



MUSTANG MONTHLY™

VOLUME 23
ISSUE 6
February 2025

Empowering Students to Take Charge of Their Future.

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

I'm writing this message to you on Tuesday, January 21. It's 8:30 am and the feels like temperature is -25! Thanks for all of the ways you support our students and staff, especially on the cold days!



There are two acronyms you will be hearing a lot in the next couple of weeks - PPEL and SAVE. PPEL stands for Physical Plant & Equipment Levy. It's one of the primary revenue sources for funding school infrastructure and equipment needs.

SAVE is connected to DCG's Revenue Purpose Statement (RPS) A district's RPS describes how schools can spend the one-cent sales tax that the legislature has dedicated to Iowa schools. The district is seeking voter approval of a new RPS that would cover the duration of the penny sales tax (SAVE) under Iowa law through 2050 and will allow our district to utilize funds available due to the extension.

The communities of Grimes and Dallas Center will be voting on a renewal of PPEL and SAVE in an election on Tuesday, March 4, 2025.

PPEL and SAVE funds ensure Dallas Center-Grimes CSD will have dollars for new projects, building maintenance, software, and technology in years to come.

**More from Superintendent Blum on Page 4*

CALENDAR AT-A-GLANCE

February 5, 12, 19, 26 - Early Dismissal

Friday, February 28 - No School, Teacher Workday

March 17-21 - Spring Break

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Home of the Mustangs



www.dcgschools.com

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DISTRICT UPDATES

District Wide Registration for the 2025-2026 school year opened online (dcschools.com) February 1. If you do not have a computer to complete the registration, a kiosk is available at the DCG Administration Building located at 2405 W. 1st Street, Grimes.

Families With Students Currently Enrolled at DCG:

Use your 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, "School Registration" tab or quick link.

- If your child will be 5 on or before September 15, 2025, register for kindergarten. - If your child will be 4 on or before September 15, 2025, register for 4-year-old preschool. - If your child will be 3 on or before September 15, 2025, register for 3-year-old preschool. *Optional Kindergarten Registration* – Please complete the registration process using the kindergarten option. Once complete, please email enrollment@dcschools.com to express interest in the optional kindergarten program. Families will receive follow-up communication from building administration.

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 be automatically placed on a waiting list.

Dallas Center-Grimes CSD is excited to announce that Alyson Finley has been named our new **Director of Student Services**.

Finley has nearly 30 years of experience in public education and currently serves as a Director of Student Services in the Des Moines Public School District.

"Humbled. Energized. Ready. I am so excited to join the incredible team at Dallas Center-Grimes, shares Finley. "This important work has been a driving force in my professional career and this role will challenge me, inspire me and fulfill me. I can't wait to get started."



Finley's resume at DMPS also includes stops as a Special Education Lead Support (2010-2017), Special Education Consultant (2008-2010) and Special Education Teacher (2004-2008).

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS



Middle School Food Drive - The DCG Middle School Food Drive was a huge success! Students and staff donated 4,061 items to the Dallas Center Food Pantry! A special shout out to the students in Mr. White's and Mr. Heinemann's classroom for donating the most items this year!

Every Wins Award - A special shout out to DCG High School Social Studies Teacher Heather Every! Mrs. Every was named the Grimes Chamber and Economic Development Educator of the Year for 2024-25. Every's passion for DCG students shines through in every class period. Heather was presented with the award in early January! Thanks for your commitment to DCG Mrs. Every!



Future Freshman Night - The transition to the 2025-26 school year at DCG is underway! Building leaders from Oak View and DCG High School connected with current 8th grade parents. Our team is so excited to walk alongside our students during their path to graduation!

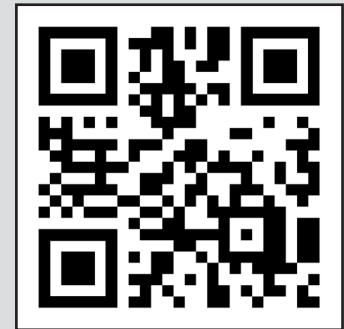
From the DCG PTO - The DCG Elementary Schools PTOs would like to express our deepest gratitude to the generous sponsors of the Glow Run event. Your support has been instrumental in the success of this fundraiser and in enriching the educational experiences of our students. Please use the QR code to the right to view our sponsors! Each of our elementary schools is using the funds raised to enhance their facilities and programs:

South Prairie Elementary: Purchasing new playground equipment to create a fun and safe space for students to play.
North Ridge Elementary: We are providing social events for families to engage outside of classrooms as well as considering options for our outdoor space on the playground.

These initiatives are just a few examples of how your support is making a difference in the lives of our students. Thank you for helping us to create better learning environments for our students!



