

DHS News

December

2012

A publication of the DHS PTA

Davis Senior High School

315 W 14th St. Davis CA 95616

www.dhspta.org

Principal's Letter

Dear Parents,

Davis Senior High School wants to truly thank you all for your support of education.

Our curricular focus is student learning. This requires strong instruction and diagnostic assessments. To that end, departments are encouraged to find multiple ways to determine what students have learned. In order to ensure our students learn well, we know curriculum has to be relevant to them. A number of our classes use approaches that pique interest and then delve into the specifics of what this might mean. At DHS our teachers care what students learn. They do not say, I have taught the curriculum the rest is up to the students to learn or understand. All teachers at DHS believe that all students need a meaningful, relevant education. Our faculty has been encouraged to focus on what students learn and not necessarily on when they learn it.

We know that student driven inquiry helps to ensure what our students study is relevant. We continually seek ways to improve our craft. On November 30th, some members of DHS will visit Napa Valley Unified School District. This all-day district learning will involve their K-12 New Tech schools in American Canyon. Another approach is getting specific funding for creative instruction. One of our science teachers wrote and received a C-STEM grant to use mobots (mini robots) in Biology and Algebra 1 classes. This program has data to support its ability to pique student interest because students see the application of this technology to their lives. Working with robots helps too.

As many of you are aware, although our district typically scores quite well on the California Standards Test, we have not typically fared well in our similar school ranking. Similar School Ranking compares schools with similar demographics and determines who appears to meet the needs of their entire student body. A DHS team, comprised of faculty and administrators, visited Rocklin High School November 16th. Rocklin has the same high scores we do, but they also have a much higher similar school ranking. There were few but significant differences in the way that the faculty at RHS operates. A grading system based on the concept of mastery learning is key to the support offered for all students. Students cannot gain an F during the semester; they get a No Mark. Students with a No Mark must participate in PLUS a 45 minute time period in the middle of the day that backs up with lunch. Students who have a letter grade A, B, or C and have mastered essential concepts have an hour lunch in lieu of PLUS. All students are tracked with a student information system that was designed to keep daily accurate track of students in need to help. The system then alerts the teachers- all of whom have a PLUS class- what students must be in attendance that day and what the students need to master.

I spoke with many students and faculty about this system. The students actually like it. They realize that it was set up to ensure their success. They encourage their friends to learn the mastery skills in class and in PLUS, so they can spend more social time with them. Our visiting team will be discussing these as well as other take-aways from our Rocklin visit with our leadership team, faculty, Student Forum and our PTA.

Our parents and our students have asked for a more stress free Winter Break. To this end, we are having our final exams for the semester before Winter Break. We will be assessing this pilot to see if it had many of the benefits all of us have hoped for. This holiday season, please take the time your children might have typically spent studying for finals and enjoy them; they grow up so fast.

Wishing you and your family the best for the New Year!

Respectfully,
Jacqui Moore, Ed.D.PTA

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DHS Calendar

DECEMBER

Sat	12/02	Merry Madrigal Holiday Concert and Sing-Along, Odd Fellows Lodge, 1:00 p.m.
Fri	12/07	Friendship Day, 7:45 a.m.
Sat	12/08	Junior Prom, North Gym, DHS, 9:00 p.m.
Tue	12/11	DHS Winter Choral Concert (all choirs), DHS IPAB, 7:00 p.m.
Thu	12/20	DHS Winter Bands Concert, DHS IPAB, 7:30 p.m.
Fri	12/21	DHS Winter Orchestras Concert, DHS IPAB
	12/17—12/21	Finals Week
	12/24—1/4	Winter Break

PARENT EDUCATION

Parent University 2012-13 presents The Whole Child: "How to Help Your Kids Manage Stress and Anxiety," Wednesday, Dec. 5, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Harper Jr. High MPR, 4000 E. Covell Blvd. To learn more about this program and others visit <http://dctv.davismedia.org/dpu>.

Questions: Contact Jennifer Creinin, your Parent Education Representative, at mitchjen@comcast.net.

Presented by the Community-wide K-12 Parent Education Collaborative.

PTA President's Message

This is my sixth straight year with a student at DHS. In the last six years, I have seen continual paring down of teachers and staff as part of DJUSD's efforts to meet non-stop cuts to public education funds. The number of students hasn't changed much though, which means fewer teachers and staff are serving more students. Classes are running larger. The office staff has been reduced, so their workload has increased.

As parents, we need to remember the continually increasing burdens on staff this year. For most of us, that should not be hard, as we continue to experience it in our own lives. It may take a little longer to have an email returned or you may wait a little longer for an appointment. If you find yourself annoyed or impatient trying to get help or information, please take a deep breath and give the DHS staff member the benefit of the doubt. Don't give up on what you need—just be patient as you are waiting for it.

