

Report of the **Dover-Sherborn Middle School**

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The mission of the Dover-Sherborn Middle School (DSMS) is to meet the needs of all students through a nurturing, supportive, and challenging learning environment where students, parents, caregivers, and teachers embrace our core values to ensure excellence and success now and in the future.

DSMS continues to provide an outstanding educational experience and positive culture for its students in grades 6, 7, and 8. Our talented staff, the availability of state-of-the-art technology, a beautiful library, and student-friendly space make the school a welcoming place for all students. Thanks to a supportive community and budget allocation, our teachers have many resources at their disposal. Class size continues to be approximately 16 students and the daily curriculum is both challenging and exciting. DSMS is a one-to-one school and again this year provided each student with a new ACER Chromebook, enabling students to research, write, collaborate, and create in real time in the classroom.

Our theme for the 2023–24 school year is “Be Kind, Be Curious, Be You.” DSMS staff work to infuse these actions into our students’ everyday experiences and ultimately create a school community that is full of kindness, curiosity, and students walking their own paths.

Recognition and Awards

- ***Project 351:*** Once again two eighth-grade students represented DSMS at the Governor’s youth community service organization, which promotes leadership, development, enrichment, and impact.
- ***Student Leadership Awards:*** At all-school assemblies our staff presents “shout-outs” to students demonstrating leadership, scholarship, citizenship, and our school values of kindness, curiosity, and individuality.
- ***MATHCOUNTS:*** Our 2022–23 DSMS MathCounts team returned to in-person competition in 2023. Twelve students attended, and our team of four mathletes placed sixth at the Metrowest Chapter regional competition.

Activity Highlights

The following are just some of the curriculum enrichment activities that took place throughout the year:

- ***Music and arts presentations:*** DSMS Choirs, Concert Band, and Jazz Band students had the opportunity to shine at events such as the Dover-Sherborn Jazz Brunch, Winter and Spring Concerts, the Chocolate Cafe, and more, both during and after school hours. Many of these events are supported by the D-S Friends of the Performing Arts (FoPA). Term 1 general music classes shared their Band and Blues Fest culminating performances, as will the following term classes. The creative and

powerful work of our visual arts students can be viewed throughout the year in our lobby's art gallery.

- ***D-S Drama fall musical presentation:*** This past fall, our very talented DSMS cast and crew put on an incredible production of *Mary Poppins*. Our performers sang, danced, and acted, dazzling audiences by their energetic performances, as well as by the extraordinary costumes and set design.
- ***Turkey Tourney:*** The half-day prior to the Thanksgiving break is dedicated to building community and positive school culture. Students and staff take part in decorating doors, playing turkey toss, and running a turkey trot. The morning ends with an all-school assembly featuring our student musicians, a slide show, and student shout-outs.

The following groups focused on many community-service projects:

- ***The Student Council*** successfully hosted dances for grades 7 and 8. This group also plans and promotes many school spirit events such as Spirit Days and Weeks.
- ***Help Club*** has raised money for Making Strides Against Cancer, JB Keys, The Trevor Project, and Riverside Community Care.
- ***Citizen Action Groups***, or CAGs, are the mainstay of our citizenship program for all eighth-grade students. During the first half of the year, students learn about various issues and concerns in our community. They then choose to join a CAG that matches their interests, such as working with the environment, assisting local food pantries, supporting local veterans, addressing hunger and homelessness, and mentoring and helping children in need. Each CAG has 15–20 students and a teacher who work together to explore and address the issue. In May, all CAGs participate in a service day at various venues in the area.
- ***DSMS D1A (Day One, A Block):*** is a new student group that planned and held the the school's inaugural annual all-school assembly, which served as a welcome to new students, as well as a welcome back to the entire school community. Student-led activities and presentations covered all the important and exciting things that DSMS has to offer, as well as expectations for our community.
- ***Trip to Washington, D.C.:*** This year, after a pause due to the pandemic, we were able to successfully re-establish the eighth-grade annual trip to Washington D.C.

Professional Development

DSMS is committed to providing learning and growth opportunities for its staff through professional development that is aligned with District and DSMS initiatives to promote a culture of data and tiered support for students, student engagement, and social and emotional learning. This year's offerings continue our focus on best teaching practices that deepen student

engagement and learning, and on refining curricular resources to better ensure that all student needs are met.

Grants

In 2023, POSITIVE (Parents Offering Support In Time, Involvement, Volunteering, Enthusiasm) provided grants for academic and extracurricular enrichment. DSMS is grateful for the generous support of this group.