

# Tiger Tracks

Delano Intermediate School Newsletter



October 2021



DIS Student Council has had a busy start. See Page 2.

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Listening session

## Dates to remember

### October

12.....Referendum info meeting  
18.....Picture retake day  
18.....School board listening session, 7 p.m.  
18..Conferences, 3:30-7:30 p.m.  
19..Conferences, 3:30-6:30 p.m.  
20.....Two-hour late start  
20.....Unity Day  
21-22.....MEA, no school



## Plenty of pep

Delano Intermediate School students enjoyed an outdoor Homecoming pep fest on Friday, Oct. 1, that featured the high school pep band, cheerleading and dance performances, members of the Homecoming court and more. See Page 4 for more photos.

## Focus areas for 2021-22 year

By Katie Thompson  
Principal

We are thrilled to be back at DIS with all of our students this year.

We have worked hard at the intermediate school throughout the month of September to create a building climate that is positive and full of energy for achieving our goals this school year.

As you know, DIS has two new administrators this year: myself, as well as Greg Hinker, our assistant principal. Both Greg and I have been highly impressed with the efforts of



Katie Thompson

our students and staff members toward creating a positive learning environment at DIS. I

would like to briefly share with you our strategic focus areas for the 2021-22 school year.

**Core Instruction:** Core instruction is the learning that is provided to all students in all areas. When our core instruction is effective, we will see that 80% or more of our students are meeting standards in response to the curriculum.

Our actionable areas this year in core instruction are ensuring that all curriculum maps are up-to-date and standards-aligned, along with a

See Thompson  
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# Student Council up and running

By Nicole Gohman  
Social Worker

The Student Council at Delano Intermediate is off to a busy start this school year.

Student Council is made up of four representatives from fifth grade and four representatives from sixth grade. These representatives applied to be a part of the Student Council last school year and were voted in by their peers.

Representatives from this year's fourth-grade class will be invited to apply in November.

The staff facilitators are sixth-grade math and life skills teacher Drew Waldbillig and School Social Worker Nicole Gohman.

The Student Council has already been involved with Homecoming, Unity Day plans, and crossing guard duty at the intermediate school.

Student Council members created Homecoming dress up days and advertised these days with posters and daily announcements.

The Student Council will also play a role in Unity Day by planning and hosting a Kindness and Positivity Project. All students are invited to visit the Kindness Cove table in the commons area before school on Monday, Oct. 11; Tuesday, Oct. 12; and Wednesday, Oct. 13, to design a kindness shape. All completed kindness shapes will be displayed in the DIS Commons for all



**Student Council representatives currently come from fifth and sixth grade, and fourth-graders will be invited to apply in November.**

students to see. The goal is to spread kindness and positivity throughout our school. Members of the Student Council will be featured on the morning announcements to invite students to participate in the Kindness Cove project.

Student Council members will be taking on the role of crossing guards in the mornings and afternoons to help students safely cross through the DIS parking lot. They have expressed an eagerness to take on this

responsibility and leadership role within our school.

The DIS Student Council has plans to be involved with many additional projects as this year moves along, including Treats for Troops, Pennies for Patients, Kindness in Chalk, Food Drive, MCA Motivation and Mints, and The DIS Variety Show. Additional projects and events will be planned as time allows.

## Two opportunities to get involved

### *District Wellness Committee*

Delano Public Schools is seeking community members, parents, students and school staff to serve on the District Wellness Committee.

The committee's main objective is to monitor compliance with the district's student Wellness Policy (No. 533) and the Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 in the areas of student nutrition and education, physical activity, and wellness support (i.e. mental health).

This committee will meet three times during the year. The first meeting will be in early November, the second around the end of February, and the third in June. The committee will review data from all three areas above, and from the student wellness goals submitted by each of the three school's student wellness committees.

Areas of focus include school lunch and food service, mental health programs, and opportunities for students to participate in community and school physical health activities.

The committee submits a district compliance report to the school board every three years. The next report is due in July 2022, and an updated building report is made each year in between.

If you wish to help ensure student wellness by participating on

this committee, contact DHS Assistant Principal Steve Schaubberger at 763-972-3365, ext. 1703, or [steve.schaubberger@delanoschools.org](mailto:steve.schaubberger@delanoschools.org).

