August 2019

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Families,

Welcome back to another awesome year at Davidson! We are so happy to see so many families returning to Davidson and many new families, as well. We are glad you’ve chosen to become a part of our Davidson community. Davidson is made up of a dedicated, committed, and fun-loving staff. Our teachers work tirelessly to provide outstanding learning opportunities for students. All staff members are committed to providing the best possible education, services, and resources for our students and families. Always remember that once you’re a Dragon, you’re always a Dragon.

**Spirit Day Every Friday**

This year’s theme is Red, White and ROAR. ROAR stands for our PBIS expectations: Respectful, On-task, Always Safe, and Responsible. Every student has received a free red, white, and blue Davidson shirt to wear on Spirit Fridays each week. The classes that have 100% of students in their spirit shirts will receive Otter Pops at lunchtime. If you misplace your child’s t-shirt, you can purchase a replacement in the front office for $12.

**Free Breakfast and Lunch**

This year, ALL Davidson students will receive free breakfast and lunch. There is no need to complete an application. We are one of several TUSD schools that earned a federal grant to provide these meals to students free of charge.

**Strive for Less Than Five**

We are beginning a new school-wide attendance initiative this school year. Regular school attendance is critical for your child to be successful. Numerous research studies show a direct correlation between students who attend school on time every day, and those who have academic and social success at school. That’s why this year we want every student to “Strive for Less Than Five” absences for the entire school year.

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% of school days, or 18 days or more, during the school year. That averages out to just 2 days missed each month. Nation-wide, it is estimated that between 5 million and 8 million U.S. students miss nearly a month of school each year. During the 2018-2019 school year, 21% of Davidson students in preschool thru 5th grade, or 1 in 5 students, were chronically absent.
A missed day of school is a missed opportunity. Every day matters. Several research studies support that poor attendance and chronic absenteeism affect success in school. For example:

- Students reporting 3 or more missed days in the month prior to state testing had lower scores in reading and math than students with fewer or no absences. In 4th grade, the absentee student scored an average of a full grade level lower than students without absences.
- Absenteeism in kindergarten can affect whether a student develops the grit and perseverance to succeed in school. A recent study at the University of California showed the negative impact of chronic absenteeism on academic performance and the social-emotional skills needed to persist and engage in learning in kindergarten.
- Absenteeism in preschool and kindergarten can influence whether a child will be retained in third grade. There are several studies that show a connection between chronic absenteeism in the early grades and a child’s ability to read at grade level by 3rd grade.
- Chronic absenteeism is associated with a lack of certain social skills, including the ability to focus and pay attention, work independently, adapt to change, and persist in learning tasks.

Just 1-2 absences a month can have a real impact on student success. We would like to see all students and families strive for less than five absences for the school year. Throughout the year, we will provide a variety of incentives to encourage and reward attendance.

- Every 20 days of perfect attendance, students will continue to receive a Popsicle at lunch time. Look for your student wearing a sticker that reads “I was on time and ready to learn for 20 days!”
- Every month, students with perfect attendance for the month will earn a raffle ticket and the chance to earn special prizes.
- Daily attendance rates by grade level will be posted on the office doors. Every Friday, the grade level with the best attendance for the week will earn a reward.
- An updated Attendance Newsletter will be sent home each month to keep families apprised of our progress.

If your child is ill, he/she should stay home. Students should stay home if they have a fever over 100 degrees and/or severe diarrhea or vomiting. Otherwise, please send students to school. Most often, a student who has minor symptoms such as a headache, allergies, common cold, etc. will feel much better and even forget about their symptoms, once they are at school and become engaged in learning. However, if a student must stay home sick, you will be required to bring a doctor’s note if your child is absent for more than three days. If you do not have a doctor’s note, the absence will be unexcused.

Here are some things parents and families can do to support great attendance:

- Call the school office by 7:30am to report absences.
• Schedule appointments for after school rather than during the school day. If this is not possible, schedule appointments to limit the number of minutes missed from class and have your child return to school immediately after the appointment. Wednesday early release days are great days to set afternoon appointments.
• If your child arrives after 7:40, please escort your child to the office and check in at the front desk. Adults must escort the student to the front office and provide a reason for being late.
• Get a good night’s sleep every night and ensure your child(ren) are well rested and ready!
• Set out clothes and pack backpacks the night before so mornings go smoothly.
• Have a back-up plan for getting to school in case of an emergency.

Important Dates

Tuesday, August 13, 5:30-7:00, Cafeteria and Classrooms- Back to School Night/Title I Meeting
Friday, October 25, 5:30-7:30, Cafeteria and Courtyards- Fall Carnival
Tuesday, October 15, 5:30-7:00, Cafeteria and Library- Literacy Night (“We the People” Artmobile)
Friday, November 15, 5:30-7:00, Cafeteria- Movie Night
Tuesday, December 10, 5:30-7:00, Cafeteria- Winter Fine Arts Festival
Friday, January 24, 5:30-7:00, Cafeteria- Movie Night
Tuesday, February 4, 5:30-7:00, Cafeteria and Courtyard- STEAM Night (“Art in America” Artmobile)
Wednesday, February 19, 8:30 AM-10:30 AM, Playground- Field Day
Friday, March 27, 5:30-7:00, Cafeteria- Spring Family Dance
Friday, April 17, 5:30-7:00, Cafeteria- Movie Night
Tuesday, May 12, 5:30-7:00, Cafeteria- Spring Fine Arts Festival

Parent Teacher Conferences (Early Release at 10:55 Daily):
September 11-13, 2019 and February 13-14, 2020

Holidays/Breaks: No School
Labor Day- September 2, 2019
Fall Break- October 4-11, 2019
Veteran’s Day- November 11, 2019
Thanksgiving Break- November 28-29, 2019
Winter Break- December 20, 2019-January 3, 2020
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day- January 20, 2020
Rodeo Break- February 20-21, 2020
Spring Break- March 13-20, 2020
Spring Holiday- April 10, 2020
It is going to be a great school year! Thank you for sharing your children with us every day. As always, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please don’t hesitate to call, email, or stop by school to talk with me.

Fondly,

Sarah Andricopoulos