



Tiger Territory

Delano High School Newsletter October 2021

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Dates to remember

October

- 5.....Mid-quarter
- 11.....Conferences, 4-7 p.m.
- 12.....Referendum info meeting
- 18.....Picture retake day
- 18.....School board listening session, 7 p.m.
- 20.....Two-hour late start
- 20.....Unity Day
- 21-22.....MEA, no school
- 26.....Referendum info meeting

November

- 1...9-12 band/choir concert, 7 p.m.
- 2.....Election day, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.



Campbell Logan is a National Merit Semifinalist. See Page 2.



Homecoming court

The DHS Homecoming Court included, front from left, Chase McClay, Cody Thomas, Chris Johnson, Austin Kramp, King Peder Bjorklund, Saul Streachek and Dillion Mrnak. Queen candidates included, from left, Madison Mittelstaedt, Louisa Stowman, Katie Wegman, Queen Kaiya Merritt, Lydia Smith, Kaylee Gillette and Harper Betlach.

Getting back on track in '21

By Barry Voight
Principal

Greetings, DHS students, staff and community.

The month of September has been an exciting time as our students have come back to the building. It is so great to witness the energy and engagement of our students who have returned and are attending our events. The enthusiasm I witness on a daily basis gives me great excitement about what the future holds for our students and staff at DHS.

This school year DHS staff members are redoubling our efforts to get back on track after the tumultuous pandemic year of 2020-21. Understandably, our professional development



Barry Voight

efforts were largely put on hold as our students and staff were forced to simply survive the pandemic in the various learning models we had to endure.

Moving into this year, DHS staff members are working toward the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), new intervention programming in math to better support student needs, and a renewed focus on instructional literacy to support all student needs in the classroom.

Our collective efforts towards continuous improvement will yield significant dividends for our students.

Schedule redesign

As we focus on continuous improvement and collective growth, a task force consisting of staff, students and parents

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DHS earns College Success Award

Top rankings given for test scores, college readiness

By Paul Downer
Communications Coordinator

For the third year in a row, Delano High School has earned the College Success Award from national non-profit GreatSchools.

This year Delano has received elevated distinction, the College Success Award – Gold for a “multi-year track record of preparing students to enroll and succeed in college” as evidenced by winning two or more College Success Awards in recent years.

“This recognition is yet another example of the outstanding efforts our teachers and students make on a daily basis, as well as the support of our parents/community, to reinforce a quality educational experience,” said DHS Principal Barry Voight.

A total of 63 public schools in Minnesota earned the College Success Award in 2021, including 46 that received the College Success Award – Gold.



Nationally, 1,838 schools across 25 states earned the award this year.

Among the award-winning schools were ranks based on an overall 10-point score, and DHS was among the top 20 schools in the state. Categories used to determine that score included test scores, student progress, college readiness and equity.

In Minnesota only one school, a public charter, earned a 10/10. Six schools earned a 9/10, and 13 earned an 8/10.

Delano High School was given an overall score of 8/10. Within the categories making up that overall number, DHS earned perfect 10/10 scores in test scores and college readiness, and scores of 7/10 in student progress and equity. All scores of 7 and up are considered above average or far above average.

“Test scores at this school are far above the state average, suggesting that most students at this school are performing at or above grade level,” said GreatSchools.org.

In terms of college readiness, DHS posted a four-year graduation rate of 98 percent, an average ACT score of 24 and an Advanced Placement course participation rate of 21%.

As for student progress, GreatSchools.org noted, “Students at this school are making more academic progress given where they were last year, compared to similar students in the state. Strong progress with high test scores means students have

strong academic skills and the school is doing a better job at supporting academic growth than most other schools.”

The equity rating looks at how well a school serves disadvantaged students relative to all students, compared to other schools in the state, based on college readiness metrics, student progress, and test scores provided from the state department of education.

“Underserved students at this school are performing better than other students in the state, though this school may still have achievement gaps,” GreatSchools.org said about DHS.

Delano Superintendent Matt Schoen said the award was another sign of success in regard to the district’s vision of providing educational excellence.

“This is a great testament to our staff, students and parents in continuing to support the mission of our schools,” he said.

Logan a National Merit Semifinalist

Four named Commended Students in prestigious nationwide program

By Paul Downer
Communications Coordinator

Fewer than 1% of high school seniors in the United States have managed to become National Merit Scholarship Program semifinalists, but one of those outstanding students hails from Delano High School.

