

**DANVILLE SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, February 1, 2022 - 6:00 p.m.

Zoom teleconference | No physical location designated for this meeting

Members present Bruce Melendy (Chair), David Towle, Tim Sanborn, Clayton Cargill, Robert Edgar | Thomas Edgar | All directors present via Zoom remote

Administration present Mark Tucker, David Schilling, Sarah Welch

Public present Melissa Conly, Alison Despathy, Katie Feigenbaum (*Caledonian Record*), Molly Gleason, Kristin Mantius, Lindsey Mitchell-Wheeler

1 Call to Order [00:00:00] Bruce called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. Roll call of directors present: Clayton - present, Dave T - present, Tim - present, Robert - present, Bruce - present.

Bruce acknowledged members of the public present and indicated they did not need to identify themselves unless they became active participants in the meeting.

2 Additions to the Agenda. [00:01:10]

MOTION Clayton moved to add to the agenda the issue of Regional High School Choice; Dave T seconded. Vote unanimous. Motion ADOPTED. Bruce added the item to the Board Business section after the "Shop business ..." item.

3 Approve Minutes [00:02:50]

Bruce called the Board's attention to proposed amendments to the minutes circulated prior to the meeting by Robert (see addendum).

MOTION Clayton moved that the unapproved minutes of the regular meeting of January 4, 2022, as amended, be approved; Tim seconded. Vote unanimous. Minutes APPROVED.

MOTION Clayton moved that the unapproved minutes of the special meeting of January 10, 2022, as amended, be approved; Tim seconded. Vote unanimous. Minutes APPROVED.

4 Administrative Reports

- **Superintendent** - No written report was received. [00:04:25]

Mark called attention to how hard it has been on school personnel to shift from the Test-to-Stay program to the Test-at-Home program as directed by AOE. The shift was intended to lighten the administrative work load in the school, but it has not been his experience that it has done so. He noted the old guidelines about handling covid contacts were thrown away -- for reasons he has been unable to fathom despite his queries at AOE -- and replaced with those in which presumptive contacts are now defined as anyone in a room with someone who has tested positive. He was disappointed in not being able to get a clear answer to what was the scientific basis for the change in testing protocol.

Mark indicated the staff was just barely staying ahead of the testing demands. He described (1) the interruption of the principals' conduct of in-service sessions to pass out test kits due to a suddenly

revealed positive test, (2) the emergency deployment for most of a day of a staff member from Central Office, not known to parents and students, to spell the principals in test kit distribution, (3) the problem derived from one covid positive person potentially finding their way into a classroom or two and generating 30-40 presumptive contacts, who would need processing, (4) the weekly uncertainty of the timing and completeness of State deliveries of test kits, and (5) the shuffling of a limited number of test kits among districts as one district would surge while another might be quiescent. He noted that state case counts were going down but did not yet know whether the school's would also; hopefully if that were to occur, it would make things more manageable.

He concluded by notifying the Board that he would testify to the Legislature on Thursday regarding the Pupil Weighing Study being considered in the context of Act 173; copies of his testimony would be distributed to the Board.

Clayton asked Mark what sort of feedback he had been getting from parents with respect to the at-home testing. He said he did not have a good handle on it, and although most parents were cooperative, he had only incidental reports. Under the new AOE guidance he was instructed not to track students and not to trace. He said AOE had abandoned tracing; kids who do not test cannot be kept out of school; kids who test positive should be kept home from school. He alerted the Board to a *Caledonian Record* article expected tomorrow updating the community of these testing programs.

Dave T reported that Commissioner Levine had noted that some schools were getting thousands of dollars for their high vaccination rate. Mark said that we were not involved in that. Our district vaccination rates are in the c. 60-70% range, with grades 5, 6 and 7 lower than other grades in a sampling of district schools; 80% is the threshold for such payments. He did not expect to reach the threshold, and he was not pushing vaccinations. Dave S extended Mark's comments indicating that using school staff to incentivize vaccination would put them in an uncomfortable position, and he did see it as "their role." Bruce indicated he agreed with the position.

- **Principals [Report](#)** received. [00:15:29]

Their reports address (1) Winter Wellness, (2) Winter Carnival, (3) the [DREAM](#) mentoring program, (4) the K-6 & MS writing program - Professional Development. and (5) the graphic design of a "bears" logo for the School.

Dave S highlighted that the Student-Council-run Winter Carnival is resuming (February 16-17?) after the covid shutdown(s) and that it will be a new event to many kids who he is hoping experience it as "fun being brought into the school."

Sarah described the on-going success of the DREAM mentoring program based at UVM but facilitated here by an elementary (Danielle) and a MS (Adrianna) teacher. The program is designed to provide instruction and coaching so that our High School students can mentor our Elementary and Middle School students. Sarah thought the program educationally was valuable and "awesome."

In conclusion, after 4 years of working with retiring board members Bruce and Robert, Dave S expressed his gratitude to them: to Bruce, as chair, for being "a steady leader and a constant source of assuring that all voices were heard"; to Robert for his insistence on adherence of open meetings and

transparency and for expecting me "to have a very a good reason for everything I said." Bruce thanked Robert for his service, and other board members added their appreciation to both. Notice was also made of candidates' night on Thursday (2/3) which would feature Clayton (running for re-election) and Molly and Melissia (new candidates running for election to 1-year seats).

