



MUSTANG MONTHLY™

VOLUME 23
ISSUE 6
February 2024

Empowering Students to Take Charge of Their Future.



SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

I shared the parts of the following message with our parents and staff recently and felt that I needed to share my thoughts with our entire community.

The tragedy in Perry has been weighing heavy on my heart. As the Perry community honored the life of Principal Marburger, I am reminded of his powerful commitment to serving his building. He risked his life to save others. Dan Marburger is the definition of a hero. I'm so thankful that I had the opportunity to know him.

It's also a very natural feeling to wonder "what if" and I know it's something we've been talking about in the Blum household. I thought it was important to share some of the things we have in place at Dallas Center-Grimes.

There have been several media reports highlighting the use of SEARS radios in Perry. Officials have said this form of communication saved crucial time in the response of law enforcement. SEARS radios allow school officials to contact law enforcement with a push of a button, instead of picking up the phone. All of our school buildings have SEARS radios and an immediate connection with local officials.

The addition of Deputy Alan Loutzenhiser as our district's school resource officer is already making a difference. Deputy Loutzenhiser's expertise helped us create a video highlighting evacuation strategies and lock down procedures with district staff. Deputy Loutzenhiser outlined lock down strategies for our classroom teachers. This includes outlining what to do if a teacher's only option is to shelter in place.

Another aspect of Deputy Loutzenhiser's relationship with DCG is we have the resources of the Polk County Sheriff's Office on stand-by 24/7. We are working with the Polk County Sheriff's Office to hold active shooter trainings in all of our buildings in April. These trainings will not include students. We asked Deputy Loutzenhiser and his team to take our DCG staff through several scenarios and then have a debriefing period for our teachers to ask questions and share concerns. I truly believe these experiences will provide our staff with critical knowledge moving forward.

Student safety has never been more important. I promise our entire DCG community that we will do everything in our power to protect our students and staff. Please know I am always available for additional conversations.

Sincerely,
Scott Blum
Superintendent



CALENDAR AT-A-GLANCE

Wednesday, February 7, Early Dismissal, 12:30 Oak View, 1 pm All other buildings

Friday, February 16, No School, Staff Professional Development

Wednesday, February 21, Early Dismissal, 12:30 Oak View, 1 pm All other buildings

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Home of the Mustangs



www.dcgschools.com

DALLAS CENTER-GRIMES
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS OFFICES
Elementary Offices

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High School Office/Travis Donahue, Principal
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2405 W. 1st Street, P.O. Box 680
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DISTRICT UPDATES

District Wide Registration for the 2024-2025 school year opened online (dcgschools.com) February 1. If you do not have a computer to complete the registration, a kiosk is available at the DCG Administration Building located at 2405 W. 1st Street, Grimes.

Families With Students Currently Enrolled at DCG:

Use your Campus Portal Account to access Online Registration. You will be able to add a student to your account if you have a child that will be entering the district for the first time (preschool, kindergarten, or another grade level.)

Families With Students New to the DCG District:

Follow the steps listed on the district website: www.dcgschools.com, "School Registration" tab or quick link.

If your child will be 5 on or before September 15, 2024, register for kindergarten

If your child will be 4 on or before September 15, 2024, register for 4-year-old preschool

If your child will be 3 on or before September 15, 2024, register for 3-year-old preschool

Preschool Information:

4 year old program: Registrations are accepted on a first come first serve basis until all spots are filled. When the program is full, your child will be placed on a waiting list.

3 year old program: To be eligible for a random selection to fill a preschool spot, register between Feb 1st and Feb 15th. If you register after Feb 15th, your child will be automatically placed on a waiting list.

Athletic Registration:

Athletic Registration in rSchool for 7th-12th grade athletes will not start until July 1, 2024.

The school will send email reminders as 7/1 approaches.

Registration Fees:

Registration fees will not be available for payment until July 1, 2024. The district will send email reminders as 7/1 approaches.

2024-25 School Calendar Update - There will be a new look to the 2024-25 school calendar! DCG CSD will now have an early dismissal every Wednesday. The new plan was approved at the January DCG School Board Meeting.

DCG CSD asked for feedback on this transition from both staff and families. 74% of DCG staff members voted for a weekly early dismissal. The other option was a model similar to the current DCG school calendar.

We also surveyed DCG families, asking parents to approve or disapprove this change. 44% of parents disapprove in some way, while 43% of parents approve in some way. There was not a majority in either direction. Based on this feedback, the district moved forward with a recommendation to the DCG School Board of a weekly early dismissal. (more on page 4)

HIGH SCHOOL



DCG's SRO Honored - We are excited to celebrate DCG's School Resource Officer Alan Loutzenhiser! Deputy Loutzenhiser was named the West Des Moines Elks Law Enforcement Professional of the Year! Deputy Loutzenhiser's partnership with our district is so valuable! Thanks to Deputy Loutzenhiser for your commitment to the safety of our students and staff! Deputy Loutzenhiser was presented with his award during a ceremony on January 17.

