

DHSPA
Freshman Parent
Survival Guide
2009-2010



SCHOOL COMMUNITY INFORMATION

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION AND PHONE NUMBERS

Principal Dan Haron
Assistant Principals Ellen Dunn
Donna Russo
Mike Sullivan

DHS Main Phone: (203) 655-3981
Attendance Press #3
Administration Press #4
Guidance Press #5
Health Office Press #6
Welcome Center Press #9

Darien Public Schools Website: www.darienps.org
DHS Website: www.darienps.org/dhs
Up to date Sports information www.highschoolsports.net

WHO TO SEE FOR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

CONCERN	CONTACT
Student performance	Teacher
Curriculum/instruction/grading	Teacher first, then Department Chair
Requests for homework	Teacher
Counseling related issues	Counselor
Discipline	Assistant Principal
Attendance	Chuck Ferguson, Attendance Secretary
Medical issues	Nurse
Clubs	Donna Russo, Assistant Principal
Athletics	Coach first, then Athletics Director
Adult personnel	Assistant Principal first, then Principal
Stolen items	Teacher or Coach, then Assistant Principal
Locker problems	Linda Cambareri, Secretary to the Principal and Assistant Principals
Job Opportunities	JOBS Office
Lost Schedule	Guidance Counselor
Lost/Found	Rosemarie Hyatt, Secretary
Personal Concerns	Guidance Counselor
Schedule Problems	Guidance Counselor
School Records	Guidance Secretary
Tutoring	Teacher, Department Chair

CONTACTING TEACHERS

Teachers may be contacted either through Voicemail or Email. Generally, a teacher's email address consists of the first initial of the first name, the last name and darienps.org. For example if your teacher's name is Jane Doe, her email address will be jdoe@darienps.org. However, since there are many duplicates of the "first initial" + "last name" rule among the faculty, staff and students across Darien, please refer to the DHS directory or the website to ensure the email address is correct. The Darien voicemail system may be accessed 24 hours at 655-3981. There is a spell by name option or extensions can be found on the DHS website.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

IF A STUDENT IS ABSENT:

When a student is absent, parents/guardians must call the attendance line that day to give a reason for the absence. If a phone call is not made on the day of the absence, it will be considered an unexcused absence. Students with three unexcused absences in a given course within one quarter will lose credit for the quarter. When calling the attendance line, please state the following:

- Student's first and last name and spell slowly
- Grade level
- Reason for absence
- Parent/Guardian home/work phone number for verification

Students are responsible for making up missed homework, quizzes or tests resulting from their absence.

IF A STUDENT IS LATE TO SCHOOL:

Students who arrive after 7:40, will need to report to the Attendance Secretary with a note from their parent/guardian. They will be requested to sign in and will receive a late pass to class. Any student who enters the classroom after the bell, without a pass, will be marked as unexcused tardy.

IF A STUDENT NEEDS TO LEAVE SCHOOL EARLY:

- **Bring a note from parent/guardian** to the attendance office prior to **7:30 a.m.**
- Only valid reasons listed under excused absences will be accepted.
- A pass will be issued to the student to be released from class.
- Because we are responsible for student's whereabouts during the school day, prior to leaving the building, every student **MUST SIGN OUT** through the **Attendance Office**. If students do not sign out prior to leaving school grounds, disciplinary actions will follow.

NOTIFICATION OF MISSED CLASSES:

DHS has an automatic dialing service that calls home when a student has an unexcused absence recorded for that day. If you believe that your student has been marked as unexcused erroneously due to an early dismissal, late arrival or illness, please contact the attendance officer. If you believe a your student was marked as unexcused in class when they were at school, please contact the classroom teacher.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

For complete information on attendance policies including tardiness, excused and unexcused absences as well consequences for repeated offences, please refer to the DHS Student Handbook.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION

For weather delays, cancellations or emergency dismissal you can obtain up to date information on local radio and TV stations, as well as on our website <http://www.darienps.org>. You will receive an e-mail from <http://www.ctweather.com> if you register. Do not call your school or the central office, as our phone lines cannot handle excessive volume. Your best source of information is the media and websites.

