

SQUALL.

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VOL. 31 ISSUE 1

PAINING A NEW TRADITION

Dexter seniors have the opportunity to leave their mark. Pg. 14



Cover

Painting a New Tradition

For the first time in school history, seniors were allowed to paint their parking spaces. Students and administrators talk about the pros and cons with the new tradition.

Photographer - Alaina Fuqua

Sports 3-9

Fantasy Football Frenzy	3
Parlays and Pitfalls	4
Get Loud on 3rd Down	8

Feature 10-17

Welcome to Dexter	10
Get to Know the '25-'26 International Students	12
Painting a New Tradition	14

News 19-23

Unplugged: Dexter's Crackdown on Devices	19
Administrative Shake Up	20

Opinion 27

Our View: The New Principal Needs to be a Visionary	27
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Anchor 28

Head, Shoulders, Cup	28
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JUST DANCE: The Dexter Dance Team performs a routine during the Homecoming Pep Assembly. **Photographer - Callan Biga**

Check out the new and improved website,
DexterSquall.com



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FANTASY FOOTBALL FRENZY

Students love the thrill of victory while also knowing last-place punishments exist

WRITER  OWEN SORTOR

Often at lunch you can find fantasy footballers huddled around their phones reviewing line-ups, and checking how their players have done.

You can hear the echoes of students negotiating trades, such as electric Bengals WR Ja'Marr Chase for dynamic Lions RB Jahmyr Gibbs. Typically you can also hear a little bit of trash talk from people in really competitive leagues.

Some play fantasy football for the money, others play for bragging rights. The players that have the most fun play because of the excitement that they get with the risks and rewards that are involved. We're not talking about risking \$10 on the league or because they will get made fun of for losing; We're talking about the people who risk punishment for losing.

Senior Mitchell Ward is one of those students who suffered the punishment. Ward finished last place in his league and his punishment was the 24-hour IHOP challenge, an increasingly-common punishment for fantasy losers. This involves the loser heading to an IHOP or whatever restaurant the league settled on, and includes the person having to stay there for 24 hours with a catch: Every pancake they eat takes an hour off of the time they have to spend there.

The funny part about Mitchell's punishment was that he ended up getting kicked out of the IHOP after around eight hours.

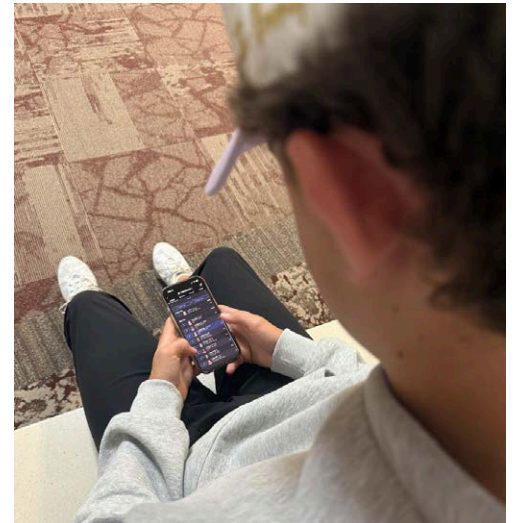
"This was before I could drive too and I had to wait outside for like 45 minutes in the cold before being picked up by my parents," Ward said.

Senior Dylan Darby also came in last place in his league, and he shared a pretty comedic punishment. After losing his league during his sophomore year, Darby had to drink a gallon of milk and then run a mile.

He had to run the mile in the freezing

"I PUKED FOUR TIMES AND I COULDN'T DRINK MILK FOR A FEW DAYS."

-Dylan Darby,
2023-24 Fantasy Football Loser



SETTING THE LINEUP: A student sets their fantasy football lineup during passing time in hopes of avoiding the last-place punishment. **Photographer - Owen Sortor**



REFUSING THE DRINK: Senior Dylan Darby, who lost his fantasy football league, struggles to fulfill his punishment of drinking a gallon of milk and running a mile. **Photograph courtesy of Dylan Darby**

cold while everyone else in his league watched. He claimed that this was way more physically demanding than other people would expect.


"I puked four times and I couldn't drink milk for a few days," Darby said. "I still had a stomach ache for a few days."

If you are trying to find a less basic punishment to do, you may want to take what junior Tyler Fabian's league made him do his freshman year as an example.

His league made him create a new TikTok account and make 'Day in the life' vlogs every day for an entire month.

"It got to a point where it was a habit right after hearing my alarm clock go off to open up TikTok and record me waking up." Fabian said. "Thankfully, I was granted permission to delete the tiktok account a week after I finished my videos."

If you are thinking about implementing a punishment into your league, even those who have suffered punishments I strongly recommend it.

Even if it's just a basic punishment, it gives you and your leaguemates an excuse to get together once more after the fantasy season has come to an end. 

PARLAYS AND PITFALLS

From casual fun to full-blown addiction, students share how illegal betting is becoming a high-stakes habit with real consequences

WRITERS  CAM ENYEDY & ELI WINKLER

Coming home after a long Monday at school, The Noob runs straight to their room, grabs their phone and sits at their desk. They have 4 hours till kickoff, The Noob starts frantically researching player props. After some research, they place a 5-leg parlay, with the odds of +2000, the chance of this bet hitting are slim to none, but The Noob believes.

If this bet hits The Noob could walk away with thousands of dollars. The Noob watches the opening kickoff snuggled in the couch,

hoping and praying that their parlay will hit. As the game continues on, The Noob realizes the fact that their parlay isn't going to hit. As regret starts to fill, The Noob feels like they took a punch to the stomach, another 10 dollars down the drain.

"Losing is demoralizing, but at the same time it motivates you to get back and hit the next bet," The Noob stated "You're only one win away from getting rich."

The Noob got into sports betting because they wanted to "get rich quick" by throwing up hopes and

prayers, placing \$1-5 bets with the potential to earn thousands.

Although The Noob is not alone, for some adults, sports betting is a fun and exciting hobby, but many students at DHS have taken it to a whole new level; betting illegally. What started as a sweet way to spend time and money, has quickly turned sour. Betting has become a part of the daily routine for some teens, but one with real risks.

Here is what some DHS students had to say regarding their sports betting tendencies.



Photo Illustration - Eli Winkler



“I probably place like 10 bets a week... a ton on Saturday and Sunday.” – The Addict

The Addict

The Addict came in hot. Right off the bat, they informed us they had placed over \$20,000 worth of bets in three months. This student was not only betting on sports, but also using online games such as poker, blackjack, baccarat, and slots.

When asked how The Addict created their account, they explained, “I stole my mom’s social security number.” The Addict said, “This allowed me to log in and access online gambling....I did not have my parents’ consent.”

The Addict later informed us that stealing their mom’s social security number was the second attempt at betting.

“I started out with a bookie, and then they stopped. My other friend kept [betting] and they were telling me that I should also bet.” While The Addict may have gambled often, they knew what they were doing, “winning around \$500” after it was all said and done.

Although The Addict got caught and banned from betting by his parents, they are now back in the ring. Using bookies, The Addict is now up over \$1,000.

The Sharp

The longest known bettor at DHS is someone referred to as The Sharp, a popular term used to describe a professional sports bettor who consistently wins and is respected for their expertise. In our interview with The Sharp, they informed us that they’re not hesitant to throw money around.

