

DANVILLE SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES (Rev. 2 - Revised/updated 2021-12-120)

Link to original 12/14/2021 and Rev 12/16/2021 posting at end of this document.

Thursday, December 9, 2021 - 6:00 p.m.

Danville School Library & Zoom teleconference

Members present Bruce Melendy (Chair), David Towle, Tim Sanborn*, Clayton Cargill, Robert Edgar*; student members Liza Morse*, Ava Marshia*, Thomas Edgar* | *Zoom remote

Administration present Mark Tucker, David Schilling, Sarah Welch, Michael Concessi

Public present Rob Balivet, Abigail Bartell, Riley Cadieux, Channel 7 News, Mellissa Conly-Gratton, Bobbie Copen, Zoe Crocker, Allison Despathy, Kameron Drew, Katie Fiegenbaum (*Caledonia Record*), Simon Fisher, Colleen Flinn, Molly Gleason, Emily Greaves, Anthony Guinard, Bethany Hale, Lili Klarke, Libbie Lumbra, Kristin Mantius, Peter Mantius, Willa Mantius, Stephanie Melen, Kellie Merrell, Lindsey Mitchell-Wheeler, Carolyn Morrison, Polly Joncas, Melissa Ramsey, Randy Rathburn, David Richardson, Luke Robbins, Danielle Scott, Jessica Settles, Sara Stinson, Susan Terry, Danielle Turo, Kaity White, Nick White

1 Call to Order [00:14:00] Bruce called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Roll call of directors present: Clayton - present, Dave T - present, Tim - present, Robert - present, Bruce - present.

2 Additions/Changes to the Agenda. [00:14:40]

MOTION Clayton moved to add an item regarding the appointment of a person to the negotiating team for Danville; Dave T seconded. Vote: unanimous. Motion ADOPTED. Item added under Board Business right before entering Executive Session.

Sarah requested that the Mascot Selection Process item be moved to be the first item of business after the administrative reports.

MOTION Clayton moved that the Mascot Selection Process item on the agenda be moved to the first item under Board Business; Dave T seconded. Vote: unanimous. Motion ADOPTED.

3 Approve Minutes [00:17:30]

MOTION Clayton moved the minutes of the regular meeting of November 2, 2021 be approved, as amended by the Clerk (see addendum for 5 corrections); Tim seconded. Vote: unanimous. Minutes APPROVED.

4 Administrative Reports

- **Superintendent** [00:18:30] [Report](#) received.

This report addressed 6 topics. (1) Open positions available across the SU. (2) Additional staffing in the Central Office included hiring two ESSER-funded LNAs (Licensed Nursing Assistants) to assist with covid-related demands, with the likelihood that one would remain part-time after the pandemic subsides, and a replacement cook to relieve Tanika Stewart, the Director of Food Services, who has been covering needs until a replacement hire can be made. (3) The successful launch of the covid-19 Test-to-Stay programs and student vaccination clinics at 3 SU schools, and CCSU-Association agreements with respect to vaccination and periodic testing were concluded. (4) The AOE still has not yet released ESSER III funds. (5) Issues with respect to the use of the [Kolbe] pupil weighting study recommendations, and consequently, so with the budgetary implications for special ed funding within the SU.

(6) State-supplied CLA, Yield Rate and Equalized Pupil count values have not yet been released, and an analysis has been undertaken to determine the effect of Act 173 Special Education block grant funding on our FY23 budget.

[SUPERINTENDENT COMMENT]

[00:47:50] Bruce recognized Mark to provide a point of information for the Board. Mark indicated that Rory Thibault, Chair of the Cabot School Board, had asked him to communicate to the Danville Board that it should expect soon to receive a letter proposing an exploration of future partnerships and collaborations between the two schools.

- **Principals** [00:26:40] No written report. Minutes in the section written by Clayton Cargill.

Dave S spoke of the continued and ongoing difficulties in operations with regard to COVID, of both principals' gratitude with the Test-to-Stay program, and specifically Sarah's work on it. Sarah states that the program has enabled around 85% of the students who were eligible for the program to remain in classes when they otherwise would not have been. Clayton said that his son at this age had directly benefitted - being allowed in school for two days he would otherwise have been held out. Dave S said the rest of what they were going to be discussing as principals would be the results of the mascot vote to follow.

- **[Student Services]** [00:27:47] [Report](#) received. There were no questions
- **Student Representatives** [00:28:03] Reports received. Liza [reported](#) on High School activities. [00:29:27] Ava and Thomas [reported](#) on Middle School activities.

5 Board Business

- **Mascot Selection Process Results** [00:31:00] These minutes were written by Clayton Cargill.

Documents received:

[2021-12-09 DSB Mascot- ranked choice](#)
[2021-12-09 DSB Mascot Smore newsletter](#)
[2021-12-09 DSB Mascot responses](#)
[2021-12-09 DSB Superintendent endorsement](#)

Dave Schilling walked the board and the attending public [through the process](#). The notable elements of that are as follows:

- April 6th 2021: The board directed both principals to begin the process of selecting a new mascot, symbol, name and/or image to represent the Danville School in accordance with Policy DB-001, which had been adopted on March 23, 2021.
- April 29, 2021: An open call for both name suggestions and potential committee members was started. Applications and suggestions were collected until June 1st.
- The [newsletter](#) making this request defined and detailed the stakeholder representative process, as was indicated by the policy. All members of the Danville School community, alumni, and any staff, student, or Danville resident were invited to propose a name to officially represent Danville School.
- The committee's role would be to narrow the finalists to between three-to-five names, and then define a process by which to select the ultimate choice. The committee would be the one to decide who participated in the vote, but that the voting would be ranked choice voting to ensure the most

popular outcome.

□ The selection committee ultimately received [34 suggested names](#), along with accompanying rationale. Nine individuals requested to be on the committee, and all nine were accepted into the committee. No one who wanted to participate was turned away. Those nine were as follows: Fawn Baesemann (parent and faculty member), Melissa Conly (parent), Simon Fisher (school counselor), Abigail Bartell (parent and faculty member), Jessica Settles (faculty member), Ava Marshia (student), Dana Welch (parent), Autumn Larocque (student), and David Richardson (student).

□ The committee did not meet over the summer, and when they reconvened after the summer, both Autumn and David had moved on to college and Ava Marshia took on the responsibility to recruit other students to join in the process. Joining the committee at this point were students Liam Carcoba, Thomas Edgar, Luke Ste Marie, Lili Klarke, and Willa Mantius. The committee did not have a town select board member respond to the invitation (and had a select board member joined, they would have done so as a private citizen, not a representative of the select board).

□ November 8, 2021: The committee narrowed down the choices to the following four finalists: Trailblazers, Mountaineers, Bobcats and Bears. The criteria for selection are listed both in policy DB001 and in the packet that was shared publicly tonight. While the committee agreed that the broader community should be invited and included in the collection of suggestions and committee members, the final choice for the mascot should rest with the current student body, the most relevant stakeholders. A vote for December 3rd was scheduled.

Speaker Willa Mantius, the youngest member of the selection committee, took over for Dave S at this point to read the results of the vote:

On December 3 2021, we, the current Danville students were eligible to vote on our future mascot / student nickname. Out of 294 total votes cast, in a ranked choice system, 148 votes are needed to win. Tonight, I am happy to announce, that with 168 student votes, the students of Danville School have decided that we will now be known as the Danville Bears.

At this point, an [accounting of the votes](#) was distributed. Bears initially won a plurality of the votes, but the ranked choice system took two eliminations to get to the point where Bears was the majority winner with 168 votes, ultimately beating out second place winner Trailblazers.

Some positive chatter here from various high schoolers in attendance indicated an ultimate preference for Bears as well. Clayton wonders how quickly we can “get a kid in a bear suit.” Clayton notes that to this point, all aspects of the policy have been fulfilled by the selection committee and makes a motion to accept the results of the election and the [subsequent recommendation by superintendent Mark Tucker](#) to move forward as the Danville Bears.

David T wondered if there had been a checklist and that all aspects of the policy had been satisfied. Robert said that he thought Dave S had done that, but if anything hadn’t been done, it was to read the statement at the end of the policy, that described the properties the name could and could not have. Subsequently that section of policy DB001 was read aloud by Dave S:

All mascots, names, nicknames, images and descriptors—including symbols, banners, flags, pennants, or similar identifiers—used by sports teams, extracurricular clubs, curricular clubs, or organizations representing the School shall respect cultural differences and values and shall be neither derogatory nor discriminatory. The Board explicitly prohibits the representation of the

School by the use of any race or ethnic group and its traditions or customs as a mascot, name or nickname. This policy shall go into effect on the date of its adoption.

Notwithstanding the above, with the consent of the Board, after this policy is adopted, the School may continue to use any currently used uniforms, and replace lost or damaged ones, and other items prohibited by this policy for a period not to exceed the normal school lifetime of the uniforms or items.

David T questioned the definition of stakeholder at this point. Dave S again described that the committee defined stakeholder early in the process as alumni, student, parent of a student or Danville citizen, for the committee and nomination process. He further asked Robert if the original policy had defined the term stakeholder, and Robert indicated that part of the committee's role was to define the term stakeholder. Dave T again indicated that he thought stakeholders should include any person or group that supports an institution, indicating that he meant the vote should have been extended to the wider community. Bruce told David T that, just like in a public meeting setting, the input of the public could be limited by the committee past a certain point.

Dave T reiterated that it should have been a "community decision" and was impressed with the process and expressed gratitude that the mascot hadn't been replaced with a "stereotypical white person." Bruce then reiterated that the policy was in place and that the committee was allowed to operate the way they did. Robert makes clear that if the word stakeholder had been in need of a definition to this extent, there was ample time to have done that prior to the policy itself being adopted. Tim argues that this was a community decision and that the school vote was a vote of the community that this new mascot would most represent and that the ranked choice voting with makeup ballots for absentee students made the most democratic representation of the community members this most affected. That was the voice that needed to be heard.

Dave T asked what happens in six years when someone wants to change the mascot again. Robert answered that the policy provides for that -- changing the name can only be initiated by the board and that someone would have to petition the board to take it up and initiate the process. Only the board can initiate the process.

Bruce indicates that there is a motion (by Clayton) on the table and calls for a second. Tim seconds. More discussion, Clayton reads again from the policy: *The Board's role is solely to approve of the selection if the requirements of this policy have been met.* He indicates again that the [recommendation for this mascot has been made by the superintendent](#), that there has been a fair stakeholder process and that the requirements of the policy have been met.

MOTION Clayton moved that the recommended name "Danville Bears" be approved as the name officially representing the School; Tim seconded. Vote 4-1; roll call: Clayton - aye, Tim - aye, Robert - aye, Dave T - nay; Bruce - aye.

- **Initial FY22[-23] Budget** [00:49:30] Documents ([expenses](#), [revenues](#)) received.

Michael presented an initial overview of the FY22-23 budget showing Total Budgeted Expenditures of \$6,701,703, local Revenues of \$851,200 and Educational Spending (ES) of \$5,846,453, assuming no input of surplus funds to increase revenues. ES is the primary, board-controlled variable in the

determination of the tax rate. The range of values of the Yield has been provided by the State, but values for Common Level of Appraisal and the Equalized Pupil Count are not expected before January, and so no tax rate estimate is yet merited. Michael also reports a strong surplus as indicated by the auditors, but the documents are not yet available. Michael did not go through the proposed details of the administratively [proposed budget expenditures](#) as Robert objected that budget documents had been sent to the Board barely 90 minutes prior to this meeting, and thus provided no reasonable opportunity to examine them. Clayton noted the same tardiness occurred last year. The board decided to postpone further examination of expenditures prepared by the administration until its January 4th meeting. Robert conveyed that he thought the funding needs of the school should be presented in full leaving the provision of funding largely in the hands of the board.

- **Facility Update** [01:11:47]

Mark reported that a preliminary cost estimate for the renovation/addition project had been received from TruexCullins, but that it was judged too high, and the firm was asked to reconsider it. Sarah reported that the wood chip boiler project was nearing completion, according to Shawn McNamara and that wood chips were being delivered "next week." Shawn was hoping that the boiler would be up and burning during Christmas break. Robert asked if information on the projected maximal student capacity for the Elementary School could be obtained.

- **Programming Update - Technical Education** [01:13:54] [Proposal Document](#) received.

Principal Schilling brought to the Board a proposal for the creation of a position of Director of Career, Technical and Experiential Learning. The first two paragraphs of the proposal, reproduced in the following, provided the rationale for it.

As we continue to assess the effects of remote learning on student well-being and academic growth, the need for authentic student learning, [and] rigorous experiential learning opportunities is increasingly evident. Some students have become increasingly disengaged with traditional learning, with these habits reinforced by their remote time. Outside of school, employers are struggling to fill jobs, specifically in technical, creative and trades fields.

For Danville School to continue to meet the post-pandemic needs of a diverse group of learners, and continue to successfully serve as an attractive high school for students in our town and region, we need to significantly invest in our hands-on, experiential learning programs, providing a relevant pathway to postsecondary education and employment, equally as rigorous and deep as our traditional courses. These programs have existed at Danville historically, but not with the depth and sustainability necessary to serve students in our changing world. There is more we can and should do.

At Danville these experiential and hands-on modes of learning are partially available in programs such as Pathways, Engineering Sustainable Systems (ESS), CONNNECT and others, but the majority of students have followed the traditional mode of learning. The Director would address this problem by coordinating and supervising various programs already extant at the School and teaching in them. The list of the Director's duties is extensively outlined on pages 1 & 2 of the Proposal. The new Director position is proposed to be budget-neutral for the first two years by using ESSER-III funds. He provides an extensive justification for use of the ESSER-III funds on pages 3 & 4 of the Proposal.

