



Drake Direct



A Newsletter for the Drake
Community
Early Spring 2017

AVID @ Drake

By Liz Seabury, Principal

Our education system is fairly outdated and can be difficult to navigate for all students. While some students seem to inherently understand this system and thrive, others are mystified, confused, unmotivated or depressed by the many rules, personalities and/or disconnectedness of the day. For years, education left these students behind. There have been changes to the high school model to try and improve this, such as our Small Learning Communities, and one of the strongest programs in the past twenty years to make a significant difference for students is AVID. Drake will be implementing the AVID program for our students next year. Hopefully this overview will help you understand what AVID is and provide you with information to determine if you have a student who may benefit from their inclusion into AVID.

AVID stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination and is a global nonprofit organization dedicated to “closing the achievement gap by preparing all students for college and other postsecondary opportunities” (www.avid.org; 1/3/17). It is an elective class that provides motivation, college readiness skills, tutorial skills, and school techniques that allow for greater clarity in learning, access to more rigorous coursework and confidence. While it focuses on learning and student-hood, it is not a study skills or homework completion course. Because much of student success in class stems from the perception of homework completion, the traditional approach to support classes has been to create a space for students to do homework. We have ample evidence that this is not successful and creates a culture of compliance-based behavior rather than the ideal- having students understanding HOW they learn, WHAT they need to understand better and WHY their education is important to them. This is the magic of AVID- it unlocks the academic in all kids and creates a culture of “can-do” in school.

**AVID
is having students
understand HOW
they learn... and
WHY their
education is
important to THEM.**

AVID: Opening doors of opportunity for all students at Drake

Students enrolled in AVID courses have a much higher success rate in college completion than students who are not engaged in AVID strategies. The data is so strong that many parents feel their student needs to be enrolled in this course even if their student does not fit the profile of an AVID student. We are looking for students who are “in the middle” academically. Many times they get a “C” and they are not really sure why. We are also looking for the student who is unsure about school and does not experience success or enjoyment from the schooling experience.

Traditionally, AVID has also served those who might be the first in their families to attend college, but this is not as good of an indicator as those kids who are disconnected from school but have the general interest in doing school. AVID is not for those students who are struggling with school, or need skill support in many areas of their schooling. These are students who are capable of completing rigorous coursework but are falling short of their potential.

To build our AVID program, we will be hosting an AVID information evening in April and speaking with our students from our partner middle schools. We also encourage our interested families to explore the [AVID website](#). If you are interested in this outstanding program for your student, please contact me by email or phone. I am deeply committed to having all our Pirates be successful and college ready. I have also had the experience of having AVID at other schools I have worked in and I know the power of this program. We are excited to be bringing AVID to Drake. Please contact me if you are interested.

email: lseabury@tamdistrict.org or phone: 415-458-3410

Early Spring 2017



Changing Bell Schedule

By Chad Stuart, Assistant Principal

After a year of investigative work as a staff, Drake is changing the bell schedule for the 2017-2018 school year. This change occurs after many iterations of scheduling ideas that were researched by teachers and counselors and discussed in terms of what is best for student learning. Our teacher committee also provided opportunities for feedback by both students and parents on the key concepts of the proposed changes. From the student and parent feedback, research and input from teachers, a bell schedule was proposed and gained the necessary teacher votes to become our new bell schedule.

The key features of the new bell schedule include:

- ▶ **Later start time to school.** Our goal is to start school at 8:30 AM. The research our team of teachers has done shows that more sleep reduces the levels of stress and anxiety and also leads to higher academic achievement. We have been working closely with the town of San Anselmo and they have determined that this start time should not impact traffic in the Ross Valley. With the traffic studies complete, we are planning on an 8:30 start time next year.
- ▶ **Tutorial at the end of the day.** Another goal was to create more class time during the key learning hours of the morning (as opposed to morning tutorial - which has been moved to the end of the day). The teachers also placed our staff meetings at the end of the day on Friday for this reason. This also provides for less academic learning missed when athletes need to leave early for competitions.
- ▶ **Consistent lunch.** Students and staff like the idea of lunch at the same time everyday.

