Committee of the Whole

April 3, 2024

Academic Affairs and Mental Health

In partnership with families and the community, DASD empowers students in a safe environment through relevant and engaging educational experiences that support academics, creativity, and character development.

A DASD Student will FORGE on by demonstrating:

Flexible and critical thinking

(empowers students to discover the truth in assertions and analyze problems based on logic and evidence)

Ownership (*empowers students to be accountable for their actions and work hard to achieve success)*

Resiliency

(empowers students to have the strength and fortitude to confront the obstacles they are bound to face in life)

Good Judgment

(empowers students to use integrity to make decisions and act in a way that encourages other to trust, respect, and depend on them)

Empathy

(empowers students to see the world from someone else's perspective and develop compassion for others)

The DASD will prepare students for their future including college, career, and life success.

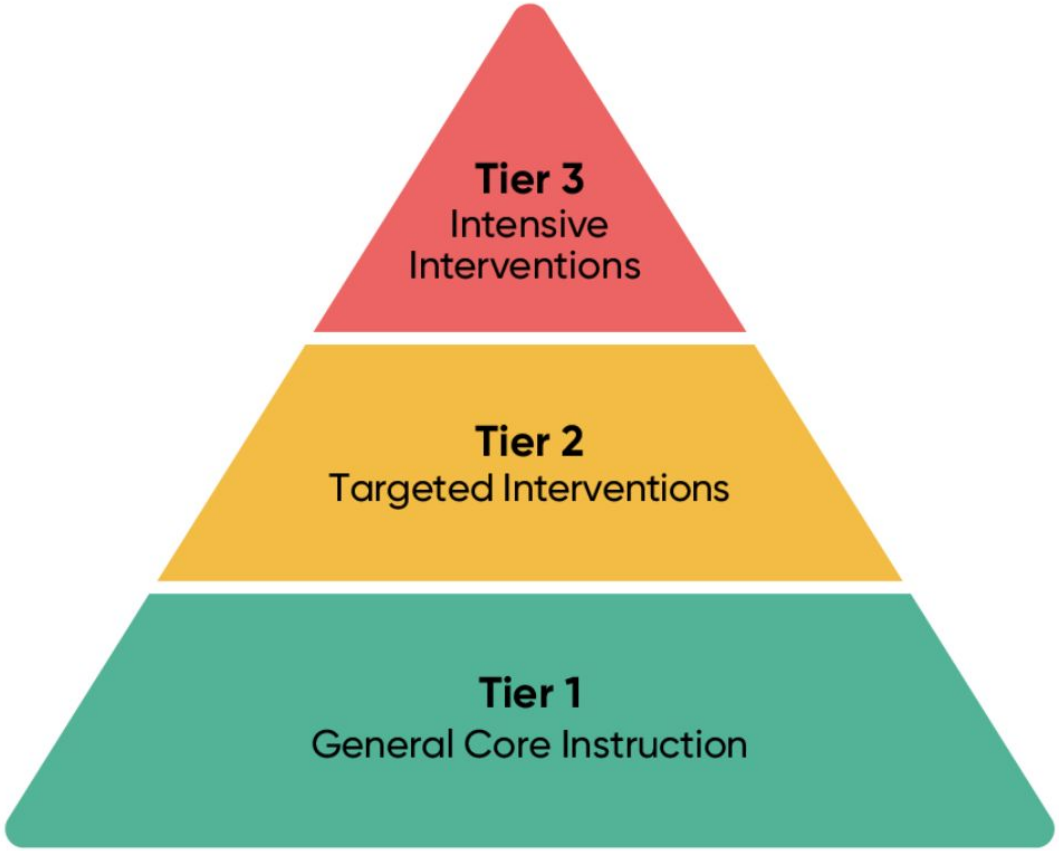
The DASD will be the top performing district in the CSIU region.

DASD will be committed to the mental health wellness of students, their families, and our staff through prevention, intervention, and education

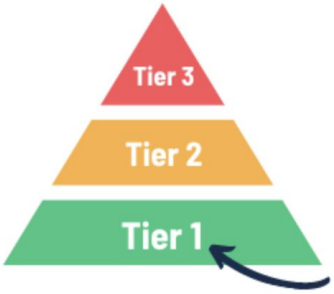
What is MTSS?