Campbell Logan is among 16,000 national semifinalists who qualified for the distinction through exceptional performance in the 2020 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

Three more DHS students were named Commended Students by finishing in the top 50,000 students nationally on the same test. They are Kath-

erine Baker, Jaxon Duberstein and Ashton Esco.

For Logan, Delano’s third semifinalist in the past five years, the distinction is the culmination of sustained effort.

“I was pretty surprised, but I was really happy because it was something that I had been wanting for a couple of years,” said Logan of her reaction to finding out about the honor. “Seeing all that hard work pay off was really rewarding.”

DHS Principal Barry Voight said the National Merit recognition was well-earned.

“It is a big deal. Ms. Campbell should be extremely proud of herself,” he said. “I know all

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Campbell Logan, left, scored among the top 1% of students nationally on 2020 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. Here, she is being recognized by DHS Principal Barry Voight.

Merit

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of us here at Delano Schools are really proud of her. She's a very impressive young lady when you look at her accomplishments, both academically and in the extra-curricular areas."

Logan's favorite subjects in school are chemistry, biology and Spanish.

"I like how once you learn it you can kind of see it everywhere in your life," Logan said of the scientific subjects.

Organization is key to her academic success, because Logan keeps a busy schedule. She runs cross country and track, and also competes academically in Math League and Science Olympiad. She is a member of the school's National Honor Society chapter, plays piano, and is involved with her church youth group. How does she manage to do so well in the classroom in the midst of those various endeavors?

"Time management is really important," she said. "I just try to be thorough. Everything I do I like to do thoroughly and give 100%. It's important to work hard even when you're tired."



From left, DHS Principal Barry Voight congratulated Katherine Baker, Jaxon Duberstein and Ashton Esco on their Commended Student status in September.

Though busy, Logan said that taking a long view of things helps keep her various obligations in perspective.

"You're only in high school for four years, so I would say that makes it easier to just give it my all and work hard throughout those years to make the most of it," she said.

Beyond high school Logan plans to study chemical engineering at a college yet-to-be-determined, and perhaps pursue a career in that field or medicine.

"Campbell is definitely somebody who is self-motivated and who challenges herself to achieve at the highest levels," said Voight. "Those things

obviously benefit her now, and will continue to benefit her in the future."

Logan is the daughter of Scott and Sarah Logan of Loretto.

Commended Students

Baker, Duberstein and Esco also earned National Merit distinction by earning Commended Student status.

The top 50,000 scorers nationally are divided into 34,000 Commended Students and 16,000 semifinalists in the competition for National Merit scholarships. While in rare company, Commended Students do not move forward in the scholarship competition.

"Those being named Commended Students have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success," said a statement from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. "These students represent a valuable national resource; recognizing their accomplishments, as well as the key role their schools play in their academic development, is vital to the advancement of educational excellence in our nation. We hope that this recognition will help broaden their educational opportunities and encourage them as they continue their pursuit of academic success."

Delano High School Principal Barry Voight agreed.

"Ashton, Jaxon and Katherine have just added to the strong academic tradition at DHS," he said. "Their efforts toward excellence for themselves will pay off significantly in their futures."

Baker is the daughter of Joe and Sarah Baker of Loretto, Duberstein is the son of Todd and Sue Duberstein of Loretto, and Esco is the son of Adam and Anissa Esco of Delano.

• *This article is a condensed version of coverage available on the district website at www.delano.k12.mn.us.*

Delano School Board Share feedback at listening sessions

Members of the Delano School Board host periodic "listening sessions" to discuss matters of interest with district residents.

The next listening session will occur on Monday, Oct. 18, in the Delano High School Tiger Den. Parents have been surveyed about possible topics, and more information about topics will be provided as the date approaches.

Listening sessions are not formal meetings, and open

discussion about the designated topics is encouraged. Members of the public are welcome to share comments, questions and suggestions.

Two or three board members, along with appropriate school staff, attend each session to share information and hear feedback. No official action is taken at the sessions, but feedback is shared with the entire board to inform members as they make decisions going forward.



Skimmer challenge

Seventh-graders set up a 'skimmer' for a distance race down a DHS hallway. The speedy vehicles serve as an introduction to Project Lead the Way courses. In addition to emphasizing the metric system, 'the skimmer is a lot of fun. They like to modify them and compete with their classmates; this leads into the Design Process really well, which is our second area of focus for this class,' said DHS science teacher Gerrit van Bergen.

