



**DOVER SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Special Session #2
Meeting Location:	Media Center, McConnell Center
Meeting Date:	Monday, January 25, 2016
Meeting Time:	6:30 P.M.

- A. A special session of the Dover School Board was called to order by Chair Amanda Russell on Monday, January 25, 2016 at 6:35 P.M. in the Media Center of the McConnell Center.
- B. **ROLL CALL:** Present were Amanda Russell, Betsey Andrews Parker, Kathy Morrison, Keith Holt, Matt Lahr and Carolyn Mebert. Michelle Muffett-Lipinski arrived at 6:43 pm.

Also present were: Superintendent Elaine Arbour, DHS Principal Peter Driscoll, CTC Director Louise Paradis, PPS Director Christine Boston, GES Principal Beth Dunton, WPS Principal Patrick Boodey, DHS Principal Kim Lyndes, CIA Director Paula Glynn, Technology Director Jeffrey Myers, Fosters.

- C. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Kathy Morrison led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- D. **CITIZEN'S FORUM:** No one addressed the Board.
- E. **BUDGET DISCUSSION:**

Dover High School Budget Presentation

DHS Principal Peter Driscoll presented a slide to the Board and public showing his new personnel requests. He described the changes in the World Language enrollment and stated that Spanish is increasing due to an increase in demographics which helped to justify his request for a .37 Spanish position.

Even though art enrollment has been decreasing, Mr. Driscoll feels that an additional part time art teacher is also needed. In the past, there has higher enrollment than number of classes.

Ms. Russell requested that Mr. Driscoll look at music enrollment also since there are currently only 1.34 FTE's of music teachers at DHS and it seems inequitable. She would like to know if there would be more student interest in music if there were more options.

For FY18, Mr. Driscoll requested a stipend be paid to both the Robotics and Project Search advisors. Both of these advisors have been volunteering a great deal of time and he feels they should both receive compensation.

A part-time Wellness position could potentially be a request for FY19.

DHS Career and Technical Budget Presentation

DHS CTC Director Louise Paradis presented a slide showing her request for additional days for two of her positions. She explained that additional days are required in the summer for these positions and the teacher contract does not allow for that. Last year, 10 additional days were requested for each position, but were not approved. She elaborated that the NJROTC position had been a full year position when it was classified as NJROTC,



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but not since that time. In the past, the navy had paid 50% of the cost for the NJROTC instructor, but as enrollment in the program declined, Dover was removed from the program. It was re-classified as a CTC program but students still are able to reap the benefits of the NJROTC program, but Dover does not currently receive any payment from the navy for this program. If enrollment continues to increase, NJROTC can be reinstated in Dover. Mr. Lahr requested current enrollment to which Ms. Paradis responded that there are 70-75 students.

General Budget Discussion

Budget discussion revolved around adequacy aid. Mr. Holt asked if adequacy money should be removed from the high school project.

Ms. Taylor explained that there will be unknowns until the bonding has been completed and the interest rate could potentially be 2% which would mean that debt costs would be lower. The projected interest rate is 4%. She is hopeful that other revenue sources will cover the anticipated debt so that money would not need to come out of the operating budget to cover it. Currently, the operating budget is intact with FY17 adequacy aid built in.

Mr. Holt asked if the past Board committed to \$1.4 million out of the budget for the next 25 years to pay for the new high school. The consensus of the Board members who were part of the past Board was that they had not committed to that expenditure.

Dr. Arbour elaborated that the Board can put some, all, or none of the additional adequacy toward debt in the budget.

Ms. Andrews Parker added that she never approved to give the funding to the City for debt. She feels that the money should go toward teacher salaries, curriculum or students. She would not have agreed to the law suit if the money was going to debt and not students and staff. The difference in taxes would be negligible if the adequacy funds were not used for debt.

Dr. Mebert recommended reallocating tax dollars so that the School District receives a higher amount. Dover receives 49.38% of tax dollars. Most districts receive percentages closer to 63%.

Ms. Muffett-Lipinski stated that she doesn't recall a conversation about where adequacy funding should go and feels it should have been more clearly articulated. She agreed with Dr. Mebert about reallocation of tax dollars so that more goes to the school district and would like the information about how the percentage is calculated.

Ms. Morrison stated that she agreed with the law suit, but also does not recall the conversation about where the adequacy funded would go.



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Ms. Taylor reiterated that the operating budget does not include high school debt or revenue attached to the high school debt. The additional adequacy aid is included in the operating budget presented to the Board.

Dr. Arbour commented that the amount over (\$1.174M) is not what she expects to bring to the City Council. She would like the Board to determine their priorities in the list of requests. She and the administrators are still going line by line through the budget to find areas that can be reduced.

Ms. Andrews Parker commented that she feels it is a dangerous precedent to gamble on money that is not guaranteed. She stated her concern for where the money will come from and added that the Board should be advocating for the full budget if that is what it takes to educate children.

Ms. Muffett-Lipinski agreed, but added that the Board needs to live within its means. She wants to be sure that whatever is added is sustainable for future years.

Ms. Russell agreed with sustainability of the positions. She is also in agreement with a budget that exceeds the tax cap because there are still too many unknowns. She added that the biggest issue at this point is that all city services are fighting for the same funding and there isn't any flexibility due to the tax cap.

Ms. Russell spoke against the City Council adding money to the budget last year for adequacy. The School Board chose not to do this last year.

Mr. Holt agreed with putting together a budget that meets the needs of the students. His priorities would include ESL services. He trusts the leadership team to bring forward needs of the district.

Dr. Mebert commented that at the JFC meeting the City attorney stated it could be years before the money is received. This would make it difficult to budget this money.

Ms. Taylor agreed which is why she separated the debt figures from the operating budget. She added that the final draft of the tax cap will not be available until the end of February. There are still many estimates

Dr. Mebert felt that that Board should be on record that they have concerns.

Mr. Holt stated that it is difficult to make decisions and would request a confidence interval so that the Board will have an idea which numbers may change.

Ms. Russell asked if personnel costs be reduced to include single health plans instead of family plans. Dr. Arbour responded that there were many instances where new staff was hired at more than was budgeted so this extra money helped to offset. She noted that the



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administrators will be looking at non personnel budget items to see what can be reduced. She added that there are savings realized throughout the year also which helps to be able to purchase items such as curriculum which would save money for the following year and money returned to the City at the end of the year would be limited. She commented that budgeting can be risky, but the nature of budgeting is to provide best estimates.

Ms. Taylor estimated that there could potentially be \$300,000 available toward the end of the year to use for other non-personnel related items. This money would come from savings throughout the year and is a conservative estimate and could change depending on the remainder of the year.

Ms. Taylor answered questions regarding Medicaid billing and clarified that MSB is Multi State Billing.

Discussion regarding the Garrison counselor and Dean of Students positions continued with Ms. Muffett-Lipinski stating that she would think that it would be difficult for Ms. Dunton to complete all staff evaluations on her own. She requested job descriptions for counselor and Asst. Special Services Director so that they would be able to see duties of each position. She noted that there have been several administrators added over the past two years.

Ms. Russell commented that she is leery about adding a Dean and a Counselor to GES. It was done more gradually at WPS and is concerned with the District being able to keep these positions in years to come. She agrees that Ms. Boston has a difficult position and could certainly use the help. She commended all administrators and staff for their efforts every year with resources given. Changes that have been made have been positive, but she feels the Board should be cautious and responsible.

Ms. Andrews Parker commented that Athletics has not received additional funding in many years, so she would advocate for Mr. Wotton's requests. She is in agreement with Mr. Holt that ESL should be a priority. In addition, she feels there should be a counselor in every school and additional days for DMS guidance. The GES Dean of Students position could possibly wait until next year. She would be in support for 5th grade support and for special education requests.

Mr. Lahr agreed that Special Education services should be prioritized.

Ms. Russell suggested the possibility of shifting elementary teachers to other locations or grade levels instead of adding and requested the plan for the requested new teachers.

Dr. Arbour commented that there may be some risk management with some of the requests and this would impact some of the recommendations.



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Ms. Muffett-Lipinski responded that the School District needs to know essentials to keep children safe.

Ms. Andrews Parker reminded that the DTU contract is still not settled and could impact the budget.

Ms. Muffett-Lipinski agreed with the recommendation to add athletic funding and possibly items from level 2 since they are smaller dollar amounts and could still impact student learning. She offered Robotics as an example. Activities need to be funded that keep students engaged.

Dr. Arbour clarified that Mentors for Administrators is for providing support to new administrators. A supervisor should not be mentoring a direct support. She also reminded the Board that non personnel items will be reviewed with administrators for reductions.

Ms. Andrews Parker stated that she felt that the Board should provide priorities and trust administrators to make recommendations to the Board.

Ms. Russell noted that she is comfortable with a plan that exceeds the tax cap since there are too many variables.

Dr. Mebert asked if there are targeted issues in the budget with ESL and special education and if there may be need for targeting assistance to which Dr. Arbour responded that there is a small portion and results will be brought back to the Board.

F. OLD BUSINESS:

a. EEAA—Video and Audio Surveillance on School Property

Carolyn Mebert moved, Michelle Muffett-Lipinski seconded to approve policy EEAA as amended.

Dr. Arbour reviewed changes that were presented to the Board based on answers received from legal counsel in response to DTU changes. She clarified that “reasonable conditions and limitations” is an expansive term that is needed so that all options are used when talking about students with diverse disabilities.

An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

b. EEAA-R—Video and Audio Surveillance on School Property Procedure

The name of the policy was changed to Video and Audio Recording on School Property Procedure so that it is consistent with policy EEAA.



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Carolyn Mebert moved, Keith Holt seconded to approve policy EEAA-R as amended. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

G. SCHOOL BOARD MATTERS OF INTEREST:

H. ADJOURNMENT:

Michelle Muffett-Lipinski moved, Carolyn Mebert seconded to adjourn the special session at 8:05 pm. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

Respectfully submitted,
Robin LaFleur, Recording Secretary