



Dragon Update

De Soto High School

Mr. John Daniels, High School Principal

September 25, 2018

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Dragon Strength!



DHS Students Showing Their Spirit

The *Dragon Update* is a periodic update from De Soto High School. It will focus on current and upcoming events, as well as important dates for DHS families. Additionally, the *Update* will spotlight some of the great things happening in our building and also give you a closer look at some of our staff members.

John Daniels, DHS Principal

Principal's Page...

What is our purpose?

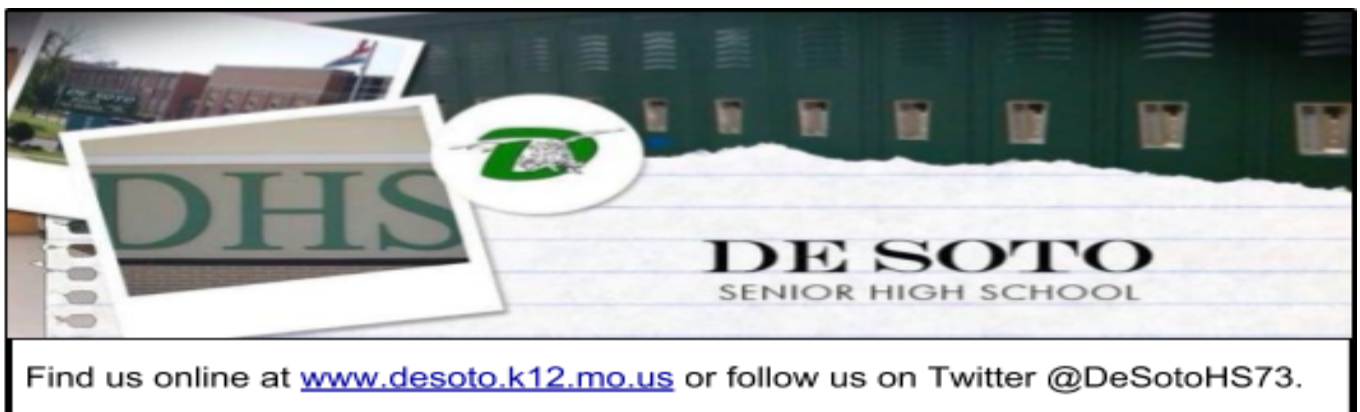
We all have some school experience. We went to grade school, junior high, senior high...maybe you're still in school. There have undoubtedly been times when you wondered "why?" or "what's the purpose?" Some of us went because we had to, some went because we were headed to go to college, maybe some of us went for PE and the delicious lunches. Regardless, I think we all knew we were supposed to be learning and our teachers were supposed to be teaching us stuff.

As I was reflecting on the past week at DHS, it occurred to me how much things have changed in schools over the years and how fast things continue to change. Working in public schools today offers challenges that teachers 25 years ago (when I started my teaching career) couldn't have imagined. Your teaching staff at DHS accepts these challenges every day. They are like everyone else in that they don't always have all the answers and they make mistakes, but what every parent who sends their children through our doors each morning needs to know is that our teachers care about your kids. The raw emotions I have witnessed over the past several days are very real. These people love their jobs and they love their students.

Teaching is like any job. Sometimes teachers don't feel like getting up and going to work. Our students are teenagers and like teenagers everywhere, they are sometimes quite challenging. However, when you see the relationships between our teachers and students, it is easy to see the payoff for teachers. No other "job" is so rewarding.

Our teachers are here to teach math, science, English, and art. They are here to coach football, direct the choir, and sponsor student council. They majored in things like "Secondary Social Studies" or "Special Education." But when DHS needed strength, it came from our teachers. Their job is to teach, but their purpose is to help kids...and De Soto parents, rest assured that these folks are passionate about and committed to their purpose.

John Daniels, De Soto High School Principal
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Teacher Page...