The holiday season is upon us and it is time to reach out.

Reach out if you are in need. If you are struggling to find ways to provide for your family, please inform one of your student's teachers or a counselor. The school can help you find resources and watch out for your child, because chances are your student feels your struggles. Reach out if you are not in need. Take a minute to write an email to your student's teachers, to let them know you appreciate their hard work. Stop by the DHS office and show your appreciation for the hardworking staff, with a plate of cookies or a basket of fruit, or just a smile and a thank you. I wish for all DHS families that you have a warm place to sleep, loved ones to spend time with, and healthy food for your table.

If you have any questions, comments, concerns, I want to hear them.

Cathy Farman
PTA President

530-750-0321 or davishighpta@gmail.com

JUNIOR PROM – CASINO ROYALE INFORMATION

This year's Prom, with the theme Casino Royale, will be Saturday, December 8 from 9:00pm – midnight in the DHS New Gym. Doors will open for check-in at 8:30pm and close at 10:00pm.

All sophomores, juniors and senior attending DHS, DaVinci, DSIS and King High School are welcome to attend. Some students go to Prom with dates, but this is not required. Many students attend Prom in a group. Formal wear is not required, although it is highly recommended – students must wear soft-soled shoes, remove them at “coat check” because our dances are held on our basketball courts/gym. (Shoes should not “clack” on a hard surface).

Prom bids are given in place of a ticket and will go on sale on Tuesday, November 27. Bids will be sold at DHS lunch daily and after school on Wednesday & Thursday. Bids are \$25 with an ASB card and \$30 without one. No tickets will be sold at the door. A completed and signed Dance Contract and Student ID is required at the time of ticket purchase. Dance Contracts are available in the school office, DHS Room C-4 or online at <http://davishighstudentgovernment.wordpress.com/events>. Once a dance contract is turned in, tickets can also be purchased online by credit card at http://webstores.activenetwork.com/school-software/davis_high_school_on/.

Guests who do not attend one of the four Davis high schools must have a Guest Pass completed and approved by guest's school administrator, parents and DHS administrator at the time of bid purchase by the inviting student. For more information, please see the Guest Pass at <http://davishighstudentgovernment.wordpress.com/events>.

Professional photographs will offered as part of the evening, but are not included in the ticket price. Students will receive a photo order form when purchasing bids. If you have questions about prom, please contact DHS Activities Director, Eric Morgan, at emorgan@djUSD.net.

SENIOR INFORMATION

Jostens (Caps, Gowns, etc.) - <http://www.jostens.com/apps/catalog/customer/1003768/Davis-High-School/> 916-782-3949.

Grad Night Tickets - Ticket prices are now at their lowest price until December 31! Forms can be found at www.davisgradnight.org, dropped off box in the office for ticket orders, or mailed to Grad Night Reservations, P.O. box 2143, Davis, CA, 95617.

VOTE FOR WILLETT ELEMENTARY

Willett has been nominated for a **Power a Bright Future** technology grant from **The Clorox Company** of up to \$50,000 for the computer lab, in class instructional support (iPads), wireless on campus and classroom audio. This grant for Willett will benefit the entire district because one less site will be in need of upgrades and less of a budget drain next year. Help us win by casting votes starting Now through Dec. 19th, 2012. The program that receives the highest number of votes will be awarded the \$50,000 grand-grant. *Vote one time every 24 hours via cell phone and website! With these easy steps, you'll help give our children \$50,000!* Vote at <https://powerabrightfuture.clorox.com/nominees/detail/?nid=377>

Counselors' Corner

Just in time for the holidays, Madeline Levine's new book, *Teach Your Children Well*, has recently been released. Dr. Levine, author of *The Price of Privilege*, eloquently expresses what many parents agonize over: Am I doing what I need to be doing to guide my child into becoming a capable adult? Although we intuitively know our child, we oftentimes listen to adult peer pressure and start placing demands on our child that might not be in his/her best interest. Are high grades in several AP courses more important than having balance: mental, physical, and creative? Are children only successful if they get into an Ivy League or highly competitive college?

As parents, we do know that children grow and change at different rates. We see the potential in each of our children. We know high school is a brief period of time in which significant maturation changes happen. We are tired of the teenage drama and want them to hurry up and become adults. Yet, just as the child is agonizing over developing his/her own identity and separation issues, we also have a hard time accepting their drive for total independence. Dr. Levine helps parents to understand that all children continue to need love, support, limits and responsibilities. She feels that children today are "failure deprived." Parents can provide guidance so children learn skills that enable them to experience "successful failures." If a child receives an F grade, rather than rushing in to see what went wrong, encourage your child to speak directly with the teacher and learn what he needs to do in order to improve. This teaches coping skills and resiliency.

