



October 2025

DCGCSD School Board Report

Prepared by: Matthew J. Blackmore, High School, Principal

***Special Thanks to Monica Malmberg and Shaylee Vander Velden for homemade sweet treats for our staff after Parent Teacher Conferences! We are very grateful to have the support of Mustang Moms & our Board of Education Directors! Go Mustangs!**

October 🍂 Welcome | Principal Matthew Blackmore

Good morning, students and families of DCG High School! I'm thrilled to connect with you after what has been a truly amazing, hot start to another fun-filled school year!

I think it's safe to say we're *all* ready for some crisp, cool fall weather—and with those seasonal changes comes an equally exciting shift here at the high school. It's hard to believe that in just three short weeks, our students and staff will be wrapping up Term One and moving onto Term Two.

But before we flip the academic calendar, we still have plenty of time to make a tremendous impact. I strongly encourage every student to focus on those learning connections, collaborate closely with your peers, and continue to chase the goals you set back when the school year began.

We are here to support you in every way possible. Whether you are a student needing a little extra help in a tough class, or a parent looking for resources to support your child, please reach out and connect! Our dedicated Student Services team—administrators, school counselors, special educators, interventionists, Talented & Gifted staff, and alternative education professionals—along with every classroom teacher, is ready to find solutions.

At DCG, our mission is to empower students to create their future, and together, as a school and a community, we absolutely *can* achieve this.

I have thoroughly enjoyed presenting to the School Board, attending all of our fantastic Mustang activities, and seeing our staff and students in action here at school. The energy and commitment are inspiring!

October is going to be a great month of success for our students and families. Even though the weather outside will change, our goal for all students to learn at high levels marches on!

Go Mustangs!

Matthew J. Blackmore

DCG Staff Professional Learning | Bullying & Harassment

Wednesday, October 1, 2025

Presentators: Dr. Greg Carenza, Associate Superintendent & Dr. Gail Callahan, District Investigator

It Starts With YOU! Ensuring a Safe and Caring Classroom and School Culture

Our professional learning with all staff included topics around bullying & harassment in the following areas:

- Understanding Our "Why"
- Online Cyberbullying and Harassment
- Students Need To Consider the Implications
- What is Harassment?
- How Educators Can Respond to Bullying
- Keeping Students Safe from Bullying and Harassment

This professional learning allowed our staff to take a deeper dive into the reality of bullying & harassment in today's schools by practicing scenarios and developing response plans that ensure student & family safety. If you, or your student feel that their safety is in question at DCG High School, please contact an adult/staff member that you feel connected with or call an administrator. We value all of our students and their well being and will continue to educate our staff on best practices for a safe school climate.

Dallas Center - Grimes CSD | 2025 Bond Referendum

- Dallas Center-Grimes CSD completed a facilities master plan project with OPN Architects in the spring of 2025.
- Community leaders from the DCG Facilities team canvassed the community to circulate a bond petition ahead of the DCG School Board Meeting on August 25, 2025.
- On November 4, residents of the Dallas Center-Grimes Community School District will have the opportunity to vote to allow the district to use a general obligation bond to pay for improvements to multiple district facilities.
 - **What is the bond referendum plan?** – The bond will play for the majority of multiple phases of a 7-year, four-phase master plan. A portion of the plan will also be paid for using sales tax revenue collected by the state.

- Wednesday, October 1, 2025 is dedicated to BUILDING LEVEL professional development. Please watch for information to come forth from your building administrator(s) and/or Instructional Coach(es) with regards to content you will be engaged in learning. Teachers who travel between buildings will report to their home-base building.
- District-Led Safety Training: ALL STAFF (Certified and Classified) that work at OAK VIEW (7-8) will remain at your building for safety training. This training is building specific and applies to Oak View only!
- Classified staff (except Oak View staff) WILL have professional development focused on First Aid facilitated by Cary Justmann and our district nurse team. Please watch for more information to be forthcoming from Mr. Justmann regarding this training.

Professional 📚 Learning | Parentships @ DCGHS

Parentships Four Critical Questions

The work in your PLC to drive the development of your parentship is focused on four critical parentship questions. The following questions will help you shift your attention to parent learning and strongly commit to parentships in a PLC.

1. What do parents need to know and be able to do to support student learning in your classroom at DCG?
2. How will we know parents understand how to help with student learning in your classroom at DCG?
3. What will we do to support parents who aren't equipped to help with student learning in your classroom at DCG?
4. What will we do to support parents in extending student learning in your classroom at DCG?

At DCG, when we say "All Means All" we live it everyday. We have started a culture of high levels of collaboration by leaning into one another's skill sets as believers and developing our norms and agendas to drive our work!

As we continue to move towards Term 2, here are some key concepts between our Student Services Staff and Classroom Teachers to keep in mind for all students:

- Meetings between teachers and parents or guardians
- Meetings between the principal and parents or guardians
- Interactions between front office staff and parents or guardians
- Phone conversations between teachers and parents or guardians
- Phone conversations between the principal and parents or guardians

Greetings, DCG Teachers!

The School Improvement department would like to share information with you about our upcoming Early Dismissal Professional Development schedule for this coming week. It is our goal to ensure timely and proactive communication to assist you in planning for your learning.

Wednesday, October 8, 2025 is dedicated to **PLC Team Meetings**. Please watch for information to come forth from your building administrator(s) and/or Instructional Coach(es) with regards to the work you will be engaged in on this day. Student Services staff will be working in their assigned building(s) to collaborate with PLC Teams unless otherwise directed.

In addition, many of our Encore staff will be meeting in their K-12 Encore Teams for a district PLC team during this time. Please see the image (below) for specific Encore group assignments.

Classified staff/associates will **NOT** have any professional development meetings during this time!

If you have any questions about this schedule, we ask that you please reach out to your building principal(s), Instructional Coach(es) and/or Curriculum Facilitators for more specific information.

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE | Standards Focused Learning

AT DCG WE ENCOURAGE COLLABORATIVE TEAMS TO START WITH THE SIMPLEST STANDARD AS POSSIBLE!

