



# MUSTANG MONTHLY™

VOLUME 23  
ISSUE 5  
January 2023

Empowering Students to Take Charge of Their Future.



Each new year brings new opportunities. I'm so excited to see what's in store for our school district in 2023. I hope the holiday break was filled with memorable moments, shared with those you care deeply for.

I'm returning to the office this week filled with excitement and optimism. I'm excited to see the growth that students will make in the new calendar year. I'm optimistic that we can hit the ground running in 2023! Maybe our district's New Year's Resolution can be one of health for students and staff!?

In December, we reached the 10% student absentee rate threshold across our district. As soon as we hit 10%, we communicated our numbers to the Iowa Department of Public Health and will continue to follow their guidance. It's also important to note that the IDPH requests our district to report the illnesses circulating in our district. This places an added importance on the dialogue between school nurses and families, especially when students have been in a district building while sick.

These numbers are not unique to Dallas Center-Grimes. Other districts in central Iowa and across the state of Iowa are experiencing similar levels of illness. The illnesses include the common cold, influenza, RSV and COVID-19.

Our staff members continue to work tirelessly, focusing on the goal of creating educational opportunities for our students. Teachers get sick too, but DCG remains committed to providing excellent educational opportunities to our students, even with several team members fighting through illnesses at home.

#### *Notes from DCG Nursing Team:*

Wash your hands - before meals, after sneezing, before working with others

Use hand sanitizer

Cover your coughs and sneezes

Stay home when you are sick. Students may return to school after 24 fever-free hours. The fever-free "timer" begins when fever-reducing medication use has stopped.

Make sure your contact information is updated in Infinite Campus.

I appreciate your dedication to this issue. Working together, we will get through this!

Sincerely,

**Scott Grimes**

Superintendent



## CALENDAR AT-A-GLANCE

Tuesday, January 3rd - Classes Resume

Wednesday, January 11th - Early Dismissal

Monday, January 16th - No School - MLK Day - Teacher Workday

Wednesday, January 25th - Early Dismissal

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Home of the Mustangs



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

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## REGISTRATION PERIOD OPENS SOON

**Registration for 2023-24 School Year** - The registration period for the 2023-24 school year will begin on February 1st. To project enrollment numbers, please register incoming students as soon as possible. Use the QR code (right) for a direct link to our registration page.



**Computer Access:** If needed, a kiosk is available at the DCG Administration Building, located at 2405 W. 1st Street in Grimes.

**Key Dates:** If your child will be 5 on or before September 15, 2023, register for kindergarten. If your child will be 4 on or before September 15, 2023, register for 4-year-old preschool. If your child will be 3 on or before September 15, 2023, register for 3-year-old preschool.

**Families With Students Currently Enrolled at DCG:** Use your Infinite Campus Portal Account to access Online Registration. You will be able to add a student to your account if you have a child that will be entering the district for the first time (preschool, kindergarten, or another grade level.)

**Families With Students New to the DCG District:** Follow the steps listed on the district website: [www.dcschools.com](http://www.dcschools.com), registration tab or quick link.

### Preschool Information:

**4-year-old program:** Registrations are accepted on a first come, first serve basis until all spots are filled. When the program is full, your child will be placed on a waiting list.

**3-year-old program:** To be eligible for a random selection to fill a preschool spot, register between Feb. 1st and Feb. 15th. If you register after Feb 15th, your child will automatically be placed on a waiting list.

**Athletic Registration:** Athletic Registration in rSchool for 7th-12th grade athletes will not start until July 1, 2023. The school will send email reminders as July 1 approaches.

**Registration Fees:** Registration fees will not be available for payment until July 1, 2023.

# HIGH SCHOOL



**Mock Interviews** - Dallas Center-Grimes High School students participated in mock interviews with local business partners. These students are currently enrolled in our Independent Living class and have worked through the stages of future employment. Topics included resume building, importance of insurance and what to look for in an interview. This is an exciting time for our students! Thanks to our communities for helping pave the way!

