



PIONEER NEWS

HOLIDAYS AROUND THE WORLD

On Thursday, December 18th, students will participate in a school-wide Holidays Around the World experience. Through engaging activities and discussions, students will explore how cultures around the world celebrate traditions, holidays, and special events.

This experience helps build cultural awareness, promote respect and inclusion, support social-emotional learning, strengthen academic skills, and encourage global citizenship.

We are excited for students to learn, explore, and celebrate together while honoring the diverse cultures within our school community.



Winter Break Packets and Exact Path

To support continued learning during the winter season, students will receive winter learning packets aligned to state standards. These packets are designed to help your child review key skills and prepare for upcoming standards and high-stakes assessments.

Students who have picked up their school-issued technology are encouraged to complete Exact Path for at least 30 minutes each day in both Math and Reading. This targeted practice will reinforce classroom learning and support individual skill growth.

Students who complete their winter packets with quality and accuracy and consistently complete at least 30 minutes per day on Exact Path in both Math and Reading will earn free dress day passes as a reward for their effort and commitment to learning.



Thank you for your continued partnership in supporting student success at home.



December						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

- 12.18 - PTC 4:30-7:30 - sign up links have gone out.
- **12.18.25 - locker clean out - all items must come out of the locker**
- 12.18 - Holidays Around the World and JA Winter Concert beginning at 2:00 PM - parent invite for performers only [Click here to RSVP](#)
- 12.19 - ½ day for students - holiday colors and jeans can be worn.
- 12.22 - Winter break begins
- 1.5 Students return to school

January						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



Message from Mrs. Garvin, PreK Director

Winter Traditions: Holidays Around the World

Every December, our schools celebrate **Holidays Around the World**. During this special event, PreK students explore different winter traditions from various cultures. These activities help children build understanding, appreciation, and respect for the world around them. Each grade level learns about different celebrations.

Parents are invited to visit classrooms on December 18, 2025 and enjoy the student work and learn alongside your child. Check the calendar on the first page of this newsletter.

PreK Holiday Focus

St. Lucia Day (Sweden)

A winter celebration known as the Festival of Light. It symbolizes light overcoming darkness during the long Swedish winter. Children learn about traditional white gowns, candle crowns, and special pastries.

Hanukkah (Jewish Tradition)

Often called the Festival of Lights, Hanukkah celebrates victory, religious freedom, and the miracle of one day's oil lasting eight nights. Children learn about the menorah, dreidel, and the significance of lighting one candle each night.

Diwali (India and South Asian Communities)

A five-day Festival of Lights celebrated by Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and some Buddhists. It represents the triumph of light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance. Children explore bright colors, patterns, lamps (diyas), and festive traditions.

Chinese Lantern Festival (China)

This beautiful festival marks the end of Lunar New Year celebrations. It takes place on the first full moon of the new year, with glowing lanterns of many shapes and sizes. Children learn about lanterns, symbols of hope, and traditional holiday foods.



Pre-K Gallery



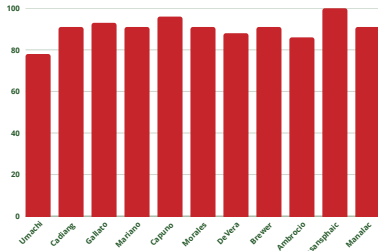


Message from Principal Withers

Happy Monday!!

This week we will be full of fun as we prepare for winter break. Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held on Thursday December 18th from 4:30pm-7:30pm. We also will be hosting our annual Holidays Around The World. Please come out and see what our scholars have worked so hard on. Monday, we will start distributing Chromebooks for your children to bring home. If you have a balance from last year, you must pay it off before your child will be distributed a computer. You should have already been contacted regarding balances. If you have any major questions or concerns regarding your child academically or behaviorally, please sign up to speak with your scholars teachers. It is very important that we address any issues, big or small. Remember, communication is key and we are all here to help along the way.

One Team, One Mission!



Reading Trends

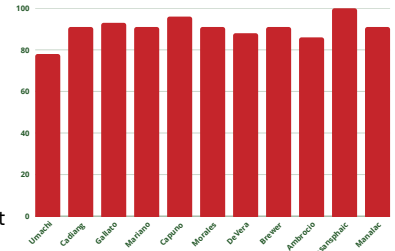
Kindergarten: 95% → 83%
 1st Grade: 95% → 94%
 2nd Grade: 95% → 94%

Goal: 95% Weekly Student Attendance

Kindergarten: 95% → 84%
 1st Grade: 89% → 88%
 2nd Grade: 88% → 90%

Last week, we've seen a drop in Kinder & 1st grade attendance. Lets get back to making sure our scholars are at school and on-time. Our goal is 95%.

WE CAN DO IT!!



