

# Board Briefs



## District to implement K-12 Balanced School Calendar in 2016/17 school year

After nearly two years of studying the possibility of a district wide Balanced Calendar school year, Davison Board of Education members officially put their stamp of approval on the idea last night, voting to implement the K-12 calendar beginning in the 2016-17 school year.

“After scrutinizing data, holding more than two dozen presentations and seeking input from parents, students and stakeholders, I firmly believe moving to a district wide balanced calendar school year is absolutely in the best interest of our students,” said Superintendent Eric Lieske. “The data clearly shows that a balanced calendar helps reduce summer learning loss and our surveys of parents and staff have been consistent in that 70 percent or more are in favor of implementing such a calendar. If our mission and philosophy truly is to put kids first, then this is a perfect example of how to do that.”

With the district wide balanced calendar, students will continue to attend school 180 days as they have historically. What is different is that there will be an eight-week summer break and three one-week intersession breaks throughout the school year. Students and staff can use the breaks to recharge or students could opt to attend intersessions, which are normally theme based, offer additional learning opportunities and often allow students to participate in activities that normally don't take place in the traditional classroom setting.

In 2016/17, students will begin school on Monday, August 22, 2016. Intersession breaks are scheduled for October 24-27, 2016; February 20-23, 2017; and May 22-25, 2017. The last day of school will be June 23, 2017.

Once implemented, Lieske said the district would

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*The mission of the Davison Community  
Schools is to develop individuals who  
demonstrate skills necessary for lifelong  
success in a changing, global society.*



### District renews Food Services contract

The Board of Education voted Monday, June 1, to extend its contract with Chartwells School Dining for the management of the district's food service program for the 2015-16 school year.

### Board approves purchase of buses

Board members approved to accept the low bid of \$332,500 to purchase five 2014 Thomas Saf-T-Liner C2 school buses from Hoekstra Transportation at the Monday, June 15, meeting. The buses are an upgrade to our existing fleet, according to Director of Operations **Phil Thom**. Delivery is expected this summer.

### Fowler reappointed

Parent **Tracey Fowler** was reappointed June 1 as Davison's representative to the Genesee Intermediate School District's Parent Advisory Committee. Terms are three years. The committee meets periodically to review countywide special education programs.

Board Briefs is a monthly newsletter published after Board of Education meetings. For additional information, please contact the Communications Department at 591-0852.

## **Presentations**

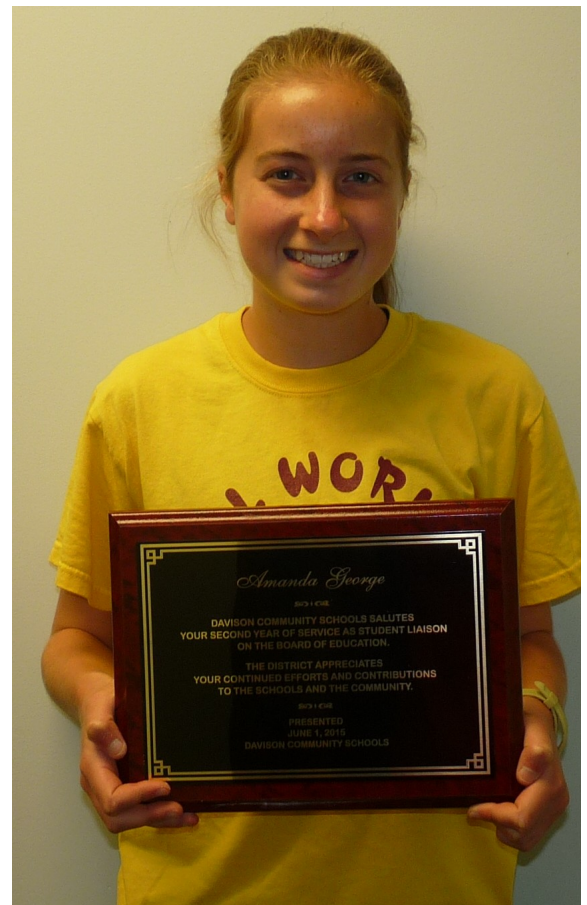


### **All State Music Honors**

Davison High School Instrumental Music students Katie Pulaski and Jake Bronson were recognized at the June 1 Board of Education meeting for their individual achievements at the Michigan Arts Youth Festival. Katie was one of 200 musicians selected from 15,000 potential students invited to compete in the Michigan Youth Arts Festival Concerto Competition. She plays clarinet. Jake was selected to perform with his trumpet in the Michigan Youth Arts Festival in Kalamazoo. Bailey Linton, who was unable to attend the meeting, was also recognized for his selection to participate in the Michigan Youth Arts Festival All State Choir.



Board of Education student representatives were acknowledged for their service at the June 1 board meeting. Above, Board President Kathy Sudia presents a plaque to Davison High School junior Ryan Myers for sitting at the table. He will return next year. Right, senior Amanda George proudly displays the plaque she received for her second year of service on the board.





# Presentations



Above, Varsity Track members were recognized as All-State athletes at the June 15 Board of Education meeting, Left to right, with Athletic Director Dave Beamer, athletes Lily Kelsey, Emily Faltin, Kristina Button, Jacob DeBoer, Joe Renner, Nicholas Schmidt, Nicole Martinbianco, Jordan Arnold and Andrew Bradsher with Board President Kathy Sudia. Right, Josh Hill was recognized for being named 2nd Team All State in Hockey. Josh is pictured with Athletic Director Dave Beamer, Board President Kathy Sudia and Superintendent Eric Lieske.



