



DESERT HILLS
MIDDLE SCHOOL

**HAWK
EXPRESS**

Principal's Notes

Safety is Our Number One Goal!

We take safety very seriously at Desert Hills. Our new school was built with multiple safety features. We have over 70 security cameras that cover every inch of the campus (except for private areas such as locker rooms and bathrooms). We also have a security system in place that can electronically lock all of the entry doors and fire doors in the building at the touch of a button. There is a silent alarm that uses flashing lights to alert staff and students that we need to lock down the school.

We practice using these safety features at least once a month. Sometimes we practice a critical lockdown drill. A critical lockdown drill occurs when I (or someone I designate) push the button that electronically locks all of the entry and fire doors. At the same time, an electronic announcement goes out over the intercom telling staff and students that we are in a critical lockdown. Staff members immediately sweep the hallways for stray students and bring them into their classrooms, lock their classroom doors, turn out their classroom lights, and have the students gather in the far corner of the classroom until the drill or emergency is over.

A non-critical lockdown drill occurs when I (or someone I designate) push another button that triggers the flashing blue lights throughout the building. The flashing light signals that there is a problem nearby (for example, the police may be looking for a suspect in the neighborhood next to the school), that teachers need to lock their doors, but they can go on teaching as usual. The students just need to remain in their classrooms until the drill or emergency is over.

We also practice evacuation drills regularly where all of the students are evacuated from the building to various parts of the grounds, depending on where the emergency is. We have a policy in place to make sure someone can't pull the fire alarm with the intention of having the students evacuate so they can do them harm, which happened in Florida recently.

We practice these drills regularly so that our students know what to do in case of an emergency and feel safe while they are at school, because safety is our number one goal at Desert Hills Middle School.

I'm Glad I Live in Kennewick!

One of the reasons I love living in Kennewick is the traffic; there isn't any! The one exception is when I get to school between 7:45 and 8:00 am. The drop-off area by the front office is packed! It's like I'm in Downtown Seattle at rush hour! The cars are backed up bumper-to-bumper as they wait to drop off their children. The parking lot is full of cars pulling in and backing out to drop off their children. Every day there are numerous near misses and we have had a few fender-benders. One day, Mr. Meyer and I counted over 200 cars dropping off students for school! We have the same problem between 2:35 and 2:50 pm after school. Our drop-off area wasn't designed for that much traffic.

There are 14 buses that pick up and deliver students to and from school every day. We have more bus transportation than any other school in the District! Plus, with the additional routes Hansen Park will generate next year, we could have as many as 16 buses! I would encourage you to please consider having your children ride the bus to school. It is a safe way to travel and it will alleviate the problems we are having in our drop-off area every morning and afternoon. Thank you.

What Happened to Our Flag?

You may have noticed that Desert Hills has not had an American flag flying from its flagpole during the last few weeks. It's not that we are unpatriotic. You can blame the famous Columbia Basin winds! Earlier this month, the wind blew the flag right off the flagpole and damaged the apparatus that holds the flag. We have ordered a new flag and new flagpole equipment, and will have Old Glory on display as soon as the new parts arrive and we can get our flagpole repaired.

Steve Jones

Principal

March is Music in Our Schools Month!

Spring Flower Bulbs are on sale from any music student

Band

- The Spring Band concert is at 6 pm on March 20th in the DHMS Gym.
- 7th grade band will have a field trip to participate in the CBMEA Region Large Group Festival in Richland on March 28th.
- 8th grade field trip to participate in CBMEA on March 29th.

Choir

- CBMEA Choral Festival field trip Friday March 23rd at Chief Joseph Middle School.
- Festival choir concert on Monday, March 26th at Kamiakin auditorium at 6:00 p.m.

Orchestra

- 6th and 7th Grade Orchestra Concert, 6:00 pm on March 15th in DHMS Commons.
- Large Group Orchestra Festival field trip on March 28th at Columbia Basin College.



