

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

John G. Smith, Principal

Dover-Sherborn High School (DSHS) is a community of learners whose goal is to inspire academic excellence and a commitment to personal and civic responsibility. We engage in the learning process with honesty, creativity, dedication, and respect, and seek to cultivate an atmosphere of freedom and trust in a safe and nurturing environment.

DSHS is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and consistently ranks among the top public schools for academic excellence in both Massachusetts and the nation. Our students excel in the classroom, on the stage as musicians and actors, and as athletes on the various playing fields and venues in our area. We are grateful for the support of our community and our parents and guardians.

Curriculum Requirements

In the 2023–24 school year, DSHS served approximately 650 students in grades 9 through 12. Each year, over 95% of graduating students attend four-year colleges and universities. To graduate, all students must complete four years of English, four years of mathematics, and three years each of laboratory sciences, social studies, and world language. They must also earn 18 credits in the fine and performing arts and/or technology, engineering and computer science and 12.5 credits in wellness (physical and health education). In addition, they must complete 40 hours of community service.

Although DSHS offers three levels of courses in each of the academic disciplines, students are not tracked. DSHS also does not compute “rank-in-class” for its students, a policy approved by the Dover-Sherborn Regional School Committee.

Most departments offer a variety of courses that are heterogeneously grouped. The schedule is based on an eight-day rotation. All primary courses (and most electives) meet six times out of the eight-day cycle, and each class meets for nearly an hour. Laboratory sciences may meet up to two additional periods each cycle.

The pages that follow provide overviews and highlights of the DSHS 2023–24 school year, including academic testing results, individual departmental reports, a recap of student athletics for all seasons, as well as information on student activities and clubs, student wellness, and college preparation support.

Academic Testing

PSAT

The PSAT was offered in October 2023 to juniors and sophomores. Eighty-eight juniors (57% of the class) and 128 sophomores (71% of the class) took the test. Based on their scores, 15 students received National Merit Scholarship Program Letters of Commendation, and three students were recognized as National Merit Semifinalists.

SAT

- **SAT I:** Sixty-nine percent of the Class of 2024 took the SAT test, with 68% of the students earning a combined score of over 1200 in Evidence-Based Reading & Writing and in Mathematics. The table below shows the average of the highest SAT test scores

for the Class of 2024 and the previous senior class as calculated in Naviance. Compared with national and state averages, DSHS students significantly outperform their peers.

SAT Mean Scores						
	Class of 2023			Class of 2024		
	DSHS	MA	US	DSHS	MA	US
Evidence-Based Reading & Writing	647	560	520	650	559	519
Mathematics	643	551	508	659	550	505

AP

Fifteen AP (Advanced Placement) courses were offered during the 2023–24 academic year. These courses are typically offered during junior and senior years and allow students to maximize their educational opportunities within the confines of the master schedule and graduation requirements. All students receiving AP credit are expected to take the AP examination at the end of the year. In spring 2024, 246 students took 603 examinations. Results for individual AP courses are as follows:

AP Course	# Students	Students Scoring 3 or Higher (%)
Biology	70	99
Calculus AB	21	100
Calculus BC	21	100
Chemistry	30	100
Computer Science Principles	40	88
English Language and Composition (G-11)	70	93
English Literature and Composition (G-12)	51	98
French Language and Culture	10	100
Physics C: Mechanics	15	100
Spanish Language	7	100
Statistics	68	90
Studio Art: 2D Art & Design	7	86
Studio Art: 3D Art & Design	1	100
U.S. Government and Politics (G-12)	80	98
U.S. History (G-11)	79	100

MCAS

For the 2023 MCAS exams, the Commonwealth used the Next-Generation MCAS test. Testing highlights for DSHS students are as follows:

- **English Language Arts:** Eighty-six percent of sophomores met or exceeded expectations (state average 57%).

- **Mathematics:** Eighty-nine percent of sophomores met or exceeded expectations (state average 48%).
- **Science and Technology/Engineering:** Eighty-nine percent of sophomores met or exceeded expectations (state average 49%).

