

Dear DLH Academy Family,

It is with great pleasure that I write to inform you of my new position and purpose on the DLH Academy team of educators! After serving as your principal for nine years, I am shifting into a position in which I can spend more time in the classrooms providing teachers with the support that they need to maximize learning experiences for our children. I will serve in the position of Growth and Development Strategist and perform duties that accelerate growth for our students and teachers. This space, “in the trenches” positions me to provide the much-needed service of on-going coaching for teachers, as well as provide the service of a present mentor and advocate for our children. This is where my heart and passion lie! I am grateful to remain a staple in the DLH Academy team of educators, and I look forward to continuing to support our community in this role.

Goals and strategies for the 2022-2023 school year include pressing forward to reach new heights with reading and math performance on our local measure growth assessments (MAP, PALS, WRITING) and achieve notable progress on our state required exams. Our goals also include continued instruction and support dedicated to student wellness. Achieving our year end goals must be preceded by actions taken daily at school and at home.

Student Wellness

Student wellness is not a new concept at DLH Academy as it speaks to our stated International Baccalaureate (IB) mission to “develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world.” This reference highlights that instruction at DLH Academy includes helping students to know HOW to learn as well as what to learn. To that end, students are taught the necessary communication skills, social skills, and self-monitoring techniques (including analyzing and reflecting on their progress towards meeting stated goals) needed to empower them to actively participate in their growth and development. Specific activities that provide opportunities to exercise these skills include collaborative classroom interactions (to be discussed further under academics) and interactions during extra-curricular activities such as music, fitness, dance, art, and additional movement and teamwork activities that are built-in to student schedules. Grades second through fifth also participate in Spanish instruction where they not only learn about the language but also converse about Spanish speaking cultural activities and norms. Intentional instruction that includes a focus on diversity and varying cultural norms allow students to not only appreciate the differences within groups but also the similarities in the human experience.

Academic Achievement

Daily instruction at DLH Academy includes opportunities for students to engage in learning activities and accountability practices in several ways. Students must attend whole group instructional sessions to review daily agenda's, work expectations and academic goals for the day or specific instructional period. Following such session students separate into small group rotations that include instructional time with their teacher, work time with peers, and independent work time. Additionally, assessment practices

include one-on-one meetings with teachers and administrators as needed with students who need extra support with meeting their goals.

While all student instruction includes support in gaining knowledge and skills on information outlined in grade-levelled state standards, the route taken to achieve state goals varies based on each student's most current achievement data. All students regardless of levels must participate in the following activities:

Intense Literacy and Math Studies

Studies in reading are supplemented by use of the Accelerated Reader Program (AR) for grades 1-8. Students are required to read a specific number of books/words in varied styles depending on their individual goal and pacing. Studies with Letters, letter sounds/patterns and sight word recognition take place for grades K4-1st. Students are scheduled to read/write with teachers, classroom peers and reading buddies to practice newly attained skills as well as sharpen recently learned skills. Additionally, students receive homework assignments for additional skills practice in reading, vocabulary studies, and math computations.

Writing

Studies in writing include instruction on research and organization of information to developed skills with voice and accuracy in conventions to effectively communicate thoughts and intentions.

Teacher Support

Teachers receive on going coaching with instructional practices that support small group rotations and preparing students as critical thinkers. This includes reflective data meetings, planning meetings, classroom observations, and modeling the necessary interactions with students and parents. Teachers also receive support from administrators as they are instructed to engage with student focus groups to support academic, social, and emotional growth. Administrators work with students and parents to help address barriers that impact student learning.