

# DaVinci Connection

July 31, 2014  
Volume 4, Issue 2



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## Dear Lee,

To the left, you will find helpful links that will take you directly to the articles you want to read (Table of Contents), to important pages on our website (School Links), and will provide a quick list of upcoming events (Important Dates.)

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## Online Registration Is Open!

On July 30, you should have received an email informing you that online registration is now open and providing directions for completing this step. If you did not get this email, please contact the school office (763-754-6577) as soon as possible.

This on-line process allows you to update any personal and emergency contact data, provide current medical information, review and acknowledge select school policies and obtain other important notices. As this is all done online, the entire process should only take an average of 15 to 20 minutes per student. After it is complete, simply print the Registration Form, sign it and return it to school. Your registration is not considered complete until the signed form is received in the school office.

If you need help in any way, feel free to contact the school office or come to school during New Family Parent Information Night or Returning Family Drop-In and Drop-off Day (see related articles) and use an available registration computer. We will be happy to assist you.

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## New Staff

Drop-in & Drop-off Day

8/11 - First Day of 2014-15 School Year

8/15 - School Pictures



#### Ms. Plucker - Kindergarten

My name is Robyn Plucker and I will be teaching Kindergarten this year at DaVinci Academy. I have a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education with a cross categorical certification in Early Childhood Special Education. I came from teaching in the public school system. When I first walked through DaVinci Academy's doors, I was pleasantly surprised by the immediate sense of culture and community I felt and I am ecstatic to be teaching here!

Outside of teaching, I love lifting weights and staying healthy. I also enjoy anything outdoors - camping, fishing, hiking, sports, and bonfires. My fiancé, Andrew and I have a dog named Cooper who is half Lhasa Apso, half Shih Tzu and a whole lot of fun!

#### Ms. Zender - 3rd Grade

Hello! My name is Kelly Zender. I am thrilled to join the DaVinci Academy community! I come to DaVinci Academy with 13 years of teaching experience and am excited for this new adventure in my career. I earned my undergraduate degree from Minnesota State University, Mankato and my Masters Degree in Education from Hamline University. After ten years at my prior school, it was time to make a change in schools and I couldn't be more pleased to make DaVinci Academy my new home away from home. I am a proud mom of three children - Charlie is 9 years old and will be a 4th grader at DaVinci Academy, Chloe is 7 years old who will be a 2nd grader at DaVinci Academy, and Molly is 4 years old and is excited to start at DaVinci Academy next school year. Most of our time as a family is spent either at the hockey rink or the dance studio. In our rare spare time we love to be outside, watch movies, make crafts, and spend time with our friends. I am looking forward to getting to know the students, parents, faculty and staff here. Please don't hesitate to stop into my classroom and introduce yourself

#### Ms. Berryhill - 4th Grade:

## Greetings and Salutations!

My name is Brynn Berryhill and I will be the 4th and 5th grade social studies teacher this year. I graduated from Bethel University with a K-6 Elementary Education license and a Theater Arts minor.

I am ecstatic to be working with DaVinci Academy students on stories and cultures of our world. In class, as well as in various after school programs, I am excited to share some of my many hobbies

with the students (juggling, knitting, improvisation, etc.)

I look forward to meeting all of you!

Mrs. Brown - Middle School Science

Hi, My name is Nikki Brown. I will be teaching middle school science this year. I am very excited to be part of the DaVinci Academy Family. I graduated from the University of WI Eau Claire with a Bachelors of Science in Biology. Upon completion of that degree I realized that teaching was my passion. I went back to school and received my teaching license from Augsburg College. I also have coached swimming for many years both at the High School level, and club level.

I am married and have two children. My 4 year old is Wyatt. He will be starting Pre-K this year and will be attending DaVinci Academy next year for Kindergarten. Wyatt is a very active boy and is involved in Soccer, Swimming, and Gymnastics. My daughter Olena is 8 months old. She will be starting swimming in the winter and within a year I'm sure Gymnastics and Dance will be added to her activity list.

When not working his full-time job, my husband is a volunteer Firefighter for North St. Paul, and is very active in our community.

Ms. Tacheny - Special Education

My name is Gwen Tacheny and I am a special education teacher new to DaVinci Academy. I am very excited to begin the new school year and get acquainted with the students, families and staff here at DaVinci Academy.

Erin Alexander will be working as a Paraprofessional this year. Cassie Anderson will be joining our lunchroom staff.

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## Reminders

**New Family Parent Information Night** (just for **new families**) is on Wednesday, August 6 from 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm.

The doors will open at 6:00 pm. From 6:00 pm to 6:30 pm is set aside for "housekeeping" tasks. At 6:30 pm there will be an informational presentation. New families are highly encouraged to attend.

**Returning Family Drop-In & Drop-Off Day** (just for returning

families) is on Thursday, August 7 between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm. This entire 12 hour period has been set aside for you to come in and take care of your "housekeeping tasks."

If you need more information on either of these events, please refer to the previous DaVinci Connection dated July 19, 2014.

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## Student Drop-Off & Pick-up Process

([Gregg Eldred](#) - Student Development Coordinator)

### Morning Drop-Off:

Students may be dropped off at school in the morning between 7:40 am and 8:00 am. Students may be dropped off in the front of the school or in the back of the school. Please watch for the person directing traffic. This person will direct you where to drop off your child. The area in the front of the school is used for our buses between 7:30 am and 8:00 am. Please do not drive in the front of the school unless you are directed to by a staff member.

