Welcome back to school families and students!

I hope that a little extra time this summer allowed everyone time to travel, enjoy the outdoors and prepare for the school year. I really appreciate all of the families that were able to attend our back to school orientation nights. Any time we are able to have classroom teachers, families and students all connect face to face it is a wonderful thing. The following are a few items that are either new or important for families to watch for:

Art Sculpture
You may have seen in The Messenger this summer our art sculpture donated by the Catherine Vincent Deardorf Foundation. To the right is a picture from the installation over the summer. Stop by the auditorium and see the finished product. We will have some student led groups in charge of staging the items in the sculpture soon!

1:1 Computer Initiative
Students at FDMS have more access to technology than ever before. 7th and 8th grade students have been issued a Chromebook to use the entire year. 5th and 6th grade students will have their Chromebook throughout the school day, but will leave their device at school. Below are some keys to having a successful year with your Chromebook:

1. Care: In order to keep the device from being damaged, please recommend students use their backpacks to carry the device and be responsible about where the device is stored at home. If it is damaged we need to know as soon as possible to make sure your child can use it. Students can personalize so long as it doesn’t damage the device or violate school/board policies.

2. Prepare: It is a building expectation that the Chromebook come to school every day with students, with a full battery charge, ready to use in class. Students should keep their chargers at home to prevent them from being lost/damaged carrying back and forth, we also won't have assigned charging spaces available for students to charge at school.

3. Use: Chromebooks are used to enhance learning, connect with learners around the globe, gather information at an incredibly efficient rate and share and publish information at a global level. Chromebooks are learning tools that enhance and intensify what teachers are doing, they do not replace teachers and are not a "gaming device."

4. Abuse: Inappropriate use of the Chromebook such as accessing inappropriate websites, playing games at inappropriate times or other internet abuses will result in student's access to the internet being restricted. Internet access levels remain in place no matter what network the Chromebook is connected to, whether at school or home. Only those with an @fdschools.org email address can log onto a Chromebook.

Estimated costs for repair doc: https://docs.google.com/a/fdschools.org/document/d/1FuKUy02Flcn4D6WCPNimTvc5zEw3qtYdWlzqTtiBE4lw/edit?usp=sharing

Look for more information coming home about:
5-8 Student After School Clubs
FDMS Fall Fundraiser

Ryan Flaherty
FDMS Principal
FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL IS SEPTEMBER 5TH!
1:10 DISMISSAL

Dodgers
DATES TO REMEMBER:

SEPTEMBER:
1st     PreK-12 Professional Development
4th     Labor Day - All Schools & Offices CLOSED
5th     First Day of School EARLY DISMISSAL 1:10pm
20th    PreK-12 Professional Development EARLY DISMISSAL 1:10pm

OCTOBER:
4th     PreK-12 Professional Development EARLY DISMISSAL 1:10pm
6th     Homecoming Parade - EARLY DISMISSAL 2:00pm
13th    Middle School Fall Pictures
18th    FULL DAY OF SCHOOL (different from 12 month calendar)
24th    TK-8 Conferences - EARLY DISMISSAL 1:10pm
26th    TK-8 Conferences
Drop-Off & Pick-Up Info

As always our first priority with your child is their physical, emotional, and social safety. As we begin the new school year please take some time to educate yourself and your child of the following requests to provide a safe before and after school experience for your child.

All non-bus riding students enter the building through the auditorium doors on the south side of the school. Doors open at 7:40 am. Bus riding students will enter the north main doors.

There are cross walks on 10th avenue north with crossing guards please, discuss with your child(ren) to cross at the cross walks. There are cross walks on the south side of the building assisting students from the parking lot to the sidewalk. Please discuss with your child(ren) to cross at the cross walks. Teachers will be at these cross walks to assist students as they cross.

Give yourself some extra time. It will likely take between 10-12 minutes to drop your child off at the middle school. Try to always budget for that so you and/or your child do not end up late.

Reduce your speed. No matter where you are at when there are children present and the roads are slippery it is important to proceed with caution. Our staff is diligently trying to keep all children out of roadways until their ride is present, but as a driver always plan for the unpredictable and keep your eyes open.