**Driver's Education** - Spring sessions are set for Driver's Education through the Triple "R" Driving School.

Session 1: Jan. 9-20

Session 2: March 20-31

Session 3: April 17-28

Registration information can be found on our district website. The cost for all spring classes is \$335.

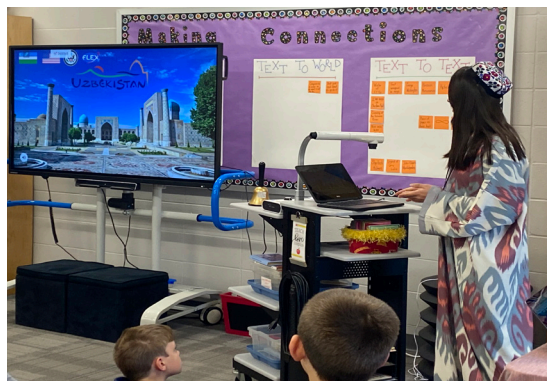


**Career Day at DCG HS** - Dallas Center-Grimes High School will be hosting a Career Day on Thursday, April 20th from 1:15 PM-3:15 PM for 9th-12th grade students. We are hoping to have over 45 different careers represented in various fields and industries from the area. Students will have the chance to learn about 3 different careers from professionals in a classroom setting. This event will be an opportunity for our high school students to navigate different career options directly from professionals in our community.

We will also be hosting a job fair that day which will be held in the Meadows high school gym approximately 11:30 AM-1 PM. We are looking for companies who are interested in connecting with our students as potential employees either for summer/part-time work or seniors going into the workforce. If interested in participating, please contact Ben Twigg (ben.twigg@dcgschools.com). More information will be provided to participants closer to the event.

## Learning about Uzbekistan -

Students at DCG Middle School received a powerful presentation from Marjona, a foreign exchange student from Uzbekistan. Marjona shared the customs, food and daily life in Uzbekistan!



**Angel Account** - Looking for a way to help a neighbor in need? Consider giving to the DCG Angel Account. This fund helps students who do not qualify for free or reduced meals, but still have a need for our support. Angel Funds are provided to accounts in an equal distribution to children with negative meal balances. The DCG Nutrition department must balance the desire to provide for our hungry children with the demands of maintaining the financial viability of the school's food service operation. There is an Angel Account donation link on RevTrak!



## Bus Driver Training -

Dallas Center-Grimes bus drivers worked through de-escalation and response strategies in a professional learning setting in December. Our drivers are an asset to our district and model #dcgexcellence with their willingness to learn and collaborate together!

**Graduation Day** - We are excited to celebrate the Class of 2023 at their commencement ceremony. Mark your calendars for Friday, May 26!

## OAK VIEW



**Oak View Cookie Challenge** - FCS students at Oak View are getting ready for their Kitchen Chemistry unit. As a preview of their upcoming learning, they are participating in a "Cookie Challenge." 8th graders were given the original Nestle cookie recipe and tasked with adding their own "flavor" to it.



**Computer Science Education Week** - December 5-9 was Computer Science Education Week in Iowa. We'd like to thank our partners at the AEA for helping guide the learning for our elementary students. It was also pretty special to watch our high school students who are enrolled in the Computer Science class, spending time with our youngest students. Their session together focused on coding. Computer science continues to be a popular topic throughout our district and we are thankful for these learning opportunities!



**Middle School Mock Trial**  
The Middle School Mock Trial State Tournament concluded in December. This was such a great season for our middle schoolers!

**Team Awards-**  
1) Team Evil Refuse Container competed and placed in the top 30 (of

130 teams across the state).

2) Team Coefficient of Friction took home 9th place overall and won the Critelli award for Sportsmanship.

**Individual Awards-**

3) Nash Townsend of DCG Middle School won outstanding attorney.

4) Evie Dahm of Oak View won outstanding witness.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL



**Learning the English Language, One Shape at a Time -**

Zach Krueger is a sign language interpreter at Dallas Center-Grimes Middle School. This year, he's working with Ashlyn and the two have created a powerful bond. Mr. Krueger developed a sentence structure, symbol system, designed to help Ashlyn communicate more efficiently. A square represents a noun. A circle stands for a verb. Adjectives are triangles.