PARENT PICK UP AND DROP OFF

Parents may drop-off their students after 7:00 in the morning. Students may be dropped off in the front of the school or in the athletic area if they have sports equipment. Students are not to be dropped off at the library entrance as this causes a dangerous situation with teacher parking and the flow of traffic. All parents are asked to follow the flow of traffic and not pull into an open parking space or turn in the middle of the parking lot to drop off students.

In the afternoon, High School Lane will be one way leading into the school property only from 2:10 to 2:30 p.m. In addition, cars entering from Nutmeg Lane will not be allowed to enter the athletic circle and will be directed around the front loop. Parents must exit the high school on Noroton Avenue. The speed limit on Darien High School property is 15 mph. Drivers are asked to be very alert for pedestrians.

LIBRARY HOURS

Monday-Friday 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Early Dismissal Days 7:00 a.m. – 12:18 p.m.

CAFETERIA

The cafeteria is open from 7:00 a.m. - 2:45 p.m. Hot and cold breakfast and lunch items as well as nutritious snacks are available. There is also a sub shop located in the Auxiliary Cafeteria which is open daily during the lunch periods. A separate food service information packet as well as information about replenishing lunch accounts was sent to you in mid-August. Please refer to the packet for more details on food offerings and prices.

COLLEGE AND CAREER CENTER/JOBS OFFICE

The College and Career Center and JOBS office is located on the first floor of A building. It is open Monday – Friday from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. in the fall and 11 a.m.–1p.m. in the winter and spring. The CCC contains college brochures, information about the various military branches, career information, college applications and scholarship information as well as job opportunities around town. Listings of volunteer opportunities are also available. Students of all grades can access the CCC during lunch and study halls.

WELCOME CENTER

The DHS Welcome Center is staffed with parent volunteers to assist in directing visitors at the school. While messages or items forgotten at home can be left with the volunteer, they are not responsible for loss/theft of the items or ensuring your student picks them up.

- All items dropped off at the Welcome Center should be in a bag and clearly marked with the student's name.
- Arrangements to pick up lunches or non-emergency items should be made in advance by the parent and the student.
- We will not call students to the Welcome Center to pick up these items.
- Due to health considerations, all lunches/food items not claimed by 2:45 p.m. will be discarded.
- **All sports related equipment, clothing, mouth guards, etc. should be taken to the athletic department. The Welcome Center will not take these items.**

STUDENT WEAR

DHS Student Wear can be purchased during scheduled sales dates throughout the year or online. Sales will be announced in the DPN email blast and are generally held at the first DHSPA meeting, during Open House, at the Homecoming football game, as well as before Christmas and Graduation. There is also a link for Student Wear sales on the DHS website located under the Parents tab.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

EMAIL BLAST

The Darien High School Parent Newsletter (The "DPN") is a weekly email with school specific information that is sent only to those parents who have provided us with their email address, and have become a member of the DPN Google Group. If you are not currently receiving the DPN, please email Jennifer Fitzpatrick at dhs.parentnews@gmail.com with your child's name and grade, to receive your invitation and instructions to join the Google group.

DHS WEBSITE

We strongly encourage you to check the DHS website frequently for up to date information regarding important news and activities at DHS.

On the main page, there is a calendar of important upcoming events, the daily bulletin- announcements made to the students, daily cafeteria menu, links to the Principals newsletter, Blue Wave newscasts and the DHS newspaper, NEIRAD, as well as important information regarding upcoming parent and student programs, academic news and student activities.

There are also separate tabs for information pertaining directly to students and parents, faculty contacts, school programs, guidance, library, athletics as well as Darien Public Schools district information.

PARENT MEETINGS

Open House – Open House will be held September 17th and is an opportunity for parents to attend their child's classes and receive information about each class from the teacher. This is a well-attended event. Due to the number of cars at this event, please plan to carpool with neighbors, if possible.

