

Dartmouth Middle School

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Dartmouth.schools

Peter Rossi- Principal, Marc Hayes- Associate Principal, Sam Madden- Assistant Principal, Justin Zexter- Assistant Principal

Message from the Principal

August 11, 2025

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

I trust this communication finds each of you in good health and spirits.

I am writing to share important dates, information, and activities for the upcoming academic year:

Key Dates:

- First Day of School: Wednesday, August 27th
- Sixth-Grade Orientation Program: Wednesday, August 27th & Thursday, August 28th
- No School: Friday, August 29th & Monday, September 1st
- Open House: Thursday, September 4th (more information to come)
- Picture Day: Friday, September 12th
- Release-Time Day: Wednesday, September 17th

The Orientation Program for Sixth -Graders: Our Sixth-Grade Orientation Program is thoughtfully designed to address the social and emotional aspects of transitioning from fifth to sixth grade. We recognize the importance of building strong connections between students, staff, and families. The first two days of the academic year will be dedicated to activities to foster meaningful relationships among peers and teachers. These activities are carefully planned to acknowledge, respect, and support the diverse cultural assets of our students.

During the orientation program, students will also become familiar with their school environment. They will learn how to use their lockers, take a building tour, receive their Chromebooks, and meet special-area teachers. Additionally, students will be given a R.A.R.E. t-shirt to wear on the second day, promoting team spirit and camaraderie. The program will conclude with a fun culminating activity called "Minute to Win It."

Open House Event: Our Open House is scheduled for Thursday, September 4th. This event

presents an excellent opportunity for parents/guardians to meet their child's teachers. Teachers will discuss classroom expectations, curriculum, communication strategies, and school supplies. Further details regarding timings and locations will be provided soon.

School Schedule: Please be aware of our school schedule and timing

- Building opens at 7:30 a.m.
- Students can report to homeroom at 7:30 a.m.
- Homeroom: 7:45 a.m. – 7:52 a.m.
- Period 1: 7:54 a.m.– 8:49 a.m.
- Period 2: 8:51 a.m.– 9:46 a.m.
- Period 3: 9:48 a.m.– 10:43 a.m.
- Period 4: 10:45 a.m.– 12:10 p.m.
- **Lunch: part of 4th period**
 - Grade 8: 10:45 a.m.– 11:12 a.m.
 - Grade 6: 11:14 a.m.– 11:41 a.m.
 - Grade 7: 11:43 a.m.– 12:10 p.m.
- Period 5: 12:12 p.m.– 1:07 p.m.
- Period 6: 1:09 p.m.- 2:05 p.m.

Dismissal:

- First Bus & Non-Bus Dismissal: 2:05 p.m.
- Second Bus Dismissal: 2:23 p.m.

Student Schedules: We are finalizing student schedules to ensure equitable and balanced arrangements. Information about your child's schedule will be shared through their ASPEN account. You will receive a notification with instructions on how to access these schedules.

Lunch Arrangements: Students choosing to have school lunch will submit their order to their homeroom teacher on the respective day. Lunch and breakfast items will be provided at no cost. Please note that additional food entrees or snacks may have associated costs.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures: Students may be dropped off starting at 7:30 AM. To help reduce the traffic congestion and provide for a safe arrival and dismissal process, please utilize the front of the building along Slocum Road and the south side of the building along Hawthorne Street. Supervision will be provided at both locations. The process will take some time, so please be patient.

All students riding the bus will be dropped off at the designated bus loop and enter from the bus loop doors.

Grading System: Our standards-based grading system remains consistent for trimester report cards. The report cards will have numeric grades for assessments, and work habits will be assessed using a school-wide rubric for Participation, Literacy, and Practice/Homework. Grades will be posted biweekly in the Aspen parent portal.

Curriculum and Support: We will continue to strike a balance between the use of technology

and hands-on learning in our curriculum. We have many supports and enrichments that will be put into place if needed. Monitoring and supporting the social-emotional needs and academic benchmarks through our Response to Intervention (RTI) is an ongoing process. Chromebooks will be provided to all students. We recommend waiting for your child's teacher's list before purchasing school supplies.

Summer Reading and Math: All incoming 6th-grade students should be reading Restart by Gordon Korman. 7th and 8th-grade students chose what book they planned to read. The summer math links are on our website. Students should visit and practice their skills. On Tuesday, September 3rd, all students will be participating in summer reading activities. There will also be a Kahoot math contest by homeroom, with the winners for each grade winning a trophy.

DMS Active Learning Online Support Center: Our DMS Active Learning Online Support Center will offer academic assistance, managed by staff members representing all grades. More information regarding its launch will be provided when our after-school programs are posted.

Lockers and Communication : Lockers are for academic materials and valuables, including cell phones. Cell phones should be stored in lockers to minimize classroom distractions. Please contact the main office if you need to communicate with your child during school hours.

Contact Information: For specific concerns or questions, please contact:

- Mr. Peter Rossi- Principal
- Mr. Marc Hayes, Associate Principal -Director of Curriculum
- Mr. Justin Zexter, Assistant Principal -Student Discipline and Supervision (grade 8), Compass Special Education Programs
- Mr. Sam Madden, Assistant Principal -Student Discipline and Supervision (grades 6 & 7)
- Mr. Jay Sullivan, Guidance Counselor (Grade 8)
- Mrs. Diane Massari, Guidance Counselor (Grade 6)
- Mrs. Sarah Dury, Guidance Counselor (Grade 7)
- Mr. William Garcia, Adjustment Counselor

Please remember that you can reach out to the staff mentioned above or your child's teacher(s) for any concerns throughout the school year.

In conclusion, thank you for your ongoing support and patience. We are eagerly anticipating the 27th and looking forward to a fantastic school year.

Sincerely,

Peter Rossi, Principal