

Dear Parents,

I cannot believe this year is going by so quickly. We are well into our second semester and our DISD staff continues to reach out and partner with you to ensure a quality education and safe environment for our children. As the saying goes, "It takes a village to raise a child."

On the academic front, please encourage your children to read every day! Research shows that starting in kindergarten, if a student reads 20 minutes a day at home, they will hear 1.8 million words per year. They will have read for 851 hours by 6th grade and on standardized tests, they will likely score better than 90% of their peers. One of our initiatives is to increase the amount of reading every child does at every level daily. There are many other benefits to improving reading skills including writing skills increase, promotes brain development, spelling and vocabulary skills improve, and develops critical-thinking skills. Picture books, chapter books, kindles, novels, comic books, fiction and non-fiction passages, articles, etc. all count for reading. We encourage our children to find books that interest them and read every day. Our goal is to grow each child academically this school year.

Please continue to have conversations with your children concerning their behavior. We expect our students to be respectful and polite from the time they get on the bus and/or dropped off until they get off the bus and/or picked up. For ultimate learning to occur in the classrooms, all students must listen and participate, which allows academic growth for themselves and also gives others the opportunity to learn. Just a reminder that our buses are an extension of our classrooms and appropriate behavior is important for the safety of all. Our district's expectations are that we provide a safe and secure school for students at all times. So, whether in the classroom, in the hallway, in the gym, or on the bus, our district will not tolerate threats, smoking, vaping, horseplay, foul language, etc. Please encourage your children to keep their hands to themselves and be respectful of others at all times. All of our campuses will be holding discussions concerning appropriate behavior during the school day with our students. We encourage you to also hold those conversations with your own children.

Attendance is important! We need your children to be in school each day. I understand the occasional illness might get our students down and we certainly do not want to get others sick. House Bill 5 (passed in 2013) put into law that all students (at all grade levels Pre-k through 12<sup>th</sup>) must abide by the 90% rule. Which simply means that each semester, your child must be in attendance 90% of the time in order to receive credit. Otherwise, there may be consequences including tuition-based summer school and/or retention for the student. Regardless of the law, our district realizes that if children are not in class, then no learning is taking place. We want and need your children every day. Our staff misses them when they are not in school. So I urge you to have your children at school and on time. We appreciate your continued efforts when it comes to attendance.

Thank you for entrusting us with your children. DISD is having a wonderful school year with our students. We are blessed in so many ways and we are appreciative of your continued support. If you have any questions and/or comments, then we encourage you to call your child's campus administration and/or our district's departments. Together, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of our children. Thank you again for your partnership with Dayton ISD.

Dr. Jessica Johnson