

DUNDEE DISPATCH

MAY 2020



Dear Dundee Families,

As I write this article for the final Dispatch of the year, I can't help but think of all the spring events that we weren't able to participate in, and I miss them. At the same time, I'm also reminded of everything we have learned and how we have adjusted to make sure our students still have opportunities to learn, and for that I'm grateful. There was a true spirit of cooperation as we ALL had to work together.

A big THANKYOU to our fabulous PTO for still finding a way to show appreciation for our staff during Staff Appreciation Week! It may have looked a lot different this year, but that didn't change how much we appreciate everything our PTO does for us! We are all so lucky to be a part of Dundee and the thoughtful, caring atmosphere that has been created here!

Looking ahead – information about the beginning of school year will be mailed to all parents in early August. If your address has changed, please let us know so we can make sure you receive the opening information. If you change your address or move over the summer, please call Student Placement, 531-299-0302, and let them know. As of now, the first day of school is Tuesday, August 18. We look forward to having a back-to-school celebration on Friday, August 14. More information will be included in the August mailing.

We wish our current 6th graders the very best as they move on to Jr. High and will look forward to hearing the wonderful things they continue to do throughout their education. We are still hoping to have some kind of event for our 6th graders. For now, the 6th grade picnic has been moved to Wednesday, July 22, from 10 – 2 p.m., at Elmwood Park Pavilion. We will continue to communicate updates as that date nears.

On behalf of the entire Dundee Staff, THANKYOU for sharing your children with us! Whether it was in school or online, we appreciate all the time, effort, and support that was given. I will look forward to hearing about your "home schooling" adventures! Until we can all get back together, please stay well and continue to support each other. Don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

With much care,
Kaye Kennedy



Hello Dundee Families!

What a wild way to be writing our final dispatch article for the school year! It's truly been our pleasure to serve as your PTO presidents this past year – our only regret was not doing it sooner during our time at Dundee. Thank you all for being such a special community that we've loved being a part of.

We were looking forward to all the end-of-year events so much, the graduations, the picnics and of course the PTO potluck. As we're navigating how this school year ends and how the next one will start, we're reminded how fortunate we are to be part of such a strong school with the amazing faculty and staff and supportive PTO community.

We would like to announce our executive team for next year:

- Presidents: Katy & Nate Dickerson
- Vice Presidents: Trisha & Joe Howard
 - Treasurer: Ben Dey
 - Secretary: Jayme Aliano
- And of course, we'll be here as your Past Presidents.

And without further ado, a little about our incoming Presidents, Nate and Katy Dickerson!

Nate and Katy have been active PTO members for several years. Their oldest son Steven is moving on to middle school after a "Covid-shortened" seven years. Their son Sam will be a 6th grader and daughter Anna will be in 4th grade. Katy is a Special Education teacher at Dundee for the last three years and even went to Dundee Elementary herself many years ago (we won't say how many:). Nate was previously our PTO Treasurer for three years. Both of them say they are excited about the future of Dundee Elementary and really looking forward to another school year after last year ended so abruptly. "We are big believers in quality public education and feel blessed to work with many other like-minded parents and teachers to sustain and improve our terrific elementary school.", said Nate. Katy adds, "Support from the PTO for our students and teachers has been amazing and we want to work hard to give back and help set the course for a bright future here as well."

Take care & Be Safe,
Don & Julie Stavneak



COUNSELOR'S CORNER

By Mary Ann Colasacco

April 29, 2020

Hello from my basement! When 2020 arrived in what seems like a very long time ago, I remember being so excited about just the way the year sounded. 2020. There was a balance, an evenness, a symmetry to its pronunciation. I remember thinking this was going to be a great year. THUD. And then, the world changed – very quickly. There have been questions out there like, “Why did I even bother to purchase a 2020 planning calendar?” or “Can we just unplug 2020, reboot it, and plug it back in again?” Well, sadly, no. So, here’s my pep talk for you and your children as I try to detail what we can do during this uncertain time:

- a) We can stay positive. And, that may be difficult given the financial and health concerns for all. However, one of the things we can control in this time is the direction of our thoughts. Here’s a quote: “What you focus on expands.” If you are only thinking negative thoughts, then you are going to slump and stay slumped. Find the good – more family time, more time to self-reflect, more time to maybe paint that bathroom or clean out that basement. There is good in all this; we may have to just search a little bit harder on some days.

- b) We can help our children become more capable and responsible. This time away from school does not have to be lost learning time for your children. Take a few moments to think about what you can do in your home and in your daily routine to incorporate learning. Can you teach your children to make some simple meals? Think how helpful that will be when normal schedules begin, and you can walk in the door after a full workday to the smell of a Tater Tot casserole cooking in the oven. Do your kids know how to do their own laundry, how to sort it, wash it, dry it, and – most importantly – get it back in their closets and drawers within two days of the time it was washed? Vacuuming, cleaning the bathroom, decluttering their own closets and drawers are all possibilities, and the list goes on. Do not waste this time; create more capable human beings who are not going to rely on you as much and who will learn to do their share on the family “team”.

- c) We can help our children stay focused. As time has gone on, I have found myself slipping some days and not making a to-do list. Those days seem to get away from me, and I am not as productive. Your kids have missed a quarter of school. Their skills do not have to slip. However, taking action to ensure this will require that you sit with them and make a plan for the summer. What should be on their to-do list to help them stay engaged academically? What would they like to work on? Can you ask that they research a topic they are interested in each week and prepare a report or a presentation to the family about that topic? How many books could they plan to read over summer? Do they have a favorite website to help them with spelling, math, etc? Can they schedule 20 minutes per day on that site? Bring back good old-fashioned math flash cards. They can do these in the car, sitting in the backyard, or just quiz them as you are going on a walk. Find creative ways to continue to incorporate and challenge them with learning during the summer. They will be better prepared when school re-opens.

d) We can take a deep breath. We cannot control a lot of things that are occurring in our lives now. I try to stay optimistic with these thoughts when I feel my stress level ramping up: A) As a community and as a nation, we have been able to take actions that have contributed to slowing the advance of the virus. That attitude and willingness to do things for the greater good has been heartening to see. As more is learned and more strategies are put in place, I remain hopeful that people will remain cooperative. B) It appears that we have the best medical minds in the entire world working on methods to treat, curtail, or derail this virus. With that mental manpower coupled with their experience, I feel there will be breakthroughs. The hard part is being patient and smart while we wait. C) At some point, we will be returning to Dundee Elementary. As we await answers and direction, there is a lot of uncertainty; however, I am certain of one thing. Our staff is the best. We are creative, caring, hard-working, and intelligent, and – upon the return - we will be doing our best to serve your children best. Count on that...

I cannot wait to see everyone again. Until then, be safe, be smart, and be well.

Mrs. Colasacco



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Thank you to all of the families and local businesses that have supported Dundee this year. Don't forget to support our Dundee community!

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- Central Body Company Inc
- Children's Physicians Dundee - Dr. Specht
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