Dr. Levine emphasizes that there are many ways to be competent in the world. Each person is profoundly unique, which is why parents need to assist their child in finding the best fit for their career aspirations, rather than the best college. Between the ages of 13 and 19, teens are developing lifelong patterns of coping emotionally with whatever life deals them. Dr. Levine encourages the reader to reassess parenting styles that interfere with children becoming independent, self-assured, and well-adjusted adults. Interested in exploring this topic further? Please join us on December 5 at 7:00 PM at Harper Junior High School for a parent education presentation on stress and anxiety factors our students' experience.

Merry Madrigal Holiday Concert and Sing-Along

The Davis High School Madrigals requests the presence of the Davis High School Community at a special concert filled with old-fashioned holiday spirit on Dec. 2 at 1:00. The Merry Madrigal Holiday Concert and Sing-Along, co-hosted by the Davis Odd Fellows Lodge, features the choir dressed in lavish costumes authentic to the Renaissance period. This colorful event, full of hearty merriment and good cheer, celebrates the traditional music and splendor of "Jollie Olde England". The afternoon opens with a grand processional, walking guests back in time to enjoy the joviality of the holiday season. The audience is invited to sing-along to holiday carols and revel in luscious desserts prepared by fine Davis eating establishments. To purchase tickets or for more information, contact Robbie Murphy at (530) 758-1838 or robbiemurphy@sbcglobal.net.

CAREER CENTER NEWS

Financial Aid Workshop: The Financial Aid Workshop held in November was very well attended, and participants received information about funding their student's college education. If you were unable to attend, financial aid handouts are available in the high school's Career Center.

FAFSA: All seniors planning to attend college who want to be considered for federal, state, and college-based financial aid need to complete the FAFSA. Students are strongly encouraged to apply online, beginning January 1 at www.fafsa.gov. The deadline for submitting a FAFSA is March 2, 2013. For questions about completing the FAFSA, contact the Career Center at 757-5400, ext. 140, the FAFSA Help Line at 800-433-3243, or go online to:

www.studentaid.ed.gov.

Cal Grants: The State of California offers financial aid in the form of Cal Grants for students planning to attend a California college. Every high school senior who has at least a 2.0 GPA, meets income and residency requirements, and applies on time is guaranteed a Cal Grant. Students must submit the FAFSA and a verified GPA to be eligible. DSHS electronically submits senior students' GPA's to the California Student Aid Commission for CalGrant consideration. This eliminates the need for students to complete a paper GPA Verification Form.

All college-bound seniors are encouraged to apply for financial aid even if they think they don't qualify. Many factors besides income are taken

into account to determine eligibility. By submitting the FAFSA, students will be considered for federal and state grants, loans, work study, and public and private college-based aid.

Scholarships: The DSHS Scholarship Bulletin is published every two weeks and is available in the Career Center, the Naviance computer program, or on the Career Center's webpage (on the DSHS website, click on counseling, click on Career Center, click on Scholarship Bulletin). Many scholarships provided by the Davis community for Davis Senior High students will be available in January. Scholarships can also be found on the internet. Students are welcome to come to the Career Center for a list of useful scholarship and financial aid websites.

PARENT PERSPECTIVE

GAP YEAR??

The information below was gathered from the Berkeley Parent's Network – it illustrates how sometimes our children have needs that are very different than what we had planned for...

Like most seniors, our daughter has spent the better part of a year applying to college. Together, we have made two visits to about fifteen campuses on the East Coast and visited three schools in Oregon. Some months ago, she quietly said she was interested in a gap year. I said at the time that she was welcome to do some research and come up with a proposal and that we would consider it. When nothing showed up, I forged ahead with the visits and the expectation that she would go to college in the fall. Our daughter has applied to twelve schools and gotten into seven. She isn't in love with any of them. But then again - as her fabulous college advisor pointed out and as I know from my own experience with her this year - she hasn't "owned" any of these choices. She's not excited about any of them, didn't do any independent research, and hasn't written down the pros and cons of any school. She hasn't talked with her friends about her options and is embarrassed and confused about the rejections. With the deadline coming up to commit, we finally made a date yesterday to go to breakfast and discuss this. I was already to hear which of her top two schools she had chosen. Instead she informed me that "she had decided on a gap year." WHAT!?!? May 1st is still around the corner.