“I probably place like 10 bets a week,... a ton on Saturday and Sunday,” The Sharp said.

Not only does The Sharp bet often, they have been doing it for years now.

“I first downloaded DK (DraftKings) in December of 2023, and have been betting ever since,” The Sharp states.

The One-Month Wonder

The One-Month Wonder had a short stint in the gambling world. After talking to The One-Month Wonder, it was clear they weren’t cut out for the harsh reality of gambling.

Despite others saying betting on sports made them more enjoyable to watch, The One-Month Wonder heavily disagreed.

“It just makes it way more stressful,” they said.

After losing \$50, The One-Month wonder decided enough was enough. A year later, they haven’t bet since.

The Casual

The Casual bets as a hobby.

“I usually bet with my father,” they said.

The Casual is playing just to have a good time, and make their favorite sports games more exciting.

“The ups and downs of the game really get to you, because you need certain things to happen, and when they don’t happen, you get really into the game,” The Casual said.

The Casual also explained they have no fear of losing.

“I just felt like it’d be fun,” they said. “It’s actually not my money; It’s my father’s money. I’m gambling without losing anything.”

The Bookie

The Bookie had a grueling 2 months of work, as they were betting hundreds of dollars, day or night, without profit.

“Certain few are texting me at 2 AM asking me to place parlays down,” The Bookie said.

A bookie or bookmaker is someone who accepts and pays out bets on sporting and other events at agreed-upon odds. The bookie in our story was a selfless person, bookmaking for up to “five, maybe six” people a month.

“My mom made me an account; she didn’t know I was using it to bookie, she just thought I wanted to bet on my own,” The Bookie said when asked how they got started with this business.

Throughout the months they were bookmaking for other students at DHS, but they didn’t ask for anything in return. They didn’t want money in exchange for placing bets for others; they just did it out of the kindness of their heart, even when people didn’t win.

“People I was booking for ended up losing around \$200 a month.”



IT’S NOT ACTUALLY MY MONEY; IT’S MY FATHER’S MONEY. I’M GAMBLING WITHOUT LOSING ANYTHING.”

– The Casual





“A certain few are texting me at 2 AM asking me to place parlays down.” – The Bookie

For the Sharp and The Addict, betting can be a fun and easy way to make some spending money. For others, like the One-Month wonder, it's stressful and a terrible way to spend time. Although fun for some, betting underage is still illegal, dangerous and important to think of the real-world consequences betting underage can bring.



GET LOUD ON 3RD DOWN

Can you make an impact as a fan in the stands? Coaches and players say absolutely!

WRITERS  CAMERON SWEENEY & DANIEL XUEREB

Student sections help separate high school games from the pro games. Having the most dedicated and excited fans all in one section helps bring energy to the game and, in turn, the team.

Coaches, fans, and players have taken note of the impressive atmosphere created at the football games.

Coach Phil Jacobs, the head football coach, called this year's student section "one of the loudest we've had since I've been here." Jacobs, who became Dexter's head coach in 2017, is in his 9th season with the Dreadnaughts.

Some students' favorite memories were made in the cramped, enclosed area of the student section. Saying that, the main point of the student section is to aid the team in their endeavors, so can students in the student section actually impact the game without being on the field? The players say yes, and the first way to help the team is to make a lot of noise.

So far, a check can be put next to that. The student section this year is one of the loudest, if not the loudest, in recent Dexter history.

Junior tight end Holden Niemi seconds Coach Jacobs, saying the student section is "better this year than years past."

In football, this noise can disrupt the opposing players. Occasionally, this helps force five-yard penalties for such things as a delay of game or a false start. This penalty puts the opposition "behind the eight ball," according to Jacobs, which instills some excitement into the team and allows for a better chance at a defensive stop.

This noise can largely be credited to the student section leaders. The leaders constantly remind the students of the upcoming games and tell people to show up and be loud.

Jacobs compliments the student sec-

tion leaders' coordination and motivation, stating they are "Not only loud, but they show up in droves," and that

"they want to be bigger than the opposing team's student section. They've been loud and very supportive. And it's been awesome to see."

Senior leader Cam Enyedy believes that the student section is more engaged than in years past and that everyone seems "excited to be there." Enyedy credits the communication of the student section leaders to the improved student section.

"Everyone is on the same page and ready to go," said Enyedy, who admitted he learned a lot from his brother Noah - a student section leader for the 2022-23 season.

This engagement has led to students trash-talking opposing players before the game has even kicked off. When thinking of student section impact, this doesn't immediately come to mind, but Jacobs said the ability to make an opponent "pay a little rent" plays a large factor in the student section's impact on the game.

Confidence is one of the key components to any sport, and having the ability to put a cloud of doubt over

"JUST KEEP BRINGING THE ENERGY AND HAVING FUN. PLAYERS LOVE IT, COACHES, AND ALL FANS LOVE IT."

—PHIL JACOBS
HEAD FOOTBALL COACH



GOING TO WORK: Students wear construction worker gear as Dexter prepares to play Ann Arbor Huron on September 12. Dexter defeated Huron 48-16. **Photographer - Lauren Palkowski**



WAVE THOSE TOWELS: Members of the student section wave white Dexter towels during a play during the Dexter vs. Saline game on September 19. Saline won the game 61-34. **Photographer - Jacob Clark**

that aspect of a player's game needs to be taken advantage of. Getting a quarterback to doubt his judgment can cause an interception or have him miss a busted coverage in the secondary.

Doing the opposite and getting loud for Dexter players can also have a major impact. When the team is down, it is not the reason to stop cheering; in fact, that is the time to get louder. That is when the student section can attempt to inject some energy into the team and get them going again.

Even with all the praise given to this year's student section, many agree that it can always be louder.

Enyedy wants to tell the student section that "there is nothing wrong with being loud and being energetic."

Jacobs adds: "Just keep bringing energy and having fun... Players love it, coaches, and all fans love it."



WHITE SMOKE: Shortly before kickoff against Chelsea on September 26, members of the student section throw up baby powder to create the smoky scene. Dexter defeated Chelsea 42-28. **Photographer - Lauren Palkowski**

WELCOME TO DEXTER

Here are four new staff members who became Dreadnaughts in 2025

WRITER  DECLAN CURBY

Where are you from and when did you start teaching?

Mr. Alex Karapas

“I’m originally from Clinton, Mich., but I’ve lived in Midland, Mich., for the past nine years. That’s where I began my teaching career at H.H. Dow High School.”

Mr. Constantine Souliotis

“I am from Ann Arbor, and I started teaching in 2023.”

Mr. Ethan Lancaster

“I grew up in Portage, Michigan, and I graduated from the University of Michigan in May. I did my student teaching here at Dexter High School from January to June of last year. This is my first year in my own classroom.”

Mr. Nick Stanko

“I graduated from Wyandotte Roosevelt High School in Wyandotte, Michigan. I started teaching in 2006 but took an 11-year break.”

Why did you start teaching?

Karapas

“I’ve always known I wanted to be a teacher. I had a great school experience growing up, and I wanted to give back to an institution that gave me so much. At the same time, I know school isn’t always easy or enjoyable for every student. If I can be a bright spot in someone’s day—especially when they’re having a tough time—then I know I’m in a profession that’s truly worth doing.”

Souliotis

“I chose to be an educator because I have a passion for the social sciences - During my university years, I had the opportunity to work with an amazing mentor who helped me, and I decided I wanted to do the same for other students in the future.”