Graduate Post-Secondary Plans			
	Class of 2022	Class of 2023	Class of 2024
Four-Year College	93%	96%	94%
Two-Year College	2%	<1%	2%
Post-Graduate Program	2%	<1%	<1%
Other (gap year, job)	3%	3%	3%

Departmental Highlights

ENGLISH

Through effective reading, writing, and critical thinking instruction, our students are able to use their language and communication skills to understand more about themselves, their world, their responsibility toward others, and their place in both the local and global communities. The Department offers courses at the college preparatory and honors levels for freshmen and sophomores, and at the college preparatory, honors, and advanced placement (AP) levels for juniors and seniors.

Freshmen focus on the themes of identity and self-discovery through their study of short stories, novels, drama, poetry, and nonfiction works. Sophomores explore great themes in literature and hone their analytical and expository writing skills. AP courses include English Language and Composition, offered to juniors, and English Literature and Composition, offered to seniors. Juniors not enrolled in AP English Language may take a full year of American Literature, or enroll in a **new interdisciplinary course, *Intersections***, taught by an English teacher and Fine Arts teacher. Both courses are offered at college preparatory or honors levels. Seniors not enrolled in AP English Literature may enroll in two of five same-level semester courses in focused areas, such as contemporary literature, poetry, film, and nonfiction studies, or enroll in *Intersections*.

RUNES Literary and Arts Magazine, published in May 2024, features outstanding nonfiction, fiction, and poetic writing, as well as artwork and photography by D-S students, chosen and arranged by students in the *RUNES*/Creative Writing Club.

MATHEMATICS

The Mathematics Department provides standard courses at college preparatory and honors levels, with Algebra 1 or Geometry in grade 9, Geometry or Algebra II in grade 10, and Algebra II or Precalculus in grade 11. Several options are offered in grade 12, depending on previous levels of proficiency attained: AP Calculus BC, AP Calculus AB, Honors Calculus, College Preparatory Calculus, AP Statistics, Probability and Statistics, and Precalculus & Applied Topics. We also continue to offer a semester-long elective course, Financial Literacy, as well as

Business Marketing, which can count as a one-semester math credit. These courses are available to students in grades 11 or 12 who have passed Algebra II.

The Dover-Sherborn Math Team, a member of the ***Southeastern Massachusetts Mathematics League***, continued its strong tradition of success, placing second out of 33 schools in Southeastern Massachusetts for the 2023–24 school year. Based on our third-place finish among medium-sized schools in the ***Massachusetts State Championships***, our team also qualified to represent the state in an invitational meet with the ***New England Association of Math Leagues***. This was the second time the team qualified to compete at this level in more than two decades (2022–23 being the first), and D-S finished in first place overall in the medium school division ahead of Wayland, Weston, Sharon, Barrington, RI, and Rocky Hill in CT.

Honors and Awards: One of our students advanced further in the field of mathematics than any D-S student we know of in school history, placing among 40 students in the country for the final stage of the ***USA Mathematical Olympiad (USAMO)*** selection process to ultimately compete for a spot on the U.S. team for the ***66th International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO)*** in Queensland, Australia in July 2025. This follows a series of exams, including the American Mathematics Competition, American Invitational Mathematics Exam, and USAMO, where only the top few students advance. At the time of this writing, our student was vying for one of six spots on the U.S. team, following the nation’s 2024 IMO victory.

SCIENCE

The Science Department provides a rigorous curriculum sequence at the college preparatory, honors, and AP levels, with three years of coursework required for graduation: Biology in grade 9, Chemistry in grade 10, and Physics in grade 11. Electives open to juniors and seniors are AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Physics, Advanced Topics in Biology, Anatomy and Physiology, Astronomy, Environmental Research, Forensic Science, and Marine Science.

