



Dallastown Area School District

8/4/26 SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, August 4, 2026 ▪ 6:00 PM
HS LGI Room, 700 New School Lane, Dallastown, PA 17313

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Mr. Pantano

The Special Board Meeting of the Dallastown Area School District Board of School Directors convened on Tuesday, August 4, 2026, in the High School LGI Room. Board president, Anthony Pantano, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

2. ROLL CALL & EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT - Mr. Pantano

Mr. Pantano noted Mr. Cohn had joined the meeting via Zoom and all other board members were present. He announced no Executive Session had been held since 7/9/26.

Attachment: 8.4.26 Special Board Meeting Attendance Sign In Sheets

3. APPROVAL OF BOARD AGENDA

Motion to approve the Board Agenda as presented. This motion, made by Eric Pierce and seconded by Dina Aubel, Carried.

Wesley Anderson:	Yea
Dina Aubel:	Yea
Matthew Charvat:	Yea
James Cohn:	Yea
Karl Dotterweich:	Yea
Albert Granholm:	Yea
Anthony Pantano:	Yea
Eric Pierce:	Yea
Scott Wingard:	Yea
Yea: 9, Nay: 0	

By voice vote, the motion passed unanimously (9-0).

4. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no public comments.

5. PROCEDURAL REVIEW - Mr. Pantano

Mr. Pantano provided an overview of the discussion procedure for the Special Board Meeting. He noted for each topic, the board will: 1) Review the essential question, 2) Receive background information on current practices from administration, and 3) Conduct board deliberation by polling each member individually on whether to keep current practices or do more. A simple majority of affirmative support will determine the outcome. He shared board

members may change their vote during discussion if persuaded. He directed the board to make their final determination on these agenda items so the board can avoid re-addressing them in the future and focus on upcoming priorities for the year.

6. CELLPHONE PARAMETERS

DASD school board members discussed whether to implement a stricter, district-wide cell phone ban—specifically looking at whether high school policies should align with the more restrictive K-8 rules. Following board member input, the board opted not to change the current policy which states Grades K-8 students' cell phones are to be "turned off and put away" during the school day, with minor exceptions (e.g., before/after school or explicit teacher direction) and cell phones belonging to students in Grades 9-12 are prohibited during direct instruction, but allowed during non-instructional times (lunches, hallways, study halls). Teachers also have discretion to allow phones during self-directed classwork. Dr. Doll noted that cell phone mandates were not included in the state budget, keeping policy decisions strictly local. He shared the consensus among teachers and administration is mixed, with some favoring a complete ban and others integrating cell phones into lesson plans. Dr. Doll added that a complete ban would pose enforcement challenges, temporarily increase disciplinary burdens on teachers and administrators, and potentially create friction with high school students. Board discussion focused on allowing limited cell phone use in high school which provides a necessary "safety net" for students to practice self-regulation and healthy technology management before adulthood. A majority of the board agreed that current restrictions against use during direct instruction sufficiently cover classroom needs. A few board members were in favor of a stricter ban, citing research such as Jonathan Haidt's, *The Anxious Generation*, regarding the mental health risks, social media distractions, and bullying linked to phone use. They also argued for removing teacher discretion during instructional time to create clearer district-wide boundaries. Ultimately, the will of the board was to not alter the current policy on cell phone parameters with several board members noting the current guidelines are working and that stricter rules would place an unfair enforcement burden on teachers and staff.

Mr. Pantano reiterated the essential question: Should cell phones be restricted for students at DAHS for the entirety of the instructional day?

Each board member's opinion/response is outlined below:

Mr. Anderson - no

Mrs. Aubel - no

Mr. Charvat - yes

Mr. Cohn - no

Mr. Dotterweich - no

Mr. Granholm - no

Mr. Pierce - no

Mr. Wingard - yes

Mr. Pantano - no

Attachment: Discussion Item 815.1 Acceptable Use of Personal Tech Devices

Attachment: Cell Phone Expectations - 8.4.26

7. STUDENT DEVICE PARAMETERS

DASD school board members discussed whether to remotely disable district-issued student devices for grades K-6 overnight between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. via Lightspeed filtering software. Student devices for students in Grades K-3 currently stay at school unless needed for virtual or FID days, while students in Grades 4-6 take their devices home regularly. Dr. Heffler presented data showing that out-of-school overnight usage in grades K-6 is extremely minimal with occasional late-night use typically stems from students completing homework late due to extracurricular schedules. She added current device control software, Lightspeed, can implement time or location-based restrictions, but noted cyber school students require separate rules and only one after-school rule can be active at a time per group. A majority of the board members were against changing student device policies emphasizing that district data proves late-night usage is barely occurring in grades K-6. Several board members argued that managing bedtime and device habits falls on parents, not the school district. They also noted disabling access could penalize students who rely on late-night or early-morning hours to complete schoolwork due to family or extracurricular commitments. A concern among many board members was the ineffectiveness and burden on staff time while restricting student devices does not stop students from using other devices in their home. A few board members were in favor of restricting student devices from 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. arguing that young children should be sleeping overnight rather than completing schoolwork late and saw little harm in locking the devices down as a precaution.

Mr. Pantano reiterated the essential question: Should students in Grades K-6 have limitations on their district-issued device from 11:00 pm through 6:00 am?

Ultimately, the will of the board was to not alter the current policy on student devices.

Each board member's opinion/response is outlined below:

Mr. Anderson - no

Mrs. Aubel - yes

Mr. Charvat - yes

Mr. Cohn - no

Mr. Dotterweich - yes

Mr. Granholm - no

Mr. Pierce - no

Mr. Wingard - yes

Mr. Pantano - no

Attachment: Discussion Item 815 Acceptable Use of Technology Internet (1)

Attachment: K-6 Student Device Usage Summary

8. K-3 TOILETING

The school board directors discussed whether independent toileting should be explored as a prerequisite for in-person general education enrollment in grades K-3 (with temporary enrollment in virtual/cyber school as an alternative until readiness is met). Dr. Doll noted the policy would apply strictly to general education students in grades K-3, students with IEPs, 504 plans, or documented exceptionalities which are legally accommodated and exempt from

this consideration. It was noted DASD currently has no toileting prerequisite for enrollment. When needs are identified, schools create individualized home-school support plans, set schedule prompts, and rely on nurses, paraprofessionals, or teachers to manage accidents. District data showed 17 general education students (primarily in Kindergarten and 1st grade) required ongoing toileting interventions last year. Board leadership noted that staff concerns are rising as these occurrences trend upward. Board leadership and members highlighted that ongoing toileting issues create significant classroom disruptions and place an extra, non-instructional burden on teachers, nurses, and paraprofessionals. DASD administration emphasized a need to establish consistent, district-wide protocols for who handles accidents and support plans across all K-3 buildings. All board members agreed that the issue warrants further study to better support teaching staff, establish clearer guidelines, and streamline administrative procedures. Several board members strongly cautioned against denying a child access to education entirely. They stressed that if a student lacks home support or readiness, the school system should help rather than exclude, though alternative options like temporary cyber learning could be considered if necessary.

Following a full board discussion, the board unanimously directed administration and board leadership to focus on examining legal ramifications, gather staff feedback, and evaluate potential administrative solutions or updates to policy(ies). Administration was directed to provide the board with a final recommendation at a future meeting.

Mr. Pantano summarized the revised essential question: Should DASD further explore a policy to require independent toileting as a prerequisite for enrollment for in-person general education classrooms?

Each board member's opinion/response is outlined below:

Mr. Anderson - yes

Mrs. Aubel - yes

Mr. Charvat - yes

Mr. Cohn - yes

Mr. Dotterweich - yes

Mr. Granholm - yes

Mr. Pierce - yes

Mr. Wingard - yes

Mr. Pantano - yes

Attachment: 200 Enrollment in District - Dallastown Area School District

Attachment: 200-AR-0 Enrollment of Students - Dallastown Area School District

Attachment: 201 Admission of Students - Dallastown Area School District

Attachment: 201-AR-0 Admission of Students - Dallastown Area School District

9. CALENDAR OF BOARD EVENTS

Mr. Pantano highlighted the Calendar of Board Events.

10. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr. Steven Bentzel, district resident and former board member, questioned if allowing students

to access social media and communicate on their devices is educational. He feels students must be able to toilet independently prior to starting school.

11. BOARD COMMENTS / CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Dotterweich thanked DAIS for sponsoring the Principal's Popsicles and Playgrounds event.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa B. Little, Board Secretary