Stanko

“I had a lot of great teachers and

“I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH AN AMAZING MENTOR WHO HELPED ME, AND I DECIDED I WANTED TO DO THE SAME FOR OTHER STUDENTS.”

-Constantine Souliotis,
Social Studies Teacher



“I HAD A LOT OF GREAT TEACHERS AND COACHES GROWING UP, SO I THINK THAT PROBABLY PLAYED A KEY ROLE. KIDS NEED AS MANY POSITIVE PEOPLE IN THEIR LIVES GROWING UP, SO I TRY TO BE ONE FOR THEM.”

-Nick Stanko,
Graphic Arts Teacher

coaches growing up, so I think that probably played a key role. Kids need as many positive people in their lives growing up, so I try to be one for them.”

What class are you teaching?

Karapas

“I’m teaching U.S. History, World History, AP U.S. History, and Social Studies Lab.”

Souliotis

“I am teaching Economics and American Government.”

Lancaster

“I teach Pre-algebra, Algebra 9, and Algebra II.”

Stanko

“I am teaching Graphic Design 1 & 2 and the Graphic Arts Academy.”

How has the first month of teaching been for you? What have been the biggest challenges?

Karapas

“The first month has been amazing. Dexter Schools has been incredibly welcoming to both my family and me. The biggest challenge has simply been getting back into the school routine while adjusting to a new environment for all of us.”

Souliotis

“It has been amazing! I have loved getting to know my students and finding new ways to engage them in learning. My biggest challenge is probably that there is a lot of things to balance as you enter a new school community.”

Lancaster

“The first month of teaching has been wonderful! I’ve loved getting to know my students! I would say the biggest challenge has been keeping up with my grading for 150+ students!”

Stanko

“Off to a great start! I was lucky to work with Mr. Stockwell for the last few months of the school year last year and that gave me a little head start on things.”

Craziest story you have from a classroom or from student teaching?

Karapas

“Honestly, every day in Mr. K’s class

has its own bit of craziness—but that’s what makes it fun!”


Souliotis

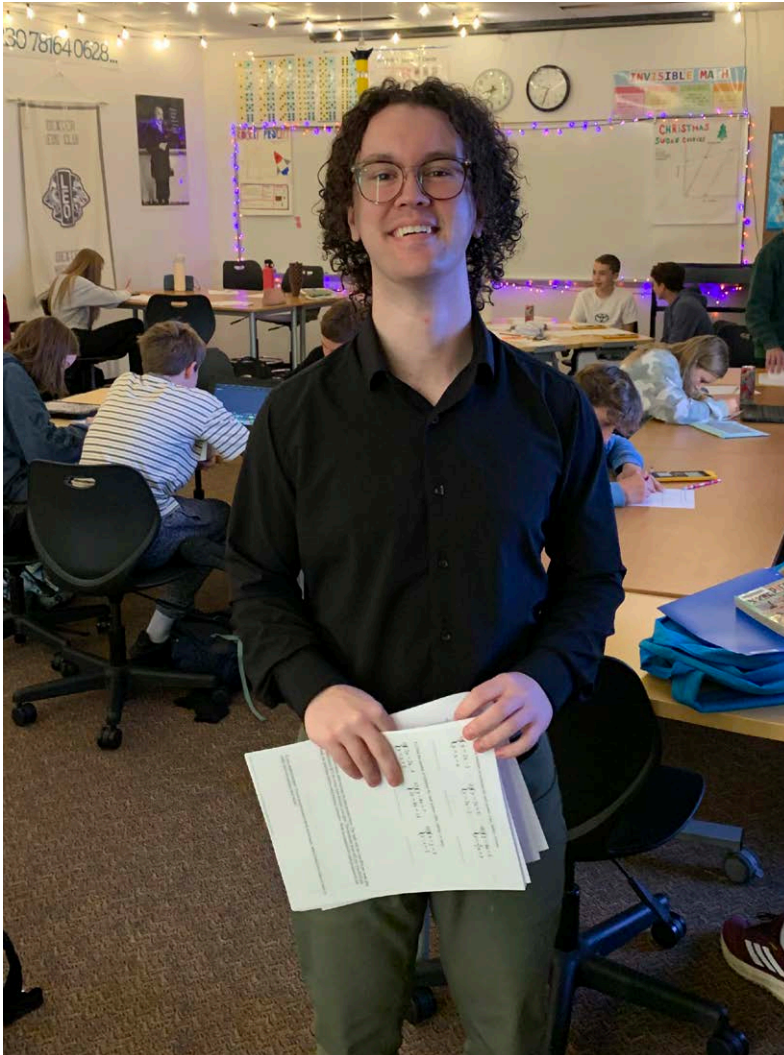
“During my first week, I discovered that there were some students who did not know what democracy was in a government class, or what America looked like on a map in U.S. History, but they had other knowledge from their own cultures.”

Lancaster

“While maybe not a crazy story, a great memory I have from my student teaching is on my last day, the pre-calculus classes I was with threw me a pancake party to celebrate the semester! It was a wonderful way to wrap up my time in the classroom with them and a memory I’ll hold on to forever!”

Stanko

“Luckily nothing too crazy that I can recall. A student once challenged me to a push up competition and I crushed him.” 



STUDENT TEACHER TO HIS OWN CLASSROOM: Mr. Ethan Lancaster, 23, student taught at DHS last year.



MIDLAND TO DEXTER: Mr. Alex Karapas, 31, joins Dexter after nine years teaching in Midland.

*“I had a great school experience growing up, and I **WANTED TO GIVE BACK** to an institution that gave me so much.”*

Alex Karapas,
Social Studies Teacher

GET TO KNOW THE '25-'26 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

From Thailand to Brazil, nine new students will be spending the year in Dexter. From experiencing a new culture, a different school system, and a year far from home these students were asked various questions regarding their thoughts on the big move

WRITERS  KAYCE McALLISTER & CALEB WILSON



Poon (Thailand)



Rafaela (Brazil)



Natalie (Sweden)



Jayda (Thailand)

How has the first month in America been? “The host family is hard to adapt to. I have changed host families, which was hard, but I have met great friends here.”

What is the biggest difference between your home country and here (outside of school)? “We can’t drive here, so you can’t go anywhere by yourself, relying on a host family and other people to drive you places.”

What are your plans when you return home? “I need to get my SAT done here and in Thailand. I will be there for 3 months, then I will come back to America next year to get ready for college in Thailand.”

What has been the biggest challenge for you? “Adapting to the host family.”

Before coming here, what is something that you thought was true, but it isn’t? “Football players in varsity jackets are going to bully people and push people into lockers, or they’re going to put random things in people’s lockers.”

How has the first month in America been? “The hardest has been adapting to the family. School is so different here. I was here for 3 days, then I had to go to school. But it has been nice and things have calmed down.”

What is the biggest difference between your home country and here (in school)? “The schedule and how much time we spend in the school. Much more in Brazil. The different classes you can take. There is much more math, chemistry, and Portuguese, but there is so much more choice of what you want to do for college here.”

What has been the biggest challenge for you? “Adapting to the host family for sure. Like you just met these people and you are living with them, it’s really hard. School, you are doing so much all the time, but when you’re at home, it’s so different, and you can really think about it. School isn’t that hard.”