Staff Profiles

Lindsey Brinkman - High School Math

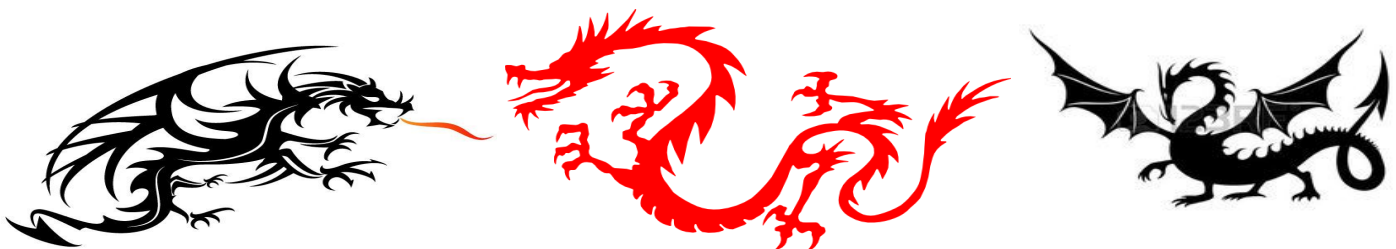


- 1. Education Background:** 2002 Graduate of De Soto High School, Bachelor of Arts (Math Content) from Westminster College, Master's in Curriculum and Instruction from William Woods University
- 2. Years as a teacher/years in De Soto:** 13th year of teaching, all at De Soto.
- 3. Favorite Class in High School:** Honors Algebra 2.
- 4. Hobbies:** Spending time with family.
- 5. Favorite Book:** Angels and Demons by Dan Brown
- 6. Best live event I've ever attended:** "Wicked" at the Fox Theater..
- 7. Fun Fact:** Both of my parents taught for more than 30 years!

Paul Wallis - High School Science



- 1. Educational background** - Fox High School - 1994, 10 years military service and training (MT2 SS), 1996-2006, BMW/MINI Certified Technician, 2006-2011, Bachelor of Arts in biology and education from Hamline University - 2015, Currently working on Master's from Missouri Baptist University.
- 2. Years of teaching/years teaching in DeSoto** - Second year of teaching, both at De Soto.
- 3. Favorite class in high school** - Band
- 4. Hobbies** - Robotics (of course), hunting, fishing, camping, and gaming.
- 5. Favorite book** - The Fourth Horseman and the FIRST Robotics Game Manuals.
- 6. Best live event I've ever attended** - DHS winning the Missouri State Robotics Championship last summer!
- 7. Fun fact** - I've been doing robotics with high school students longer than I've been teaching.



Calendar Page...

Up Next at De Soto High School:

9/25	Tuesday	9/JV Cross Country at Jefferson County	4:00 PM
		V/JV Boys Soccer at Perryville	5:00 PM
		JV/V Volleyball at Windsor	5:30 PM
9/26	Wednesday	JV Softball at Oakville	4:30 PM
		JV/V Volleyball at Herculanenum	5:30 PM
9/27	Thursday	V/JV Softball vs. Perryville (Home)	4:30 PM
9/28	Friday	Varsity Football at Fredericktown	7:00 PM
		Varsity Softball vs. Oakville (Home)	4:30 PM
9/29	Saturday	JV Girls Softball at Tiger Cub Tournament	TBA
		Varsity Volleyball at Perryville Tournament	TBA
		JV/Varsity Cross Country at Notre Dame Invit.	9:30 AM

DHS Librarian Keeley Stearns:

Mrs. Stearns was recently honored at the September 20th School Board Meeting for her dedication to DHS students in the care and distribution of Chromebooks.



Parents Page...

Talking to Your Teenager

Please take a look at the WebMD article with some tips for talking to your teenager. If you and your child are struggling with communication, this article offers some helpful strategies to get the ball rolling toward productive conversations.

