



DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type: Budget Workshop #2
Meeting Location: Media Access Room (Rm 306) McConnell Center
Meeting Date: **Monday, January 26, 2015**
Meeting Time: **6:30 pm**

A workshop session of the Dover School Board was called to order by Chairperson Amanda Russell on Monday, January 26, 2015, at 6:31 p.m. in the media access room in the McConnell Center for the purpose of discussing the FY16 school district budget.

A. ROLL CALL: Members present were Amanda Russell, Kathy Morrison, Carole Soule McCammon and Michelle Muffett-Lipinski. Betsey Andrews Parker, Sarah Greenshields and Doris Grady were excused.

Also present were Elaine Arbour, Superintendent; Karen Taylor, Business Administrator; Paula Glynn, CIA Director; Patrick Boodey, Principal WPS; Christine Boston, Pupil Personnel Services Director; Kimberly Lyndes, DMS Principal, Beth Dunton, Principal GES, Mike McKenney, HSS Principal, Louise Paradis, CTC Director, Greg Brown, DTU President.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Kathy Morrison led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. CITIZEN'S FORUM: No one addressed the Board.

D. BUDGET DISCUSSION: Superintendent Arbour provided updated budget documents to the Board. *All documents distributed are included with agenda materials and are also posted on the Dover School District website.* Dr. Arbour reviewed changes to the budget that had been made since the January 5 budget workshop.

She reviewed the original budget priorities discussed earlier in the process and asked the Board to revisit them for changes. She also stated that she is requesting that administrators advocate for their priorities at this meeting. Dr. Arbour noted that the priorities listed in the presentation are in random order.

Ms. Morrison commented that her top priority would be for adequate staffing in all departments.

Ms. Soule McCammon stated that she is a strong advocate for recess at Dover Middle School. Her participation in the Wellness Committee has made her more aware of the need for this. She also stated her support for removal of student fees.

Ms. Muffett-Lipinski asked for more options for students to complete credits at Dover High School. She also strongly favors funding for a strategic plan since the district will need this in order to move forward over the next few years. She added that staffing for mental health awareness is also important to her.

Ms. Russell clarified that the late bus was something that was available to students a number of years ago, but was eliminated due to budget cuts a few years ago. She stated that her priorities are adequate staffing, elimination of paper, more options for acquiring credits at DHS. She is disappointed that they are looking at ways to cut the budget, but is optimistic that the district is still making gains and moving forward. Ms. Russell added that the District is also improving purchasing procedures. She also is a strong advocate for equity within the elementary schools.



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Dr. Arbour added that she would like to expand that idea to equity across all schools. She added that safety and security should be included in the discussion also and part of each decision made.

Dr. Arbour reviewed the PowerPoint slides and stated that the current year savings and anticipated savings are approximately \$500,788. These savings will help with FY16 purchasing. Since the year is half over, she and Ms. Taylor have been able to estimate what will be spent for various items in FY15. Items that will be able to be purchase with FY15 funds for FY16 include curriculum software, text books, athletics equipment and maintenance projects. Ms. Russell asked if any of the maintenance projects could be funded with the Facilities fund. Ms. Taylor responded that some could come from that fund, but many should be included in the operating fund due to the type of work that needs to be done.

In addition, the new Transition Coordinator position is able to be funded with the IDEA Grant instead of the local budget and other items were identified by the Administrative team as savings making a total current budget variance of \$108,827.

Dr. Arbour reviewed items that are on the “IN” list and items that are on the “NOT IN” list. She stated that there are no additional elementary teachers on the list at this point, but she asked that if they are added later in the process, something be removed to allow for them. Coaching positions have not been added, but if other sports have low participation, funds can be shifted to the new sports. She stated that items on both lists are all needed, however, the “IN” list are priorities, but could change based on the direction given by the Board.

Dr. Arbour stated that a compliance issue that is not on the “IN” list is the HSS Guidance counselor which can be added if the Board would prefer that it be included.

Ms. Muffett-Lipinski also expressed her interest in keeping the LDAC (Licensed Drug and Alcohol Counselor) in the budget. She added that it addresses the Chemical Health Policy also and thought that it may help the District to stay compliant.

Dr. Arbour agreed that it is a necessary position and stated that she will look into a cost/benefit analysis and report back to the Board.

Ms. Russell asked about impact fees. Ms. Taylor stated that \$200,000 is included in the budget already and there is potentially \$35,000 in additional impact fees that can be used.

Ms. Russell asked if savings from retirees have been included in the budget. Ms. Taylor stated that she has taken into consideration a \$40,000 savings for each retiree and will continue to look at the savings for retirees.

Ms. Muffett-Lipinski requested that the district continue the process of hiring the most qualified staff regardless of their cost.



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Dr. Arbour agreed and encourages the administrators to hire the best qualified since doing otherwise hurts the children in the long run.

Ms. Russell confirmed that after participating in hiring committees in Dover, the practice of hiring the least expensive candidate doesn't occur in Dover when there is a more highly qualified candidate.

Ms. Glynn stated that currently the LDAC is paid 2 days out of Title I and 1 day out of a police grant. The cost is in the \$40-\$50 per hour range.

Dr. Arbour added that the District may consider contracting out the position of truant officer. Ms. Boston stated that the district can go through the Dover Police Department or through an organization called "YES". The cost would be \$37 per day per child or \$80,000 per year and the officer would stay with us throughout the day if the option of a staff position is chosen.

Ms. Muffett-Lipinski asked for a job description for the SRO to which Dr. Arbour stated she would supply to the Board.

Ms. Russell feels that the high school is lacking in new positions and would like to advocate for the addition of the increased world language position and for the .34 music teacher. She summarized history of the positions at DHS and since these positions were in the budget years ago, would like them restored. Many students are serviced with these positions and the cost of the 2 positions would be approximately \$34,459.

Mr. Driscoll stated that the world language position is .67 and would increase to 1.0, focusing on Latin. There has been high enrollment in Latin and if the position isn't added, all students who would like to take Latin, would be unable to do so.

The additional music position would be for chorus and is currently taught by the full time music and marching band instructor.

The wellness position would be important for DHS due to the addition of unified wellness which is an elective that takes up 2 blocks per day that would otherwise we used for health classes. The addition of unified wellness has helped to build inclusion at Dover High School. The increased position would also help to protect the Physical Education credit.

Ms. Russell asked for clarification on the work hours for the nurse administrative assistants. It was determined that at DMS, the hours are 10-2:30 and at DHS, the hours are 8:30-12:30.

Ms. Muffett-Lipinski stated that it is important to hear from administrators so that they can inform the Board of impacts on student learning.

Ms. Lyndes stated that her priority is additional teachers. If the teachers and/or aides are not approved, class sizes would remain at 25 or 26 in 5th and 6th grade. She understands that due to



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the high cost, these positions have been removed from the priority list, but she feels the impact would be significant.

Ms. Lyndes continued to say that if 4 aides were approved, 2 would be placed in 5th grade and 2 would be placed in 6th grade. The deans would determine their final placement and they would most likely be flexible positions and used wherever most needed.

Ms. Muffett-Lipinski asked for information on the staffing of the OASIS program at DMS. Ms. Lyndes stated that there are 2 paras, 1 sped teacher and 1 counselor and they work with students in grades 5-8.

Ms. Soule McCammon asked for a clarification between paraprofessional and instructional aides to which Ms. Lyndes responded that they are the same. Special Education paraprofessionals only deal with students who are identified.

Ms. Russell asked if having aides in classes creates more work for teachers. Ms. Lyndes responded that they are happy to receive any additional staffing and it is definitely a benefit. The issue with adding new teachers is the lack of classrooms in the building.

Ms. Lyndes also cautioned that all of the grades coming up to the middle school in the next few years have a minimum of 300 students and the problem of enrollment will continue for the foreseeable future.

Ms. Muffett-Lipinski asked to see discipline reports to show a trend. Ms. Lyndes agreed that the students overall coming to the middle school with more disciplinary and mental health issues.

Ms. Soule McCammon asked for the purpose of a .2 art teacher at Garrison School. Ms. Dunton stated that the current .8 art position makes it difficult to run a schedule and has a cascade effect on the rest of the day. The addition of the .2 position would allow for an expanded RTI program and math instruction in small groups.

Also, since the position is currently only 4 days, a 5-day schedule cannot be run. Ms. Dunton is concerned with the equity of the situation and is concerned with a possible teacher retention issue if the position isn't increased.

Ms. Russell stated that she doesn't see how schedule is affected so greatly by one person and wondered why a para is not hired for the intervention position.

Ms. Dunton invited Ms. Russell to meet with her to discuss the position and the effect that it has on the scheduling at Garrison School.

Ms. Russell added that the past practice of sharing related arts teacher among schools is difficult. She stated her concern for inequity within the district.



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Dr. Arbour offered for principals to explain their schedules if it would help with the understanding of the position.

Ms. Dunton stated that the current .8 art teacher is a talented teacher and could also help with technology instruction.

Ms. Morrison asked why Horne Street does not have an extra guidance counselor if it is needed for compliance. Dr. Arbour responded that the District is starting with the Assistant Principal this year and will be hopefully add the guidance position next year.

Mr. McKenney stated that he would love to have an additional position, but for now, Horne Street School will make do and be creative for a year. The request will be submitted again next year and in the meantime, his dedicated staff will do their best.

Woodman Park currently has 1.5 guidance counselors and Garrison and Horne each have 1. There are 528 students at HSS, 615 at WPS and 469 at GES.

Ms. Soule McCammon asked if the salary of the Contract Administrator can be reduced since the educational attainment for the position is only an associate's degree. Dr. Arbour stated that this can be the upper part of the range. Ms. Taylor added that the range can be reviewed and experience will also be assessed when determining the salary.

Dr. Arbour stated that the Capital reserve document shows target balances for the accounts. The School Board should review them to make sure that they are what they would like to keep. This will be discussed at the February 2 budget meeting.

She added that there is \$75,000 in the FY16 budget allocated for Capital Reserves

Dr. Arbour asked if there are any items that are an absolute priority.

Ms. Muffett-Lipinski responded that she feels very strongly about putting some funding in the budget for a strategic plan and for a LADC position. Dr. Arbour agreed with both of these priorities stating that she finds it difficult to budget without a strategic plan in place.

Ms. Russell added that she feels strongly that Dover High School add the partial positions (WL, Music) requested. For a small amount of money, there would be a large impact.

Ms. Taylor added that through the process, a CIP is developed, which ties into to the Strategic Plan. The bones of the 5-year plan for facilities, curriculum and IT are being developed which will be helpful later when budgeting and for the CIP.

Ms. Russell asked for impact fee information and more retirement information for the next meeting. She thanked the administrative team for smooth budget process and is happy that positions are being restored.



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E. ADJOURNMENT: Michelle Muffett-Lipinski moved, Kathy Morrison seconded, to adjourn at 7:48p.m. An oral **VOTE PASSED 4/0.**

Respectfully submitted,

ROBIN LAFLEUR, Recording Secretary
Dover School Board