### *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@delanoschools.org](mailto:monica.kunkel@delanoschools.org).

# 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.

## Tips for quality conferences

Fall parent-teacher conferences will be held from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 18, and from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. on and Tuesday, Oct. 19.

Conferences will be held virtually, but accommodations can be made if you desire an in-person meeting. These conferences are an excellent opportunity to meet with teachers and learn how students are doing academically and socially. Read on for a few tips on how you can get the most out of your conference time.

### Listen

Throughout the school year, if you hear your child talking about something he or she is doing well in or is struggling with, make a note of it. When it's time for conferences, you'll have a list of topics to discuss.

### Ask

The week before conferences, sit down with your child and ask him or her about school. Ask what's happening in class, at lunchtime or in special classes such as media,

physical education, and/or music. Ask your child what he or she thinks their teacher is going to tell you about them.

### Take notes

Take some notes on what information the teacher is sharing about your child. Your child's teacher will have assessment data to share on how your child is achieving in comparison to his or her peers. This information will help in addressing your child's strengths, weaknesses and social skills development.

### Follow up

After the conference, take time to talk with your child about what you and the teacher discussed. Highlight the positive things the teacher said. Take time to develop a plan to help your child in the areas the teacher addressed. This may include dedicating more time each evening at home to help your child succeed.

### Sample questions

The following are some

questions you might find helpful in preparing for discussion with teachers. Pick two or three topics that you would like to hear about.

- How is my student interacting with his/her peers?
- Is my student staying on task during class?
- Does my student appear to be enjoying school?
- What can we do at home that will help to improve their school performance?
- What do you feel are my student's strengths and weaknesses relative to your content area/class?
- Does my child advocate for himself/herself in your class? Do they ask for help?
- What does my child need to do differently in order to better perform in your class?
- How well does my student complete their assignments, and do they get turned in on time?
- Does my student show respect to you and their classmates?
- Does my student use his/her class time wisely?

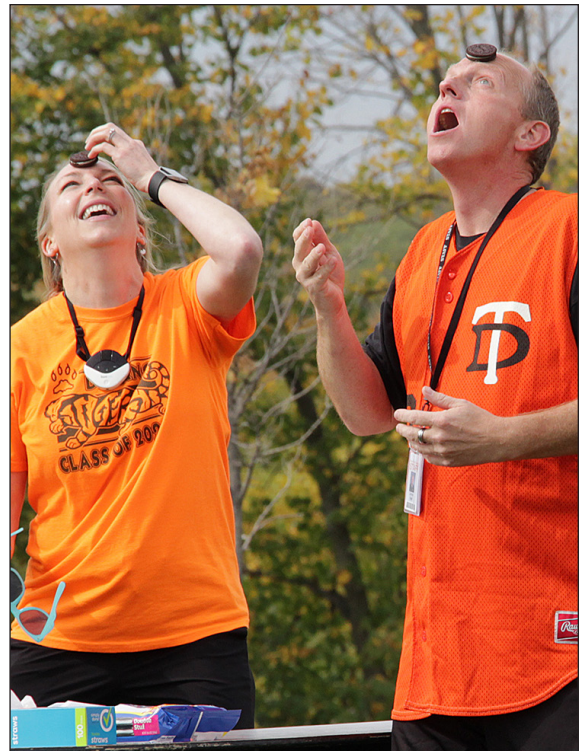


# Homecoming at DIS



## Pep fest fun

Delano Intermediate School celebrated Homecoming week with a variety of fun dress up days and an outdoor pep fest on Friday, Oct. 1. Here are some of the scenes from the pep fest.







## Back to school

**Delano Intermediate School students returned to the classroom on Tuesday, Sept. 7. Through the first month of school, masks have remained mandatory on buses and optional for inside school buildings due to the continuation COVID-19.**



# Unity Day arrives Oct. 20

**By Nicole Gohman**  
Social Worker

Delano Intermediate students will participate in Unity Day on Wednesday, Oct. 20.

Unity Day is sponsored by PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, which actively leads social change to prevent childhood bullying so that all youth are safe and supported in their schools, communities and online. Students are encouraged to wear orange.

By wearing orange, our school will send the message that we will unite together to end bullying by choosing kindness, acceptance and inclusion of everyone.

To order the 2021 Unity Day T-shirt, go to <https://stcroixprint.com/index.php?cID=934>.

