

DaVinci Connection

October 23, 2014
Volume 4, Issue 6



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.)

Table of Contents

8th Grade Explore
Assessment

Individual MCA Results

College Study Skills
Seminar

High School Information
Meeting for 8th Grade
Families

Basketball Parent Meeting
on October 27

Health Concerns

Book Fair Results

Thank You from Teachers
& Staff

PTO News & Spaghetti
Dinner/Silent Auction

School Links

DaVinci Academy
Staff Directory
Food & Nutrition Info
School Calendar
School Supplies
Volunteer Information

Important Dates

10/27 - School Board

Middle School - EXPLORE Assessment

By Debra Lach

Next week, our 8th grade students will take the EXPLORE assessment, a national tool that helps 8th and 9th grade students determine their readiness for high school, plan high school courses, and start to consider a career direction. It is important that students take this assessment seriously because many area high schools use the scores on EXPLORE to place students in honors or other courses.

We are proud of our middle school program, which prepares students to succeed in high school and beyond. There are three characteristics of high performing middle schools: a rigorous academic program; a community that ensures every student feels safe and knows a sense of belonging and support; and teachers and curriculum that allow students to wonder, discover, create, and envision a future with a wide variety of potential interests.

Middle school students' brains are growing at an explosive rate, faster than at any time since infancy. Neural pathways are being pruned and strengthened, and it is important that students continue to experience many new areas of interest because the brain selectively strengthens or prunes neurons based on activity during this time. Synapses that are continually used will flourish; those that are not will wither away.

Our young teens will grow as much during middle school as they did from infancy through the toddler years – physically, emotionally, and intellectually – and we, as parents and teachers, get to witness it all. The quirky humor, the occasional clumsiness, and the insatiable desire to "know it all" present opportunities to connect with and inspire students in unique ways. We are here to stretch their minds and their hearts.

Meeting, 6:00 pm

10/27 - Basketball Parent Meeting, 6:00 pm, Gym

11/2 - Study Skills Seminar, 10:00 a.m.

11/3 - School Development Committee, 6:00 pm

11/3 - HR/Compensation Committee, 7:00 pm

11/6 - End of 1st Trimester

11/7 - No School

11/7 - School Play, "The Humor Games," 6:30 pm

11/8 - School Play, "The Humor Games," 11:00 am

11/10 - Curriculum Committee, 5:00 pm

11/10 - Finance Committee, 6:30 pm

11/11 - High School Info Mtg, 6:00 pm

11/12 - Policy Committee, 3:30 pm

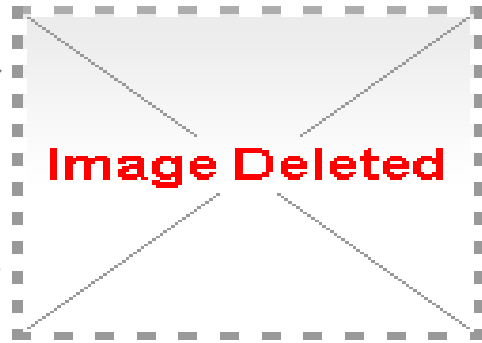
11/17 - School Board Meeting, 6:00 pm

11/24-28 - No School

We will provide results of the EXPLORE assessment as soon as they are available to help students and parents as they make decisions for high school. We will also be holding parent/student sessions throughout the year to inform and educate on topics that are of special interest for middle school families.

High School Information Meeting for 8th Grade Families

On Tuesday, November 11, at 6:00 pm, we will hold an information session for parents and 8th grade students regarding high school decisions you will make for next year.



This meeting will include a panel of former students who are currently in high school, as well as parents who have already gone down this path. We will also have information about how to open enroll, who to contact for tours, and other information that will assist parents and students in making the best decisions about high school next year. At this session, there will be the option to sign up for individual meetings with Ms. Moffatt to discuss your child's options.

If you have any questions regarding the information session, contact [Terry Moffatt](#).

Individual MCA Results

The individual results for the 2013-14 MCA's have finally been delivered. These are for the MCA's that were completed last spring. If your child was in grades 3-8 last year, you will receive the individual report in the mail soon. If you have any questions about the scores or what they mean for your child, contact [Terry Moffatt](#).

College Study Skills Seminar for Students in Grades 7 - 12

Saturday, November 1st, DaVinci Academy is offering a unique seminar for students in middle school and DaVinci graduates. Jeannie Burlowski will be teaching an introduction to college study skills and success strategies class aimed at middle school and early high school students.



COLLEGE STUDY SKILLS FOR STUDENTS GRADES 7-12

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 1 10-2:30 / DAVINCI ACADEMY BLAINE MN

A college study skills class for middle schoolers and high schoolers? Really? Yes!

Middle school students' brains are growing at an explosive rate — faster than at any time since infancy. Neural pathways are being pruned and strengthened, and so any experience they have during these years is likely to stick with them — in technique — for years and years afterward. Often for a lifetime. I want it to be during those years that they are first matched with the message of what it takes to succeed in college. That their mindset is not fixed; it grows as they develop it. That learning is useful and unnecessary. That strategic college students use a calendar and several tricks that allow them to get a whole studying LESS than most other people. If we're able to get this message to your child early on, college success strategies will be locked in in ways they will not be as wet and just before or during college.

