

# Board Briefs

## Thank a school board member It's Board Appreciation Month!

Board of Education members were honored for their commitment and dedication as part of Board of Education Appreciation Month.

A special presentation by the Davison High School Student Ambassadors, led by Assistant Principal **Julie Malenich**, was held to recognize board members **Karen Conover**, **Kathy Sudia**, **Mark McGlashen**, **John Hair**, **Diane Rhines**, **Granger Stefanko** and **Matthew Smith**. Board members were presented with gift cards from a variety of local restaurants, paid for with contributions from district administrators.

**Sara Howes**, vice president of the Davison Education Association, also recognized board members for their commitment to the students and staff, and announced that the teacher's union was making a \$200 contribution to Outreach East in honor of the board.

## Board elects officers

The first official act of business for the new year was the election of officers. Board members voted to re-elect **Kathleen Sudia** as President; **Mark McGlashen** as Vice President and **Karen Conover** as Secretary. **Diane Rhines** was elected Treasurer. **John Hair**, **Granger Stefanko** and **Matthew Smith** will serve as Trustees.



The Honorable Judge Jennifer Manley and Honorable Judge Mark Latchana of the 67th District Court administer the oath of office to Davison Board of Education members at the January meeting.



**Davison Community Schools**

Where Kids Come First and Futures Begin

*Connections ♦ Curriculum ♦ Opportunities*



## Donations gratefully accepted by Board

The following contributions were accepted at last night's meeting:

- The **MEEMIC Foundation** donated a \$100 grant to Davison Community Schools to purchase books from Scholastic for the Traveling Library bus.
- **Dr. Wax Orthodontics** donated \$30 to Thomson Elementary from the "Lace Up for Learning" program.
- **Davison Meijer** donated school supplies and snacks to Gates Elementary.

## Rhines to serve as rep at GISD budget hearing

Newly elected Board Treasurer **Diane Rhines** will serve as the Board's representative to the Genesee Intermediate School District's annual budget hearing, set for April 24. Trustee **Granger Stefanko** will serve as the alternate.

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

# Presentations

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## Tech. Supervisor Chris Lesko named “Kids First” January recipient

Technology Supervisor **Chris Lesko** is the January 2019 recipient of the “Kids First” Award.

Each month, administrators nominate a DCS employee who best exemplifies what it means to be “Kids First.” Winners receive a \$100 Visa gift card thanks to Mark Owen, owner of MEEMIC insurance agencies in Davison and Flint Township, and a certificate. The winner is chosen at random.

Chris was nominated by Davison High School Principal **Sue Kenkel**, who wrote:

“When I think about a Kids First award winner, it is easy to think of teachers. Yet, there are key staff members in this district that keep us up and running every day. Without their help, student learning would come to a crawl. An impactful Kids First person that provides tremendous support for Davison staff and students is Chris Lesko, Davison Community Schools’ Technology Coordinator.

“While Mr. Lesko is housed at the high school, he and his small team of less than 6 serve the entire district. What once was an operation that tended to fewer than 1,000 technology devices now services around 5,000 devices. Chris is always very responsive and quick to troubleshoot challenges that arise on any given day or during testing crisis time. As students and staff have all become dependent on our technology devices for instruction, testing and research, we can be quick to go in to crisis mode when there is a breakdown.

“At Davison High School we depend on Chris and the department he leads to navigate and troubleshoot our heavily used technology, whether it be a Chromebook, a projector or screen, printer, it matters not the type. Chris responds in a timely manner with a calm demeanor and a friendly smile and assures us that we will be up and running quickly.

“What is most impressive about Chris is his can-do spirit and positive attitude. I cannot imagine the magnitude of what goes through the Technology Help Desk on a daily basis. Regardless of the volume or stress level, you would never know it from interacting with Chris. He listens to our needs and requests and systematically responds as if we are his only customer. He has helped us through difficult situations and has offered much needed support. He is very much a professional and has an incredible skill aptitude in this career field. He takes the time to recognize how his work impacts student learning and he keeps kids in mind as he provides much needed support for the district’s technology.