The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a collaborative, evidence-based approach to differentiating and personalizing instruction and intervention, across academics, social-emotional learning, and behavior for all students—so that every student can achieve academic and life success.

There is tremendous evidence supporting the power of an effective MTSS system to improve student outcomes for struggling learners, but there is also solidly convincing research that it improves student outcomes for ALL learners. *A rising tide raises all boats.*


Tier 3
Intensive
Interventions
Tier 2
Targeted Interventions
Tier 1
General Core Instruction

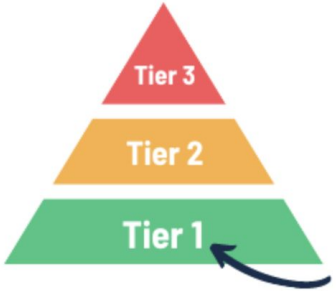
Tier 1: Core Instruction



High quality instruction is essential to ensure that 80% of students' needs are met at Tier 1

- **Standards-Based Curriculum**:
  - Revised curriculum maps in every content area K-12
  - Improved elementary literacy curriculum maps such that K-2 maps include phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing while 3-5 maps include fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing
- **Systematic Explicit Instruction:**
- **Differentiated Instruction:**
  - The content of instruction, delivery of instruction, and targeted level of instruction can be differentiated
- **Flexible Grouping:** .
  - K-5 daily small group literacy instruction
  - K-5 daily small group math instruction
  - In 2024-2025 there will be daily small group literacy and math instruction in 6-8
- **Active Student Engagement:**
  - Professional development around student engagement and checks for understanding

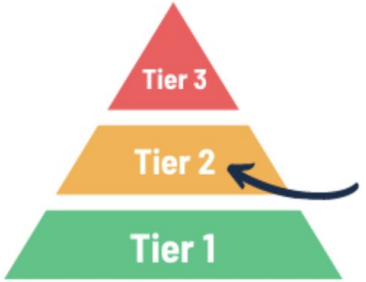
Tier 1: Core Mental Health / Behavior Support



Tier I interventions for all students teach our students skills to understand, identify, and manage emotions; make good choices about behavior; solve social problems; develop self-awareness; and seek help from others when experiencing mental health problems or challenges. These skills are comparable with PA Career Ready Skills (34). They help our students develop these skills at age-appropriate levels and by doing so may prevent the development of more serious mental health problems.

- High School
  - GPS Class for 9th graders
  - Revised FLEX Period
  - School-wide Positive Events
  - Revisions to cell phone and e-hall pass procedures
- Middle School
  - RISE Class for 6th graders
  - School-wide Positive Events
  - Revisions to cell phone and e-hall pass procedures
- Elementary Schools
  - Guidance Class for K-5th graders (cost was grant covered)
  - School-wide Positive Events

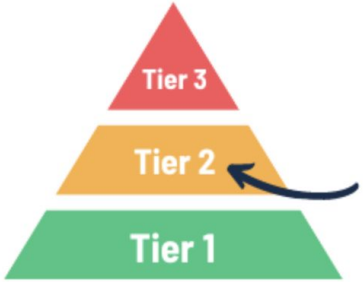
Tier 2 - Targeted Academic Intervention



At Tier 2, students identified as being at-risk academically through universal screeners are provided scientific, research-based interventions in addition to the core curriculum. **Approximately 5-15% of students** will need supplemental instruction at a Tier 2 level of support to become proficient. Tier 2 interventions are implemented in the regular classroom individually or with groups of students demonstrating common skill deficits

- **Universal Screeners:**
  - K-2
    - NWEA MAP Literacy and Math
    - DIBELS and Phonics Screener for individual students
  - 3-8
    - NWEA MAP Literacy and Math
    - CDTs Literacy and Math
  - 9-12
    - CDTs in Algebra, English, and Biology
- **Research-based Interventions:**
  - Interventions provided through the MTSS process
  - Intervention bank development in progress for literacy and behavior support
  - 2024-2025 intervention bank development for math

