

The Drake Direct

A newsletter from the administrative, counseling and teaching staff at Sir Francis Drake High School



March 2016

Drake High School

Attendance: 415-458-3418

E-mail communication: first name initial last name@tamdistrict.org

Example: lseabury@tamdistrict.org

Counseling Information:

- Kyle Kassebaum: 415-458-3442
- Katie Paulsen: 415-458-3435
- Sheila Souder: 415-458-3436
- Molly Yasuda: 415-458-3439

Assistant Principals: 415-458-3414

- **David Rice:** Grade 9/10-ROCK & Galileo Grade 11/12- Students A-J
- **Chad Stuart:** Grade 9/10- TREK & Mobius Grade 11/12-Students K-Z

Drake High Online:

- tamdistrict.org/drake
- Facebook: drakehighschool
- Twitter: @drakehighschool

Small Learning Communities & Academies: An Evolution

Liz Seabury, Principal

One of our most distinguishing characteristics at Drake High is our unique approach to personalized instruction. Beginning in 1992, Drake High has embraced a structural and philosophical approach to working with teens and their education. We believe in a team approach to both the instructional and curricular educational practices to develop learners but also in our support and development of each student as a member of our community. The creation of a team of teachers to support an identified group of students over two years is the foundation of both our 9th and 10th grade Small Learning Communities (SLCs) and our 11th and 12th grade Academies. Over the years, Drake has seen the creation and evolution of over 17 different SLCs or Academies. Some of our original teams still exist (ROCK and ComAcad) while others are brand new to us this year- daVinci! While these teams have changed over the years there are some standing principles we use to guide our work. These principles were developed in 1992 and still guide our work today, 24 years later.

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Drake Talks: March 10@ 6:30 p.m.

Our topic for March will be our athletic program. We are looking for helpful, honest and reflective thoughts on what is going well and what we can improve on in athletics. Please join us in the main office on March 10!

SLCs and Academies

The basic tenants of our work include the development of 21st century skills including communication, creativity, critical thinking and collaboration. We also believe in the use of instructional strategies that develop personalized, relevant and rigorous outcomes for students and that we work as a community of learners- students and adults- to improve student achievement. In 2012 we revisited this work and identified a set of values we aspire our SLC and Academy work to develop at Drake. They include: personalization, relationships, whole child and social emotional growth, academic habits (Agency), the use of both an integrated instructional approach and project-based learning, collaboration and a creative

learning process. The teachers who work on these teams are all deeply committed to these values and as we work in our SLC and Academies, these are highly visible attributes of all these teams.

Our SLCs have made a few changes this year. ROCK remains consistent, however TREK and Galileo are joining forces to create a larger model of a Learning Collaborative that will have four teams of teachers working with a group of students around the values and principles mention above. We also have the new daVinci SLC that will also work to develop the attributes of our SLC approach and they will include an introduction to engineering course. All three SLCs will develop our 9/10 students to become model students and community members.

Our 11/12 Academies achieve all

the principles and values outlines above AND work to develop some higher level academic work and some career goals as well. ComAcad works to develop the Core Craft skills around design thinking, production development and media communication. ComAcad will also be adding an AP English course to their curriculum for all students.

SEA-DISC has been at Drake since 1996 and develops students to be environmental ambassadors. They offer a unique blend of social and science issues to explore the environment and how we can use advocacy to improve our world.

Few schools can boast such a rich learning tradition as the SLCs and Academies as Drake. For more information:

<http://www.tamdistrict.org/domain/739>

Restorative Practices: An Introduction

David Rice, Assistant Principal

This Spring at Drake, we have assembled a group of staff members who are looking into restorative practices as means for students to make good choices and behave in a positive manner. Traditional approaches to discipline aim to accomplish two goals: it uses a consequence in the hope that it will serve as a deterrent to poor choices and it hopes these consequences, or the threat of them, will reduce repeat offenders. These approaches are not effective.

Restorative practices focus not just on the consequence, but also the relationship and on repairing any harm that an action may have caused. In other words, it focuses on learning through accountability and understanding how ones' actions affect others so they are not repeated. One example of restorative practices at Drake is our recent partnership with the YMCA and their Youth Court suspension diversion program. When a student participates in a suspendable offence, they may have the option to participate in Youth Court, a program that focuses on the students repairing of the harm that has been done and learning from it. If a student successfully completes Youth Court their suspension is removed from their record, or it is diverted. The Youth Court program is used by many other high schools in the county and they have found that-students who complete this program do not face discipline again.

The use of restorative practices are used in the classroom as well. Teaching students how to have self-management, self-awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making is key to educating a whole student. How does a student address an uneven distribution of work on a project? Or, how does a class rebuild trust after a student has a phone stolen from their bag in class? Restorative approaches address the root of the behavior and rebuild the relationship with the group or class. Many of our teachers are interested in exploring this type of classroom practice.

If you have any experience in this area that you are willing to share please contact me at drice@tamdistrict.org., As we continue to explore restorative practices as a staff we hope that you may also find this approach useful at home. Asking your student, the following questions can help get to the root of an issue. These questions are: Tell me what happened. What were you thinking at the time? What have you thought about? Who has been affected? How? What needs to happen to repair the harm?

