

# SWDCS

February 2018



We are at the midway point in the school year. This is a great time to reflect on what has gone well during the first half of the school year and also to focus on the things we still need to improve. One big success this year has been the 'Panther Parties' we have on early release Wednesdays. At these gatherings, our students are recognized for demonstrating our school values, showing academic achievement, and they get a shout-out if it's their birthday. Students gain a sense of belonging and pride from these events.

One challenge we continue to address is making sure that all of our students are at school everyday and on time. Students who miss more than 5 days in an academic year are at risk for falling behind their peers. Students with excessive absences (more than 10 days in an academic year) significantly underperform when compared to their peers. Coming to school late (any time after 8:45am) also impacts a student's performance. And it impacts the instruction that other children are receiving as a late entrance is disruptive to the entire classroom.

Re-enrollment for current families is in full swing! Make sure you preserve your child's spot at our school by returning the re-enrollment forms ASAP! Next month, we will begin enrolling new students into our school and I will ask you for help to fill open spots.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Donner".

Frank Donner  
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## New Breakfast Procedure

Beginning Monday, February 5, 2018, students who choose to eat breakfast at school will pick up their breakfast bag from the gym as they enter the school. Students will still eat in their classroom. Breakfast service begins when the school doors open at 8:25am. Breakfast distribution will stop in the gym at 8:40am. Students arriving after 8:40am will not receive breakfast. Formal instruction in all classes begins at 8:45am and students arriving to school after this time will be marked tardy.

## New Grading Procedure

Beginning this semester, teachers will only record graded class work, quizzes, and tests in their gradebooks. This allows teachers to focus on how well students are mastering grade-appropriate

content and skills. This also gives you, as parents, a clearer understanding of exactly how your child is progressing in school. Teachers will continue to track and monitor things like homework and participation, but they will not be factors in determining grades in ELA, Math, Science, or Social Studies.

## Attendance

It is important for your child to be at school on time every day. Students with regular attendance do better than their peers in academic performance. Beginning this month, we will celebrate the class with the highest average daily attendance with a free dress day! Additionally, the parents of any student that has perfect attendance for the entire month will be invited to a recognition breakfast at the beginning of next month!

## Enrollment for Next School Year

All current students need to complete re-enrollment paperwork in order to maintain their spot at our school for the 2018-2019 school year. Re-enrollment forms were sent home on Monday, January 29, 2018. Return it as soon as possible. The re-enrollment period ends on February 25, 2018. Enrollments after this date will not be given re-enrollment preference and will become part of the general application pool. If you need another re-enrollment form, please call 313-782-4422.

## Winter Count Day

Winter Count Day is Wednesday, February 14, 2018. Please make sure your child is present in school! Attendance is important everyday, but it is crucial on Count Day. The funding we receive from the state is based on our enrollment and attendance on the Fall and Winter Count Days.



## Valentine's Day Grams and Dance

Students can send a Valentine's Day Gram to friends, family, and staff at school. Grams will be on sale in music class and during lunch on February 7th, 8th, 12th and 13th. Grams will be delivered at the end of the day on Wednesday, February 14th. Grams with a prize cost \$1 each. All proceeds will go to the SWDCS music department.

The SWDCS Valentine's Day Dance will be during school on Wednesday, February 14th, 2018! Admission to the dance with dress down is free! There will be pizza, snacks, and drinks on sale at the dance for \$1 each. All proceeds for concessions will go toward the 8th grade Washington DC Trip.

## Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences will take place on Friday, February 16, 2018. This is an important time for you to connect with your child's teacher, review your child's progress, and make plans for

successfully completing the school year. Conferences will take place from 8a-5p. There is no school for students. As always, interpreters will be available upon request.

To sign up with Kindergarten through 4th grade teachers, use this link:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b094cafab29abfb6-parentteacher1> To sign up for an appointment with 5th through 8th grade teachers between 8am and 12pm, use this link:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b094cafab29abfb6-5th8th> Additionally, 5-8 teachers will be set up in the gym from 12pm-5pm to meet with families. This is an unscheduled time (families show up without an appointment) and no interpretation is guaranteed. We are giving this a try to allow families to interact with all of their child's content teachers.

If you need help signing up or have questions, please contact your child's teacher directly.

## NWEA Testing

Students are wrapping up winter NWEA Measures of Academic Progress testing right now. We are currently administering make-up tests to students that were absent when their class originally tested. Check in with your child and see if they attained their growth target! Teachers will review this data in more depth at Parent Teacher Conferences on Friday, February 16, 2018.

## WIDA

All students who have a language other than English spoken at home must take a state test named WIDA ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State for English Language Learners) for ELLs. The enrollment form that was completed when your son/daughter enrolled at SWDCS provides us this information. Students will take the test even if they are not in ESL/ELL classes. The test is for Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking, and Comprehension in English. Students will take this test between February 5, 2018 and March 23, 2018. We will mail your child's test results to you when we receive them from the Michigan Department of Education. If you have any questions, please contact our ESL teacher, Danielle Boland.

## Girl Scouts

Girl Scouts in 2nd through 8th grade meet each Wednesday at SWDCS. On early release Wednesdays, the girls meet from 1pm to 2:45pm. On regular Wednesday, they meet from 3:30pm to 5:00pm. Please stop by the main office for more information or application to join the troop.

## 24 Hour Rule

Please remember if your child is sick, they need to be vomit/fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child returns to school any earlier, they will be sent down to the office and you will be called to come pick them up. This is for the safety and health of all students.

## Snow Days/ Emergency Building Closures

In the event of a snow-day or emergency closure our school name will appear on channels 2, 4, and 7, and will also be on the local radio stations. An automated text or phone call will be sent out to parents confirming the closure. In extreme cases in which we may close school in the middle of the day, parents will be contacted by phone. It is important that we have up to date phone numbers in your child's record so that we can reach you. If your contact information has changed since the beginning of school, please see Ms. Gonzalez to update the information.

## Garden Resources for Families

For over a decade, the Garden Resource Program (GRP) has supported family, community, school, and market gardens in Detroit, Highland Park, and Hamtramck. Participants in the Garden Resource Program receive resources for their vegetable gardens, including seeds and Detroit grown transplants and become part of a growing network of gardeners and advocates working to promote urban agriculture within a thriving local food system. Applications to join the program are available in the main office or can be accessed at [detroitagriculture.net](http://detroitagriculture.net).



The GRP will be having a kick-off potluck and party on Tuesday, February 6th, 6-8pm, at City Temple SDA, 8816 Grand River. Bring a dish to share and learn about the GRP's 2018 annual theme, land security in Detroit, and how to successfully purchase land from the city.

**SEEDS FOR PUERTO RICO COLLECTION:** This winter, GRP is also collecting a donation of seeds to send to Puerto Rican farmers who were devastated by hurricane Maria in 2017 in partnership with Comite Cultural Boricua de Detroit. If you have viable seeds to share, please bring them!



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