Dave S proposed that he has the experience to fill this new position, which would be on par with that the principals reporting directly to the superintendent. He would "step aside" as principal, and a new

secondary principal would be hired, for which Dave S might serve as a mentor. The Director would assume duties with the start of the next school year (2022).

Mark and Dave S noted they have discussed the need for such a "project" for years, and Dave S and Sarah have discussed it across recent months. In contrast, the Board was made aware of this proposal less than 24 hours before this meeting, and consequently inadequate opportunity was provided for some board members to evaluate it. Sarah very strongly supported the proposal based on her professional judgment as to its expected benefits for our students. The board's initial response to the goals of the proposal were markedly positive from most members, however, some initial concerns were raised about the proposed organizational structure, the absence of faculty input/assessment, and ramifications for the school generally, such as the effects of administrative turnover given the history of such turnover at the School. Bobbie Copen was staunch in her support of both the Principals and the proposal.

At Bruce's suggestion, the board decided not to take any action at this meeting but to place the item on the agenda for its next regular meeting on January 4, 2022, with possible adoption under consideration.

- **[Nominations Committee]**

MOTION Dave T moved that Ginni Lavelly be allowed to remain a Danville member of the negotiations committee. Vote: Unanimous. Motion ADOPTED.

- **Executive Session [01:21:15]**

MOTION Dave T moved that the board enter executive session under 1 VSA 313(a)(6) and 1 VSA 317(c)(1) to discuss "records that by law are designated confidential"; Clayton seconded. Vote: unanimous. Motion ADOPTED. Executive session entered at 7:48 pm.

MOTION Tim moved the board exit executive session; Clayton seconded. Vote: unanimous. Motion ADOPTED. Executive session exited at 8:03 pm.

MOTION Tim moved that the Board grant the request of the parent to allow the student(s) [her children] to stay in school exempt from tuition for this School Year (2021-2022); Dave T seconded. Vote: unanimous. Motion ADOPTED.

6 Other Business None.

7 Public Input These minutes were written by Clayton Cargill.

[1:50:30] Ginni Lavelly - Thanks the board for the continued trust on being named again to the negotiations council. She looks forward to a quick and speedy process.

[1:51:10] - Carolyn Morrison - comments of support for Dave Schilling's proposal. Indicates that Morrison's Feeds may be interested in being involved in that program.

[1:53:05]- Allison Despathy - Also supports the "trades" [Career, Technical and Experiential Learning] program. Gave a lengthy description of her son's participation in the senior project program. Clarifies that she doesn't wear a mask. Asked many questions about the statewide mask mandate in schools, whether the recommendation from the state was being revisited on January 4th, and whether the CCSU was revisiting its policy on masking on January 4th. Mark Tucker states that the Agency of Education had once again pushed its date of even considering revising its guidance on universal masking in schools. The next current date was not even set, and the CCSU guidelines that are in place are in no

way up for reconsideration on January 4th. She listed off several statements related to masking. Her only relevant question was regarding the Agency of Education financially incentivizing vaccination rates within schools, which was directed to Mark Tucker and he asked her to forward her questions via email, and he would address them directly.

8 Future Agenda Items [02:03:48] budget, architects, facilities, programming update relative to technical education

9 Adjourn [02:04:10]

MOTION Tim moved to adjourn the meeting; Clayton seconded. Vote: unanimous. Motion ADOPTED. Bruce adjourned the meeting at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Robert Edgar (Clerk), 14 December 2021([original](#)), 16 December 2021 ([revised/updated](#)) and 20 December (revision 2 12/20) with greatly appreciated assistance from Clayton. Meeting video recording [2021-12-09 DSB.mp4](#) c. 497.7 MB GB, c. 02:09:45
The next Regular Meeting will occur on Tuesday, January 4, 2022 at 6:00 pm

ADDENDUM

Proposed amendments to the DSB Minutes of the Special Meeting of 2 November 2021:

insert | ~~delete~~

- (1) page 1; "Call to order [~~00:021:24~~ 00:01:24]"
- (2) page 1, line 2; "...~~Witrobski~~ Watrobski ..." (3) page 2, paragr. 2, line 1; "...at a previous..."
- (4) page 4, paragr. 4, line 1; "... ~~SW corner~~ remains ..."
- (5) page 4, paragr. 6, line 1; "...students ~~each~~ eat lunch?"

Two trivial typographic errors will also be corrected.