Dobbs Ferry School District
Independent Thinkers Change Worlds

# APPROVED MINUTES

**Tuesday, April 21, 2026**
**Special Meeting - 6:00 PM**
**MS/HS Library Presentation Room**

## 1. Call to Order

B. Bass called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

## 2. Meeting Opening

## 2.01 Pledge of Allegiance

## 2.02 Roll Call

Brooke Bass, President; Penny Sullivan-Nunes; Darren Wood; Pavithra Nagarajan; Rebecca Hershberg; Mindy Walker; Sudha Reddy; Kenneth Slentz, Superintendent; Lisa Raymond, Assistant Director of Finance, Facilities and Operations; Yael Klein, student ex-officio; Ashley Wu, student ex-officio; and Elizabeth Saperstein, District Clerk.

Dr. Stinchcomb was absent.

## 2.03 Acceptance of the Agenda

B. Bass requested a motion to accept the April 21, 2026 agenda.

P. Sullivan-Nunes moved and D. Wood seconded, that the board accept the April 21, 2026 agenda.

Vote: 7 ayes, 0 nays

## 3. Citizens 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, 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

**4.0 Correspondence**

None

**5.0 Announcements**

B. Bass made the following announcements:

**5.01 Personal Voter Registration**

Any community resident not registered with the Westchester County Board of Elections may do so during Personal Registration which will take place on Monday, May 11, 2026 between 3:30 pm and 7:30 pm in the High School Gymnasium Foyer. Voter Qualifications: (1) Must be a citizen of the United States; (2) Must be 18 years of age or older; (3) Must have been a resident of the school district for a period of 30 days or more prior to May 19, 2026.

**5.02 Absentee and Early Mail Ballot Applications**

Any registered, qualified voter may vote by mail by submitting an Application for an Absentee or Early Mail ballot. Applications for absentee or early mail ballots may be downloaded from the District Budget section of the website, or may be requested in writing by emailing the district clerk at districtclerk@dfsd.org or 505 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522. Applications for absentee or early mail ballots may be submitted after April 20, 2026. The application must be printed, signed in ink by the voter, and returned either in person or by mail to the Office of the District Clerk. The application for an absentee or early mail ballot must be received by 2:00 p.m. on May 12, 2026 if the ballot will be mailed to the voter, or by 4:00 p.m. on May 18, 2026 if the ballot will be picked up in person by the voter or his/her designee. Absentee and early voting ballots will be available April 24, 2026. Completed absentee and early mail ballots must be received in the district office in person or U.S. mail no later than 5:00 PM on May 19, 2026.

K. Slentz made the following announcements:

Three verified candidates will run for two seats for the board of education:: Pavithra Nagarjan, Jeremy Schumacher, and Disan Davis. That is the order that they will appear on the ballot per the drawing conducted by the district clerk office. Mr. Slentz wished all three candidates good luck.

K. Slentz acknowledged administrative assistants recognition day, April 22, 2026, and thanked E. Saperstein for the work she does on behalf of the district.

For those who could not attend the high school performance of Pippin, it can be streamed on the website. K. Slentz acknowledged G. DeFalco and the many participants who put together another amazing musical experience for our staff and community.

The board is tentatively scheduled to consider a resolution for possible approval of the

proposed energy performance contract at its meeting of April 28, 2026.

## 6. Superintendent Report

### 6.01 2026-27 Budget Presentation

The superintendent and assistant superintendent proposed the 2026-2027 budget to the board.

The proposed budget totals $62,045,799 - a spending increase of 3.68% over the previous year.

All current programs, courses, clubs, and sports will be maintained, but there are reductions in staff positions, including two reductions in current staff and eight vacant positions that will not be filled.

The budget includes a $100,000 capital outlay project for which the district will receive building aid back the following year, once the project is completed.

The proposed budget carries a 3.49% increase on the tax levy resulting (at this time) in a projected decrease in the tax rate on account of property reassessments and new construction.

The proposed budget prioritizes curriculum and instruction and the entire student experience. This includes maintaining a safe, secure, and welcoming environment.

The superintendent recapped critical steps being taken to decrease the weight on the taxpayers, including maximizing investments to generate building aid and BOCES aid. Declining enrollment across the state (700 districts are experiencing decline) does not translate into declining student needs.

The assistant superintendent highlighted the largest cost drivers of the budget, specifically salaries and benefits which comprise 74% of the total spending. The district also faces an increase of 8.77% (approximately $715,000) in insurance costs for active employees and retirees. Increases in services to students with special needs, transportation costs, and terms of collective bargaining agreements also drive increases.

The assistant superintendent reiterated how a school budget is structured as required by New York State, which includes administrative, capital and program components of the budget, designed to make it easier for the public to understand. L. Raymond reviewed each component in detail for the proposed 2026-2027 budget, including historical trends, the tax cap calculation, debt service obligations, and use of funds from the unappropriated fund balance and three reserve accounts.

The superintendent concluded with next steps, should the board adopt the proposed budget. This includes finalizing the budget newsletter, presenting this information at the public hearing on May 12, 2026, and then the annual budget and trustee vote on May 19, 2026.

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*The proposed 2026-2027 budget presentation is available on the district website.*

**7.0 Board Reports**

None

**8.0 Board Actions**

**8.01 Southern Westchester BOCES Trustee Election and Administrative Budget Vote.**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District hereby move to consider a resolution with respect to approval of three trustees for Southern Westchester Board of Cooperative Educational Services - Sheryl Brady, Nilesh Jain, and Nan Eileen Mead for the time period of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029;

AND IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, that the board will move to consider a resolution with respect to approval of the 2026-2027 Estimated Administrative Budget of $14,191,628 for the Southern Westchester Board of Cooperative Educational Services.

B. Bass requested a motion to approve the resolution.

P. Sullivan-Nunes moved and D. Wood seconded, that the board approve the resolution.

Vote: 7 ayes, 0 nays

**8.02 Approval of 2026-2027 Property Tax Report Card**

**BE IT RESOLVED,** that the board of education adopts the Property Tax Report Card for the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District, as attached, and directs the superintendent to submit it to the New York State Education Department as prescribed by Education Law 1716(7).

B. Bass requested a motion to approve the 2026-2027 property tax report card.

P. Sullivan-Nunes moved and R. Hershberg seconded, that the board approve the 2026-2027 property tax report card.

Vote: 7 ayes, 0 nays

**8.03 2026-2027 Budget Adoption**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the board of education of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District hereby moves to adopt the proposed budget of $62,045,799 for the 2026-2027 school year.

B. Bass requested a motion to adopt the 2026-2027 proposed budget.

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P. Sullivan-Nunes moved and M. Walker seconded, that the board adopt the 2026-2027 proposed budget.

Vote: 7 ayes, 0 nays

**9. Citizens Comments**

**9.01 Notice**

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**10. Old Business**

None

**11. New Business**

None

**12 Upcoming Meetings**

**12.01 Calendar**

Tuesday, April 28, 2026 - 7:00 p.m. - MS/HS Library Presentation Room
- Regular Meeting

Tuesday, May 12, 2026 - 7:00 p.m. - MS/HS Library Presentation Room
- Regular Meeting

**13. Acknowledgements**

None

**14. Adjournment**

B. Bass requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**APPROVED MINUTES**

P. Nagarajan moved and M. Walker seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 6:42 p.m.

Vote: 7 ayes, 0 nays

**Elizabeth Saperstein**
**District Clerk**