"The ball is on the box is exactly opposite of the box is on the ball," Krueger says. "You can have the word "box", the word "ball", the word "on", but if you don't have the structure, you have a 50-50 shot of being able to communicate what it is you are trying to communicate."

Thanks to Mr. Krueger for sharing his innovative ideas in our classroom. Watching these two work together is a powerful experience!

# ELEMENTARY



**STEM at South Prairie -** Fourth grade students at South Prairie Elementary worked through STEM activities with a Thanksgiving theme! They were faced with three tasks - helping the Mayflower float, protecting pilgrims in a shelter and harvesting pumpkins. Watching our students work together in these activities is inspiring.

**Kindergarten Partner Work -** Students at North Ridge Elementary are working on their words together! The lesson started with word families and then expanded to a partner exercise with "real words" on their whiteboards. It's fun to see the conversations take place between classmates and all of the creative ways they can build on their learning together. Great job kindergartners!



**Leading the Way at DCE -** Leaders in Mrs. Davison's 4th grade class are spreading some extra cheer this year. Every Thursday, they spend 15 minutes focusing on kindness. We think of our teachers, paraeducators and most of all, students, to boost weekly. We call it Kindness Mail. Students love brightening someone's day and focus on writing what they would want to hear on a low or bad day. Every Friday morning Mrs. Davison, delivers the mail to all teachers and they hand it out to students who might need a little extra love. Pictured (left) - Kensi Decker, Sylvia Clegg, Maybellene Crow, Roc Johnson, Sam Smith

**Holiday Cheer -** Fourth graders in Mrs. Washington's class at North Ridge Elementary shared their holiday spirit in song. Thanks to these students for spreading smiles throughout their building!



**Taher Update -** Corporate Chef Chris Murray stopped by our cafeterias in December to serve Hawaiian Island Street Tacos, Pineapple Fried Rice and Sweet Mango Slaw. Our students were also able to visit with Chef Chris to learn how this dish was made. This meal was served at DCG High School, Oak View and DCG Middle School. Thanks to Chef Chris for providing this opportunity!



**Civic Engagement Day -** Fourth grade students at North Ridge Elementary took part in Civic Engagement Day on December 9. The lesson showcased the importance of engaging in our communities. Students learned from the Polk County Sheriff's Office, a local realtor and an Air Force Captain. What a fun learning experience for our students!

# ACTIVITIES



**DCG Musical Performance** - We have some incredibly talented musicians at DCG High School. Our choirs and band performed at the Grimes Chamber & Economic Development December meeting. This was a special time to showcase our students. They are sensational every single time they step on the stage!



**Oak View Band** - The following students were accepted to the 2023 Orpheus Middle School Honor Band on Tuesday, January 17th at Simpson College: Cedar Bandy, Gabe Bennett, Aaron Bonefas, Rory Kading, Adrian Ibarra, Daphne Kallman, Adeline Rowe. Congratulations!

**Oak View Jazz** - We have 2 jazz bands this year split by grade level. Our performance schedule this year is as follows.

*Thursday, January 5, 2023* - Oak View Jazz Band and Show Choir Preview Concert at 7:00 in the Oak View Gym

*Saturday, January 14, 2023* - DCG Jazz Festival at Oak View. 7th-grade performs at 7:30 am & 8th-grade performs at 6:00 pm

**Clubs Begin at Oak View** - It's an exciting time for students at Oak View! The photo with this story is showcasing our E-Sports club, led by Konnor Gifford. Through their first couple of practices, you can already see a sense of pride and commitment from the students involved. We are so excited to see the investment into our school's clubs and thankful for the opportunities they provide. Our E-Sports team says they are looking forward to competing for the high school team in a couple of years!



**Choir Tour** - Our DCG High School Singers took a tour of our district's elementary schools in December. The smiles and cheers from our youngest students made this quite the event. Thanks to Director of Choral Activities Eric Mohils for his dedication to the program and for making this such a special day!