Unity Day activities are



**Unity Day aims to create a spirit of togetherness in school, and reduce negative behaviors and bullying.**

planned for the full week of Oct. 18, including a variety of classroom activities as well as a Kindness and Positivity Project hosted by the DIS Student Council.

All students are invited to visit the Kindness Cove table in the commons area before school on Monday, Oct. 11;

Tuesday, Oct. 12 and Wednesday, Oct. 13 to design a "Fish of Kindness" with a kind message or picture. All completed fish will swim in the Kindness Cove, which will be located in the DIS Commons for all students to see. The goal is to spread kindness and positivity throughout our school!

## Every Meal covers food gaps

Every Meal, a weekend food program formerly known as The Sheridan Story, is once again available to DIS families 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.

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 DIS Social Worker Nicole Gohman at [nicole.gohman@delanoschools.org](mailto:nicole.gohman@delanoschools.org) or 763.972.7602 ext. 1515.

To sign up, go online to [bit.ly/DISmeal21](http://bit.ly/DISmeal21).

## Book fair shifts to November

The annual DES and DIS Scholastic Book Fair is taking place next month rather than in October this year.

The dates are Nov. 15-19. More information will be included in the November newsletter.

# 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/](http://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.

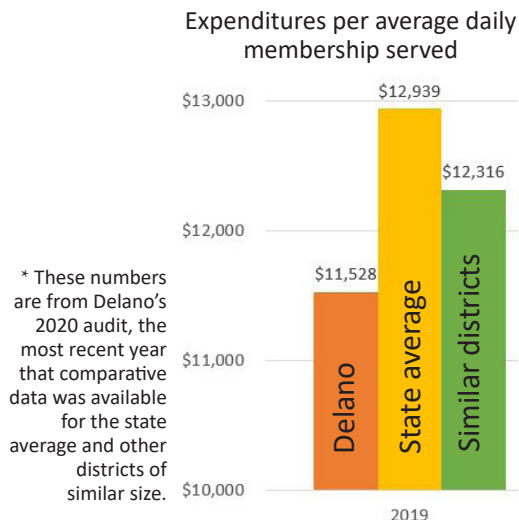
To this point the district has also been spending down its fund balance reserves in order to minimize cuts, but larger cuts will be needed in the near future in order to maintain an adequate fund balance.

#### **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/](http://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](mailto:paul.downer@delanoschools.org).

For complete information, see [bit.ly/DelanoLevy21](http://bit.ly/DelanoLevy21)



