
For the first time in over a year, the Board of Education met in person (masked and socially distanced) on Monday evening in the Bates Boardroom. This meeting also marked the first opportunity Dexter's three newest board members (Brian Arnold, Elise Bruderly and Jennifer Kangas) have met in person with their fellow Trustees since their election in November 2020. Approximately 14 community members attended the meeting in person, with 70 logging in via Zoom.

Board President Julie Schumaker noted that the Washtenaw Board of Commissioners has declared a local State of Emergency within Washtenaw County through December 31, 2021 due to COVID-19. Although the Board is meeting in person, they do not want to place an undue burden on those who may wish to address the board but have health concerns that make them uncomfortable meeting in a group setting at this time, so they will be temporarily allowing virtual comments during public participation. Once the pandemic has passed and there is no longer a local state of emergency, the BOE will return to its normal practice of having public comment in-person only when meetings are held in person.

New DHS Principal

Dr. Timmis noted the retirement of Instructional Coach Jeff Dagg, describing him as instrumental to the District through his many roles over the past 25 years. The Superintendent next introduced newly-hired DHS Principal Melanie Nowak, and outlined the hiring process that began in February. Ms. Nowak's resume & letters of recommendation can be found in the [4/12/21 Board packet](#). Nowak thanked the District for this opportunity and shared that she is excited to work with our amazing staff, students and community.

COVID Data Review & Return to Learning Plan

Moving to the [COVID Dashboard](#), Dr. Timmis shared that our total positive student cases increased by 20 this week. The Athletics Department tested approximately 700 students last week and about 500 this week; of those, only 4 students were positive out of the 700 tested between April 4 & 5, and 3 out of the 500 tested April 11 & 12 (less than 1% each).

County cases are rising significantly with 50.1 positive cases out per 100,000 people (4/12/21). In our 48130- zip code, there were 33 cases in February and the case number today is 76. According to MDHHS, there are 393/1,000,000 positive cases with an 8% positivity rate. The ISD Dashboard lists 314.2/1,000,000 positive cases with a 6.2% positivity rate. DCS attendance data shows that we are averaging between 97-99% students attending either virtually or in person each week. With this information in mind, the Return to School team recommended that Dexter continue to bring Y5-4th grade in 100% all day, every day, and phase in Creekside, Mill Creek and DHS students after April 19th (Mill Creek & DHS would be 4 days/week). One mitigation strategy that is proving effective is a number of tents outside each building. These are used for classes, as well as lunch and snacks time when students need to take off masks to eat (but remain 6 feet apart).

State Testing Week

Dexter Freshman, Sophomore and Junior students participated in State testing this week: 11th graders take the M-STEP, WorkKeys and SAT tests, while 9th and 10th graders take the PSAT. In early April, the Michigan Department of Education denied the District's request to waive the federal requirement to test students, but approved the waiver which relieves DCS of penalties if <95% of juniors do not test.

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Student Representative Update

Student Board representative Anna Shehab reported that Monday was the first day back to remote learning for DHS, which went very smoothly. Spring sports are underway. The Athletic Department is testing non-contact sports weekly and contact sports (including those where masks cannot be worn, i.e. water polo) are tested three times weekly. Shehab and fellow student Board representative Aidan Naughton served on the student committee to interview the final four DHS principal candidates, and are excited to have Ms. Nowak as their principal next year.

First Opportunity for Public Participation

No one spoke during the first opportunity for public participation.

Consent Agenda

Business turned to the unanimous approval of the evening's consent items. President Schumaker expressed her gratitude and best wishes to Jeff Dagg upon his retirement, citing his enormous contribution to the District both as a teacher and a mentor.

Reconfirmation of Learning Plan

Discussion commenced regarding the [Reconfirmation of Learning plan \(pg. 298\)](#) detailed by Dr. Timmis during his earlier update. When asked if the county health department had issued any new updates, Timmis shared they had met with WCHD on Thursday and Friday and they are satisfied that Dexter's mitigation strategies are effective. He reiterated that we are testing a significant number of students weekly for sports and club participation, and our numbers are nowhere near the county positivity rate. All DCS staff have been given the opportunity to receive a Covid vaccination, and 92.6% of DCS staff have received at least one dose. The learning plan reconfirmation was unanimously passed.

DHS Tennis Court Removal and Replacement

The Facilities Committee met Thursday, April 8th to review bids for the removal and replacement of the DHS Tennis Courts. Trustee Dick Lundy moved that the Board of Education award the contract to the lowest bidder, Best Asphalt, Inc. for the base contract of \$425,140, with the total budget not to exceed \$500,000. Trustee Kangas thanked the Board for considering the project and suggested more gates for easier coach access to players during match play, as well as shelter from the sun for players when not competing. The motion was unanimously approved; the project will utilize funds from the 2017 Bond.

MASB Conferences

The final action item of the evening was a motion to fund up to 10 total Board and invited DCS community members to attend the virtual MASB Behind the Scenes Conference on April 26. This motion passed unanimously. Trustee Mara Greatorex will extend invitations to selected community members, historically leaders of school-related booster groups. Board members were also invited to attend the MASB Spring Institute, being held virtually April 16-18.

Public Participation

No one spoke during the second opportunity for public participation.

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Committee Updates

Trustee Lundy updated the Board on the Finance Committee's latest meeting where they discussed this preliminary planning for next year's budget, a difficult undertaking with many unknowns. The committee expects more solid numbers by early- to mid-May. The Finance Committee also reviewed the recent bond refinancing which, due to the work of Dexter CFO Sharon Raschke, will save Dexter taxpayers over \$1M.

The Facilities Committee reviewed bids for the removal and replacement of DHS tennis courts and learned about the process of digitizing the District's blueprints from CFO Sharon Raschke. This project was a huge endeavor, vital to preserving historical building information and allowing easy and long-term digital access to current building plans.

The full meeting video can be watched on the Board of Education website at <https://www.dexterschools.org/district/board-of-education/meetings/videos>.

Board Calendar

- Monday, April 26 – 7:00pm – Board Meeting – Bates School
- Wednesday, April 28 – 5:00pm – Board Workshop – location TBD