

# DaVinci Connection

## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

### **Back to School Nights:**

August 6  
6:00 p.m.  
Grades 6 - 8

August 7  
6:00 p.m.  
Grades 3 - 5

August 8  
6:00 p.m.  
Grades 1 - 2

**First Day of School**  
August 12

**NWEA Testing**  
Aug 13 - 29

**Picture Day**  
August 16

**School Board Meeting**  
August 19  
6:00 p.m.

**Mandatory Intersession**  
August 26 - 29

**Family Picnic**  
August 29  
5:00 p.m.

**No School**  
August 30

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

[http://dvincicharterschool.org/  
Calendar.aspx](http://dvincicharterschool.org/Calendar.aspx)

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

[www.dvincicharterschool.org](http://www.dvincicharterschool.org)

We hope you are enjoying the last days of summer. We have been very busy preparing for the new school year.

### **ON-LINE REGISTRATION AND BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHTS**

THIS YEAR WE ARE MOVING OUR APPLICATION, LOTTERY, ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION PROCESSES TO AN ONLINE SYSTEM.

You will receive an email with access codes for your student(s). IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE AN EMAIL with this information by Friday, August 2, please contact [Lee Swearingen](#) as soon as possible.

The initial rollout of this system requires you to review and update your student's information to insure the correct information is in our system. Go to our website [www.dvincicharterschool.org](http://www.dvincicharterschool.org) to complete the process.

Please take time to complete the entire process before you come to Back to School Night.

August 6 – grades 6 - 8

August 7 – grades 3 - 5

August 8 – grades 1 - 2

Once you complete your review and updates, you will receive an authorization form to print, sign and bring to school when you come for your Back to School Night. If you don't have access to a computer or a printer, you can complete and/or print and sign the form at school. Computers will be available from 5:30-6:00, before the Back to School Night agenda begins. There will be volunteers to help you through the process.

### **CLASS LIST**

Class lists will be posted at your child's Back to School Night. Class lists are continually refined through the summer as we add new students.

### **BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT SCHEDULE**

Please plan to attend the Back to School Night(s) with your student(s).

5:30-6:00 - Complete On-line registration form if necessary

6:00 – 6:40 - Parents/students meet teachers in classrooms

- Drop off supplies to each classroom teacher

6:40 – 7:15 - Parents meet in gym with administration and students remain in classrooms

Please be aware that many of the teachers have switched classrooms. Maps will be provided when you arrive.

### **NEW ATTENDANCE CALL-IN LINE**

If your child is going to be absent for any reason, please call our new attendance line at (763)754-6648. Leave the student's name, your name, the date and the reason for the absence. Please call before 8:00 a.m. if at all possible. Please call EACH day that the student will be absent, even if you know in advance that a student may be out for more than one day. In the case of an extended absence of more than three consecutive days for surgery, etc. please call Terry Moffatt, Academic Director in advance at phone number (763)754-6577 extension 104 or fill out the extended absence form available on our website. (<http://dvincicharterschool.org/CMSUploads/PDFs/Prior%20Approval%20Request%20Form.pdf>)

### **PICTURE DAY**

Picture day is scheduled for August 16. Look for order forms to come home the first week of school.



## APPLICATION FOR EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

Our school participates in the Food and Nutrition program through the Minnesota Department of Education. Please review the application for Educational Benefits carefully. Our school receives state and federal funding, as well as other resources, for each student who is eligible for free or reduced price meals. Even if you choose not to take advantage of free or reduced price meals, your application may still make a difference for our entire school.

If your family is eligible for educational benefits you may also qualify for a program from Comcast that provides very low cost computers and internet access for your home. Information is available at the front desk.

Taking the time to fill out the application helps the entire school. Information on your application is kept strictly confidential. A new form must be completed each school year. If you have any questions regarding the application or the school lunch program, contact [Lee Swearingen](#).

## SUPPLY LISTS ARE AVAILABLE

You can find the 2013-14 student supply list on our website ([http://davincicharterschool.org/School\\_Supply\\_List](http://davincicharterschool.org/School_Supply_List)). We will again provide parents with the opportunity to save time and money by paying an upfront fee for a limited number of classroom supplies which we will order on an as-needed basis. We have negotiated special prices for the items and included only those things that we can get at a better bulk rate. The "school purchase/parent reimburse" items are limited to supplies such as printer paper, hand sanitizer, glue sticks, and sanitizer wipes. This process will substantially shorten the "family responsibility" list of supplies you need to shop for and bring to school.