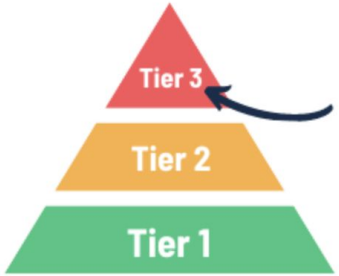
Tier 2 - Targeted Behavior/Mental Health Intervention



Tier II Interventions are actions taken to help students who are identified as having a specific mental health or behavior problem. Tier II interventions are generally provided by school staff and conducted in the school.

- Addition of Principals of Intervention and Special Education
- Addition of Mental Health Specialist at DMS
- Improved MTSS/Child Study process / Improved SAP process
- Modifications to the Ironmen Cyber Academy
- ACEs training for all teachers
- Mental Health First Aid training coming for all teachers

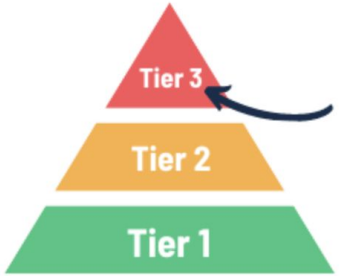
Tier 3 - Intensive Academic Intervention



Students who have not demonstrated progress with targeted interventions at a Tier 2 level of support require more time in more intensive interventions. Tier 3 interventions are distinguished from Tier 2 interventions because they are even more individualized based on data collected in individual problem solving, occur with smaller student-teacher ratios, possibly occur for a longer duration of time, and possibly occur with another teacher. **About 1-5% of students will require this level of intensive support.**

- **Universal Screeners:**
  - K-2
    - NWEA MAP Literacy and Math
    - DIBELS and Phonics Screener for individual students
  - 3-8
    - NWEA MAP Literacy and Math
    - CDTs Literacy and Math
  - 9-12
    - CDTs in Algebra, English, and Biology
- **Research-based Interventions:**
  - Interventions provided through the MTSS process
  - Intervention bank development in progress for literacy and behavior support
  - 2024-2025 intervention bank development for math
- **Support Personnel:**
  - Reading specialists, Mental Health Specialists, Guidance Counselors, Regular Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers

Tier 3 - Intensive Behavior/Mental Health Intervention



Tier III interventions are services provided to students with mental health problems that are more extensive than students who receive Tier II interventions. These services are sometimes provided by practitioners or agencies outside the school district. Additionally, these interventions are usually provided after a trial of a Tier II intervention and a conclusion being made that a more intensive intervention is needed.

- Mental Health Specialists
- Vaping cessation course for middle school students as needed
- Drug/alcohol counseling support for middle and high school students as needed
- Revisions to our suicide prevention policy
- Revisions to our crisis protocols
- Training for our mental health specialists including QPR and Mental Health First Aid
- Application to grants for more support and funding

Our Next MTSS Steps

- **Appropriate Use of Data in Determining Secondary Courses for Students**
  - Lifting many prerequisites
  - Expanding access to AP courses
  - Expanding access to Dual Enrollment opportunities
  - Clear communication and expectations of courses between DMS and DHS regarding core content areas and Spanish
- **Expanded use of NWEA MAP Testing**
- **Creation of Student Homerooms at the Elementary Level**
- **Analysis of DHS and DMS Schedules / Continued Instructional Time focus in Elementary**
- **Improved MTSS Referral Process**
  - Mrs. Earp, Ms. Wenrich, and Mrs. Snyder, School Psychologist, will automatically refer students based on diagnostic test results
  - Teachers are currently being provided with more guidance about what constitutes an appropriate referral and how to go about gathering data for the referral

Our Next MTSS Steps

- **Improved Documentation in Sapphire**
- **Refined use of Reading Specialists**
- **Refined use and possible expansion of Mental Health Specialists**
- **Google shared folder with research-based interventions**
  - Clearer communication about what intervention to utilize
  - Clearer communication about how to progress monitor
- **Continued Professional Development for Teachers**
  - Understanding curriculum maps / creation of units of study / creation of daily lesson plans
  - Differentiated Instruction
  - Data Analysis
  - Small group instruction / Interventions and Progress Monitoring
  - Student Engagement
  - Effective classroom leadership