DHS Homecoming



Eventful week

After a small-scale Homecoming in 2020, DHS was firing on all cylinders this year with all the usual attractions, including powder puff football, he-man volleyball, the coronation, dance, pep fest and more.



New staff at DHS

High school staff members who are new to the district this fall include, front from left, Madeline Kenney (9-12 math), Brittany Carlen (9-12 math) and Kate Foster (9-12 language arts). In the second row, from left, are Amanda Anjorin (9-12 FACS), Autumn Huju (7-8 language arts), Ryan Ward (7-12 PE/developmental adapted physical education) and Linnea Manske (9-12 special education).



Focusing on safety, wellness

Parent participation needed on health committee

By Steve Schaubberger
Assistant Principal

Greetings from Delano High School! It is reinvigorating to see our students, parents and staff back at school.

We have a few very important opportunities for parents and students to be involved in this school year.

Safe Routes to School

First, we have updated our Safe Routes to School Walk and Bike Map on all of our school building websites. Please take a moment to look at the map with your student to plan out a safe route to bike and walk to school.

Wednesday, Oct. 6, is Minnesota Walk to School Day. It is an opportunity to build community and make healthy choices. We are also discussing other programs to encourage healthy and smart choices like carpooling and park/ride the bus days for next school year.

Wellness Committee

Second, we are looking for parents of K-12 students and community members to serve on our Districtwide Student Wellness Committee.

The Districtwide Student



Steve Schaubberger

Wellness Committee's responsibility each year is to monitor student health and wellness issues and ensure the district is in compliance with the

**Wednesday,
Oct. 6, is
Minnesota Walk
to School Day.**

Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and the School District's Wellness Policy (number 533).

Specific areas of focus include school nutrition, health education, and physical and

mental well-being activities. This committee is made up of district parents, staff and administration. We will meet two to three times this year in November, March and June. We may use Google Meets as our venue and encourage participation.

We use a three-year cycle; the past two years were district/building goal implementation/monitoring/compliance years. Please email or call me at 763-972-7607 at the high school if you are interested in serving on this important committee.

Student wellness

Finally, the DHS Student Wellness Committee is also looking for students in grades 7-12 to serve on this important group that meets once per quarter. Please encourage your child to join and make an impact in the areas of school nutrition, health education, and physical and mental well-being activities at our school. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Thank you for being a partner in your student's total school experience. *Together* we are better!

What is DHS PIE?

DHS PIE stands for Delano High School Partners in Education. All parents, students, teachers and community members are welcome to join PIE to help raise money and support various efforts for the high school students and staff.

One way to help

Do you buy groceries? Do you want to contribute money to your child's school? Well, we have a very easy way to do both! When you buy Box Tops for Education products, simply scan your receipt and the money is automatically credited to the school!

Over the past seven years Delano High School has earned \$1,715 from the Box Tops for Education program!

And remember, if you have 'big kids' in the high school now, don't forget to designate Delano High School to receive credit.

See <https://www.boxtops4education.com/How-To-Earn>.

Next meeting date

Monday, Nov. 8, at 6 p.m. in the high school office conference room.

Referendum 2021

The Delano School Board is asking voters to consider a new operating levy

The basics

What is the purpose?

A portion of the district's funding comes through an operating levy approved by voters in 2012 that expires at the end of 2022. If this levy is not replaced at the time it expires, the district will lose about \$1 million in annual funding.

What is the district asking for?

The ballot will ask voters to revoke the current levy of \$374.89 per pupil, which is set to expire, and replace it with a new amount of \$970.

What is the tax impact?

If approved, the tax increase would be \$23 per month, or \$281 per year, on an average Delano residential property valued at \$300,000. A tax calculator is available on the district website

that allows residents to see the impact on their specific property. See www.ehlers-inc.com/microsite/delano2021/

What happens if the levy passes?

No cuts will be needed in the foreseeable future and current programs and activities can be maintained

What happens if it doesn't pass?

Cuts of \$500,000 will be needed for next school year. While specifics have not yet been identified, that amount could be the equivalent of up to eight staff members (including classroom teachers and auxiliary support positions such as paras, administrators, health/custodial, etc.), sports for grades 7-8, and increased fees.

Background

The funding situation

About 80 percent of the school district's funding comes from the state, but state funding has not kept pace with inflation or operating costs. As a result, almost all districts in Minnesota depend on voter-approved operating levies for adequate funding.