Before coming here, what is something that you thought was true, but it isn’t? “What Poon said, and the couples kissing in the hallways in a corner.”

What is the biggest difference between your home country and here (outside of school)? “They take all of the sports very seriously. School and sports on TV.”

What is the biggest difference between your home country and here (in school)? “All the homework. In Sweden, I never had any homework unless it was studying for a test.”

What are you most looking forward to while you’re here? “Experiencing the school spirit and the American culture.”

What has been the biggest challenge for you? “Homesickness and finding your group of people. It’s easy in school to talk to people, but outside of school, it is hard.”

Before coming here, what is something that you thought was true, but it isn’t?

“All of the big sizes of everything. Like when you walk into a store, like the cereal section, there is so much. That’s not normal.”

How has the first month in America been? “It’s lots of fun. I do field hockey, and it’s been really fun. Everyone is really nice.”

What is the biggest difference between your home country and here (in school)? “Dexter is a smaller school compared to my home school. My grade is 1,500 students in my graduating class.”

What are your plans when you return home? “I will go home after the school year is done, and I plan to come back for school next year. But have to go to a different school. I want to stay in Michigan, but it has to be a private school. You have to change from public to private school every year. You can’t do public school 2 years in a row.”

What has been the biggest challenge for you? “Meeting the new people.”

Before coming here, what is something that you thought was true, but it isn’t? “I feel like in movies there is a lot of bullying, but people are actually really nice.”



Clarisse (France)

What is the biggest difference between your home country and here? “Football games.”

What is the biggest difference between your home country and here (in school)? “Um, the schedule. We begin at 8 a.m. and end at 6 p.m.”

What are you most looking forward to while you're here? “Get my high school diploma.”

What are your plans when you return home? “I'm not going back to France. I'm going to Quebec.”

What has been the biggest challenge for you? “Finding a host family.”

Before coming here, what is something that you thought was true, but it isn't? “I thought that Americans would ask a lot of stupid questions.”



Charlotte (Spain)

How has the first month in America been? “Yeah, really good people. Are really nice, and I'm liking it.”

What is the biggest difference between your home country and here (outside of school)? “And it's bigger. I have to drive a lot with the car. So in Spain, I can just walk.”

What are you most looking forward to while you're here? “Making new friends.”

What are your plans when you return home? “I'm going to continue school and continue sports.”

What has been the biggest challenge for you? “Probably not in school, but outside school, and hockey to fit in, to play.”



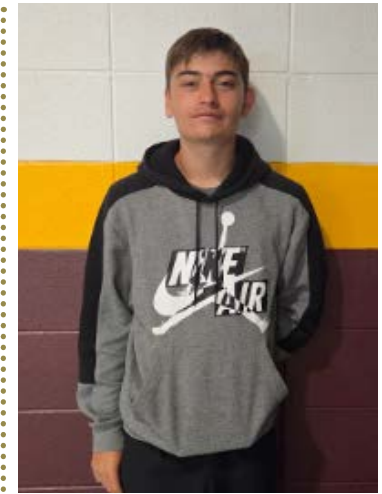
Felix (Spain)

How has the first month in America been? “Yeah, really good people are really nice, and I'm liking it.”

What is the biggest difference between your home country and here (outside of school)? “Outside of school, it's all bigger. I mean, here I take the car for everything, and the food is also different.”

What is the biggest difference between your home country and here (in school)? “Oh, the sports. Also changing classes.”

What are you most looking forward to while you're here? “The high school sports. It's fun, also, having a good experience, like homecoming, and making new friends.”



Tomas (Spain)

How has the first month in America been? “I think, great. I mean, everybody here is very kind. I mean, I know more people.”

What is the biggest difference between your home country and here (outside of school)? “Well, in my country, I hung out with friends. I think living here you need a car to go everywhere in the place. Where I live, everything is very near.”

What is the biggest difference between your home country and here (in school)? “In schools in Spain, you don't have out of class. You only have one class when the teacher is the one who rotates.”



Jason (Germany)

How has the first month in America been? “Pretty fun”

What is the biggest difference between your home country and here (outside of school)? “The size of the cars. We have the same cars in Germany, but no trucks like these.”

What is the biggest difference between your home country and here (in school)? “I think basically everything. The style of teaching is so different, and the style of teaching is better; I like it more. The classes are different.”

What are you most looking forward to while you're here? “Getting my license and just finishing the year.”

What are your plans when you return home? “I'm staying here until July. When I get home, I will graduate there. I don't know if I will have to redo 11th grade. But there are 13 grades in Germany.”

What has been the biggest challenge for you? “Probably calling my family every weekend. There is a 6-hour time change. They are 6 hours ahead.”

Before coming here, what is something that you thought was true, but it isn't? “So in Germany, and in Europe, people think Americans are fat and stupid, and I have realized that isn't true.”





PAINT A NEW TRADITION

WRITERS  ALAINA FUQUA



STING NEW ITION

& SAVANAH ROSENTERER



Dexter seniors have an opportunity to leave their mark

Senior Josie Demers didn't think she'd ever have the opportunity to do it, but she was thrilled when she found out the Class of 2026 had the chance to paint parking spots and begin a new tradition.

For the first time, seniors had the opportunity to paint their own designated parking spots, allowing them to express their personalities and leave a personal mark on Dexter High School's school grounds.

"I've always seen it online, and I never thought we'd be able to do it," Demers said. "I thought it would be nice, but I mean, we're in Dexter, so of course we can't do it."

Based on her love for singer-songwriter Ariana Grande, Josie painted her spot with Ariana's album cover, Thank You Next.

"At first I didn't really know what to do," Demers stated. "I looked up videos on TikTok and saw the idea in the corner of someone else's video. I was like 'Oh my God, I need to do Thank You Next!,' mainly because I love Ariana Grande, obviously."

Demers put in a ton of time, effort, and money to make sure her spot was perfect.

"Every day I went, I was just trying to

get as much of it done as I could, but very long days were exhausting," she said. "I went to three of the paint days, and I was there from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. every day."

Thanks to Demers and more than 100 other seniors, the DHS parking lot's new tradition has created a colorful parking lot for the 2025-26 school year.

SENIORS LOVE IT

Senior after senior expressed their excitement for the new tradition.

"I love having a gorgeous spot to park in every day, which I put so much effort into," senior Alli St. Amour said. "It makes me less rushed in the morning as well as less frantic, because no matter how late I leave, I'll always have a spot."

Not feeling the anxiety of having to rush to school was also a major plus for senior Dane Lee.

"It's nice when I'm late," Lee said about having a designated spot. "I know where to park and am never late for class because my spot is so close. It's a large relief knowing that I don't have to park far away and I can still be next to my friends."

For senior Mason McAllister, he doesn't miss his long walks junior year from the back of the parking lot.

"It is really great knowing I'll have a spot right next to school every day that I don't have to park in the back and walk all the

way up," McAllister said. "It's really nice seeing [my spot in] my backup camera."

It's a really nice senior perk, according to senior Ali Genske.

"I feel very special and I like driving past all the people filled in the back and I get to drive to the front," Genske said of her spot. "It feels a lot better than last year because I would get to school early to get a good spot but now I don't have to."

Senior privileges aside, students, staff, and administrators have commented on how beautiful the parking lot now looks.

