



DaVinci Connection

DATES TO REMEMBER

Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) Meeting

Thursday, March 22
6:00 pm

School Board Meeting

Monday, March 26
6:00 pm
Room 305

K-5 Science Fair

Tuesday, March 27
4:00 pm
Gym

PTO Meeting

Tuesday, March 27
6:30 pm
Room 305

Theater Performance

Thursday, March 29 &
Friday, March 30
6:00 pm
Gym

No School

April 2 - April 9

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Monday, April 2 &
Tuesday, April 3

School Resumes

Tuesday, April 10

Find more upcoming events
on the DaVinci Academy
home page, or go to the
"[Calendar](#)" page for future
important dates.

13001 Central Ave NE
Blaine, MN 55434
763-754-6577

www.davincicharterschool.org

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held on Monday & Tuesday, April 2 & 3. Conference times are: April 2 from noon-8:00 pm, and April 3 from 9:00 am-4:00 pm. Please contact the DaVinci Academy office to schedule a conference time.

HIGH SCHOOL COORDINATOR'S CORNER

(by Patrick Hobot, High School Coordinator)

Here we are again with a brand new, albeit short, "High School Coordinator's Corner." I hope I make a lot of sense, but to be honest, I spent the night on the roof of the school in celebration of the great achievement of DaVinci students and their families in the Read-a-Thon! And as the night grew colder, I became more and more grateful for the fine buffet of chili recipes shared and savored before heading to the summit.

In any case, I'd like to follow up on some valid points and concerns brought forward at the recent 8th Grade Family Night. One of the real challenges for DaVinci Academy High School will be the ability to recreate the positive social aspects of the traditional, and much larger, local high schools. We have some sincerely expressed feelings from some of the students and families that our students, lacking longstanding traditions, need opportunities to develop the new traditions for the future of DaVinci Academy High School students. Things like letter jackets, prom, and extracurricular experiences that build connection, pride, and ownership among the students, are vital to the long-term success and sustainability of the program. We have very limited outside enrollment, so it is important to retain as many of our current students as possible. Stability breeds success!

With that in mind, we are placing a 'suggestions' box in the reception area of DaVinci Academy for students and families to submit ideas for consideration as the strategic plan for the high school continues to be developed. Later, watch for interest surveys to determine the kinds of activities our students would really connect to and can justify the investment. And, as always, I am open to your input via [email](#).

In the meantime, here's wishing for a glorious springtime of smiles and prosperity!

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

(by Doug Dinndorf, Communications Committee Chair)

The challenge of effective communication is key to any successful organization, schools included. At DaVinci Academy, we take this challenge very seriously. Our weekly *DaVinci Connection* newsletter, comprehensive web site, and regular communications on key issues form the basis for keeping all our stakeholders informed on what's going on at your school.

We continue to enhance our newsletter with pertinent articles authored by our school administrators, teachers, and board members. You will hear from Holly Fischer, our new Instructional Coordinator, about some of the great things happening daily in our classrooms. You should also look for new "Art Corner" and "Science Corner" articles, highlighting those key components of our curriculum.

Enhancement and updating of our school [web site](#), is also continuing. With everything that is going on at DaVinci Academy, that's a constant challenge. If you have not visited the site recently, set aside a few minutes and take a look.

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We are wrapping up the Time and Talent Survey we undertook last November. We have received responses from 75% of DaVinci Academy families; thanks to all who have responded. Lee Swearingen, our Volunteer Coordinator, has used survey responses to build a comprehensive database of stakeholder talents and interests, and has begun using that information to solicit help with various volunteer opportunities.

As I have mentioned previously, volunteerism is critical to the success of DaVinci Academy. I encourage all of you to make a serious effort to get involved when volunteer opportunities arise that suit your talents and schedule.

Your Communications Committee is always open to suggestions on how we can enhance communications at our school. If you have any thoughts or concerns to share, please contact [Doug Dinndorf](#).

VOLUNTEER CORNER

(by Lee Swearingen, Volunteer Coordinator)

Current Volunteer Opportunities:

- Art room organization and supply clean up
- Childcare during March 22 meeting (from 6:00-8:00 pm)
- On-call lunch/kitchen help
- Office Volunteer Pool

To ensure the safety of our students and staff, every volunteer is required to have a current background check on file with DaVinci Academy. If you do not have a background check on file, please obtain the form from the front office, or [click here](#) to print the form from our web site.