Drake's current bell schedule was implemented 21 years ago and the teachers felt it was time to re-envision how we traveled through the school day in order to best suit the needs of our students. The new bell schedule will be a 2-year pilot before deciding on its level of success. There will be a teacher team to study the effectiveness of this schedule on student learning.

Bell Schedule Community Information: We will be holding a Drake Talks on our new Bell Schedule on March 30 at 6:30 pm in the main office.

We also want to thank County Supervisor Katie Rice's office, the town of San Anselmo and Marin Transit. We will continue to have a year of investigative work as a teaching staff. This conversation will continue with all our partner organization in the community as we move forward with this exciting change for our learning needs!

Drake Bell Schedule for 2017-18

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30 – 9:20 First Period	8:30 – 10:00 First Period	8:30 – 10:00 Second Period	8:30 – 10:00 First Period	8:30 – 10:00 Second Period
9:25 – 10:15 Second Period		10:10 – 11:40 Third Period	10:10 – 11:40 Fourth Period	10:10 – 11:40 Third Period
10:25 – 11:15 Third Period	11:40 – 12:20 Lunch	11:40 – 12:20 Lunch	11:40 – 12:20 Lunch	11:40 – 12:20 Lunch
11:20 – 12:10 Fourth Period		12:25 – 1:55 Fifth Period	12:25 – 1:55 Sixth Period	12:25 – 1:55 Fifth Period
12:10 – 12:50 Lunch	2:05 – 3:35 Seventh Period	2:05 – 2:45 Tutorial 1	2:05 – 3:35 Seventh Period	2:10 – 3:15 Staff/PLC/Dept Meeting time
12:55 – 1:45 Fifth Period		2:55 – 3:35 Tutorial 2		
1:50 – 2:40 Sixth Period				
2:45 – 3:35 Seventh Period				

EQUITY: A TUHSD Goal

Larry Pratt, Assistant Principal

Does every student get what they need in order to effectively access their education? There is a popular belief that providing different students in a classroom, with the same teacher and materials, should result in a single learning experience and by extension the same outcome. However, it is fairly common for students in the same classroom to use the same materials, and perform the same activities, but have vastly different learning experiences. Factors such as background knowledge, language, contextual vocabulary, trust and attitudes can have an impact on this experience. In addition, most of the policies and practices that many of us consider to be integral to schooling, can also serve to negatively impact certain subgroups of our population.

As a district, we have been intensifying our collective efforts to ensure that every student gets what they need to fulfill their social and academic potential. These efforts are anchored in the goal of removing the predictability of success and failures as they correlate to social and cultural factors. To this end, each site, including Drake, has implemented Equity Teams to help ensure high academic and social-emotional outcomes for students. They are engaged in actions such as building awareness, creating an inclusive school environment, and examining factors inside and outside of the classroom that impact student achievement. In addition, a District Equity Team, comprised of teachers and administrators, has been formed to align site actions with district goals and will eventually plan and lead district initiatives. This team has also started the sensitive work of exploring race, bias, achievement, and opportunity gaps as they relate to our students. The team has established agreements and has begun utilizing a framework for discussing race. In addition, this team will examine policies, systems, and practices for inequities as well as explore and propose corrective actions to disrupt them at the district level.

Central to the goal of serving all students and helping them to achieve at high levels is ensuring that they all have proper support, targeted to their needs. This requires collaboration and persistence. The equity teams at the site and district level are conducting this important work and are expected to make vital contributions toward helping our schools become more equitable.

We invite you to learn more about this work. We ask that you contact us with any thoughts or questions and we have a few resources we could recommend for further information. Larry Pratt :lpratt@tamdistrict.org

DRAKE HIGH CALENDAR FOR March/April

Date	Event	Notes
3/22/16	Drake Leadership Council (DLC) Meeting -Wellness Program update -SLC student survey development	4:15 pm in Room 106
3/27/17	Drake Fund Meeting	7:00 p.m. in Main Office
3/28/17	TUHSD Board Meeting	7:00p.m. at the district office-Kreps
3/30/17	Drake Talks: Bell Schedule	6:30 pm in the Main Office
4/1/16	Drake Fund Fundraiser- Dance Party	Drake Fund website for information.
4/7-16	Spring Break	Enjoy time with family and friends.
4/18 & 19	State Testing for Juniors and Sophomores	See article on page 9

Pirate news...

