

In The Matter Of:
Department of Education
Academy of Public Safety & Security Charter School

Public Hearing
March 9, 2018

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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-- PUBLIC HEARING --

IN THE MATTER OF:)
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Delaware Academy of Public)
Safety and Security Charter)
School)

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Department of Education
The Collette Education Resource Building
35 Commerce Way
Conference Rooms A and B
Dover, Delaware 19904

Friday, March 9, 2018
5:00 p.m.

.. . . .

BEFORE: Denise Stouffer, Lead Education Associate
Charter Office, Department of Education

Donna Johnson, Executive Director
State Board of Education

ATTORNEY: Laura Makransky, DAG
Attorney for Department of Education

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-- Transcript of Proceedings --

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1 MS. STOUFFER: Good evening. I
2 declare this public hearing to be open. My name is
3 Denise Stouffer, and I'm the Lead Education
4 Associate, and I have been appointed by the
5 Secretary of Education to conduct this public
6 hearing.

7 At this time I will ask for the
8 wonderful Laura beside me to introduce herself for
9 the record.

10 MS. MAKRANSKY: Hi. I'm Laura
11 Makransky. I'm the Deputy Attorney General assigned
12 to represent the Department.

13 MS. STOUFFER: The Delaware Academy
14 of Public Safety and Security was placed on formal
15 review by the Department of Education with the
16 assent of the State Board of Education.

17 As required by law, the matter was
18 referred to the Charter School Accountability
19 Committee for investigation and report.

20 This joint public hearing is being
21 held by the Department of Education and the State
22 Board of Education to assist in the decision of
23 whether the criteria set forth in Delaware Code for
24 remedial action has been satisfied.



1 This public hearing provides an
2 opportunity to receive public comments about this
3 formal review.

4 I would like the record to reflect
5 that the time and notice of this -- the time, date,
6 and place of today's meeting was published in the
7 News Journal and the Delaware State News on
8 January 23, 2018.

9 In addition, notice was posted at the
10 Charter School Accountability Committee's official
11 place of business, on the Department of Education's
12 official website, and on the State Public Meeting
13 Calendar on the State's official website on
14 January 9, 2018.

15 Further, the applicant was personally
16 notified of the time, date, and place of today's
17 public hearing on January 18, 2018.

18 A court reporter is present so that
19 record of this hearing can be made. It will be
20 necessary for each speaker to clearly identify his
21 or herself before beginning to speak so that the
22 court reporter will be able to note who you are.

23 The record of this hearing will be
24 provided to the Secretary of Education, the members



1 of the State Board of Education, together with any
2 written or electronic comments received during the
3 course of the formal review process.

4 To date, we have received several
5 comments on the formal review, and they are posted
6 on our website.

7 We will proceed in the following
8 manner: First, we will hear from any
9 representatives of the charter school who wish to
10 comment on the formal review process.

11 Then we will take comments from
12 anyone else who desires to speak. There are sign-up
13 sheets as you came into the room. If you desire to
14 speak, please sign up now. I will pause the record
15 for a moment to permit anyone else who desires to
16 speak to sign up.

17 First, however, I would like to have
18 a show of hands of all those who desire to make
19 comments so I can make a determination whether it is
20 necessary to impose any time limits. We are going
21 to go off the record.

22 (An off-the-record discussion was held.)

23 MS. STOUFFER: We will go back on the
24 record. At this point I will accept any comments



1 from any members of the DAPS, the people who are
2 here to represent the Delaware Academy of Public
3 Safety and Security. So if you would like to go
4 first, and then we can accept comments from the
5 school.

6 MS. MANISCALCO: Oh, okay. Hi. My
7 name is Jolynn, J-O-L-Y-N-N, Maniscalco. It's M as
8 in Mary, A, N as in Nancy, I-S-C-A-L-C-O.

9 Good evening. So I spoke at the last
10 meeting. I offered a parent's perspective and
11 challenged the Board to hear me, to hear us all. I
12 was skeptical, but still I had hope.

13 As the meeting went on, I heard parents,
14 teachers, students, and just community people stand
15 up and tell heartfelt stories of how the school has
16 changed their lives.

17 I heard some say that the school had saved
18 their lives. I was still filled with doubt that
19 this would change anything. I hoped it would, but I
20 still had this feeling of uncertainty in my stomach.
21 I was wrong.

22 You did not only listen to us, but you
23 heard us. I want to thank you for that. I want to
24 personally thank the committee for voting to



1 recommend to keep DAPS open. My hope has now turned
2 into belief, a belief in the DOE that wants to help,
3 a belief in our school administration, teachers,
4 parents, and students, a belief in our community
5 that we will succeed and turn things around
6 together.

7 This newfound sense of belief lies much
8 deeper than a single committee vote. There have
9 been monumental changes in just a few short weeks to
10 strengthen my belief. The decision of the Colonial
11 School District to take DAPS under its guidance is a
12 huge step in the right direction.