Math Trends

Kindergarten: 95% → 83%
 1st Grade: 95% → 94%
 2nd Grade: 95% → 94%

Holidays Around the World

Our Holidays Around the World celebration will be from 2:30 to 3:30, a special event showcasing student learning and cultural discovery. Families will have the opportunity to view their child's work, explore traditions from different cultures, and experience the creativity and effort students have put into their projects. This engaging event offers a meaningful way to celebrate diversity, support student achievement, and enjoy a memorable experience together. We look forward to welcoming you and sharing this incredible journey around the world.

Winter Break Packets and Exact Path

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Students who have picked up their school-issued technology are encouraged to complete Exact Path for at least 30 minutes each day in both Math and Reading. This targeted practice will reinforce classroom learning and support individual skill growth.

Students who complete their winter packets with quality and accuracy and consistently complete at least 30 minutes per day on Exact Path in both Math and Reading will earn free dress day passes as a reward for their effort and commitment to learning.

Thank you for your continued partnership in supporting student success at home.

I AM THE COOL KID





Message from Principal Dr. Peart

Attendance Matters Now More Than Ever

Currently, 17% of students are chronically absent and 31% are chronically tardy. This is unacceptable, as consistent attendance is essential for academic success. We understand that weather and circumstances may change, but it is critical that your child is in school every day and on time.

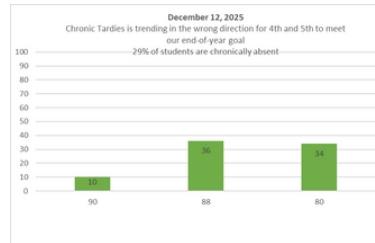
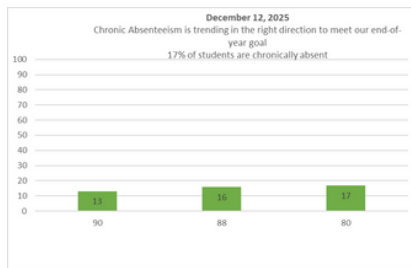
We are reinforcing our Strive for 10 initiative:

- 10 days present in a row, and
- 10 days on time
- Students who meet this goal will earn a prize and be recognized for their commitment.

Your partnership makes a powerful difference. To support strong attendance at home, please:

- Communicate regularly with your child's teacher
- Review the DeansList Weekly Report
- Check your child's book bag and folders daily
- Maintain a consistent homework, bedtime, and morning routine

Thank you for working with us to help your child return strong and stay on track. Together, we can ensure every student has the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed



Teacher of the Month Class with the highest # of students who answered 50% of questions correctly on ANET

Cool Kids



Dr. Balyout



Ms. Bartolome



Ms. Mathis



HOMEWORK

Monday 12/15

Read & Response, C3 Homework

Tuesday 12/16

Read & Response, C3 Homework

Wednesday 12/17

Read & Response, C3 Homework

Thursday 12/18

Read & Response, C3 Homework

Friday 12/19

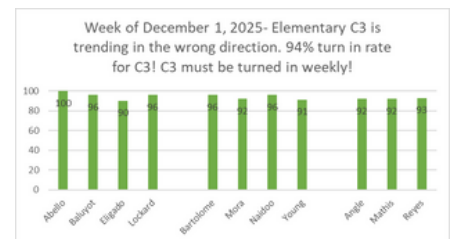
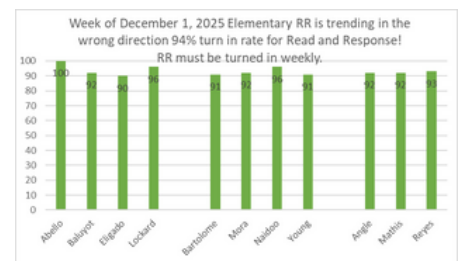
C3 & RR Due

•Students are expected to complete homework by their classroom teacher along with their Reading (Read and Response and C3). Homework is due daily.

The goal is for each class to attain a 95% return rate on homework at the end of the week.

Homework will be checked EVERY DAY- thank you for helping your child build their work ethic by completing their homework every night.

Shout of to the following classes who received 95% of higher submission rate: Ms. Abello, Dr. Baluyot, Ms. Lockard, Ms. Bartolome, Ms. Naidoo





Message from Principal Collins

Holiday Break Checklist

Every Day (Try Your Best!)

