

# Summary

This document contains my notes (Reed Sutman's notes) regarding the dennis lab structural issues story. These notes are not vetted for perfect accuracy, and contain some paraphrasing.

Dates are 2023, timezone is central standard time.

## Official Documents

- June 13, 2023 @ 7am [Future of Dennis Lab School](#)
  - Official release from DPS61
  - Campuses closed for 2023-2024
  - Staff hopes to have solid recommendation by june 27 meeting
  - Will plan a community forum to discuss recommendations
  - Links to several documents.

## Reporting available

- May 31, Herald & Review: [Both Dennis School campuses temporarily closed](#), Herald & Review, May 31, 2023, by Valerie Wells
  - "He expects it to be a topic of board discussion, though maybe not in time for the next meeting on July 11 if the results of the tests are not yet available by then." - **Note:** The next meeting is June 13th according to Alyssa Patrick, not July 11th. I emailed Valerie to let her know of the mistake. She confirmed July 11th was incorrect.
  - Clevenger quotes
  - Some details on former considerations of building a new dennis lab building, and mention of former woodrow wilson.
- May 31, Illinois Newsroom: [Decatur Public Schools temporarily closes 2 campuses over structural concerns](#): May 31, 2023, Illinois Newsroom, nothing new.
  - Links to July 13 H&R article [Decatur school district responds to Lincoln Park plan criticism](#)
- June 3, 2023, Byers & Co: [LISTEN: DPS61 Superintendent Dr. Rochelle Clark discusses Dennis School on Byers & Co](#)
  - Clark says "we went through the building with a fine-tooth comb"
  - 26 total expulsions this year (clark thinks)
  - Byers says there are 7,500 kids
  - Not much on the structural issues.
- June 5, Herald & Review: [Dennis Lab School buildings to remain closed until further notice](#): Herald & Review, June 5, 2023, author not stated in byline
  - Details on a Monday June 5th robocall to staff asking them to continue working from home.
  - Some details on previous plans to replace Dennis Lab & the fate of former woodrow wilson
  - Martin Engineering Company proposal for survey related to "New School on Lincoln Park Drive", dated May 26, 2022, sent to Kent Metzger
  - BLDD Agreement for for work related to "New Denis Lab K-8 School - Programming Services", dated April 28th, 2022
- June 8, Herald & Review: [Decatur schools continue to wait for engineer's report; Dennis staff updated today](#), Herald & Review, June 8th 2023, by Valerie Wells
  - Herald & review [shared on twitter](#)
  - Nothing much new.
- June 8, WAND: [Dennis Lab Schools close for structural concerns](#): WAND, June 8, 2023, Alyssa Patrick
  - "The board will discuss both short-term and long-term options for students and staff at the June 13th meeting."
  - details on robocall
- June 9, WCIA: [Decatur school remains closed pending structural engineer report](#): WCIA, June 9, Scarlett O'Hara
  - "School Board Vice President Jason Dion said while he can't comment or give details on the situation"
  - "All staff members were asked to work remotely until June 5"
  - "All staff members were asked to work remotely until June 5, but the closures have been extended pending a second opinion from a structural engineer."
  - Some details about community interest in building a new school, though it does not include details from opponents of that position.
  - "'The gas leaks are unsafe, the pickup lines are dangerous. It is not fair that the teachers and students continue to make do," a former student said during the August 9, 2022 meeting.'
  - "Chief Communications Officer Denise Swarhout said they expect the final report to come any day now."
- June 9, WCIA: [Decatur school remains closed pending structural engineer report](#), WCIA, June 9th 2023, Video report by Brandon Merano anchoring & Scarlett O'Hara reporting.
  - Robocall details
  - some details & public statements regarding previous considerations of a new dennis lab school.

