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Dear Darien Community,

I am pleased to share this week's community update on behalf of Darien Public Schools. As Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, I am grateful for the opportunity to highlight the meaningful teaching and learning taking place across our schools. Across the district, our work reflects strong collaboration and a shared commitment to every student's growth. Below is a snapshot of how our educators and students are engaging in learning aligned with our District priorities and Vision of the Graduate.

Teaching and Learning Across PK–12

Across all grade levels, educators continue to strengthen instruction using research-based practices that support students at every stage of development. In our elementary schools, teachers and leaders are deepening the implementation of our K–3 literacy framework, with a focus on foundational reading skills and small-group instruction grounded in the Science of Reading. This work builds the strong reading foundation students need for long-term success. In upper elementary, middle, and high school classrooms, instruction builds on that foundation through intentional vocabulary development, research and inquiry-based learning, and opportunities for students to apply their skills in meaningful ways. At Darien High School, students are deeply engaged in research and independent projects that require critical thinking, problem solving, and presentation skills.

Students in grades 6–12 are also currently engaged in the course selection process as we prepare for transitions from elementary to middle school and from middle to high school. This important step allows students to reflect on their interests and goals as they plan their academic pathways.

Using Data to Support Student Growth

We continue to refine how we use student learning information to guide instruction and provide timely support. This includes ongoing review of assessment tools and data systems to ensure they are purposeful, efficient, and aligned with our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). As previously shared, MTSS is a framework that helps ensure every student receives the support they need to learn, grow, and thrive. Our staff regularly review how students are progressing academically, socially, and behaviorally, and adjust support as needed. MTSS includes three levels of support:

- **Tier 1:** Strong, high-quality instruction for all students
- **Tier 2:** Targeted small-group support for students who need additional reinforcement
- **Tier 3:** More individualized support for students with greater needs

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The goal is simple: to make sure every child gets the right level of support at the right time. We use data not just to measure learning, but to guide instruction and ensure continuous growth for every student.

In the coming weeks, we will continue strengthening alignment across our schools, refining our MTSS practices, and sharing additional updates about teaching and learning initiatives across the district.

Please read on for additional District updates and information about upcoming events. Thank you for your continued partnership and support of Darien Public Schools.

December Parent University Update

We are pleased to share this [information](#) from our December Parent University session, now available for families to explore at home and at their own pace. This guide is designed to walk you through the Darien Public Schools' framework for high-quality literacy instruction and the research that informs it, often referred to as the Science of Reading. By accessing these materials, you can engage with the same learning experiences shared during the live event to better support your child's literacy journey. Thank you for your continued partnership and dedication to your child's reading development.

National Technical Honor Society: Curiosity & Experiment Night

Join us on March 2 at 5:00 p.m. at Darien High School for the *National Technical Honor Society's Curiosity and Experiment Night*. This free event will feature 15 interactive stations designed by students in our Business and Technology Education departments, along with presentations from DHS Independent Projects in Engineering. The event will take place in the DHS cafeteria. Click [here](#) for the flyer.

Grade 5 to Grade 6 Curriculum Night

Middlesex Middle School recently hosted its Grade 5 to Grade 6 Curriculum Night. Mrs. Dimoulas and the leadership team warmly welcomed families, and department chairs shared an overview of the academic opportunities awaiting incoming sixth graders. Additional transition activities — including Grade 5 visits to MMS, SESS coffee articulation meetings, orientation programming, and other supports — are planned to ensure a smooth and positive transition for students and families.

Kindness Week

We are so proud of the compassion shown during last week's Kindness Week! From the Wave Strong [video](#) collaboration between DHS and MMS to the beautiful centerpieces crafted for our local seniors at the Mather Center, our students proved that small acts of kindness create a big ripple effect. Elementary schools rounded out the week by exploring poetry and practicing self-care. Let's keep that spirit of kindness going all year long!

FCIAC Exemplary Scholar Athletes

We are thrilled to congratulate seniors Alexis Procopion (girls volleyball), Ryan Xing (boys golf), Chase Dolan (boys basketball) and Elise Hole (girls basketball) for being named Darien High School's FCIAC Exemplary Scholar Athletes for the fall and winter seasons. This prestigious honor is the highest scholar-athlete distinction awarded by the conference, reserved for seniors who maintain a minimum 3.5 cumulative GPA while serving as pillars of leadership within their programs. Alexis, Ryan, Chase and Elise were selected not only for their athletic contributions but for their unwavering commitment to self-improvement, their ability to help teammates navigate adversity, and their dedication to putting the team's success above their own. Please join us in celebrating these four outstanding role models who perfectly embody the DPS spirit of excellence both on the green/court and in the classroom!

DHS Sports

It's another action-packed weekend for our athletes with several key matchups on the schedule! Today starts with a flurry of activity at 4:00 pm: varsity wrestling travels to New Canaan for the FCIAC trials, girls freshman basketball hosts Fairfield Ludlowe at home, and boys freshman basketball heads to Fairfield Ludlowe. The court action continues as boys jv basketball plays away at Fairfield Ludlowe and girls jv basketball plays at home, both tipping off at 5:30 pm. Later this evening at 7:00 pm, the boys varsity basketball team faces Fairfield Ludlowe on the road while girls varsity basketball takes them on at home. The excitement carries into tomorrow, as varsity wrestling returns to New Canaan for the FCIAC championship starting at 10:00 am and concludes tomorrow evening at the Darien Ice House, where girls varsity hockey hosts Avon at 6:00 pm. Roll Wave!

Wishing everyone a safe, fun and restful break!

Sincerely,



Amy Fedigan, Ed.D.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction