

**DANVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, November 1, 2022 – 6:00 p.m.
Danville School Library and Zoom Teleconference
[Video Recording Available](#)**

School Directors Present: Clayton Cargill, David Towle, Melissa Conly, Molly Gleason.
Planned absence: Tim Sanborn.

School Administrators Present: Superintendent Mark Tucker, Elementary Principal Sarah, and
Secondary Principal Larry Fliegelman

Student Representative Present: Thomas Edgar

Building Advisory Group Members Present: Kaity White, Mary Beattie, Eric Hewitt

Public Present:

Pete Knight, Seth Knight, Allison Horne, Lance Horne, Dawn Pastula, Carolyn Morrison, Ginni Lavelly, Melissa Ramsey, Lisa French, Alison Despathy, Rhiannon Esposito, Tyler Cahoon, Melissa Newland, Tracy Hale
Via Zoom: Kathy Dellinger, Bethany Hale, James Stinson, Sara Stinson, Cheryl Mitchell, Jan Noonan, Jo Guertin, Pete Mantius, Kristin Mantius, Richard Benoit, Rob Balivet, Lindsay (no last name listed), Fontaine (no first name listed), Mary Wyand, Bruce Melendy, Travis Grosse, Karena (no last name listed), Dave Schilling, Randy Rathburn, Jen Noonan, Lindsey Mitchell-Wheeler.

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** (*Proposed additions or deletions/Possible agreement*):

Clayton recommended adding CCSU Cost Sharing to the agenda.

MOTION: Dave T. moved to add CCSU Cost Sharing to the agenda, seconded by Melissa, all in favor.

3. Approve Minutes:

MOTION: Melissa moved to approve the October 4, 2022 minutes as written, Molly seconded, all in favor with one abstention from Dave T.

4. Administrative Reports:

- Superintendent: Mark reported that the CCSU Board of Directors passed a policy requiring the elimination of discriminatory mascots in schools which came from the VT Legislature. All school districts in the state are required to adopt the policy; this doesn't impact Danville School seeing as Danville changed the mascot two years ago and has a policy in place. CCSU Policy F8 will be supplemental to Danville's policy DB001 on this issue.

The VT Agency of Education changed the process for Continuous Improvement Plans. Previously, each school district had a separate plan. With the new process, the supervisory union has one plan for all school districts. The Continuous Improvement Plan for all five school districts in the CCSU was approved by the CCSU board and applies to all seven schools for the next two years.

[*CIP can be found here*](#)

Student Services: Board members reviewed the written report, and Mark stated there have been challenges with transporting students with disabilities within the supervisory union. He is working on finalizing a lease for a wheelchair van as they are unable to hire enough transportation companies to cover all of the needs in the supervisory union. The van will be used primarily in Danville, and those costs will come out of the Danville budget.

Mark highlighted the curriculum update in the board packet which will be available bi-monthly.

- Principals: Sarah reported there was a pep rally at the school, the first one since COVID. She also shared that Danville's counselors are working with [Umbrella](#) for grades 5 / 6 guidance classes to support social-emotional needs.
- Student Representative: Thomas reported that Fright Night was on Friday, offering games, an apple cider station, and a haunted trail. It brought together all grades at the school. He mentioned a new group at Danville, "Getting to Y", that is analyzing youth risk behavior survey data which will be released in January. Students are meeting in groups throughout the state and using a framework to take action on specific areas of concern. Larry added that he invited the group to present to the board at a future meeting.

5. Board Business:

- Clayton introduced Brooke Hale, a candidate for the open student representative position on the board. She attended the meeting to observe.
- CCSU Cost Sharing: Clayton reported that the CCSU board received a budget primer to educate board members on how special education funding is allocated from the supervisory union budget to local district school budgets, similar to transportation. There are some costs for the CCSU that aren't billed back to school districts, such as operational costs. Previously, the funding formula for CCSU was 10% shared operational costs (all districts contributed and shared this cost), 45% of total full-time employees and 45% of total student enrollment (ADM). Regarding the 10% portion, some schools in the district require more time and resources. For example, with payroll and more staff. At the recent CCSU board meeting, Mark Tucker and Mike Concessi, CCSU Finance Director, proposed to remove the 10% shared cost and change the formula to 50% of total students (ADM) and 50% total full time employees to make cost sharing more equitable throughout the supervisory union. It is a very minimal increase for Danville, 2/100 of a cent, and other districts such as Peacham will see some savings. Board members agreed to make the change but did not hold a formal vote.

Mike Concessi arrived and introduced himself, adding that very little is a fixed cost for the supervisory union and the 10% was a compromise; Peacham received two seats on the CCSU board with this compromise at the time. Mark added that Caledonia Cooperative has three seats, one for each town, and the other districts each have two seats, including Danville.

