

DRAFT MINUTES

Tuesday, June 24, 2025

Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m.

MS/HS Library Presentation Room

1. Call to Order - Special Meeting

B. Bass called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

2. Meeting Opening

2.01 Pledge of Allegiance

2.02 Roll Call

Brooke Bass, President; Penny Sullivan-Nunes, Vice President; Jean Lucasey; Shannon Stringer; Pavithra Nagarajan; Kenneth Slentz, Superintendent; Meryl Rubinstein, Interim Assistant Director of Finance, Facilities and Operations; Darrel Stinchcomb, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Equity; Elizabeth Saperstein, District Clerk

D. Wood arrived at 7:05 p.m.

R. Hershberg was absent.

B. Bass requested a motion to amend the agenda to add new item number 2.04 (presentation) to the agenda.

J. Lucasey moved and S. Stringer seconded to amend the agenda as referenced above.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

3.03 Acceptance of the Amended Agenda

B. Bass requested a motion to accept the amended June 24, 2025 agenda.

P. Sullivan-Nunes moved and P. Nagarajan seconded, that the board accept the amended June 24, 2025 agenda.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

B. Bass announced that the board would move straight to the new item which would be presented by P. Sullivan-Nunes.

P. Sullivan-Nunes presented background information on New York State Education Law Section 2803 prohibiting students from using personal internet-enabled devices during the school day and



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on school property, and explained the rationale behind the policy committee's recommendation to revise Policy 5695: Students and Personal Electronic Devices in accordance with the new law. The policy committee offers its revised draft of policy 5695 for first reading in agenda item 9.01 of this meeting.

School districts in New York are required to adopt a policy by August 1, 2025 to be in effect for the start of the 2025-2026 school year and to develop the supporting regulations.

The adopted policy must include the following: ways for parents/guardians to contact their children during the school days, device storage methods, stakeholders with whom the district should consult, ways to discipline students, and yearly reporting of disciplinary action for non-compliance including an analysis of demographic disparities in enforcement. P. Sullivan-Nunes noted that the law does not direct the district specifically on how to satisfy the above requirements. The presentation reviewed the criteria the policy committee had to consider in order to develop a policy that is in compliance with the requirements of the law.

The presentation covered the exceptions to student use of a personal electronic device including: if it is explicitly included in a student's individualized education program (IEP) or 504 plan, if needed for the management of a student's healthcare, for translation services, for a student who is routinely responsible for the care and wellbeing of a family member, in the event of an emergency determined by administration, by an administrator for a specific educational purpose, and/or where required by law.

If the board supports the policy committee's recommendation at tonight's meeting without substantive changes the revised policy will be posted to the district website on June 25 for public comment, to be shared with the policy committee for consideration. A second reading of the proposed policy will be presented to the full board at a future meeting and recommend adoption of the policy by August 1, 2025.

P. Sullivan-Nunes concluded the presentation by acknowledging the various perspectives - parents and guardians, teachers, and administrators - to take into consideration. Whatever policy is adopted can be revisited during the school year.

3. Citizen Comments

3.01 Notice

The board of education values input from the entire Dobbs Ferry School District community. Although we do not engage in dialogue with the public at our board of education business meetings, we are listening. Members of our school district community may comment on *any matter related to the meeting's approved agenda*. If you wish to address the board, please sign in with the district clerk. Any group or organization wishing to address the board must identify a single spokesperson. Please state your name for the record and keep your remarks to 3 minutes or less. Speakers will conduct themselves in a civil manner and will be ruled out of order for any statement that constitutes a direct threat against officers, employees or students of the school district,



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or that is obscene. Questions or comments concerning matters that are not on the agenda will be taken under consideration and referred to the superintendent for appropriate action.

Members of the Dobbs Ferry community shared their opinions on the development of the statewide "bell-to-bell" cell phone ban policy in public schools.

4. Correspondence

4.01 Board Correspondence

None

5. Announcements

K. Slentz thanked everyone involved in this year's high school graduation.

6. Board Committee Reports

6.01 Committee Reports

D. Wood reported the following information and updates from the June 17, 2025 meeting of the School and Community Relations Committee:

- Discussed the new district website and features that could be particularly helpful to parents;
- Discussed the feedback on the budget newsletter exit survey of voters, and how the district can improve communications;
- Recognition of the Eagle Eye Newsletter, which won a public relations award.