The **DCG Large Group Speech team** (photo left) is busy preparing for the District Speech Contest scheduled for January 21 at Johnston Middle School. This year, the team has 120 students preparing 27 events for contest. Students rehearse their events once a week to prepare for District competition where they can move on to State with a I rating from the judge. Valuable skills are being learned along the way as students gain self-confidence in themselves through their performances.

Parent Night will be held in the High School auditorium on Friday, Jan 6 at 6:00 PM. This event is open to the public for a free-will donation.

**Future Mustang Soccer Camp** - The 2023 Mustangs (Boys and Girls) coaches and athletes will be conducting a soccer skills clinic for boys and girls in grades K-8.

*Date:* Sunday February 26 at the DCG Meadows gymnasium

*Grades:* K - 2: 1:00 - 2:15PM | Grades 3 - 5: 2:45 - 4:15 PM | Grades 6 - 8: 4:30 - 6:00 PM

If you have any questions, please contact Dan James ([dan.james@dcg-schools.com](mailto:dan.james@dcg-schools.com)) or Collin Lane ([collin.lane@dcgschools.com](mailto:collin.lane@dcgschools.com)).

**Future Mustang Girls Soccer Camp** - The 2023 Mustang coaches and athletes will be conducting a soccer multi-weekend skills camp for future soccer players in grades 2-6.

*Dates:* Saturday, Feb 11, 18th and 25 at the Oak View gymnasium

*Time:* 8:00 AM - 9:30 AM. Registration will begin 15 minutes prior to the start of the clinic.

More information (including registration info) can be found on DCG's EBackpack site. This can be found at [DCGschoools.com](http://DCGschoools.com)

# ACTIVITIES



**Instrumental Music Success** - Eight Dallas Center-Grimes instrumental music students were selected to participate in the Iowa All-State Music Festival. Through a highly competitive audition process, these musicians were able to rehearse and perform with the top 2% of all musicians from around the state of Iowa. Membership in one of the All-State ensembles is the highest honor that an Iowa high school music student can receive. The concert was held on Saturday, November 21, at Hilton Coliseum and later broadcast on IPTV on Thanksgiving night. The 2022 All-State instrumentalists include:

Ella Christensen-French Horn (orchestra) - Isabell Schall-Alto Saxophone (band) - Dante Chittenden-Tenor Saxophone (band) - Ryan Fitch -Trumpet (band) - Jack Crilly-Cornet (band)- Lauren Ihde-Trombone (band) Anna O'Tool-Clarinet (band) - Emma Altman-Clarinet (band).

Of special note, students auditioned for chair placements within their sections on the first day of the festival. The following DCG students earned first chair designations in their ensembles:

Ella Christensen: 1st chair French Horn - Jack Crilly: 1st chair Cornet - Ryan Fitch: 1st chair Trumpet

The following DCG students were chosen as alternates for the band. In the event that another student was unable to perform at the concert, these students would be asked to take their place:

Ethan Ibarra (Baritone Saxophone) and Brady Kinman (Trombone)



**DCG Dance Performs at State Competition-** The DCG Varsity Dance Team competed in the State Championships on Friday, December 2. The team competed with 3 group routines and 6 solos. The team placed 4th in Class VII Hip Hop, 5th in Class VII Jazz and 8th in Class XI Pom. DCG Dance also received an Academic Excellence Award for having a team GPA between 3.5 and 4.0. Four of the six soloists also came home with a Division I Rating. The team will be performing at several DCG Varsity Basketball Games in January and February, along with holding their annual Youth Dance Clinic in February.



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## POSTAL CUSTOMER



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**12 Days of Kindness at DCG Middle School** - It's been a special couple of weeks for our middle school students. They capped off their 12 Days of Kindness event with a historic food donation at the Dallas Center Food Pantry. In fact, students brought in 3,285 items for their donation drive!! This is the largest single-day donation in Dallas Center Food Pantry history. Students were invested in this project from the very first day and were full of smiles on donation day. Thanks to this group for truly making a difference in our community. The middle school team would also like to thank the Grimes Hy-Vee for their help! Mr. Heinemann (5th grade) and Mr. White's (6th grade) homeroom brought in the most donations, so they got to drop off the food at the food pantry!