- Tax Impact of School Building Project (*Discussion*) *See video at 29:15

Mark reported that he and Mike C. underestimated the tax impact on residential taxpayers who pay their education property taxes only on the value of their property (they receive no property tax credits) in the initial tax impact presentation. Representative Scott Beck, who understands the complexity of the school education property tax calculations, reached out to Mark about the tax impact information that was shared in the newspaper and worked with Mike to revise the numbers.

Mike presented the [new tax impact information](#), and there was a lengthy discussion with many questions coming from community members and responses from the administration. The list below highlights some of the topics discussed:

- School Funding Overview: Danville is a “receiving” town meaning Danville School receives funding from the State Education Fund to support the school budget every year. Local Danville residents contribute 32% to the school budget, and the other 68% comes from the state education fund and non-homestead property taxes (commercial building, second homes, etc).

- Income Sensitivity in Vermont: Vermont offers property tax credits which are applied based on annual household income and house site values. It is a complex formula with specific criteria that determine the level of credits homestead property owners receive. The income cap is currently \$137,000 and the house site value is capped at \$400,000; this is statewide and applies to all towns throughout Vermont.

- In Danville:
249 or 32% of homestead property owners in Danville pay property taxes on their full house site value and are ineligible for property tax credits. For a \$70M school renovation, these property owners would pay an additional \$920 for every \$100,000 of their house value each year for the 30-year bond. For a \$75M new school, they would pay \$980 for every \$100,000 of their house value (see the presentation link above for more detailed information).

186 or 23% of homestead property owners with incomes below \$47,000 would see no increases in their taxes due to property taxes being capped at 2% of their income.

239 or 30% of homestead property owners with incomes between \$47,000 and \$90,000 would see their income sensitivity rate increase by 1.55% and would see an increase in their education property tax with a renovation and a new school. Property taxes and credits vary significantly for each property owner. The VT Department of Taxes website has a property tax calculator available [here](#) to calculate individual property taxes and credits.

110 or 14% of homestead property owners with income between \$90,000 and \$137,000 would see a tax rate increase that is a combination of the two above (see presentation and tax calculator links).

- Non-Homestead Taxpayers (commercial, second homes): These property owners will not see an increase with a new building or renovation because the non-homestead rate is set by the state. If there are any increases or decreases year-to-year, those are set by the state, not locally.

- Factors that are uncontrollable: Common Level of Appraisal (CLA), yield, non-homestead rate, and inflation are all factors that are uncontrollable and could have an impact on property taxes.
 - Financing: Discussion on debt payment, fixed vs variable interest rates and bonding options for a building project.
 - Voting & Timeframe: Every resident will have an opportunity to vote on a bond; it is not the board's decision. The board will decide when the bond vote will be presented, likely a year out (not at Town Meeting this year).
- Building Advisory Update (*Discussion*)

Eric Hewitt, the spokesperson for the advisory group, reported that the group had some of the same questions on tax impact. The group has been meeting since August, and there are knowledgeable members in the group with expertise relevant to these discussions. Mark and Clayton asked that the group reconsider the building options without looking at finances and focus only on what is best for children in the town. With that information, the group voted unanimously (with Melissa and Dave abstaining) to build a new school with the caveat to demolish the entirety of the school and place a monument for the 1937 building. They consider their work done and could reconvene if needed.

Discussion on:

- The various building options, pros and cons, costs and information that is still needed
 - Tax increases and student test scores and how they impact the desirability of living in Danville.
 - Building codes and challenges presented with the different options
 - Current enrollment (353 students) and past enrollment trends and the number of students the new building can support (450 students)
 - Changes in education over the years
 - Composition of the advisory group and how it was formed
- Refocusing the Advisory Group (*Discussion / Possible Action*):

Discussion on:

- How to move forward with the advisory group and utilize the knowledge and information they have obtained throughout this process.
- Construction disruption to students and concerns with them learning in a school under construction
- How more space can impact learning. With more space, the school could

offer more for students such as drama for example, could grow programs but they don't have space.

Clayton proposed holding a special meeting for the board in two weeks and inviting advisory group members to discuss the school building project. All members were in favor; no formal action taken.

6. Public Input

Public comment given by Ginni Lavelly, Carolyn Morrison and Lisa French.

9. Executive Session (*Discuss the terms of a contract with Teaching Labs for professional development in accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 313(1)(A).*)

MOTION: Dave moved to go into executive session at 8:11pm, Melissa seconded, all in favor.

MOTION: Dave moved to come out of executive session at 8:40pm, Melissa seconded, all in favor.

No action taken.

8. Future Agenda Items / Next Meeting Date

- Student Representative (*possible change to policy*)
- Advisory Group Update
- Next Meeting Date: November 15, 2022 Special 6:00pm in the school cafeteria

9. Adjourn

MOTION: Melissa moved to adjourn at 8:44pm, Dave seconded, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Molly Gleason, Clerk, November 4, 2022.