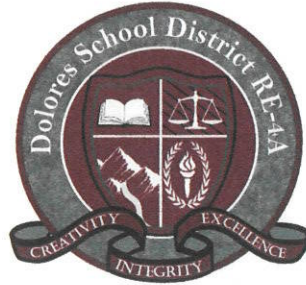


DOLORES SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-4A

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January 6, 2020

Dear Secondary Parents,

Happy New Year! I hope that you had some quality time with your amazing kids this holiday season. We have been working on making this semester a great one for your student.

We are currently working on our academic programs and offerings. We are very happy to offer some additional electives. Students should already have their schedules. They are also available on PowerSchool. If you do not have a log in for PowerSchool, please sign up for this.

There have been some practices among our student body in our recent past that we plan to address second semester. The purpose of writing you directly is to seek your support in all of this. Specifically, we are endeavoring to create a more conducive environment to learning and to make certain our students are safe while at school. Here are some procedures we plan to implement for which we are seeking your help:

1. Ear buds, cell phones, and music in classes and hallways - We are now telling students to refrain from using their phones to play music while in class. Many students have ear buds they wear most of the day. We would like for them to keep these at home or out of sight during the school day. We believe this will help them better focus on their studies.
2. Backpacks in classrooms - We are now requiring that the students will begin using their lockers to store their backpacks. Many students carry all of their belongings and books in their backpacks and do not use their locker. We do not believe this is a good practice. First of all, students are keeping things in their backpacks that are not allowed (i.e. vape pens, alcohol, cigarettes, THC, edibles, etc.) We would like to keep any of this out of the classrooms. Also, safety is a primary motivator for this decision. Even though we trust our students, school shootings are a reality we face in 2020. Many school shooters were former or current students who entered the building with arsenal in a backpack. It is too difficult to guarantee our student's safety when there are well over 300 backpacks in classrooms.
3. Hats in classrooms - We truly value our student's individual expression. Hats have been allowed in classrooms of most teachers. There are some who have not allowed this. The hats are not the issue, it is the distraction to the learning environment. Hats send different messages that show affiliation with different products. Many of the hats associate students with drugs and alcohol. Parents are not aware of these but we are. Students are using the hat rule to wear hoodies over their head in class and wearing their ear buds to listen to music. Also, many hats now are made with pockets inside to hide things. Overall, we do not believe that hats are something that enhances learning for our students. We will now require the students to remove their hats and keep them in their lockers. They may wear them into the building but remove them before going to class.

With your help and support, we can improve the learning environment and keep the students safer. Please talk with your child and let us know if we can help. Also, my office is always open to any of you to discuss these topics. I am happy to share research and thought behind these requests.

Parents of high school students, please speak to your child about being responsible during lunch. The majority of our discipline problems come from the students who are off campus during lunch. Some students are driving too fast out of town to get to Cortez, some have stolen from area stores, while others are coming back to campus under the influence of drugs and alcohol. We need to clean up the behavior and request your help and support. Our goal is to have a safe and inclusive environment for all students.

Thank you for your support in these efforts.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Lis Richard
Superintendent and Secondary Principal