



Superintendent Update May 16 2021

1 message

Sun, May 16, 2021 at 10:51 AM

May 16, 2021

Dear DCS Families, Students, and Staff,

Initially, I planned to send this letter on Thursday and then the CDC made their announcement regarding new mask rules. Whenever there is a change in CDC recommendations or an order from MDHHS, it takes several days to sort through the details and work on implementation at the local level. This change is no different. On Friday morning, we received some updates from the state level, late Friday night we received MHSAA's interpretations and plans, and sometime late today or on Monday we'll likely receive guidance/advice from MDE/school associations and attorneys. That being said, thank you for your patience as we continue to navigate this school year. At this time, our students and staff will still be required to wear masks in the school other than designated spaces (i.e., lunch where they are 6' apart) and outdoors at recess. Most of our staff and many of our 16+-year-old students are either fully vaccinated or in the process. However, we do not want to create a potentially difficult situation where we have some individuals wearing masks in classrooms and others not.

Now for the letter I started to write on Thursday:

The beautiful weather is hopefully a symbol of the light at the end of a long tunnel signifying an end to this pandemic. As we move through May and have kids in all of our buildings, we're seeing a return to a more normal that is one of hope and excitement. I'm writing to share a few pieces of information with you and to ask for your feedback:

- DCS is working with the Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD) to offer a **vaccination clinic** during the school day for students ages 12 and up. The tentative date is Tuesday, May 25th. Details and registration forms will be sent to families as details are finalized. Currently, we're planning a two-hour window in the morning during the school day for interested families to sign their child up for a Covid-19 vaccine administered by the WCHD.
- In the coming weeks, we'll be ready to share the **school calendar for next school** year. A few dates of note:
 - The first day of school will be Tuesday, September 7th with a half day for all students. We are planning for 5 days of school in most weeks, like a normal school year.
 - The last day of school will be June 17th, 2022. Winter Break will be December 18, 2021 - January 2nd, 2022.
 - Spring Break will be March 26, 2022 - April 3, 2022
 - The remaining calendar will be shared in coming weeks.
- Throughout the pandemic, DCS and families have continued to implement new practices. Some of these have been positive and some have not. We're **interested in your feedback** and would like to know: "As we've navigated a full school year through a global pandemic, what are practices we've historically done that we should stop doing, what should we continue doing, and what should we start doing?"
 - **Parents:** To share your thoughts, please participate in this thoughtexchange <https://my.thoughtexchange.com/425693994> or text the 9-digit code 425-693-994 to the phone number 728-55 to get a link to participate in this exchange.
 - **Students:** To share your thoughts, please participate in this thoughtexchange <https://my.thoughtexchange.com/952812928> or text the 9-digit code 952-812-928 to the phone number 728-55 to get a link to participate in this exchange
 - **Staff:** To share your thoughts, please see the link I sent via email last week.
- **Community Book Study:** Historically, we've offered staff and parents opportunities to participate in a community book study or community read. This started several years ago when we issued hundreds of copies of *At What Cost* when discussing student mental health. This summer, we are offering a series of three books that will be incorporated into voluntary book studies focused on Diversity Equity and Inclusion. All of our students will be asked to be competitive workers in a society that assumes an ability to work in a diverse world. However, our students do not live in a multicultural setting in their daily educational environments. This requires an increased focus from DCS to help prepare our students and to best educate all of our students. Staff, parents, and MC/DHS students interested in sharing in one or more of our community reads, can select the book(s) you would like to read by completing this form: <https://forms.gle/PVGmCN7jwEZU1GpB8>. Books will hopefully be delivered to buildings for pickup by the end of the school year (depending on shipping). Activities and opportunities for discussion will be made available closer to the summer. The deadline to request a copy is Sunday, May 23rd.

- **Parents** - please take a moment and have a conversation with your child(ren) about the importance for everyone to demonstrate empathy and respect for different cultures and values by establishing and maintaining positive relationships that ensure safety and dignity for all. In recent weeks, we're seeing an increase in inappropriate comments, statements, and behaviors related to race and culture in our buildings. We need your help in talking with your child(ren) about treating everyone with dignity and respect.
- A new federal program titled the [Emergency Broadband Benefit Program](#) was announced this week. Please take a moment to read the details and [qualifications](#).

A couple of weeks ago, I shared that I was interviewing for another position at Wayne RESA. I cannot thank everyone enough for your understanding and support as I explored this opportunity to help kids at a broader scale. I was not selected for the position and, in all honesty, am relieved to continue serving the kids in Dexter and the Dexter community as the Superintendent. Thank you for your kindness, understanding, and continued support throughout this process. Dexter is a wonderful community and a great place to raise kids. I started at DCS when our current 7th graders were in Kindergarten and I look forward to seeing these kids graduate from DCS.

Thank you for your continued support of DCS, all of your help this school year, and Go Dreads!

Sincerely,

Christopher Timmis, EdD

Superintendent