

DSL A Newsletter

Don Smith Learning Academy



February, 2012

Hello to all our parents, guardians, students, family and friends! In this edition of the DSL A newsletter you will hear from DSL A teachers, find out how first semester wrapped up and what is in store for the rest of the school year, including summer school.

We finished first semester with a total of 64 students in various programs. These students are in one or more of the following: our full day program (9AM-2:30PM), Independent Study (12PM-2:30PM), Night Program (4-6PM two days per week), SAPAR, and a variety of modified on campus and off campus programming. As an alternative school, we have some flexibility in being creative in order to meet the individual needs of our students.

We have some important changes and want you to be aware of them early. Students who do not complete all work in their class by the last day of the term, will no longer be permitted to make up missing assignments later or during summer school. All assignments, projects and tests must be completed by the final day of the grading period. Students must earn a 70% or better to earn a passing grade.

It is important to repeat: There will be no packet make up in summer school. Students who have incompletes or failed grades at the end of a term will be required to repeat that quarter class or complete an equivalent APEX course during the school year or in summer school. During summer school, students will have an opportunity to make up failed grades by completing an APEX course in that subject.

We are also moving away from giving pass/fail/incomplete to giving percentage grades based on changes that have recently been made by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. This will also help if your son or daughter wishes to go on to a Wisconsin Technical College or into the military. A 70% or above is considered passing. Any grade below a 70% will need to be repeated in order to complete a Competency Diploma.

If you have questions about the DSL A or these changes, please feel free to call me at the Don Smith Learning Academy 885-7423.

Respectfully,

Debra Lins, Principal

Congratulations to DSL A students for a terrific first semester..

Attendance:

According to Wisconsin Law
Parents can excuse their child from
school a maximum of 10 school
days for the school year.

Any absences where students are taken
to see a doctor, dentist, therapist,
or other medical professional, or
have a hearing in court do not
count against those 10 absences
simply by bringing documentation
from their doctor or from the hear-
ing the day of or the next school
day.

A high number of medical excuses may
require a release to the health care
professional in order to create a
health care plan for that student.

School aged children are considered
truant if they are unexcused for
part or all of 5 or more school days
per semester.

Please remember that in order for your
child to be successful in school, it
is important for them to be in
school and ready to learn every
day.

English Literature and Intermediate English

Students are completing MAP testing this week and
need to be sure to have all missing and late work
handed in by January 18th. Students can stay after
school until 3:30 to make up work- just be sure to
check with Ms. Sorenson in advance to ensure there
are no staff meetings. Seniors needing assistance
with college, apprenticeship or job applications can
make arrangements with Ms. Sorenson or any other
staff member for extra help as well. Students will
begin reading a novel and we are working on the 6
traits of good writing for the remainder of January.

Environmental and Earth Science-

We have been dis-
cussing the need for change in
energy use and production in the
United States and globally. Stu-
dents will begin to look at the impact their ener-
gy usage has on nature as well as learn about
different types of ecosystems. We are planning
on having a speaker from the DNR come later in
the term.



Mrs. Sorenson



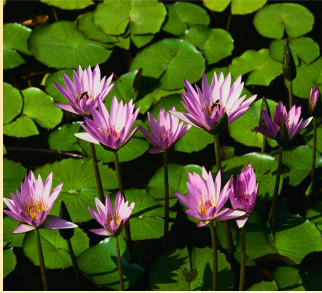
Algebra 1 students have been very busy factoring polyno-
mials. Some students are now grumbling that they wish
they knew how to do this when they were trying to divide
polynomials by binomials as they thought that factoring
was easier. We will be finishing up factoring in another
week and moving on to Data, Statistics and Probability.
Algebra 2 students are finishing up working on graphing
quadratic functions. They are moving on to a subject that is
a little easier for them Polynomials. They will be happy to
be finished as they didn't like graphing the functions. The
spiral of math continues as Algebra 1 finishes with Polyno-
mials Algebra 2 will start on them.

Biology students have been talking about the human body
systems. Hopefully we will be able to do some fun pro-
jects in the next term as we finish up some of the basics.
After studying about plant lives there were a few interest-
ing stories that the students created about the cross section
of the cherry tree.

