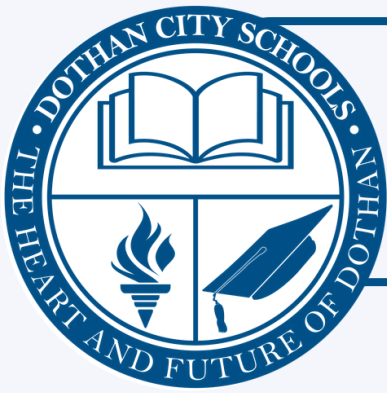




DOTHAN CITY SCHOOLS **INSIDE THE PACK**



VOLUME 1, ISSUE 8
AUGUST 2026

UPCOMING EVENT

First Day of School in Dothan City Schools

Wednesday, August 5th

UPCOMING EVENT

Dothan City Schools Board of Education Regular Meeting at 1665 Honeysuckle Road

Tuesday, August 18th
5:30 PM

UPCOMING EVENT

First Home Football Game Dothan High School VS Bay High School

Friday, August 21st
6:00PM



WHAT'S INSIDE

**IT MEANS MORE: SELMA STREET SPARKING
GOOD THROUGH LOCAL GRANT**

**THE WOLFPACK WAY: DCS INSTITUTE
2026: ONE PACK, ONE PURPOSE**

**THE WOLFPACK WAY: DCS OPEN HOUSES:
WELCOMING OUR WOLFPACK**

PRINCIPAL'S PRIDE: NIKKI COCHRAN

FUELING FAINE FORWARD

AHSAA ALL STARS

**PREPARING OUR TEAMS TO SUPPORT
STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY**

NEW PRINCIPAL MEET & GREETs

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

I hope everyone had a wonderful first day of school! Welcome back, Wolfpack!

The first day of school is always filled with excitement, anticipation, and new opportunities. Our schools have been hard at work preparing classrooms, campuses, and learning spaces and we are thrilled to welcome our students, families, and staff back for another incredible year.

At Dothan City Schools, we believe every student deserves a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment where they

can reach their full potential. This year, we will continue building on our successes, celebrating accomplishments, and creating meaningful opportunities for every child.

To our students, I encourage you to be curious, work hard, and make the most of every opportunity. To our families, thank you for your trust and partnership. And to our employees, thank you for the passion, care, and commitment you bring to our schools each day.

I wish everyone a safe, successful, and memorable 2026-2027 school year. Go Wolves!



- *Dr. Garrick Askew*
Superintendent
Dothan City Schools



IT MEANS MORE SELMA STREET ELEMENTARY RECEIVES SPARK GOOD LOCAL GRANT

It means more opportunities for students to make a positive impact on their school and community. Selma Street Elementary has been awarded a \$1,000 Spark Good Local Grant through Sam's Club Facility #8192 to support Principal Blair's "Let's Recycle, Crew" initiative.

The grant will benefit Selma Street's PE Club by supporting the school's recycling efforts and encouraging students to take an active role in environmental stewardship. Through hands-on involvement, students will learn the value of teamwork, responsibility, and caring for the world around them.

That's what it means more, to be investing in meaningful experiences that empower students to lead, serve, and make a difference.



THE WOLF PACK WAY

DCS INSTITUTE 2026: ONE PACK, ONE PURPOSE

DCS Institute 2026 brought the entire team of Wolfpack staff together under this year's theme, *One Pack, One Purpose*. Staff from every school and department gathered to celebrate the start of a new school year, hear from inspiring speakers, reconnect with colleagues and reaffirm our shared commitment to serving Dothan City Schools students and families. It was a day of collaboration, encouragement, and excitement as we kicked off the 2026-2027 school year together.

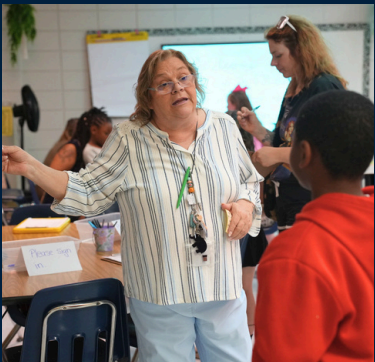


DOTHAN CITY SCHOOLS
INSTITUTE
ONE PACK, ONE PURPOSE **2026**



THE WOLF PACK WAY
DCS OPEN HOUSES:
WELCOMING OUR WOLFPACK

Families across Dothan City Schools filled campuses during Open House, meeting teachers, exploring classrooms, and getting ready for the 2026-2027 school year! As classrooms come to life once again, we're excited to welcome everyone back for another great year at Dothan City Schools.