What is an operating levy?

Operating levies cover the expenses of running the schools, including salaries, utilities, supplies and technology. They cannot last more than 10 years and must be regularly renewed or replaced.

In contrast, bond referendums, like the one approved by Delano voters for DIS and campus upgrades in 2015, are for facilities and maintenance. Those 2015 funds were used for construction and do not support ongoing operations.

Why not renew the current levy?

A simple renewal will not maintain the status quo. The operating levy approved in 2012 is no longer keeping up with expenses due to higher costs, and the district has made about \$900,000 in cuts over the past three years.

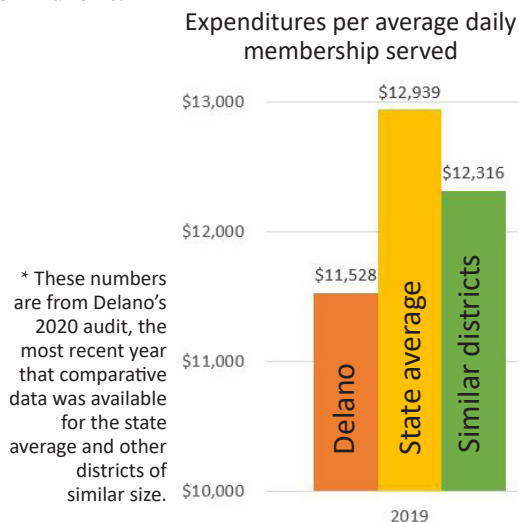
To this point the district has also been spending down its fund balance reserves in order to minimize cuts, but larger cuts will be needed in the near future in order to maintain an adequate fund balance.

Is a smaller increase a viable option?

Any per-pupil increase of less than the amount proposed will require additional cuts, including some staff. After much deliberation, school board members decided to ask for the full amount that is needed to preserve the district's current class sizes and programs.

Can the district be more efficient?

Independent audits have shown that Delano consistently spends less money per student than the state average, and less than other schools of similar size.



Tax impact

To see how the proposal affects your specific taxes, see the tax calculator at www.ehlers-inc.com/microsite/delano2021/

Public meetings

District staff and school board members will host two sessions to share information and answer questions from 7 to 8 p.m. in the DHS Tiger Den on Tuesdays, Oct. 12 and 26.

Voting

Election day:
Tuesday, Nov. 2

Poll hours:
7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Vote in person:

With the exception of district residents living in the City of Independence (who vote at their city hall), all voters can cast their ballots in person at Delano City Hall (234 2nd St. N) on election day.

Early voting:

Early absentee voting is available from Sept. 17 through Nov. 1.

*** In-person absentee**

Voters can fill out an absentee ballot at the Delano Schools district office (700 Elm Ave. S). Weekday office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

*** Mail absentee**

Voters can request an absentee ballot and vote by mail. To request a ballot, call 763-972-3365, ext. 1911, or email paul.downer@delanoschools.org.

For complete information, see bit.ly/DelanoLevy21

Schools offer help for the holidays

The Delano school social workers are partnering with a local non-profit agency, Friends for a Cause, to facilitate a program called Holiday Helpers.

If you are experiencing hard times right now, we would like to invite you to be a part of this program. The goal of Holiday Helpers is to help you and your family have a bright and merry holiday season by providing each member of your household with gifts and goodies.

Please know that this is a confidential program and your names will not be shared with others. If you are already participating in the Love Inc. Christmas Program or another similar program, we ask that you decline this opportunity in order for us to help additional families.

If you are interested in participating, email your child's school social worker to express your interest. If you have a child in more than one school building, please only email one school social worker. Please know that depending upon the number of interested participants, more questions may be asked to determine program eligibility.

After acceptance into the program, a form will be emailed to you asking about your family's needs and wants this holiday season along with details on gift pick-up.

Please contact one of the school social workers by Friday, Oct. 29.

- Lisa Armstrong, DES lisa.armstrong@delano.schools.org
- Nicole Gohman, DIS nicole.gohman@delano.schools.org
- Marie Techam, DHS marie.techam@delano.schools.org



Mermaid makes a splash

About 30 students in grades five through eight performed 'Disney's The Little Mermaid Jr.' Sept. 9-11. After last year's middle school play was canceled due to COVID, many of the actors were eager to return to the stage or make their pandemic-delayed debuts. The production was directed by DIS sixth-grade teacher Natalie Palmer, who received help from eight high school drama students.

