

# BEAR ESSENTIALS

Monthly Publication | Dolores School District RE-4A | 970-882-7255

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## October 8

## Board Elections p. 3

Cast your vote in the upcoming elections for our three open seats on the District School Board.

**Don't miss the opportunity on Tuesday, November 5 to have your voice heard!**

*See Page 7 for  
Board Candidate  
Information*



## Joey Whited Returns to School After Life-Changing Accident

It was September 1, 2018, when the lives of the Whited family changed drastically. Sophomore Joey Whited crashed while riding his dirt bike. Mr. Whited, a local EMT was one of the first on the scene where he found his own son critically injured.

Joey was going on a ride with some friends from Cortez on the afternoon of September 1, and while unloading his bike and reloading it onto a trailer he lost control and was thrown head first without a helmet into a pole. Joey was transported to Southwest Memorial Hospital in Cortez and stabilized. He was then flown to Denver Health Medical Center in Denver, Colorado. Joey was rushed into surgery to have a pressure monitor and a drain placed inside his skull. Joey's brain continued to swell to points that the pressure spike was two to three times the normal pressure for the brain. He was given every medication possible to ease the pressure on his brain and it wasn't working.

It was decided by his doctors to try an experimental procedure to help with the pressure concerns. This procedure placed him in a hypothermic state and cooled his entire body down to 89

## October is National Bullying Prevention Month

Did you know: more than **one in five** students reports being bullied at school each year? From name calling, being made fun of, threatened or physically harmed, students who are picked on by bullies find that it can be fearful or emotionally damaging to go to school. PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center writes: "Historically, bullying had been viewed as a "childhood rite of passage" that "made kids tougher," but the reality has always been that bullying can leave devastating and often long-term effects such as loss of self-esteem, increased anxiety, and depression for those involved."

So, how is bullying defined?

**Bullying is an intentional behavior that hurts, harms, or humiliates a student, either physically or emotionally, and can happen while at school, in the community, or online.** Those bullying often have more social or physical "power," while those targeted have difficulty stopping the behavior. The behavior is typically repeated, though it can be a one-time incident.

Students often describe bullying as when "someone makes you feel less about who you are as a person."

Dolores School District takes an active approach in creating a safe student environment. DSD implements a variety of social and emotional learning opportunities. Students are taught to build self-awareness and self-management skills, use responsible decision making skills,



and improve social awareness and relationship skills. Our staff is caring and dedicated to guiding our students through these skills.

How can our Dolores community help? Parents, families, AND community members can play an active role in eliminating bullying!

- ✦ Understand what bullying IS and what it IS NOT.
- ✦ Talk to your student - recognize whether your student is being bullied, bullying, or witnessing bullying.
- ✦ Go to the school for accurate understanding, assistance, and support - administration and staff ALWAYS welcome conversation to better support our students.
- ✦ Get the FACTS - get the story from several sources (students, adults, and the school), listen without blaming, don't label the act bullying until you understand what happened.
- ✦ DON'T participate in conversations within the community without accurate facts (which can be detrimental in a small community). Participating in these conversations results in inaccurate information being spread and damages reputations! Community gossip is a form of bullying!

We ALL can make a difference in the lives of students! Remember, positive adult role modeling, mentoring, and age-appropriate approaches to kindness, acceptance, and inclusion can make a big impact on how children treat each other in the classroom, on the playground, at home, and in the community.

For more information:

<https://www.stopbullying.gov/>

<http://www.pacer.org/bullying/>

"You will never reach higher ground if you are always pushing others down."—Jeffrey Benjamin

Used with permission from Danielle Ceja, Licensed School Psychologist



# DSD BOARD CANDIDATES

Elections will be held on November 5, 2019. Your vote counts!

## Six Candidates Running for Three Open Seats

### Current School Board

#### Kay Phelps - President

Term Expires: November 2021

#### Casey McClellan - Vice President

Term Expires: November 2021

#### Lenetta Shull - Treasurer

Term Expires: November 2019  
(Appointed and running for second term)

#### Deanna Truelsen - Secretary

Term Expires: November 2019  
(Term Limited)

#### Vangi McCoy - Director

Term Expires: November 2019  
(Term Limited)



**Maegan Crowley**



**Lenetta Shull  
(Incumbent)**



**Phil Kasper**



**Spark Reed**



**Alex Prime**



**Clay Tallmadge**

### Meet the Candidate Opportunities:

October 2, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
Dolores Community Center

October 3, 4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
Dolores School District Library

*Please visit the District website for more information on the candidates.*



## **Mrs. Huffman Bids Farewell to Dolores School District**

Dear Dolores Community...

