

Dear Davidson Families,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year! The last time we were together in-person was the Spring of 2019, almost 18 months ago. Throughout that time, I was completely impressed with how our students, teachers, staff, and families learned new things, took care of one another, nurtured the needs of students, and showed up in big ways every day amid a global pandemic. Our students are stronger, more resilient, creative, and independent because of your grace, gratitude, and grit!

This year, we are so excited to reconnect with all of our students and families. Our school-wide theme for the year is Everyone Belongs at Davidson. This past year everyone has been largely disconnected. It has been very difficult for many people, including our children. The loss of genuine face-to-face interactions and connections simply cannot be replaced by technology and social media. Our goal this year is to re-establish those connections, while providing high-quality instruction for all students.

We have many wonderful things planned for the 2021-2022 school year. We will continue with our school-wide implementation of PAX to meet the social emotional needs of our students. Davidson is an OMA Gold school, and we are blessed to have fine arts instruction and integration at every grade level. We now have Chromebooks for every student, which allows for more opportunities to extend learning through technology. Davidson has earned a grant from the Laura Bush Library Foundation for a new Family Engagement Library. We have also added Math Intervention this year, in addition to our outstanding Reading Intervention program.

The most exciting new is that Davidson has become an AVID Elementary School! AVID stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination. It is a nationally known program and utilized in schools throughout TUSD. AVID's mission is to close the opportunity gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society. AVID implementation will be a main focus throughout campus this year and I am confident that our students will create a greater sense of belonging, confidence in themselves, and develop college readiness skills that will allow them to see themselves belonging not only at Davidson, but in educational settings throughout their lives.

As expressed in last week's message, Wednesday, August 4, is Meet the Teacher from 2:00-3:00. This is a time for you to meet your student's teacher, walk through the classroom and drop off supplies, if you wish to do so. We will greet you in the breezeway with class lists and show you where to go.

School starts the following day, August 5. Our gates will open at 7:25 AM. Students will go directly to the playground. The first bell rings at 7:40 and teachers will meet students on the playground to walk them to class. The late bell rings at 7:45. Any students arriving after 7:45 will need to check in at the front office.

All Davidson students are able to receive free breakfast and lunch. Families do not need to fill out any applications. Students will be served breakfast in the classroom during morning announcements from 7:45-8:00. Lunch times start at 11:00 and end at 12:20. You are welcome to send lunch from home if you prefer. However, please refrain from sending chips, soda, and candy. We want to nourish bodies with healthy food, so that minds function effectively after lunch.

Dismissal is at 1:55 every day, except Wednesdays, when it is 12:55. The pick-up procedures we put into place during 4th quarter of last year will remain in place. We found the system to be much more effective and efficient. At 1:52, Kindergarten, 2nd grade, and 4th grade students will be dismissed. At 1:55, 1st, 3rd, and 5th grade students will be dismissed. I encourage 1st, 3rd, and 5th grade parents to wait a few extra minutes before arriving for pick-up so you are not waiting through the first shift. Students will stay with their teacher at their designated location. Parents should remain in their vehicles and drive around the loop to pick up their children. Please pull up to the curb where your child is waiting. We will not allow children to walk or run into the parking lot. It is also extremely helpful if your student can enter the vehicle curbside. If you have a younger child in a car seat, please move him/her behind the driver seat so that your school-age child can enter the car on the passenger side.

One change is that we are moving the kindergarten pick up location from the beginning of the parking lot loop near the entrance to the end of the parking lot loop near the exit. This is to reduce traffic at the entrance and allow parents of other grade levels to get into the parking lot more easily.

Additionally, all parents will receive color cards to put in their dash. These help teachers and staff to identify the grade level of the students for each vehicle. We thank you for your support in keeping all of our students safe and helping the dismissal process move efficiently.

The teachers and staff at Davidson are very excited to see you all soon! We can't wait to reconnect, feel the energy of the beginning of the year, and strengthen our relationships as we work together – Everyone Belongs at Davidson!

With grace, gratitude, and grit,

Sarah Andricopoulos, Proud Principal of Davidson Elementary