Join the District Advisory Council

Delano Public Schools is seeking parent and community members to serve on the District Advisory Council (DAC) for the 2021-22 school year.

The District Advisory Council serves to ensure active community participation in all phases of planning and improving instruction and curriculum in terms of state and local standards.

Through that work, the DAC provides recommendations to the school board regarding rigorous academic standards, student achievement

goals, and measures consistent with the MN Statute B.11. The DAC membership reflects the diversity of the district and its school sites and includes teachers, parents, support staff, students and other community residents. DAC members must be able to commit to three or four meetings per year.

Interested parents and community members can request an application by contacting Monica Kunkel, Curriculum Coordinator, at 763-973-7601, ext. 1731, or monica.kunkel@delano-schools.org.

School support

The Coborn's MORE School Rewards program netted \$1,160.86 for DHS over the past year. Here, Delano store director Joe Tipka, right, presents Principal Barry Voight a check for that amount. To participate, log into moreRewards.com and choose your school, then earn points by shopping Coborn's store brands. See moreRewards.com/school for more info.



Veterans clothing drive begins Oct. 18

Delano Public Schools will conduct its annual clothing drive for veterans in need again this year.

The drive will begin on Monday, Oct. 18, and end on Veterans Day, Thursday, Nov. 11. All donated items must be newly purchased.

The clothing drive will continue to support veterans who are hospitalized at local VA hospitals in Minneapolis and St. Cloud, as well as those who are transitioning from the hospitals to independent living. In addition, this drive will support veterans who are undergoing treatments for post-traumatic stress disorder at the Eagles Healing Nest.

The past 18 months have been challenging for all of us, but especially for veterans with mental health needs. With your



Some of the Delano donations from a previous year are dropped off at a VA hospital.

donations, we can help these men and women who have served our country and sacrificed so much continue the healing process and transition to independent living

Please consider donating the following items.

For men: Socks, boxers (M-XL), undershirts (M-XL), pajama pants (large to 2X), T-shirts (M to XL), sweatpants

or sweatshirts (M-XL), jeans (waist 30-42, length 30-34), winter boots (size 9-14), slippers, winter coats, hats and gloves and exercise clothes.

For women: Socks, underwear, pajamas, shirts, sweatpants, jeans of any size, slippers with rubber bottoms, exercise clothes and winter boots, hats and gloves.

•If you would like to make a monetary donation, collected funds will be used to purchase the items of greatest need based on the request of each facility.

Make your check payable to Delano Public Schools, and note "veterans clothing drive" in the memo. Thank you in advance for your continued support of this project.

Voight

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has been formed to redesign the daily schedule at DHS.

The DHS Schedule Redesign Task Force has hosted several listening sessions to encourage participation from our stakeholder groups and to gain your perspectives on what makes DHS great and how we can improve.

I encourage everyone to study the work we've done and plan to do as part of this effort. An overview of our work is available on the district web page if you navigate to the "Information" tab on the High School page.

While this effort began with the purpose of developing a common schedule for all students 7-12, it is evident that the depth and breadth of the feedback received will lead to

much broader school improvement efforts. Working with students, staff, and families to design a better experience for our students moving forward is truly exciting.

COVID continues

Finally, I urge all of you to do your part, on behalf of our students, with respect to staying safe and protected from the COVID-19 virus. Staying home when ill, proper hand washing, and other appropriate hygiene measures will increase the likelihood that our students can have a normal school year for the duration of 2021-22. After the last year and half, they deserve it.

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to any DHS staff member about questions you may have so that we can partner in your student's success.

Every Meal helps cover food gaps

Every Meal (formerly The Sheridan Story), a weekend food program, is available to DHS families again this year. The non-profit's mission is to fight child hunger through community and school partnerships.

The organization strives to make a difference by focusing on food gaps – the times when children aren't at school to access meal programs. Every Meal offers food over the weekends, summers and extended school breaks.

The program is free for all families, and no qualifications are required for enrollment. No information

is collected for enrollment, and privacy is protected for participating families. Those interested can sign up at any time during the school year, and school staff will discreetly provide the food on Fridays during the school year.

Families can choose from a variety of food bags that contain nutritious, non-perishable food, including fruits, vegetables, proteins, grains and soups or entrees.

For more information, contact DHS counselors Katie Chandler at katie.chandler@delanoschools.org or Elise Boleman at elise.boleman@delanoschools.org.