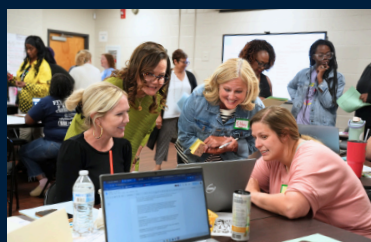


THE WOLF PACK WAY GROWING TOGETHER TO BETTER SERVE EVERY STUDENT

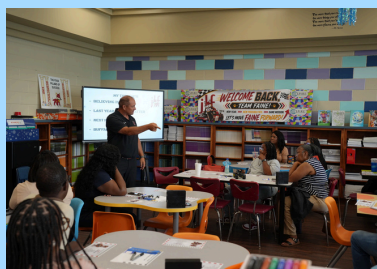
A common thread connected Dothan City Schools throughout this summer: a commitment to continuous improvement. Whether attending national conferences, participating in district-lead professional learning, or collaborating with colleagues on their own campuses, educators across the district embraced opportunities too strengthen their practice and bring news ideas back to their schools.

From the Get Your Teach On Conference in Orlando, FL and the MEGA Conference in Mobile, AL to specialized training in literacy, mathematics, school counseling, and school improvement, DCS educators learned alongside peers from across the nation and throughout Alabama. At the same time, district and school-based professional development, including ACIP planning, Orton-Gillingham, CKLA, AMSTI, and campus collaboration days, allowed teachers and leaders to share expertise with one another and build consistency across the district.

Professional learning is more than attending a conference, it's about creating stronger classrooms and better outcomes for every student. By investing in collaboration, innovation, and continuous growth, Dothan City Schools is building a culture where educators learn from one another, lead with purpose, and remain focused on providing exceptional opportunities for every learner. That commitment to always growing, always improving, and always putting students first is the wolfpack way.



FUELING FAINE FORWARD: INSPIRING A YEAR OF PURPOSE AND POSSIBILITY



Jerry Lee Faine Elementary kicked off the new school year with Fueling Faine Forward, a special gathering designed to bring staff together before students returned. Faculty and staff had the opportunity to introduce themselves, build connections, and strengthen relationships as they prepared for the year ahead. JLF employees also got the opportunity to hear an inspiring keynote from Head Wolves Football Coach Jed Kennedy, whose message encouraged the team to lead with purpose, passion and set the tone for a successful school year. The event focused on building a strong team ready to support both students and families from day one.

EMPOWERING EVERY WOLF GETTING NEW KINDERGARTNERS READY FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR

As the school year approaches, our schools are preparing to welcome our newest members of the Wolf Pack. For many rising kindergartners, this exciting milestone also brings new routines, new friendships, and a brand-new school environment.

To help students begin the year with confidence, Highlands Elementary and Kelly Springs Elementary welcomed incoming kindergartners through their Kinder Wolf Pup Readiness Camp. The camp gave students an opportunity to become familiar with their new schools while easing first-day jitters and building excitement for the year ahead.

Throughout the camp, students met their kindergarten teachers and other faculty and staff, toured their new school, practiced daily school routines, and made new friends before the first day of school. The Kinder Wolf Pup Readiness Camp helped students feel confident, connected, and ready for their first day, empowering every Wolf from the very beginning.



BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

PREPARING FOR FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

While summer may mean a break from the classroom, Dothan Wolves students have been hard at work preparing for another exciting season of Friday Night Lights. From the football field to the sidelines, students have spent countless hours building the skills, discipline, and teamwork that make game nights special. Their dedication throughout the summer reflects a commitment to excellence that extends far beyond academics.

The Dothan Wolves Football team wrapped up summer workouts by recognizing 91 players who earned a 14 oz Ribeye for achieving 100% attendance with no excused absences during summer conditioning. Dothan Cheer also had an outstanding summer at camp, returning home as Overall Camp Champions while earning top finishes in cheer and dance, six All-American seniors, and the prestigious Top Banana Award for leadership, spirit, and teamwork. Dothan Preparatory Cheer added to the celebration by bringing home a first-place camp routine trophy, third place overall, and five All-American cheerleaders.