13 The restructuring of our school board with
14 a strong leader in Ms. Lopez Waite, who has a proven
15 success rate and deeply cares about our kids, is an
16 enormous win.

17 The Board accepting our recommendation to
18 lower our charter numbers will allow the school to
19 grow at a reasonable pace.

20 These are just a few of the changes that
21 are going to give us a chance. But, although I am
22 optimistic and excited to see how DAPS is going to
23 grow into a strong school that will foster our
24 future heros, the battle is not over. There is



1 still much work to be done, work that will include
2 the necessary support of us all, from the students,
3 parents, teachers, administrators; and yes, even
4 you, Department of Education. We all have a stake
5 now to ensure the success of our school.

6 We need the support of the Secretary and
7 the whole, entire Department of Education. We must
8 work together as a team. And it all starts with
9 you, the Secretary. You must be part of our
10 success. You all are the Jeffrey Lawrey to our
11 team.

12 So, yes, while I am extremely grateful for
13 the opportunity keep DAPS open, I'm also cautious.
14 Because I know, for things to turn around, it is
15 going to take every single person in this room
16 reading this, hearing about it, whatever, to make
17 this happen.

18 And what a terrific thing to have a hand
19 in making. With our success, the DOE will have
20 bragging rights that this small, little State of
21 Delaware has a unique educational opportunity for
22 its children, to teaching foster kids to become
23 heros, to save lives by teaching to save lives, so
24 unique that one would have to move to Texas to find



1 anything else comparable. What a chance. What a
2 gift. What an opportunity. Together, we will make
3 this a success. The key word there is together.

4 Again, I want to express my gratitude to
5 the committee, to the Secretary, and to the entire
6 Department of Education for this opportunity. I
7 want to implore you to still be a part of our
8 success.

9 To the Colonial School District, I offer
10 my sincere thanks for your guidance. To the
11 administration, teachers, parents and students, we
12 will do this. We will take this opportunity and
13 create a unique, special, wonderful learning
14 environment. We will be celebrating 10, 25, 50-year
15 reunions. Together, we are unstoppable. Together,
16 we will now and always be a part of the DAPS family.
17 We will forever be DAPS. Thank you. And I have
18 pictures.

19 MS. STOUFFER: Okay.

20 MS. MANISCALCO: I was going to put
21 them on the board, but I wasn't sure. It's just
22 pictures of all the activities and volunteer things
23 that the students have been doing for rescue.

24 MS. STOUFFER: These will be marked



1 as an exhibit. Is there anyone else who would like
2 to make comments?

3 MS. LOPEZ-WAITE: I will just make a
4 comment. Margie Lopez-Waite. I'm the chair of the
5 board of directors for DAPS. And I just wanted to
6 acknowledge that we have our administrators here and
7 a parent to support the mission that we are on. And
8 I just -- and we are hopeful that on March 15 will
9 be a new page in the history of DAPS. That we get
10 to move forward and really start putting our plan
11 into place.

12 So we hope that the conditions that
13 were placed on the recommendation will stand. We
14 feel very confident that those conditions are fair.
15 And we feel that they are necessary in order for us
16 to hit those necessary milestones.

17 So we are willing to take that
18 challenge. And we are willing to, you know, move
19 forward. And we are looking forward to that. Thank
20 you.

21 MS. MATOS: Hi. My name is Maria
22 Matos, and I'm going to speak on behalf of DAPS. I
23 didn't come here to speak on behalf of DAPS, but I
24 believe that it's an educational opportunity for our



1 children.

2 I think with the leadership of Margie
3 on the board, this school is going to continue to
4 move forward. I started with DAPS way back when,
5 before we started Antonia Alonso.

6 And I truly believe what the mother
7 said about the school certainly is a beacon of hope
8 for some of the students that go there. I don't
9 think the Department of Education is going to regret
10 giving the opportunity for DAPS to move forward. I
11 think it will happen, and you are not going to
12 regret it. Thank you for allowing me to speak.

13 MS. STOUFFER: Is there anyone else
14 who desires to speak? Then thank you all for
15 participating today. The Secretary will consider
16 your comments in making her decision at the
17 conclusion of the formal review process. This
18 hearing is now closed.

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CERTIFICATE

I, Lorena J. Hartnett, a Notary Public and Registered Professional Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing is an accurate and complete transcription of the proceeding held at the time and place stated herein, and that the said proceeding was recorded by me and then reduced to typewriting under my direction, and constitutes a true record of the testimony given by said witnesses.

I further certify that I am not a relative, employee, or attorney of any of the parties or a relative or employee of either counsel, and that I am in no way interested directly or indirectly in this action.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal of office on this 12th day of March 2018.



Lorena J. Hartnett
Registered Professional Reporter

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