

From Dr. James Liebreit, Director and Mr. Brian Smith, Principal

We thank you for your participation in Open House this week. Your support is crucial to the success of the students and we appreciate you making the commitment to come to the school to meet the teachers and visit their classrooms.

Homework:

Dr. Liebreit & I have spoken with quite a few students who are concerned about the amount of homework they have. Although homework is a crucial part of any instructional program, too much can make homework a burden rather than a benefit.

What can you do if you think your child has too much homework? First, tell your child to ask the teacher, when the assignment is given, how much time he expects students to need to complete the assignment. If an assignment is expected to take 30 minutes but it takes one hour for the student to finish it, the student needs to see the teacher before school, after school, at break or at lunch to find out why.

All students at DCS should use their daily planners to make a record of what is done in each of their classes. This is the ideal place for students to record their homework assignments and the amount of time the assignments are expected to take to complete. If your child uses his daily planner this way, you will be able to see, at a glance, how much homework he has.

If students are being overloaded with homework, please inform the teachers so that they can adjust the amount of homework being assigned. Students who spend all their time finishing homework do not get the rest they need nor do they have the time that they need to spend time with family & friends. We expect our students to be prepared for school in the morning when they arrive and exhaustion from lack of sleep prevents them from being prepared.

We are working with the teachers to put some checks in place to help insure that students are not overloaded. Teachers expect students to make their best effort on homework to help them be prepared to learn in the classroom.

Homework is an important part of the DCS curriculum but if you see that it is causing a problem, please contact us so that we can work together to find a solution.



Dr. James L. Liebreit, Director



Brian Smith, Principal

From the School Nurse:

Mrs. Julie Sawah

School wide vision screening will be scheduled during next week using the Snellen eye chart. If you know that your student should wear prescription glasses in school, please make sure they do so. If your child is found to be visually impaired, you will receive a letter asking that you take him / her to an ophthalmologist.

DCS has a strict attendance policy. If your child is late for school you MUST either notify the school office staff or send a written note with the child explaining the reason for the tardiness. If the office does not receive notification, you will receive a phone call from the school. If an absence occurs, the same regulation applies but, if the student is absent for 3 days or more, they require a note from the doctor BEFORE they can return to school

This is a condensed version of the DCS Newsletter please go to <http://dcssyria.org> or check your email for the complete DCS Newsletter.

From the Counselor:***Mr. Bence Brown***

Greetings from the Counselor's office:

Due to U. S. sanctions, the SAT exam will not be given in Syria. For those students who have signed up for the October 1 administration, College Board is allowing them to change their test location and/or date free of charge. DCS students who are taking the SAT will need to make arrangements to take it in either Lebanon or Jordan. Test dates are the same as the dates would have been for administration in Syria. Pay attention to deadlines. If you have any questions, come see me.

The first SAT exam is scheduled for October 1.

The PSAT exams will be given as scheduled. All 9th, 10th, and 11th graders need to take this exam. The PSAT will be given on October 15, and the cost is 2500 SP. See Mahmoud in the DCS Business Office to pay for the exam and get your name on the list.

From the Librarian:***Ms. Lorna MacIver***

One of the main goals of the Damascus Community School Library is to offer our students reading and research materials that are current, varied, significant, useful, and interesting.

When the school closed on short notice in 2008, there was no time for the library to recover books that were out on loan. As a result, many items were still missing when DCS reopened last year. Last spring, Ms. Sylva Sanadiki did a complete inventory of the library and then worked with DCS teachers and a school library consultant to compile an order for new books. Books were chosen to not only replace missing classics and non-fiction essentials, but also to update the collection with the best of recently published non-fiction and literary titles.

The books arrived over the summer – over 1000 of them! – and the library staff has been working every day to get them processed and cataloged. By next week they will start to appear on the shelves for students to check out. I know the students are as excited as we are about delving into these great new books!

From the Activities Director:***Mr. Tyler Ready***

High School Student Council elections will be held on the 28th and 29th of September. DCS Middle School Student Council elections are on the 29th.

Elementary School Activities will start on October 2nd, and permission forms will be sent home next week.

Astronomy Club continues to meet on a regular basis, every other Sunday from 3:30-4:30pm in room 230, their next session is on Sunday, September 25th. Interested students should speak with Mr. Saffarewich.

Official MS/HS sports will not begin until the middle of October. However, we are going to begin football open fields on September 26th, and they will continue on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30 – 5:00. This is an opportunity for students to play against each other and develop skills in an informal setting. This is open to all students in grades 6 – 12, provided they a) complete Coach Anthony Smith's permission form and b) bring appropriate football equipment. If students have questions, they can contact Coach Anthony Smith in room 113.

From the PTA:***Mrs. Sima Kozbari, President***

It was our pleasure meeting all the returning and new families at the open house evenings. I'm looking forward to the PTA board elections on Sunday, September 25th at 2:30pm in room 212. You will find on the following pages descriptions of PTA offices and events.