By the time you read this, I will have served my last day as Dolores Secondary School principal. The decision to end my tenure here was not an easy one, nor one that I took lightly. A drastic change to my sister's cancer prognosis, along with some other personal events, has prompted some urgency to create time and space in my life for connecting with those I hold most dear, beginning with my sister and my immediate family. In all fairness to students and staff at Dolores, it is best for me to take this time without trying to lead remotely.

I am proud to have led this school to the highest academic rating in the San Juan BOCES for two years running. Our middle school has improved from a turnaround school to a performance school. Our high school has improved from a priority improvement school to a school of distinction. Our staff are exceptional, and the rigor offered to students at our school is phenomenal. We have expanded the number and type of concurrent education courses and online learning experiences available to our students, and have created an individualized pathways model for graduation. We have introduced the 7 Mindsets and an intentional approach to social-emotional learning. We have introduced and developed a robust National History Day and Rube Goldberg Engineering Fair, and we have introduced a Literary Magazine. Our student advising program is the most extensive available in our BOCES, and our students earned over \$300,000 in college scholarships last year. These are all accomplishments of which I am very proud.

Our staff are committed to continuing this excellence and leading Dolores to even higher levels of achievement and growth.

It has been my intense privilege and honor to get to know your children. I wish nothing but the best for each of them, and my wish is for their greatest success.

Jen Huffman

## **School Board Charges the DAC with Declining Enrollment**

On September 12, in the Regular Meeting of the Dolores School Board, the board voted to charge the District Accountability Committee with surveying the stakeholders as to why students are leaving our district. This came after a presentation on enrollment was given by Superintendent Richard who noted that the concerning decline was in the secondary grades and averaged over 25% each school year over the last five years. Over 380 students in grades 7-12 have left (this does not include graduating seniors) and only 198 have come in as new students. This is a decline (attrition) at the rate of 15.8% average over five years. The elementary has maintained their enrollment.

Board member, Casey McClellan, asked that the survey also include those families who have pulled their students from the district. He asked that an exit survey was conducted to pinpoint any direct areas of need.

The District Accountability Committee is also responsible for making recommendations concerning the preparation of the district Performance Plan, recommendations to the board concerning budget priorities, and providing input and recommendations to principals, on an advisory basis, concerning the development and use of assessment tools to measure and evaluate student academic growth as it relates to teacher evaluations.

**SERVE ON THE DAC! EMAIL THE DISTRICT OFFICE IF YOU ARE INTERESTED:**

## Dolores School District

Download our Mobile App for Free!

Stay in touch with Dolores School District while on the go.



### APP FEATURES:

- ✓ News
- ✓ Notifications
- ✓ Calendar
- ✓ Schools
- ✓ Portal
- ✓ Parent Resources



Apps by:  bluetreeapps

***Bear Essentials*** Newsletter is edited and published from the Dolores School District RE-4A Administrative Office.

Suggestions and comments are welcome. Please email [larnett@dolores.k12.co.us](mailto:larnett@dolores.k12.co.us).

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## District-wide Strategic Goal

### *Curriculum Alignment Update*

by Alesa Reed

The new Colorado Academic Standards are in the full implementation process this academic year. Our district has dedicated itself to curriculum development around these new standards. The Dolores Board of Education recognizes the need for and the value of a systematic, on-going program of curriculum development and evaluation. Dolores District RE-4A has undertaken the foundational work of curriculum design for the past two years in preparation for the state standards initiative and to strengthen our district's system of delivering and assessing instruction.

Curriculum alignment is the process in which educators formally evaluate their delivered instruction, assessments, and the written curriculum. Research has proven that this process strengthens educational programming, data outcomes for students and addresses the changing needs of students and workforce readiness. We believe in a constant, continued effort to focus on identifying what is essential for student success and connect learning by reinforcing complex learning skills across grade levels and schools.