Community Service students have been complaining that
their hands hurt but it was so worth the effort. They have
cut out more than 3700 Box Tops for Education for Tren-
ton Elementary School. In addition to the Box Tops they
have also cut out UPC labels for Our Family and Campbell
Soup labels. The students have also been sorting all of the
different types of milk caps benefit education. Thanks to
all of the students who have been working so hard to help
raise money for Trenton.

Ms. Mueller

**Please save your aluminum cans, Box Tops for Education,
Our Family & Campbell soup labels.**



Mrs. Henkel's HotTopics
"Teaching Tolerance"

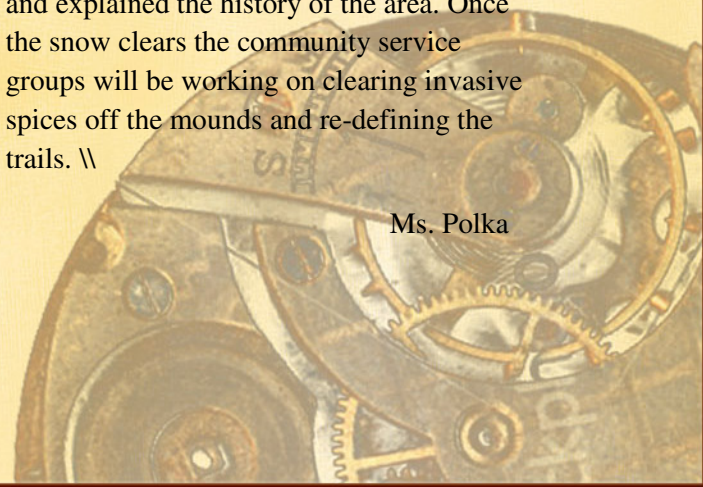
In January, the Civics and World History classes traveled to West Bend to meet Suzy Fono, a Holocaust survivor from Budapest, Hungary, as part of our "Teaching Tolerance" unit. Suzy spoke to the group about her experiences as a seven year old child and the Jewish ghetto that her family lived in. Over 55,000 people were crammed into 350 apartments in the ghetto where Suzy and her family were forced to live. Along the banks of the Danube River, which ran behind the ghetto, Jews were taken out and forced to line the banks of the river, and then shot based on a number rolled on the dice by Nazi soldiers. Suzy's mother survived this random execution three times. Suzy's message to our students was to recognize each other as gifts and be to be kind to one another.

Ozaukee Washington Land Trust Volunteer Work

Throughout October, November and December, three DSLA students worked on crafting Aldo Leopold styled benches, to be placed in Ozaukee Washington Land Trust Preserves. Justin Bubholz, Aaron Brewer and Kegan Hackbarth, along with adult volunteer Terry Zimmermanlee, created eight benches. In January, the DSLA students delivered the benches to the OWLT office in West Bend and met with Executive Director, Shawn Graff and Land Protection Specialist, Steve Henkel. OWLT will feature and recognize our DSLA students in their February newsletter and on their OWLT Facebook page.

Community Service Update: Prior to winter break Mrs. Henkel and Ms. Polka brought their community service groups to Nitschke Mounds to speak with Bill the Assistant Director of County Parks. During this time Bill gave the group a tour of the mounds and explained the history of the area. Once the snow clears the community service groups will be working on clearing invasive species off the mounds and re-defining the trails. \\\

Ms. Polka



Community Panel Discussion on what is in your medicine cabinet & how it could impact your son or daughter's safety.
Thursday, February 9th at 6:00 p.m. at the Beaver Dam Community Library.

Nurses Notes
Louise Wilson RN, BSN, MS, NCSN
Health Service Supervisor



Adolescent Prescription Drug Abuse

This February, Beaver Dam community members will be hearing a lot of information about the abuse of prescription drugs. That's because several organizations, including the BDUSD, have come together to alert the community to the increasing danger of prescription drug abuse, particularly in adolescents.

