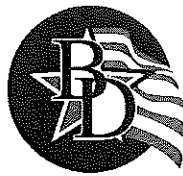


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Britton Deerfield Schools

May 20, 2025

Dear Britton Deerfield Parents,

We trust this finds you well and looking forward to the sun and fun the summer months always bring! We are writing to share important news with all our BD Families.

The Britton Deerfield Board of Education, in collaboration with the administrative team, has been working to devise a strategic plan that not only supports an operational model that is fiscally responsible, but also sustains as many educational resources our projected revenue streams can provide. Our focus on sustainability is not only on today--but also for generations of Patriots to come.

As an administrative team, it is our job to always seek avenues to better deploy our educational model. Year in and year out the financial strain upon our district outpaces the revenue stream supplied by our state and federal government. Although our enrollment numbers across Lenawee County and the State of Michigan have declined over the past 20 years, students' needs at all levels have continued to increase. Our special education population has increased steadily over the past 5 years, more students are entering school with behavioral needs and at-risk factors, more and more students need access to mental health support for various reasons, and more and more students need remedial services to meet grade level expectations. Thriving students also need opportunities for enrichment and advancement.

To take steps to ensure we can continue to provide the opportunities we have been providing for our students, we must make changes to keep up with the needs of our students and families. For this reason, Britton Deerfield Schools will be undergoing a re-configuration to our buildings for the start of the 2025-26 school year. We truly believe this reconfiguration will provide more opportunities and a better educational experience for our students. Our desire is not to close any building within the district—but to fill the buildings with students who are seeking an amazing educational experience, and families who support education through a caring, community-based school with student safety and student need at the center.

Why now?

Over the past 3 years the district has received a significant amount of federal funding for COVID recovery. These funds were used in a variety of ways toward the enhancement of learning experiences for students, decreasing class sizes, closing the gaps created

from the mandated COVID restrictions and improving the district buildings through sanitation and improvement. Additionally, these resources allowed the Staff, Administration and Board to understand the value of some areas of new or additional support, all while understanding at some point difficult decisions regarding our future would need to be made as we emerge from the strains of the COVID era. Reconfiguration will allow for further financial sustainability and provide a better education and more opportunities for our students.

What are the benefits?

The benefits of having grade-level teachers together in the same building are significant and can positively impact the educational experience of students. We are also aligned appropriately with our curriculum and are readily prepared for the implementation of the PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) that is the focus of our school improvement initiatives.

Utilization of Space – The Britton Deerfield district is not utilizing either building to its expected efficiency level. By reallocating grade levels and consolidating resources, the district can optimize space utilization and ensure that each school building has adequate facilities to support teaching and learning activities appropriate for the age of children housed in that building. Students will have greater opportunities to work in content-area specific classrooms geared toward STEM, STEAM, and project-based learning. This will also provide a more exciting and engaging learning environment that is centered around a true community of learners focused on collaboration and team building.

Utilization of Staff - Having more highly qualified educators in one place enables better coordination and collaboration among staff members, leading to more targeted interventions and support services for students with varying needs. This flexibility in staff deployment enables the district to better match educators' expertise and skills with students' specific needs, enhancing the overall quality of instruction and support services provided.

Stability Regarding Placements - The proposed reconfiguration eliminates the need for students to switch between schools, providing families with greater clarity and stability regarding their children's educational placement.

Elimination of Swing Areas - Eliminating the need to transfer students between buildings to balance class sizes reduces disruptions to students' routines and fosters a sense of stability and continuity.

Elimination of Special Education Transfers - All special education services (Life Skills/Autistic Support and Learning Support Services) will be offered in each building, eliminating the need for students to transfer to the other building to receive the services they require.

Opportunity for Grouping Students - With teachers working closely together it becomes easier to group students based on their learning needs. Students can receive targeted remediation or enrichment activities tailored to their specific academic levels and areas of interest, promoting personalized learning experiences during small group instruction. The district is dedicated to providing Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to meet our students where they are. This process would be even more effective if all grade level teachers worked together collaboratively to meet ALL students' needs.

More Efficient Resource Allocation - Concentrating grade-level teachers in one building allows for more efficient allocation of resources, including instructional materials, technology, and support staff. Administrators can better assess and address the specific needs of each grade level, ensuring that resources are utilized effectively to support student learning.

Collaborative Planning Opportunities for Teachers- Having teachers in the same building means they can work closely together to plan lessons. When teachers collaborate, they share ideas on what and how to teach. This helps make sure all students are learning the same things and that teachers are using the best methods to support a variety of student needs.

More Accessible/Age-Appropriate Learning Environments - The physical attributes of each building are better suited for the proposed grade levels. Housing Britton Deerfield's elementary grades in the Deerfield Building provides a more compact layout. It is easier for primary students to move and transition, while the Britton Building facilities are better suited for grades 6-12.

Age-Appropriate Learning Environments and Activities - The implementation of School-wide Positive Behavior Support programs, activities, and assemblies can be tailored to align more effectively with age-appropriate preferences, rather than attempting to cater to a broad spectrum from kindergarten through 12th grade. We recognize the desire for a more mature learning environment among our older students.

More Flexibility Within Programming to Meet Individual Needs - All programs for grade levels within one building allows for creative groupings and cross-over supports to better meet individual needs of students. Students needing both Learning and Life Skills Support can mix programs to best meet their needs.

Optimized Caseloads and Teacher Focus - Combining grade levels within each building allows teachers to have a more focused and manageable caseload, enabling them to provide more individualized attention and support to students with special needs within grade levels, rather than grade spans. With equalized caseloads and a narrower focus on specific grade levels, teachers can better address the unique learning goals and challenges of their students, fostering a more supportive and inclusive learning environment. This also reduces the number of teachers who are traveling between buildings, cutting costs and lost instructional time.

Compliance with State Regulations - With the influx of special education needs, the district can ensure compliance with state regulations regarding maximum caseload numbers and staffing requirements while equalizing caseloads among staff members. This approach minimizes the need to hire additional staff or transfer students between schools to meet regulatory standards, thereby enhancing administrative efficiency and resource allocation.

In summary, the reconfiguration of schools to facilitate collaboration among teachers and balance the use of both district buildings will enhance the quality of education provided to students. By creating cohesive learning communities within each building, schools can foster a supportive and inclusive environment where all students can thrive academically and socially. The reconfiguration will offer a strategic approach to addressing the increasing complexity of student needs within Britton Deerfield Schools. By consolidating resources, maximizing staff flexibility, and promoting consistency in programming, the district can better meet the evolving needs of its student population and ensure equitable access to high-quality education and support services for all students.

Throughout the summer months we will be sharing information with families. Please make sure you are attentive to all phone alerts and updates to our website and social media platforms. We are so excited about the coming year, and we can't wait to watch as the reconfiguration takes shape! If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me. I am happy to meet with anyone and can also be reached via email at: stacy.johnson@bdschools.us. Thank you for supporting our district. BD4Life!

Yours In Education,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stacy Johnson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mrs. Stacy Johnson
Superintendent