- Early on in my career as a High School Principal I learned that one of the best decisions our staff made was allowing collaborative teams to choose the simplest possible standard or learning target.
- Doing so ensured that every team was willing to invest in the new initiative that we were asking them to embrace. More important, doing so ensured that every team experienced initial success!
- Driving change in schools can be as simple as hitting a benchmark/standard, celebrating & moving on!
- What happens is everyone feels success, and now has a baseline for how the course will go.
- Remember, you are trying to give collaborative teams evidence of their ability to build strategies to move all learners forward.
- If teams start with a complicated standard and fail, you can't reinforce their belief in their own efficacy as professionals.

"When our staff at DCG align their beliefs AROUND ALL STUDENTS WILL LEARN AT HIGH LEVELS". We create a higher ceiling of achievement that only the student can conquer!"
What is better than that?"

Our staff uses Iowa state standards as a benchmark to measure student learning at high levels and above. The standard is the standard, it's that plain and simple when it comes to school. Our staff at DCG, has the unique ability to build in scaffolding techniques, to get students up to grade level and beyond, this is what separates our staff from others when it comes to the high school experience.

With only three weeks left in the first Term, what do you want your students to take away? By keeping a focus on learning, collaboration and being results oriented, I'm excited to see the success that comes from all of our classrooms and the growth of our students.

Building: DCG Middle School	August Board Report
 <p>The graphic features a circular diagram with a red background. At the top, it says "Strategic Plan". Below that are two boxes: "Mission Statement" (Empowering every student to create their future) and "Vision Statement" (Our district strives for excellence through innovation, and embraces growth in every dimension of education). The center of the circle contains the DCG logo. The outer ring is divided into six segments, each with a title and a brief description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative: Building a culture of teamwork and shared purpose to achieve our goals. Passionate: Championing the success, well-being, and growth of every student with unwavering commitment. Innovative: Embracing creativity to meet diverse needs and challenges. Inclusive: Creating a community where every student feels valued, respected and empowered. Supportive: Ensuring every student has the academic, social and emotional support they need to prepare for their future. DCG's Core Values (surrounding the central logo) 	<p>Building Goals:</p> <p>By May 2026, each grade (5-6) will show an increase in the percent proficient on the ELA and math subtests as measured by the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) test.</p> <p>By May 2026, DCG Middle School will score “effective” in each element of Capacity 6: Building-Wide Behavior Expectations as measured by the MTSS-B Capacity Matrix team reflection sheet.</p> <p>100% of middle school students will receive a positive communication home during both semesters of the school year.</p> <p>Over the course of the 2025-2026 school year, each PLC will keep agendas and minutes for their meetings showing integration of the Stronge Framework.</p>

Collaboration: Our PLCs have focused this month on developing a culture of collaboration, particularly in having a shared vision that is aligned with both our building goals and DCG's strategic plan. Our PLCs meet every other day and are looking at adult learning and action steps they can take to support each student in our building. They are also looking intentionally at what we want students to know and collaborating to have consistent learning goals and objectives across classrooms.

Innovative: 6th grade students traveled to JA Biztown this month as part of their learning in Social Studies classes. During their day at JA Biztown they were able to visit a simulated town, where they managed businesses, operated banks, and even voted for mayor! This innovative experience helps prepare students for real world financial and career scenarios.

Supportive: We have started our first Tier 2 intervention of the year, Check In Check Out (CICO). We currently have four students participating in CICO, which allows them to reflect on their performance at school and to receive consistent feedback to support them in being successful. Each CICO student gets to meet daily with their mentor to set goals and review their performance both in the classroom and throughout the building. We're excited for this program to start and are confident that it will help students reach new levels of success!

Inclusive: Students have been working together this month to display The Mustang Way, where we are respectful, responsible, safe, and kind. Our goal for October is to have 5,000 positive commendations on our positive behavior tracker. When we consistently show these values, it creates a community in our building where each student feels like they belong. If we meet our goal, we will celebrate with Anything But a Backpack Day at the end of the month!

Passionate: We have seven 6th grade students who were selected for Iowa Opus Honor Choir! Over 3,000 students across the state were nominated for this honor; we're so proud of our students who were selected and excited to see what they accomplish next!

Dallas Center Elementary

DCE Vision: To be a student-centered, inclusive community where all are welcome to learn, grow, and make a positive impact together.

DCE Mission: DCE empowers students to create an inclusive community by being kind, safe, and showing PRIDE.

Date: 10/2025



DCE Building Goals:

K-2 Goal 1 - DCE Literacy Goals and Actions

- 85% of K-2 students will be fluent readers as measured by the FAST earlyReading screener and CBMR Screener by May 2026.

3-4 Goal 1 - DCE Literacy Goals and Actions

- 80% of 3rd/4th graders will be proficient as measured by aReading by May 2026.

Goal 2 - Social Emotional Wellness

- With explicit social/emotional behavior instruction, and MTSS supports, students at DCE will decrease undesired behaviors by 35% as measured by major referral documentation.

Collaboration	DCE Teachers engaged in our Fall Data Day to analyze student data and make action plans as collaborative teams on how to best support students in their areas of need. Our classroom teachers rotate with our TAG, Literacy Interventionists, Counselor, and Special Education Teachers to ensure that all efforts are aligned so that we are effectively supporting students and their needs.
Innovation	
Supportive	Many of our students struggle with emotional regulation in the classroom. Our teachers collaborate with Ms. DeLacy on a 'Check in / Check out' procedure and with a chart monitoring the progress towards each student's Learner Behavior goals. Classroom teachers work closely with Ms. DeLacy in identifying these students who are needing this type of support/intervention. The students are able to start their day with intentional, but brief, instruction on how to regulate emotions, and the students discuss their goal for the day. Ms. DeLacy also checks out with each of these students at the end of the day to discuss if they met their goals. If the student meets his/her goal, there is a quick celebration, and if a student does not meet his/her goal, they discuss what can be done differently the next day in order to meet their goal.
Inclusive	
Passionate	DCE's first PRIDE assembly was held October 3rd. It was a great success and it is so rewarding to see the families come and celebrate our students with us. The first PRIDE assembly focused on 'Problem-solving' for the P in PRIDE. Students, staff, and families had a lot to celebrate!