- **Student Services** - [Report](#) received. [00:22:00] - No discussion,
- **Student Representatives** - [Report](#) received [00:22:22]

Thomas read Liza's Report on the Middle School in her absence (hockey game). Ava was dealing with a concussion.

5 Board Business

- **CTE Director Position** (Hiring Recommendation/Requested Approval) [00:24:43] and [00:52:58, discussion continued after addressing other agenda items]

Mark recommended that the board approve the hiring of David Schilling as the Director of the Career, Technical, Experiential Learning Program, subject to approval of ARP-ESSER funds. He added that these funds have not been released yet by AOE, but the absence of any questions regarding the CTCL portion of the proposal portends well for its approval. Dave's application was the only one received for this advertised position. The board had approved the creation of this position at an earlier board meeting.

Mark indicated that Dave S well met the requirements of the position: "... the creation of courses and programming that are not currently part of the course catalog ..., someone who can teach and lead outside of the normal flow of traditional coursework and for providing both the instruction and the motivation for these students to continue onward, a holder of an appropriate AOE license endorsement in technical education experience and leadership in that arena and skill in designing the needed courses....."

Mark concluded that "we are making a transformational investment in the subset of our students at Danville Middle and High School who are not finding, or at least struggling to find , a pathway through school as they are operated today. Many students are from Danville; others are and will continue to come from others towns. I view this new program as being strategic to the longer-term financial health of Danville School because of the likelihood of its attracting even more tuition students, and our best bet for success is to put this program in the hands of the leader who knows the needs of the students and how to operate a new program."

Mark reviewed the hiring process for the board, and indicated that Dave S' application was the only one received. No salary has yet been set, but it is expected to be commensurate that of other "director-level" positions in the CCSU.

Clayton responded to Mark's offer of a presentation of CTCL efforts to date by instructor Mike White's by asking that he set up such a presentation for the board.

Robert asked if the "board was being asked to approve a contract?" Mark responded that it was being "asked to approve a hire, so I can negotiate a contract."

Following Mark's informing the board that interviews for the secondary principal position are being scheduled for next week, Bruce inquired about the hiring committee composition, in particular the presence of any "community members." Sarah indicated the committee was composed primarily herself and the Superintendent, a board member and the Middle and High School leadership team. Bruce added that that in his experience past practice was that a community member served on such committees. Some debate occurred as to what qualified as a "community" member, and Bruce stating that he understood them to be neither an employee of the school nor a board member but had an investment in the school. He agreed that a parent of a student would qualify as such in view. Administratively the response was that were such parents and additionally members who fulfilled multiple roles. Bruce stressed he was offering a suggestion only; Sarah and Mark indicated they would review the present committee and see if an addition at this late date was warranted. Tim, Dave S and the other board members expressed satisfaction with that resolution of the question.

Bruce asked if there were any other concerns before a motion was offered. Robert asked if a letter of resignation of the Principal had been received. The general and quick response of several board members and administrators was that it had been sent out in an email to the board on January 13th. Robert indicated he was aware of that email. But that if we were dealing with a resignation, then he found a difference between "resigning" and an "intent to resign" and that the CCSU policy [C13] directs the resignation be sent to the superintendent and then upon his/her recommendation action taken by the board with respect to both the acceptance and setting a date the resignation becomes effective. Debate ensued regarding the questions of whether a resignation was required for appointment as Director and whether a resignation was required at all given the nature of the Principal's contract, given the provisions for a third-year of his contract. Discussion centered around the difference between a resignation and a non-acceptance of an optional remaining year of a contract. Mark and Bruce felt the resignation was unnecessary; Robert and Dave T suggested adherence to the procedure used in a past resignation. Clayton asked that the "new" letter of resignation addressing the questions raised and drafted during the meeting be put on the agenda for the board's regular March meeting and acted upon then. That request was adopted without any objection.

MOTION Dave T moved that David Schilling be hired as the Director of Career, Technical and Experiential Learning Program, effective July 1, 2022; Tim seconded. Vote unanimous. Motion ADOPTED.

- **Shop equipment and program space** (Discussion/Possible Action). [00:39:36]

Dave S informed the Board that Mike Concessi and he would be bringing to the board a review of the School's endowments to clarify the purposes for which they were set, to ensure that they are not only used but effectively used for those purposes for which they were given, and to make recommendations which improve the goals of the endowments.

Dave S brought forward, as an example, the Ira Preston Fund containing about \$14,000 which has largely or entirely been unused since its receipt "more years back anyone is sure." He noted there are two large pieces of shop equipment - a table saw and a planer - which were decades old (63 years! for the planer) and which have few, if any, modern safety devices now normally associated with such tools. Consequently, they were not being used by students, and liability associated with teacher use was a major concern. He recommended both be replaced at about \$5,000 each. A general and brief discussion of other shop issues followed. Dave S thanked Dave T for his knowledge of the history of the school's endowments and his advice on shop renovation.