Although we often hear about young people abusing "street" drugs, such as marijuana and methamphetamine, prescription medicines have become the second most frequently abused type of drug among 12- to 17-year-olds (2002 National Survey on Drug Use and Health). In fact, most teens (56 percent, or 13.4 million) find that prescription medicines are easier to get than illegal drugs (www.family.samhsa.gov).

Abuse of prescription drugs covers a wide variety of medications. The prescription drugs most abused by teens are "opioid" pain relievers such as Darvon®, Dilaudid®, OxyContin®, Vicodin®, and products containing codeine or morphine. Teen abuse of prescription drugs also includes sedatives, tranquilizers, and stimulants such as Ritalin®, Concerta®, and Adderall®, which are known for treating attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

A False Sense of Security

Because prescription drugs have been tested and are prescribed by doctors, adolescents may see no harm in using them—even if the medication was prescribed for someone else. Taken by the right person, at the right time, and in the right amount, prescription drugs are generally safe. Yet, like other forms of substance abuse, misuse of prescription drugs is risky. Abuse of pain relievers and drugs used to treat anxiety and sleep disorders can lead to dependence and addiction. In fact, abusing prescription pain relievers can be "as dangerous-and addictive-as using street narcotics and other illicit drugs" (National Institute on Drug Abuse).

High doses of stimulants, used to treat conditions such as ADHD and obesity, can cause high body temperatures and irregular heartbeat, paranoia, and hostility. In addition, teens may increase the risk by "pharming" mixing prescription drugs—or combining them with alcohol or illegal drugs.

Be Alert

To help prevent prescription drug abuse in your home, monitor your child. You can store prescription drugs where teens cannot get them, watch for missing drugs, keep an eye out for drugs in a teen's possession, and look for physical signs of use. Prescription drugs are amazingly easy to buy on the Internet, so look at the history of Web sites your teen has visited and check credit card receipts.

Set an Example

Still, there is more to prevention than being watchful. Youth take cues from their parents. So, set a good example in your approach to prescription drugs:

- Only use medications when necessary. Being quick to seek prescriptions and to constantly reach for the medicine cabinet can give kids the idea that there's a "pill for every ill."
- Consider non-drug measures such as exercise, relaxation, meditation, or massage for relief of minor pain or other situations when prescription drugs are not vital to your health. Tell your kids about these options and when they apply.
- Show caution in taking prescription drugs or giving them to family members. Openly read instructions regarding prescribed doses, time between doses, and the need to avoid substances such as alcohol and certain other medications or foods when taking a prescription.
- Keep medicine containers closed and out of the reach of young children and pets.
- Ensure safety. Check labels about what not to do—for example, driving, using machinery, or climbing ladders when taking prescription drugs—and enforce these safeguards with family members.
- Be consistent. Making exceptions because you're too stressed out, uncomfortable, or in a hurry undermines your stance on prescription drugs.
- Start early. Reinforcing a message of caution and restraint before your child reaches adolescence can build a solid foundation for resisting temptations and outside influences (<http://family.samhsa.gov/be/prescriptionharm.aspx?printid=1&:>). While most teens do not abuse prescription drugs, the rapid growth of the problem shows that parents need to pay attention. Stay alert, set a good example, and talk to your child about the dangers of abusing prescription drugs.

15.6% of OUR teens risk their lives becoming addicts to a drug they get from Mom, Dad, Grandma and Grandpa.

Important Dates:

February 9th – Prescription Drug Abuse Panel Community Discussion

Beaver Dam Public Library, 6:00-7:30 p.m.

February 24th – No School

February 28th – DSLA Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences,
3:30-7:00 p.m.

March 8th – DSLA Early Dismissal, 12:30

March 19-23 – Spring Break – No School

April 3rd – DSLA McTeacher Night Fundraiser
Park Avenue McDonald's, 4:00-6:00 p.m.

May 1st – DSLA Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences,
3:30-7:00 p.m.

May 10th – DSLA Early Dismissal, 12:30 p.m.

June 5th – Last Day of School

June 5th – DSLA Graduation, 6:00 p.m.
BDMS Auditorium