Class Coffees – The fall Freshman/Sophomore Class coffee will be held on September 30th at 8:45 a.m. This is an open discussion session with the school Administrators and Guidance and provides an opportunity for you to ask questions regarding any school related topic. Another coffee will be held in January prior to exams and scheduling for the 2010-2011 academic year.

DARIEN HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS ASSOCIATION

The Darien High School Parents Association meetings are held monthly at 9:15 in the Auditorium. Meetings feature a Principal's Report, Guidance Report, information and updates on all DHSPA committee activities, important school related information as well as special programs. The meeting dates for 2009-2010 are as follows:

September 15th
October 20th
November 17th
February 2nd
March 16th
April 6th

More information regarding the DHSPA including contact information and meeting minutes can be found on the DHSPA website: www.darienps.org/dhs/dhspa

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

MARKING PERIOD DATES

MARKING PERIOD	MARKING PERIOD CLOSING DATE
1	October 30, 2009
2	January 13, 2009
3	March 29, 2010
4	June 7, 2010

Dates may be modified pending any emergency or storm related closings.

CLASS MEETING ROTATION

There are seven class time slots per academic day. Students generally have six academic classes and physical education for a total of seven classes. Classes meet on a rotating 8 day schedule where one period drops per day. While the schedule may seem very confusing, students adapt to it very quickly and have no problem determining when their classes will meet.

BELL SCHEDULES

TIME SLOT	REGULAR	HOMEROOM	HALF DAY	90 MINUTE DELAY
1	7:40-8:29	7:40-8:26	7:40-8:16	9:10-9:47
2	8:33-9:22	8:30-9:16	8:20-8:58	9:51-10:29
3	9:28-10:17	9:20-10:06	9:02-9:38	10:33-11:10
4	10:21-11:10	10:10-10:56	9:42-10:18	Lunch 11:14-11:34 11:34-11:54 11:54-12:14
5*	1 st Lunch 11:14-11:40 Class 11:42-12:31 Class 11:14-11:39 2 nd Lunch 11:39-12:05 Class 12:09-12:31 Class 11:14-12:03 3 rd Lunch 12:05-12:31	1 st Lunch 11:00-11:24 Class 11:27-12:13 Class 11:00-11:23 2 nd Lunch 11:24-11:48 Class 11:50-12:13 Class 11:00-11:46 3 rd Lunch 11:49-12:13	10:22-10:58	12:18-12:55
6	12:35 – 1:24	12:17-1:03	11:02-11:38	12:59-1:36
7	1:28-2:17	Homeroom 1:07-1:27 Class 1:31-2:17	11:42-12:18	1:20-2:17

*First lunch – Go to lunch then class

Second lunch – Go to class, break for lunch, go back to class

Third lunch – Go to class then lunch

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

There are no required school supplies at DHS. Each teacher may specify supplies needed for their class once the school year has begun.

STUDENT PROGRESS

Up to date student progress can be obtained via our new Aspen system. Parents and students can log in and check grades on a real time basis at any point during the quarter. Progress report emails will no longer be sent directly to parents. The Aspen system should be operational by late September/early October. More details will be available in September.

ACADEMIC ISSUES

Students needing additional help in an academic subject should first contact their teacher. Students may also visit Learning Connections Centers during their study hall to obtain extra help from an “on duty” teacher specific to that academic subject. Students are also able to receive tutoring support through the National Honor Society.

REPORT CARDS/TRANSCRIPTS

Report cards are mailed home at the close of each quarter. At the end of each semester, the report card will show quarter grades, exam grades and final overall semester grades. Transcripts only reflect semester grades and GPA.

MIDYEAR AND FINAL EXAM SCHEDULES

Midterm and final exam grades account for 20% of a student's semester grade.