Pull all the way forward to the auditorium doors when dropping off your child. We have determined the system that best works for our parking lot. We have opened the auditorium entrance in the morning. By design our parking lot and drop-off lane are successful only if drivers always pull all the way forward in the drop-off lane. Please help us get everyone in and out of the building efficiently by pulling all the way forward and utilizing both doors.
Meet Ryan Flaherty
Principal

Family:
My wife Lisa works as a pharmacist at Daniel Pharmacy. We have two children each attending Fort Dodge Schools; Micah is a 5th grade student at Fort Dodge Middle School and Noah is a kindergartner at Cooper Elementary.

Previous Work:
For the past two years I worked at Prairie Lakes AEA as a Regional Administrator coordinating services for students with special needs. I have also worked as an assistant principal at Fort Dodge Middle School and as Principal at Feelhaver Elementary.

Hopes and Goals:
During my first year as principal at Fort Dodge Middle School I will have many things to learn and people to meet. I hope to learn as quickly as possible, to build healthy relationships with families, students and the staff at FDMS. If I am successful learning, leading and building relationships, you all will know you are sending your sons and daughters into a safe building, with caring adults that will help your children realize their hopes and dreams.
Meet John Buckner
Assistant Principal

Hometown: Fort Dodge, Iowa

Education: University of North Texas, B.A. Psychology, M. Ed. Educational Leadership

Where were you before you came to FDMS?: I was a Special Education Teacher specializing in social and emotional assistance for students with severe behavior challenges in the Fort Worth, Texas, area.

Family: My wife’s name is Andrea and we’ve been married for 9 years and we have 4 children; Nolan (7), Gracie (4), Mayzi (2), and Nixon (7 months).

Hobbies/Interests: Triathlons, marathons, and seeing new Major League Baseball stadiums

What do you look forward to this year at FDMS?: The challenge of our work as an administrative team and school staff excites me. I look forward to working hard each day to ensure our students and staff have a safe environment to create learning experiences our community will be proud of.
The athletic season is currently rocking at Fort Dodge Middle School! This year has seen many new changes take place. We have started practices before school and have seen a change in the personnel as well. With the retirement of Mark Johnson, the athletic department has developed a new 7th-12th brand under Activities Director Matt Elsbecker. Ryan O’Leary will be the go to guy at the Middle School with the role of Assistant Activities Director.

We have a lot of students who are currently involved in football, volleyball, cross country, band and choir, but we always have room for more! If you know of anyone that is interested in going out for an activity please encourage them to give it a try.

We are always looking for volunteers to help out with concessions stands and crucial jobs such as chain gain crews, timers and scorers at our events. Please let us know if you are available. Your help is essential.

The athletic website is still accessible for those of you who like to print off the team’s schedules. You can find the schedules on http://cimlcentral.org/public/genie/79/school/10/ Schedules do change throughout the year so please remember to check the page every so often to stay up to date. The directions to the out of town venues are listed as well.

If your child isn’t participating in any extracurricular activities, please encourage them to do so! Studies have shown that students who are involved in activities tend to do better in school. There is always room for anyone who wants to give it a try and put on a Dodger uniform. Our mission is to get as many students involved as possible and with your help we can achieve that goal. And remember TOGETHER WE RISE!

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact Matt Elsbecker (7th-12th) Activities Director at 574-5826 or Ryan O’Leary Assistant AD/Middle School AD at 574-5453 or at roleary@fdschools.org.
From The Attendance Office:

Phone Messages:

Every day around 2:30pm, we call students to the office for any messages they have received during the day. Please ensure you have called in before this time. Also, please keep in mind that with close to 1,200 students, if you have a reoccurring message, please discuss this with your child in the morning before school. This will help us keep classroom interruptions to a minimum.

Early Dismissals From School:

This year we have several early dismissals at 1:10. Please make sure your child knows how to get home on these days. DART and regular school buses will run at 1:10 dismissal time.

Time of Arrival at School:

Students should not arrive at school before 7:40, as supervisors are not on duty before that time. Breakfast starts at 7:50 and runs until 8:05. Please help us keep your children safe by not sending them to school before that time.

Checking Out of School:

Please sign and send a written note to school if your child has to leave school during the day. They are to bring it directly to the office first thing in the morning for office personal to sign. They will then show that note to their teacher to get excused from class and bring the note to the office to check out.

Parents are required to pick up their child on the South side. They will be waiting in the office or door area until you arrive. If they return to school, they must first check in with the office for attendance purposes before returning to class.

