



# MUSTANG MONTHLY™

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April 2024

Empowering Students to Take Charge of Their Future.

## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



I want to take this opportunity to celebrate! There are so many things on the April and May calendar at DCG and sometimes it seems like we are moving 100 miles per hour! I dedicated some time during Spring Break to pause and reflect.

First, let's look back. Parent/teacher conferences were a huge success at DCG. The sign up sheets across our district were full! Thanks to the commitment of our parents and the dedication of our staff! The next couple of months will also provide several opportunities to honor academic achievements. From scholarships and awards, to year-end report cards, our students are learning at incredible levels.

We also had a special winter season of activities at DCG High School. Choir, speech, basketball, wrestling, Esports and so many other activities were on display. Please help me celebrate these outstanding students and the coaches and directors who support them daily!

I also want to celebrate Team DCG for a second. There are several important groups that we will showcase in the next couple of weeks! National Assistant Principals Week, Paraprofessional Appreciation Day, School Librarian Day, School Bus Drivers Day and Administrative Assistant Day are all on the docket this month! Stay tuned for another phenomenal group of honorees during the month of May.

Celebrating and showcasing are two things that I am trying to do every single day. Sometimes it's a quick email or call, others it's a hug or high five. It makes my heart feel good. I can't wait to honor the DCG Class of 2024 next month!

I'm proud of DCG. You should be too. We have a great thing going!

Sincerely,  
**Dr. Scott Blum**  
Superintendent

## CALENDAR AT-A-GLANCE

- April 3 - Early Dismissal, 12:30 Oak View, 1pm all other buildings
- April 17 - Early Dismissal, 12:30 Oak View, 1pm all other buildings
- April 22 - No School - Staff Development Day

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Director of HR
- Blood Drive
- Battle of the Books
- Taylor Swift/Travis Kelce
- Talent Show
- Winter Sports Recap

Home of the Mustangs



[www.dcgschools.com](http://www.dcgschools.com)

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## DISTRICT UPDATES



**Justmann Named DCG's Director of Human Resources** - Dallas Center-Grimes CSD is excited to announce that Cary Justmann will be our district's first Director of Human Resources. Justmann's first day at DCG will be this summer.

Cary is a proven leader in education, with a diverse skill set that will be beneficial in his transition to this position.

"I'm thrilled to rejoin the incredible team at Dallas Center-Grimes," says Justmann. "I'm committed to fostering relationships with staff members, while also providing a data-driven approach to strategies that will showcase Dallas Center-Grimes as a premier district in Iowa."

Justmann has spent nearly 30 years in public education, currently serving as Waukee High School's Principal. He also has ten years of administrative experience at Dallas Center-Grimes CSD, serving as DCG High School Principal from 2012-2016 and Associate High School Principal from 2006-2012.

"I'm so excited to welcome back Cary to DCG," says Dr. Scott Blum, DCG Superintendent. "Building meaningful relationships is at the core of who Cary is as a person. His personality and work ethic will immediately benefit our district."

**Final Day of School** - The final day of school for students at DCG will be Wednesday, May 29. If there are any additional weather cancellations, the last day of school will be pushed back accordingly. Parents received updated communication in late March! We've had a great year together!

**Active Intruder Trainings at DCG** - Dallas Center-Grimes CSD will be partnering with the Polk County Sheriff's Office to provide active intruder training for all DCG staff members. These trainings will not include students and will take place outside of school hours. There is potential for our community to observe additional law enforcement presence during these trainings.

**Training Schedule** - Wednesday, April 3 - DCG High School | Wednesday, April 17 - South Prairie and Heritage | Monday, April 22 - Oak View and North Ridge | Wednesday, May 1 - DC Elementary and DCG Middle School  
We believe this is an important step for our district to take in our commitment to the safety of our staff and students.

# HIGH SCHOOL



**National Honor Society Leading the Way** - The DCG High School National Honor Society is doing some incredible work this spring! They led the way on the Soles for Souls Shoe Drive in all seven of our district buildings. The group also held DCG High School's annual blood drive. 101 people donated blood this year, totaling 105 units of collected blood, equaling 315 lives saved or sustained! Thanks for going the extra mile to help our community!!



**High School Students Visit Capitol Complex** - DCG High School Rho Kappa students and the AP US Government and Politics class traveled to the Iowa Capitol Complex this spring. Students had a chance to observe two Iowa Supreme Court cases and

take a tour of several rooms within the capitol complex. They also had an opportunity to meet State Senators Amy Sinclair and Jack Whitver. The end of the tour featured a conversation with Governor Kim Reynolds. What a great experience for these students!

The **30th Annual Academy Awards** will be held on Wednesday, April 17 at 6:30 pm in the Dallas Center-Grimes High School Auditorium. This fun event allows the high school to recognize students in grades 9-12 for the variety of gifts and talents they contribute to our school daily.

Each department at the high school is tasked with nominating five students per grade using the following criteria:

Character | Attitude | Aptitude & Future Plans | Attendance | Grades in Specific Content Courses

Please join us for this exciting event where we can celebrate the many successes of our Dallas Center-Grimes High School students!