MOTION Dave T moved that the Principal be approved to use the entirety of the Ira Preston Account (\$13,537) for the purchase for the CTE Program of a new table saw, a new planer, and any. other tools or items he deems necessary or useful for the refurbishment and improvement of the shop; Clayton seconded. Vote unanimous. Motion ADOPTED.

Clayton recommended and Dave S and Bruce strongly endorsed that these new tools be recognized by suitable plaques or other such signs in the shop identifying the benefactor of the gifts and that such gifts be given strong, local public recognition.

- [Public High School Choice](#) [00:49:47]

Mark provided an overview of this lottery-based, program and requested board approval of the School participating in this program. This fiscal-neutral, lottery-based program offers the opportunity for a limited number of students resident in one district to attend a public school in a non-resident district. In the recent past Danville has set a limit for 5 for both incoming and outgoing students, and the board decided to continue that again this year. Incoming students per year are usually 2-3; there have been no recent outgoing students. Choice students are counted in their home district's ADM.

MOTION: Clayton moved that the board approve the school's participation in the Vermont Regional [Public] High School Choice Program for 2022-23 with a maximum of 5 incoming students and a maximum to 5 outgoing students; Dave T seconded. Vote unanimous. Motion ADOPTED.

6 Other Business None.

7 Public Input [01:04:44]

Allison Despathy spoke about her concerns regarding the board's current position on the use of KN95 masks in the schools by reading for about 3 minutes an extensive set of information from the CDC website about the medical effects of KN95 masks on children. Given no other speakers and at the invitation of the chair, she extended her remarks, but this time covering the history of vaccines, the increased frequency of the use of diverse vaccines and the effect of this use in causing autism and children's health generally.

8 Future Agenda Items board reorganization, principal "resignation", new principal hire

9 Adjourn

The motion to adjourn was made and seconded, but then a member of the public, having apparent difficulty in connecting by Zoom, interrupted and asked to speak before a vote was taken. Bruce invited her to speak -- see 7 Public Input above. Following the Public Input, action on the motion was taken

MOTION Clayton moved to adjourn the meeting; Tim seconded. Vote: Unanimous. Motion: ADOPTED. Bruce adjourned the meeting at 7:16 pm

Respectfully submitted, Robert Edgar (Clerk), 8 February 2022.

Meeting video recording [2022-02-2 DSB Spec Trim.mp4](#), 2.41 MB, 01:14:18 h:mm:ss

The next Regular Meeting will occur on Thursday, March 3, 2022 at 6:00 pm

ADDENDUM

None of the corrections listed for either meeting is substantial.

Proposed amendments to Regular Meeting Minutes (15 pp) of 4 January 2022:

insert | ~~delete~~

- p. 1, paragr. 3, line 3: "... that he felt ..."
- p. 2, paragr. 8, line 3: "... we hired to handle ..."
- p. 3, paragr. 2, line 2: "... thousands; ~~a~~-this appeared ..."
paragr. 6, line 3: "... asked ~~in~~ if the number ..."
- p. 5, paragr. 3, line 3: "... this is a community vote ..."
- p. 6, paragr. 2, line 2: "... students from other districts ..."
paragr. 5, line 7: "... pathways ~~that~~ they would ..."
paragr. 5, line 3: "... and is ~~anted~~ granted a"
- p. 7, paragr. 8, line 1: "... put ~~that~~ on Sarah ..."
paragr. 10, line 1: "... had just asked ~~I just if would~~ it would be accurate...."
- p. 8, paragr. 1, line 1: "... ~~Can weto me easily.~~"
paragr. 2, line 1: [they] "... job ~~leaves~~ leave some ...]
lines 2-3: "... ~~job that is ... ground not covered?~~"
paragr. 3, line 6: "... ~~1:39:43~~"
paragr. 7, line 2: "... he ~~through~~ thought "
- p. 9, paragr. 5, line 4: "...Chair ~~referred~~ referred to when his kids"
paragr. 6, line 11: "... ~~the~~ to come here"
line 12: "... ~~he's paying~~"
- p. 10, paragr. 6, line 4: "... which ~~is~~ binds all district boards."
- p. 11, paragr. 4, line 4: "...without a ~~mas~~ mask;"
- p. 12, paragr. 1, line 2: "... ~~with~~ as superintendent."
paragr. 4, line 1: "...a copy of an open"
- p. 13, paragr. 2, line 1: "Bruce noted that the [~~FOIA request~~ Vermont Mask Survey] was shared"
paragr. 7, line 2: "...that we were doing so."
- p. 15, paragr. 3, lines 4-5: "... superintendents ~~and~~ all over the state"
paragr. 6, line 3: "The next Regular Meeting will occur on Tuesday, February 8, 1, 2022 at 6:00 pm. [Date was in error.]

And correction of an embarrassing richness of typographical errors.

Proposed amendments to Special Meeting Minutes (3 pp) of 10 January 2022:

insert | ~~delete~~

- p. 2, paragr. 5, line 1: "... Mark explained that it ..."
- p. 3, paragr. 2, line 3: "...February 4 1, 2022 ...". |. And correction of 3 minor typos.