Building: Heritage Elementary	September Board Report
<p>Strategic Plan</p> <p>Mission Statement: Empowering every student to create their future.</p> <p>Vision Statement: Our district strives for excellence through innovation, and embraces growth in every dimension of education.</p> <p>DCG's Core Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative: Building a culture of teamwork and shared purpose to achieve our goals. Passionate: Championing the success, well-being, and growth of every student with unwavering commitment. Innovative: Embracing creativity to meet diverse needs and challenges. Inclusive: Creating a community where every student feels valued, respected, and empowered. Supportive: Ensuring every student has the academic, social, and emotional support they need to prepare for their future. 	<p>Building Goals:</p> <p>By May 2026, 80% of each student group will meet the literacy FAST spring benchmark. (EL, Special Education, Gender, PatR/AR, Race/Ethnicity)</p> <p>By May 2026, disrespect/noncompliance minors in the classroom will decrease 20% from first semester to second semester.</p> <p>By May 2025, 80% of teachers will score each statement of the School Culture Survey with a 3 or 4.</p>

COLLABORATIVE & PASSIONATE

Building Goal: By May 2026, 80% of each student group will meet the literacy FAST spring benchmark. (EL, Special Education, Gender, PatR/AR, Race/Ethnicity)

FAST Building Data

Reading				
	Passed FAST	PatR	AR	
Kindergarten	54/60	90%	0	7
1st Grade	58/65	89%	6	2
2nd Grade	44/60	73%	13	3
3rd Grade	40/55	73%	13	3
4th Grade	54/80	68%	20	8
Total:	250/320	78%		

Math				
	Passed FAST	PatR	AR	
Kindergarten	51/60	85%	0	9
1st Grade	60/65	92%	0	6
2nd Grade	42/60	70%	0	17
3rd Grade	40/55	73%	0	15
4th Grade	66/80	83%	0	14
Total:	259/320	81%		

FAST Reading Data: Student Groups

Grade	Females			Males			EL			Race/Ethnicity			Special Education		
	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring
K Early Reading	84%			97%			100%			100%			67%		
1st Early Reading	93%			86%			100%			78%			38%		
2nd CBMR	80%			71%			40%			64%			0%		
3rd CBMR	68%			74%			17%			46%			50%		
4th CBMR	66%			64%			50%			36%			18%		

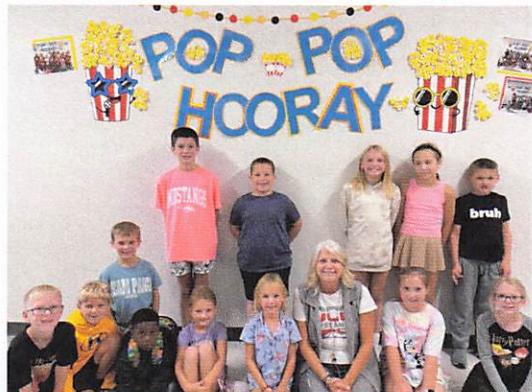
Grade	Females			Males			EL			Race/Ethnicity			Special Education		
	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring
2nd aReading	82%			74%			20%			54%			0%		
3rd aReading	73%			71%			33%			36%			33%		
4th aReading	85%			76%			0%			43%			9%		

FAST Math Data: Student Groups

Grade	Females			Males			EL			Race/Ethnicity			Special Education		
	Winte	Spring	Fall	Winte	Spring	Fall	Winte	Spring	Fall	Winte	Spring	Fall	Winte	Spring	
K Early Math	81%			89%			67%			78%			33%		
1st Early Math	93%			89%			100%			89%			63%		
2nd aMath	59%			81%			0%			36%			50%		
3rd aMath	59%			82%			17%			50%			60%		
4th aMath	85%			80%			0%			43%			18%		

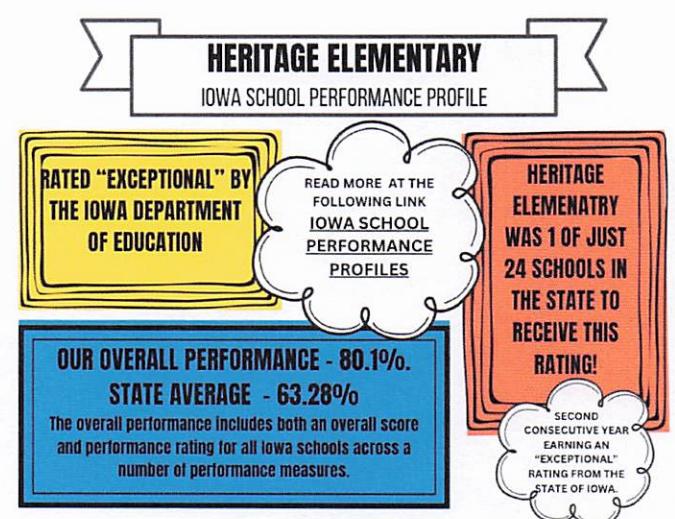
SUPPORTIVE & INCLUSIVE

To enhance PBIS within the building, teachers write Shout Outs to students throughout the year. We begin each morning hearing about how students are showing their BEST behavior at Heritage. On Friday, all recipients gather for a popcorn with the principal to celebrate!



Iowa School Performance Profile for Heritage Elementary: EXCEPTIONAL

Once again, Heritage Elementary was given the rating of EXCEPTIONAL by the State of Iowa. Heritage was just 1 of 24 schools in the state to receive this rating! This is an amazing accomplishment and speaks volumes of the commitment our teachers, parents, principal, and staff have to our students - THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP!



**DCG**

North Ridge Elementary

North Ridge Elementary	Board Report		
 <p>Strategic Plan</p> <p>Mission Statement Empowering every student to create their future.</p> <p>Vision Statement Our district strives for excellence through innovation, and embraces growth in every dimension of education.</p> <p>DCG</p>	<p>Features:</p> <p>Collaborative and Supportive- Fall 2025 Baseline data for Reading and Math</p>		
ACADEMIC By May, 2026 the percentage of students scoring "not yet proficient" in math will decrease by 5% from the previous year as measured by the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) test.	ACADEMIC SUPPORT By May, 2026 the percentage of students (Grades K-4) receiving office referrals for physical incidents on the playground will reduce by 5% as compared to the previous school year.	CLIMATE / CULTURE By May, 2026 North Ridge teachers and staff will have communicated positively to each family on at least 4 occasions.	TEACHER EFFICACY By May, 2026, the percentage of certified staff participating in a coaching cycle related to a building goal will increase by 10% as compared to the previous school year.

