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DPSCD Board of Education Welcomes New Member and Approves New Board Officers

DETROIT – January 12, 2021 – The Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) Board of Education ushered in its 5th year under local control Tuesday, January 12, 2021, returning two incumbents and welcoming a new member, as well as approving new officers.

Board members Misha Stallworth and Sonya Mays retained their seats in the November election. Meanwhile, the Board welcomed its newest member, former State Rep. Sherry Gay-Dagnogo, who was also elected in November. This is especially significant as we celebrate Michigan School Board Appreciation Month. The Board reinforces the principle of local control over public education, which is an important, highly valued aspect of education in Detroit.

“Having a locally elected board creates the highest level of potential accountability for the school district. This is especially important during the pandemic when our community needs elected officials who are creating policy and guiding the district. I’m looking forward to continuing our work together as we remain focused on improving traditional public education in Detroit,” said Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent, Detroit Public Schools Community District. “Since the return of a locally elected Board in 2017, our reform work has resulted in an improvement to enrollment, student achievement, attendance, access to technology, teacher pay, filling teacher vacancies and establishing financial independence for the school district. There is much more work to be done to move the district on the other side of this pandemic but we will continue to work hard to address the needs of our students, families, and employees.”

Board members elected Angelique Peterson Mayberry as Board President. The new Board leader is a native Detroiter and a proud alumna of the District. She has a distinguished record of community service and involvement. In addition, members also elected member Dr. Deborah Hunter Harvill as Vice-President, member Sonya Mays as Treasurer and Misha Stallworth as Secretary. Major committee leadership appointments included:

- Finance Chair, Sonya Mays
- Curriculum-Academic Committee, Bishop Corletta J. Vaughn.
- Policy Ad-Hoc Chair, Misha Stallworth
- Code of Conduct Chair, Georgia Lemmons.

New Board member Sherry Gay-Dagnogo will serve on several committees including the District’s Legislative Committee, a natural fit for the former state representative. In addition, the Board and Dr. Vitti will embark on a robust community engagement

campaign with the first meeting, to be held online, planned for February 24, 2021. More information on this meeting will be forthcoming.

Other high-level highlights from the January 12 meeting included:

- In Dr. Vitti's Superintendent report, he highlighted the quarter three survey, slated to be released on Wednesday, January 13. The survey asks teachers and students/families their preference for in person learning or online learning as well as other questions pertaining to navigating through the pandemic, including the willingness to take the vaccine.
- Dr. Vitti noted that over 300 applications have been received for the formation of an Online Learning Task Force. Once formed, the group will provide feedback on areas that are working with online learning as well as recommendations for improvements.
- Dr. Vitti said the District continues to monitor the COVID-19 infection rates in the City, which as of January 12, hovered just under seven percent, well above the safety threshold of five percent that DPSCD has adhered to for in person learning of any type to resume since it in person learning was suspended in November. He added it is possible the Learning Centers could open, presuming the infection rates continues to decline, in late January or early February.
- Finally, Dr. Vitti said the District is in talks with the Detroit Health Department (DHD) on facilitating distribution of COVID-19 vaccines directly to District staff and select contracted employees. More information will be released once an agreement is finalized, possibly in the coming days.

About Detroit Public Schools Community District

Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) is Michigan's largest public education system. It is governed by a locally elected, seven-member board with Dr. Nikolai Vitti serving as superintendent. The District's mission is to provide every student with a beneficial and rightful educational experience, preparing students to be career and college ready, and qualified to compete in the global market. The District has more than 100 schools and educates 49,300 children. For more information, visit detroitk12.org and follow @detroitk12 on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

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