So suddenly here I am with a kid without a plan. She said she is burnt out from high school, needs a break, and wants to work in her chosen field for a time. I was so taken aback I don't think I really heard the rest and didn't have time to compose myself for a thoughtful conversation about next steps. So I'd like to ask for some help in organizing my thoughts here. I am a big planner, I have had a vision of my daughter in college this coming fall for a long time now, and now I need to make a huge course correction with a new plan OR try to force her to attend a school she doesn't love and doesn't seem ready for. OMG! Since I went to the wrong college, I have empathy here and I would like to see her take time off, if that is the way it goes, to work hard to identify a school she loves and then do the work to make it happen. But I find myself so nervous that she is saying "no" to a known option and is heading into a year without a job, without structure, without a plan.

As a student, she is a mixed bag - really strong in humanities, just very weak in math. I don't experience her as studious or focused on her academics, and was thrilled when she got into a very prestigious school back east (which she said at one point she didn't think she could handle academically). I insist that she look into accepting and then deferring at one of her two choices (needn't be the tough one; the other lesser-known school has a fabulous department in her field of interest), and her college advisor knows this. I really need help shifting gears, honoring her need to make a change, and figuring out how to see this as a productive use of her time. I am an upset mess today and would appreciate help in sorting this out so we can go from here and I can continue to be a positive, supportive parent of my young adult's life choices. Just when you think you have it figured out...

Some helpful responses from other parents

The college crazies can consume the entire household. Tests, activities, tours, choices, financial planning. It's absolutely nuts. And then there's the "gotta" get into the best school possible" insanity because of the fear that their life will be derailed. But here's what's much worse - a child who is not ready going off to some distant college and totally screwing up, either academically or personally. As concerned parents we become very involved and can do way too much. You met deadlines. You showed her colleges. You got a counselor. I've been there. Now your kid says "I'm not ready". And you should thank your lucky stars this is happening when you can put the brakes on the college fast-thru train and take a breath because if your child is not ready, she is *not* ready.

Try to relax. It isn't who gets first to the starting line that matters, but who finishes the race well. Regrouping is positive and healthy. Support your student in learning to honor her internal knowing while still keeping options open. Your daughter is finally able to articulate her problem and has come up with a solution for it -- a gap year. This is very brave on her part and you also have from your own experience seen how detrimental it can be to go to the wrong college. Appreciate the strength it took for your daughter to make this choice and help her implement it without falling back into your style of wanting to create a big plan.

Allow her room to explore her options. She may find with the pressure off that she can begin to really think this through. You MUST accept her decision but she hasn't finished planning yet. If your daughter is having difficulty "owning any of her choices", pull back and let her spend time articulating her options and coming up with a plan of how she wants to spend her gap year. Let her do the major work of implementing her plan, but offer to help occasionally. Even if the year does not fulfill the promise of what she wanted it to be, this could be a real "growing" experience and help her be ready to "own" subsequent choices.

It is reasonable to ask your daughter to request a deferral, and to accept the reality that she is going to have a gap year. This year can be used to support her in her decision making for next year and the future. After all the effort put into applying, holding a place somewhere preserves her options for her for as long as possible. Explain that choosing a college is her decision but insist on this one thing. You really can see further down the line than she can. Many schools are happy to allow deferral. If she doesn't go the following year, she loses the spot and deposit. Consider it insurance. If she decides she wants to apply elsewhere next year, she can. But my bet is that, with the pressure off, time to breathe, and seeing her friends happy at their chosen colleges, she will warm to her choice and embrace it when the time comes.

Take a deep breath. It will be fine. My son was in some ways like your daughter; smart but burned out on school, and not particularly excited about college or engaged in the application process. He applied early decision to a good east coast school, not based on any searching process or infatuation with the school, but as the path of least resistance. When he got in, we put down the deposit and he then deferred a year. He was pretty independent, very involved in an outside activity, and spent the year traveling the world, following his passion and growing up. When he started college the following year, he was ready to dive in.

FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE (PILOT) - FALL, DECEMBER 2012

Monday December 17	Tuesday December 18	Wednesday December 19	Thursday December 20	Friday December 21
Regular Monday schedule	1 st 7:45 – 8:25	2nd Per Final 7:45 – 9:50	3rd Per Final 7:45 – 9:50	1st Per Final 7:45 – 9:50
	2 nd 8:31 – 9:11			
	3 rd 9:17 – 9:57			
	Break 9:57 – 10:01	Break 9:50 – 10:10	Break 9:50 – 10:10	Break 9:50 – 10:10
	4 th 10:07:10:52	4th Per Final 10:10 - 12:10*	5th Per Final 10:10 - 12:10*	6th Per Final 10:10 - 12:10*
	5 th 10:58 – 11:38			
	6 th 11:44 – 12:29			
	Lunch 12:29 – 1:19			
7 th Per Final 1:25 – 3:25				

Next PTA Meeting: January 9, 2013