Again and again... I do encourage all the parents to attend the first meeting. So we can fit our selves in our positions to start organizing the first event of the PTA, the Welcome BBQ.



Damascus Community School

“A Learning Community in Pursuit of Excellence”

2011-12 DCS Parent Teacher Association Volunteer Sign-Up Sheet (page 1 of 2)

Child(ren) Name: _____

Grade: _____

Parent's Name: _____ Mobile: _____ Home Tel: _____

Email: _____

Please indicate which of the following events/activities you are interested in leading/volunteering for:

__ Lead Fundraiser Coordinator(s)

Coordinate with fellow PTA members and parents on meaningful and effective fundraisers to augment the operating budget specifically to enhance DCS community. One of our goals is to work to maximize the fundraising opportunities while minimizing the number of events. A few examples would be bake sales, pizza sales, DCS Logo sweatshirts and T-Shirts Sales, concerts, plays. Any funds raised will go directly to PTA future activities and a charity organization. We welcome all other suggestions.

__ Welcome Barbeque

Coordinate welcome BBQ, date, food, activities, entertainment. This event is attended by many of our families and provides a relaxed, fun setting for them to get to know one another.

__ Teacher Luncheon Volunteers

Work with the school administration in coordinating lunch for the teachers. Lunch is provided for staff once a year as a special treat. In the past, luncheons have been prepared by parents or boxed lunches brought in by local vendors.

Luncheon dates are: to be determined

__ Halloween Day

Work with your child's teacher to prepare for event in your child's classroom. Pastries- muffins- juice coffee is usually served for parents and students to meet and mingle OR organize trick-or-treating, Halloween parade, costumes, activity around the school.

__ Winter Bazaar Coordinator(s)

Work with fellow PTA Winter Bazaar volunteers to organize activities (games, crafts, booths, sales of Christmas gifts, vendors) for the event. This event is attended by many of our families and provides a relaxed, fun setting for them to get to know one another.

__ Eid Al-Adha

Work with fellow PTA members to organize an evening watching our kids perform a story for Eid and a evening pot-luck dinner, eid gifts for the kids.

__ Spring Egg-Hunt Day

Work with fellow PTA members to organize an afternoon of egg-hunting for the elementary school children.

__ International Day

Work with PTA members, organize parade, show, vendors, food, this is our largest fund-raising event of the year.

__ End of the Year Party Volunteer(s)

Work with your child's teacher and Classroom Lead Coordinator to prepare a party in your child's classroom OR a farewell BBQ organize, food, vendors, entertainment and activities.

Please indicate which of the following role you would be interested to volunteer:

__ President preside at all meetings of the Association and of the executive committee; be a member ex-officio of all committees with the exception of the nominating committee; coordinate the work of the officers and committees of the Association in order that the objectives be promoted; perform all other duties usually pertaining to the office of the president.

__ Vice-President act as an aide to the president; perform any duties the president may direct; perform the duties in the absence or disability of that officer.

__ Secretary keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the association, and of the executive committee; prepare all official correspondence of the Association; and answer on behalf of the Association routine correspondence and inquiries not requiring action by the executive committee. *The secretary shall also prepare (for distribution) prior to the general meeting, minutes from the previous general meeting.*

2011-12 DCS Parent Teacher Association Volunteer Sign-Up Sheet (page 2 of 2)

Treasurer receive all monies of the association; keep accurate record of receipts and expenditures; and make payments from association funds only as authorized by the executive committee. The treasurer shall present a statement of account at each *executive* meeting. An auditing committee of three associate members shall examine the treasurer's accounts annually. The auditing committee shall render a signed written report to the membership at the general assembly of each school year.

Member-at-Large The member at large will be required to substitute for the vice-president, the secretary, or the treasurer in case of the absence of one of these members.

PTA Representative to DCS Board of directors represent all members of the Association; submit to the Board of Directors matters of concern to the Association and the executive committee; and shall report to the executive committee business matters of the Board of Directors if of concern to the Association and delegated to do so by the Board of Directors.

Teacher Representative The teacher representative shall represent all teachers and shall report to the teachers on a regular basis.

Elementary School Coordinator shall coordinate grade-specific (grades pk-5) parent association participation in the form of room mothers; assist the president in any elementary school activities as needed; and consult with the activities representative to provide grade-appropriate activities.

Middle School Coordinator shall coordinate grade-specific (grades 6-8) parent association participation in the form of grade reps; assist the president in any middle school activities as needed, work closely with the middle school teacher coordinator, counselor, and activities director to promote middle school activities; and consult with the activities representative to provide age appropriate activities.