Support for Perry - Students at DCG High School are standing in support of our neighbors in Perry. Our thoughts and well wishes continue to be with everyone impacted by last month's tragedy. DCG High School students asked Principal Donahue if they could wear blue on January 5. After one email from Donahue, approximately 800 students were wearing the Perry blue to DCG. We stand with you Perry!



DCG HS Class of 2024 Graduation - We are so excited to celebrate the DCG Class of 2024 at our commencement ceremony on Friday, May 24! More details to come, but mark your calendars! This will be such a special evening! We will see you in a few months!



The Seal of Biliteracy is an award recognizing students who attain proficiency in two or more languages, one of which is English, by high school graduation. The Seal of Biliteracy:

- Values language as an asset
- Recognizes the value of language diversity and cultural identity
- Prepares students with 21st century skills that will benefit them in our global society, especially during college and job searches
- Provides recognition and evidence for students' proficiency in two or more languages

To be eligible for the Iowa Seal of Biliteracy, each student must demonstrate proficiency in English and a world language through various assessments. Students who earn the Seal of Biliteracy will be recognized during the graduation ceremony, and the seal will be shown on their diploma and official transcript.

Dallas Center-Grimes Testing Information:

Dallas Center-Grimes will be offering the following time to take the assessments with a proctor present. The school district will cover the cost for administering the initial test, but the students will be responsible for the fees associated with retakes.

Date: April 17, 2024

Time: 1:00 pm

Room: Mrs. Hawks Room

Please contact Mrs. Hawks by April 4 if you would like to sign up to participate in the upcoming testing session: laree.hawks@dcgschools.com

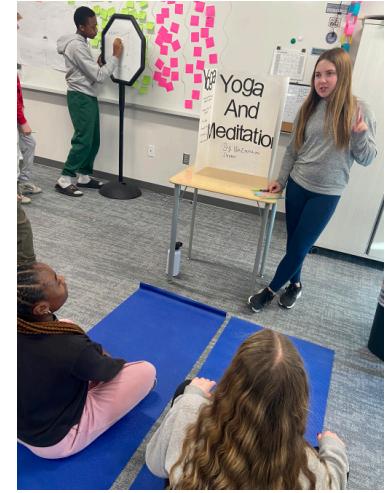
Taher Update - The Taher team loves meeting the needs of students and staff at DCG. We have two examples to share this month! District Chef Jozsef Grull helped students in DCG High School Spanish class make tamales in the cafeteria. Oak View students asked Taher for another sandwich option at lunch. Taher also created the "Build Your Own Sub" station in the Oak View lunch line, featuring fresh baked bread! Both of these stories are pictured below!



OAK VIEW



Stress Management Techniques - 7th and 8th grade Oak View Seminar students reviewed stress management techniques by holding a stress management health fair. Students worked in groups to research and present their own topics at the fair. It was so impressive to watch our students share their own learning with classmates! Topics included yoga, chess, coping strategies and journaling.



FROM THE BUILDING



Schedule Challenges - January provided DCG and schools across the Midwest with some unique challenges. From snow days, to late starts and everything in between, it was a crazy month! Our students have also been getting used to inside recess! But as you can see on the photo to the left, there was still fun to be had! This photo came from Dallas Center Elementary.

School Calendar Continued - This model will feature consistency for all stakeholders and will limit confusion on early dismissal vs. non-early dismissal each week.

The model allows for approximately 100 hours of professional development for DCG staff. We believe by empowering our teachers with more time to learn and grow, they will still be able to see the desired results in the classroom.

We will now begin to finalize all of the dates/times for the 2024-25 school year and will publish it online when ready.

ELEMENTARY



Refilling the Snack Tray - Zella and Rigsby DeNoble noticed the snack tray was getting empty at South Prairie Elementary. They decided to take action! Over winter break, the brother-sister duo created a video to ask for donations from their neighbors and friends. After a few short days, Zella and Rigsby brought

in a dozen boxes of snacks to share with their classmates! What a special way to show compassion to your fellow students!



PTO Update - Our DCG Elementary Schools PTO fall fundraiser was a HUGE success! Our combined efforts raised more than \$58,000. Our students will be rewarded for their efforts with a "Day of Awesomeness" this spring. Thank you to all our students and community members that participated and donated.

These funds allow the PTO to purchase kindergarten shirts for incoming students and organize fun social events. Additionally, teachers can apply for teacher grants that have included items like books, iPads, and alternative seating. Some buildings have worked with buildings and grounds to purchase more inclusive playground equipment.