The ***Science Olympiad*** team has been performing well in monthly West Suburban Science League competitions and is currently in first place. Last year, five AP Chemistry students were nominated by their teacher to compete in the sectional competition of the ***U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad***, the Avery Ashdown Exam. One student placed in the top six students in Eastern Massachusetts, qualifying him to compete in the National Chemistry Exam against the top 900 students in the country. Last spring, AP Physics students earned first place at the ***Eastern Massachusetts Physics Olympics***. A small group of students, accompanied by two science teachers, traveled to Vermont this last spring to observe the total solar eclipse, a rare astronomical event.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Courses are offered in history and the social sciences at both the college preparatory and honors levels for freshmen and sophomores and at three levels (college preparatory, honors, and advanced placement) for juniors and seniors. World History I & II and U.S. History are required courses for all students. Electives include AP American Government, Government and Law, Economics, Introduction to Psychology, and Facing History. For 2024 AP examinations, 98% of our U.S. Government students qualified with a passing score of 3 or better while the national average was 73%. In U.S. History, all students qualified with a score of a 3 or better, while the national average was 72%. The Social Studies Department’s enrichment programs and activities included the ***EPIIC Tufts Inquiry Program; Harvard Model United Nations*** in Boston; ***Mock***

Trial, in which our team finished third in the state competitions; and the **Close-Up Program**, a weeklong government studies program held in Washington, D.C. The Department's **2024 Summer Reading Program** for grades 9–12 continued to focus on themes and issues of systemic racism, factors shaping United States foreign policy, and the growing polarization in American politics.

Honors and Awards: Several students received honors or awards in 2024. One student received the Daughters of the American Revolution Award for excellence in character, service, leadership, and patriotism; one student each received a youth leadership award and represented DSHS at the **Hugh O'Brien Sophomore Youth Leadership Conference**; one student received the Fredrick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony Community Service and Social Justice Award; and another student received the Social Studies Award presented at the **Senior Academic Award Night**.

WORLD LANGUAGE

A number of World Language students received honors for the 2024 calendar year. In May, eight students received awards from the Massachusetts State Seal of Biliteracy. Two students received the Seal in Spanish and one in Latin. In addition, two students in Spanish and three in Russian received the Seal of Biliteracy With Distinction.

In November 2024, 21 students were inducted into the Dover-Sherborn World Language Honor Society for their achievement and dedication to learning world languages and cultures.

FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS

Performing Arts (Theatre and Music): Courses offered include Music Theory, Guitar I and II, American Musical Theater, and Acting Workshop. Additionally, three performance ensemble courses are offered: Regional Chorus, Regional Concert Band, and the Jazz Band (by audition). These groups perform at many school and community events throughout the year. Course offerings and their adjacent performances seek to provide opportunities for the creation and enjoyment of music for all D-S students and community members.

Schedule changes made five years ago to improve student access to ensembles have yielded excellent results. The Concert Band and Chorus now consistently enroll more than 60 students in each ensemble, more than double the enrollment numbers prior to 2020.

Visual Arts: Course offerings providing the opportunity for all D-S students to create and enjoy art include Art 2D, Art 3D, Ceramics I and II, AP Studio Art, Darkroom Photography, Digital Photography, Yearbook Design I, II, and III, Computer Graphic Design, and Silkscreen Printing.

Honors and Awards: D-S students and their teachers continue to distinguish themselves in activities and competitions outside the school:

- **Scholastic Art Awards** recognized three of our students for their artistic works. One student received a Gold Key Award, and two students received Honorable Mentions.

- ***Great East Music Festival***, held in the spring, featured bands from throughout the state, including the D-S Regional Concert Band, which received a Gold Medal Rating from the adjudicators.
- ***Eastern District Senior Festivals***, sponsored by the Massachusetts Music Educators' Association (MMEA), awarded honors to five D-S students, two of whom went on to perform at the MMEA All-State Festival at Symphony Hall in Boston.

TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

Over the past 10 years, the primary goal of the Department has been to strengthen alignment between the grade 6–8 and grade 9–12 curriculums to provide students with a robust foundation in preparation for college courses and careers in computer science and engineering. To support this goal, D-S Middle School (DSMS) adjusted its course offerings to ensure a cohesive progression. The 6th-grade curriculum, focused on digital citizenship, is now integrated into wellness courses, while the 7th and 8th grades offer computer science courses that strongly emphasize programming. In 8th grade, students complete a capstone-style project that allows them to combine their coding skills with hands-on engineering tasks, such as coding a video game and building a functional controller.

At the high school level, the Department introduced more than 14 new or reconfigured courses over the past nine years, creating a seamless continuation of the DSMS curriculum. Each year, the curriculum for grades 6–12 is reviewed and updated to reflect advances in technology and education. For example, during the 2022–23 school year, the Department prioritized cultural responsiveness by introducing thought-provoking units, while the 2023–24 school year has focused on ensuring equality and diversity within the curriculum.

Responding to increased interest in computer science, the Department expanded its offerings in the 2024–25 school year to include AP Computer Science A, an advanced programming course designed to align computer science education across grades 6–12 and meet demand for more rigorous programming instruction. Additionally, a new course titled Tech Trends and EthiCS will explore emerging technologies and their ethical implications, and is planned to launch in the 2025–26 school year.

DSHS computer science courses currently include Intro to CAD, Web Design Using HTML & CSS, Computer Programming with JavaScript, iOS App Design, Video Game Design, AP Computer Science Principles, and AP Computer Science A, which serve as capstones for sophomores, juniors, or seniors. Engineering and technology classes, including TV Media I, II, and III, and Industrial Technology I and II. A yearlong Engineering course is also available at the college preparatory and honors levels and may be taken for science or elective credits that count toward graduation. These continuous curriculum updates and additions reflect the Department's commitment to evolving with technology and ensuring that students are well-prepared for the future.

WELLNESS

The Freshman Wellness Curriculum requires students to take one-semester courses falling under Contemporary Issues, and which cover nutrition, sexuality, mental health, and alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; and one semester each under Outdoor Education (one quarter) and Fitness Development (one quarter). Students in grades 10–12 can choose from the following electives: Cardiovascular Fitness, Outdoor Pursuits, General Survival, Student Leadership Internship,

Stress Management, Sport Education (Net Sports, Winter Team Sports), Dance Education, CPR/AED Training, Yoga/Pilates, Coaching, Teaching, Recreation and Leadership, Fitness Program Planning, Drugs and Society, Muscular Fitness, Sports and Society, R.A.D (Rape, Aggression, Defense Systems), and Target Sports.

GUIDANCE

Eighty-eight percent of the Class of 2024 completed some form of early decision, priority, or early action applications to colleges and universities. To respond to a rise in early college applications, counselors facilitate a five-class seminar series for grades 11 and 12. Juniors participate in seminar classes that prepare them for college applications, including completing resumes, beginning essays, and starting work on their Common Application. Seniors begin their seminar series during the first week of school and can complete their Common Application online, add schools to Naviance, edit and complete their essays, and participate in mock interviews. Seminars on stress management, high school transition, study skills, time management, and career and personal exploration are available to freshmen and sophomores.

Counselors meet with seniors individually and in seminars. They also host representatives from more than one hundred colleges and universities and spend time strengthening their working relationships. Counselors meet several times with juniors individually to discuss the college application process and guide post-secondary educational planning. Freshmen and sophomores discuss academic and future career plans with counselors and are introduced to online programs for college and career exploration. An overview of the guidance curriculum can be found on the DSHS website (<https://hs.doversherborn.org>).

Support Programs: The Guidance Department offers several support programs:

- ***Freshman welcoming activities*** support freshmen during their transition to high school.
- ***The Peer Helper Program*** has in this past year trained 40 upperclass students to assist incoming freshman with healthy decision-making, respect for others, study and exam-taking strategies, social issues, and expectations for sophomore year.
- ***The Signs of Suicide (SOS) Program*** for sophomores and seniors teaches students how to identify the symptoms of depression and suicide in themselves or their friends and encourages them to seek help.
- ***Parent-departmental meetings*** are held throughout the year to discuss important issues and concerns specific to each grade level.