- ***PTO invites DHMS Students, family and friends to a **Rollerskating Party*****
- ***TONIGHT 6:30-8:30 pm at Rollarena in Richland***
- ***Cost is \$5.00 +\$2.00 for Rollerblades***

- The social on March 7th theme is "March Madness". Kids can use their phones to take selfies at the new basketball backdrop that was purchased by the PTO.
- If you received an invitation to the 8th grade Honor's Breakfast, please send your RSVP as soon as possible to help with planning. The PTO will be asking for food donations via Sign-up. Please consider helping with a food item.
- The next PTO meeting is Tuesday, March 6th at 12:30 in the conference room behind the office. All are welcome to attend.
- The students send a big thank you to the PTO for purchasing two new microwaves and a cart to set them on for the Commons.



8th Grade Field Trip

8th Grade Computer Applications classes went on a field trip to Ridgeview Elementary. They created their own children's book on the computer and took

them to Ridgeview to share with 1st grade students. The students also had a book drive and collected enough books to give each 1st grader a book to take home, and three classrooms some new books for their classroom libraries. They had a wonderful time reading with Ridgeview Elementary 1st graders.

Clubs & Activities

Drama Club

It is not too late to join us for some fun drama activities! We will be meeting Mondays, March 5 and 19th, from 2:35 to 4:00 in the cafeteria. To join, go to the DHMS Website, Activities, and download the parent permission form. All grades welcome. See Ms. Zacher (room 216) or Mrs. Maxson (room 116) if you have any questions!

Spring Sports Spirit Wear

Watch for order forms coming home soon if your child participates in Baseball, Softball, or Track and Field. The deadline to return those to the DHMS Office will be March 15th in order to get clothing to students as soon as possible. The school store does have limited supplies available as well.

March Madness Social

The first annual March Madness Social will be held on Wednesday, March 7, from 1:30-3:00 pm. There will be music, food for sale, a 3 on 3 basketball bracket, Selfies booth, and lots of games. Prizes for the best costume, and for first place in the bracket. Cost is \$3.00 with ASB; and \$5.00 without. Buy your tickets at lunches Monday-Wednesday, March 5-7.

DHMS Hawks Nation Spirit Wear

Stop by the school store and pick up a Hawks Nation t-shirt or hoodie. If we don't have your size we will order it with our Spring Spirit Wear. Order deadline will be March 15th.

Book Fair

A big thanks to everyone who supported the book fair. It was a huge success and it was only possible through all the support we received from the students, parents, and community.

Reminders

Attendance

Whenever a student is absent, you need to contact the Attendance Office by one of the following ways:

- call (509) 222-6614,
- email terry.smith@ksd.org
- send a note with your student the day they return.

For pre-excused absences please send a note to the attendance office with the expected absence dates several days before the absence. A pre-excused form will be given to your student to take around to their teachers.

Important Dates

February 28 - Early Release at 1:10

6:30-8:30 pm PTO sponsored Roll-A-Rena

March 5 - 2:35 pm Drama Club,

March 7 - 1:10 pm Early Release

1:30-3:00 pm MARCH MADNESS SOCIAL

March 9 - Honors Breakfast for invited 8th graders

Staff vs. 8th Grade Girls BB Game

March 12-16 - ASB Primary Elections

March 14 - 1:10 pm Early Release

March 15 - 6:00 pm Orchestra Concert

March 19 - 2:35 pm, Drama Club

March 20 - 6:00 pm Band Concert

March 21 - Early Release at 1:10 pm

1:15 pm ASB Reps meeting – Library

March 19 - 23rd ASB General Elections

March 26 – 6:00 pm Choir Concert at Kamiakin Theater

March 28 - 1:10 pm Early Release

March 30 - Hawk Reward Day Assembly?

April 2-6 SPRING BREAK

Desert Hills Middle School | 1701 S. Clodfelter Road, Kennewick, WA 99338

(509) 222-6600 | deserthills.ksd.org

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