<u>TENTATIVE DATE*</u>	<u>EXAMS</u>	<u>TIMES</u>
January 14, 2010	Periods 1 and 2	8-10 a.m. and 10:30-12:30 p.m.
January 15, 2010	Periods 3 and 4	8-10 a.m. and 10:30-12:30 p.m.
January 19, 2010	Periods 5 and 6	8-10 a.m. and 10:30-12:30 p.m.
January 20, 2010	Periods 7 and 8	8-10 a.m. and 10:30-12:30 p.m.
January 21, 2010	Make-up Day and Honors Testing	

- School is in session from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., with two exams given each day. Students should report to school only on the days and periods when they have exams. Buses will continue with their regularly scheduled pick up times in the morning and will depart from the high school after the 12:30 dismissal time.. If school is closed for an emergency during the exams, the schedule will be adjusted so that the next day of school will have the exams that were missed, and the schedule will continue in the original sequence.
- If there is a 90 minute delayed opening on an exam day, the first exam period will be from 9:30-11:30 and the second exam period will be from 12:00 to 2:00. School cancellation days during the winter months may extend the date for the last day of school. Please consider the possibility that the school year may be extended to the last week in June when making summer plans.

SCHEDULING

Each year in January/February, students will begin the scheduling process for the next academic year. Students will receive a course selection worksheet and a listing of courses offered for the year. Students and parents should review graduation requirements and course descriptions before completing the worksheet. Students will meet with each teacher individually during class time to discuss course options and the appropriate level for the student. Teachers will then sign off on the class choice. Once a student has met with all his/her teachers and chosen any elective courses, they will meet with their Guidance Counselor to ensure all academic requirements are being met. Course selections are then sent home for parents to review and approve.

HONORS TESTING FOR SOPHOMORE YEAR

Students who are in 300 level Social Studies courses and would like to be considered for Honors level classes in Sophomore year may take a placement exam in January on the exam make-up day. Students will sit for a written exam which will be reviewed by Social Studies Departments. Students will be notified later that month if they will be eligible for Honors level classes in 10th grade.

To be considered for Honors English, students must notify their English teacher of their desire to be considered for the honors level. The English Department will then evaluate each student based upon their coursework to date, 8th grade ERB scores and the teacher's recommendation. Students will be notified in late January if they will be eligible for Honors level classes in 10th grade.

FRESHMAN STUDY HALL

All freshman are assigned to a supervised study period in each period they do not have scheduled classes. Study halls will be held in classrooms and are monitored by a teacher. If students need to see an academic teacher during this period, they will obtain a pass from their teacher and present it to the study hall monitor.

HOMEROOMS

While students have homeroom assignments, they only meet in homerooms every few weeks. Homerooms will be used to communicate important testing dates, school, and individual class information to the students.

STANDARDIZED TESTING BY GRADE

Freshman	ERB's - March Biology SAT II for some Honors Biology Students (teacher recommendation) – May
Sophomore	PSAT's – October CAPT* - March
Junior	PSAT's – October SAT and/or ACT – Spring SAT II's – Spring
Senior	SAT and/or ACT - Fall

STANDARDIZED TEST DESCRIPTIONS

CAPT Testing - All grade 10 students are required to take the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT). All juniors and seniors who have not mastered any section of the CAPT will be required to retake those tests. Students must reach mastery of its equivalent in order to meet graduation requirements. The results of the CAPT will be placed on the test record of a student's transcript. During CAPT testing, Freshman, Juniors and Seniors will be on a modified school schedule.

PSAT – The Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test is given annually in October. Sophomores and juniors are encouraged to take this test, which gives students practice on the types of questions asked on the SAT I. In addition, if taken in the junior year, the PSAT is the qualifying test for many scholarship programs. PSAT scores are not put on the permanent transcript and not ordinarily reported to colleges.

SAT I – The Scholastic Assessment Test I is a three and a half-hour long, multiple choice and student produced response test. The three parts of the test are called critical reading, mathematics and writing. It is required for admission to most colleges. Most students take their first SAT I in the spring of junior year and often repeat the test in the fall of senior year. Students must register for this test directly with College Board either by mail or online at www.collegeboard.com.

ACT – The ACT is a three and a half hour test which is an alternative to the SAT for virtually all colleges and universities. The ACT test consists of five tests: English, Math, Reading, and Science reasoning and an optional writing test. Some students who perform poorly on the SAT find that they perform better on the ACT and vice versa. Students must register for this test directly at www.act.org.