## Leading the Pledge

Students from the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) preschool led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance at the June 1 Board of Education meeting. The students were accompanied by teachers Angela Clark, Tiffany Maples, April Bowen, Robin Anderson and Lindsay Tate as well as Early Learning Coordinator Susan Vamos.

## **Action Items**

### Board adopts new “Kids-First” mission statement

For more than a year, members of a District Improvement Committee have been working on developing a statement that better fits the district’s mission and vision.

Last night, Board of Education members approved the district’s new mission statement as:

***Davison Community Schools: Where Kids Come First and Futures Begin.***

“Our old mission statement has worked for a number of years but didn’t really fit our purpose,” said Superintendent **Eric Lieske**. “We need to be able to articulate our mission with a sense of purpose, passion and commitment. That is where we’re going with our new proposed mission statement. It fits. We all talk a lot about putting kids first and it truly is what we do. By making this our mission statement, it will help us to make sure kids are at the forefront of every decision we make.”

Lieske said there are three key areas of concentration to keep district staff on course in fulfilling the district’s mission. They include:

- **Connections.** “We need to find ways that ensure kids have connections to our school,” Lieske said. “The research is clear; kids who feel good about school through these connections perform at a higher level. The connections adults have with kids is the basis of this; it’s the bus driver who picks kids up in the morning, the teacher they see in the hallway, the cook who sees them picking up breakfast in the cafeteria and the first hour teacher who knows them well enough that they know the student had a rough night because they were up late studying for a physics exam.”
- **Curriculum.** Lieske said the district must continue and improve efforts to implement curriculum with fidelity; engage in best practices; assess all that happens and continually provide kids and parents with feedback.
- **Opportunities.** Offering a wide range of extracurricular activities, athletics, fine arts, DECA, DTV and other opportunities gives students a chance to grow in their sense of self and depth of knowledge. “We want kids dreaming big; bigger every day,” Lieske said.

“If you talk to people, they agree that our new mission statement and vision really makes a whole lot of sense,” Lieske said. “It fits with what we do every day. It’s clear, it’s concise. I really think a mission statement that is clear and concise may be simplistic but it’s the way to make a good school system into a really great school system.”

“I don’t see anything revolutionary here,” Board Secretary **Karen Conover** said of the new mission statement. “This is great because, really, we are articulating what we are already doing and that brings everyone’s focus in on it.”

### Contracts approved with district teachers and secretaries

Board of Education members ratified contracts with the Davison Education Association and Davison Education Secretaries Association at the June 15 meeting. The current contracts expire June 30.

Both contracts are for two years.

## Action Items

### Donations accepted by Board of Education

The following donations have been gratefully accepted by the Board of Education:

- **Chris Graff** of Hank Graff Chevrolet donated 26 Dell computer monitors to the Technology Department to be used as needed throughout the district.
- **Jim Williams**, in memory of his wife, Sally Ann Williams who taught oil painting through DCER, donated art supplies to the Davison High School Art Department for students to use in their art class.
- 1969 DHS graduate **Michael Ribble** donated copies of the Davison High School "Cardinal Caller" newspaper from the 1968/69 school year. The memorabilia will be placed in the District's Alumni Room at Central Elementary.
- Davison High School student **Emily Faltin** raised \$325 through a walk-a-thon she organized as part of her Senior Exit Project and donated the money to the Cardinals Care Fund to assist students with medical and/or dental needs.
- Parents **Barry** and **Danita Bass** of Bedrock Express donated one yard of mulch to the Davison Middle School Student Council and National Junior Society. The groups used the mulch to improve the Middle School's courtyard area.
- **Safari Club International of Flint** donated a 12-person shanty valued at \$300 to the Hahn Fishing and Outdoor Club for their annual ice fishing derby.
- **Jeff LaFerney** donated 550 paperback/hard cover books to Davison Middle School for students' independent reading use in the Language Arts Department.

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evaluate the program annually during the first three years to determine its effectiveness.

"We will check to see if it is impacting student achievement," he said. "We will check to see if it is helping with academic retention; are kids retaining knowledge better? We will check to make sure it stays aligned with our Board of Education goals in the areas of instruction, resources and school climate."

Parents and stakeholders will also be surveyed annually to gather their input. Attendance and behavior data will be monitored to determine if the balanced calendar has an effect in those areas.

During the 2015/16 school year, school officials and staff will work together to determine themes and opportunities for meaningful one-week intersession opportunities that students will have the option of attending once the Balanced Calendar is implemented.

"This has been an exciting, informative and interesting journey analyzing an alternative school calendar," said Board Treasurer **Kim Lindsay**. "The transparency of the work has clearly been in the forefront as the district studied the balanced school calendar. I'm eager to see the positive results this will have on our kids, parents and staff members."

Board Secretary **Karen Conover** said moving to a district balanced calendar is a natural next step for Davison.

"We have witnessed 15 years of success utilizing a balanced school calendar at Hill Elementary and this next step is going to fit very well with our kids first mission and board of education goal areas," she said. "Having the implementation a full year away provides our staff the time necessary to really get to work and plan the logistics for meaningful intersession opportunities for kids."

Lindsay added that the process of including input from parents, staff, community leaders, coaches and all areas of the organization was valuable and helpful to board members in making their final decision.

"I believe the administration has gone about this initiative in a thorough and thoughtful manner," said Board President **Kathy Sudia**. "Utilizing a variety of data sources to guide this decision provides a strong level of confidence that the implementation will have a successful impact on all district stakeholders."