Drake Talks:

Come learn about our new Bell Schedule!! Thursday March 30, 2017 at 6:30 pm in the main office.

Attendance Matters!

Attendance in class is a key indicator of academic achievement. Unfortunately, our school data has shown that student attendance has grown worse over the past several years. When a student misses class, they miss key instruction and the ability to work in collaborative settings. It can be difficult to make-up for missed time when the absences mount up. While we do not want students coming to school sick, we do expect all students to be at school when possible.

Attendance procedures at Drake are different than that of our middle schools. Therefore, we ask that parents read and understand our attendance procedures, including what we will and will not excuse for absences. You can view Drake's attendance policies by clicking [here](#). Thank you for any help in a) getting your student to attend school daily and b) following proper protocol in reporting absences.

LUNCH @ DHS

Recently, we sent an email to our community in response to a concern raised on Next Door about Drake student behavior at Safeway. The conversation indicated that some students were taking food and leaving without paying. In response to these concerns, we have been visiting Safeway and the other businesses at Red Hill with more frequency and have not seen or heard of any further complaints of students stealing food. We appreciate how our community has rallied around this to make a change.

This event reminds us how important student behavior in the community is and for us to work with our students on reminding them of their role in our community. We will continue to have these conversations and develop these behaviors. We recommend you speak to your child, as we often do, about making proper choices when off campus. For instance, observing pedestrian safety laws while walking on the streets or the rules of the road while driving. Safety through good choices is the utmost importance to our school. Thank you for all you can do to help our students have a positive influence on the community.

Pirate news...

The Jolly Roger- ONLINE!

The Jolly Roger, Drake's student newspaper, has a wonderful ONLINE edition that you need to check out! <https://drakejollyroger.com>

Our school newspaper has been printing editions since the opening of Drake High School in 1951. We are proud of our student writing and reporting and encourage our Pirate Community to add the Jolly Roger to your list of newspapers you frequent online. The Jolly Roger has been working on their online edition for a few years and would like our community to use this edition while our print format is on hold.

Regarding the print edition, the Jolly Roger has used our district's printing facility for many years and the recent closure and negotiations about this closure has caused the printing of the school paper to be suspended. While the school paper is a top priority for all parties involved, we need to allow the process to be completed and stay inline with California state laws around negotiations and labor rights.

The student editors are being highly proactive and problem solving and not allowing this to "stop their presses". Please continue to read and enjoy the Jolly Roger ONLINE!

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Protecting Transgender Rights at Drake

Last month's [rolling back](#) of protections for transgender students by the Federal Government has led to some confusion among many in California and across the nation. Please know that **the changes by the Federal Government do not change [California law](#) nor [Tamalpais Union High School District Board Policy](#) protecting transgender and gender nonconforming students at Drake High School.** Additionally, the Federal Government changes do not lessen our resolve as a school to make sure ALL students are provided a respectful and safe learning environment at school and we will continue to follow California State Law and Tam District Board Policy as we have done previously.



State Testing: Introducing a pilot test in Science for sophomores

By Chad Stuart, Assistant Principal

The California Assessment System:

California's academic standards—the things we want students to know and be able to do—are designed so students graduate ready for college and a career. One way we measure their progress is through the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) assessments. These Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBAC) are computer-based and adaptive, including a bank of test questions aligned to standards, and free-response performance tasks. The questions are open-ended and require students to explain how they arrived at their answers, support their responses with evidence and solve real world problems. For more detailed information about Common Core State Standards and/or the Smarter Balanced assessments, please reference the Parent/Student tab of the CDE CAASPP Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/>

Testing at Drake High School:

Last year, the class of 2017 set the highest participation rate in the district for many years. We are proud and impressed at the commitment this class showed us. Furthermore, the class of 2017 scored the highest in the district on their English achievement. Our English scores were higher than Tam AND Redwood. The Class of 2017 did an impressive job on all fronts and we invite the class of 2018 to take this up a notch!