LIBRARY

The DSHS library is a place where students and faculty can read, research a topic, access information, or complete a homework assignment. It is equipped with large tables for student collaboration, private study booths, and 16 computers for word-processing or online searches. The collection includes approximately 20,000 print volumes, six newspapers, and 20 periodicals. In addition, patrons can search the library catalog for a growing collection of e-books. Digital services include online databases available from Massachusetts Regional Library System and those purchased by subscription, as well as thousands of ebooks and audio-based materials via OverDrive. The library houses a portable cart with 25 iPads and 15 Chromebooks for classroom use. An average day brings approximately 300 students and teachers to the library.

ATHLETICS

The 2023–24 school year was very successful for D-S athletics. Student athletes and coaches worked extremely hard. During graduation week for the Class of 2024, the Athletic Department recognized 11 student athletes, six females and five males, who will each play a sport level in college athletics.

Winter Sports: Between November 2023 and March 2024, 235 students participated across 13 sports. Both Basketball and Boys Ice Hockey won TVL Small Championship titles. Boys Ice Hockey won the MIAA D4 State Championship, a first in school history. Boys Basketball made the MIAA D3 tournament and advanced on to the MIAA D3 Elite 8 game at Old Rochester Regional. Girls Basketball made it to the MIAA D3 Sweet 16 Game of the MIAA D3 Tournament versus Pentucket. Boys Alpine Ski won the MBE League for the third season in a row, while Girls Alpine Ski came in second. Boys Alpine Ski placed third and Girls Alpine Ski placed 11th at the MIAA State race. Girls Ice Hockey placed fifth in the TVL. Boys and Girls Nordic Ski qualified for the MIAA State Tournament placing 17th overall. The girls placed fourth and the boys sixth in the MBE league. Both Swim and Dive teams qualified for postseason play, the boys placing 27th at sectionals and 35th at MIAA D2 States, and the girls placing 17th at sectionals and 27th at MIAA D2 States. Both Track and Field teams qualified for postseason, with boys placing ninth in D4 States and the girls placing 24th in D4 States. The MADS gymnastics team placed third in the MIAA Sectionals Meet and seventh at the MIAA State Meet.

Spring Sports: The season ran from March to June, with 288 students participating in nine sports. Girls Lacrosse, Boys Lacrosse, Boys Tennis, and Girls Tennis all won TVL Small Championship titles. In addition, Boys Lacrosse and Girls Lacrosse both advanced to the MIAA D3 Sweet 16 game. Boys Tennis and Girls Tennis advanced to the MIAA D3 Elite 8 Match. Baseball advanced to the MIAA D3 Sweet 16 Game at Apponequet after beating Holliston in the MIAA D3 Round of 32. Both Track and Field teams broke records throughout the season. The girls broke the Pentathlon, Heptathlon, and Triple Jump Relay records. The boys broke the 100 Meter, 4x400 Meter Relay, Triple Jump Relay, and the Spring Medley Relay records. Sailing had a much-improved season going 3-4-1 on the year.

Fall Sports: The season ran from August to November, with 256 participants in seven sports. Boys Soccer and Golf both won TVL Championships. Boys Soccer won the MIAA D3 State Championship, the first time in over a decade. Girls Soccer and Field Hockey advanced on to the MIAA D3 Elite 8 game. Golf placed fourth overall at the MIAA D2 Central Sectionals Tournament, while Girls Cross Country placed fourth at MIAA D2C Divisionals and 14th at MIAA All States. Boys Cross Country was state runner-up in the MIAA D2C Divisionals and 13th overall at MIAA All States. D-S Football played its annual game on Thanksgiving at Medfield.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

