Darien Public Schools

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Dear Darien Community,

Back on August 29 when I sent my very first Community Update, I shared that I will be generous with information. I hope that you have found the Community Update to be a helpful source for information about the happenings in the schools and the community. We've done our best to include everything we can, but sometimes we miss an event. We will continue this weekly message next year and add some new lines of communication. Thank you to all who have sent us information about events and accomplishments of the Darien community.

BOE Meeting

At Tuesday night's June 9 Board of Education meeting, the district introduced the Darien Public Schools Technology Plan 2026-2031, a comprehensive five-year roadmap designed to ensure technology continues to serve learning rather than drive it. Developed collaboratively by the District Technology Committee, leadership, and key stakeholders, the plan establishes crucial priorities to guide technology-related decisions and investments over the next five years. This initiative focuses on teaching and learning, operational efficiency, and data security, bringing immediate changes such as an updated K-12 AI literacy framework, a new data dashboard, and a revised K-8 student device deployment strategy for Chromebooks and tablets. Please click here to view the presentation.

2026 Superintendent's Awards

Also at Tuesday night's Board of Education meeting, the district proudly announced the recipients of the 2026 Superintendent's Awards. This prestigious honor is presented annually to students in grades 5, 8, and 12 who truly embody the district mission by demonstrating a genuine love of learning, critical thinking, and a dedication to contributing to the world with integrity and purpose. To earn this special recognition, students are nominated by their peers and then selected by faculty, honoring one standout student from each elementary and middle school, alongside two high school seniors. Congratulations to this year's exceptional award winners: Darien High School seniors Milana Melnick and Luka Zhou, Middlesex Middle School eighth grader Lucien Presseau, and fifth-grade representatives Olivia Sun from Hindley, Thomas Fisch from Holmes, Amy Wyson from Ox Ridge, Liam Bell from Royle, and Frankie Martinak from Tokeneke. Here is a link if you'd like to view the presentation of the awards.

Darien District Named Top Tommy Fund Fundraiser

Darien Public Schools is thrilled to be named the Tommy Fund for Childhood Cancer's top fundraising district in Connecticut for Hats for Hope this year, raising an incredible $13,421 under the leadership of Ox

Ridge teacher Sandy Henry. To celebrate this amazing achievement, Ox Ridge School hosted members of the UConn Football Team including Matt Ragan, Ty Chan, Joshua Mickens, Luke Murphy, and Assistant Athletic Director Andrew Terwilliger for a special celebratory assembly on Tuesday. To learn more about the Tommy Fund's vital mission to support families battling cancer, please visit www.tommyfund.org.

Upcycle School Supply Drive

Throughout June and until the end of the school year, the Darien Community Association and all five Darien elementary schools, Tokeneke, Holmes, Hindley, Royle, and Ox Ridge, are coming together for an Upcycle School Supply Drive. Each school will have a designated collection bin and is working directly with teachers to collect gently used items like crayons, pencils, scissors, markers, folders, and pencil cases during classroom clean-outs. Please consider donating your gently used items to help reduce waste, keep supplies out of landfills, and support local organizations preparing for the next school year. Over the summer, volunteers will sort and organize all the donations so they can be shared with schools and community groups that need them most, making it a simple way for our students and families to make a meaningful impact for both the environment and our neighbors.

DHS Students Bring History to Life in WWII Museum Project

Opening just ahead of the 82nd anniversary of D-Day on June 6, Darien High School teachers Dennis Cummings and Michael Krawec launched a student-curated World War II Museum. On June 4 and 5, AP US and AP European History students transformed DHS' Learning Connections Center into an interactive exhibit for their peers. Partnering with the Museum of Darien, students curated historical artifacts, created an introductory video, built a scavenger hunt, and served as museum docents. By taking complete ownership of the exhibition, students beautifully demonstrated our Vision of the Graduate as critical thinkers, effective communicators, and independent learners. This hands-on project sparked rich, student-led conversations that made history both authentic and unforgettable.

Around Town

Celebrate Connecticut Museum Open House Day tomorrow, June 13, with free admission for the whole family at the Museum of Darien! Visitors can tour the *War Comes to Middlesex* exhibition, explore the historic 1736 Colonial Saltbox house with expert guides, and sample traditional colonial hot chocolate served by The Pewter Pot Chocolatier. Children will also love a special hands-on seed planting project hosted by the Darien Library and Darien Garden Club, where they can plant and take home historic heirloom herbs from the museum's memorial garden. Bring your friends and family for a fantastic day of local discovery!

Congratulations to the Class of 2026!

We are proud to celebrate the Class of 2026 at our annual Commencement Ceremony on Wednesday, June 17. This milestone event marks the ultimate culmination of our students' journey through Darien Public Schools, showcasing how they have truly embodied the pillars of our Vision of the Graduate: Communication, Creativity, Curiosity, Empathy, Independence, and Integrity. While the in-person ceremony is reserved for families, we invite the wider community to be a part of this special tradition from the comfort of home. You can watch our graduates cross the stage in real time by tuning into the DAF Media live stream here.

DHS Sports

We are incredibly proud to celebrate DHS Girls Lacrosse Coach Lisa Lindley, who has officially been named the 2026 Class LL Coach of the Year. This prestigious honor is a fitting reflection of her storied and historic career. Coach Lindley has guided the Blue Wave to an astonishing 560 wins, 21 FCIAC championships, and 20 state championships, while developing 90 All-Americans along the way. She has been named Connecticut Coach of the Year 10 times, FCIAC Coach of the Year 4 times, and was recognized as the National Coach of the Year in 2023. Her enduring legacy is cemented across multiple sports and eras, earning her well-deserved induction into the National Lacrosse Hall of Fame, the Connecticut Lacrosse Hall of Fame, the Connecticut Field Hockey Hall of Fame, the UMass Hall of Fame, and the Simsbury High School Hall of Fame.

What an incredible weekend ahead for our student-athletes! We have two teams and individuals competing at the highest levels across the state and region this weekend. Come out, bring your energy, and support our athletes as they compete for championship glory. Roll Wave! Please see the schedule:

Saturday's Schedule:

- Boys Varsity Track & Field - Outdoor member's Andy Khouw and Drew Sharron will compete at the New England Championship at Noble HS (North Berwick, ME) – 10:00 AM
- Girls Varsity Lacrosse: CIAC LL Championship vs. New Canaan at Fairfield University – Time: 12:30 PM

Sunday's Schedule:

- Boys Varsity Lacrosse: CIAC LL Championship vs. New Canaan at Fairfield University – Time: 3:00 PM

Have a wonderful weekend!

Sincerely,



Eric A. Byrne, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools