DOVER SCHOOL DISTRICT	DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES	
	Meeting Type:	Budget Workshop #2
	Meeting Location:	Media Access Room (Rm 306) McConnell Center
	Meeting Date:	**Tuesday, January 16, 2018**
	Meeting Time:	**6:30 pm**

A workshop session of the Dover School Board was called to order by Chairperson Amanda Russell on Tuesday, January 16, 2018, at 6:34 p.m. in the media access room in the McConnell Center for the purpose of discussing the FY19 school district budget.

A. ROLL CALL: Members present were Amanda Russell, Keith Holt, Kathy Morrison, Zak Koehler, Matt Lahr, Carolyn Mebert and Andrew Wallace.

Also present were Bill Harbron, Superintendent; Libby Simmons, Business Administrator; Paula Glynn, CIA Director; Patrick Boodey, Principal WPS; Peter Driscoll, DHS Principal; Christine Boston, Pupil Personnel Services Director; Kim Lyndes, DMS Principal; Beth Dunton, GES Principal; Louise Paradis; CTC Director; Jeffrey Myers, IT Director.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: A moment of silence was observed for DMS student Alex Leclerc who passed away last week. Zak Koehler led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

D. FY 2019 BUDGET DISCUSSION: Dr. Harbron reviewed the process for the evening and reviewed budget tasks. Ms. Simmons summarized slides presented at the last meeting.

Dr. Harbron placed posters around the room that would be used in the process. He first asked Board members to select an option that they would prefer for a budget or select a third option which would be an alternative budget.

Option 1: FY2019 Budget Level with Obligations and Anticipated Expenses

Revenue: $59,375,066
Expenditures: $61,791,430
Net: $2,416,364

Option 2: Budgeted New Positions & Other Related Services/Equipment added in FY2018 (SB approved through FY2018 budget process)

Revenue: $59,375,066
Expenditures: $62,618,904
Net: $3,243,838

Two Board members were in favor of option, one for option 2 and four for an undetermined third option. Mr. Holt stated that he has concerns and believes that the School District will most likely be held within the tax cap. He is interested in the dollar amount of the tax cap and would like to stay close to what is expected by the Council and citizens. Dr. Mebert agreed with Mr. Holt. Ms. Morrison agreed but knows that there are obligations including the DTU agreement. She doesn't believe the costs can be absorbed within the budget.

Ms. Russell noted that the motion last year to approve the DTU contract included working with the Council on funding it.

Mr. Koehler believes that the District needs to fund competency based learning and selected option 1.

Mr. Wallace believes that the strategic goals need to be funded and chose option 2 to support initiatives. He knows there will need to be realistic adjustments.

Mr. Lahr agreed with Mr. Holt and the need to stay as close to tax cap as possible. He suggested comprising and adding only 1 position out of 2 when multiple positions are requested.

Ms. Russell stated that she chose option 3 since it is still too early in the process to decide. She added that every budget she has worked on has been a combination of Board and administration recommendations. She wants to be responsible with funding, but also needs to make sure there is adequate funding for student needs. The strategic plan needs to be funded and if it is not supported, the District will fall behind.

Dr. Harbron summarized thoughts of the Board stating that he heard they want to stay within the tax cap. Ms. Russell clarified that she felt that the budget should be devised to fit the needs of the District. She understands that some councilors will want the budget within the tax cap. She added that some will disagree with her on how the tax cap is applied. She does not believe that the application is interpreted in the spirit it was written. Mr. Wallace agreed with her interpretation of the tax cap.

Dr. Harbron asked for direction on proceeding with the budget. Ms. Morrison believes blending is a good option. Dr. Mebert noted that they must be very specific and provide concrete information on what has been going well. She gave retirement costs as an example of when specific figures are needed.

Mr. Holt noted that they are still held to the tax cap as a benchmark and it is always the School District that is over the cap. It continues to put a bad light on the work of the District. He agrees with funding the strategic planning goals, but how they are funded and the length of time to get there is a Board and District decision. The strategic plan is a 5 to 10-year process and the budget can't keep increasing each year.

Dr. Mebert noted that 63-64% of property tax goes to education throughout the state. Dover is at the 10% in property tax to education. Mr. Holt stated that there is no mechanism in the community to voice concerns. The community does not vote on the budget as they do in some communities.

Board members agreed that there should be a joint fiscal committee meeting to discuss the process.

Ms. Morrison noted that the Council supported the Board last year in the budget process.

Ms. Russell noted that the FY17 budget was the most cooperative with the Council and Board and money was allocated to the school district from other departments which she appreciated.

Ms. Morrison noted that the District lost positions a few years ago and needs to bring them back.

Mr. Wallace stated that he would like to support students, the superintendent and the strategic plan. Students come first, and he would like to make education a priority.

Mr. Koehler agreed and stated that compromise is needed but progress costs money. There needs to be an argument for why the positions are needed.

Dr. Harbron explained the next part of the process giving each Board member 16 dots to place on posters listing new positions. Dots were to be placed next to positions favored by Board members. It was not necessary to use all dots in selection of priorities.

Ms. Russell asked for dates that Nottingham and Barrington need to inform Dover of potential enrollment. Ms. Simmons will email the dates on Wednesday.

It was determined that the IT Technician was a top priority. Mr. Myers stated that this position is comparable with staff that is already working. It is an additional position that would assist with basic support.

Mr. Holt commented that a basic theme is that ESL is a continued need and not going away. He noted that there is not enough support at the SAU level for all services. Mr. Koehler asked if UNH interns may be able to assist with the burden. Ms. Russell responded that Dover benefits from interns, but they need to work under cooperating teachers.

Mr. Russell commented that her priority is to take steps to implement the plan. Positions need to be added that get the District closer to the goals in the strategic plan. People are needed to lead competency based learning. She added that the District needs to grow to meet the needs of the students.

Dr. Mebert feels that one of the Dean positions should be changed to a grant writing position. The District is missing out and could be meeting many more needs of the strategic plan if grants were received.

Mr. Holt noted that even if positions are added, additional SAU level leadership is needed since it is a major void. Mr. Russell recommended that perhaps an Assistant CIA Director may be a need before a Dean.

Ms. Russell added that the District doesn't have people training for higher positions that would fill in gaps if needed.

Dr. Harbron summarized the Board's thoughts stating that a career ladder is needed, and an Asst. Supt or Asst. CIA Director may be preferred to a Dean for implementation of the strategic plan.

Dr. Boston explained rationale for DMS and elementary special education positions. She stated that the ratio should be 15:1 and is currently closer to 23:1 and could potentially increase. In response to a question, she explained that case manager placement is reviewed annually for re-allocation. They do not travel to higher grades with the students that they manage.

Ms. Russell stated as she has in the past, the DHS music department is understaffed.

Dr. Harbron explained the next portion of the workshop—Budget Guidelines. He asked Board members to provide guidelines on post-it notes and place in the appropriate area. Results would be included in their weekly update on Friday. He also asked for expectations from the Board. It was determined that they would like the leadership team to provide input since they have a better idea of what resources would be valuable to them. Dr. Mebert commented that she would like their reaction to comments and suggestions made by the Board. Mr. Wallace asked for their perspective on sequencing of staffing requests and what are the most important positions to implement core competencies.

Ms. Glynn commented that the time line for core competencies is most likely 2021-2022 which is inline with the state. She added that the District is well into the process, but competencies need to be written. Performance based assessment needs to occur and is the bulk of the work.

Dr. Holt cautioned that the District should be well-positioned to do the work the right way and not just by a timeline.

Mr. Koehler asked for administrator's thoughts on a possible CIA Director position,

In closing, Ms. Simmons showed her online "calculator" that she will use during the process to show cuts and additions to the budget in real time as meetings occur. She noted that the budget is currently over the tax cap by $2,416,364 without new personnel (only obligations). She will email this document to the Board. The tax cap figure Ms. Simmons used is $743,000 (increment over current allocation). The total cost of new positions is $760,000 and the personnel adjustments are $67,000.

E. MATTERS OF INTEREST: Ms. Russell thanked District staff and Dr. Harbron for rallying this past week. She noted that both parents and students noticed and greatly appreciated the efforts of all.

F. ADJOURNMENT: Carolyn Mebert moved, Andrew Wallace seconded, to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0**.