Meanwhile, the Pride of the Wolfpack Marching Band spent the summer sharpening its performance through sectionals and band camp, with student leaders helping prepare what promises to be another exciting halftime show. As fall camp begins and the first kickoff draws near, the Wolves, cheerleaders, and band are ready to showcase the hard work they've put in all summer. Their preparation reminds us that Friday Night Lights are about much more than the game, but rather the result of dedication, perseverance, and school pride built beyond the classroom.



Principal's Pride: Nikki Cochran, Headstart Principal

For the past 18 years, Principal Nikki Cochran has dedicated her career to preparing Dothan's youngest learners for success. Beginning as one of Dothan City Schools' first OSR PRe-K teachers in 2008, she later served as an instructional coach before becoming principal of DCS Head Start & Pre-K Center. Throughout every role, her focus has always been creating strong foundations for students and families.

Now entering the 2026-2027 school year, Principal Cochran is committed to fostering a positive school culture, strengthening family engagement, and ensuring every child develops the kindergarten readiness skills needed to thrive. She believes that when schools and families work together, students are empowered to reach their fullest potential both academically and personally.

Outside of the classroom, Mrs. Cochran enjoys spending time with her husband of 25 years, their three children, two granddaughters, and three Weimaraners. Whether they're on the river, relaxing at Lake Eufala, or enjoying the beach in Port St. Joe, family time is what she treasures most.

Principal Cochran says one of the things she values most about Dothan City Schools is the culture of collaboration and support among staff. One of the most rewarding parts of her career is working alongside colleagues who share a commitment to supporting students and helping one another. She is excited to continue building on that spirit as DCS Head Start and Pre-K Center begins another school year.



**CHURCH AT
THE CROSSING**

COMMUNITY PARTNER

This month we want to highlight Church at the Crossing. Thank you for your support of Dothan City Schools and for assisting us with audio and visual at our district wide Institute by lending your time and equipment.

PREPARING OUR TEAMS TO SUPPORT STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY

During the last weeks of summer, our school nurses were busy preparing for another successful year. Through back-to-school training, they reviewed important health updates, refreshed emergency procedures, and collaborated with one another to ensure they're ready to care for our students from day one.

The preparation didn't stop there! Carver 9 School Nurse, Jackie Pearce, also spent time with our Transportation Department at the bus barn, providing training to help bus drivers and staff feel confident in responding to student health needs while they're on the road.

We're grateful for the teamwork and dedication of our nurses and transportation staff. Their commitment behind the scenes helps ensure our students have a safe, healthy, and positive start to the new school year.



Wolf Spotlight: Ella Burgess



Dothan High School senior Ella Burgess exemplifies what it means to be part of the Wolfpack. As a dedicated student athlete, Ella competes in both softball and flag football, balancing the demands of athletics while excelling in academics, leadership, and service.

Beyond the field, Ella is actively involved in several clubs and civic organizations and serves as a leader in Dothan High School's Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Whether she's representing the Wolves in competition or motivating her peers, Ella consistently leads with integrity and a positive attitude.

Her ability to excel in the classroom while competing in two varsity sports reflects her strong work ethic and commitment to excellence. Ella's leadership, work ethic, and positive influence within her school community reflect the character that makes DHS so special. She embodies what it means to be a Wolf.

WOLVES SHINE AT AHSAA ALL-STARS GAMES

Congratulations to Dothan High School student athletes Ava Bell and Nate Childers on their selection to the 2026 AHSAA North-South All-Star Soccer Game and to Jada Newman on her selection to participate in the AHSAA Softball All-Star Game.

Being selected to compete in these all-star events is a tremendous honor and recognizes the hard work they've poured into the sport throughout their high school careers. Ava and Nate represented Dothan High School with pride on the soccer field, while Jada made her mark in the softball all-star competition as one of only two pitchers selected for the South team during the doubleheader, helping lead the South to a tie the first game and a victory in the second game.

Their selection is a reflection of the countless hours they've dedicated to their sport, and we are excited to celebrate this well-deserved recognition. Way to go, Wolves!



Credit: Alabama High School Athletic Association - AHSAA

Wolf Pup Spotlight: Onyx Murrell, Carver MST

Onyx Murrell is an outstanding 5th grade student at the Carver School for Mathematics, Science, and Technology who consistently demonstrates excellence in both academics and character. As an A/B Honor Roll student during the 25-26 school year, Onyx approaches each day with a strong work ethic and a positive attitude that inspires those around him. Though quiet by nature, he leads by example and encourages his classmates to stay focused and do their best.