- June 13, 2023 @ 10:40am [DPS says both Dennis Lab School buildings are 'structurally compromised'](#)
  - Says the schools will not be open during 2023-2024 - specifies not open during fall. Wasn't entirely clear about spring.
  - Quote from Superintendent Dr. Rochelle Clark
  - Links to dps61.org saying "To view structural evaluations of each building and recommendations by engineers, click [www.dps61.org](http://www.dps61.org). There is also a timeline of events that led up to the findings, the latest Health Life Safety reviews for each building, Frequently Asked Questions, and planned next steps." As of 11:09am, I cannot find the documents. I emailed Swarthout for a link and copy of the press release. I also contacted WAND's news room and they said it is the same link that was in the press release DPS sent them. (*WAND updated the link. I was viewing the old dps site and had to clear my browser cookies*)
- June 13, 2023 ~ 11:43am [Dennis School campuses closed for coming school year, next steps under review](#)
  - Video of press release video conference with Dr. Rochelle Clark (reporter questions are paraphrased)
    - "Digging a little deeper to find out what actually has caused this structural compromise and what the next steps should be in order to remedy that."
    - She talks about the article on the website with links to further info and documents.
    - Reporter asked for timeline: Dr. Clark said a teacher expressed concern that their classroom shook when the band would play, and this concern came forward around mid or late April.
    - Reporter asks where the students will be next year. Dr. Clark doesn't know yet, but says they're doing their best to keep them together and not scatter them throughout the district.
    - Reporter: Did Dennis need renovations before American STEM? Dr. Clark said when the BOE made their decision they made it using the information they had available at that time.
    - Reporter, As it pertains to transparency, what would you say to community members who say the district has not been transparent? Refers the community to the webpage, which has a timeline.
    - No-one is allowed in the building, including staff to get their belongings. They're working on a solution.
    - No answer on the possibility of building a new school.
    - Health/Life/Safety report required every 10 years, last completed in 2013 & another due this year
    - "The first day of the 2023-24 school year is Aug. 14. With 532 students at Dennis, options for placing them elsewhere are limited."
    - Some background on STEM, other buildings owned by the district, woodrow wilson, and the scrapped plan for a new dennis in lincoln park
    - Quote from "Decatur Education Association President Chrissy Pettit", saying "We appreciate Dr. Clark's willingness to act promptly based on the findings she's been given" (quote continues)
    - Clark says the band shaking the classroom was an April concern, but the online timeline shows this was brought up on February 7th. The timeline and email records show that analysis was sought in March.
- June 13, 2023 11:59am [Decatur Schools closes Dennis Lab School for 2023-2024 school year](#)
  - nothing new
- June 13, 2023 12:02pm [BREAKING: DPS 61 declares both Dennis Lab School campuses structurally unsound](#)
  - Does not appear to have any new information.
- June 13, 2023 ~5pm [OUR VIEW: Dennis decision leaves questions](#) - Herald & Review Editorial Board
  - Basically just saying they're glad the buildings are closed down.
  - They quoted an unnamed parent saying "It was OK Tuesday but it wasn't on Wednesday?"
- June 13, 2023 ~5pm [Timeline: What led to Dennis Lab School closure](#)
  - It's just a copy+paste of the District's webpage about it, but with less information and no link to the source.
- June 13, 2023 ~7pm [DPS says both Dennis Lab School buildings are 'structurally compromised'](#)
  - Video report, highlights the structural issues - showing images
  - June 27th meeting expects full discussion (*Clevenger previously said it would be discussed at June 13th meeting, but it was not mentioned outside of public comment*)

- June 14, 2023 8:57am: [LISTEN: DPS61 discusses structural issues and future of Dennis Lab School on Byers & Co](#)
  - Byers asked when she first knew there were any issues. She said "when I started meeting with the Dennis staff". She said she met with "buildings and grounds" to see what they could do & that a structural engineer should come out there. She also mentions staff seeing daylight through their floor.
  - Byers asked if they were getting in reports from the maintenance department before that, and she said "nothing, nothing, so it's really strange"
  - She says "eyeballing" the roof, it looks fine, but getting on the roof, you can see it's not level.
  - Asked if they were scheduled for another 10-year study. Clark says there would've been one this year anyway
  - Byers said the firm would not even send their people into French and points out that 30 days ago there were kids and staff in there.
  - He asks Bill, "Did you have any inkling?" (of there being problems). Bill says this is a "prime example of our infrastructure issues."
  - Bill: "It doesn't do a lot of good right now for us to spend a lot of time and energy on what was. We really have to get focused on what is and what's gonna be tomorrow". He says there will need to be "rapid decision making" and "rapid changes made maybe in other buildings" to accommodate kids in the fall
  - Byers swerves to Lincoln Park, saying this would have been helpful to know about 8 or so months ago.
  - Bill says this may be time to look at "what the district looks like 10 years from now", and says the number of kids in the school system will be different then.
  - Clark: "Everything is on the table." She says she's hoping for an in-district school, all in one building. She does not believe they'll be able to house all K-8 in one location, but may be able to get majority in one location.
  - Clark says they looked at the Tech Academy and there "are issues there as well"
  - Byers suggests Fairview Plaza Kroger as an idea & Clark says "We are looking at that as well"
  - Byers asks the board's role. Clevenger says they'll look at Clark's recommendation, the staff will prepare recommendations, and then the board will review and act on it.
  - Byers asks if Clevenger wants to "know the status of every single building in your district moving forward?"
  - Clevenger says they've had conversations about a "district capital program", a "district site plan, master plan" for every building in the district, which they do not currently have.
  - Clevenger says at their upper team level, they have turnover in the last decade and a half - Kent's been in the job a year and a half & in the last 6 or 8 years, there have been four people in that job. He says "we have to pay attention to this turnover issue".
  - Clevenger says Mike Satira ... (sp?) was there for like 30 years and knew a lot. Clevenger mentions working with the team, having continuity
  - Clark says one of the buildings is likely to be demolished. Byers asked and Clark said "I think so"
  - Clevenger says he does not see any avenue other than that "right now". Clevenger says we have the study, and now we need the numbers to do a cost-benefit analysis & make some determinations & how much it will cost & if it makes sense given the age of the structures, to rebuild vs repair.
  - Byers asks if they'll need a tax referendum, and Clevenger says he doesn't see that right now. Clark says that Dennis is less likely to be demolished than French.
  - Byers asks, does this give you pause about school starting in the fall & the state of other buildings? Clark says it gives her concern.
  - Byers says "four months ago, no-one knew this" Clark said "That is so true"
  - Clevenger says we need to start the process of investigating every building, and Clark says they'll need to bring people in to assist.
  - Byers suggests that Swarthout & Metzger are "reacting" because there is not enough time and money to be "proactive" and Clevenger agrees
  - Clevenger says the want to get to a position where Clark can be strategically planning for the district, for the next one, two, or three decades
  - Clevenger anticipates board unity on this issue, and he will work hard to coalesce the board around an issue
  - Clevenger said they had a board training that went well & the trainer did a good job of clarifying the roles.

## Questions & Missing Information

- In her June 1 email, Swarthout attached three images, these images were not in the FOIA I received.
- Swarthout May 31, 8:20pm email attachments: image001.png, image002.png, image003.png, image004.png, image005.png, image006.png, Outlook-fmmls0ez.png, Outlook-mwywps0l.png
- Amanda Leigh asked on Facebook: "why on earth would they not inspect the entire building?!"

## Individuals Involved

### Journalists

- Reed Sutman, reed@decaturvote.com - Journalist for Decatur Vote
- Valerie Wells, Valerie.Wells@lee.net, Staff Writer for Herald & Review, (217) 421-7982 & Twitter @modgirlreporter
- Scarlett O'Hara, SOhara@wcia.com, Multimedia Journalist for WCIA 3 | WCIX 49 | WCIA.COM
- Bryan Bridge, bpbridge@sbgvtv.com, Decatur Journalist for FOX Illinois, News Channel ABC20, and CW23 (according to his email footer)

- Alyssa Patrick, reporter for WAND
- Caryn Eisert, WAND Reporter, 217-521-3969, posted to Citizen Stakeholders for Educational Excellence - DPS 61, asking for parents to talk on-camera. See <https://www.facebook.com/groups/143822530128246/posts/818065079370651/>

## School Reps

- Melissa Bradford, MBradford@dps61.org - FOIA officer for DPS 61
- Denise Swarthout, DSwarthout@dps61.org, Chief Communications Officer for DPS61
- Kent Metzger, kametzger@dps61.org, (217) 413-3586, Director of Buildings and Grounds for DPS 61
- Bill Clevenger, , School Board President has made public statements
- Jason Dion, , School Board Vice President
- Superintendent Rochelle Clark, , has made public statement / recorded robocalls.
- Dr. Mike Curry, Chief Operations Officer - Klinger's findings were sent to Curry. <https://www.dps61.org/Page/78> "oversees all District financial matters and District non-instructional operations", 217.362.3021, MCurry@dps61.org

## Engineers

- BFW Engineers, (217) 530-4283
- Phillip Holthaus, pholthaus@bfwengineers.com, Structural Engineer / Project Manager for Bacon Farmer Workman Engineering & Testing, Inc.
- Anna Marie Ignacio, amignacio@bfwengineers.com, Ignacio was CC'd on an email Holthaus sent.
- Heath Pederson, hpederson@bfwengineers.com, Pederson was CC'd on an email Holthaus sent.
- Klingner & Associates, P.C. -604 liberty st, suite 125, Pella IA 50219. Ph: 515-612-7402, klingner.com
  - Kyle T. Hannel, P.E., C.W.I. - signed the findings
  - Alan D. Lukens, P.E., S.E. - signed the findings

## Timeline

### Journalism Timeline

- May 31 2:01pm - 8:20pm, emails between Denise Swarthout and Scralett O'Hara
- May 31, Swarthout writes "we are temporarily closing the two Dennis Lab School campuses"
- May 31: Swarthout declines to do an interview with O'Hara
- June 1, 10:38 am, Reed sends FOIA request
- June 1, Swarthout communication with Bryan Bridge
- June 6, 5:31pm, Valerie Wells sent a FOIA request to Melissa Bradford
- June 8, 9:48pm, Melissa Bradford sends FOIA Response to Reed