"Just driving in the parking lot, like all the different colors and stuff, the brightness, just can change your mood and make you happier," Assistant Principal Mrs. Rachel Hervey said. "I think students getting to show their creativity was a great plus."

DRAFT DAY

The process began with Draft Day, where students met in the parking lot and selected their spots. Once a spot was chosen, seniors submitted design proposals, which were then reviewed to ensure they followed school guidelines and were appropriate for the community. Once approved, students were able to paint their spots during designated Senior Paint Days scheduled for mid-August.



TRUST THE PROCESS: Senior Josie Demers had a vision for her spot. After more than 20 hours of work, her vision became reality.



“I never thought we’d be able to do it. I thought it would be nice, but I mean, we’re in Dexter, so of course we can’t do it.”

-Senior Josie Demers

“I love it!” Hervey said. “I’m really glad and proud of the senior class for taking the initiative and pulling this together!”

But the new tradition has sparked some controversy for some people, specifically around the price to paint a spot.

The initiative, organized by school administration, members of the student council, and three teachers, settled on a \$50 participation fee. That fee secured a designated spot and will help cover some of the cost of senior events for the year.

But for many students, the real price came in the form of time, effort, and a surprising amount of paint. For some students, paint costs exceeded \$200.

“Something to learn from this first round is the amount of paint it takes,” Hervey stated. “I think in future years, it probably won’t take as much, because there will already be a coat of paint. But, it took

a lot of paint, and I think that kids didn’t realize how hard it might be.”

Junior Ella Rogalski expressed her concern for the price of the tradition. “I don’t even know if I am going to do it next year,” Rogalski said. “If anything, I will just paint it a solid color and paint my name.”

Hervey is hoping to make things a little easier for not only students, but also for the hardware store.

“We want to give the hardware stores, Lowe’s and Menards, a heads up. We also want to work with them to see if they’ll give us some discounts for the kids and stuff. This paint is expensive.”

MINIMAL POLICING NEEDED

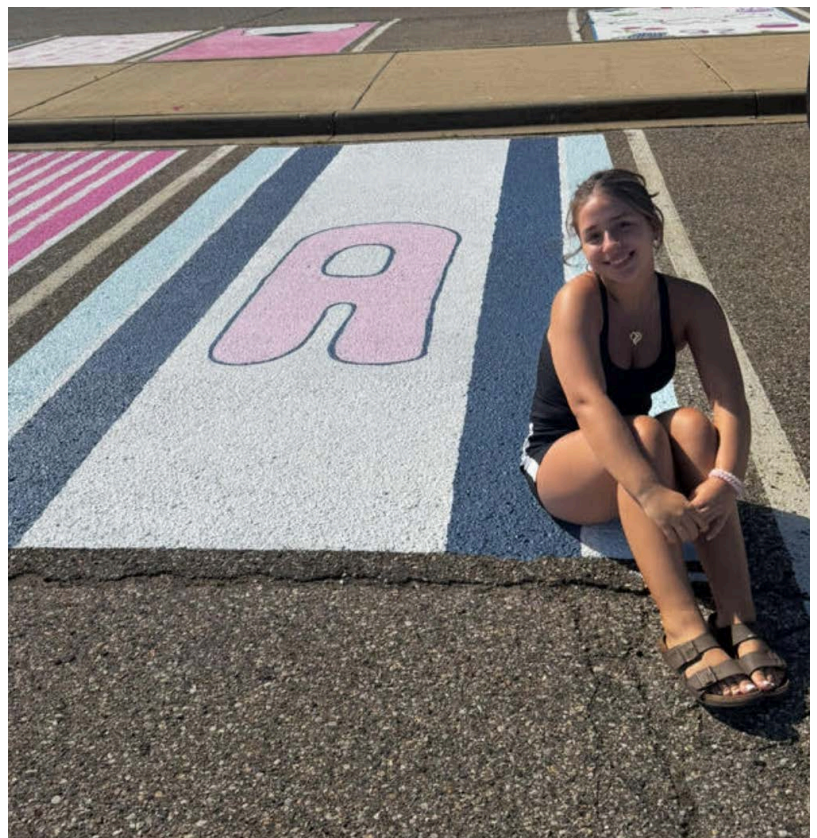
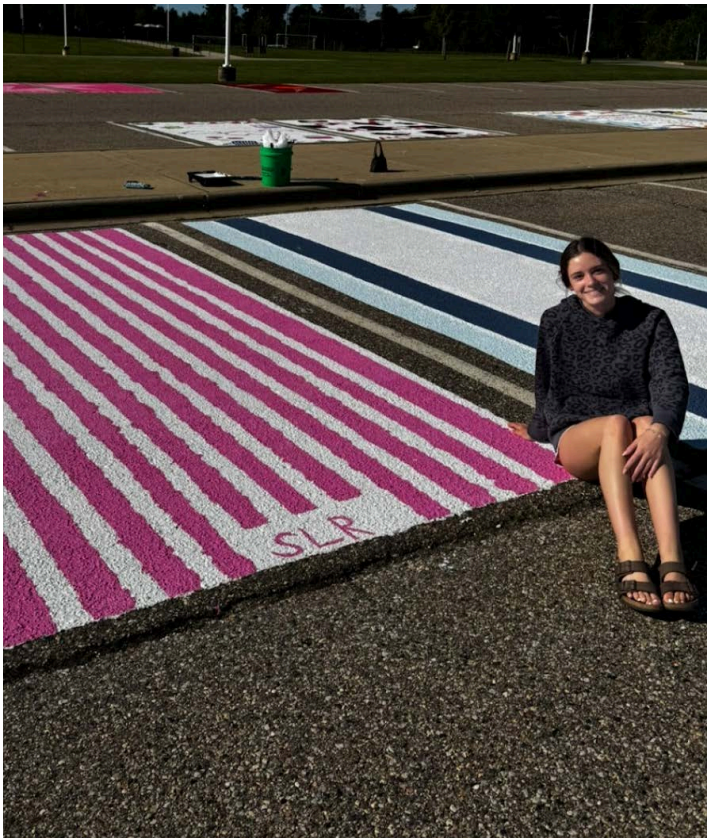
So far, everything has been running smoothly, other than the first day of school. A few students were a bit confused about the new tradition and parked in a senior’s spot.

“I saw [the spot] was painted, but I didn’t know why,” junior Calvin Portice said. “I thought they were just painting the parking lot to make it look nice.”

Another student was so focused on getting to school to talk to the counselors that he didn’t notice it was painted.

“I only had the counselors on my mind because I had holes in my schedule,” said junior Patrick Corgan, who was notified in the middle of the opening day pep rally that he needed to move his car. “Not my proudest moment.”

Aside from the price, this new tradition has been super fun for the class of 2026. It’s turned the parking lot into a bright place, full of color and personality. Seniors have loved how it allows them make their own mark on the Dexter community, and makes showing up to school a little more fun.



FRIENDS THAT PAINT TOGETHER, STAY TOGETHER: The authors, Savannah Rosentreter (L) and Alaina Fuqua (R) pose by their parking spots in late August.



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UNPLUGGED: DEXTER'S CRACKDOWN ON DEVICES

How the newly introduced technology policies at DHS, which include no personal computers and a ban on cell phones, are affecting students' daily lives

WRITER  RYAN DEC



“I feel like we have the greatest chance to make a culture shift with our freshman by normalizing it now.” —Mr. Ryan Baese

Imagine this, you are sitting in class and you pull your MacBook out of your backpack to do the warm-up on Canvas. This is a pretty typical way teachers have you start class. Except, the change is that your teacher walks over and asks you to put your MacBook away and instead use a “school-issued device.” You agree, and pull out the slow, clanky Chromebook that the district hasn’t replaced in years and wait for it to load up. By the time that your Canvas has finally loaded, you only have a minute to do the warm-up that you could have knocked out in all the time you spent messing around with the old, laggy Chromebook.

One of the biggest changes for the ‘25-26 school year is that all students are being required to use district-issued Chromebooks. Previously, students were seemingly able to bring their own computers, such as MacBooks, to school. Are DHS students actually following this policy? Not all of them.

According to a recent Squall survey, nearly 25% of students said they are still using a personal device even after increased pressures from admin telling them to keep personal computers at home. It seems with already so much on teacher’s plates, having to report students to the office for using their own technology, isn’t on the forefront of their minds and students can tell.

“Having to carry two computers around makes my backpack a lot heavier and is just

one more thing to forget in the morning,” sophomore Ellie Treat said, referring to how some students carry both a Chromebook and a personal computer in case a teacher calls them out in class. “Several of my teachers know that I use my personal computer and have no problems with it at all.”

It seems that the general consensus from students is, if no teachers are going to enforce these new policies, why should the students follow them?

Another change this year is the “heightened” enforcement of phone usage during classes. According to teachers, administrators are pushing phone-caddies into the classrooms more than ever. Not all teachers handle cell phones the same, their approaches ranging from strict to relaxed.

Mr. Baese who team-teaches with Mr. Parker and whose classes are double the size talked about the idea of planting these policies early in student’s minds so they always want to follow them.

“I feel like we have the greatest chance to make a culture shift with our freshman by normalizing it now,” Baese said.

He is referring to his own phone policy in his classes which is just a flat-out no phones from the very beginning. According to Baese, between him and Parker, they have only had to ask 2-3 students to put away their phones at the time of the interview. This shows the power of starting a habit early and the

growth that comes with it.

Interim Principal Mrs. Abby Holland was one of the people most involved with the new policies this year. Her take on the situation was one that shared a different side of the story and some of the reasoning behind the new policies that are now in effect.

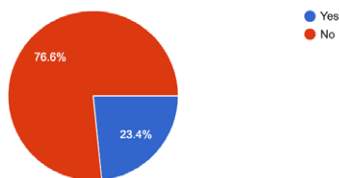
“We have the obligation as a school to keep our students safe and the world really enters our school through the internet,” Holland said. It seems like DHS is worried about their worst fear, parents suing. If a student got into a dark part of the internet and was on school WiFi, parents could blame the school even though the student was on a personal device with very little restrictions.

The other reason that Holland identified has to do with repairs. “If a student has a tech glitch or their devices aren’t working, the district can’t touch it,” she said. “If our technology is failing then it’s our fault, but if it’s the student’s there is nothing we can do.”

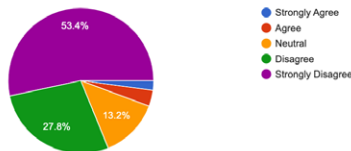
If a student’s \$1000 MacBook Pro isn’t working then wouldn’t they want to go to the Apple Store and get it fixed. Or, on the other hand, if it couldn’t be fixed, the student would most likely temporarily just use their Chromebook until their personal device was fixed.

Overall, it seems like the future of technology at DHS is an interesting one, but only time will tell if the policies of today will become the policies of tomorrow.

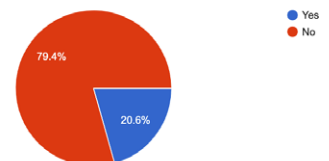
Do you use a non-school issued computer at DHS?
278 responses



How would you feel about a district-wide cell phone ban?
281 responses




Do you think a district-wide cell phone ban would improve students' mental health?
281 responses



THE NUMBERS DON'T LIE: Nearly 25% of DHS students said they still use a personal device at school. Regarding phones, more than 80% of students disagree or strongly disagree with a district-wide cell phone ban, around the same number who don't believe it would improve student mental health.

ADMINISTRATIVE

SHAKE UP

WRITERS  TYLER CRAIG, ABIGAIL DOBRY, ELLA ROGALSKI, ALEX TRISDALE

Superintendent Dr. Timmis' retirement will be effective in February. His replacement, former Executive Director of Instruction and Strategic Initiatives Ryan Bruder, caused a ripple effect within Dexter Community Schools. The first domino was DHS Principal Mrs. Melanie Nowak moving to fill Bruder's position. That's led to the administrative shake up.

"PRINCIPAL TO CAO"

Mrs. Melanie Nowak ascended into the Chief Academic Officer role in early October, leaving behind the principal position at Dexter High School, which she had held since 2021. As she stepped into this new district-wide leadership position, she noted both her excitement and sadness in leaving the principal's office.

"I'm excited for curriculum work. I can geek out on pedagogy," Nowak said. "But I'll definitely miss the students. That's the hardest part."

Nowak, who played a central role in shaping the school's culture over the past few years, said she found fulfillment in both the administrative and personal aspects of her job. However, her passion for curriculum and instructional leadership made this next step

feel like a natural progression.

"I love digging into curriculum, the way the brain works, and teaching moves. In my current role, I don't get to dig into that as much because there are a lot of managerial things," she explained. "This new position will let me focus more on learning strategy and how we teach—not just what we teach."

Despite the excitement, the mid-year transition brought mixed emotions—especially because of her deep connection with the Class of 2026 students.

"I love this senior class," she stated. "I've seen them every day since their first day of freshman year. I'm glad I got to be here for the start of the year—senior sunrise, parking spots, student section leaders—those things really build school spirit."

The Chief Academic Officer role is brand new to the Dexter Community Schools district. It combines responsibilities from the Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction with additional oversight in coaching, instructional leadership, and academic innovation.

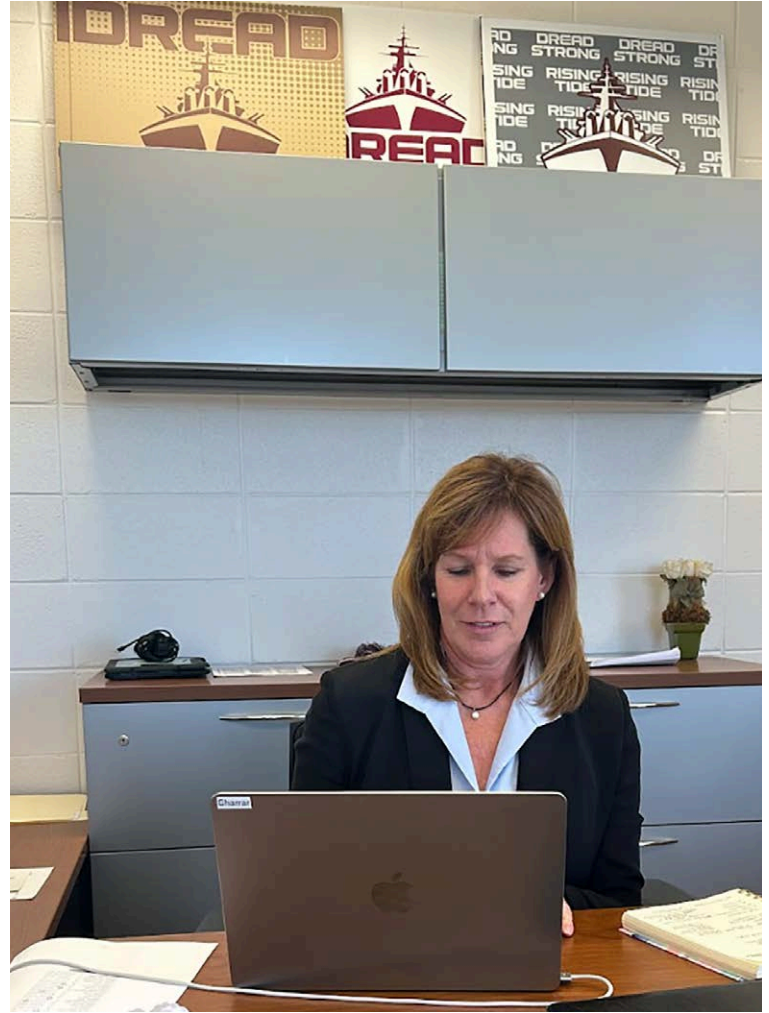
"It's really about building a stronger foundation and helping the district grow into more flexible learning paths," Nowak