Academic- Early Math K-1

earlyMath FALL of 24-25	earlyMath FALL of 25-26
8.5% Not Proficient	10% Not Proficient

ACADEMIC- Math 2-4

aMath FALL of 24-25	aMath FALL of 25-26
Not proficient 20%	19% Not Proficient



North Ridge Elementary

ACADEMIC- Early Reading K-1

earlyReading FALL of 24-25	earlyReading FALL of 25-26
24% Not Proficient	19% Not Proficient

ACADEMIC- aReading 2-4

aReading FALL of 24-25	aReading FALL of 25-26
30% Not Proficient	27% Not Proficient

ACADEMIC- CBM-R 2-4

CBM-R of 24-25	CBM-R FALL of 25-26
22% Not Proficient	24% Not Proficient

I continue to hold monthly staff meetings at North Ridge, each centered around a specific focus topic. In September, our discussion included staff evaluations and reflective questions such as, "What has changed for you since last school year?" and "What would you like to see happen this school year?" The October meetings focused on providing staff an opportunity to share any concerns or ideas they wanted to bring forward. These monthly meetings also allow me to connect with each staff member individually, fostering open communication and collaboration.



Dallas Center-Grimes Community School District

Teaching and Learning Board Report

Shana Olson

Director of Teaching & Learning

October 2025

The teaching and learning department has spent much of our time of the last month focusing on professional learning and engaging staff in our curriculum review process.

Professional development:

Our instructional coaches have done an excellent job collaborating with their building leaders to facilitate our district professional development sessions focused on bringing PLCs together with the Stronge Instructional Framework. Their collaboration and feedback has made an impact in providing high quality professional learning for our staff.



K-2 teachers were recently part of their second training session for MyView, our K-5 literacy program. This training focused on developing strong routines with students and the curriculum as well as ensuring student engagement throughout instruction.

Teachers found value in the opportunity to collaborate with one another as well as learn from an experienced trainer with in-depth knowledge of the program.

Curriculum Review:

Our curriculum facilitators have been supporting teams of teachers in our curriculum review process across our seven year cycle. These sessions take place on our FLEX days or PLC dates for our Encore teams. Each year has specific components to address with team members. Our team has been refining our process by articulating what occurs in each year of the review cycle. An important focus for us has been increasing stakeholder communication regarding potential curriculum changes. See below for a snapshot of where each curricular area is in the process:

	Year 1: Evaluation	Year 2: Program Revision & Development	Year 3: Resources & resources Selection	Year 4: Implementation	Year 5: Sustainability	Year 6: Sustainability	Year 7: Sustainability and Analysis
Current Year 2025 - 2026	Science Health/Physical Education	Social Studies Guidance	Math Music (General, Instrumental, & Vocal)	Career & Technical	Literacy (ELA & Writing) EL Program	World Languages Art	Library Sciences TAG Program

Math Counts Implementation

Another priority in our K-6 buildings is ensuring compliance with HF 784: Math Counts, by screening all students and providing target interventions for those who have been identified as needing additional support. We have spent time this fall ensuring we are familiar with testing procedures and ensuring adequate materials for intervention when it will be required following our winter screening. We continue to provide updated information to teachers as we gain more information from the state.

Student Teachers and Practicum Students

This fall we are fortunate to have 13 student teachers from colleges and universities across the midwest. Student teachers have the opportunity to observe and collaborate with their cooperating teacher before taking over full time teaching duties throughout their experience. Additionally, we have 5 practicum students in classrooms. These students are typically early on in their educational journey and are observing and doing some initial lessons with the support of their host teacher. Our teachers provide a fantastic learning environment for these aspiring educators and we are thankful to have the opportunity to host.



Student Services Board Report

October 27, 2025

Alyson Finley

Special Education	<p>DCG has once again earned a Level I designation under the IDEA-DA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act – Differentiated Accountability) system—the highest rating assigned by the state. As part of this designation, DCG will complete a state-required data review and implementation plan locally, without direct state involvement. The district will select from a variety of professional learning packages that align with local needs: Social Emotional Behavior, Math, Literacy, or Transition.</p> <p>On October 15, 2025, Special Education teachers participated in their second FLEX Day professional development of the school year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades 7–12 continued Year 2 of IDEA-DA Transition Training, focusing on improving postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities.• Grades K–6 teachers continued their work on the Iowa Specially Designed Instruction Reading Module – Intensification, aimed at enhancing reading instruction for students with diverse needs. <p>Additionally, Special Education teachers supporting students in the Iowa Alternate Assessment have begun administering the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM), as part of ongoing efforts to ensure all students are assessed appropriately.</p>
ELL	<p>During the October 15 FLEX Day, ELL teachers continued to engage in collaborative professional learning with Cindra Porter from Heartland AEA, working together as a professional learning community to strengthen instruction and support for multilingual learners.</p> <p>In addition to this collaboration, teachers are deepening their expertise through an ongoing book study of <i>Literacy Foundations for English Learners</i> by Elsa Cárdenas-Hagan, which focuses on research-based strategies for effective literacy instruction for English learners.</p>
Homeless	No new families have been identified this month.



Student Services Board Report
October 27, 2025
Alyson Finley

Counseling	<p>On October 15, 2025, Secondary Counselors met with Sue Schirmer to continue the review, development, and improvement of the DCG School Counseling Program, with a focus on alignment to Iowa Code and the ASCA National Model, 5th Edition (released July 2025).</p> <p>Key areas of focus included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviewing results from the Self-Assessment of School Counseling Programs• Completing a program assessment to establish a baseline for ongoing work• Beginning a review of the School Counseling Program overview• Aligning practices with the district's School Counseling Belief Statements• Creating connections between the DCG Strategic Plan and the Counseling Belief Statements• Uploading current Tier 1 lessons into the Student Delivery Plan• Preparing to complete a Use of Time Assessment before the next meeting on December 10 <p>Meanwhile, K–6 Counselors attended a training focused on Xello, the K–12 online program that supports student skill-building, career exploration, and future planning. This professional learning is part of DCG's ongoing implementation of the District Career and Academic Planning (D-CAP) work.</p>
Networking Systems 25-26 school year	<p>Ongoing collaboration continues with the Metro Special Education Directors and the Statewide Special Education Team to stay aligned with current practices, legal guidance, and statewide initiatives.</p> <p>At the October meeting, key topics included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legal updates and field scenarios presented by Miriam and Elizabeth from Ahlers & Cooney, offering valuable insights into current issues impacting special education.