Our school administrators have selected a team comprised of pre-kindergarten, elementary and secondary staff dedicated to articulating, practicing and mentoring staff in the alignment of standards and our instructional practices district-wide. This team will meet monthly for training in curriculum design, district curriculum decision making, and the creation of grade level curriculum maps. Last year our district focus was English Language Arts. This was our first attempt district-wide in writing curriculum pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. This year we are focusing on math curriculum design. In the first meeting, the team performed a careful study of the state standards, targeting the *key learnings* for each grade level. As those *key learnings* were identified, they were added to our math scope and sequence continuum grid. At our next meeting we will make sure that there are no gaps in our instruction and student mastery of skills. This will be accomplished through data analysis and the *key learnings* we have targeted. This process supports teachers in targeting their instruction and isolating and eliminating gaps in student learning.

All certified staff have been trained in curriculum design over the last two years as well as a team dedicating part of their summer 2019 to take a more in-depth look into the curriculum audit process. We now have a team that can review the district's curriculum work and function as overseers of this important work.

Our board has written a strategic plan that sets high expectations for staff and students. This process of curriculum work offers a roadmap for our students to accomplish these expectations. The local board and educators of Dolores District have made it a priority to strengthen the implementation of the new state standards through a viable curriculum design process. Through our district curriculum team focusing on deeply aligning our curriculum, this vital work will move forward.

# BEAR FACTS

## Monthly Blog by Superintendent Lis Richard

One of the most important appointments you will make as a parent is the parent/teacher conference at the beginning of the school year. Please do not be that parent who lets a conference pass because you are too busy or your student is now in high school. There is nothing more important October 28-31, than meeting with your child's teacher(s). According to *Kids Health* (2017), kids and teens do better in school when parents get involved. Attending parent-teacher conferences is one way to be involved and help your child succeed.

You may set your appointment now for the week of **October 28-31**. It is our desire to see all students succeed in school. Research has proven that parents are a key component to this.

Conferences will be held Monday through Thursday the week of October 28. Elementary appointments can be made directly with the teachers and Middle School and High School appointments can be with the advisory teachers or made with the school office by phone, email or in person. MS and HS parents may call 882-7288 or email [sburger@dolores.k12.co.us](mailto:sburger@dolores.k12.co.us) to set your appointment. Please let us know if you have any comments or questions.

Here are some ways parents can prepare so they can be active participants in Parent-Teacher Conferences:

**Be willing and ready to share information about your child and family.** Families are the most important influence in a child's life! You know your child better than anyone else and have valuable insights to share. Advocate for your child. Share their personality traits, challenges, habits, friends, hobbies, and talents. How do they relate to their siblings? What kind of discipline do you use? What are your concerns?

**Stay focused on your child.** Try to put aside your past experiences as a student yourself and not let your ideas about teachers, and their role, be shaped by your own school experience. Allow your child their own unique

temperament, individual needs and special interests.

**Attend every parent-teacher conference.**

If the schedule doesn't suit your work schedule, relay this to the teacher to see if an alternate time can be set up, or schedule a telephone call to discuss your child's progress.

**Arrive on time.** Conference times are on tight schedules and there will be someone scheduled after your appointment.

**Remember, children have "big ears" and remember what is said.** It is best to arrange a caregiver for your child or invite another family member to occupy the child during the conference. Conference time is for you and the teacher to discuss the child, unless they are expressively invited.

**Listen with an open mind.** Ask questions when you don't understand, and speak up if you disagree with a strategy or don't understand how it will support your child's development and learning. Explain the reasons for your views and voice your concerns, but be open to suggestions.

**Be prepared.** Ask those important questions first, just in case time runs out. Remember, teachers may not have all the answers.

After the conference, speak to your child about it. Share with them, the positive points and be direct about the problems, as well as any plan you and the teacher have created. And lastly, as this was one event in an ongoing relationship you'll have with the teacher, keep in touch with the teacher during the school year.

Passionately Pursuing Excellence,

**Mrs. Lis Richard**

Superintendent



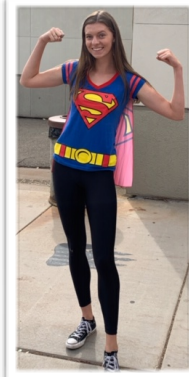
According to *Kids Health* (2017), kids and teens do better in school when parents get involved. Attending parent-teacher conferences is one way to be involved and help your child succeed.



# Homecoming Week in Pictures



Our preschoolers getting into the spirit of Super Heroes!



Jordan Elder posing!