POWER TEAM: Mrs. Nowak (L) and Mrs. Sharrar (R) drive a gator during this year's Homecoming parade. **Photograph courtesy of Melanie Nowak**



EYE ON THE STUDENT SECTION: Former DHS Principal and new CAO Mrs. Nowak watches the student section during the closing minutes of Dexter's 42-12 victory against Flushing on Friday, Oct. 24.. **Photographer - Tyler Craig**



GETTING COMFORTABLE: Mrs. Sharrar sits at her new desk (Mrs. Nowak's old desk) as she begins her role as interim Assistant Principal. **Photographer - Alex Trisdale**

explained. "Not every student needs to sit in every single class. Students can learn through internships, work-study, and industry-based experiences—like they're doing in Indiana."

Although she won't be part of the hiring process for her replacement, she said students, staff, and parents will be invited to contribute feedback and participate in interview committees.

When asked what advice she would give the next principal, Nowak didn't hesitate.

"People come first," she said. "If someone shows up at your door—even if you have 550 emails—you talk to that person.

We're here for students. Everything else can wait."

And while her job title has changed, Nowak made it clear she's not disappearing from the building.

"I'm not transitioning out of here. I still plan on being around—visiting classrooms, supporting teachers, and helping us build a stronger curriculum foundation," she said. Leaving us with the sentiment, "I'll be back."

AP TO INTERIM PRINCIPAL

A new chapter for Mrs. Abby Holland begins as the search for a permanent principal continues.

With all the administrative changes unfolding at DHS, Holland hopes to keep "doing what I can to provide some stability and keep the train on the tracks and keep our school year going strong."

As the interim Principal at DHS, curiosity arises around what Holland hopes to accomplish. On day one of the job, Holland didn't have any big plans, "Big plans day one. Um, oh, gosh, no."

Holland does not wish to pursue the full-time principal position.

"One of my greatest professional passions is working to ensure academic opportunity and access for our most marginalized or at-risk students," Holland



"I love this senior class... I'm glad I got to be here for the start of the year — senior sunrise, parking spots, student section leaders — those things really build school spirit."

-New Dexter Chief Academic Officer Mrs. Melanie Nowak

said. “I’m really fortunate that my current regular assistant principalship role allows me to do that kind of work in a few different ways.”

The role of principal, as it currently sits, would not provide that for her.

“I’m humbled and honored and excited for the interim role, but I think I’ll be excited to go back to my regular role when the position is filled permanently,” she said.

The interim principal role, which is slated to run through the end of first semester, comes with a lot of responsibilities and pressure, Holland explained.

Is she excited or nervous?

“I’m a little bit of both,” she said.

“I’m mostly excited, but you know, I want to do a good job. And like I said, keep the train on the tracks, keep the momentum going. And that can be a big responsibility.”

The new full-time principal will have some big shoes to fill, and many important attributes are required. What does Holland see as the most important attributes for a future principal?

“Advocate for students, caring about our staff, and not only teachers, all the staff in the building,” she stated. “A desire to partner with parents and families, and a building leader has to care about and have thoughts and ideas on, and be willing to work on, everything from the district’s strategic initiatives all the way to, like, the weird smell that’s coming from the stairwell that no one can figure out.”

SAME JOB, EXTRA DUTIES

In her second year as assistant principal at DHS, Mrs. Rachel Hervey is ready for her new responsibilities as Mrs. Nowak leaves the principal position.

“It’ll be a work in progress for the first few weeks, for sure,” Hervey said. “We are splitting up some of the duties between she and I. Some of what I do will go to Mrs. Sharrer, and some of what [Mrs. Holland] does will go to Mrs. Sharrer as well. Some of it will be stuff we kind of figure out on the fly.”

Making her transition easier will be the addition of Mrs. Sharrar, a former DHS assistant principal, who will come back to help during the transition.

“We have a really knowledgeable, experienced interim (Sharrar) coming in who’s been in the district for a long time,”

“

THE PRINCIPAL IS THE FACE OF THE SCHOOL AT THE END OF THE DAY. IF SOMETHING HAPPENS, IT COMES BACK TO THE PRINCIPAL.”

—Mrs. Rachel Hervey,
DHS Assistant Principal

Hervey said. “She’ll be able to pick right up early.”

Hervey’s goal is for students to be unaffected by any changes.

“I don’t think students will notice,” she said. “Obviously, you won’t see Mrs. Nowak walking in the halls. But as far as the day-to-day running of the building, everything will stay the same.”

In terms of what a future DHS Principal would look like, Hervey has some ideas of what that person should and shouldn’t look like.

“I think that communication and open, honest conversations is important,” Hervey stated. “I think that the student voice is really important, and brings fun and joy to what can be challenging four years of life for teenagers. From the student lens, I think communication and student voice are two really important things.”

Hervey also acknowledged the huge



FACE-TO-FACE: Mrs. Hervey talks with a student during passing time. **Photographer - Ella Rogalski**

responsibility a high school principal has.

“The principal is the face of the school at the end of the day,” Hervey said. “If something happens, it comes back to the principal. If something hits the news, they’re not going to the assistant principal.”

When asked if she was interested in the full-time principal position, knowing all the pressures and expectations, Hervey paused and chuckled.

“I am interested, yes,” she said.

WELCOME BACK, MRS. SHARRAR

Days before walking back into DHS, Mollie Sharrar was in Portland, Oregon on a vacation. Now, after being lured back by outgoing Superintendent Dr. Chris Timmis, Sharrar is back as an Interim Assistant Principal.

“My initial reaction was, ‘No, I like being retired and am not interested in getting up at 6 a.m. anymore,’ however, I was intrigued,” she said. “I loved being at DHS and have worked with the DHS staff and Ms. Holland before, so I was up for considering it. Having been a DHS Assistant Principal, I know the job, and it is one of the highlights of my career.”

Sharrar received a call from Dr. Timmis back in September.

“Dr. Timmis called me and asked if I would be interested in coming back for a short time as a DHS Assistant Principal during the transition for Mrs. Nowak to become the Chief Academic Officer and Mrs. Holland to become the Interim DHS Principal. After talking it over with my husband, we decided it was a good fit at this time.”