Student Services Board Report
October 27, 2025
Alyson Finley

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Upcoming professional learning opportunities available through Heartland AEA and the Iowa Department of Education (IDOE).Reminder that the Special Education Weighted Count is due by October 31, 2025.Discussion of IDEA-DA designations across districts, including implications for planning and professional development. <p>These ongoing conversations help ensure DCG remains proactive and informed in its implementation of special education services and compliance efforts.</p>
Other	I continue to work (with the Senior Leadership Team) on the high priority actions related to the DC-G Strategic Plan.



Human Resources Board Report October 2025

AASPA National Conference

Mr. Justmann and Dr. Blum were fortunate to attend the American Association of School Personnel Administration National Conference in mid-October. The conference was a great place to network with other HR professionals and strategize over some common themes across the country: use of AI in the Human Resource arena, staff retention, onboarding of all staff, stay interviews and progressive discipline to name a few. We will be presenting to our Senior Leadership Team as well as the Administrative Cabinet to share some of the valuable learning.

Metro-area HR Monthly Meetings

Metro-area HR professionals have been meeting monthly in order to build community via collaboration. We have a rolling agenda each month in which we dive into specific topics that we are all facing day-to-day.

This provides an opportunity for us to not only build relationships with colleagues (much like our teachers are doing in PLCs), but it allows us to grow professionally and lean on one another. DCG hosted the September meeting and we will be traveling to Saydel for the October meeting.

Professional Development plans

Our special education and general education associates took part in First Aid and CPR refresher training earlier this month. Our team of dedicated school nurses and health associates led the staff through various scenarios and held question/answer sessions to support our team.

Our associate will have an opportunity to learn more about technology later this month. We will be sending a survey to staff to see which topics they would like to learn more about and tailor our learning to their needs.

We will continue to provide relief to our associates from the classified PD sessions when buildings are doing their Safety Training, as we feel it is extremely important that our associates feel like they are learning the safety details at the same time as the certified staff.

Transportation Report



October 2025

Roll with the Changes

We are settling into a good rhythm with school bus transportation scheduling. Ongoing road construction throughout the district has required us to make adjustments as each project moves through its phases. Each phase brings both benefits and challenges—positively impacting some areas while creating new obstacles in others.

For example, the most recent phase of the S James Street project improved transportation for families on the southeast side of Grimes who ride the bus but created challenges for those in the same area who walk to school. In collaboration with South Prairie staff, we added a **temporary** school bus stop for walkers on the southeast side of Grimes so they would not need to walk around the construction site or on the street.

Fleet Management

We are postponing any recommendations for the purchase of new school buses for the next 9–12 months. Our current fleet is in good condition and should meet the district's needs through the 2026–27 school year. During this time, we will continue to set aside our annual budget allocation for bus purchases so we are well-positioned to make future investments when needed.

We also remain alert for opportunities to purchase high-quality 3–4 year old buses coming off lease that meet our specifications. While these opportunities have become less common, we will continue to evaluate them carefully and make recommendations when it makes sense for the district.

Just a little trivia for you.....

- A fully equipped 56-84 passenger transit style route school bus costs around \$150,000
 - Air-conditioning - ADD \$12,500
 - Cargo bays - ADD \$10,000
- A fully equipped 56 passenger, rear-engine activity school bus costs around \$200,000
 - Includes A/C
 - Includes Cargo bays
 - Charter style seating - ADD \$10,000 (cuts capacity down to 46 passengers)

v/r

Jeff Wolfe, Transportation Director

Technology Board Report - October 2025

Director of Technology – Steven Hopper

The Iowa Technology & Education Conference (ITEC) just wrapped up last week, and DCG was fortunate to send a total of 12 attendees over two days of learning. Principals and district leaders approved attendees, many of whom will be tapped to share new ideas with their colleagues back in the building. The conference featured over 100 sessions on topics such as creating a future-ready workforce, implementing computer science standards, and leveraging free digital tools for promoting books and reading. The most popular sessions, by far, focused on the explosion of AI tools in education. One of our central Iowa neighbors, Winterset, shared the [story of their AI Task Force](#) and offered many practical steps that will undoubtedly help DCG as we continue our own AI journey.

This month, we are asking the board to approve our latest sale of surplus devices. This will be the fourth bulk sale in my tenure with the district, which allows us to recover the value in some of our retired staff and student devices. Over the years, we've developed a list of over 45 interested vendors who receive a copy of our RFP with a total return approaching \$85,000. Selling retired devices in bulk to a certified buyback vendor ensures that any data remaining on the devices is securely wiped and reduces the time and resources involved in selling devices individually.

Our [RFP](#) to establish a district-owned fiber connection between DCG High School and DCG Middle School is also open. As of today's date (10/15), we've hosted two site walks and responded to questions from at least two other interested parties. Receiving multiple bids on a project of this scale ensures competitive pricing and an efficient allocation of district resources. The current plan is to bring all eligible proposals to the board at next month's meeting.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of technology initiatives in our schools.

October Communications Board Report

There's been a lot to showcase at DCG this month!

DCG Creators - We traveled to all seven of our district buildings for round two of DCG Creators on Monday, October 20. The video will be live and online soon after. This is a special way to showcase the incredible people at Dallas Center-Grimes. Our goal is to aim for 20+ staff members each month, but so far we've been above that number!

Safety Training - The staff safety training exercise at Oak View in early October tested our communication plans in the event of an active intruder. I was extremely pleased with how our first session went. I was able to send out emergency notifications from my computer and my cell phone, allowing our staff members to receive updated information within seconds. I look forward to participating in the staff training process at our other six buildings.

Iowa School PR Conference - The Iowa School Public Relations Association meets twice a year. Our fall conference was held in October, and it's such a great time for me to connect with colleagues across the state. Some of the featured topics this year included: building strong communities - led by the school, creating community partnerships, preschool enrollment, and digital marketing strategies. We also honored the 2025 School Communicator of the Year. I'm thankful for the opportunity to learn with this group! We will meet again in April.