Mark your calendars! The Dallas Center-Grimes Education Foundation will be hosting a senior scholarship informational event on February 25. This is a great opportunity for seniors to learn more about the DCGEF scholarship application process and get their questions answered ahead of the application opening date of March 1. These scholarships wouldn't be possible without sponsors! Consider partnering with the **DCG** Education Foundation as a scholarship sponsor, where you'll help our students achieve their educational goals and shape a brighter future. If your business or organization would like to sponsor a scholarship, fill out the sponsor donation form before February 15.



Brrrrrrr! - Even though we didn't see a ton of snow at DCG in January, we did see really cold air! A special thank you to all of the parents/guardians/staff members who make the arrival and dismissal routine run smoothly! Thanks for your partnership in this process!



OAK VIEW

World Language Trip - Do you want to travel to Paris and Spain in March of 2026? This adventure offers a unique opportunity for all. It combines a school-sponsored trip, a reputable travel company and the High School World Language Department teachers from DCG who speak the language. We will make stops in Paris, Avignon to see the Pope's palace and Spain, where you'll explore the iconic Sagrada Família Basilica. This trip will create memories that will last a lifetime. If you would like more information, please reach out to laree.hawks@dcgschools.com.

Message from the Superintendent (Cont.) - SAVE and PPEL are two different funding resources; neither will raise taxes if approved. The district needs to have public approval to continue to receive the voter-approved PPEL funding for another 10 years and approval of the SAVE Revenue Purpose Statement to spend the SAVE dollars as needed. SAVE and PPEL do not support salaries or benefits.

If these resources are not approved by the public, DCG will dip into the General Fund for these expenses. In most districts, the General Fund is the primary source of staff salaries. The polls will be open on March 4 from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. If you're unsure about your polling location, you can find it on the Iowa Secretary of State website.
More to come! Stay warm!
- Superintendent Blum

African Drums at Oak View - 7th grade social studies students at Oak View are learning about cultures from around the world. They kicked off their Africa unit with a special presentation from CultureAll. The African Drum was an incredible hands-on experience for all!



The Great American Road Trip at Oak View - English Language Learners at Oak View are wrapping up their Great American Road Trip Food Series in January. They capped off a lesson with DCG's Culinary Educator and spent time cooking a lunch that connected to their studies. What a fun way to celebrate an interactive project!

FROM THE BUILDING



Flag Project - DCG Middle School students partnered with the Grimes American Legion Post 577 and the Dallas Center American Legion Post 49 on a recent project. Students were tasked with writing an essay focused on the American flag. This essay focused on the history of the flag

and updates to the flag throughout American history. Six students were chosen as finalists – Hannah Patrick, Sawyer Fetrow, Emma Turner, Brooklyn Bell, Asher Bermone and Soo-Rae Nzokwe. Two students, Patrick and Fetrow, were selected as winners and their essays will advance in the competition.

School Board Schedule - The next DCG School Board Meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 24 at 5:30. The meeting will be held in the DCG Administration Office. Agenda and livestream information will be available at DCGSchools.com

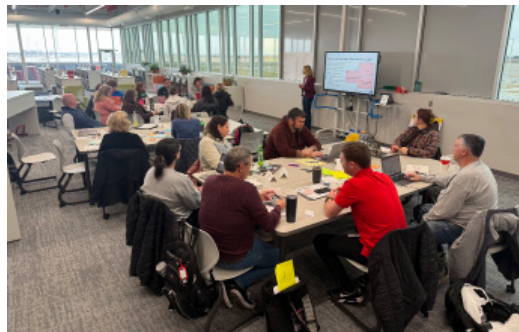
DISTRICT UPDATES



Every Journey Begins with a Single Dot - This is story connecting our classrooms across DCG. The story showcases the power of a single dot and the journey we all take after making our first dot. The dot in this story allows for imagination, creativity and self-discovery. That takes us to DCG High School for a brand-new hallway display. Each member in the DCG Class of 2025 was given a dot to showcase their favorite moments at DCG High School and their plans for the future. They are placed alongside motivational messages from staff members! The DCG Dots will be on display through graduation in May.

Career Day at DCG High School - Dallas Center-Grimes High School will be once again hosting our Biannual Career Day on Friday, March 7th from 1:15 PM-3:00 PM for 9th-12th grade students. We are hoping to have more than 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 an engaging classroom setting. This event will be an opportunity for our high school students to navigate different career options directly from professionals in our community.

Strategic Plan Update - DCG's Strategic Planning team met on Wednesday, January 22 to continue our work together. The meeting was focused on DCG's Theory of Action. What's going well when we as a district/student/parent are at our very best?



How are we united in our pursuit of excellence at DCG? The DCG Theory of Action was created from the feedback that was provided in the Desired Daily Experience surveys that were sent to district stakeholders earlier this winter.

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. There is an Angel Account donation link in the School Store at DCGschoools.com.



Feel the GLOW! - Kindergarten students in Miss Wessling's class at Heritage Elementary cashed in their good behavior points for a GLOW Party in January! Highlighters, sight word glow hunt, glow sticks and a dance party! What an awesome way to celebrate a job well done!

