DANVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Directors Regular Meeting
Tuesday, December 2, 2025, 6:00 pm
In Person and via Zoom

School Directors Present: Clayton Cargill, Dave Towle, Tim Sanborn, Eric Hewitt (via Zoom), Kay Freedy.

School Administrators Present: Matt Foster (Superintendent), Mike Moriarty (Assistant Superintendent) via Zoom, Patti Sprague (Curriculum Director) via Zoom, and Natalie Conway (Principal).

Community Members Present: Kaity White, Karena Shippee, Pat Priest, James Hughes, Peter Bowry, Marilyn Mcdowell, Earl Morrison , Carolyn Morrison, Kristin Mantius, Harlee Lacourse, Margaret Priest, Willa Mantius, Luke Morrison, all in person. Molly Gleason, Michelle Leclerc, Bethany Hale, Pete Lynch, Simon Fisher, others via Zoom.

1. **Call meeting to order:** Clayton called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Introductions were made around the room.

2. **Additions/Changes to the Agenda:**
   Addition to the agenda: Position letter from McNeil, Leddy and Sheahan regarding School Closure Article.
   MOTION: Dave made a motion to add this letter to the agenda for discussion. There was no second, and no vote. This item was added to the agenda by consensus with the error.

3. **Board Business:**
   - **Middle School Student Council Presentation (Video Timestamp 2:00)**

   Harlee Lacourse, Margaret Priest, Willa Mantius, Luke Morrison shared a presentation titled "The Student Opinion Survey." They created a survey for students in middle and high school to share their thoughts and feelings about the petition to close the high school. 96% of middle school students and 32% of high school students participated in this anonymous survey. Of those surveyed, 66% of middle school students and 61% of high school students want the high school to stay open. They shared the ways the students felt the closure would positively and negatively impact them; credit transferability, tougher transportation, losing friends being some negatives, while new opportunities and the opportunity to attend other schools of their choice would be positive. There were several questions asked on the survey and the answers were reviewed. They ended the presentation with additional feedback gathered from students worth considering.

   - **Fall Data Presentation by Patti Sprague, Curriculum Director (Video Timestamp 14:14)**

   Patti reviewed the results of the data collected during the Fall Assessments. The assessments in the fall involve literacy, reading, social-emotional-behavioral, and math. There are also assessments for preschool students, involving the topics mentioned previously, as well as physical, cognitive, science, social studies, arts, language, and numeracy. These tests are all "one test, one day"; a snapshot of a students' learning.

Patti reviewed Danville's Academic Achievement Goal for 25-26: The number of students in K-8 who are proficient in reading (using LCAS measures) will increase by 7%, from 69% to 76%. *Between Fall of 2024 and Fall of 2025, 48% of students met the fall ELA benchmark in 2025, compared to 61% in 2024. In Math Proficiency between Fall of 2024 to Fall of 2025, 47% of students met the fall math benchmark in 2025, compared to 52% in 2024.*
The next 2025-2026 goal was reviewed, regarding safe & healthy schools: By June 2026, SWIS major referrals in grades K-8 will decrease by 5% compared to 2024-2025 levels. Major behaviors are ones that are office-managed, instead of classroom-managed. Between Fall of 2024 and Fall of 2025, there has been a 32% decrease in major behavior referrals. *Point of Clarification on Italicized text: Per Patti Sprague, this data was identified after the meeting as inaccurate. Patti has to do the recalculations to figure out the aggregate.*

4. **Approve Minutes:**
   - November 4, 2025 Regular
   - November 4, 2025 Informational

MOTION: Tim made a motion to approve both sets of minutes, seconded by Kay, all in favor.

5. **Administrative Reports:**
   - **Superintendent Report (Video Timestamp 24:56)**
     Matt shared CCSU and member districts made a timely submission of their self-evaluation of the District Quality Standards (DQS) to the AOE. This is the first submission of DQS. Matt volunteered to be part of a working group to study class sizes under Act 73.

   - **Principals Report (Video Timestamp 28:11)**

Natalie reviewed recent happenings with high school Spanish class, college visits, a visit to the Hood Museum, a Veteran's Day celebration, a school Thanksgiving meal from the cafeteria. Sweethearts and Heroes, sponsored by Littleton Chevrolet, gave a school-wide presentation on empathy, compassion and teamwork. Winter Athletics is off to a strong start with student participation. The school has open positions for a MS Special Educator and a ES Paraeducator Long-Term Sub.

   - **Student Services Report (Video Timestamp 32:16)**

No questions.