The Supply Lists include, by grade, both the list of the school purchase/parent reimburse items and the family responsibility items.

Supply fees will be collected at the Back to School Nights or Start of Year Kindergarten Conferences. If you have any questions about supplies, please contact [Lee Swearingen](#).

## "AUTHORIZED VEHICLE" WINDOW CLINGS

We are continuing to fine-tune the drop-off and pick-up of students to insure that the process is as safe and efficient as possible. You will receive two new window decals to be placed on the front windshield of your vehicle (driver's side, lower corner). Decals are a different color for this year (blue), and will be provided in your Back to School night family folder. Please replace the decal from last year with the new one.

We will provide a maximum of two additional decals per family for people on your Authorized Pick-up List.

Cars that come through the pick-up line without the appropriate window decal may be required to exit the pick-up line and come to the front desk to check-out the student(s).

## DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

Please help us keep the process safe and efficient:

- ◆ Insure that students are ready to leave the car as soon as you arrive at the curb in the morning
- ◆ Driver should stay in the car both in the morning and in the afternoon
- ◆ Students should always exit to the right, passenger side of the vehicle
- ◆ If you choose to come into the school to pick up your child in the afternoon, go to the front desk and tell them your student(s)' name. The receptionist will call for your student(s) who will meet you at the front desk. Please do not go to your child's classroom.

Thank you for your cooperation and patience in improving the safety and efficiency of the drop-off and pick-up procedures while keeping students, staff and parents safe.

## A NOTE FROM MELISSA MERRITT

It is with mixed emotions that I inform you of my departure from your school and community. In the last year I have gotten married and bought a house in Richfield. Time at home is becoming more valuable to me so when a first grade position opened at a school near my house it was a good fit for me. As excited as I am about this new opportunity, I will miss DaVinci greatly. I have made many friends with both staff and parents. I think your school is on a great path for success and will miss being a part of it. Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of the DaVinci family, and I know you will continue to be the desired school you are.





## NUTRITION PROGRAM

***Lunch orders for the first three weeks of school will be due no later than 7:00pm on Thursday, August 8.*** Menus will be sent out in a separate email by the end of this week and will also be available at Back to School Nights and Kindergarten Conferences.

At DaVinci Academy, we believe strongly that good nutrition is imperative for effective learning and we are committed to providing nutritious lunches for students. The meal and milk costs are the same as last year:

- ♦ student meals (including milk) - \$3.50 per day;
- ♦ reduced-price meals - \$0.40 per day; and
- ♦ milk only - \$.50 per carton.

Parents are required to order lunches for each month during the prior month. With the exception of the first month of the school year (August), the deadline for ordering lunches is usually 1 to 2 weeks in advance of the first school day in the month. The menu will be sent out through an email and will be available at the reception desk. One menu needs to be completed for EACH student who wishes to have lunch provided for them.

Please be assured that should your child forget their lunch at home, we will always offer them an emergency meal from school. Emergency meals consist of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, a carton of milk and one serving of fruit. Their lunch account will be charged \$1.50 for each emergency meal and they will be given a slip during lunch to notify you of the charge.

The following rules will apply when purchasing meals or milk at school:

1. Students who bring lunch from home will be allowed to purchase milk only if they have a positive lunch balance.
2. Students who incur a negative balance at any time during the month may receive an emergency meal in lieu of the pre-ordered meal.
3. Students will be able to pre-order lunch for an upcoming month only if they have a positive lunch balance.
4. A student who has not pre-ordered lunch for a particular day and does not bring a lunch from home will be provided with an emergency meal.

If, for any reason, you would prefer that your child not be allowed to charge any meals or milk to their lunch account, please email [Lee Swearingen](#) directly and we will delete their lunch id number and inform the appropriate staff.

## WELCOME NEW TEACHERS AND STAFF

My name is Katharine Borg, and I will teach **1st grade** at DaVinci. When I have a bit of free time, I enjoy being with my family and friends. I have 2 siblings, a sister and a brother, who are both married, and I have 3 nephews that I love and adore. When with my family we like to hang out at our cabin: swim, fish, barbeque, etc. I also love being outside running and biking, my goal someday is to do a triathlon. Teaching is something I am very passionate about. I love the excitement that the students have towards learning and enjoy watching them grow and succeed academically and emotionally. I look forward to the coming year and getting to know your child and you!