### Story Timeline

- March 23, 6:29 am: Holthaus sends email to Metzger with a \$19,000 proposal to inspect Dennis Lab Mosaic & Kaleidoscope School Structures
- April 11: Metzger says April 19th works for the school.
- April 27: Holthaus replies, asking "Are there any other dates that work well for you..."
- May 8 - May 12: Metzger was out of the office, at least at some point during this week, according to an email from Holthaus.
- May 15: Holthaus stated his colleagues may be available May 15 - 18, and that he himself would be "rather open" the following week (*presumably May 22-26*)
- May 26: Metzger states "My maintenance foreman and mason are knowledgeable about some structural issues."
- May 30-31: Inspection takes place
- May 31: Swarthout announces closure to O'Hara
- May 31: Swarthout **claims** the structural engineer's first availability was Tuesday May 30th.
- June 1: Both Dennis Lab School campuses are closed
- June 8: Robocall says "The district has not received the structural engineers' final report." Says after information is received "administration will reach out to your building principal so that she can schedule a meeting with staff and administration to discuss findings and our options."
- June 13: School board will discuss short & long-term options for students & staff

## Important Facts

- Locations: Dennis Lab Mosaic @ 1499 W. Main St, Kaleidoscope Campus @ 520 @ Wood St.
  - Mosaic built in 1910 w/ additions/renovations in 1927, 1954, 1974, and 2004. 45,000 square feet. 3 stories tall.
  - Kaleidoscope built in 1914, additions/renovations in 1974, 1994, 20024.
- Contract Details, proposal date March 23, 2023:
  - \$19,000 for inspection from bfw engineers
  - Visit both campusess, be escorted by staff to "any specific locations of concern that staff has seen or felt (vibrations)"
  - Take photos of any deteriorations
  - Compile a stamped report of our findings and professional oppinions/recommendations for next steps
  - DOES NOT include detailed fixes, destructive material testing, 3d scanning of buildings, or Drone HD video of high exterior walls
- March 23 BFW Propposal is on page 9 of the pdf
- April 11: Metzger tells Holthaus "The afternoon of April 19th works well for us". Holthaus replies April 27th asking for "any other dates". April 27th, Metzger says "Can we schedule the work for an afternoon next week?" (*that would be May 1 - May 5*)

## Full Communications

### Reed's FOIA Request (June 1 - June 8)

Reed Sutman sent a FOIA request to Melissa Bradford, citing a quote from a Herald & Review article, seeking the following documents & receiving the noted responses.

1. Any document finding that the district "already knew there were issues"

Response: There is no document responsive to this request

1. Any communications from administrators and staff voicing their concerns.

Response: See the attached document title "Communication between Admins and Others"

1. Any communications with engineers / engineering firms to schedule an examination, including the engineer who did the assessment and any others that were sought.

Response: There is no document responsive to this request.

1. Any documentation showing that the engineer's first opening was Tuesday (*May 30*)

See "Communication between Admins and Others"

1. Any prior assessments of the buildings' structural stability

Response: There is no document responsive to this request.

1. The full content of any communications (including FOIA requests) with media organizations

Response: See attached "Communications with ... FOIA V. Wells 06.07.23"

### Valerie Well's FOIA (June 6)

Valerie requested the following information on June 6th:

The report from the structural engineer who inspected the Mosaic and Kaleidoscope campuses of Dennis School on May 30;  
The names of that firm and the firm that is doing/has done the second inspection of those buildings;  
Emails mentioning Dennis School campuses in regard to concerns about the integrity of both or either building from March 1 to today.

## **Swarthout & Bridge (June 1)**

**Bryan Bridge, June 1, 9:38 am**

I am just seeking a bit more information on the Dennis Lab School closing and confirming details I've seen in other articles.

Why did the district temporarily close Dennis Lab School?

Any timeline or date that you plan on reopening it?

I've seen something about an infrastructure problem, can you confirm exactly what it was?

If somebody came out to check it, when was that?

**Swarthout's response, June 1, 9:54 am**

Hi Brayn - here's the information I have to share at the moment, we hope to have more info to share soon.

Out of an abundance of caution, we are temporarily closing the two Dennis Lab School campuses following an analysis from a structural engineer. We are looking to get a second opinion this week, but for the moment we are asking all staff at the two Dennis Lab School campuses to work from home or at an alternate location through Monday, June 5

## **Swarthout & Ohara (May 31)**

Swarthout initiates contact with Scarlett Ohara.

**Swarthout, 2:01 pm**

Out of an abundance of caution, Decatur Public Schools is temporarily closing the two Dennis Lab School campuses while we further assess structural concerns with the two buildings. We continue to do our due diligence, as we take proactive steps to ensure the safety of students and staff at all DPS schools.

**Ohara, 2:33 pm**

We'll be in town covering this today. Would you and/or the principal of Dennis Lab School be available for a quick interview? *(she shares her cell #)*

**Swarthout, 3:20pm**

Hi Scarlett! We're not available for on-camera interviews at this time, the statement is all the information we have to share.

**Ohara, 3:22pm**

Are you able to clarify what the structural concerns are and how long the campuses will be closed for?

**Swarthout, 3:35pm**

We are looking to get a second opinion this week, but for the moment we are asking all staff at the two Dennis Lab School campuses to work from home or at an alternate location through Monday.



**Ohara, 3:44pm**

When was the first opinion sought?

**Swarthout, 3:44pm**

We requested the analysis from a structural engineer this spring, but yesterday was the first availability on his schedule to come out and do the analysis.