Homecoming Court 2019



Kibel Sisters



Flag Team and Marching Band in Parade



Watch out Spider Man!



First Place Float - Junior Class! Theme: Spacecraft

## Fun-Filled Week

by John McHenry

This year, as in years past, homecoming week was organized by the Dolores High School Student Government. The students dressed up each day of the week to show school spirit. Themes included Marvel Monday, Class Color Day, Wacky Galaxy Day, Aliens vs. Cowboy Day and Friday was Bear Pride Day.

Thursday night the Lady Bears Volleyball Team dominated the Mancos Blue Jays winning in three quick sets. Following the game, the students and Booster Club brought back the amazing bonfire. It rained some but the event was great!

Friday afternoon, students were led to the gym by the Dolores High School Band and Color Guard for our big pep rally that celebrates fall sports. Following the pep assembly was the powder puff football game won this year by the senior and sophomore girls. Revenge was given following the powder puff football game with the juniors and freshman boys as champion peach fuzz volleyball winners.

Another major tradition is our homecoming parade held on Friday afternoon before the big game. Floats are designed around a theme and this year's theme was *Space*. The winning float was the junior class with an "Alien Autopsy" float. The parade included the Marching Bears, the color guard, fall sports teams, and the homecoming court. They were joined by the Sheriff and Fire Departments.

Friday night was the big homecoming game. This year, Monument Valley Utah barely nudged a win against the Bears 22-24. Jordan Elder was crowned the 2019 Homecoming Queen, and the King honors went to Alden Adams. The court was as follows:

**FFA Sweetheart:** Brenn Jeter escorted by Kolby Burt.

**Freshman Princess:** Carlie McClellan escorted by Ohad Siddiqui

**Sophomore Princess:** Erin Bown escorted by Wyatt Koskie

**Junior Princess:** Akira Edwards escorted by Emil Becker

**Seniors:** Second Attendant - Dara Suckla escorted by Colin Turner

First Attendant - Kiffany Lewis escorted by Cael Schmittle





**Preschool Teacher  
Regina Tohtsoni leading  
the children in a  
special song**



**Student Cash Taylor  
with a resident**



**Firefighters sharing  
with our preschoolers**



by Valiena Rosenkrance

Our preschoolers have been busy little ones! Every year they travel to the Vista Grande Nursing Home in Cortez to visit the residents (top two pictures to the left). They have kept this tradition for over 25 years! The children go to the home dressed in costumes. They make the residents gifts such as beaded necklaces and fall leaves (covered in Karo syrup, food coloring and glitter). The children sing songs to them and trick or treat down the hall. The residents line up and give the children treats. The children, staff and residents really enjoy this trip. There are even some grandparents of our students who live there. It is important that the children learn to give and do for others. A true highlight for the children is getting to ride the school bus to and from the nursing home.

October is Safety Month for the preschool. In preparation for this, the Dolores Fire Department come visit our preschool students. This is to familiarize them with our community helpers. The firefighters do many activities with the children including turning on the siren or lights on the truck, hold a hose while water is spewing, and practice "Stop, Drop, and Roll!" It is important for the children to build relationships with our emergency helpers so that they are not afraid of them in the event of an emergency.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

October 28 - 31

### *Preschool Parents (Guardians)*

November 4-7 Preschool only

- Sign ups for conferences are located by the sign in/out sheets by each classrooms.

### *Elementary Parents (Guardians)*

- Classroom teachers set appointments with their student's parents.
- All parents are encouraged to attend.

### *Secondary Parents (Guardians)*

- Teachers will schedule meetings with their advisory student's parents. Students are included in these meetings.
- Any parent of a student struggling in a course or who has received a D or F in a class will be invited in for a conference.
- Meetings will take place throughout the entire week.



**Continued from page 1**



**First days in the hospital**

degrees. This was done over four days. This procedure saved Joey's life! Joey spent two months in a coma and on life support, with many doctors telling the family that he wasn't going to make it.

On the night of October 15, 2018, Jerry and his wife, Kristie had a team of doctors

sit down with them to discuss taking Joey off of life support. The doctors shared with his brain injuries he only had a survival rate of about 3-10% and usually survivors had no function to speak of after such an injury. Mr. Whited says, "This was one of the longest and darkest nights as a family we had to go through. We had one doctor pull us aside and give us his opinion that we needed to keep fighting. He said that if Joey hasn't given up, we shouldn't either. He encouraged us to give it time."



