

Dakota Valley Upper Elementary/Middle School

Greetings to all of you as we move into this year! I am excited to get school rolling. I appreciate your willingness to be patient as we navigate some change this year. I can assure that are teachers will be prepared and provide some great activities. We have moved to an AB schedule, which means students in 5th – 8th grade will be having their core classes every other day. 4th grade students will have their traditional 7 period schedule. Homeroom teachers will be providing students schedules to you as well. Please reach out to them for question you may have. I have a list of items below that will hopefully answer some of your questions.

Forms:

Included in this letter:

Student Verification Forms-Explained on cover letter in mailer

Homeroom Teachers Form (Teachers will provide you with specific schedules this week)

Parking and Drop Off- Be safe

If you are dropping off your students at school, please do this after 8am, and use the EAST parking lot. Do not use the bus circle drive. Please remind your children to walk on the sidewalk to their respective doors. We will have teachers and signs to help greet the students on Monday.

Virtual Open House

The teachers have recorded a virtual tour of their classrooms and they are housed on the home page of the school website. Click on Virtual Open House and click on all the teachers your students have on their schedules on DDN Campus parent portal

Online Payments

Please use the www.MySchoolBucks.com site to make payments this year. Items like meals, agendas, headphones, computer insurance, PTO, Boosters, and/or Activity tickets need to be paid through www.MySchoolBucks.com. This will make things much easier for you. If you need to pay by check please make separate checks for each item to help with processing and send to the office.

Panther Time

With our new modified block schedule for 5th-8th grade, we have implemented a Panther Time block every other day. This time will be spent in a variety of activities depending on grade level. This will be an enrichment time used to help meet students needs, like technology training, help in core subject areas, enrichment activities, SEL like 7 mindsets activities and much more.

Block Schedules: 5th – 8th grades

This means students will have a core class every other day. They will be called A and B days, similar to our High school. Some benefits are listed below in start well section. **Split Blocks** Some blocks are split by lunch, specials, recess and they show up a little funny on the DDN schedule, They will start the class, go to a special, then come back and finish that core class block. Specials, academic help will be every day as well as lunch 😊. We will start with an A day.

Lunch Time

We are having a limited lunch menu for the beginning of the school year. Hot entrée and a sub will be a choice daily. Ala Carte is available as well. Menu is available on the website. Students will be served all items, they will only be touching their trays as they go through the line. They will eat in cohorts with seating charts. We will try to provide social distancing as much as possible. Teachers will provide the lunch times on their schedule and how that will rotate.

Specials

4th-6th grade specials will rotate each week. 7th and 8th grade specials will be rotating on a 3 ½ week schedule this year. Students will have that special every day for the week or 3 ½ week rotation depending on the grade level. Those rotations will be sent to you and your student and we will keep them updated as we go.

Supplies

Students will bring some supplies the first day of school. Teachers will let you know what items to bring the first day and the other items the next few days.

Lockers

Lockers will be checked out the first day of school. We are encouraging students to utilize their book bags more and lockers less often.

DVUE/MS Start Well Guide Summary for Parents and Students

- The information below is a summary of the DVUE/MS Start Well plan. The summary will highline the structure of the school day and the steps we are taking to keep students safe.

Before school:

- Parents please check your child's health prior to sending them to school. If they have a fever of 100.4 or higher or any other symptoms consistent with COVID-19, do not send your child to school.
- Upon arrival at school, students will be asked to go through their respective door and go to the classroom. (This may change to areas in gyms) Students will be required to wear masks as they arrive to school.
- Breakfast will be available from 8:00am to 8:20am. Students who are interested in eating breakfast will eat in the commons and they will be socially distant from other students.
- We ask that students not arrive before 8:00, unless they have practice or an appointment with a teacher.

During school:

- 5th-8th grade students will be using a modified block schedule.
 - o Provide less movement daily
 - o Provide flexibility to work with students
 - o Provide more time to find gaps in learning from last spring

- Provide flexibility to meet students individual needs
- Provide time schedule flexibility for restrooms, cleaning desks, lunch, and recess.
- If we move to homebased learning, this schedule will be helpful for families as well.
- 4th Grade students will remain on their normal schedule-Each day they will start with their homeroom teacher. Teachers will travel as much as possible.
- Students will remain in cohorts as much as possible, to help prevent close contact to all students in their grades
- Students will travel on the right side of the hallways.
- Students and staff will be required to wear masks during the class periods and while transitioning between classes. If social distancing is possible, students will be allowed to remove their masks.
- Students will be encouraged to use backpacks to carry their school supplies. Students will be assigned lockers but by using backpacks, the hallways will be less congested during passing periods.
- Students will have assigned seats in every class.
- Students will be instructed on proper mask handling, handwashing, etc.

Lunch:

Lunch times will be extended where needed.

- Tables will be spaced as much as possible
- Students will eat in cohorts with seating arrangements
- As soon as students finish eating lunch, they will be required to wear a mask.

Arrival/Dismissal:

- When students arrive at or after 8am please use the respective doors-Teachers will be greeting the students to help with this process.
- At the end of the school day, students will be dismissed by sections and go out assigned doors. Students will wear masks at this time.

Handwashing/Cleaning

Our teaches will be providing time for frequent handwashing and will help educate the students on this process. We will also be cleaning items throughout the day that are touched frequently.

Home-Based Learning

- Staff and students will be begin preparing for home-based learning during the 1st day of school. We plan on staying in school all year but if we must move to home-based learning, we need the transition to immediate and effective.
- Staff will train students on how to use Google Classroom, access Planbook, access their email account for some grades, and how to join a Zoom meeting.
- All DV courses will use Google Classroom as the learning management system to maintain consistency for students and parents.

I hope this email answers many of your questions. We will need to be flexible and will make changes as needed to help the students. I appreciate your patience and looking forward to a great school year. Please ask your classroom teachers with specific schedule questions.

Sincerely,

Mr. Leberman