**Ohara, 3:48pm**

Are you able to share the findings from his analysis?

**Swarthout, 3:48pm**

No, I don't have those available.

**Ohara, 7:41pm**

One more question - yesterday was the last day of school, right? So, students won't be affected by the closure at this point?

**Swarthout, 8:17pm**

Correct.

**Ohara, 8:18pm**

Is any tutoring scheduled to be held there?

**Swarthout, 8:20**

It is, and we will communicate with affected families as necessary, pending the second engineering opinion. This email also contained several attachments named: image001.png, image002.png, image003.png, image004.png, image005.png, image006.png, Outlook-fmmls0ez.png, Outlook-mwywps0l.png

## **Kent Metzger & Phillip Holthaus, March 23 - May 31**

**Holthaus, March 23, 6:29am**

Holthaus sent the \$19,000 contract proposal to Metzger. The proposal also asked for drawings of the buildings from BLDD Architects.

**Metzger, April 4, 2:05pm**

I am in the process of getting you a Purchase Order number. I will sign and return your proposal with issuance of the PO. Please schedule the site visit for your earliest convenience.

**Holthaus, April 4, 2:26pm**



Kent, thank you for the update. I will look at our upcoming schedule and get back in touch with you.

**Metzger, April 11, 1:08pm**

Any idea about when?

**Holthaus, April 11, 2:15pm**

We have discussing timing of our inspections and wanted your opinion. We can see advantages of inspecting at least the inside of these schools when they are not occupied with students in order to stay out of the way of day-to-day activities and ensure we can visually get our eyes on all walls & floors, etc. I assume that you might still require us to have an escort or at least someone to have doors unlocked during our investigation and re-locked when we are done. Does this sound like a good option to you? If so, are there any early-out days or school holidays coming up that we could make out visit on those days?

**Metzger, April 11, 2:17pm**

The afternoon of April 19th works well for us

**Holthaus, April 27, 2:47pm**

Are there any other dates that work well for you coming up so we can get this on our calendar?

**Metzger, April 27, 2:51pm**

We probably need to do the work sooner than later. Can we schedule the work for an afternoon next week? If you need to look into an area which may disturb the occupants, it can be done after dismissal for the day.

**Holthaus, May 15, 4:04am**

*This looks to be a new email thread*

*Holthaus CC'd Anna Marie Ignacio and Heath Pederson*

While you were out of the office last week, I did get in contact with BLDD and get some floor plans of the two schools to aid in our inspections and reports. If we can get something scheduled this week, I am at a conference Monday through Wednesday and currently unavailable on Thursday, but Anna Marie and Heath might be available to make a site visit during those days if needed. I am rather open the following week. Let me know what works best for you and we will try to get something coordinated this week or next.

**Metzger, May 15, 7:25am**

Can we do 5/30 and/or 5/31?

**Holthaus, May 15, 7:25AM AUTO-Reply**

I will be out of the office Monday May 15th through Wednesday May 17th for Strategic Planning Conferences. Email responses will be delayed. If you need immediate assistance, please call the office at (217)530-4283

**Holthaus, May 16, 9:09am**

We will hold both of those days for these two school inspections so if we don't get finished up on the 30th, we can do so on the 31st. Am I correct that students will not be present on these days?

**Metzger, May 17 11:44 am**

The kids will be present for a very short time on 5/30 and completely gone on 5/31

**Holthaus, May 17, 11:48am**

Great. Thank you.

**Holthaus, May 26, 3:25pm**

*This is a new email thread*

*Holthaus CC'd Anna Marie Ignacio, amignacio@bfwengineers.com*

Kent, Do you have a preference for which school we start at Tuesday morning? How early can we get started? Can I have your cell number if needed? If you not be present when we start, how will be check in at the first school?

**Metzger, May 26, 4:04 pm**

Let's start at the Mosaic campus. We start at 6:00 so anytime after that. I'll have someone escort you. My maintenance foreman and mason are knowledgeable about some structural issues so they can meet too. Let me know what works for you.

My cell is (217) 413-3586

**Holthaus, May 26, 4:05pm AUTO-Reply**

I will be out of the office Friday May 26th. Email responses will be delayed. If you need immediate assistance, please call the office at (217)530-4283

**Holthaus, May 30, 6:21am**

Kent, I will be at the Mosaic School at 7:15am. Where should I park? Should I call your cell when I arrive?

**Metzger, May 30, 6:46am**

Ok. We will meet you there. Park wherever you find a spot

**Holthaus, May 30, 6:54am**

Okay, thank you

## Documents

### Future of Dennis Lab School

Posted June 13, 2023 @ 7am - [Future of Dennis Lab School](#)

- Official release from DPS61
- Campuses closed for 2023-2024
- Staff hopes to have solid recommendation by June 27 meeting
- Will plan a community forum to discuss recommendations
- Links to several documents.