Attendance Office

It is important to call your son/daughter in absent if they are going to be late or miss a day of school. Please call the number below when your child is unable to make it to school.

ATTENDANCE LINE: 574-5711
Dodger Academy Now Open to All FD Elementary Students

Registration is taking place now for Dodger Academy. The program is open to students from all Fort Dodge Community School elementary schools. Limited transportation is available for students from Cooper, Duncombe and Feelhaver on a first come first serve basis. The program will begin on September 6 at Butler Elementary.

A typical day at Dodger Academy consists of

1. A snack provided by the USDA
2. Power Hour where students receive homework assistance as well as participate in math and reading skill building activities
3. Enrichment activities: such as cultural and recreational activities, many of which are provided in collaboration with community partners.

For additional information or enrollment forms visit www.fdschools.org, select the “Parents” tab then Dodger Academy or ask at your child’s school. Questions may be directed to Ashley Canto, program director, at 574.5863 or acanto@fdschools.org.

How Can I Add MONEY to My Child’s Lunch Account?

- Through your Infinite Campus account. Directions for how to pay fees and add lunch money can be found on your Infinite Campus Parent Portal under District Notices once you’ve logged in. There is a $1 convenience fee for using the online payment system.
- Bring payment to the food service office at the Central Administration Building
- Send payment in a sealed envelope with your child’s name on it with him/her to school to be delivered to the kitchen staff prior to 9 a.m. to be deposited into the account on that day
Absences
Add up!

#SchoolEveryday
Missing just 2 days a month means a child misses 10% of the school year.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS
SEPTEMBER 12
STRENGTHENING Families PROGRAM
FOR PARENTS AND YOUTH 10-14

Get the tools, skills, and strategies to build stronger families in seven sessions!

Join us for the Fall Strengthening Families Program...

Register online @ www.extension.iastate.edu/webster/

Registration forms were postal mailed to you in late August and can be returned to your school Student Services office by Sept. 22nd

Like us on Facebook – Strengthening Families – Fort Dodge, IA

Weekly sessions begin on Monday, Oct. 2nd or Thursday, Oct. 5th – Come once a week!
FREE meal and childcare too!

Questions: Please contact Linda Cline at the Webster County Extension Office 576-2119 or lcline@iastate.edu
FDCSD students will act in a responsible manner in school, on school grounds and at all school sponsored activities. Students, staff and guests will treat each other with respect and courtesy, use appropriate behavior and language, and follow expectations. Here is our complete School Discipline Policy for your review.

Check the FDCSD Virtual Backpack!

Our Virtual Backpack contains flyers and information on school and community activities for your family and student. Many of them are free! The Fort Dodge community offers kids so many great opportunities – make sure you are aware of the activities your kids can participate in. Check the Virtual Backpack today and regularly as new flyers are added often.

Has your address or contact information changed since school started?
If so, call 574.5679 to update it.

District Compliance

It is the policy of the Fort Dodge Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, ancestry, age, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, physical attributes, religion, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, veteran’s status, actual or potential parental, family or marital status in its programs, services, and employment practices. If you have questions or grievances related to this policy, please contact Marcy Harms, Director of Student Services, Central Administration Office, 104 South 17th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501, (574-5678) or contact the Civil Rights Midwestern Division for U. S. Department of Education Office, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661-4544. (Alternate for Section 504 is Lis Ristau, Director of Special Needs, 515-574-5675).

The District’s Compliance Coordinator for Affirmative Action is Robert Hughes, Assistant Superintendent, who can be reached at 574-5657 or 104 South 17th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501.

The District’s Designated Investigator of Physical/Sexual Abuse of Students by School Employees is Marcy Harms. She can be reached at 574-5678 or 104 South 17th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501. The alternate is Corey Moody. He can be reached at 574-5469 or 819 North 25th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501.

The District’s Officer for Harassment Complaints and Allegations is Marcy Harms, Director of Student Services. She can be reached at 574-5678 or 104 South 17th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501. 01/17

You can find information on our schools, news stories, data, contacts and more on the FDCSD website: www.fdschools.org.

In addition, follow FDCSD on Facebook and Twitter for up-to-date District information, pictures and reminders.

Jennifer Lane jlane@fdschools.org 515.574.5668
Director of Communications & Community Relations
Fort Dodge Community Schools