Spring Testing Schedule

- PSSAs
  - ELA - April 22-26, 2024
  - Math - April 29 - May 3
  - Science - April 29 - May 3

- Keystone Exams
  - May 13-24, 2024

- AP Exams
  - May 6-17, 2024

Curriculum Leads and Building Leads

- Building Lead Job Description
- Building Lead List
- Key Roles
  - Serve as a liaison between teachers and administration
  - Facilitate communication and foster relationships
  - Identify building strengths and build upon them
  - Address building-level concerns in a positive and proactive manner
  - Assist in planning building-level events
  - Assist in planning building-level professional development
- Cost
  - Each position has a stipend of $1,280
  - Reducing Curriculum leads by 8 positions - $10,240
  - Addition of 12 Building Leads - $15,360
  - Total increased cost of $5,120 / gaining this new role

Interviews / April 10th Personnel Items

- Mental Health Specialists
  - 3 applicants
  - All invited to a first round interview with an interview team of Dr. Nied, Mr. Moser, Dr. Reinard, Mrs. Earp, Mr. Varholak, and Mr. Kissinger
  - The team came to a unanimous decision to select two of the candidates
- Elementary
  - 30 applicants
  - Dr. Nied, Mr. Moser, Dr. Reinard, Mrs. Geise, and Ms. Wenrich screened applicants using a rubric
  - 11 applicants were invited to a first-round interview with that team
  - The team came to a unanimous decision to invite 4 applicants back for second-round interviews on April 4th and 5th

Interviews / April 10th Personnel Items

- PE/Health
  - 11 applicants
  - Dr. Nied, Mr. Moser, Mr. Gump, Mr. Snover, Mr. Hiravi, Mrs. Eck, and Mrs. Earp screened applicants using a rubric and served as the interview team
  - 7 applicants were invited to interviews on April 3rd
  - 2 applicants are being invited back for a second round interview
- Biology
  - 4 applicants
  - All 4 applicants interviewed with a team of Dr. Nied, Mr. Moser, Mr. Gump, Mr. Varholak, Mrs. Earp, Mrs. Crane, and Ms. Morgan
  - The team came to a unanimous decision to select one of the candidates
- Guidance Secretary
  - 3 applicants
  - All 3 applicants interviewed with a team of Dr. Nied, Mr. Gump, Mr. Varholak, Mrs. Reich-Coup, and Ms. Rickert
  - The team came to a unanimous decision to select one of the candidates

FID Application

- To complete the application, the Board must first vote on the resolution we will recommend
- Our plan will be to only use FIDs in emergency situations much as this year
    - We only used one on a half day at the High School due to water main break

Mental Health Grants

- PCCD
  - Funding the cost of a new Mental Health position
- Geisinger Catalyst
  - $60,000 ($20,000 annually for 3 years) to allow a Mental Health Specialist position to transition to a Director of Mental Health
  - Clinical supervision for our Mental Health Specialists from a Geisinger psychologist
  - Support in transitioning to a model that utilizes clinical diagnostic testing and record keeping tools
  - Support in transitioning to a billable model in the future
- Degenstein
  - Funding the cost of a current Mental Health Specialist position



Finance

- Previously projected budget deficit of $1,850,075
  - Further review lead to a deficit of $2,000,000
- Since then, we have cut an additional $1,200,000
- New deficit of approximately $800,000
- How did we arrive at this lower number?

Staffing Adjustments

- With the recent retirements, we have identified 10 positions which we do not plan to fill.
- This provides approximately a $1.2 million savings.
- Additional savings, albeit much lower, are likely as we replace the remaining retiring positions.