SAT II – The SAT II Subject Area Tests are one-hour long tests that measure your acquired knowledge in specific subject areas. SAT II's are offered in many different subjects and are usually taken when you have completed or have nearly completed your most advanced study in a specific area. For example, some students take the Biology SAT II as soon as they complete a biology course. This could be as early as the end of the freshman or sophomore year. Registration for the SAT II may be done by mail or online.

GUIDANCE INFORMATION

THE ROLE OF GUIDANCE

The School Counselors assist students in realizing their potential for healthy growth throughout their high school careers. The counselors support students and their families in a variety of areas; revolving around academic, career and personal/social development. Guidance information is found on the DHS website under the Guidance tab.

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR ASSIGNMENTS

<u>COUNSELOR</u>	<u>STUDENTS WITH LAST NAMES</u>	<u>EMAIL CONTACT</u>	<u>PHONE EXTENSION</u>
Michael Caro	A-Coli	mcaro@darienps.org	2220
Joan Flaherty	Colo-Gilb	jflaherty@darienps.org	2241
Deb Webb-Maloney	Gilh-Lait	dwebb-maloney@darienps.org	2290
Kim Taylor	Led-Muli	ktaylor@darienps.org	2370
Lisa (Palmerini) Messineo	Mur-Sei	lmessineo@darienps.org	2288
Rudy Spannaus	Ses-Wins	rspannaus@darienps.org	2347
Paul Ribeiro, Director	Wint-Z	pribeiro@darienps.org	2306

If you need to contact your student's counselor, you can reach them directly by phone or email as indicated above. If you need assistance, please contact Guidance secretary Meg Montaperto at ext. 2249 or M'Liss Conetta at ext. 2226.

NAVIANCE

We invite you to explore Family Connection by Naviance which is located under the Guidance tab on the DHS website. This program allows students and families to investigate, research, track, and plan for the college admission process and other post secondary options. The Guidance department will work more with students and their families as you progress through high school. Some of the material may not be as pertinent for ninth graders.

To begin using Naviance, go to www.darienps.org/dhs, click on the Guidance tab, then click on the Connect to Naviance tab. You may log in using the account information provided to your student or as a guest. Contact the Guidance secretary to obtain the guest password. If you login as a guest, you will have access to only some of the basic college search options. Utilizing the student id will provide additional options including a student profile which contains biographical data, GPA, a resume building tool, a learning style and a personality inventory.

COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDE

The DHS *College Planning Guide* details the formal process of identifying appropriate institutions and opportunities as well as making application for admission. The *College Planning Guide* is mailed to students during the first semester of their junior year.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

ATHLETIC TEAM LISTING - V = VARSITY, JV = JUNIOR VARSITY, FR = FRESHMAN

FALL PROGRAMS

V Cheerleading
 V Cross Country – Boys/Girls
 V, JV, FR Field Hockey – Girls
 V, JV, FR Football
 V, JV, FR Soccer – Boys/Girls
 V Swim/Dive – Girls
 V, JV, FR Volleyball – Girls

WINTER PROGRAMS

V Cheerleading
 V, JV, FR Basketball – Boys/Girls
 V, JV Ice Hockey – Boys
 V Ice Hockey – Girls
 V Indoor Track – Boys/Girls
 V Ski – Coed
 V Swim/Dive – Boys
 V, JV Wrestling
 V Gymnastics
 V Squash - Coed

SPRING PROGRAMS

V, JV, FR Baseball
 V, JV Golf – Boys/Girls
 V, JV, FR Lacrosse–Boys/Girls
 V Outdoor Track –Boys/Girls
 V, JV, FR Softball
 V, JV Tennis – Boys/ Girls
 V, JV Volleyball - Boys
 V Sailing (Coed)

Note – specific information regarding the first day of each session will be communicated by school announcements and posted on the DHS website. Detailed sports information is also posted under the Athletics tab of the DHS website.

CLUBS

Darien High School encourages the formation of clubs representing a wide range of student interests. The Student Life Office assists students and advisors in forming and running clubs. In order to utilize school facilities and resources, each club must secure a faculty advisor and file a charter for approval with the Student Life Office at the beginning of the school year. The following clubs and activities are open to students at DHS:

Art Club	JETS (Engineering)	Performance Music Groups:
Athletic Training Program	Kids Giving Back	A Cappella
Blue Wave News (Video Production)	Latin Club	Band
Buddy System	Math Team	Nutmeg Express
Building On	Model UN	Orchestra
Chess Club	Names Program	Tri – M Advisory
China Cares Club	National Honor Society	Tudor Singers
Composers Club	NEIRAD (School Newspaper)	
Community Council	Photography Club	
Computer Club	Quidditch Club	
Crew Club	Rugby	
Culture Club	Sailing Club (Fall)	
<i>Current</i> (Literary Magazine)	Ski/Snowboard Club	
Dance Team	Spanish Club	
Darianus (Yearbook)	Squash Club (Fall & Spring)	
Darien Animal Welfare Group (DAWG)	Stage Crew	
Debate Team	St. Luke's Lifeworks	
Dodgeball Club	Student Life	
Environmental Awareness Club	Student Political Action Committee (SPAC)	
Film Club	Support our Soldiers Club (SOS)	
Free Thinkers Club	Technology/Robotics Club	
French Club	Teen Peace Works	
Future Problem Solvers Club	Theater 308 (drama)	
Gay/Straight Alliance	Ukulele Club	
Garden Club	Ultimate Frisbee Club	
Guitar Club	Weekend Alternatives	
Invisible Children and Y.O.U.	Writing Center	

HOMEcomings

Homecoming is a school wide event held in the fall and organized by the Community Council. The week is comprised of spirit building activities and events including: theme dress up days, field day, sports team/club breakfasts, and pep rally. The week culminates with a Homecoming parade, varsity football game and homecoming dance on Saturday.

While we encourage all students to participate in Homecoming activities, academics should continue to be a student's top priority. Teachers will provide homework as well as schedule tests and quizzes during the period.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

August 27	Freshman Orientation
August 31	First Day of School for Students
September 7	Labor Day, No School
September 15	DHSPA Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
September 17	Open House
September 17,18	School Pictures
September 18	Freshman/Sophomore Dance
September 23	Junior/Senior Parent Coffee
September 25	Activities Fair
September 28	Yom Kippur, No School
September 30	Freshman/Sophomore Parent Coffee
October 12	Staff Development Day, No School for Students
October 17	Homecoming
October 20	DHSPA Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
November 3	Staff Development Day, No School for Students
November 17	DHSPA Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
Nov. 19 - Nov. 21	Theater 308 Production
November 25	Early Dismissal
November 26,27	Thanksgiving Recess, No School
December 4	Tudor Singer Candlelight Concert, MMS 7:30 p.m.
December 17	Holiday Concert, 7:30 p.m.
December 23	Early Dismissal
Dec. 24 – Jan. 3	Holiday Recess, No School
Jan. 14 – Jan. 21	Mid-Term Exams
January 18	Martin Luther King Jr. Day, No School
February 2	DHSPA Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
Feb. 15 – Feb. 19	February Recess, No School
February 25	All-Town Orchestra Festival
Mar. 1- Mar. 8	CAPT Testing, delayed start for Freshman, Juniors & Seniors
March 16	DHSPA Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
March 25 - March 27	Theater 308 Production
April 1	Staff Development Day, No School
April 2	Good Friday, No School
April 6	DHSPA Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
Apr. 12 – Apr. 16	April Recess, No School
May 3 – May 14	AP Tests
May 7	DHS "Pops" Cabaret, MMS Cafe, 7:30 p.m.
May 14	Prom
May 27	Awards & Scholarships Ceremonies
May 31	Memorial Day, No School
June 8-June 14	Final Exams
June 15	School Ends for Students
June 15	Graduation, 5:00 p.m.