10-12: How to Study Brilliantly in College — Part A: Is it possible to succeed at the highest levels in college without stressful cramming? Yes! Find out how top-performing students manage their time so that they can succeed brilliantly while studying LESS than most other people. Included will be a structural systematic review method developed at Carnegie Mellon University that can completely eliminate the need to ever cram for exams.

12-12:30: Bring a bag lunch for our lunchtime question and answer time

12-30-2:30: How to be Brilliant in College — Part B: Now learn the advanced, clever, studying, test-taking, and paper-writing strategies that top students use to succeed at the most prestigious colleges in the country while still having plenty of time left over for leadership, internships, and having more fun than they ever thought possible. This session will help you to maximize your potential in high school and college, give you more time to relax, and help you to become a top contender both for scholarships, and for career and grad school success after college.

RESERVE YOUR SPOT BY EMAILING brenda@davincicharterschool.org

FREE if you respond by October 30th, \$39 at the door

OUR MISSION: At BRILLIANT IN COLLEGE SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES, we equip parents so that their kids can succeed brilliantly in college, graduate debt-free, and move directly into careers they love and love. We do this through a series of free emailed articles, Facebook posts, and tweets, through low cost local seminars, and through large regional conferences sponsored by schools, churches, and other organizations. To receive ongoing free help from us, sign up for our email newsletter at burlandcollege.com, LIKE Jeannie Burlowski Consulting on Facebook, and follow @JBurlowski on Twitter.

ABOUT JEANNIE BURLAWSKI: Jeannie Burlowski is a nationally recognized speaker, consultant, and writer on the subjects of brilliance in college, debt-free college completion, strategic career planning for high school and college students, and admission to highly competitive law, medical, business, and graduate schools. Her speaking, writing, and consulting help families from birth to grade 12 to create strategic plans for debt-free four year college completion that leads directly to exciting and satisfying career after college. She is the Primary Instructor for BRILLIANT IN COLLEGE SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES, and she is also the author of two books: *LAUNCH: How to Get Your Kids Through College Debt-Free (and into jobs they love, internships, and etc.)*. The *LAUNCH* You Can't Afford to Miss in the Parent's College Prep Guide and *How to Get Your Kids Through College Debt-Free (and into jobs they love, internships, and etc.)*. Jeannie lives in Lino Lakes, Minnesota with her husband Tim, two children, and a poodle named Sparky.

(See the attached [flyer](#) for full details and registration information)

The concepts Jeannie will focus on in this one day class include how college is structured, the importance of note-taking, how to study strategically with no stressful cramming, how to study for tests using the "quiz and recall" method, how to take college multiple choice and essay exams, how to use a calendar, and how to stretch paper-writing and projects out over weeks instead of hours. Learning these skills in middle school will put students on a path towards success in high school and college.

Class on November 1st will run from 10:00 AM to 2:30 PM with a half hour lunch time in the middle. Students are asked to bring a bag lunch and drink.

This class will be **FREE to families who RSVP to brenda@davincicharterschool.org by October 31st.** Day of seminar entry fee is \$39.00.

Basketball Parent Meeting on October 27



If your child will participate in basketball at DaVinci Academy this winter, please plan on attending a Parent Meeting on Monday, October 27, at 6:00 pm in the gym. Information about tournaments, practice times, fees, etc. will all be discussed, so please try to attend.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact [Mark Slechta](#) for the information missed.

Health Concerns

By [Debra Lach](#)

This week I was on a conference call with Education Commissioner Cassellius who asked the Minnesota Department of Health to share information on the Ebola Virus and other health concerns. They verified that, while it is rational for there to be anxiety in our state about the Ebola Virus because we haven't experienced it before, we should be assured that the Commissioner and the Department of Health are working closely to assess readiness and prepare for any cases or concerns that might arise in our schools. DaVinci Academy will continue to work under the direction of the Department of Health.

Feel free to contact me ([Ms. Lach](#)) if you have any specific questions about this or any other health concerns.

Book Fair Results

By [Miranda TenNapel](#)

This year's book fair went great; we were able to raise \$2,300 in Scholastic Dollars which will go towards new books for the library as well as for each classroom!!

Thank you so much to those who volunteered their time and/or made purchases that helped support our school!

If you have any questions about the book fair or our library in general, please feel free to contact [Mrs. TenNapel](#).



Thank You from Teachers & Staff

Thank you to the parents who provided amazing meals for the teachers and staff during conferences last week, and to the PTO volunteers who organized the delivery and clean up. We were treated to all kinds of yummy salads, desserts, and meals that kept us energized through the long days. Thank you also for thoughtfully providing meals that took into account various food allergies. What a gift!

PTO News

See the most recent [PTO newsletter](#) for information on the upcoming **Spaghetti Dinner/Silent Auction** on November 20.

This is a fantastic and fun event to assist with and attend! Please get involved one way or another.



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