Drake Calendar of Events for January/February

Date	Event	Notes
2/29/16	LEAP YEAR!!! Drake Fund Meeting	7:15 p.m. in Main Office
3/8/16	TUHSD Board Meeting	7:00p.m. in Kreps @ Redwood
3/10/16	Drake Jazz Band	7:00 p.m.
3/14/16	Teacher Professional Development Day	No school for students.
3/23/16	Drake Leadership Council	4:15pm in room 106
3/24,25,31 and 4/1,2	Spring Musical- Little Shop of Horrors	7:00 in the Little Theater 4/2 showing is also at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm
4/4-7/16	Distracted Driving Campaign	All week at school and 7pm on 4/7
4/11-15	Spring Break	Enjoy your spring with family and friends

The Drake Wellness Plan-

Data, Data, Data

David Rice, Assistant Principal and
Jessica Colvin, TUHSD Wellness Director



There is a strong nation-wide movement to incorporate more overt social and emotional wellness into school structures and their curriculum. While Drake has always considered a student's social/emotional wellbeing to be at the forefront of learning, this focus on wellness has provided us the opportunity to revisit our work and assess our own curriculum, structures and services.

Our work with the Drake Wellness Design Team is completing the complex process of assessing the wellness needs of the Drake community. Our next step is to develop a plan to support the implementation of programming to meet those needs. We will be sharing this plan with our stakeholders throughout the spring. Our team includes students, staff, parents, counselors and administrators. Our work began this fall with developing a purpose for the team and then developing our goals for wellness at Drake.

The DWDT purpose statement is to assess the wellness of the Drake community, and then to develop and support the implementation of programming to meet those needs. Our work around wellness is focused on direct student services and prevention/education in the following areas: Emotional, Physical, Reproductive health and Substance use/abuse.

We are now in the analyzing of data and planning stage of our design team work. We completed the administration of an online survey for students, staff and parents in January 2016 and are working with Evaluation Training and Research Associates (ETR) to review the data from the thousands of survey's completed. We will then develop a wellness plan based on that data. This plan will lay out all the different factors of wellness at Drake including both existing programs and one's we want to improve upon or even develop to support all students at school.

We are fortunate to be building upon a legacy of developing the whole student here at Drake. To this end, we have an exceptional counseling department and mental support team (BACR) to build with in our work. If you have questions please contact David Rice, Drake Assistant Principal, at drice@tamdistrict.org, or Jessica Colvin, Wellness Director at jcolvin@tamdistrict.org. For information about TUHSD Wellness go to www.tamdistrict.org/wellness.

State Testing: It Must Be Spring!

Chad Stuart, Assistant Principal

As the season changes to spring, we enter our testing season for state assessments. With the implementation of Common Core in California schools, assessments have changed over the past two years.

All of our students have grown up taking the STAR test throughout most of their schooling. With the exception of life science for sophomores, the state suspended the STAR test at beginning in the 2013-14 school year (click here for more information: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/>). In addition, the state has suspended the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) starting this school year (click here for more information - <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/>).

There are two current state assessments our students participate in: The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) for juniors and life science STAR test for sophomores. SBAC assesses students in English Language-Arts and mathematics. It is a computer based program, is tied to the Common Core and is an adaptive exam. For more information on the SBAC, click here: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/>

We will be proctoring the SBAC to all juniors on April 20th and 21st. The life science test will take place in sciences classes on a date to be determined in the spring. It is important that we have all of our juniors participate in the SBAC. We have made strides to get our school out of Program Improvement status (click a link to Liz's fall article). One of the measures the state looks at in those terms is the amount of students participating in the exam, so it is important to our community that all students participate.

Lastly, Advanced Placement exams for students enrolled in an AP class occur in early May. We expect all students taking an AP exam to also participate in the SBAC. If you have any questions about testing, please don't hesitate to contact me at cstuart@tamdistrict.org.

Drake Talks Conversation about Race

Thank you to everyone who came to our Drake Talks on January 13th about race and inclusion at Drake. We discussed the topic and worked to address what has been done and could continue to do to help make our school more inclusive. We want to thank Keith Jackson for his facilitation and commitment to keep our goal of inclusion at the top of our priority list.

This conversation is also happening with a group of students on campus and we would like to work on building opportunities for students to have these types of conversations with students. We are going to be working on developing the process for these conversations and the time in our school day.

We also are working on our annual school plan and we are going to be working inclusion and equity training into our professional development for our staff. There is both a lot of interest and ideas that we will be able to explore and learn from. We want to thank our Assistant Superintendent, Tara Taupier, for her guidance and knowledge as we move into this area of staff development.

Again, thank you all for being on this journey with us to build a more inclusive community.

Drake Scholarship Foundation:

The Gery Gomez Memorial Scholarship

The Drake Scholarship Foundation is an active organization at Drake raising money and presenting scholarships to our seniors. They have a new scholarship they would like to introduce.

Gery Gomez, son of Hall of Fame pitcher Vernon "Lefty" Gomez, loved sports and dedicated his time to coaching young athletes in their pursuit of athletic excellence. Admired for his community service, sense of humor and wonderful baseball stories, he lived life to the fullest. A long familial history of Drake students including brother Duane Gomez~1972, grandson Andrew Brown~ 2012, son C. Austin Gomez~ 2013, granddaughters Amanda Brown~ 2014, Kiersten Brown, Nicole Brown~2019, and son-in-law Joe Brown~1979, the scholarship is in honor of his memory and awarded to young scholars who show a love and dedication to sports.

Questions regarding this scholarship or DSF, please contact Lisa Neumaier- lneumaier@tamdistrict.org