

Tuesday, October 7, 2025

Vermont School District Redistricting Task Force

Dear Task Force,

Today we, the Danville School Board, have accepted a petition from our voters to hold a public vote on the question of whether or not to close our high school (grades 9 through 12) at the end of this academic year and become a choice town. Under Vermont statute, we will be holding a floor vote on this matter in less than sixty (60) days on December 6, 2025. This petition is the direct result of great uncertainty due to Act 73 and your Task Force's mission. Between now and then, we will be holding many informational meetings to help educate our voters on the options before them. We ask you, then, to help us help them and provide us with some clarity.

It is the stance of the Danville School Board that this whole school, including its high school, is important to the town. However, we have been placed in a very awkward position as a high school. We are in the shadow of two larger private academies. All of the towns in our CTE region have the choice to attend those academies, paid for by the Education Fund. We are proud to operate the only public high school in this CTE region. The state has an obligation to provide public education in our region, which is very indicative of our geography and our regional ties to our neighboring towns, as evidenced by our neighbors to the west, Twinfield, indicating their desire to merge, if necessary, westward, rather than eastward.

We in Danville are demonstrably advocates and supporters of public education and have been for over a hundred years. We believe a strong and viable public education is important and necessary. However, we are also not blind to the fact that the State has decided to treat the private academies in our region as de facto public schools without holding them to public education standards. As such, our community is trying to do the best thing they can for our children with incomplete information.

The crux of this issue is that the idea of districting Danville with the closest high-school-operating districts to meet the class size restrictions set forth by Act 73 is completely untenable to our voters and unfair to our children. It may set forth a mass exodus to our neighboring towns that retain school choice for those that have the means, providing an inequitable result from this redistricting.

The only tenable, equitable, and real options for us as a town are to be declared small by necessity and keep operating our high school with local control in a supervisory union, and to operate the only public high school in our region. Failing that, to assure us the same privilege as all of our surrounding towns to choose where our children go to high school.

We are as sensitive to the financial viability of this as any other board, and we understand the

pressures. However, in order to keep Vermont the bucolic place that it is, we need to invest in making it feasible for people to live and thrive in the rural areas.

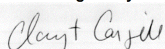
We are at risk of making a very reactionary decision that will change this town considerably in unforeseen ways. Additionally, we remain beholden to the whims of your Task Force and, more broadly, the State Legislature. With the lack of certainty or clarity around what will happen to a school like ours, which is in a remarkably unique situation in the state, we are forced to assume and plan for the worst case scenario, and do everything in our power to prevent it.

And so our ask to you is to give us clarity. Recognize that we present a unique and difficult situation in the broader scope of redistricting. Put great thought into what the future of public education should be in this part of Vermont, and then please convey that vision to us in a timely manner. Ideally, declare Danville School small by necessity and allow us to continue operating with local control.

With many thanks,

The Danville School Board

DocuSigned by:



Clayton Cargill, Chair

Signed by:



David Fowle

Tim Sanborn

DocuSigned by:



Kay Feedy

Signed by:



Eric Hewitt