Bond Referendum Planning - The 2025 Bond Referendum has been a key part of my work this fall. We've sent out messaging via email, newsletter, social media, and our upcoming town hall. I'm thankful for Dr. Blum's continued support of this project. He's been willing to meet with any group and has been open to any idea! We look forward to the vote in November.

School-to-Work Intern - I'm excited to welcome Rylee Renz to the DCG Communications Department this year. Rylee will join my team on October 28. She's the sister of former DCG CSD Communications Intern Hannah Renz. Look for her work online and on social media! She will also create a lot of content for our video board.

Thanks for your support of the DCG Communications Department!

AJ

Dallas Center-Grimes Community School District

Board Report from Madison Melchert, Activities Director

Date: October 2025

Fall Activities Update

Postseason action is officially underway, and the Mustangs are poised for success across the board.

- **Volleyball** – After a tough start, our Mustangs have battled through a demanding schedule and are peaking at the right time. They currently sit 4th in the IGHSAU rankings and have earned a first-round bye in regional play. DCG will host regionals on October 23 and 28 at 7:00 PM in Meadows Gym. A win on the 28th would send them to the IGHSAU State Volleyball Tournament at Xtream Arena in Coralville.
- **Football** – Our football team continues to grind through a strong 5A schedule, sitting at 5–2 with losses to Dowling and Waterloo West. They're currently 10th in the IHSAA RPI rankings. With wins over Ames and Cedar Rapids Kennedy, the Mustangs would be in great position for a first-round playoff game on October 31.
- **Cross Country** – Both Cross Country teams are once again among the state's best. The boys are ranked 4th and the girls 7th in the IATC rankings. They'll compete at their state qualifying meet on October 22 in Council Bluffs, where a top-three finish will secure a spot in the State Meet in Fort Dodge on November 1.
- **Girls Tennis** – This program continues to show great growth and consistency. The team advanced to the second round of regional play this fall, winning several regular season matches along the way. The move to the fall season has been a positive change, and with nearly the entire varsity roster returning, the future looks very bright.
- **Boys Golf** – Our golf team made history this fall, qualifying for the State Tournament for the first time since 2006, and their first-ever appearance in Class 4A. Not only did they qualify, but they proved they belong with a 6th place team finish among the state's best. This group has set the standard and will return next year with high expectations of bringing home a top-three finish.
- **Marching Band** – The Marching Mustangs continue to improve each week under the direction of Alec Garranger and his staff. Their growth has been evident in each performance, and they'll compete next at the IHSMA State Marching Band Festival on October 18 in Waukee.
- **Fall Musical** – Preparations are in full swing for "The Wizard of Oz," taking the stage November 7–9. This will be a highlight of our fall season, tickets are on sale now!

Culture & Identity

Our focus on cultivating a strong, connected DCG culture continues to take shape. One powerful example came at the State Golf Meet, where we had an incredible showing of support from students, staff, and community members. Our students want to be a part of one another's journeys, they want to show up and celebrate each other's success.

As leaders, it's our job to continue breaking down barriers and encouraging these moments of shared pride and inclusion. Whether that's attending a state event, coming together on the football field after a win, or showing up for the fall musical. These small moments build the memories that make DCG truly special.

Operations & Finances

We continue to track our transition to cashless ticketing. Currently, approximately 52% of transactions are cash and 48% card, though larger events trend closer to 52% card usage. Oak View events skew these numbers slightly toward cash due to junior high attendance. We'll continue monitoring and encouraging card use to streamline event operations and efficiency.

Association Updates

Both the IHSAA and IGHSAU are forming a Conference Task Force, as outlined in state code. The Iowa Department of Education has not yet finalized its structure. The process appears to have two tracks:

- **Fast Track:** Used when both the departing and receiving conferences agree on a change.
- **Regular Process:** Used when there's disagreement, requiring additional paperwork and review.

Any conference change approved prior to July 1, 2025, will proceed without review (for example, Ames and Des Moines Christian joining the Little Hawkeye Conference).

The IHSAA has also adjusted the State Wrestling Tournament schedule in response to concerns about missed class time. Every three years, one class will rotate to a four-day format, while the others remain three-day tournaments. This change maintains 24 qualifiers per class while reducing unnecessary downtime for athletes.

Personal Highlight

I continue to be amazed by this community. Whether it's watching our football team go for two against Waukee and make the play, or seeing our Marching Mustangs build energy every week, the excitement around DCG is incredible.

One of my favorite moments this fall was standing at Boys State Golf, surrounded by an army of DCG supporters. It was a perfect example of what makes this district so special; our people show up for each other. That school spirit and pride are contagious, and it's fun to watch it grow.

Looking Ahead

While we're focused on finishing the fall strong, our office is already planning ahead for winter activities and beyond. DCG is in a unique spot, though we're likely looking at our third year of slight enrollment decline, participation numbers continue to climb.