- Juniors: All Juniors will be participating in the Smarter Balanced (SBAC) assessments in English and math. All SBAC testing will take place on April 18 & 19 in the mornings.
- Sophomores: All sophomores will participate in a pilot state science test aligned to the new Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) on April 24th or 25th.

If you have any questions on testing, please contact Chad Stuart at (415) 458-3414.

The New Science Standards and Drake

Larry Pratt- Assistant Principal

There have been major changes in the field of Science and Science Education in the 15 years since the last state standards were adopted. We have an economy driven by innovation and an increased desire to attract more students to the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). This has led to the State Board of Education adopting the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) on September 4, 2013. The science concepts and practices will allow students to gain a deeper understanding of the content while learning to apply their knowledge and will better prepare High School graduates for college and technical careers.

The Next Generation Science Standards contain several new features for students in the district. First, **all students will learn all standards** of physics, biology, earth science and chemistry. Students should **complete the courses** within 3 years and there will be **opportunities to accelerate** learning as students that meet the prerequisites will be allowed to double up in science courses. This will allow students to take **more science electives such as** AP science courses, Environmental Science, Physics and Physiology.

Every NGSS standard has **3 dimensions** that are thought to be vital in a high quality science education.

1. The first dimension includes the major **Scientific Engineering Practices (S.E.P)** that scientists employ as they investigate and build models as well as the practices that engineers use to design and build systems.
2. The second dimension includes **Cross-Cutting Concepts (C.C.C)** of science literacy. This includes concepts such as observing patterns, cause-and-effect, systems and models, etc.
3. The third dimension emphasizes teaching sufficient **Direct Core** Knowledge (D.C.I) versus teaching “all of the facts” in an effort to prepare students to acquire additional information, later.

The first new NGSS course, Physics in the Universe, will be implemented in the Fall 2018 for our students in the SLCs in 9th and 10th grades.. These students will then matriculate to Biology of the Earth in the following year, and Chemistry in Earth Systems during the 11th grade. Even though science will be optional for the 12th grade, the wide range of elective options will be available to students. These elective options will also be available for the students in the 10th and 11th grade. Finally, students in need of more support will be able to receive intervention inside and outside of the classroom. These supports will include quality instruction, engaging labs, re-teaching, cooperative group, and equitable teacher practice.

Wellness Update

By Katrina Southard, Drake Wellness Coordinator

Last week Drake Wellness held our third meeting with all the students involved in the Drake Wellness Youth Advisory (DWYA). The DWYA is comprised of about 35 Drake students that are all passionate about helping to inform and develop the Wellness Program at Drake High School. After our second meeting back in October, the students divided into four committees: Education and Prevention, Policy and Advocacy, Design and Decor, and Outreach and Publicity. Our recent meeting focused on exploring the “Culture of Wellness” and how we can take intentional steps to have Wellness be a safe, comforting, warm, and inclusive place for all students on Drake’s campus to access and enjoy. The students took part in an activity where they wrote down descriptions of the type of community where they would feel these things, as well as descriptions of places that they do not feel safe or welcomed. They came up with some very wonderful and thoughtful descriptors of what they want Wellness at Drake to feel like for their fellow students! While Drake students are already reporting having very positive experiences in the Wellness Center, we’re hoping to consciously continue to develop the space based on these student intentions.

Drake Wellness would also like to welcome Anna Benitez! Anna is the Drake Wellness Outreach Specialist who will be working hand in hand with Katrina Southard, our Wellness Coordinator. Anna will be the first contact for most students as they come to Drake Wellness for services or support. She will be located in the front foyer of the Wellness center and work to greet students, determine need and provide services, education and wellness presentations on a variety of topics for all students. Welcome Anna- we are thrilled to have you as a PIRATE!

Keep your eyes peeled for Drake Wellness events and outreach in the coming months and during the 2017-18 school year!

Anna Benitez,
Drake Wellness Outreach
Specialist



Katrina Southard, DHS Wellness Coordinator
Jessica Colvin, TUHSD Wellness Director