Known for his kindness and willingness to help others, Onyx is a role model both inside and outside the classroom. His teachers describe him as a student whose positive presence is felt every day and whose leadership shines through his actions. With his dedication to learning and outstanding character, Onyx has a bright future ahead. We are proud to recognize him as our Wolfpup Spotlight for August and celebrate the difference he makes at Carver MST and in our Wolfpack.



DCS CARES

STUDENTS STEP UP BEFORE THE FIRST BELL

As summer winds down, DCS students are already making a difference. At Dothan High School, football players traded shoulder pads for work gloves and helped custodial staff move furniture, set up classrooms, and prepare the campus for another successful school year. Across town, Dothan City Virtual School students volunteered their time to pack school supply bags, making sure classmates will have the tools they need. By lending a helping hand this summer, the students helped create positive and welcoming learning environments for their fellow students. Whether preparing classrooms or packing supplies, these students are proving that being part of the Pack means showing up for one another. Well done, Wolves!



DPA PROJECT BEAUTIFICATION

A strong community is built by those who care and are willing to lend a helping hand. At Dothan Preparatory Academy this summer, they had a campus beautification week where it was a wonderful example of that spirit as volunteers came together to refresh and enhance our campus.

From July 6-10, various community members including Fort Rucker's Staff Sergeant Thomas, Drill Sergeant Delgado, AIT Soldiers, and youth and adult members of Central Baptist Church in Phenix City, Alabama, volunteered their time and talents to complete painting, spackling, and trim work throughout the campus.

We are grateful for their dedication and teamwork that made this project a success. Thank you to everyone who helped create a more welcoming and beautiful environment for our students, educators, and staff as they come back to school.



EMPOWERING EVERY LEARNER

Last month, teachers at Heard Elementary School participated in a professional learning session focused on supporting English Led by Sarahann Odom, Blanca Escalera, and Heather Bull, the training provided practical strategies and valuable insights to help educators create engaging, inclusive classrooms where every student has the opportunity to succeed. The session reinforced the district's commitment to meeting the diverse needs of all students and equipping teachers with tools that make a lasting impact.



BRINGING THE PACK TOGETHER

Before the first day of school, The Carver School for Mathematics, Science, and Technology welcomed staff and their families for Up Paw Night, an evening of preparation, teamwork, and connection. Faculty and loved ones worked side by side to ready classrooms, complete campus projects, and enjoy time together over dinner. By the end of the evening, classrooms were ready, projects were completed, and staff were one step closer to welcoming students back to campus.

FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS WELCOME NEW PRINCIPALS

Excitement is building for the new school year as families and community members across the district came together to meet and welcome new principals at several schools. These meet and greet events provided opportunities for meaningful conversations, relationship building, and a chance for families to connect with the leaders who will help guide their schools throughout the year.

Jerry Lee Faine Elementary welcomed families with Popsicles with the Principal, where they had the opportunity to meet new principal Mrs. Marketa George in a fun and welcoming atmosphere. At Dothan 6th Grade Center, families gathered for coffee, tea, and lemonade as they talked D6 with new principal Dr. Teresa K. Anderson and learn more about her vision for the school.

Beverly Intermediate School and Morris Slingluff Elementary also welcomed families and community members for meet and greet events with their new principals, Aundria L. Sewell (Beverly) and Dr. Victoria Washington (Morris Slingluff). Throughout each event, attendees enjoyed opportunities to ask questions, share conversations, and begin building strong partnerships with their new school leaders.

DCS is excited to welcome these principals and look forward to a successful school year as students, families, staff, and community members continue working together to support student success.

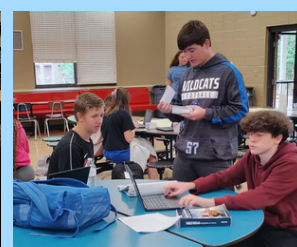
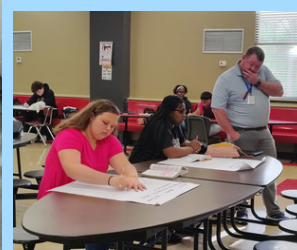


WOLFPACK WINS CARVER 9 AP SCHOLARS RISE TO THE CHALLENGE

Carver 9th Grade Academy is celebrating an incredible academic achievement! The 2025-2026 AP World History: Modern students have shown dedication, perseverance, and excellence, earning results that make the Wolfpack proud.