**Joey in a state of comatose**

On October 21, the same doctor who stated to keep fighting, met with the Whited's and told them he would like to try and remove Joey's breathing tube to see how he would react. Even though Joey never fought life support by trying to breathe on his own and was always relying on the machine, at 10:30 A.M. that morning they prepared Joey to have the breathing tube removed. The doctor shared with the family that if he didn't breathe they would reintubate him and try again later. The emotional state of everyone was very tense. One could hear a pin drop in the room when they were ready. The room had two doctors, a respiratory therapist, several nurses and the Whited's. When the tube was removed after about three seconds, Joey took his first breath since the accident! He was breathing on his own.

**Home of the Bears**



**Joe's teammates dedicating Homecoming 2018 to him**

Joey had a feeding tube placed due to not being able to swallow or eat. This would also prepare him for his transfer to

rehab. Joey spent another seven days at Denver Health before being transported to Craig Hospital in Englewood, Colorado. In Craig, they continued to try and work more with Joey to foster his ability to be aware and alert. He spent a total of four months at Craig and received extensive therapy everyday.

"The amazing support from the Town of Dolores, Dolores Fire Department, Cortez ELKS Club, and the Dolores School was so overwhelming," states Mr. Whited. He continues, "we can't put it into words the amazing people in this community and the gratitude we have for every single one of them."

Joey came home on March 3, 2019. He continues to make progress everyday. Every little step he makes toward recovery is celebrated. The Whited's share they were told this wasn't a sprint, rather it is a marathon. Joey started back to school on August 29, 2019, to an amazing group of faculty and students welcoming him back. Joey continues to go to school two days a week for three hours a day. He is also

there during some of the after-school activities to support his school and community! Go Bears!



***Love you Joey!  
Praying for you!***



## You Can Be a Bear Backer

The Dolores Bears Booster Club is a Colorado non-profit corporation that was developed to support academic **and** athletic activities for the Dolores High School and Middle School students by seeking donations, financial support, and volunteers from individuals, businesses, and community organizations. We are a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that provides financial assistance for students to have opportunities beyond what our local school can supply.

The Dolores Booster Club can do all this because of you...our Bear Backer support! Please consider a Dolores Bears Booster Club Membership!!! Together we can accomplish so much. Even the smallest of donations can help build our funds to help serve our kids.

For more information contact: Leah Boyd 970-759-5597, Brenda Spurlock 970-739-1925, Laurel Schafer 970-318-1341 or Shelly Purkat 1-970-759-3101.

## Want to get involved?

Level	Cost	
Platinum	\$250	<b>Gym Sign</b> and <b>Business Card Ad</b> in Athletic Programs
Gold	\$100	<b>Business Card Size Ad</b> in Athletic/Activity Programs
Silver	\$50	<b>Recognition</b> in Athletic/Activity Programs
Bronze	\$25	<b>Recognition</b> in Athletic/Activity Programs
Be A Bear	\$10	<b>Recognition</b> in Athletic/Activity Programs

## Support our Teddy Bear Preschool - Buy Butter Braids!

Each box - \$13.00

You may place your order with the preschool office.

Call at 882-7277

Proceeds will go to remodel the preschool playground!



## Classifieds

### District Classifieds

#### Employment:

Dolores School District is seeking an elementary school counselor. This person must have the required certification. If interested, please call 970-882-7255.

Dolores Secondary School is accepting applications for a principal. Please see the website for additional information.

Substitute Bus Drivers Needed: Training is available. If interested, please call 970-882-7255.

Substitute Teachers Needed: If interested, please call 970-882-7255.

Dolores Athletic Department is seeking a head coach and assistant coach for the **varsity and JV boys basketball teams**. If interested, please email the athletic director, John McHenry at: [jmchenry@dolores.k12.co.us](mailto:jmchenry@dolores.k12.co.us)

#### Volunteer Opportunities:

Community Members, Parents, Business Owners for the **District Accountability Committee**: If interested, please call 970-882-7255.

**Booster Club** is seeking volunteers for concessions and other activities. For more information contact: Leah Boyd 970-759-5597, Brenda Spurlock 970-739-1925, Laurel Schafer 970-318-1341 or Shelly Purkat 970-759-3101.

PTA - Do you want to be involved in your child's education and provide support to the school? Call the elementary school office for more information.