

LUMBERJACK LEDGER

FALL 2024 - FAMILY & STAFF UPDATES



DCS Families and Staff,
Welcome back to the 2024-2025 school year! We're excited to see our students on Thursday, September 5th. Until then, enjoy the last few days of summer. Summer at DCS was very busy for staff and students. Over 125 students attended our programs this summer making this our biggest summer ever! We also served a lot of free breakfasts and lunches to the kids in our community thanks to our summer café program. There's so much going on at DCS this year. I've included some of the highlights in this newsletter. I hope the information and the dates are helpful as you plan each month. We'd love for you to join us at family events and we welcome your participation. If you ever have any questions, please reach out to me at dcook@deposit.stier.org or visit our website and Facebook page. ~Denise Cook, Superintendent

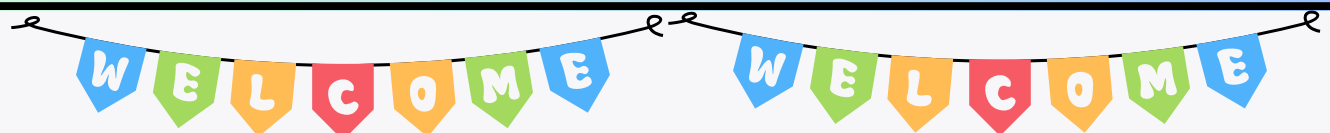
IMPORTANT DATES

Don't forget to
mark your
calendars for
these events!

9/5: 1st Day of School for Students
9/9: Board of Education Mtg. 6 PM
Elem. Library
10/3: MS/HS Picture Day
10/10: Open House/Family Night
6-7 PM Elementary
6:30-7:30 PM MS/HS
10/14: No School
10/22: Elementary Picture Day
10/31: Halloween Parade @1:30
PM



The annual District calendar will be sent to all of our families through the US mail so you should receive it soon. In addition to important dates, you can find many District policies in the calendar. This year, we will continue our early release days every Friday at 2PM. This early dismissal provides time for our teachers to collaborate on a district-wide basis as they work to review student information and improve student outcomes. We are always working to find ways to help our students achieve. This time to share ideas, plans, data and strategies is critical to the success of our teachers and students.



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We're excited to welcome our new staff to the DCS family and community. This year we have very few changes in our staffing. Please congratulate the following:

- Kristen McNamara, Kindergarten
- Mike Massaro, Shared Band Instructor for Deposit and Hancock
- Jennifer Zandt, Food Service
- Cheyanne Tarbox, Instructional Aide
- Ciara Bouhouris, Interim Director of Special Education/Related Services
- Ines Diaz, Transportation Monitor
- Jessie Decker, Transportation Monitor and Driver Trainee
- Dawn Ivans, Driver Trainee
- Bob Hagerman, Substitute Driver

**NEW
UPDATE**

We are also sad to say goodbye to DCS staff who were an important part of our team:

- Tom Halbert, Math Teacher: Tom retired after 30 years at DCS and we wish him the best of luck on this new and fun chapter of life.
- Rick Marland: Rick served in a variety of roles for DCS including food service, custodial, and instructional aide. Rick and his wife, Katie, and their children have moved for sunnier weather in South Carolina. Congrats to them all!
- Judy Tarbox, Instructional Aide: Judy retired after more than 30 years of service to Deposit CSD. Judy was dedicated and loved her job. Congratulations, Judy!
- Jannette Mooney, Clerical: Jannette served the staff and students at Deposit CSD for almost 25 years. She always greeted us with a warm welcome and happy smile. We'll miss you, Jannette!
- Treyvor Bigelow, Long-Term Substitute: Treyvor filled the role of 4th grade teacher for Mrs. Finley while she was on leave. Thank you, Treyvor, for your commitment to the kids at DCS! We hope you'll be back!