**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](mailto:laree.hawks@dcgschools.com)

**Registration Reminder** - Getting excited for the 2024-25 school year at DCG?? Don't forget to register your students on the DCG online portal. We encourage all families to register using a computer instead of a cell phone. By registering in the spring, our enrollment team gets a head start on completing student rosters for the upcoming year!

**Looking for DCG Camps and Clinics?** - The DCG Ebackpack is the perfect place to reserve a spot at a DCG Summer Camp! There's a link to the DCG Ebackpack on the front page of DCGschools.com. Recent adds include - basketball, cross country and driver's education! The DCG Ebackpack is updated frequently, so keep checking back!



The **DCG Middle School 6th Grade Band** traveled to Dallas Center Elementary to play for the 3rd and 4th grade classes. The elementary students got to see and hear what band and choir at DCG are all about! 4th-grade parents will be receiving information soon about signing up for the 5th-grade band and choir at DCG. Thanks to our current band members for providing the first look!

## OAK VIEW

**Talent Shines at Oak View** - Oak View students put on quite the show at the second annual Oak View Talent Show on Friday, March 22. It takes an incredible amount of bravery to get on stage in front of the entire school, but these students shined! We are impressed by their talent and their passion! There was singing, dancing and some very impressive musical performances! Thanks for sharing your talents with us!



## MIDDLE SCHOOL



**DCG Middle School Hosts Battle of the Books Competition** - It's a showcase day for several of DCG's most talented readers. DCG Middle School was the host site for the 2024 Battle of the Books competition. This contest features 200 students, broken up into 50 teams of four stu-

dents from grades 5-8. Each group is tasked with reading 20 books for the contest. During competition, they are quizzed on trivia questions from all 20 of the books, ranging from key details of the story to the author of each selection.

"I think it's so cool that so many kids are invested in reading these books and our school is invested in something like this," says 6th grade student Emma Oberreuter.

There's a video profile featuring several DCG students available at DCGschools.com.

# ELEMENTARY



**South Prairie Food Donation** - Students at South Prairie Elementary focused a recent lesson on "Caring for the Community." A food drive was a key part of the project and ended with hundreds of food items being donated to the Grimes Storehouse. What a positive reminder from our students about the power of caring!

**Taylor Swift/Travis Kelce Celebration** - Students in Mrs. Newcomb's 4th grade class at South Prairie Elementary completed their classroom punch card in March. Students had the opportunity to choose their celebration and they overwhelmingly selected a Travis Kelce/Taylor Swift party! Their celebration included a dress up day and several other Kelce/Swift activities!



**Concert Season** - What a fun way to celebrate a great year! There are so many concerts, performances and celebrations that our students are excited to share with our community this spring. This includes our 3rd and 4th grade music students at North Ridge! They shared their talents with the entire school in March. A special thanks to our educators for working alongside these students all year long!

# DISTRICT UPDATES



**Poole Honored** - DCG High School Math Teacher Joanna Poole is being honored as a Claes Nobel Educator of Distinction by The National Society of High School Scholars. Joanna was nominated for this award by a student who describes Joanna as an educator with an incredible devotion to her students. Congratulations to Joanna and thanks for always showing up for our students!

## High School Yearbook Reminders -

- 1) There are many 2022-2023 high school yearbooks still at the front office waiting for pick-up. Please grab yours and spread the word, especially for our 2023 graduates!
- 2) Order your 2023-2024 high school yearbook today! See the QR code to make a purchase or reach out directly to [ivy.soener@dcgschools.com](mailto:ivy.soener@dcgschools.com) with any questions.



**From the PTO** - Join us for the next Executive Board meeting on April 8, 2024, 5:30pm at the Grimes Public Library. Everyone is welcome! This meeting is open to the public. The DCG PTO Executive Board is seeking candidates to fill several open positions. Executive board meetings are held three times a year in January, April and July. Come volunteer and get a behind the scenes look at how our elementary school PTOs help make a difference in our school district.

**School Board Meeting** - The next scheduled DCG School Board meeting is Monday, April 22. The agenda and YouTube link will be posted at [DCGSchools.com](http://DCGSchools.com)

**DCG DECA** wrapped up their season at the state competition. The event consisted of each student taking a 100-question exam based on marketing, management, entrepreneurship and finance concepts. They also chose one of 15 role-play events, read a case study and presented their solutions to a judge. The test scores are averaged with the role-play scores to determine the winners. The students receive awards for the top test scores, two different role-play scores and then overall placing. Amelia Ehlert, Alex Pries, Elle Wood, Raquel Gao, Caylie James, Kerry Myers and Josephine Bond all received individual honors!

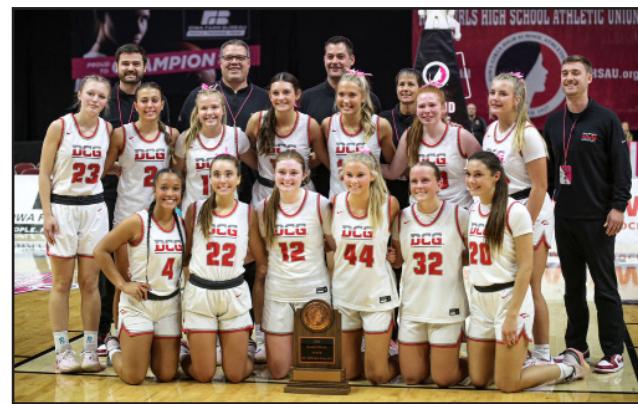


**Mark Your Calendars! DCG High School Musical Coming Soon** - DCG Theatre will be showcasing The Addams Family in their 2024 musical. Show times are available on April 26, 27 and 28! Ticket information will be available at [DCGschools.com](http://DCGschools.com) and the DCGTheatre social media pages! More than 100 students from DCG High School are involved in the musical this year! More info soon!

## ACTIVITIES

### DCG Shines at State Basketball

Dallas Center-Grimes High School is one of only seven schools in the entire state of Iowa to qualify for the boys and girls state tournaments! This is a significant accomplishment and showcases the hard work of both programs! Thanks for representing DCG at the highest level! Great season Mustangs!



**Girls Basketball Finishes in State Quarterfinals** - The DCG Girls Basketball team capped off the 2023-24 season at the state tournament! This was DCG's fourth consecutive trip to Wells Fargo Arena. North Polk knocked off the Mustangs in the quarterfinals 48-42. DCG ends the season with a 20-4 record, the fourth-straight season with 20+ wins. They also captured their fourth-straight Little Hawkeye Conference title, going 52-2 in that span! A special shout out to the five seniors on this year's roster. They've dedicated their time and talents to this incredible program and are leaving their jerseys in a great place. Congratulations on a great season DCG!



**Boys Basketball Makes First Trip to 4A State Tournament** - The DCG Boys Basketball team qualified for the Class 4A State Tournament for the first time in school history this year. 2023-24 was the Mustangs second year in the state's largest class. DCG was the 8-seed in the Class 4A bracket and dropped a quarterfinal game against 1-seed Cedar Rapids Kennedy. The Mustangs finished the year with a 20-4 record, tying for the top spot in the Little Hawkeye Conference! Joel Rankin's team won nine of their final ten games this winter. DCG says good bye to a incredible senior class. Eight seniors played their final game at Wells Fargo Arena!

# ACTIVITIES



**Great Year for DCG Esports** - The DCG High School Esports team had another incredible season. The highlight of the winter campaign is DCG's state runner-up finish in the Overwatch 2 competition. The Mustangs beat Marshalltown and Waukee before dropping the championship match to Cedar Rapids Kennedy. DCG Esports also qualified for the Rocket League state competition this winter. This is an outstanding achievement for a team in their third year of existence in our district. There were more than 25 students on the team this year!

**Spring Sports Season Begins** - It's an exciting time to be a student athlete at DCG. As the calendar turns to spring, there's a new group of DCG teams ready to take their turn. Crews recently started getting the timers and scoreboard ready for DCG's home track events this spring. DCG soccer teams are also back on the field and tennis teams are returning to the court! If you have any interest in volunteering at a DCG Track Meet, please email [brent.butijer@dcg-schools.com](mailto:brent.butijer@dcg-schools.com) to coordinate details! Go Mustangs!



**DCG Speech Shines** - The DCG Speech program continues to set records! After an amazing performance at the district speech event, DCG sent an incredible 37 speakers to the Iowa State Speech Tournament. The previous record was set last year with 26 state speakers. Alex Pries (Solo Musical Theater), Tess Meggison (Storytelling) and Elle Illian (Literary Program) all performed at the All-State Speech event in late March at UNI (photo left)! This is a tremendous achievement!

**Dallas Center -Grimes FFA** members are on the competition trail! February and March were busy at district competitions. Some members competed as individuals, while others competed on teams. All worked incredibly hard and are proud of what they accomplished. FFA contests are ranked based on performance with students earning a bronze, silver, or gold rating. DCG's Sophie Meekma deserves special recognition for receiving a scholarship award to attend the FFA Washington Leadership Conference in Washington D.C. The WLC inspires FFA members to become change makers in their communities. Each day of the conference focuses on a different principle taught through the context of our nation's capital. These principles include exploration, encouragement, advocacy and service. At the end of the week, members leave with a Living to Serve Plan they can implement in their communities. Congratulations to DCG FFA on another outstanding year!



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## POSTAL CUSTOMER



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The **Dallas Center-Grimes CSD Art Travelers** went to Greece and Italy over spring break. They saw many amazing places including the Roman Colosseum and Roman Forum, the Greek Olympic Stadium, the lovely town of Ioannina, Greece, the Oracle of Delphi, and the beautiful city of Florence. Their next trip, available to all DCGHS students and families, will be March 2027 to London, Paris and Rome. Information will be coming soon!

