
December Newsletter

12/2/2024



Dear Staff,

As we approach the close of the semester and the excitement of the holidays, we want to take a moment to express our gratitude for your hard work and dedication. This month, we are focusing on empathy, a theme that is especially meaningful during the holiday season. Empathy is at the heart of creating a caring and supportive school environment, and we encourage all of you to embrace this mindset as we work together to finish the year strong. Whether it's through small acts of kindness or understanding the needs of our students and colleagues, empathy has the power to strengthen our connections and foster a sense of community.

Alongside our monthly focus on empathy, we've included some resources and activities to help you navigate the busy December season. For example, the Holiday Riddle Challenge is a fun way to engage with your peers and share some festive cheer. Be sure to check your inbox for a biweekly riddle throughout the month, and you could be the lucky winner of a small prize!

The holiday season can also bring its share of stress, so we've provided some Holiday Stress Management Tips to help you manage the demands of the season. From mindfulness techniques to time management strategies, these tips are designed to help you take care of yourself and stay centered during this busy time.

Looking ahead, we also want to remind you of some important events in the spring semester, including Parent University, Course Selection, and upcoming grade-level presentations like Crime Stoppers. These events will provide valuable opportunities for both students and parents, and we'll be sending out more details soon.

We hope this newsletter brings a little joy, inspiration, and support as we wrap up the year and head into the winter break. If you have any questions or need assistance, our counseling team is here for you. Wishing you all a peaceful and joyous holiday season!

*DHS
Counselors*

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Monthly Focus: Empathy

This month, we're focusing on empathy—the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. Empathy is essential in building strong relationships, fostering kindness, and creating a positive school community.

Why It Matters:

Empathy helps students connect with each other, appreciate diverse perspectives, and navigate challenging situations with compassion. Whether it's listening to a peer, offering support during tough times, or celebrating someone's success, empathy strengthens bonds and promotes inclusivity.

How We Can Encourage Empathy:

- **Model Empathy:** Teachers and staff play a vital role in demonstrating empathy through actions, words, and listening. By acknowledging emotions and offering support, we show students how to respond empathetically in everyday situations.
- **Classroom Discussions:** Incorporate conversations about empathy into lessons. Ask questions like, "How would you feel if...?" or "What could we do to help someone in need?"

Take Action:

- Challenge yourself and your students to practice empathy this month. Whether it's a kind word, a helpful gesture, or simply listening, every act counts.
- Encourage students to reflect on how empathy affects their daily interactions and how it can create a more supportive, inclusive environment.

Let's work together to create a school culture where empathy leads the way in making everyone feel valued and understood!



Holiday Stress Management Tips

The holidays are a wonderful time—but they can also bring added stress. Here are a few strategies to help you stay grounded and enjoy the season:



Practice Mindfulness: Spend 5 minutes focusing on your breathing, or try a mindfulness app like Headspace or Calm.



Set Boundaries: It's okay to say no to events or commitments that overwhelm you. Prioritize what matters most.



Plan Ahead: Create a simple to-do list for holiday tasks to avoid last-minute scrambling.



Take Breaks: Pause for a quick walk or a moment of quiet during busy days to recharge. You deserve to enjoy this time, too—don't forget to care for yourself while caring for others!

December Awareness Dates



DECEMBER
**UNIVERSAL
HUMAN
RIGHTS**
MONTH



Additional
Awareness
Dates

Holiday Riddle Challenge 🎄 ?

Think you've got what it takes to crack some festive riddles? Put your brain to the test with our Holiday Riddle Challenge!

How to Participate:

- Twice per week leading up to Christmas Break, Ami Ray will send out a riddle to all staff.
- The first staff member to reply to the email (not reply all) with the correct answer will win a small prize from the counselors!

First Riddle:

**I'm a holiday treat, and I'm covered in icing, but I'm not a pie.
You can decorate me with sprinkles, but I'm still a simple guy.
What am I?**

Email Ami Ray your answer at aray@dickinsonisd.org to have a chance at winning a prize!

Motivational Tip: As we wrap up the semester, remember to focus on small victories. Celebrate the impact you've had on students, no matter how small it may seem. You are making a difference every day!

Looking Ahead to Spring

We have an exciting spring semester ahead! Here are some key dates to keep in mind from our counselors:



January 23rd:
8th Grade Parent Night



January 27th: Parent University



January 28th – February 14th:
2024-2025 Course Selection



February 4th – February 7th:
Crime Stoppers Grade Level
Presentations

Thank you for partnering with us to support student success. Together, we can make this spring semester a great one!



DHS Counselors



Group	Counselor	Contact Number
Class of 2028- 9th grade (A-L)	Ami Ray	281-229-6443
Class of 2028- 9th grade (M-Z)	Erica Pineda	281-229-6407
Class of 2027- 10th grade (A-L)	Terry Herbert	281-229-6442
Class of 2027- 10th grade (M-Z)	Shannon Clark	281-229-7363
Class of 2026 – 11th grade (A-L)	Aubrey Halford	281-229-6533
Class of 2026 – 11th grade (M-Z)	Amanda Cavazos	281-229-6473
Class of 2025 – 12th grade (A-L)	Jonathan Price	281-229-6439
Class of 2025 – 12th grade (M-Z)	Leslie Sarno	281-229-7377
College and Career Specialist	Jennifer Carse	281-229-7353