STAFF CHANGES:

- As a result of Tom Halbert's retirement, we are pleased to have Ms. Megan Miller taking over the middle school math position. Megan has extensive experience teaching middle school math and we're excited to have her back for the 24-25 school year.
- Michelle Riter, veteran teacher at DCS, will be teaching our littlest Lumberjacks this year as she makes the switch from STEAM teacher to UPK teacher. We're excited to see Mrs. Riter and Mrs. Davis team up to give our youngest students a great start to their educational journey at DCS.
- Lydia Buffington, veteran kindergarten teacher, gets promoted to 1st grade this year! Lydia is an expert in early childhood education and we're thankful that she'll join Mrs. Molino to make an impressive 1st grade team.



Congratulations!



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**COMING
SOON**



New DCS Food Center to open in October!

DCS is proud to announce that we've received a grant that will allow us to open a School Food Center on campus beginning October 2024. Our partner, The Food Bank of the Southern Tier, has provided the district with an industrial refrigerator, freezer, and storage shelving. Additionally, food from the Food Bank will be ordered and shipped regularly at no cost to the district. The Food Center will be available to families who live in the Deposit School District boundaries on Tuesdays from 8-11 AM and Wednesdays from 12-3 PM. These hours provide an alternative to the evening hours that are available at the local food pantry. DCS is working closely with all of our community partners to ensure our services offer more options and food security for our community. The Food Center will be located in the back room of the bus garage to provide easy, drive up access to our families. More information to come! Thank you to our Community Schools Coordinator, Laura Bigelow, and Assistant Coordinator, Megan Decker!

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS: Last year, we finalized the capital improvement project that was planned by the community in 2021. This included a lot of upgrades to the MS/HS including new science labs, new office areas, a new library/student cafe space, new bathroom facilities, and an upgrade to the auditorium. In March, 2024, voters approved a project that will allow us to upgrade our security systems. That project will begin as soon as New York State approves the final plans. In the meantime, we're planning our next larger facilities project. A committee of architects, staff, students, and community members has already given input to help prioritize the needs of the district. Some needs that have been identified include district-wide air conditioning, window replacements in the MS/HS, and installing a new bathroom and playground in the elementary building. The actual list of needs and wants is extensive. Once a list of priorities and costs have been identified, we'll provide additional information to the entire community. Don't forget that the taxpayers will have the final say as to whether or not the project gets approved. These projects require careful financial planning so that the end result is a zero additional tax impact for our community. More information will be coming in the next few months.

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Below are updates about our cell phone policy. Please take a minute to read the information. Thank you to all of you who participated in surveys and the meeting over the summer.



CELL PHONE POLICY UPDATE (Policy 73)

Student cell phone use during instructional classes has become a huge disruption to the learning process. Like most districts, Deposit CSD has had a student cell phone policy for over 6 years. This year, it became critical for districts to review their policy and set clear, understandable rules for appropriate cell phone use. In the survey we conducted in August, approximately 70% of families and 90% of staff agreed that cell phones are a concern in the classroom. At the same time, families want to be able to contact their children and want them to have a phone for reasons of safety. You can see the current policy, the newly recommended policy, the FAQ, the survey results, the community meeting presentation, and the addition to the student handbook about cell phone consequences here: <https://www.depositcsd.org/protected/ArticleView.aspx?iid=500BY0&dasi=33P0>

In a nutshell:

- MS/HS students may bring their phones to school and may use them before school, during lunch, and after school (this includes on school transportation). During instructional classes, phones must be kept in lockers.
- Elementary students may bring their phones or devices to school but must keep them in their backpacks or other location as designated by the building principal.
- Consequences for having phones during instructional classes will be progressive as described in the student Code of Conduct and handbook. (see addendum at link above).
- If families need to contact their student during the day, they should call or email the main office.
- The Board of Education will review the proposed policy at the September 9th meeting at 6 PM in the elementary library. Board of Education meetings are public meetings.
- Students and staff will receive training about the updated procedures on the first days of school.
- Please communicate these expectations to your students. Many students exhibit signs of “addiction” to their phones. We expect some challenges with these changes, but believe the positive effects outweigh those challenges. Let us know if we can help in any way.

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AT THE LUMBERJACK SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM, OUR STUDENTS AND STAFF WORKED HARD AND PLAYED HARD. LEARNING AND FUN GO HAND IN HAND WITH LIFE SKILLS THAT WILL SERVE THEM FOREVER.