DCG eBackpack - Looking for ways to get involved? The DCG eBackpack is a great community resource. Look for the link to DCG's Ebackpack on the homepage of DCGschoools.com.

ACTIVITIES

DCG Night with the Iowa

Wolves - Act Now! DCG Night with the Iowa Wolves is set for Saturday, February 8! A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Dallas Center-Grimes Education Foundation! Use the QR code below to secure your seat! Go Mustangs! Go Wolves!



Oak View Wrestling Update

- The Oak View Girls Wrestling team is off to a great start in 2025! There are nine girls out for the team this year! One of the season highlights was a home tournament in January that featured 160 competitors!



Hawkeye Visit - The DCG Girls Basketball team spent a morning in Iowa City with the Hawkeyes. DCG Senior Neela Williamson provided this recap: We got the chance to go to the Iowa Women's Basketball practice ahead of our game against Williamsburg. It was so generous of Head Coach Jan Jensen to allow our whole team to come and observe practice and it made for the highlight of my day. We walked into Carver Hawkeye Arena and sat right in the front row. It was so intriguing to not only watch the drills the team was doing but just to listen to the insight and coaching from the whole staff. One thing about them is they have a practice plan and they stick to it! If a drill is set to be 8 minutes long, they will not go over the time, it is straight into the next drill!

It was so fun to be close to the players and watch how they interact with one another. They truly seemed like best friends and found a way to laugh and have fun at times but also lock in and focus on the drill. Our team really resonated to that in a way that we as well like to have a balance of fun times but understand when we need to be serious and refocus. Our team will never forget this experience and we are very grateful to Coach Jones for setting it up and Jan Jensen for allowing us in! A memory made for sure!

Big Choir Weekend - The DCG Singers traveled to Onalaska, Wisconsin in January to compete in the Onalaska Choir Classic Competition. Schools from Iowa and Wisconsin performed in the beautiful First Lutheran Church. This contest has a rich history spanning over 20 years of high quality choral ensembles competing at this event. This was DCG Singers first time competing at this regional contest. At the end of the night, DCG Singers was awarded Grand Champions, beating out every group that performed that day including two previous Grand Champion choirs. The DCG Tenor Section was also awarded "Best Tenor Section" of the day. We are so proud of our students and all of their hard work. Great job DCG Singers!!



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ACTIVITIES



SCIBA Jazz Results - Congratulations to the Dallas Center-Grimes Jazz 1 and Jazz 2 ensembles on their outstanding performances at the SCIBA District Jazz Festival. Jazz 2 placed 5th and the following students received outstanding performer awards: Archer Ervin, Elijah Stevens, Oliver Davidson, Sam Maxfield, and Katelyn Daugherty. Jazz 1 placed 3rd out of fifteen bands and the following students earned outstanding performer awards: Nathan Fitch, Patrick Schmitz, and Ahren Ervin. This is the highest placing in 4A by DCG in the history of the program! They are now also considered for a wildcard bid to the Iowa Jazz Championships in April. Congratulations again to all students in Jazz 1 and Jazz 2 for representing Dallas Center-Grimes with pride and excellence!

2025-26 SCHOOL CALENDAR

DCG CSD's 2025-26 School Calendar is official! Here are some important dates for our community!

August 18-22 - Staff Professional Development

Monday, August 25 - The first day of school at DCG (TK-12). **Tuesday, September 2** - The first day of preschool at DCG. **December 22-January 2** - Winter Break **March 16-20** - Spring Break **Monday, June 1** - Last Day of School for students **Tuesday, June 2** - Last Day for DCG Teachers

Frequently Asked Questions

Is there any potential for the first school day to move off of August 25, pending statewide legislation?

No. DCG CSD's first day is set for Monday, August 25.

Do you have built-in snow days once again this year?

We have just over two built-in days in the 2025-26 school year. If we reach a third snow day (or the equivalent of a third full snow day) during the 2025-26 school year, we will need to extend the school year. Remember late starts and early dismissals also make an impact on these built-in hours. Please note that if there are any late starts on a Wednesday, we will cancel the originally scheduled early dismissal and finish our day at the regular time.

Is the district's shift to a weekly early dismissal schedule permanent?

We are actively seeking feedback from our staff. Surveys have been sent to gauge the effectiveness of our current schedule. We will use this data to coordinate our professional development schedule for the 2025-26 school year and any additional changes moving forward. The 2025-26 school calendar will feature a weekly early dismissal.

The 2025-26 DCG CSD School Calendar is available at DCGSchools.com.

It's also available using the QR code to the right.



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Hayden Wagner (DCG HS Junior), made this realistic fluff salad for our clay unit in Sculpture class. Students were asked to create a food that has historical, cultural, or personal meaning. Skylar Pennington created a realistic drawing of her dog in the animal unit for Art 1. She layered oil pastel and colored pencil to create texture in her drawing. Great work Skylar and Hayden.

