



Uniquely Davis

Superintendency responds to report

On Thursday, October 21, The U.S. Department of Justice concluded its three-year long investigation of racial harassment in the Davis School District. That investigation concluded in an agreement between the District and Department which outlines specific steps and actions that will need to take place over the next four years.

The investigation focused mainly on allegations of ongoing racial harassment of Black and Asian American students over the past five years. The Department found sufficient evidence to support the allegations and to conclude that the district has engaged in “pervasive racial harassment and other forms of racial discrimination in public school (that) violate the Constitution’s most basic promise of equal protection. This agreement will help generate the institutional change necessary to keep Black and Asian American students safe.”

In entering into this agreement, the Davis School District does not challenge the findings of the investigation. We thank those who came forward with their stories, however hurtful those are to relive, and we sincerely apologize that these incidents occurred in Davis School District. Upon those stories, this agreement has been built. And upon this

agreement, a better Davis School District will rise. As difficult as it is to admit our shortcomings and failures, that is what we must do to start on the path to improvement. We can be better, and we must be better.

We now dedicate ourselves to the work before us. Over the next year, DSD will contract with a consultant who specializes in racial harassment, school policy, and professional development. With that expertise, we will develop an Office of Equal Opportunity which will be charged with leading our efforts in training and investigation of racial harassment.

In tandem with our responsibility to provide for quality academic education, this work of community building, of establishing, nourishing, and maintaining a culture where all feel valued and appreciated is equally our responsibility. In fact, without that feeling of value and belonging, quality academic education is difficult to attain.

Over the next months and years, as we work through the opportunities found in our agreement, we will continue to provide updates as to our progress. We look forward to this work together.

— Davis School District Superintendency

District increases daily pay to fill substitute openings

Substitute teachers will see a bump in pay beginning with the Oct. 16-Nov. 15 pay period.

The district recently increased the full day amount to \$85 for a full day for non-degreed substitutes, \$105 a day for degreed substitutes and \$113 a day for certified or licensed substitutes. The long-term daily pay for degreed and licensed substitutes increases to \$140 a day. Long-term includes substitutes who spend 20 consecutive days in a classroom.

Anjel Hislop, District SubSystems



Christine Bush chats with students at Taylor Elementary. Bush is a regular substitute in Davis School District schools.

Specialist, said the hope is that the pay increase will encourage more individuals already on the substitute list to take open jobs. Currently, the district

lists nearly 2,000 individuals in its substitute pool. A shortage occurs, she said, when those in the pool don’t choose to fill open jobs.

Hislop said recruitment of substitute teachers has never been difficult in the Davis School District. In fact, a recent call for applicants brought in 400 more possible substitutes. Applicants for substitute teaching must meet the minimum requirement of having a high school diploma and being at least 20 years of age. Hislop said they also prefer applicants to have experience working with K-12 age children

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School enrollment permit deadlines set

Changes impact ninth-grade participation policy

Parents considering enrolling their student in a school other than their boundary school will want to make note of two upcoming dates.

The boundary permit application window

opens Dec.

1 and closes

on the third

Friday in

February (Feb.

18, 2022). The

application will

be accessible online through a parent's myDSD account.

Parents can apply for one of three open enrollment permits — K-6, 7-9 and 9-12. The purpose of the 9-12 permit, said Casey Layton, District Responsive Services Director, is to accommodate those wishing to participate in extra-curricular activities at the high school they desire to attend.

Recent policy changes approved by a 6-1 vote of the Board of Education of the Davis School District established the new permit process. Also altered was the ninth-grade participation policy which now allows an eighth-grade student to apply for a 9-12 permit and try out for extracurricular activities, such as athletics, in ninth grade at the high school they intend to attend.

"This brings us in line with the rest of the state," said Layton. "We were the only district in the state with a ninth-grade participation rule. The change is that nobody could play at a different high school other than their

boundary school. This now allows students to apply for a permit in eighth-grade looking to where they want to be in 10th grade."

However, the change in the process does not change the number of students allowed at any particular school. Permits will still only be given to 1.5 percent above capacity of a school. All applications that meet the deadline

"This brings us in line with the rest of the state."

— Casey Layton,

District Responsive Services Director

go into a pool and are then randomly drawn to reach the cut-off

number. Once that number is reached, applications received before the deadline that were not drawn will be placed on a waiting list.

Unlike previous years, late permit applications will not be added to that waiting list. Only schools with openings — having not reached the 1.5 percent above capacity — will be available for late application beginning March 1 and continuing through the first semester break of the upcoming school year. Out-of-district applications will be allowed only in schools that have not reached capacity.

The district also will continue to honor the variances students received in the past. Layton said this means a student can continue at their variance school through the highest year available at that school — sixth grade for elementary, ninth grade for junior high and 12th grade for high school.

Out-of-district students will need to contact Student & Family Resources at 801-402-5159.

Superintendency Message

Welcome back home

Welcome back to Davis School District.