[How to Talk to Your Teen](#)

The Importance of Student Attendance

*I am leaving the current attendance policy in the "Update" again this week to make sure everyone has had a chance to look it over. As we move deeper into the semester, it is important to remember that students risk losing credit as they approach **six (6) absences** from school.*

Attendance Policy (from the 2018-19 De Soto High School Student Handbook)

SECONDARY ATTENDANCE POLICY (Grades 7-12)

Absences are to take care of extraordinary circumstances concerning:

- a. Personal illness
- b. Professional appointments that could not be scheduled outside the school day
- c. Other serious or family problems

There are only 168 school days within the school year. Therefore, vacations, truancy, OSS, and absences not verified in accordance with the procedures listed in regulation 2310 are not considered extraordinary circumstances and will be counted as unexcused absences.

Attendance at the Junior High and High School level is vital to the educational process. Any absence from school requires a phone call from the parent showing why a student is not in attendance and that the absence is beyond the student's control. Any day a student is absent is counted as part of their total days of being absent. After the sixth (6th) absence in a semester, verification of an absence should include written documentation from a doctor, this documentation should be provided to the school within 48 hours along with a parent phone call. Examples of written documentation include, a doctor's note verifying the student is absent due to a doctor's appointment that cannot be scheduled outside the school day that includes the appointment start and end time, a dentist's note to verify a dental appointment that cannot be scheduled outside the school day that includes the appointment start and end time, and/or official written verification of absence due to a death in the family. The attendance appeals committee reserves the right to reject a doctor's notes not submitted within the required 48 hour timeframe after an absence, that does not include appointment times, or that does not provide sufficient evidence that the appointments that could not be scheduled outside the school day.

The school will make every effort to notify parents when a student has missed three (3) days (by a letter and/or other communication) and five (5) days (by a letter and/or other communication). It is still the parents' responsibility to make the school aware of the student's absences as they occur.

On the seventh (7th) absence, a letter will be sent to the parents explaining that the child has

exceeded the absence limit which results in a loss of credit for the semester. The parent and student may appeal this decision to the attendance appeal committee. In order to be in compliance with state law, the school will notify either the District Juvenile Office and/or Division of Family Services, whichever applies, after the student's eighth (8th) absence for students under the age of sixteen (16).

A record of calls from parents along with notes provided within 48 hours of an absence will be held in the office with reasons listed for absences as they are given by the parents. These should prove informative if an appeal process is started.

Appeals

If students are absent in excess of the six (6) total days per semester absence and a parent would like to appeal, they must submit their request in writing to the building principal to meet with the appeals committee 15 days prior to the end of the semester. If the seventh absence occurs during the last 15 days of a semester, the parent must call and submit a written request for an appeal prior to the end of the semester. Both the student and parent/guardian must attend the appeals committee meeting and bring all necessary documentation to the committee. Any additional documentation should be turned in with the appeal letter and brought to the appeals committee meeting. The committee, which will be comprised of administrators, counselors, and teachers, will determine if the student has the documentation needed to prove reasons for the absences.

Documentation not submitted within 48 hours of an absence may not be considered unless there are extraordinary circumstances. A ruling of reinstatement of credit, no credit, or probation will be assessed at the close of each hearing and will be followed up by a formal letter from the attendance committee.

All students will be afforded due process as guaranteed by constitutional provisions. The process will be in accordance with state law, as well as the provisions outlined in the Board policies and regulations on student attendance.

Rulings

Reinstatement of Credit: The committee found sufficient evidence to prove the student had missed excessively due to circumstances beyond his/her control. Credit would be awarded immediately.

No Credit: The committee found no substantiating evidence to validate why the student had missed school excessively. Credit is denied immediately.

Probation: The committee found that there was some evidence of circumstances beyond the control of the student, such that the student would not have missed excessively if those circumstances had not presented themselves. The student must now meet attendance criteria for the following semester. When completed successfully, reinstatement of credit will occur; however, if the student fails to meet attendance criteria he/she would lose credit from the previous semester and would put him/herself in the position to lose credit for the current semester as well. A written contract will be issued to students and parents stating the conditions of the probation