



# DEXTER COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Christopher Timmis, Ed.D., Superintendent  
7714 Ann Arbor Street, Dexter, Michigan 48130  
(734) 424-4100 ext.1001 fax (734) 424-4112  
timmisc@dexterschools.org

---

November 28, 2018

Dear Dexter Families and Staff,

I've been fortunate over my career to live and work in communities with diverse demographics. With the thousands of students and families I've encountered, there is one common hope shared universally by parents: they want their children to be safe, healthy, and happy. However, this goal is occasionally clouded by the push for students to excel academically, artistically, or athletically.

As a school district, we strive to prepare our students to be successful adults. The key to this preparation is their social-emotional well-being. Last year, we surveyed our students from grades 5-12 regarding their engagement in school along with questions about how happy, safe, and healthy they feel. Some of the results were what we anticipated and others were fairly alarming. **One theme that we believe we must address, as a school district and community, is the mental health of our students.**

Our opening conversation for this very important subject is a community book study that begins on **Tuesday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm in the Dexter High School CPA**. This talk is appropriate for parents of children of any age. We've distributed over 300 books and we are looking forward to a community study, reflection, and discussion. Dr. David Gleason (author of "At What Cost? Defending Adolescent Development in Fiercely Competitive Schools") will present his research and findings about adolescent emotional well-being. We will meet as a community several more times throughout the school year to have discussions to determine how we can all best meet the needs of our students.

While we don't believe we are a "fiercely competitive school," many of the examples outlined by the author mirror experiences we've shared in Dexter. As a parent and educator, I found the book to be incredibly insightful and caused me to reflect on how we are raising our kids in today's world.

Raising children to be healthy and happy adults is a community effort. Please join us December 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm at the CPA.

Thank you, have a great week, and Go Dreads!!!

Sincerely,

Christopher Timmis, Ed.D.  
Superintendent