High School Representative shall coordinate grade specific (grades 9-12) parent association participation in the form of grade reps; assist the president in any high school activities as needed; work closely with the high school teacher coordinator, counselor, and activities representative to promote high school activities; and consult with the activities representative to provide age appropriate activities

The Activities Representative shall attempt to create afterschool activities for all grades, concentrating specifically on activities that the school does not offer in its afterschool program; work closely with the elementary activities school teacher coordinator; and activities director to assure quality activities; explore the possibility of bringing in outside talent to provide activities (following existing safety protocol and adding additional measures as necessary by working with the school administration); and coordinate with the grade-specific representatives in order to provide grade-appropriate activities.

Alumni Representative

Please note elections will be held at the first General PTA Meeting on Sunday September 25 2:30 PM Room 212. ALL PARENTS are Welcome to Join PTA and to Vote.

In addition to the above, we need volunteers to serve as room mothers for the Elementary School:

Pre-K

KG

Grade 1

Grade 2

Grade 3

Grade 4

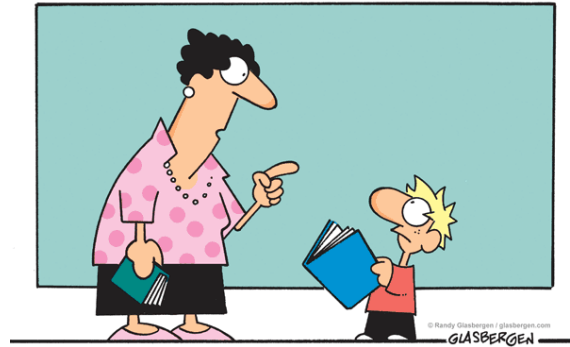
Grade 5

Thank you for your time for reading the form and indicating where necessary. With your help and support, PTA hopes to fulfill its role and make DCS a super fantastic year of fulfillment, achievement and success for our DCS children and community.

Sincerely,

With Your Help Soon to be - PTA

2011—2012 1st Semester Damascus Community School Calendar



"It's called reading. It's how people install new software into their brains."

SEPTEMBER 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

25 Sept—Sun PTA General Meeting-2:30 PM—Room 212

OCTOBER 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

5 Oct—Wed Mid 1st Qtr-Progress Report go Home
 6 Oct—Thurs Tishreen Liberation Day (Syrian National Holiday-Harb Teshreen Al-Tahiriyyah) US Embassy and School Closed
 9 Oct—Sun Columbus Day —US Embassy Closed—School Open
 13 Oct—Thurs 1/2 Day- Teacher Work Day—noon dismissal for students

NOVEMBER 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

3 Nov—Thurs End of 1st Qtr—Report Cards go Home
 6 Nov—9 Nov Id Al-Ahda (Day of Sacrifice-following conclusion of Hajj)
 Sun—Wed US Embassy and School Closed
 10 Nov—Thurs Veterans' Day—US Embassy Closed—School Closed
 13 Nov—Tues Conference Notices go Home
 16 Nov—Wed Parent/Teacher Conferences—11:30am student dismissal
 17 Nov—Thurs Parent/Teacher Conferences—11:30am student dismissal
 24 Nov—Thurs Thanksgiving—US Embassy and School Closed

DECEMBER 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

8 Dec—Thurs Mid 2nd Qtr—Progress Report go Home
 22 Dec—5 Jan Winter Break—No School

2011–2012 2nd Semester Damascus Community School Calendar

JANUARY 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

- 01 Jan—Sun New Year's Day —US Embassy Closed
- 08 Jan—Sun Classes Resume
- 15 Jan—Sun Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday observed by US Embassy
—US Embassy Closed—School Open
- 26 Jan Sun End of 1st Semester—Report Cards go Home

FEBRUARY 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

- 02 Feb—Thurs No School
- 19 Feb—Sun Presidents' Day—US Embassy Closed—School Open

MARCH 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

- 1 March—Wed Mid 3rd Qtr—Progress Reports go Home
- 8 March—Thurs Revolution Day US Embassy and School Closed
- 29 March—Thurs End of 3rd Qtr-Report Cards go Home
- 31 March—5 April Spring Break —School Closed
- Sat—Tue

APRIL 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

- 8 April—Sun Western Easter—US Embassy and School Closed
- 15 April—Sun Eastern Easter—US Embassy and School Closed
- 16 April—Mon Conference Notices go Home
- 18 April—Wed Parent/Teacher Conferences—11:30am student dismissal
- 19 April—Thurs Parent/Teacher Conferences—11:30am student dismissal

MAY 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

- 6 May—Sun Martyrs' Day—US Embassy and School Closed
- 10 May—Tues Mid 4th Qtr-Progress Reports go Home
- 17 May—Thurs Progress Reports sent home
- 27 May—Sun Memorial Day observed—US Embassy Closed—School Open

JUNE 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

- 07 June—Thurs Teacher work day—1/2 day for students—noon dismissal
- 14 June—Tue Last Day of School for Students-students dismissal at noon
- End of 2nd Semester—Report Cards go home