Why a "welcome back" since we are already fast approaching the end of the first term of the 2020-2021 school year? Why? Because we are all working and adjusting to getting back to normal, or at least as normal as we can be.

Since March of 2019, we have all had to adjust our lives because of COVID-19. We had to assess our lives, seek balance among several factors: health, education, jobs, family, travel, to name a few.



Zurbuchen

Last school year, having to make the difficult decision as to how and where best to educate your children as safely as possible, some families chose to go fully online or to home school altogether. As a school district, we have and continue to support

that decision by all families. Consequently, last school year found our enrollment both shifting to Davis Connect and to home schooling.

This school year, district enrollment grew by more than 1,800 students compared to last year. Many of these students are returning to Davis from Davis Connect as well as home schooling. To those students whose delivery of education was interrupted last year, but have found their way back to Davis School District, we say "Welcome Back."

Welcome back from your teachers and staff. We missed you.

Welcome back to your friends and classmates. They have missed you.

Welcome back to your school activities. They are better for having you involved.

Welcome back to in-class instruction. Our classrooms are richer for your involvement.

Our house is best when it is full. Full of laughter, full of students, full of learning.

Welcome back home.

— John Zurbuchen,
Assistant Superintendent

Employees, students honored for achievements



The Woods Cross High Girls Tennis Team.

- The **Woods Cross High School girls tennis team** secured the State 5A title. **Sage Bergeson, ninth-grader at Mueller Park Junior High**, also received 1st place in singles, and **Emmy Richards, ninth grader at Mueller Park Junior High**, 2nd place in singles.

- **Northridge High School's Unified Soccer team** is the state champion, winning first place in the state soccer tournament for Unified Soccer, hosted by Special Olympics of Utah and Real Salt Lake. **Syracuse High School's Unified Soccer team** placed third in Division Four.



Wolf

- The **Farmington Junior High Jazz Ensemble**, directed by **Heath Wolf**, was selected as a national winner in the 2021 Mark of Excellence/National Jazz Honors Project.

- **Marci Roper from Syracuse Elementary** received a recognition from the National Energy Foundation.

- **Davis High School Senior Esther Hodson** was selected as member of the 2021 National Association for Music Education All-National Honor Ensemble for alto saxophone. The All-National Honor Ensemble program will take place virtually in January 2022.

- **Chad Sims from Davis High** has been selected by

the Utah High School Activities Association as the 2020-21 Boys Basketball Coach of the Year.



Sims

- In the month of October, the Davis School District Board of Education recognized **Viewmont High Teachers Joy Farley, Gage Johnson and Heidi Pitkin** for their dedication to students in the district.

- U.S. News & World Report, the global authority in education ratings, announced the 2022 Best K-8 Schools rankings by state. Several Davis School District schools were included among the top 50 Utah elementary schools. They are as follows: No. 12, **Endeavour Elementary**; No. 28, **Valley View Elementary**; and No. 31, **Kay's Creek Elementary**.

- **Davis Adult Education** was honored as the Adult Education Association of Utah 2021 Adult Education Program of the Year for their fiscal compliance, retention of students, post-test rates and meeting state performance targets.

- **Farmington High Boys Cross Country team** took the 6A title. It is the team's third straight state title, but first as a 6A school. Among the top 10 individual times were Matthew Neuenschwander, Farmington (Sr.) — 15:24.6; Britton Austin, Farmington (Sr.) — 15:26.6; Ethan Peterson, Farmington (Sr.) — 15:27.4; and Isaac Halverson, Farmington (Sr.) — 15:28.7.



The Farmington High Boys Cross Country Team.

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and knowledge of the teaching process. The district does offer a job orientation to provide potential substitute teachers with basic guidelines and some classroom management tips.

The difficulty lately has been in filling all open substitute jobs. Prior to COVID, the district had about a 94 to 95 percent fill rate for substitute positions. In the last year, however, that number has dipped down to about a 75 percent fill rate. Hislop said this leaves schools scrambling as they reach out to their "emergency" substitutes. Sometimes staffing those open classrooms means pulling in part-time employees at the school, using teachers in the classroom during their prep period or even asking an administrator to

cover the class.

Assistant Superintendent John Zurbuchen said the increase puts Davis School District near the top of the pay scale in comparison to neighboring districts. This change helps the district be competitive as it attracts employees in the temporary workforce.

He said substitutes are a vital part of the district team and therefore, the district hopes this shows how much it values substitutes.

"Substitute teachers, especially those who work consistently in the district, are invaluable to student learning," Zurbuchen said. "They provide continuity in both curriculum delivery as well as promoting our Davis culture. When we get the best subs, we get the best learning."

Pumpkin patch pickings



Foxboro Elementary students swarm Pack Farms in Farmington during a field trip to learn about living things.



Students wave as they ride the barrel train around the farm.



A student checks out the dirt on the side of a pumpkin. Each student took home one of the orange gourds.



Students play in an activity station that included dry corn kernels.



Fun activities were everywhere including rolling in a round bale.