Hi! My name is Amy Gibault and I am excited to be **teaching 4-8 art** this year. Prior to teaching at DaVinci Academy, I taught K-5 and alternative middle school art in Tomah, WI for 11 years. I attended the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire for both my undergraduate and Master's degree. I love coffee, reading, traveling, and spending time with my fiancé and our family and friends. Viking fans beware - a Packer fan has infiltrated your staff!

My name is Candi Jenkins and I am so pleased to have the fantastic opportunity to **teach Special Education** at DaVinci Academy! I come to you with dual licensures in Special Education from Augsburg College in Minneapolis and as a member of the National Honor Society. My undergraduate degree from Augsburg College is a Bachelor of Arts in Music. My specialties of teaching include embedding study skills, social skills, organizational skills, and emotional regulation into the rigorous instruction of core academics. My classroom environment is a very welcoming, supportive community with a positive behavioral approach. I believe that all students can be successful learners! Please feel free to stop by the resource room and introduce yourself. I would thoroughly enjoy meeting you!



My name is Elizabeth Busacker and I am very excited to be joining DaVinci Academy as the **building substitute teacher**. I graduated from Winona State University in 2011 where I received my teaching degree. I love spending time with my family and friends, reading, cooking, and traveling—especially around the United States. I am currently engaged and planning my wedding in November to my wonderful fiancé.

My name is Brian Mueggenberg, and I am excited to start as your **middle school math teacher**! I am thrilled to work with a dedicated and supportive community of students, parents, and staff. I graduated from St. Cloud State University in 2012, and since then I have taught part-time at Arona High School and at Yeshiva of Minneapolis. I am excited to be full time at DaVinci Academy, and I anticipate getting involved in the community. I look forward to getting to know the students and I hope to meet all of you at our Back to School Night!

My name is Brittney Sundgaard and I will be working as a **Special Education Para-Professional** this year. I graduated from Concordia College in Moorhead, MN in 2012 with a degree in Elementary Education with an emphasis in Middle School Social Studies. Over the past year I have worked at New Horizon Academy in Maple Grove as an infant transition teacher getting the babies ready to be in the toddler room. In my spare time I love to swim, read, plan my wedding, and spend time with my family and fiancé. I have a passion for working with children and am excited to be a part of a school that has high expectations for the staff and students.

My name is Cassandra Poulter, and I will be your child's **4-8 Spanish Teacher** this year. I grew up in Wisconsin, and graduated with a K-12 Spanish Education degree from UW-Madison. To gain an exclusive Spanish experience, I studied abroad in southern Spain for a semester. I moved to the Twin Cities area last year, where I taught Elementary and Middle School Spanish in White Bear Lake. I am excited to work with your child this year in gaining conversational Spanish skills and fond memories to come!

My name is Siobhan Payne and I am thrilled to be the **new 4th and 5th grade science teacher** at DaVinci Academy. I have a BA in Education from the College of St. Benedict and a MA in Curriculum and Instruction

from the University of St. Thomas. For the past seven years I was the middle school science teacher at Immaculate Conception School. I was drawn to DaVinci Academy because of the welcoming community and the dedication to academic excellence. I am very excited for a wonderful year at DaVinci Academy and I can't wait to meet all of you!

Hello, DaVinci families! My name is Michele Troy and for the 2013-2014 school year I will be **teaching the full day kindergarten class**. It is my fifth year working with DaVinci students and I have enjoyed working with the wonderful children and their parents. Prior to DaVinci I taught at St. David's in Minnetonka and for ECCE in St. Paul. I received my Early Childhood degree from the College of St. Benedict and am currently continuing my education at Concordia in St. Paul. I have been blessed with a great husband and eight amazing children. Our youngest four have all had the opportunity to be DaVinci Academy Scholars!

I am Miranda TenNapel and I will be working in the **library** and the **kitchen** this year. I am a happily married mother of two boys, ages 12 & 9, who attend DaVinci Academy. I enjoy cycling, triathlons, being outside with the family & gardening. I love DaVinci Academy because of the smaller classroom sizes and the family-like atmosphere.

We'd also like to introduce our new **Advanced Academics Program**. We are very excited to have Ruth Thom join DaVinci Academy as the **Advanced Academics Resource Coordinator**. Ruth has a Master's Degree in curriculum and instruction and holds a certification in gifted and talented education. She has served on the board of Minnesota Educators of the Gifted and Talented for eight years in the capacity of president as well as the public relations chair. Ruth comes to DaVinci Academy with a considerable amount of experience which includes designing and managing district-wide gifted and talented programs for two districts. We are looking forward to working with Ruth to expand our services for gifted and talented students and we welcome her to DaVinci Academy!