District Staffing

Danville Area School District Beginning-of-Year Professional Full-Time Employee (FTE)			
School Year	**Total Students**	**Total FTEs**	**Student:Teacher Ratio**
2022-2023	2137	192	11.13:1
2023-2024	2159	184	11.73:1
2024-2025 (Projections)	2138	171.6	12.46:1

Building Staffing Projections

Danville Area School District Beginning-of-Year Professional Full-Time Employee (FTE)			
Building	**Total Students**	**Total FTEs**	**Student:Teacher Ratio**
DPS	489	42.15	11.6:1
Liberty Valley	493	40.4	12.2:1
Middle School	518	40.55	12.77:1
High School	638	48.5	12.45:1

Comparisons

- Our Projected Ratio is 12.46:1 with 171.6 FTEs
- Entire State Average Ratio is 15.2:1
  - If we were to be at the average, it would be 141 FTEs
- Average for Comparable Enrollment Schools is 13.8
  - If we were to be at this average, it would be 155 FTEs

Staffing Conclusion

- We have identified positions, through attrition, which do not need to be replaced
- Even with these reductions in staffing, we remain very well below the state averages in terms of student to faculty ratio
- We are able to do this without damaging any programs or services to students

Next Steps

With these reductions, we are still left with a deficit. We can either utilize our fund balance, further cut expenses or moderately raise taxes to cover the shortfall.

Options

- Utilize Fund Balance
  - Analogous to a household using savings to cover monthly bills
  - Amount used from fund balance could increase over time because costs will almost certainly continue to increase year-after-year
- Decrease Expenditures
  - We believe that there may be future adjustments in personnel, but at this time any more cuts would lower the service students receive or cause adjustments to programming in some capacity
  - We closely examine all expenditures and will continue to seek more cost-efficient measures
- Increase Revenues
  - Would require the Board to consider moderate tax increases at or below the Act 1 Index

Act 1 Index

- Essentially, the Act 1 Index is an “education inflation index”
- Legally, establishes a measurement for determining property tax increases justified by wage inflation, without a referendum
- Takes into account statewide average weekly wage, employment cost index, base index and then an adjusted index based on locality
- The state determines each local school district’s Act 1 Index annually

Act 1 Index

- For the current fiscal year, DASD's Act 1 Index was 4.1%; the District did not raise taxes at all
- For next fiscal year, DASD's Act 1 Index is 6.1%, meaning the Board can choose anywhere between no raise up to 6.1%

*2024-2025 also is the fiscal year where Federal ESSER III funds are no longer a source of revenue.

Act 1 Index Implications

Approximate Costs to the Median Household Per Month for Montour and Northumberland County/Total Increased Revenue Per Percentage								
Rate Increase	1%	2%	2.5%	3%	3.5%	4%	5%	6%
Average Monthly Increase								
Montour	$1.05	$2.10	$2.63	$3.15	$3.68	$4.20	$5.25	$6.31
Northumberland	$1.00	$2.00	$2.50	$3.00	$3.49	$3.99	$4.99	$5.99
Overall Increase in Revenue								
	$147,934	$295,868	$369,835	$443,802	$517,769	$591,737	$739,671	$887,605

Cafeteria Contract Renewal / Cafeteria Pricing

- Guarantee of $110,000

- Meal prices are the same
- Free breakfast program continues

Long-Range Planning



The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit responses from experienced and capable Architectural / Engineering firms wishing to perform a comprehensive District Wide Facility Study (Study) for all buildings in the Danville Area School District (the School District). The Study shall be in sufficient detail to provide information that will comply with the applicable Pennsylvania Department of Education standards for such studies. The Study will evaluate conditions at each building to include safety, capacity, useful life, and expansion of Athletic Fields to the recently purchased 20 acre property across from the Primary School Building, and the option to consolidate up to all district students to the High School Complex. Additionally, this study could propose future land acquisitions to meet the needs of any such proposed plans.

