



July 2021 Superintendent Update

July 20, 2021

Dear DCS Parents, Students, and Staff,

Our Dread Strong Summer programming is in full swing and it is great seeing so many kids on our campus every day learning, engaged in activities they enjoy, and just being kids. Every year as July begins to wind down, we begin to share updates on the work DCS staff is completing this summer. Like every summer, we're actively interviewing for open positions. If you (or anyone you know) has an interest in working at DCS, please visit our website for job postings.

Changes for the fall:

- **New administrative position created:** Over the last several years, DCS has created new learning options and we are continuing to expand educational opportunities for all students. While many districts focused on merely surviving the pandemic school year, DCS continued to push forward with reviewing, revising, improving, and creating improved learning opportunities for our kids. Meanwhile, DCS spending on Business and Administration is in the 11th percentile of all school districts in the State of Michigan. In other words, 89% of all school districts in Michigan spend more on Administration than DCS. While we strive to maximize efficiency and spend our funds on the classroom, there is a point where an organization becomes too lean. In order to support the continued growth of opportunities to our students, DCS is splitting a current administrative position into two separate roles that will be filled by two current administrators.
 - Executive Director of Instruction and Strategic Initiatives **Mollie Sharrar is now the DCS Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives.** Mollie's leadership has been instrumental in the incredible educational programming we provide at DCS. In this new role, Mollie will continue leading the innovative work and programming we provide our students.
 - Beacon Elementary Principal **Ryan Bruder is now the DCS Executive Director of Instruction.** Ryan's leadership and expertise will be increasingly important as he works at a district-wide level on instruction. The interview process to hire a new Beacon Elementary Principal is beginning this week with a timeline to have the new principal selected by the end of July.
- **Details on other DCS spending rankings** compared to Michigan School Districts are available at the end of this letter for anyone interested.
- **Virtual Options for Fall:** We know that many families are interested in virtual options for the fall. DCS has offered virtual options to families for many years and will continue to do so. In early August, we will formally send out information for interested families. We know that some families are still undecided with their plans regarding the pandemic and we want to give the maximum amount of time to make informed long-term decisions regarding this option to all families who may wish to continue remote learning.

Masks and Covid-19 Precautions for Fall: The CDC recently released guidelines for schools for the 2020-2021 school year. Yesterday, the American Association of Pediatrics released guidance and today we received one piece of legal guidance. Like all school districts, DCS is currently in the process of reviewing these guidelines while also working with the Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD) regarding local cases. As a result of very low local case rates, *DCS has been able to run our summer programming (with the exception of child care and transportation) without masks.* Our hope is that these low case rates continue into fall. At this time, DCS plans to continue reviewing case rates, WCHD guidance, CDC guidance, and other expert guidance regarding masks this fall. School doesn't start for 7 more weeks. If we've learned anything throughout this pandemic, we know it is not responsible for an organization to create requirements months ahead of time on data and recommendations that will be two months old at the time of implementation.

In summary, DCS is currently not requiring masks (other than where required by law or licensing). However, with 7 weeks to go before school starts, we are not willing to announce that masks won't be required or strongly recommended in the fall for all, none, or for some of our students and staff if there is a significant change in the case rates. Please be patient as we continue move closer to the school year.

Athletics and Student Activities: Fall school start up in the coming weeks. All fall high school sports start on August 9th. Any high school students interested in athletics should contact the program coaches for details on practice dates, locations, and times:

- Cross Country (Boys) Nate Lamb lambn@dexterschools.org
- Cross Country (Girls) Seana Larson seana.larson@gmail.com
- Cheer Amy Philage dextercompcheer@gmail.com
- Equestrian Shannon Verbal shanm21@aol.com
- Field Hockey Keely Tamer dreadstrongfh@gmail.com
- Football Phil Jacobs jacobsp@dexterschools.org
- Golf (Girls) Greg Palkowski gregp@daycroft.org
- Soccer (Boys) Drew Ducker drewducker@gmail.com
- Swim & Dive (Girls) Cory Bergen bergenc@dexterschools.org
- Tennis (Boys) Rob Smothers robertsmothers982@gmail.com
- Volleyball Paula Palmer paula.palmer.burns@gmail.com

Middle school sports begin after August 23rd. Information will be made available from Mill Creek Middle School in their back-to-school updates.

Athletic physicals are required prior to participation. The [form](#) is available on our website. Physicals must be dated after April 15, 2021. Physicals can either be dropped off at the DHS Athletic Office or scanned and emailed to stollj@dexterschools.org

Information regarding other activities like [Marching Band](#) is also available on our website.

While it is still July and we don't start school until September, we know that school is starting to be back on everyone's mind. We're excited for the 2021-22 school year and cannot wait to see all of our students back in our buildings every day. Please continue to look for updates in mid-August as we ramp up to start school on September 7th.

Thank you for your continued support, take care, and Go Dreads!

Sincerely,

Christopher Timmis, EdD
Superintendent

Here's some other data that I referred to earlier in the letter:

For reference, below is the most recent data regarding DCS spending compared to all other school districts in Michigan (by percentile):

Local **Revenue** Sources: 75th Percentile

State **Revenue** Sources: 47th Percentile

Federal **Revenue** Sources: 30th Percentile

All **Revenue** Sources: 85th Percentile

Spending:

Basic Programs: 79th Percentile

Added Needs: 57th Percentile

Total Instruction: 75th Percentile

Instructional Salaries: 81st Percentile

Instructional Support: 93rd Percentile

Business and Administration: 11th Percentile

Operations and Management: 46th Percentile

Total Support: 62nd Percentile

Operational Expenditures: 80th Percentile