Of the 40 students who took the AP exam back in May, 27 students earned a score of 3 or higher, qualifying many for potential college credit. Four scholars achieved the highest possible score of 5, while 53% of students earned a score of 4 or higher. The class as a whole earned a remarkable mean score of 3.25, surpassing both Alabama (2.91) and global (3.21) averages.

This accomplishment reflects the hard work of our students, teachers, and families. Our scholars are making history while taking meaningful steps toward college success and future opportunities.



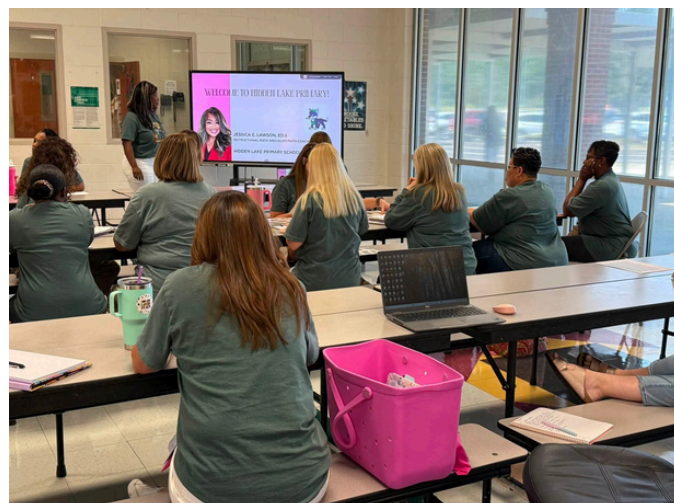
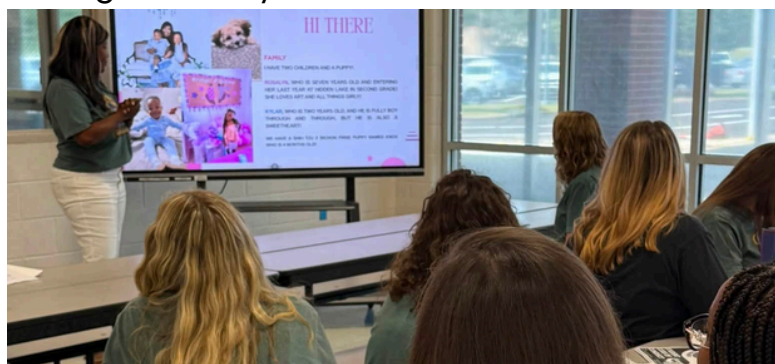
STRENGTHENING CTE THROUGH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

In June, Dothan Technology Center hosted its Spring CTE Advisory Council meeting to reflect on the successes of the 2025-2026 school year and review student and program data. This meeting highlighted the vital role our business and industry partners play in ensuring CTE programs remain aligned with workforce needs and continue to provide meaningful opportunities for students.

We are grateful for the time, expertise, and support our advisory council members invest in preparing today's students for tomorrow's workforce. Their partnership continues to strengthen our program and our community.

BUILDING STRONG MATH INSTRUCTION

As teachers prepared for the new school year, Hidden Lake Primary's instructional math specialist, Mrs. Jessica Lawson, led a professional learning session focused on strengthening math instruction across the campus. After spending the summer training and preparing, Lawson shared practical strategies and resources designed to support teachers in fostering meaningful mathematical thinking and student success throughout the year.



HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF P.A.S.S. ACADEMY

Dothan City Schools values your input as we explore the future of P.A.S.S. Academy. The program at P.A.S.S. Academy focuses on teaching students positive behavior strategies so that students can focus on improving themselves both academically and socially. Students may be placed for 90 days depending on the Class III infraction. Students who are placed permanently must either be school board approved or tribunal hearing approved. Dothan City Schools invites the community to share thoughts and feedback on P.A.S.S. Academy and what their vision is for an expanded P.A.S.S. Academy.

To get more information and to share your thoughts, please visit the Dothan City Schools website or your school's website, then click "P.A.S.S. Academy Expansion" located on the homepage. Your feedback will help guide the conversation as we evaluate opportunities for an expanded P.A.S.S. Academy.