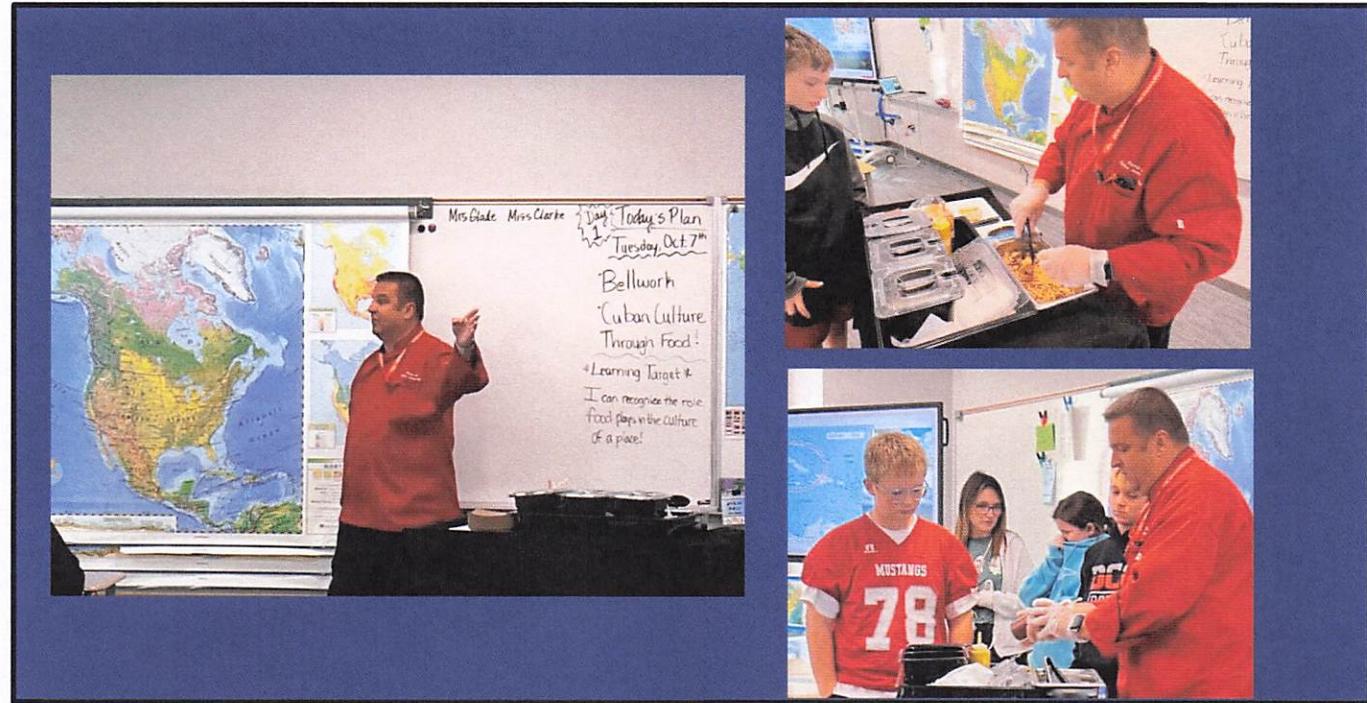
We're evaluating how best to support this growth; being creative, flexible, and forward-thinking with our resources. DCG is a great place to be, and we want every student to leave here feeling that same sense of pride and belonging.

Madison Melchert
Activities Director
Dallas Center-Grimes High School



Dallas Center Grimes Food Services Newsletter

October 2025



Look Out For New Tasty Meals

October has been a busy month of sampling for Chef Jozsef where he sampled new and tasty meals for students across the district. Chef Jozsef offered students a Cubano sandwich, Chicken Tikka Masala, and a Chicken Tuscany Noodle Bowl. The student feedback has been outstanding, and we are excited to offer these tasty new items in the menu next month!



Dip'n to Flavor Continues

This fall, students can dive into bold new tastes with *Dip'n to Flavor!*—a limited-time cafeteria promotion inspired by trending TikTok flavors. Featuring craveable, student-approved dips like Honey Buffalo, Korean BBQ, Chimichurri Ranch, and Sriracha Honey Mustard, it's all about dip'n, snack'n, and lov'n!



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chartwells
serving up happy & healthy

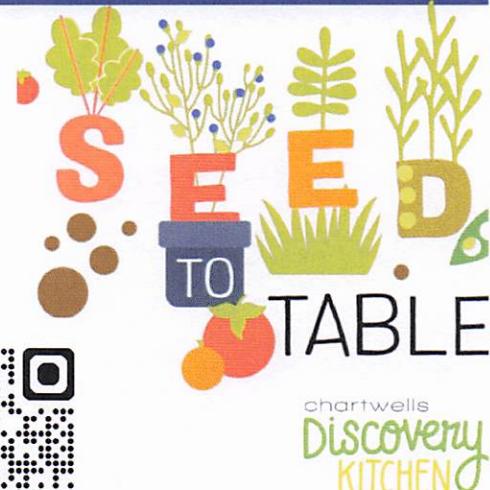
DISCOVERY KITCHEN FUN

SEED TO TABLE

This month's Discovery Kitchen theme gives kids an up-close look to see where their food comes from and how it's grown. Seed to Table is all about fresh, seasonal, and local foods. We're proud to support local farms, celebrate seasonality, and help students and families have fun growing their own vegetables and herbs.

Scan the QR code to watch Chef in action!

See how he brought the Seed to Table experience to life with DCG high school students by demoing how to make fresh salsa using farm-fresh produce. It was a fun and flavorful day!



Click "Seed To Table to see pictures!"

A collage of images related to Global Eats. It includes a chef preparing food, students in a classroom, a large Indian elephant icon, and various international dishes like chicken tikka masala and naan bread. The text "celebrating NSLW through Global Eats" is at the top.

National School Lunch Week!

Our head chef and kitchen staff across all schools helped make the week fun and engaging, ending with a special Indian-inspired menu on October 17th. Thanks to their creativity and teamwork, students enjoyed a delicious and memorable experience!

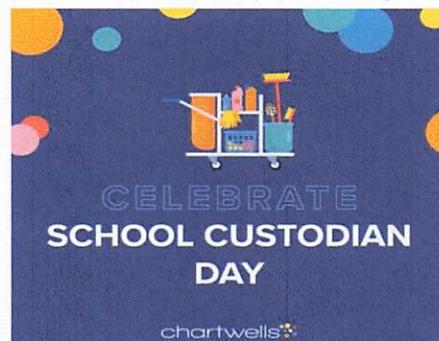
Middle and high school students enjoyed **chicken tikka masala over brown rice**, while elementary students were treated to **warm naan bread with a refreshing cucumber raita sauce**!

UP NEXT FUN DAYS THIS MONTH:

Students across the district enjoyed biting into crispy apples to help celebrate Apple Crunch Day

APPLE CRUNCH DAY

Chartwells sends out the deepest gratitude for all custodians apart of DCG! They are truly amazing.



If you would like Chef Jozsef to come to your classroom with a fun demo email one of these two people below!