Timeline:

- Oct 24, 2022: Admins discussed "grade-level separation" - referring to student grades, not construction, it seems.
- Nov 2, 2022: Discussed "general touchups to the buildings"
- Feb 7, 2023: Staff meeting, staff expressed concerns regarding "Building issues, including HVAC concerns; ceiling leaks;" and "wood damage under carpet". "Dr. Clark said she would reach out to Buildings & Grounds"
- March 7, 2023: Staff meeting, "letting staff know we were still trying to get a structural analysis scheduled" - "March 22, April 19, May 17 = half days in which the engineering review was attempted to be scheduled, but engineer and/or DPS staff schedules did not align."
- May 30, 2023: BFW Engineering analysis
- May 31, 2023: Both buildings closed
- June 1, 2023: Klinger & Associates completed in-depth study
- June 8, 2023: K&A "sent the final analyses to DPS Administration late in the day on Thursday, June 8, 2023"
- Next Steps:
  - Work with Buildings & Grounds staff and BLDD Architects "to review the recommendations, cost estimates, timeline, and feasibility of repair and/or replacement options". No timeline currently available.
  - June 27, 2023: Board Meeting. Staff hopes to have a solid recommendation for the 2023-2024 school year for dennis students/staff.
  - Will schedule a community forum to review recommendations

## FAQ - June 13

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hUIJCUUZ0zLWlkgQYagTZh1XgSz4OXstzwzCpsqw3-0/edit>  
Contains several questions, I think it's pretty much all covered elsewhere.

"At this time, there is not a viable location within the current Dennis boundary suitable to build a new facility to replace the existing Dennis buildings."

## Initial Structural Engineering Analysis

<https://www.dps61.org/cms/lib/IL50010903/Centricity/Domain/4/Dennis%20Lab%20Kaleidoscope%20-%20Minimum%20Recommen>

Shows a floor plan of the Kaleidoscope Campus (former French Academy) with sections of marked as "recommended unoccupied space"

## Mosaic Campus (Original Dennis) - 10-Year Health Life Safety Survey

<http://www.dps61.org/cms/lib/IL50010903/Centricity/Domain/4/2013-DENNIS-HLS-REPORT.pdf>

Prepared by BLDD Architects and Architectural Expressions, LLP, signed on August 23, 2013, surveyed August 1, 2013. (It appears to be mainly BLDD, but Architectural Expressions's logo & information is on the front page)

### BUILDING NOT IN COMPLIANCE

- Note: Failure to submit accurate and complete safety survey reports shall subject a school district to the recognition provisions of [23 Illinois Administrative Code 180](#)

There are many rather minor violations, such as doors not fitting properly, fire doors using doorstops, glass not being tempered. Some notable violations:

- Classroom 301: Wall below window and above casework shows signs of water damage; investigate source of damage and repair surface
- Classroom 005, 141, 008: Ceiling in center of room appears to be wet; investigate source of damage and repair surface
- Corridor 219, 231: Walls at Perimeter show signs of a liquid dripping down the wall; Verify source of water, provide repair to system. Cover exposed wood with aluminum
- Exterior Masonry: Deteriorated / Damaged Masonry joint sealant at the perimeter of grills; Repoint masonry joints / remove + reseal control joints
- Storage 004: Plaster Wall is damaged due to water infiltration; investigate source of damage and repair surface
- Vestibule 001, Stair 136, 228: Asbestos containing floor tile is loose, friable, and causing tripping hazard in vestibule. Stairway tiles are popping; Remove asbestos containing floor tile. Install VCT.
- Library 133: Light fixtures have water stains. Roof or mechanical system leaking; Verify source of water. Provide repair to system
- Stair C: Wall near boiler room door is damaged due to water infiltration; Investigate source of damage and repair surface.
- Facility: Existing fire alarm system worn beyond its useful life; Replace fire alarm system and update system
- Estimated cost, about \$590,460. Largest costs are: nearly \$400k for new windows, \$44k for new fire alarm system, \$10k for "Replace curtain wall system or replace sealant" and \$10k for new urinals.

- Exterior Masonry: Masonry wall has hole in exterior envelope; Repair/replace cracked or spalling masonry

Provides history and state of building construction:

- 1910: original building, 3 story. 16,906 S.F.
- 1927: 3 story addition. 7,845 S.F.
- 1954: 2 story addition + basement. 21,709 S.F.
- 1973: 1 story addition. 2,539 S.F.
- 2004: 1 story addition. 334 S.F.
- Total: 49,330 S.F.

Fire Alarm System:

A non-coded, supervised, continuous ringing fire alarm system consisting of break glass stations and horns exists. A fire alarm control panel is located in the General Office on the second floor.

Further details include construction materials of foundation & walls, details of gas and water service and electrical system, plumbing, and "No peeling [lead] paint was observed.". Says "Drives, parking lots and sidewalks are in satisfactory condition."