Students may not enter the school building before 7:20 am. Students go to their lockers or classrooms prior to 7:40 am. Students that arrive to school before 7:40 am will need to wait in the front of the school, just inside the first set of doors. Our first morning bell sounds at 7:55 am. When students hear this bell they should go to their classrooms. School begins at 8:00 am. A second morning bell will sound at this time letting staff and students know that school has begun. If you arrive at school with your child after 8:00 am, you need to park on the side of the building and walk your son or daughter to the front desk and sign them in. Please, do not park in the front of the school when you walk your child in.

### Afternoon Pick Up:

If you are picking up your child at the end of the day, please drive to the back of the school. We have staff members that will radio in and have your child sent out to meet you. When driving on school property, please drive with caution and courtesy.

Our morning drop off and afternoon pick up has been working well and efficiently. If you have any transportation questions, please feel free to call me at (763) 754-6577 Ext: 116.

### One-Day Transportation Requests:

If you need to change your child's transportation for one afternoon, for example, if your son or daughter should not ride the bus because you will be picking him or her up at school, you **MUST** call the school by 2:00 pm with details. **We will not accept changes after 2:00 pm.**

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## Busing Information

The bus stops for 2014-2015 have been set. You will find a list of the satellite stops in your online registration information or you can

view the list [here](#).

Please note, DaVinci Academy's satellite bus stops are carefully determined based on the locations that are central and accessible to as many families as possible but still within the allotted mileage to and from school.

Please make sure your child is at their bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled pick-up. When picking up your child from the bus stop at the end of the day, PLEASE be on time. If you are not at the bus stop to pick up your child, he or she will need to remain on the bus. You may pick up your child at the next stop or at the last stop scheduled for the bus. If you are running late and know you won't be at the bus stop on time, you can call Kottkes directly at (763) 755-3100. Students that ride the bus will be dropped off at the front of the school usually between 7:40 am and 7:55 am. If a bus is late arriving to school, those students are excused from being tardy. Your child's safety is our number one priority.

#### One-Day Transportation Requests:

If you need to change your child's transportation for one afternoon, for example, if you son or daughter should not ride the bus because you will be picking him or her up at school, you **MUST** call the school by 2:00 pm with details. **We will not accept changes after 2:00 pm.**

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## Student Medication at School

Any prescription and non-prescription medication that is given while a student is in school will need to have the Medication Authorization form completed by the parent and must include a physician signature. This form must be updated at the beginning of each school year or when a change of medication is required. The medication must be brought to the school office in either the container labeled by the pharmacy with the student's information and directions or in the original container for non-prescription medication. We will not be able to accept medication that is brought in any other form.

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## Lunch Orders/Pricing

The August lunch menu email was sent to all families on July 30. If you did not receive this email, please check your spam email folder and then contact the school office immediately.

Lunch prices for the 2014/2015 school year are:

- \$3.50 full price lunch (includes a milk)
- Student approved for free or reduced priced meals will receive lunch for free this year (must still pre-order all meals)
- \$1.50 for extra slice of pizza (served only on pizza days) for ALL students (even if approved for free or reduced priced meals)
- \$0.50 for milk **only** for ALL students (even if approved for free or reduced priced meals)

Any questions on this program can be directed to [Mrs. Swearingen](#).

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## Classroom Celebrations - Treats in the Classroom

Our wellness policy at DaVinci Academy is designed to encourage a school environment that promotes and protects students' health, well being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Please check with your child's classroom teacher BEFORE sending treats to celebrate birthdays or other occasions.

There are many healthy snack products that students enjoy that will meet the nutrition standards. Some items include light popcorn, low-fat chips, granola bars, fruit cups, vegetables, no-calorie flavored water, or 100% fruit juices. There are several classrooms with peanut or other nut allergies present, so please check with the classroom teacher about snack items with nuts.

Snack items that are generally not allowed include cupcakes, candy, cookies, cake, doughnuts, ice cream, high calorie energy bars and soda.

Please help us in our efforts to encourage healthy and nutritious eating habits for our students.

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## Save Your School Supply Receipts!

Minnesota offers two valuable tax benefits for parents who purchase school supplies for their K-12 students; the K-12 Education Credit and Subtraction. These benefits can reduce parents' taxes and increase their refund, but only if they keep their receipts. Purchases for most school supplies, field trips, and musical instruments for school band are eligible.

Most Minnesota parents qualify for the K-12 subtraction, which reduces their taxable income. Parents under certain income limits may also qualify for the K-12 credit, which can refund up to 75 percent of their costs - even for parents who don't owe any taxes. See the attached [flyer](#) or visit the Minnesota Department of Revenue website for details.

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## Student Volunteers

As we return to school, we realize that many of our outgoing eighth grade students will not yet be starting school. Some former students feel that this might be a good time to come into school and volunteer during the school day. However, this is disruptive for the students in school and we would ask that former students do not come into the school during the school day. If former students would like to volunteer for projects, their parents should call the



school to ask if we have projects available and then make arrangements through Mrs. Swearingen. Also, please understand that teachers are busy at the end of the day as well and this is also not a good time to come and visit. We would like to thank you for your cooperation.

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## After-School Childcare

If you are interested in signing up for convenient and flexible after-school care for the upcoming school year, check out Y-Care; daycare provided by the Lino Lakes YMCA right here at DaVinci Academy!

To review program details and register, go to the YMCA website [here](#).

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DaVinci Academy of Arts & Science / 13001 Highway 65 / Blaine, Minnesota 55434 / 763-754-6577

### [Forward this email](#)



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