



The January 11th Board of Education meeting began with the swearing in of three recently elected Board Trustees: Brian Arnold, Elise Bruderly (who has served as an appointee since July 2020), and Jennifer Kangas. Their terms run through 2026.

January is School Board Recognition Month, and Dr. Timmis thanked Trustees for taking on the commitment to serve Dexter students and the District. The Board viewed a heartwarming video, made by Creekside art teacher Jane Montero, in which Dexter students thanked the school board for their service and Dexter Art Teachers presented a mini virtual art show of Y5-12 student creations (find the video [here](#)). Each year the Dexter Education Association donates award-winning books to each building's media center in recognition of Board service. The following books are being donated this year:

Anchor Elementary: [Truman](#), by Jean Reidy and Lucy Ruth Cummins
Beacon Elementary: [Lift](#), by Minh Le
Wylie Elementary: [I Hate Reading: How To Read When You'd Rather Not](#) by Beth Bacon
Creekside Intermediate: [Echo Mountain](#) by Lauren Wolk
Mill Creek Middle: [They Called Us Enemy](#), by George Takei
Dexter High School: [A Promised Land](#), by Barack Obama
Louie Ceriani Alternative Education: [The Hate U Give](#) and [On The Come Up](#), by Angie Thomas

As with last month's BOE meeting, much talk centered around the pandemic and the District's Return to School plan. Dr. Timmis shared the latest data from the [COVID-19 Dashboard](#) and the [Return to School Data Review](#). As of January 8th, Dexter is down significantly in student and staff cases/quarantining from what was seen in November. Data reviews now occur on Thursday afternoons, rather than Tuesdays, as there have been delays in receiving data after the weekend. The infection rate is at 1.04%, and as of January 7th, 8% of cases were in ages 0-17. The majority of current cases are adults 18-39 (over 50%); those likely to have school-aged children. In the 48130-zip code, there were 58 positive cases over the last two weeks, compared to 47 cases during the last two weeks of December 2020.

The Washtenaw ISD dashboard shows a positivity rate of 8.7% (7-day moving average). With that figure, according to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Level Risk Determination chart, Dexter is in the highest risk level in terms of cases and medium-high in terms of positivity rate.

Considering all this data, Dexter's Return to School Committee has determined that it is safe to return to the buildings with stringent safety protocols in place. Jenkins, GSRP and Y5-6th grades (hybrid model) started back Monday, January 11th and it is proposed that middle and high school students return to buildings in a hybrid model on Thursday, January 28th. With MLK Day on Monday, January 18, half days scheduled for Thursday, January 21 & Friday, January 22 and the high school PSAT scheduled for Tuesday, January 26, it was determined that bringing students back on Thursday, January 28 would cause the least amount of disruption for students.

Governor Whitmer recently announced that schools are "strongly encouraged" to have students back in buildings by March 1st with safety protocols still in place. The Return to School Committee is working through these guidelines (released last week) to determine logistics.

Wrapping up his Superintendent Update, Dr. Timmis reiterated that the second semester window for School of Choice applications is underway; the application process will close on Friday January 15th. He also noted that a

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Board of Education Bulletin – a meeting summary, not actual minutes – will be distributed to the community and local press following each meeting.

Board President Dr. Julie Schumaker shared that following the recent election of the first woman as U.S. Vice President, she began researching historical DCS board records to find when the first woman was elected as a trustee. In doing so, Schumaker has found many interesting nuggets of Dexter School history which she plans to share; for example, when the District experienced rapid growth during the 1950's and 60's, Dexter asked the local fire department if they could hold some classes in the fire station due to lack of space (they were denied).

Student Representatives Annalisa Shehab and Aiden Naughton reported that Dexter students are nearing the end of their 1st semester. While DHS students would normally have exams at semester end, due to the pandemic there will be no exams this year. Some teachers plan to give chapter tests or have assigned a semester-end project. The 2nd semester begins January 25th, and hybrid classes for DHS and Mill Creek students are scheduled to begin on January 28th. Since current freshman didn't have orientation this past fall, they are invited to attend open houses scheduled for January 21st and 22nd, where NHS students will give tours and answer questions. Winter sports may begin competing on Friday, January 22nd.

DHS students have been invited to participate in a Zoom meeting on January 13th with DHS administration to discuss the previous 6-period per day schedule and give feedback on pandemic schedules. Dr. Timmis shared that parents will be invited to participate in a separate Zoom feedback session within the next few weeks.

No community members asked to speak during the public participation time allotted, and the Board moved on to unanimously approve the hiring of Carly Petersen as a counselor at Mill Creek Middle School.

The Board considered the COVID-19 data review information presented by Dr. Timmis during his update prior to unanimously confirming the 4th Extended Covid-19 Learning Plan as presented. Trustees asked about a possible reversal in the return to buildings decision based on a future positivity rate of 9% or higher. Timmis responded that there are many data points to consider, not just positivity rate, and that all factors will be taken into account by the Return to School Committee before decisions are made or reversed. In addition, HVAC filters for all schools, ordered in August 2020, have recently begun to arrive and will be installed as quickly as possible.

Bylaw 0144.1 regulates the amount of annual compensation for Board members. This compensation is paid by the District in two installments on or about December 15 and June 15 and shall not be contingent upon the number of meetings scheduled or attended. This amount has been unchanged for many years, with the exception of a few recession years where Trustees voted to take half that amount.

In her historical BOE research, Schumaker discovered that board member compensation was \$200 per year during the 1952-53 school year, which in today's dollars would be around \$2000 per year. Dr. Schumaker suggested that the Policy Committee benchmark neighboring district BOE compensation in order to provide equal opportunity to serve on the Board. Trustees approved remaining at \$840 per year for 2021-2022. The Policy Committee will review the topic for future adjustment.

Trustees voted to hold a Board workshop on Saturday, February 20th from 8:30-11:00 a.m. to be tentatively held at the Washtenaw ISD. The Board approved 6 class registrations for each Trustee to be used between now and June 2021. The MASB Winter Institute will be held virtually February 19-21, and online classes and workshops are continuously available for all Trustees. New trustees are encouraged to take Board 101, as well as 100-level classes.

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During a special meeting on December 7th, the BOE conducted the Superintendent's annual evaluation and rated his performance as Highly Effective. At this evening's meeting, a [summary statement](#) (see p. 21 of packet) of the Board's evaluation was read aloud in its entirety. The Board unanimously approved the statement with thanks to Dr. Timmis for his leadership during this challenging school year.

Each January, the Board of Education signs annual declarations affirming their commitment to the Board, listing any potential conflicts of interest, and agreeing to Board Norms and Social Media Guidelines. These forms can be viewed in [the meeting packet](#).

The Board receives monthly financial reports from Dexter Schools CFO Dr. Sharon Raschke, which provide information about budget expenses. In November, this report is accompanied by a quarterly narrative with deeper explanations of changes from the original budget approved in June. The budget created in June is based on what the District estimates they will receive from state and federal funding. This information is not finalized until late in the year, which is why a full operating plan cannot be determined until November.

In response to a question, Dr. Timmis explained that Dexter is planning a robust summer program for special and high need students due to COVID-19. There are likely to be general education options as well. Funding for this program will be primarily from the 2021-2022 budget.

During Board Comments, trustees welcomed the new trustees and expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the student video created for School Board Recognition Month, citing the impressive artwork and warm sentiments shared by Dexter students. The new trustees thanked the Board and District for their support and onboarding assistance.

The next Dexter Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 25, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.