Volunteers must pay a \$10 processing fee for each background check submitted. Checks should be made payable to DaVinci Academy. Return all forms and payments to the front office (Attn: Volunteer Coordinator). *Please do not let the processing fee keep you from volunteering at school. If you cannot afford the fee at this time, contact [Mr. Klabunde](#) to make alternative arrangements.*

DEER HEARTS DISSECTED IN 2nd GRADE SCIENCE

(by Remy Dick, 2nd Grade Teacher)

The Core Knowledge Series gives 2nd graders the opportunity to study various aspects of the human body. We began our unit with a discussion of how living things are made up of cells (and cells make up tissues, and tissues compose organs, and organs work in systems). We investigated the digestive and excretory systems, and included the topics of nutrition and healthy living.

We expanded on our unit with an introduction to the skeletal and circulatory systems. Last week, the 2nd graders learned about the parts and functions of the heart. To conclude this unit, I provided a hands-on opportunity in which students were able to watch the dissection of a deer heart. Although deer hearts are larger than human hearts, they are comparable in terms of parts.

Students observed and participated in a discussion while I performed the dissection process on one heart. Afterwards, students formed small groups to view a deer heart close-up, as well as touch it (with gloves on, of course) if they desired. I met with each group to review the anatomy of the heart.

I enjoyed seeing the students so excited for this unique learning experience! Thanks to those who donated deer hearts to our class.





PTO PLACE

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 27 – PTO Meeting, 6:30 pm

April 1-30 – Box Top Collection Contest

April 12 – Spaghetti Dinner/Silent Auction

PTO CHILI FEED RECAP

We had a great turn out for the Read-a-Thon Celebration/Chili Feed on March 15! DaVinci Academy's top two pledge earners were Dylan W. and Josiah L. The top readers were the Ness family and the Fields family! A drawing was held for all participants who brought in at least \$100 in pledges, and the Kindle winner was Matthew N. Congratulations!

Attendees enjoyed fun carnival games with prizes and delicious food...and teachers slept on the roof! Thank you to all of our spectacular volunteers: Gloria Gustafson, Carrie Cronin, Amy Klein, Suzie Koch, Brenda Burns, and Mary Kay Lawrence and family, just to name a few. It was a huge success!



SPRING INTO BOX TOPS

On April 1, the PTO kicks off our spring Box Tops Collection Contest! To download collection sheets, [click here](#). The contest will run from April 1-30. There will be prizes for the "Top Class" and also for the "Top 3 Individual Earners." To give suggestions for prizes or what the [Box Tops](#) proceeds should go towards, join us at the PTO Meeting on March 27.



the difference
i can make.

GUEST SPEAKER ON MARCH 27

Laura McDaniel will speak at our next PTO meeting on March 27. She is an RN, has over 30 years of nursing experience ranging from physicians' offices to critical care nursing at a level one trauma center, and is the owner of [Wyndgate Health](#). She spent more than 11 years specializing in biomedical therapies in the areas of behavioral and mental health.

Wyndgate Health is unique in that it is one of few clinics in the country that provides this approach to behavior and mood disorder therapies. They work with you and your healthcare team to design novel, personalized vitamin programs treating the symptoms of behavior, mood disorders, chemical dependencies, and eating disorders, leveraging over 10 years of functional medicine practice and research.

Based on laboratory testing and patient symptoms, Wyndgate Health's supplement programs are successful in treating symptoms of ADHD, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, autism, anxiety, eating disorders, chemical dependencies, depression, oppositional defiant behavior, and violence, as well as memory issues and Alzheimer's.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The PTO needs help from our stakeholders in order to make the April 12 Spaghetti Dinner/Silent Auction a success for our school. Please consider helping in one of these areas: assembling theme baskets, setting up, seating, serving, and cleaning up. We also need folding tables and chairs for the event. To help, please contact [Lisa King](#).

We also need help with childcare at the upcoming PTO meeting on March 27. Contact [Dina Lantzer](#).