On October 17, 2024, 54 students were inducted into the Dover-Sherborn High School Chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS), bringing our DS membership to 80 leaders and scholars. Admission to the NHS is granted to juniors and seniors who have demonstrated a commitment to academics by attaining a GPA of 3.8 or higher, and who exemplify the NHS pillars of

character, leadership, and service. Admission into the National Honor Society takes years of perseverance and self-motivation, and our members are a testament to the power of Dover-Sherborn students to use their education to make a difference. Our current NHS members serve the local community by tutoring fellow students and community members, completing an individual service project, and raising money for the Greater Boston Food Bank. Information about membership requirements and the NHS application can be found on the high school's website.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Our school is proud to offer students many diverse clubs, organizations, and opportunities to become involved in our D-S school community. An activity fee of \$75 is required for participation in many of the clubs on campus.

- ***Academic and student-life organizations:*** Chess Team, Debate Team, DECA, DSHS Events, Executive Board, Coding Club, Creative Writing Club, Destination Imagination, EPIIC Tufts Inquiry, Harvard Model United Nations, Math Team, Mock Trial, National Honor Society, Prom & Senior Boat Cruise Executive Board, Robotics Team, *RUNES* literary magazine, School Newspaper, Science Olympiad, Senior Project, Student Council, THOxDS, and Yearbook.
- ***Art, music, and drama clubs:*** Two a cappella groups (DS al Coda and Noteworthy), Arts Club: Open Studios, Crew, Drama Club, Filmmaking Club, Knitting Club, Music Club and Digital Recording Studio.
- ***Social and cultural awareness groups:*** Asian Student Union, Backpacks for Kids, Black Student Union, Cheer Club, Community Service Club, Down to Earth, Fitness Club, Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA), Global Citizenship Program, Jewish Heritage Club, MARC, Medical Club, Mountain Biking Club, Peer Helping, Philosophy Club, Red Cross Club, Relay for Life, Sports Medicine Club, Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), Sustainability Task Force, Volleyball Club, and Women's Group.

Parent and Community Groups

D-S BOOSTERS

The D-S Boosters supported the athletic program with grants for the purchase of capital items. It continues to promote community spirit and provide recognition to student athletes participating in all sports at DSHS.

D-S FRIENDS OF THE PERFORMING ARTS (FoPA)

FoPA is a 501(c)3 organization of parents and community volunteers who support the vocal and instrumental music and drama programs at the D-S Regional Schools. FoPA awards scholarships to seniors who have demonstrated excellence in the performing arts. It funds grants for workshops, equipment, and material requests, and provides production support for the concert bands, jazz bands, a cappella groups, and drama programs and students. (More information is available at www.doversherbornfopa.org.)

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The DSHS PTO is organized for charitable educational purposes to actively support the Administration, to promote and encourage communication in matters of common interest and to encourage spirit building initiatives among DSHS students, the faculty, and the community. Its monthly meetings are open to parents and guardians of students. The PTO Board includes representatives from many parent organizations, the Dover-Sherborn Regional School Committee, and parents/guardians of students in each of the four grades. Meetings typically begin with an update from Principal John Smith and often include teachers or administrators who talk about their areas of expertise and answer questions. Meeting dates, times, and locations are posted on the DSHS calendar. New faces and voices are always welcome. To learn more about the DSHS PTO, please visit <https://dshspto.org>.

GUIDANCE ADVISORY COUNCIL (GAC)

The GAC is composed of three representatives from each grade for grades 6–12, with each serving two-year terms. The GAC is as a communication channel between the DSMS and DSHS communities and the Guidance Office. The GAC is chaired by the Director of Guidance and two parent/guardian committee members, and its functions include communicating parent/guardian and community perspectives to the DSHS administration, assisting with D-S Regional Schools tours for prospective students and families, and providing hospitality for guidance-sponsored events. Subcommittees support guidance programs and services designed to enhance the educational experience for students and their parents/guardians. The GAC meets in September, November, January, March, and May.