The DCG Elementary Schools PTO invites you to join the PTO. There are lots of different ways to get involved. Reach out to your building principal to join the PTO go to our website: <https://dcgpto.com>. Many hands make light work!



Angel Account - Looking for a way to help a neighbor in need? Consider giving to the DCG Angel Account. This fund helps students who do not qualify for free or reduced meals, but still have a need for our support. There is an Angel Account donation link in the School Store at DCGschools.com.



Scholarship Opportunities - Is sponsoring a scholarship on your list of resolutions for 2024? If it is, the final deadline to sponsor/fund a scholarship for the DCG Class of 2024 is February 15, 2024.

The DCG Education Foundation will help you prepare a scholarship for those pursuing degrees through trade schools, junior colleges, and both private and public universities. You can also identify specific criteria for the scholarship you sponsor. For more information, visit www.dcgeducationfoundation.org.

DCG eBackpack - Looking for ways to get involved? The DCG eBackpack is a great community resource. Look for the link to DCG's Ebackpack on the homepage of DCGschools.com.

School Board Update - The DCG School Board has two meetings scheduled in February.

Special Meeting - 2/5 at 5:30
Regular Meeting - 2/26 at 5:30

Schedule Updates - Mother Nature played a major factor in January! We had several no school days and activity cancellations! The best way to keep up with all the makeup dates is by visiting the Little Hawkeye Conference website (QR code below)! Thanks for your continued support of DCG Activities!



New Activities Website - In just a few short weeks, there will be a new home for DCG Activities! A new website featuring all of the latest news, photos and showcases for ALL of our activity programs is under construction! This will be a great way to connect our community to the incredible work of students in extra curricular activities! Approximately 86% of DCG High School students are involved in at least one activity. We are so excited to showcase their talent in this brand new way!

ACTIVITIES

DCG Esports Program on the Rise - It's year three of the DCG Esports program and we've seen a dramatic rise in popularity. The team started with 12 players in its inaugural season. The 2023-24 roster features 30 players! In addition to the amount of students involved, this program is also

garnering statewide success. Look for DCG Esports at the winter state tournament in a few short weeks! There's more information about the DCG Esports program available at DCGschools.com.



SCIBA Honor Band - Six DCG musicians are receiving statewide recognition! Participating in the SCIBA Honor Band is a significant achievement and is yet another reminder of the talented musicians we have at DCG High School. Pictured left to right:

Emma Adair, Hannah Fasse, Hayden Smith, Quinton Oberender, Ahren Ervin, Charlotte York. Congratulations to these six musicians!

Mr. 500 - Congratulations to DCG Boys Basketball Coach Joel Rankin! Coach Rankin coached his 500th game at DCG on Saturday, January 20! He's leaving a legacy of dedication and teamwork that will be felt at DCG for decades to come! We are so thankful for his leadership of our program!

Thanks for investing in our student athletes Coach Rankin! We also had a great conversation with Coach Rankin on the latest episode of The Mustang Message, the official podcast of Dallas Center-Grimes! It's available at DCGschools.com. It's been a great year of basketball at DCG. Come check out a game before the season comes to a close!



ACTIVITIES



Mustang Athletic Performance Center Officially Open at DCG - We are so excited to showcase a brand new facility available to DCG High School students! We cut the ribbon at the Mustang Athletic Performance Center on Thursday, January 11. This facility will be home to our high school's new weight room and auxiliary gym. 600 high school students will also use this facility in PE class during the school day. "It's going to be one of the best in the state, if not the Midwest," says Jake Lewis, DCG Strength and Conditioning Coach. "Being able to outfit a room like this and have them take advantage of it in the school setting with our classes and the performance setting with our sports is going to be incredible."

Athletic teams and PE students started using this space at the start of the second semester. Here are a few photos of this incredible facility!



Renovation Update - The opening of the Mustang Athletic Performance Center completes a significant portion of phase one of the DCG High School Renovation project. The new music wing and art studios opened at the start of the 2023-24 school year. The band facility is large enough to hold DCG High School Marching Band practice and directors can divide the room for smaller group instruction. The DCG High School art rooms also incredible! This facility holds classes in Art I, Painting 1-4, Drawing 1-4, Ceramics 1-4, Sculpture, Graphic Design and Art Appreciations. Approximately 540 students will take at least one class in this space throughout the school year.



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Art Showcase - There are some incredible artists at DCG High School! Riley Fox created the goldfish bobble head (right) in Ceramics I. Students were tasked with creating a functional bobble head that held personal significance. Taylor Gray created a portrait (left) for her final project in Art 1 where she continued improving on her shading and proportion skills from the portrait unit. She was able to create this drawing that looks very similar to the people in the original picture!