March 27, 2024 Pre-Proposal Meeting (16 companies)

- Quad 3 Group
- KCBA Architects
- Buchart Horn
- Barry Isett and Associates
- EI Associates
- ICS - Provident
- Schraeder Group
- RLPS Architects
- K&W Engineers
- Marotta Main Architects
- Breslin Architects
- MKSD Architects
- McKissick Architecture
- Alloy 5
- Strosser Baer Architects
- HRG

- **RFP response due May 1, 2024**

Establishment of a Foundation

Assistance of an attorney:

1. Preparation and submission of the application for formation and creating of the Articles of Incorporation
2. Publication of the Articles of Incorporation
3. Assistance with appointment of the Board of Directors
4. Preparation of Bylaws and assistance with adoption of same
5. Assistance with appointment of the Officers
6. Preparation and submission of the forms required for application of an EIN

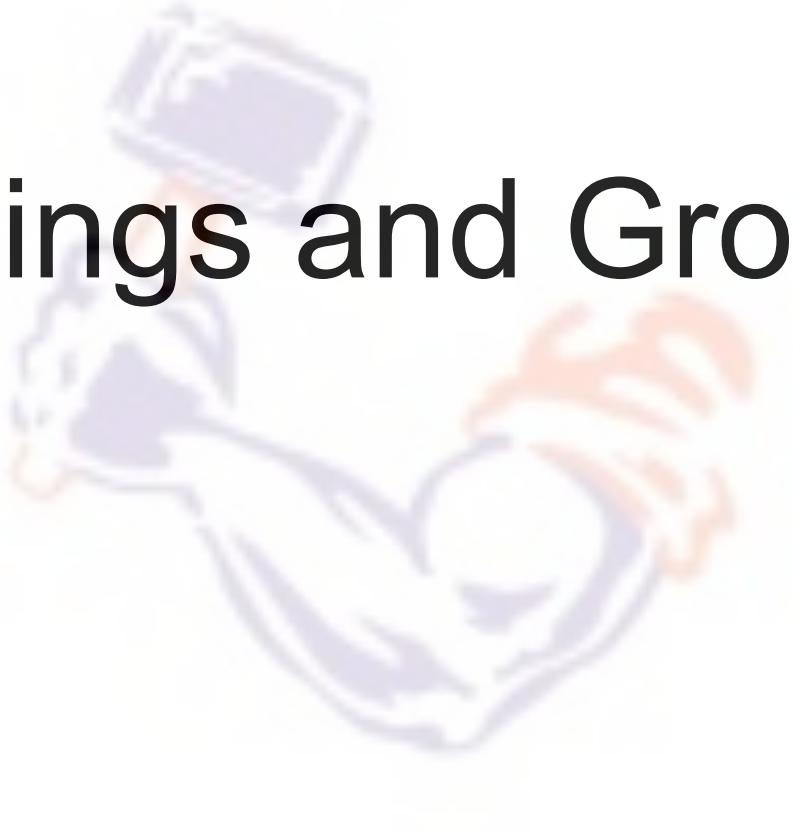
Assistance of a CPA.

7. Opening of a bank account
8. Application to the IRA for tax-exemption

Associated Costs:

- $125 filing fee with the state
- Approximately 10-15 hours of attorney fees connected with foundation establishment
- CPA fees

Buildings and Grounds



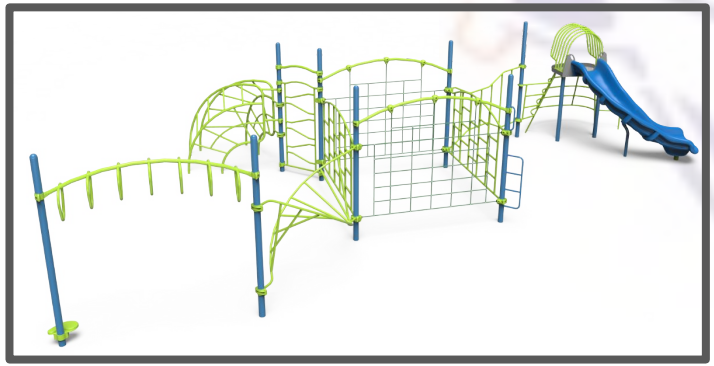
Playground Equipment at DMS



- $25,000 contributed by Hummel Station, matching $25,000 from Degenstein Foundation, $10,000 from gala fundraiser
- Maycee’s Maze designed for numerous climbing challenges, including “obstacle course” style
- Purple with white available