- READ for 20 minutes
- Move your body for 30 minutes (walk, play, dance, stretch)
- Do one kind thing for someone
- Get enough sleep and drink water

Brain Boost

- Read a book, graphic novel, or article
- Write in a journal or free-write for fun
- Play a word game, puzzle, or brain teaser
- Practice typing or handwriting
- Listen to music

Create Something

- Draw, paint, or color
- Build something (Legos, model, invention)
- Try a craft or DIY project
- Cook or bake with an adult

Learn Something New

- Learn a new skill or hobby
- Watch an educational video
- Practice a musical instrument
- Learn 5 new words in French

Stay Active

- Go for a walk or bike ride
- Play a sport or outdoor game
- Try a workout or dance video
- Stretch or do yoga

Help & Give Back

- Help with chores at home
- Read or play with a younger sibling
- Write a thank-you note or card
- Donate toys, books, or clothes

Get Ready for the New Year

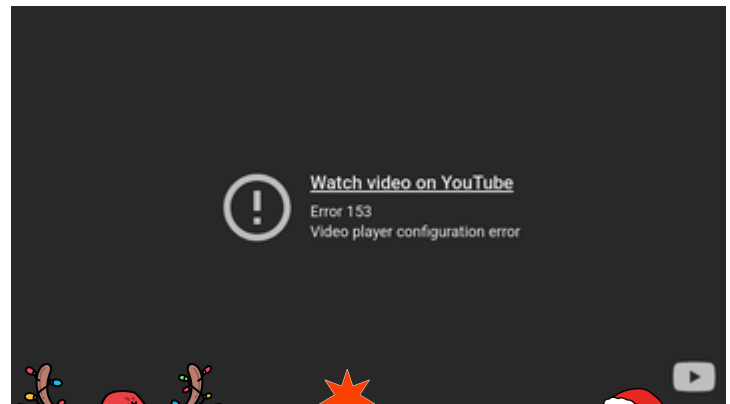
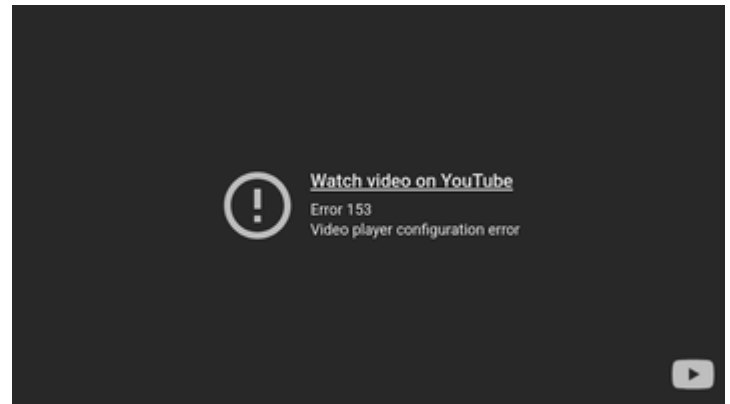
- Clean your room or backpack
- Set 3 goals for the new year
- Make a vision board or goal list
- Reflect: What am I proud of this year?

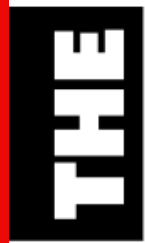
DEPSA is an International Baccalaureate School



IB trait: Inquirer

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.





DEPSA HIGH SCHOOL MISSION BRIEFING

PARENT AND FAMILY NEWSLETTER

A WORD FROM MR. BLACKBURN

Hello DEPSA Families,

I hope you enjoyed a restful and well-deserved Thanksgiving break. As we return, let's refocus our efforts and finish 2025 strong by ensuring our students are present and engaged every single day. Attendance continues to be one of the most important drivers of academic success! Every day matters, and every class counts.

We are excited to share that our annual Holidays Around the World celebration will take place on December 18. This is always a meaningful tradition for our school community, and more information will be shared soon. Please keep an eye out for updates.

Thank you for your continued partnership and commitment to our scholars. Together, we will keep pushing toward our goals of 100% graduation, 100% college acceptance, and 95% attendance.

One Team. One Mission.

UPDATES

- **DECEMBER 18 - PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES FROM 4:30- 7:30**
- **WINTER BREAK DEC 22 - JAN 5**

EVENTS

- **12.19 - 1/2 DAY FOR STUDENTS**
- **12.22- WINTER BREAK BEGINS**
- **1.5 STUDENTS RETURN TO SCHOOL**

UPCOMING GAMES/EVENTS

- **WINTER SPORTS - BASKETBALL SEASON**

SENIORS NUMBERS

- **OCTOBER FAFSA NUMBERS:**
 - 86% OF SENIORS HAVE COMPLETED THE FAFSA
- **SCHOLARSHIP TOTAL**
 - \$3,582,040 AWARDED IN SCHOLARSHIPS.
- **APPLY FOR THE DETROIT PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP! DETROIT PROMISE PROVIDES FREE COLLEGE TUITION FOR ELIGIBLE DETROIT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES. DON'T MISS THIS AMAZING OPPORTUNITY TO ATTEND COLLEGE DEBT-FREE!**
 - **APPLY AT DETROITPROMISE.COM TODAY.**

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[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE FULL HIGH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER](#)

