into these buildings and most with State Aid. Whereas much of this was done with State money contribution, does this have any affect on how we address debt service in this budget.? If it is not included, what will the impact be on the total budget? I could not find this in the budget materials that I have.

Yes, we are paying debt service in the present budget in the amount of \$3,673,831. The present DHS facility We finished paying for the DHS track and exterior improvements in FY15. We are still paying some general DHS improvements (\$200,000), the roof replacement (\$1,000,000) and refinanced DHS/HSS/DMS debt. We do not currently have the exact number on the refinanced DHS portion and are getting this from the City. Having received State Aid does not affect the way we pay for the outstanding debt. The debt service for the FY16 budget is \$3,673,831 (noted in the "Summary by Function" tab, expenses page, Debt Expenses line).

13. We were able to avoid an asst. principal at Woodman for several years due to asking for waivers when the numbers hovered around 500.(also true at Garrison until it was addressed with redistricting) Now with the Sp. Ed pre-school in the building and the numbers hovering over 625 they would not allow another waiver (after several requests being granted in the past) Negotiations this past year with the State allowed the present plan and accepted it to a much lower cost in that administrative part. Why can't we ask for a waiver at Horne Street School and create a saving.? The NH DOE agreed to a waiver for WPS. However, we are concerned that the model does not actually meet the need. The Associate Principal cannot help with staff and supervision issues, as that position is still in the DTU, which disallows supervising someone within the bargaining unit. We are also not actually able to meet the mental health needs in the Associate Principal model, as the behavioral staff is still handling much of the discipline. The Associate Principal is a guidance counselor with a stipend for the AP duties, so she still has a guidance caseload and responsibilities. The Administrative Team spoke about this and we agree that we do not want to shift the problem by asking for a waiver. Adding the Assistant Principal position would address the administrative, behavioral, instructional leadership, needs and many of the mental health needs.

14. **Whereas this budget seems to be heavy in personnel and new positions and hires, did the administrators not have ideas that were more pertinent to the children we serve (which should come first)???? Would you please furnish to the Board, the recommendations they perceived to be pertinent to their building so that as we look at these monies, we can be more concerned with children.**

The new positions we have added are the result of conversations at the Administrative Team level.

- a. Our rationale for adding the Assistant Principals is noted above and is regarding meeting student and staff supervision needs.
- b. We are adding the nurse to address medical needs of students, as we have many days in which we lack adequate medical coverage due to the significant medical needs of some and the lack of nurse substitutes available to us.
- c. We are adding the Business Office Purchasing Agent to address liability issues in handling finances in an understaffed Business Office. This is also at the request of the Administrative Team because our current staffing levels do not allow us to support the schools' resource needs in a timely and consistent manner, which impacts instruction.
- d. We are adding the DW Currier at the request of the Administrative Team. The slow movement of documents and materials from one location to another impacts services to students and increases legal liability when the documents are time sensitive. Without a Currier, someone from the school and SAU offices needs to leave their building and job responsibilities to collect and deliver interoffice mail and materials.

15. **I noted some name attachments with which I was not familiar such as Pupil Service Contract consultant (about 235000 dollars involved with some monies transferred to another account), Transition Coordinator Business Office Purchasing Agent (cannot we combine with the City to avoid this 83,000 increase) does this include all benefits? Could you explain these positions to me?????**

- a. Pupil Service Contract Consultant – Contracted services in the special education & 504 areas
- b. Transition Coordinator – Teacher for students ages 18-21 who need additional services through special ed
- c. Business Office Purchasing Agent – Addresses purchasing, special contracts (e.g., food service, transportation, RFPs, RFQs, etc.). The amount of purchasing, RFPs/RFQs, and special contracts (e.g., busses, food service, etc.) would be too much to add to the existing City Purchasing Agent's role.
- d. The figures given include benefits and taxes.