Playground Equipment at DMS

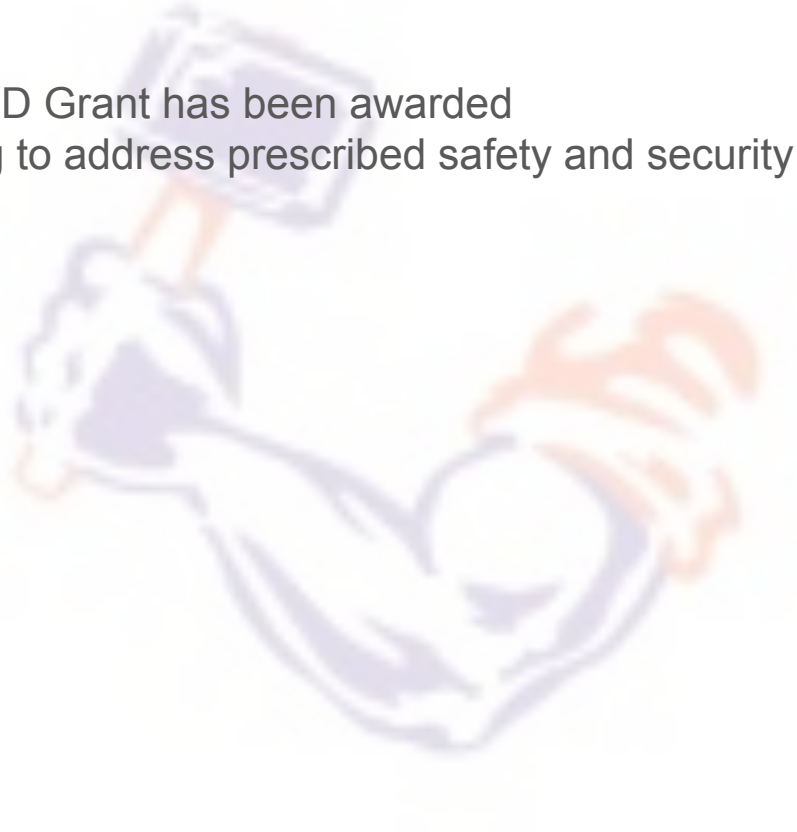
- Centrally placed near incoming pavilion
  - Pavilion breaking ground in early April
- First play equipment of multi-phase fundraising process by Danville School Community Park Project
- Playground surfacing to be mulch, similar to DPS playground





PCCD Grant

- The District’s PCCD Grant has been awarded
- $40,000 in funding to address prescribed safety and security upgrades



High School Agriculture Room

- Safety switch was modified in order to notify people when a fuse was out
- This can not be the permanent solution
- We are having an outside company come in to assess
- This could be anywhere from a few thousand dollars or possibly up to over $150,000
    - If an expensive project, we will ask for the project to be funded out of Capital Reserve Fund

Athletics & Extracurriculars



Athletic Hall of Fame

- Daily Item and Press Enterprise will be running advertisements for Committee members this week.
- Two new applicants for Committee have already been received
- We will look for May appointments and schedule the first meeting shortly thereafter

Scoreboard

- Have received comparable quotes from two leading vendors, in progress of a third
  - Daktronics
    - Approximately $510,000
      - Able to enter a fundraising agreement to raise a percentage of cost prior to commitment of purchase
      - All raised funds go directly to school
      - All solicitation costs are included in the quote
      - Installation and technical support through the Daktronics company
  - Watchfire
    - Approximately $472,000
      - Any fundraising efforts are done through a third party, who takes a percentage both up front and for the length of contracts
      - Installed by Miller Sports Construction
      - Technical support through another third party vendor

Scoreboard

- Next Step
  - Once we have secured a third quote, we will look at total comparison of costs and services included
- Future Options
  - Consider purchasing upfront out of Capital Reserve funds
  - Consider agreement to attempt to raise the funds, or a percentage thereof, up front
  - Include a scoreboard upgrade for consideration in long-range planning
  - Choose to maintain our current status at this time