Sharrar worked for Dexter Community Schools for 32 years. She was a DHS assistant principal for five years from 1990-2022. Prior to that, she taught at Mill Creek for 15 years and was the Assistant Principal there for one year. She was also the Creekside Principal for three years. After her job as DHS Assistant Principal, she was the Executive Direction of Instruction and Strategic Initiatives, a role to innovate new curriculum while also reevaluating the current curriculum, for eight years.

Sharrar plans on only being back for a short period of time, then returning to retirement.

“This is a short-term gig, just until the transition is complete and DHS has a new principal. I’m always willing to consider opportunities with DCS, but I also enjoy retirement.”

The transition from retiree to interim assistant principal is not entirely easy, even with Sharrar’s years of experience.

“I was a DHS Assistant Principal for five years, so I know the job, but it’ll take me a bit to get back into the routine,” she said. “I’m sure a few things have changed.”

With all of that, Sharrar is back at DHS to fulfill her role as interim assistant principal.



STRENGTH IN NUMBERS: Mrs. Holland, Mr. Kohler, and Mrs. Hervey chat about some school business. **Photographer - Ella Rogalski**



CHECKING THE LIST: Mrs. Holland discusses school business with Mr. Kohler (L) and Mr. Williams. **Photographer - Abigail Dobry**



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OUR VIEW: THE NEW PRINCIPAL NEEDS TO BE A VISIONARY

The next DHS leader will be the face of the school and needs to be both open-minded and decisive

WRITER  STAFF

The search for a new principal is on. Searching for a new principal is far more than just filling an empty office, but rather a time that will shape the future of Dexter High School. Principal responsibilities extend past administrative duties; they are the face of the school, a leader of the culture, and a bridge between students, staff, and the community. As DHS looks ahead, it is crucial that the qualities of the next principal reflect on both our values and our vision for progress.

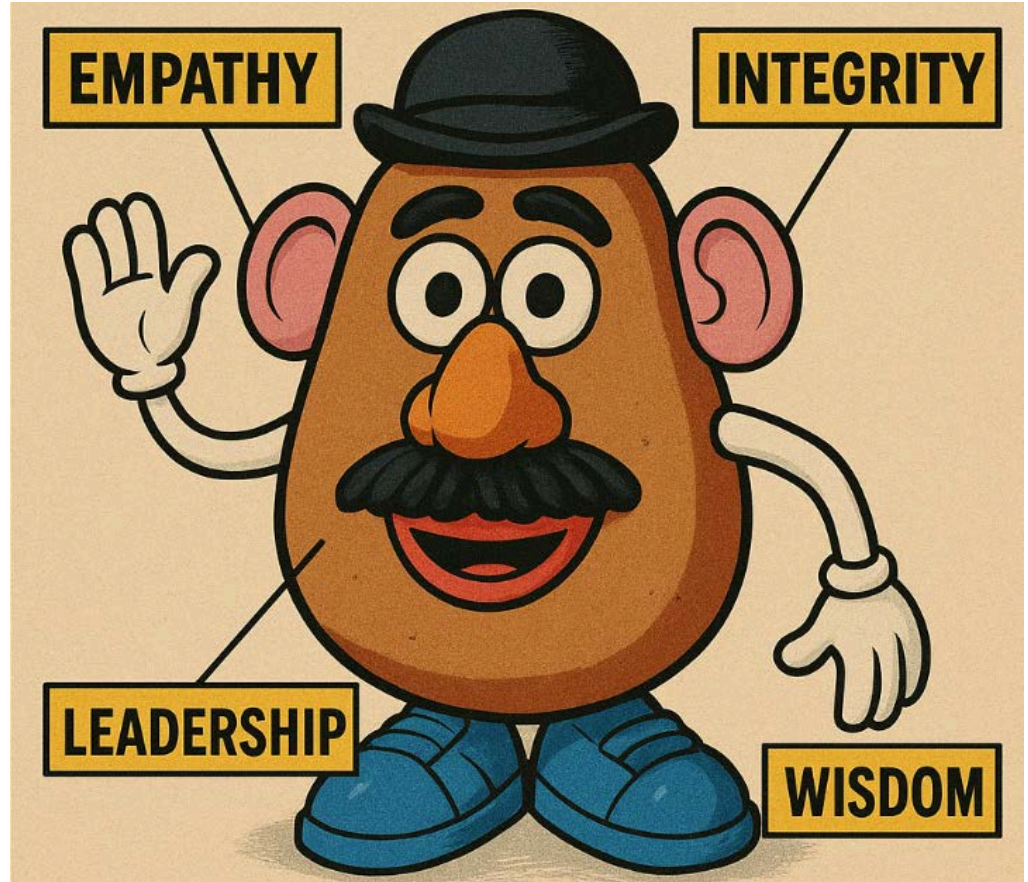
As a staff, student body, and members of the community, we've compiled common traits we need to see in the next principal.

Visionary: First and foremost, a great leader must have a plan of action and a clear vision for where DHS is heading. A strong principal must be able to set goals that not only guide our school, but also align with the further success of the district. Leadership will require timely decision-making and decisive choices when a problem arises. Students and staff alike want to see a leader confident enough to act but remain thoughtful enough to act wisely.

Personality matters: We need someone approachable, likeable, and charismatic. A principal's presence should never intimidate students, but rather make students feel welcome and understood. Seeing a principal walking the hallways, greeting students, allows for a better connection with the community as opposed to someone who hides in their office all day. Involvement in local events that range from sporting events to art showcases is also preferred and would demonstrate support and commitment to all student demographics.

Je ne sais quoi: There is a certain "je ne sais quoi" attributed to the community of Dexter. Understanding the unique character of our small community is equally essential. Dexter is a proud, growing community, and good principals will recognize the strengths while simultaneously pushing for growth. This means respecting our traditions while bringing in new ideas that benefit both the students and staff.

Student-Centered: Perhaps most importantly, a principal must be student-centered. Oftentimes, students feel as though their




THE RIGHT PIECES: Appointing a new principal is a monumental task that requires a precise process. There are major traits we believe the next DHS Principal must possess. **Photo Illustrator - Ainslie Ramsburgh**

opinions are going in one ear and out the other. What we want is someone who genuinely listens and puts our ideas into action to show a true respect for our voices. We want a leader who prioritizes building relationships, not someone who serves as a puppet for administration. Someone younger, or perhaps very open-minded, may be better positioned to connect with students and understand the issues we face in today's world. An ideal principal takes time to hear students' con-

cerns and thoroughly responds thoughtfully, demonstrating the kind of leadership that fosters trust and respect.

In essence, DHS deserves a principal who can find a balance between empathy with vision, decisiveness with being open-minded, and leadership with approachabil-

ity. As the district moves forward with making the decision, we urge those involved to consider these qualities that matter most to our students and staff. 

“There is a certain ‘je ne sais quoi’ attributed to the community of Dexter. Understanding the unique character of our small community is equally essential.”



The Anchor

HEAD, SHOULDERS, CUP! Students participate in the first edition of a new assembly game called Head, Shoulders, Cup. The game was a part of the Homecoming Pep Assembly on Friday, Sept. 26. What started out as a battle between grade levels ended up crowning one winner: Sophomore Brady Bishop.

PHOTOGRAPHER  Ryan Dec