6. **Board Business continued:**
   - **FY27 Budget Discussion (Video Timestamp 32:30)**

Matt shared that the December 1st letter from the AOE was received the day before this meeting, and included LTWADM and tax yield information. Time is needed to interpret this data for a future presentation. Matt and the board agreed to present this in a separate meeting in December.
There was discussion of moving Title I funded employees into the local budget due to the current unpredictability of future federal funds, but due to expected local budget increases, that is not the plan at the current time. There is also discussion of making a reduction of a staff position next year, which would be a $190k, 2% reduction in the budget presented last month. Matt and the administrative team will also be reviewing the surplus from last year to help offset next year's increase.

- **Legislative Update-Act 73 and Redistricting Final Report Discussion (Video Timestamp 36:43)**

No maps were produced by the task force. Now they're looking at cooperative services as a plan. This will go back to the legislature. Danville was mentioned in the final report as being a BOCES with Hazen and Cabot. The definitions of small/sparse by necessity and graduation requirements have been delayed and will be produced at a future meeting in December.

- **Position letter from McNeil, Leddy and Sheahan regarding School Closure Article Discussion (Video Timestamp 39:43)**

Matt and Clayton consulted a second law firm, McNeil, Leddy and Sheahan, who produced their Position Letter on the Petition, which directly contradicts the verbal advice of the law firm originally consulted, Lynn, Lynn, and Blackman. Their conclusion states, "It is our legal analysis that the electorate does not have the authority under the provisions of 16 V.S.A 822(a) to 'direct', compel or otherwise require the School Board to close or 'cease' operating a high school as proposed in Article 1. The language of the statute is clear, the electorate has the power to 'authorize', but not compel. The School Board may accept and implement the authorization under 822(a) or it may choose to provide for a high school education for its students by continuing to maintain a high school." This is a major update, changing the vote from being a binding action, to an advisory action.
Question from the audience-is this vote now more of getting an opinion of the voters of whether they want to close the high school? Matt clarified it authorizes, gives permission, for the board to close the high school, or not. The vote is not binding, so the board can still choose to take the opposite action of the vote.
Question from the audience- is there a 'time limit' on this authorization? Clayton will consult legal on this question.
Question-can the messaging be more clear on the floor vote, that voters will have the opportunity to privately cast their ballot on paper? The flyer sent in the mail is short and not clear on this. Another mailer cannot be produced at this point, but the board will continue to try broadcasting this process so voters won't feel intimidated to have to cast their vote in front of others on the floor.
The message is still the same-it is important to vote on December 6.

- **December Informational Meeting Discussion (Video Timestamp 1:03:16)**

Doors will be open to the public by 1:30. In anticipation of ballot votes, there will be ballot stations and boxes. A process will be in place to confirm registered voters. Only registered voters will be allowed in the building at first to make sure capacity won't be exceeded. Childcare will be provided in the cafeteria. Masks and accommodations will be available for immunocompromised voters. Matt will look into recording/livestreaming. The message for parking is; if you're able to walk, park away from the school (at the church, town office, public parking areas, etc) and walk, to allow those who need more accessible parking to park at the school. Rides are being offered by the school if someone needs a ride to attend. Same-day voting registration will be available.
Question-will discussion be allowed before the vote? Yes.
Question-will public discussion happen before the method of voting (floor or ballot) is determined? Yes.

Question-Where is signage or hand-out information allowed on the day of the vote? Over across the parking lot by the dugouts, or on the Route 2 sidewalk, per Michelle Leclerc. They cannot be anywhere near where people will be walking into the building or near the entryway.

- **COPS Grant Funding Match Discussion (Video Timestamp 1:34:00)**

A local match of $79,250, 25% of the grant award, is required. There are $165,000 in unrestricted endowment funds that can be used for the general purpose of the school, including Kate Currier, Ira Preston, Charles Brainerd, Otis & Irene Brickett, Wallace Collins estate, and Stanley Chamberlin Memorial. Other options would be $166,000 in capital funds.
MOTION: Dave made a motion to pay the 25% match through capital funds, in the amount of $79,250, seconded by Tim, all in favor.

- **A7 Policy – Board Relations with School Personnel, A20 Policy – Board Meetings, Agenda Preparation & Distribution, A21 Policy- Public Participation at Board Meetings, A22 Policy - Notice of Non - Discrimination, A23 Policy - Community Engagement, A24 Policy -Board/Superintendent Relationship, A25 Policy - Role and Adoption of School Board Policies, A26 Policy - Board Member Education (Video Timestamp 1:43:15)**

These are all recommended policies.

MOTION: Tim made a motion to approve policies A7, A20, A21, A22, A23, A24, A25 and A26, Eric seconded, all in favor.

7. **Public Input:**
   None.

8. **Future Agenda Items / Next Meeting Date**
   Informational Meeting-December 3, 2025 at 6:00 pm
   Special Meeting to discuss FY27 Budget-December 17, 2025 at 6:00 pm
   Next Regular Meeting-January 6, 2025 at 6:00 pm.

9. **Adjourn**
   MOTION: Tim motioned to adjourn at 7:52pm, Dave seconded, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Ellie Keefe