Contains detailed floor plans at end of document, including max floor occupancy.

## **Kaleidoscope Campus (Original French) - 10-Year Health Life Safety Survey**

<http://www.dps61.org/cms/lib/IL50010903/Centricity/Domain/4/2013-FRENCH-HLS-REPORT.pdf>

Prepared by BLDD Architects and Architectural Expressions, LLP, signed on August 23, 2013, surveyed August 1, 2013. (It appears to be mainly BLDD, but Architectural Expressions's logo & information is on the front page)

### **BUILDING NOT IN COMPLIANCE**

Total estimated costs @ \$84,396, with largest costs beign \$20k for new carpets, 7.5k for new stear treads & risers, and \$40k for new fire alarm system

There are several rather minor violations, including light fixtures, storage issues, signage. Noteable violations:

- Stair 1, Stair 6, and corridors 211, 210, & elevator corridor: no emergency light
- Janitor closets 304, storage 109, classroom closets 10, 9, 12, 7, 13, 17, 16, 20: Light fixture missing protective lense; broken lamps could be potential hazard for fire
- Facility: Existing Fire alarm system worn beyond its useful life

Construction state & history:

- 1914: Original construction, 3 story
- 1973: West Addition, 3 story
- 1974: East addition, 3 story
- 1978: Classroom addition, 1 story
- 2003: Elevator Addition, 3 story

Floor & Roof construction are detailed. Additional details in document

- 12" masonry walls
- 4" concrete floor
- no automatic fire sprinklers, fire extinguishers up to code.
- "no peeling [lead] paint observed"
- additional details about HVAC, heat distribution, ventilation, water heater
- detailed floor plan pictures at end of document, also showing maximum occupancy.

## **Mosaic Campus Structural Review - Original Dennis Building**

<http://www.dps61.org/cms/lib/IL50010903/Centricity/Domain/4/Mosaic%20FINAL%20School%20Evaluation%20Observations%20ar>

FROM: Klinger & Associates, P.C.  
TO: Dr. Mike Curry, COO @ 400 E Cerro Gordo, CC Kent Metzger

Introductory details: Inspection limited to north stair area

"We were informed that there were recent concerns with the structural integrity of the north multi-story main-entrance stairs, so the focus of our inspection and evaluation was limited to this north stair area of the Mosaic School building"

Later, the report notes:

"the possibility exists of areas of structural deficiencies that were covered up or were not identifiable during our visual inspection."

Final recommendation:

1. Restrict access to "north multi-story stair and areas below, above, and adjacent to the stair until further stabilization, repairs, or replacement of the stair can be completed"
2. BEFORE staff is allowed to access unaffected areas of the school, an emergency exit path should be established that does not involve the north stair.

Findings

Foundation:

1. basement floor slab is deteriorated
  - previous concerns of the basement slab and foundation had led to others drilling two small exploratory holes
  - top 1"-1.5" is hard, below is soft/sandy. Expected thickness is 4" or 5", but not detailed in original plans.
  - "it is unlikely that any of the structural concerns related to the north stair is related to the deteriorated basement floor slab."

Stair and Landing Superstructure:

1. Excessive permanent deflection was observed on this stair flight with gaps between the wall closed stringer and the wall mounted trim.
  - "The gap was up to 1" at the middle of the stringer span of the west side and up to ½" at the middle of the stringer span of the east side"
  - "we observed previous attempts to repair some of the stair stringers"
  - It appears "an 8" steel W-beam was added at some time in the past was pocketed into and added brick support pedestals on the east and west ends"
  - **Recommendation:** Replace or repair. Do not use basement slab for support. Raise stairs to original elevation. Add additional supports.
2. "minor interior brick wall deterioration observed" and it is "unlikely that any of the structural concerns related to the north stair" are due to this.
3. "two timber column supports" are "leaning or deflecting excessively". 6X6 timber posts, Not part of original plans.
  - "possible" that they were added "as a repair attempt for the 2nd floor landing"
  - "do not appear to be adequately spliced or fixed to the guardrail portion of post below the column"
  - Vertical splitting of TRIM on the post.
  - **Recommendation:** Replace or repair 2nd floor landing header strong enough to allow removal of 2 column supports. Replace/repair 1st floor landing guardrail post after column supports are removed.
4. "plaster was missing and heavily cracked in areas below the east and west stair flight which is likely a sign of excessive deflections of the stair stringers or stringer header supports in the past"
  - **Recommendation:** Replace or repair "the east and west stair flight that runs from 1st floor level to the middle landing" and replace or repair middle landing header.
5. "This 2nd floor landing appears to deflect excessively, which may have been the reason why the column supports were likely added below it in the past. Even with the columns below, the header support on the north end of the 2nd floor landing appears to be inadequate"
  - **Recommendation:** See #3 recommendations. Also replace/repair "the stair flight that runs from the middle landing up to the 2nd floor landing level"
6. "The upper level and both of these upper stair and stair landings have excessive deflection"
  - "someone has had to cut the door down to reduce the door height by up to 1" to "allow the doors to be able to swing open."
  - "The wall on the south side of the upper landing is also deflecting"
  - Decorative wood trim is splitting
  - "it appears the upper-level south header is inadequate to support the stair landings and the wall above it"
  - **Recommendation:** Repair or replace upper landing header, and raise upper landing & wall to original elevation. Replace or repair stair flight from 2nd floor to upper landing. Replace upper level doors.
7. "One of the exposed joists of the upper level has been notched for a previous plumbing penetration. There was also some minor existing water damage to the nearby joists and ceiling where it appeared a previous plumbing repair had been made" (*no recommendation*)