AUGUST 2026 COMMUNITY EVENTS

SEASONAL

- 5 | First Day of School for Dothan City Schools Students
- 8 | August Board Game Day – Back to School Themed at Geekz Haven from 1pm–5pm

LOCAL FESTIVALS & MARKETS

- 14–15 | 31st Annual South Alabama Pro Rodeo Classic at Dale County Ag Plex with gates opening at 5PM and rodeo starts at 7:30PM
- 14–23 | Dothan Houston County Library System's Friends of the Library Big Book Sale
 - Weekdays – 9AM to 6PM
 - Saturday – 10AM to 2PM
 - Sunday – 2PM to 5:45PM

COMMUNITY EVENTS

- 8 | August Board Game Day – Back to School Themed at Geekz Haven from 1pm–5pm
- 15 | 5th Annual Brunch, Bubbly, & Bingo at the National Peanut Festival starting at 9AM presented by Interlinc Mortgage to benefit the Southeast Alabama Child Advocacy Center
- 29 | Dothan Fire Department's Going for the Gold 5K & Family Fun Day at Water World starting at 8AM benefitting the Developmental Therapeutic Program for Childhood Cancer Support
- 27 | Lulu Gribbin at Jimmy H. Baker Center for the Arts. Meet and Greet from 4:45–5:15PM and presentation from 5:30–6:30PM.
- 29 | Landmark Park Fifth Saturday Freebie
- 29 | Rock Your Stock – Ranch Rodeo at the Jackson County Agriculture Center in Marianna, FL with gates opening at 5PM and rodeo starting at 6PM

ARTS

- 11 | Write Night: Open Mic Night at The Wiregrass Museum of Art from 6–7PM
- 15 | ArtFX: A Session of Sound and Color at The Wiregrass Museum of Art from 12:30PM–2PM
- 8, 15, 22, and 29 | Saturday Paper Art Studio at the Daleville Public Library from 10AM–12PM

CLASSES & EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

- 12 | Scarecrow Building Workshop at the Dothan Area Botanical Gardens starting at 9:30AM
- 22 | Pollinator Party at the Dothan Area Botanical Gardens from 9AM–11AM

AUGUST 2026 COMMUNITY EVENTS

SHOWS/PERFORMANCES

- 8 | Saturday Brunch Sessions: Trey Merritt at The Toasted Yolk Cafe from 10AM-1PM
- 15 | Saturday Brunch Sessions: DJ LastLaff at The Toasted Yolk Cafe from 10AM-1PM
- 15 | Back to Black: The Ultimate AC/DC Experience at the Dothan Opera House from 7-10PM
- 22 | Rock Out Cancer with Then Molly Ringwalds at The Plant from 6PM-9PM
- 28 | Ole 60 - Off The Grid Tour with The Stews & 80 Acres at the Dothan Civic Center from 7PM-10PM
- 29 | The Park Concert Series: Shay Morgan with The Byrd Family at Porter Park from 5:30-9PM
- 29 | MJ the Illusion: Re-Living the King of Pop at Jimmy H. Baker Center for the Arts from 7-9PM

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

- August 5 - May 14 | Beyond the Bell, Dothan Leisure Services' Afterschool Program, from 2:30PM-6PM. Registration is required.
- August 31 - November 16 | SEACT's Afterschool Conservatory Early Thespian for Grades 3-5 from 4:15PM-5:15PM
- September 3 - November 19 | SEACT's Afterschool Conservatory Junior Thespian for Grades 6-8 from 4:15PM-6:15PM
- September 1 - November 17 | SEACT's Afterschool Conservatory Senior Thespian for Grades 9-12 from 4:15PM-6:15PM

DOTHAN CITY SCHOOLS ATHLETICS

VOLLEYBALL

- 20 | @ Wicksburg/Dale County Tri-Match (V) at 4PM
- 22 | @ North Bay Haven JV Jam (JV) at 8AM
- **24 | VS Chipley/Headland Tri-Match (9th/JV/V) at 4PM**
- **25 | VS JAG (9th/JV/V) at 4PM**
- 27 | @ Eufaula/Phenix City Tri-Match (9th/JV/V) at 4PM
- **29 | Dothan JV Tournament at 8AM**

DPA VOLLEYBALL

- 25 | Wicksburg/South Dale at Wicksburg
- 31 | Ashford/NMA in Ashford

CROSS COUNTRY

- 20 | Mazing 100-minute Mash in Montgomery, AL
- 29 | Tiger Classic in Auburn, AL

DHS FOOTBALL

- **21 | VS Bay High School (V) at Rip Hewes at 7PM**
- **24 | VS Early County (9th) at Dothan High School at 5PM**
- 24 | @ Mosely High School (JV) at 6PM
- 28 | @ Rickards High School (V) at 7PM
- **31 | VS Smith Station High School (9th) at Rip Hewes at 5PM**