S. Stringer reported the following information and updates from the June 18, 2025 meeting of the Finance Committee:

- Reviewed the feedback received from the budget newsletter exit survey and discussed lessons learned and plans for improvement in administering the survey for the 2026-27 budget;
- Reviewed the 2025 proposed tax warrant letter that will be presented to the board for approval at the June 24 meeting;
- Received an update on tax certiorari reserve management plan including the current status of the tax certiorari reserve and discussion of options for how this reserve could be adjusted to better match current claims in future years;
- Reviewed the proposed year-end fund balance allocation and discussion of the importance of maintaining the unassigned fund balance at 4% and the options for allocation of remaining funds into specific reserves.

J. Lucasey reported the following information and updates from the June 18, 2025 meeting of the Policy Committee:

- Determined first reading for policy 5695;
- Discussed the recommendations for structure of the policy committee for the next school



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year.

Committee minutes are posted on the district website.

7. Superintendent Report

7.01 Curriculum Review Report

Building principals Dr. Tashia Brown, Mr. Patrick Mussolini and Dr. John Falino updated the board on their respective programs: K-5 literacy, 6-8 literacy, K-8 math, and 9-12 International Baccalaureate (IB). The administrators shared data on reading, math and IB diplomas.

The curriculum review report is posted to the district website.

8. Board Actions

- 8.01** The board conducted a first reading of the aforementioned revised Policy 5695: Students and Personal Electronic Devices. It reached a consensus to post the policy to the website for public comment for 28 days and bring the policy back for a second reading and anticipated adoption at a meeting date in late July.

The revised policy is posted on the district website.

8.02 Personnel - Professional/Certificated Staff

BE IT RESOLVED, that the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District moves to approve the professional/certificated personnel actions.

B. Bass requested a motion to approve the professional personnel actions.

J. Lucasey moved and P. Nagarajan seconded, to approve the professional personnel actions.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

1. Resignations

(a) Aaron Crug, Probationary Special Education Teacher
Location: Dobbs Ferry Middle School
Effective: June 30, 2025

2. Annual Appointment

(a) Mary Dent, part-time (.5) Speech/Language Pathologist
Location: Dobbs Ferry Middle School
Effective: August 27, 2025- June 30, 2026



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Compensation: MA +30, Step 7 prorated (\$46,270.50)

Note: Reappointment from 2024-2025 school year

8.03 Addendum to the Superintendent's Contract

BE IT RESOLVED that the board hereby authorizes its president to sign an Addendum Agreement to the Superintendent's Employment Agreement, as presented to the board at this meeting. A copy of said agreement shall be incorporated by reference within the minutes of this meeting.

B. Bass requested a motion to approve the addendum to the superintendent's contract.

D. Wood moved and S. Stringer seconded, to approve the addendum to the superintendent's contract.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

8.04 Return Excess Funds in Tax Certiorari Reserve to the General Fund

WHEREAS, the board of education has previously established a reserve fund pursuant to §3651(1-a) & (3-a) of the Education Law to pay judgments and claims in tax certiorari proceedings;

BE IT RESOLVED, that following a review of the status of pending tax certiorari proceedings and the amount of funds in the tax certiorari reserve fund, the board of education approves the return of the sum of \$75,000 from the tax certiorari reserve fund to the general fund, such amount representing funds not expended and not reasonably expected to be expended for the payment of judgments and claims in tax certiorari proceedings.

B. Bass requested a motion to approve the resolution.

J. Lucasey moved and D. Wood seconded, to approve the resolution.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

8.05 Budget Transfer

BE IT RESOLVED, that the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District hereby moves to approve the following budget transfer to cover costs related to curb repairs:



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Account	Decrease	Increase
A 1621-400-08-0000 Maintenance Contractual		\$79,000
A 1620-420-08-0000 Utilities	\$50,000	
A 2110-130-02-2000 Teaching Grades 6-8	\$29,000	

BE IT RESOLVED, that the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District hereby moves to approve the following budget transfer to cover transportation costs:

Account	Decrease	Increase
A 5540-400-09-9000 Contract Transportation		\$60,000
A 2110-130-02-2000 Teaching Grades 6-8	\$60,000	

BE IT RESOLVED, that the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District hereby moves to approve the following budget transfer to cover special education contractual services:

Account	Decrease	Increase
A 2250-400-00-7200 Special Ed Contractual		\$50,000
A 2250-471-00-7200 Special Ed Tuition Public	\$50,000	

BE IT RESOLVED, that the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District hereby moves to approve the following budget transfer to balance BOCES codes:

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Account	Decrease	Increase
A 1310-490-00-0000 Personnel BOCES		\$ 98
A 1480-490-00-0000 Public Info BOCES		\$ 1,568
A 2070-490-04-0000 Staff Dev BOCES		\$ 5,480
A 2110-490-00-0000 BOCES – General Ed		\$ 2,280
A 2110-490-01-5400 BOCES – Cultural Arts - SH		\$ 15,150
A 2110-490-02-5400 BOCES – Cultural Arts - MS		\$ 4,500
A 2010-490-04-0000 Curric Dev BOCES	\$ 5,500	
A 1680-490-00-0000 Data Processing BOCES	\$ 12,000	
A 2855-490-07-7900 Athletics BOCES	\$ 11,576	

B. Bass requested a motion to approve the budget transfer.

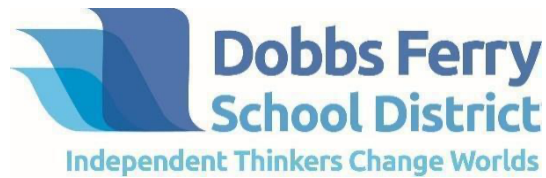
J. Lucasey moved and P. Nagarajan seconded, to approve the budget transfer.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

8.06 Year End Fund Balance and Reserve Allocation

BE IT RESOLVED, that the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District hereby moves to approve the following actions on the district reserve accounts:

- Establish the Unassigned Fund Balance at an amount not greater than 4% of the District's 2025-26: \$2,393,698
- Increase the Reserve for Employee Benefits Accrued Liability in an amount not to exceed \$200,000
- Increase the Retirement Contributions Reserve Fund (ERS) in an amount not to exceed \$100,000



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- Increase the Retirement Contributions Reserve Sub-Fund (TRS) in an amount not to exceed \$200,000
- Increase the Reserve for Unemployment Insurance in an amount not to exceed \$100,000
- Fund the Capital Improvements Reserve Fund, approved by voter referendum on 5/15/18, in an amount not to exceed the total reserve balance of \$2,500,000
- Fund the Property Loss and Liability Claims Reserve Fund in an amount not to exceed \$500,000

B. Bass requested a motion to approve the actions.

P. Nagarajan moved and D. Wood seconded, to approve the actions.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

8.07 Approval of Tax Warrant

BE IT RESOLVED, that the board of Education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District, hereby move to approve the Tax Warrant Notification for the 2025-2026 School Year to the Town of Greenburgh in the amount of \$45,851,547.

B. Bass requested a motion to approve the tax warrant.

P. Sullivan-Nunes moved and J. Lucasey seconded, to approve the tax warrant.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

8.08 CSE/CPSE Recommendations

WHEREAS the Committee on Special Education and Committee on Preschool Special Education had issued to the board by written confidential report dated June 20, 2025, its IEP recommendations for the students who are identified therein; and

WHEREAS the board is responsible for arranging for appropriate special programs and services to students with IEPs, as recommended by said committee;

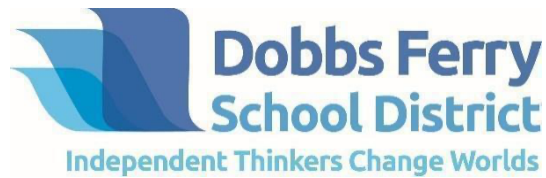
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District hereby authorize and direct the administration to immediately arrange for the special programs and services as set forth in said report dated June 20, 2025.

B. Bass requested a motion to approve the CSE/CPSE recommendations.

S. Stringer moved and D. Wood seconded, to approve the CSE/CPSE recommendations.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

8.09 Student Out-of-District and Summer Transportation (Piggybacking)



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WHEREAS, the Ardsley Union Free School District (“Ardsley”) has made available to public school districts located in Westchester County its Student Out-of-District and Summer Transportation through a provision in the bid specifications permitting “piggybacking” as well as a resolution of the Ardsley board of education authorizing participation in the Student Out-of-District and Summer Transportation on the same terms and conditions as the contract with Ardsley; and

WHEREAS, said transportation contract was bid in accordance with Education Law Section 305(14);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District determines that the contract cost for the Student Out-of-District and Summer Transportation is appropriate and will result in cost savings to the district; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the board of education requests authorization from Ardsley to piggyback onto Ardsley’s Student Out-of-District and Summer Transportation Contract with Royal Coach for the 2025-2026 school year on the same terms and conditions as the contract with Ardsley; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the board of education authorizes the board president to execute a contract with Royal Coach as well as any documents and forms required by the New York State Education Department to facilitate approval of the contract.

B. Bass requested a motion to approve the resolution.

D. Wood moved and S. Stringer seconded, to approve the resolution.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

8.10 Student Athletic and Field Trip Transportation (Piggybacking)

WHEREAS, the Hastings On Hudson Union Free School District (“Hastings”) has made available to public school districts located in Westchester County its Student Athletic and Field Trip Transportation through a provision in the bid specifications permitting “piggybacking” as well as a resolution of the Hastings board of education authorizing participation in the Student Athletic and Field Trip Transportation on the same terms and conditions as the contract with Hastings; and

WHEREAS, said transportation contract was bid in accordance with Education Law Section 305(14);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District determines that the contract cost for the Student Athletic and Field Trip Transportation is appropriate and will result in cost savings to the district; and



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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the board of education requests authorization from Hastings to piggyback onto Hasting's Student Athletic and Field Trip Transportation Contract with Academy Bus Company Inc. for the 2025-2026 school year on the same terms and conditions as the contract with Hastings; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the board of education authorizes the board president to execute a contract with Academy Bus Company Inc. as well as any documents and forms required by the New York State Education Department to facilitate approval of the contract.

B. Bass requested a motion to approve the resolution.

P. Nagarajan moved and S. Stringer seconded, to approve the resolution.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

8.11 Quad Management Transportation Services Agreement

BE IT RESOLVED, that the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District, hereby moves to approve a Quad Management Transportation Services Agreement between the Quad Villages (Ardsley, Dobbs Ferry, Hastings and Irvington) to a one (1) year municipal cooperation agreement, commencing on July 1, 2025 and terminating on June 30, 2026, for the purposes of providing the administration and management of transportation services to resident pupils attending schools within each of the quad school districts or non-public schools.

B. Bass requested a motion to approve the agreement.

J. Lucasey moved and S. Stringer seconded, to approve the agreement.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

8.12 Extension of Contract for School Food Service Management Company

BE IT RESOLVED, that the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District, hereby move to approve the 2025-26 Extension of Contract for School Food Service Management between the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District and Whitsons Nutrition, LLC effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

B. Bass requested a motion to approve the contract extension.

D. Wood moved and S. Stringer seconded, to approve the contract extension.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

8.13 Acceptance of DF Schools Foundation Grant (Librarian and Data Team)



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BE IT RESOLVED, that the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District, hereby move to accept the following grant from the Dobbs Ferry Schools Foundation in an amount not to exceed \$1,000.00

Name of Grant	Teacher(s)/Staff	School	Amount
Librarians and Data Team Summer Professional Development	Amber Klebanoff	District	\$1,000.00

B. Bass requested a motion to accept the foundation grant.

J. Lucasey moved and P. Nagarajan seconded, to accept the foundation grant.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

8.14 Acceptance of DF Schools Foundation Grant (Responsive Classroom)

BE IT RESOLVED, that the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District, hereby move to accept the following grant from the Dobbs Ferry Schools Foundation in an amount not to exceed \$4,295.00.

Name of Grant	Teacher(s)/Staff	School	Amount
Responsive Classroom	Dr. Tashia Brown	Springhurst	\$4,295.00

B. Bass requested a motion to accept the foundation grant.

D. Wood moved and S. Stringer seconded, to accept the foundation grant.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

9. Citizens Comments

9.01 Notice

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themselves in a civil manner and will be ruled out of order for any statement that constitutes a direct threat against officers, employees or students of the school district, or that is obscene. Questions or comments concerning matters that are not on the agenda will be taken under consideration and referred to the superintendent for appropriate action.

None

10. Old Business

None

11. New Business

B. Bass announced that any board members interested in leadership positions for the 2025-2026 school year can let her know.

B. Bass thanked Meryl Rubinstein for her service to the district as interim assistant superintendent for finance, facilities and operations concluding June 30, 2025.

12. Acknowledgements

None

13. Upcoming Meetings

13.01 Calendar

Wednesday, July 9, 2025 - 5:00 p.m. - Board Room

- Reorganizational Meeting

Tuesday, August 26, 2025 - 7:00 p.m. - MS/HS Library Presentation Room

- Regular Meeting

14. Adjournment

B. Bass requested a motion to adjourn the June 24, 2025 meeting.

J. Lucasey moved and S. Stringer seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Vote: 6 ayes, 0 nays

Elizabeth Saperstein
District Clerk