Jozsef.grull@dcgschools.com or
James.shrock@dcgschools.com !

chartwells
Discovery
KITCHEN

Operations Department

Shatava/Donahue

October 2025

General Maintenance Position-

We are excited, with board approval, to bring on a new member to our Operations department. In the middle of September, we put out a job posting for a General Maintenance position. This position will be critical in supporting the whole district with the work orders that come through Asset Essentials and giving us another position to support the needs of our 10 buildings in the district. We had around 10 applicants through the application process, and then, through our vetting process, we offered five individual interviews. On Oct. 10th, we interviewed four individuals. On Oct. 13, we offered the position to Travis DeVault, and he accepted. This position is contingent on board approval, a background check, and passing a physical. Travis is excited to join our team, and we are excited to have Travis on board. With the addition of this position, we hope to complete work orders more promptly and then take on more projects in-house instead of using outside vendors for support. As we onboard Travis and get him familiar with our facilities, our goal is for our department to continue to do more and more to support the needs of our students, staff, and community.

Dallas Center Elementary Roof Project-

On Oct. 9th, we did our final walk of the DCE roof. This walk-through was with the Garland Company, our manufacturer representative; Academy Roofing, the contracted installation company; and Associated Building Contractors, the installers. During this walk-through, we looked at the quality of installation and talked through the process to close out this project. During the walk-through, a few small items were caught, one being some tar that had been dropped on a wall surface, and then to clean the gym after a leak during installation. We are very pleased with the quality of work on this project and the collaboration between these three organizations. The DCE room is a quality product; when walking on it, you can feel a difference compared to other roofs in our district. With this roof's high hail and high wind features, we now have around $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of waterproof material in multiple layers, compared to other flat roofs with a $\frac{1}{16}$ inch waterproof membrane. This was a large project that our department took on this summer. We acted as the General Contractors, and all in all, we think this project went well. We would have liked it to get done sooner, but the weather is always the wild card in these projects. Associated Building Contractors will be back on site in the next few weeks to complete these small items we discussed. Once that is done, we will have a quality roof on DCE that gives us a 5-year craftsmanship warranty and a life expectancy of 30 years for this roof.

Snow Bids-

As you will see in the board agenda, we have completed the process for Snow Bids. This year, we had multiple vendors bid on our Snow Removal. This year, we had six contractors bid, four more than last year and in previous years. We are excited to have multiple vendors interested. This gives us some options for our process. Through this process, two new vendors will support our snow removal this winter.

Equipment Upgrades-

As we start to take inventory of our current equipment across the district, we are looking at ways to become more efficient and effective with our equipment. These conversations occur across our department, from discussions about vacuums and the best options for cordless or upright with a cord to larger equipment like our skid loader and tractor. We have started to meet with vendors to look at making upgrades that will save us time and money in the long run. We are currently working with equipment that is 22 years old and starting to show signs of wear and tear. As a department, we need to start looking at how to upgrade our equipment to give us what we need and also set us up for future growth and tasks we can take on. The proposed piece of equipment that we would like to purchase will replace two current pieces of equipment and give us much more room to grow our services with this one piece of equipment. As we look forward, we want our seven schools to have similar equipment in all schools so our staff can become more flexible to support other buildings as we need help. Consistency is what we are going for in our buildings regarding equipment. We are looking for flexibility and efficiency when we look at the district equipment we need to purchase.

REMI Insurance-

We continue using REMI to ensure we are getting our investment back. Over the last month, we have improved our process of getting claims to REMI and getting vendors paid. We have also worked closely with REMI to ensure we get our full reimbursement on claims we are doing in-house. Our partnership with Baker Group on the preventive maintenance of our HVAC systems has led to many minor fixes to help buildings run better and many larger fixes to ensure proper HVAC in larger building areas. With us having done some proactive planning in the past and having REMI now, we have been able to replace two heat pumps at North Ridge with minimal downtime to the building. We also worked with REMI to get new bus lifts for transportation that will ensure safe and secure lifting of our buses. These lifts are going to be covered by REMI and will help us be more efficient and safe while working on buses. These lifts cost \$57,000, so having Remi pay for these is a tremendous support and cost savings for our district.

Water Detection Pucks (IPSIP)-

We received 168 pucks through our insurance provider to help us get some water detection in our buildings. Water damage is one of the leading causes of insurance claims, so our insurance provider gave us these pucks. We then worked to find the best locations in the district to place these pucks and get them online. If one of these pucks detects water, it will send a signal to us, and we will be able to investigate and mitigate the situation quickly. The goal is to get data faster and make decisions faster. Sean Shatava took the lead on this project and worked to identify the areas we needed for these devices. He then worked to get all the pucks placed, logged into the system, and set up. We got additional support from the Business Manager's office for data entry to get all these pucks online. We now have all 168 pucks set up and will get communication if there is an issue.

RFP for trash and recycling pick up

As we started to look at our operations budget and the cost of operating buildings, we came across an issue with not having a formal service agreement for trash and recycling for our Grimes buildings. As we started to look into this situation, we noticed that we have not done a formal proposal for our garbage and recycling pickup in a few years. We then decided to reach out to three vendors with a formal RFP to see what service we could get for all our Grimes locations. We have sent out an RFP and hope to have a formal proposal to the board next month on what provider we should use moving forward.

Tersano Water Cleaning System-

As we continue looking into how to make our building more consistent with multiple custodial processes, we looked into some of the chemicals we use. As we started to do some research, we also looked into other options. One option we have come across that is very interesting and we want to pursue. Tersano water is a process that turns cold water into Stabilized Aqueous Ozone (SAO). SAO is an alternative to using any chemicals in buildings. SAO water can be used as a disinfectant for 24 hours and general purpose cleaner for 6 days. We have worked with our vendor to get a demo dispenser of SAO to go into NorthRidge. We have taken some readings on the cleanliness of 42 data points at NorthRidge to get a base line reading of where we are currently. We will then take another reading 2 weeks after we start with the Tersano water, and then we will take our 3rd reading 4 weeks after we start with Tersano. We have connected with the Urbandale School district as they have been using this product for over 6 years now. ADM has also started using this product. If the reading comes out to show a positive improvement of the cleanliness of North Ridge, we will look at making a large-scale change with more details. From a financial standpoint if we switch to this product we should see a reduction in our operating cost on chemicals. We will keep the board and district updated on what we find after our initial test and research on this product.

Sean Shatava
Director of Maintenance and Grounds

Travis Donahue
Director of Custodial Services and Buildings

Operations Department

Shatava/Donahue

October 2025

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