FROM: Klinger & Associates, P.C.

TO: Dr. Mike Curry, COO @ 400 E Cerro Gordo, CC Kent Metzger

#### Introduction:

"We were informed that there were recent concerns with the structural integrity of the original building's exterior walls and parapets. The focus of our inspection and evaluation was limited to the exterior walls and parapets of the Kaleidoscope School building." (*Building originally called "New Wood Street School". Renamed French Elementary School in 1970s/80s*)

Later notes: "the possibility exists of areas of structural deficiencies that were covered up or were not identifiable during our visual inspection."

#### Final Recommendation:

"restrict access to the east portions" of original 3-story building and adjacent 2-story building.

"The Klingner recommendations above are assuming the Kaleidoscope building is going to be repaired and stabilized for continued use as an elementary school building in the future." (*note: The recommendations referred to are BELOW in the notes here, but ABOVE in KA's document*)

#### Findings, Exterior Walls:

1. "No signs of settlement cracking in the exterior walls or exposed portion of foundation of the 3-story building was observed. The only signs of brick or mortar joint cracking observed were near deteriorated window lintel bearings or near the tops of the 3-story walls at the corners or wall bump-outs."
  - "most of the third-floor window lintels have signs of pack-rusting and deterioration"
  - exterior walls of original building are loadbearing brick walls
  - "The portions of brick that have not been tuckpointed have mortar joints that are deteriorated."
  - **Recommendation:** Repair or replace "all pack-rusting deteriorated window lintels and tuckpointing all deteriorated brick mortar joints."
2. East & West walls "showed signs of bowing and leaning out" "near the 3rd floor ceiling elevation going up."
  - "There is more wall bowing and leaning on the east wall than the west wall."
  - **Recommendation:** "partial demolition and rebuild of the top of the east wall and parapet." Use "tie-back anchors to secure the east exterior wall back to adequately braced and blocked roof framing." For West wall, no demolition, and use "tie-back anchors to secure the west exterior wall back to adequately braced and blocked roof framing."
3. "we also observed a few locations of exterior wall deterioration on the 2-story east building addition"
  - "mortar joint cracking that stair steps near the wall corners and lintels bearings"
  - Lintels with "pack-rusting deterioration that had cracked the brick veneer at each end of the lintel bearing"
  - **Recommendation:** Repair or replace "all pack-rusting deteriorated door opening lintels in the east addition exterior walls and roof top screen wall and tuckpointing all deteriorated brick and cmu mortar joints." Recommends "galvanized steel lintels" to prevent future "pack-rusting deterioration."
4. Parapet damage & water damage
  - "The inside face of parapet appears to have been coated and painted to attempt to prevent moisture infiltration of the parapet"
  - "The coating and paint on the inside portion of parapet is deteriorated and missing in numerous locations and appears to be allowing moisture to penetrate the parapet walls"
  - "Moisture damage to the drywall near the top of wall or ceiling tiles near the exterior wall in multiple third floor classrooms was observed."
  - Worst moisture damage near "the roof drain scuppers on the north parapet."
  - "Cracks were observed on the interior side of the north-east and north-west parapet corners."
  - "The parapets are leaning outward and bowing outward in multiple locations"
  - **Recommendation:** See #2 above "partial demolition and rebuild of the top of the east wall and parapet." And use "tie-back anchors on both the east exterior wall and west exterior wall to tie the walls back to adequately braced and blocked roof framing."

#### Attic Space

1. "The roof decking and framing was observed to not be attached or tied to the east and west walls or parapets"
  - 3.5 inch gap "near the middle of the east wall" between the interior face of the wall and the roof framing & wood decking.
  - Wood deck & roof framing has "signs of water deterioration"
  - "A few locations of pocketed roof framing on the south end were observed to have steel straps or shims added in an attempt to prevent the wood framing from pulling out of the pocket."
  - "Previous attempts to sister some of the water deteriorated roof joists was observed near the north wall bearing."
  - **Recommendation:** See #2 & #4 above. And secure "the pocketed connections of the north and south wall roof framing with straps or brackets to prevent future pull-out of the pockets." Replace or repair "water deteriorated portions of roof framing." Replace "waterproofing on the interior side of the roof parapets."