“I am grateful to work with Chris and very much appreciate his attitude, approach and support in keeping student learning a priority. Even as our technology coordinator, he is a Kid’s First guy. We are so fortunate to have him on our team!”

Other great DCS staff members who were nominated this month include: **Peggy McCurdy**, Secretary at Siple Elementary; **Amy Renye**, Teacher at Hahn Intermediate; **Chris Ruterbusch**, District Librarian; **Trevor Smith**, Teacher at Davison High School, **Austin Snyder**, Cook at Davison High School and **Kristine White**, Teacher at Hill Elementary.



Left to right, Davison High School Principal Sue Kenkel, Superintendent Kevin Brown, Technology Supervisor Chris Lesko and Board of Education President Kathy Sudia.





# Presentations

## Student Ambassadors help new high school students feel welcome

They are essentially the welcome wagon for Davison High School.

With personalities as bright as the yellow T-shirts they wear, the Student Ambassadors have made it their mission to make sure all students new to Davison High School feel welcomed and accepted by their peers.

New to the school this year, the 30-some members of the group each had to apply to the program last spring. They also had to get written recommendations from their teachers.

“These are kids who really put themselves out there and wanted to get involved,” said DHS Teacher **Andrea Ferguson**, who co-sponsors the group with Counselor **Betsy Wambaugh**. “They wanted to be leaders of their peers and advocates for the new students.

Student Ambassadors greet new students when they register for school. They ask them questions to determine their interests and lead them on a building tour. They also help to facilitate New Student Luncheons and offer to sit with their student at lunch time in the cafeteria.

“We are here to build relationships,” Wambaugh said. “That is our course and our purpose.”

“I would imagine that one of the hardest things for a teen-ager to do is to go into a new school,” said Superintendent **Kevin Brown**. “What (the Student Ambassadors) are doing is a big deal.”

Student Ambassadors hope to expand their purpose by offering a helping hand to all incoming ninth graders next school year. Ferguson and Wambaugh recently tasked the group with striking up conversations—and not of the social media kind—with current ninth graders to get their take on what kinds of things the group could do to help eighth graders with their transition to high school in August.

“It helps to give students a go-to peer rather than a go-to adult because they already have a lot of go-to adults in their lives,” Wambaugh said, referring to a student’s support system of multiple teachers, counselors, administrators and school staff.

Student Ambassador **Olivia Masters** eats lunch daily with one the new students she befriended and even invited her to join her at Art Club after school.

“I don’t look at it as taking time out of school but rather working (being a Student Ambassador) into your daily routine,” she said.

DHS junior **Carson Bruns** said being a Student Ambassador is not necessarily about becoming a best friend to the new student but helping them assimilate and meet other students who share the same interests.

“It’s more about helping them find their group of people, not forcing themselves on you,” she said.



**Student Ambassadors answer questions from board members at Monday night’s meeting.**





# Presentations



Four Davison High School vocal music students have been selected to perform in the State Honors Choir, a prestigious honor reserved for approximately 375 students across the state. The four earned the honor by auditioning and competing against other vocalists at district and regional Michigan Vocal Music Association events. The State Honors Choir will perform later this month at the Michigan Music Conference in Grand Rapids. This is the first time in Davison High School history that three freshmen students have made the State Honors Choir and the first time a female freshman has been selected. “I am very, very proud of these students,” Mrs. Orkisz said. “It’s a huge feat and I can’t wait to go and listen to them in Grand Rapids at the end of the month. Pictured above, left to right, are: Davison High School Vocal Music Director Jennifer Orkisz, Superintendent Kevin Brown, vocal music students Gabe Ashley, Jon Faydenko, Sophia Perrault and Joey Crowley and Board President Kathy Sudia.

## Leading the Pledge

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Davison High School Student Ambassadors. The group was accompanied by Principal Sue Kenkel, Counselor Betsy Wambaugh and Teacher Andrea Ferguson. The Student Ambassadors also assisted with the presentation for Board Appreciation Month.