# 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.

<div>LUNCH</div> <div>OCTOBER 2021</div> <div>Delano Intermediate School</div>				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<div>Orange Chicken</div> <div>Brown Rice</div> <div>Peas</div> <div>Roll</div> <div>Lettuce Salad</div> <div>Pineapple</div> <div>4</div>	<div>French Toast Sticks</div> <div>Sausage</div> <div>Tritater</div> <div>Steamed Broccoli</div> <div>Baked Apple Slices</div> <div>5</div>	<div>Hamburger</div> <div>Sun Chips</div> <div>Baked Beans</div> <div>Lettuce / Tomatoes / Pickles</div> <div>Baby Carrots</div> <div>Fruit Cocktail</div> <div>6</div>	<div>Chicken Alfredo</div> <div>California Blend Vegetables</div> <div>Roll</div> <div>Lettuce Salad</div> <div>Orange Wedges</div> <div>7</div>	<div>Walking Taco – Beef</div> <div>Lettuce / Cheese / Salsa</div> <div>Refried Beans</div> <div>OJ Cup</div> <div>Fresh Fruit</div> <div>Teddy Grahams</div> <div>1</div>
<div>Hot Dog</div> <div>A)BBQ Rib Sandwich</div> <div>Sun Chips</div> <div>Baby Carrots</div> <div>Baked Beans</div> <div>Rosy Applesauce</div> <div>11</div>	<div>Chicken Gravy</div> <div>A)Polish Sausage</div> <div>Mashed Potatoes</div> <div>Peas / Roll</div> <div>Lettuce Salad</div> <div>Baked Apple Slices</div> <div>12</div>	<div>Chicken Nuggets</div> <div>Tritater</div> <div>Green Beans</div> <div>Veggies</div> <div>Dinner Roll</div> <div>Fruit Cocktail</div> <div>13</div>	<div>Pizza – Cheese / Pepperoni</div> <div>Corn</div> <div>Lettuce Salad</div> <div>Pears</div> <div>14</div>	<div>Cheese Quesadilla</div> <div>Corn</div> <div>Salsa</div> <div>Lettuce Salad</div> <div>Fresh Fruit</div> <div>8</div>
<div>Chicken Tenders</div> <div>Mashed Potatoes / Gravy</div> <div>Broccoli / Roll</div> <div>Lettuce Salad</div> <div>Pineapple / Mandarin Oranges</div> <div>18</div>	<div>Corn Dog</div> <div>Potato Smiles</div> <div>Baked Beans</div> <div>Veggies</div> <div>Rosy Applesauce</div> <div>19</div>	<div>Italian Dunkers</div> <div>Marinara Sauce</div> <div>Corn</div> <div>Lettuce Salad</div> <div>Fresh Fruit</div> <div>20</div>	<div>No School</div> <div>MEA</div> <div>21</div>	<div>Tacos – Beef</div> <div>Lettuce / Cheese / Salsa</div> <div>Fiesta Beans</div> <div>OJ Cup</div> <div>Fresh Fruit</div> <div>15</div>
<div>Nachos – Beef / Cheese</div> <div>Lettuce / Onions / Salsa</div> <div>Refried Beans</div> <div>OJ Cup</div> <div>Fresh Fruit</div> <div>25</div>	<div>Cinnamon Roll</div> <div>Cheese Omelet</div> <div>Steamed Broccoli</div> <div>Hashbrown Patty</div> <div>Baked Apple Slices</div> <div>26</div>	<div>Spaghetti – Meatballs</div> <div>Garlic Bread</div> <div>Green Beans</div> <div>Lettuce Salad</div> <div>Pears</div> <div>27</div>	<div>Chicken Nuggets</div> <div>Tritater</div> <div>Corn</div> <div>Veggies</div> <div>Roll</div> <div>Fruit Cocktail</div> <div>28</div>	<div>No School</div> <div>MEA</div> <div>22</div>
				<div>Hamburger</div> <div>A)Sloppy Joes</div> <div>Sun Chips</div> <div>Lettuce / Tomatoes</div> <div>Pickles / Onions</div> <div>Orange Wedges</div> <div>29</div>



# Thompson

from Page 1

continued focus on the district literacy initiative as it applies to the intermediate grades.

In the intermediate grades we see not only a need for

**‘We are anticipating the creation of some really fun traditions this year.’**

strong literacy instruction, but also a new focus on what literacy looks like in a variety of content areas. For example, what does it mean to be literate in the area of health and fitness? How can we encourage this disciplinary literacy in our physical education classes?

**Learning Environment:** We know that kids learn best in a



**The district literacy initiative is continuing this year with practices differentiated for different schools and grades.**

safe and positive learning environment. This year we are committing to identifying ways to build community throughout the school with a focus on what is developmentally appropriate for students in grades four, five and six.

We are anticipating the

creation of some really fun traditions this year! Additionally, the building is renewing its focus on PBIS, or Positive Behavior Interventions and Strategies, that will give us a school-wide framework for supporting student behavior in a consistent and positive way.

## **Social Emotional Learning:**

In the intermediate grades, we know it is vital for our students to feel supported in the area of academics, but also in the development of their social skills and emotional coping skills. We know that these elements are a key to students experiencing happiness and success at DIS.

Our focus this year will be on building strong relationships between students, and also between students and staff members so that each and every student has at least one positive adult connection while they are at school.

Finally, we are layering over all of these efforts a research-based approach to addressing what our students need from a developmental perspective.

There is a lot for us to dig into this year, but we know it is the right work for our students. And with the hard work of a committed and capable staff, I am confident DIS will have one of its best years yet!



## Relay race fans

DIS students have enjoyed the start of the 2021-22 school year, with Homecoming Week serving as a recent highlight. These students were entertained as their teachers took part in a relay race on Friday, Oct. 1.

## 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.



This e-newsletter is published by District Communications Coordinator Paul Downer. Contact Paul at 763.972.3365, x1911, or [paul.downer@delanoschools.org](mailto:paul.downer@delanoschools.org).



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