



# BEAR ESSENTIALS

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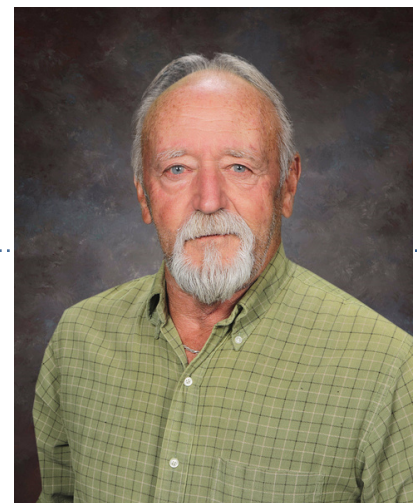


*Happy New Beginnings for each one in 2021!*



## Celebrating Life Well Lived

Dolores School District and the Dolores and Dove Creek communities suffered a great loss on Monday, November 23, 2020, when Rob Mellott passed away from this life. He was a good man who touched



the lives of so many people over the years as a teacher and coach. He cared for his students and his students cared for him. But he was much more than that. He was a family man, a friend, a mentor, and a veteran. He gave much of himself in service to our country and service to our community.

Many of our parents with children in the district tell stories of their time as students of Mr. Mellott. Justin Schmitt, our secondary principal, has provided the following tribute. "I had

*Continued from page one.*

the distinct privilege of being one of Rob Mellott's students and later his colleague. Mr. Mellott was one of the most influential teachers that I had while I attended Dolores High School. His unique approach to classroom management resulted in an environment in which he was able to use humor and high expectations to gain the love and respect of his students, which in turn caused them to perform at their best for him. He was a beloved teacher and left a lasting impression on our lives. When I joined the Dolores Secondary faculty in August of 2019, I became a colleague of two of my former teachers. As a school leader none have been more supportive of me and my leadership than these two men. Mr. Mellott was an advocate of mine when it wasn't easy to be one and I am eternally grateful for that. I am thankful for the guidance I received from Mr. Mellot as a student and later as a school leader. It is always sad to lose a friend and colleague, but I am comforted in knowing that he is now in a better place, in the presence of his Creator."

We will miss our friend and colleague.

*From the Principal's Pen...*



Every time the staff at Dolores Secondary has been asked to to work through a new challenge they have stepped up to the plate without complaint to do what is best for our students in this ever-changing time. Despite what people on the outside looking in may think, being a teacher today is harder than it has ever been.

Teachers today have to navigate a growing list of mandates from the state, administer high stakes assessment of their students, ensure standards are being covered, implement new curriculum, compete with video games, social media, YouTube to engage the minds of their students, manage student behavior in a culture that increasingly seeks to blame teachers and not students for student behavioral problems, and teach social emotional skills to their students on top of whatever content area they are responsible to teach. If that is not challenging enough, we are asking them now to switch back and forth from online learning to hybrid learning to in-person learning. Dolores Secondary teachers and staff come

*Continued on page 7*

Home of the Bears



## Dolores Bears Homecoming

Homecoming celebrations this school year were questionable due to the many restrictions imposed from the pandemic. Our mighty Bears and their fans, pulled together and managed to host a wonderful homecoming week. The students and staff had a fun time with some of the traditions.

Below are pictures from the Homecoming Football game.



# DSD BOARD UPDATES

Mission and Vision Driven for our Stakeholders

## School Board Members

### Maegan Crowley - President

Term Expires: November 2023

### Casey McClellan - Vice President

Term Expires: November 2021

### Lenetta Shull - Treasurer

Term Expires: November 2023

### Clay Tallmadge - Secretary

Term Expires: November 2023

### Kay Phelps - Director

Term Expires: November 2021

BOCES Representative

## BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY:

JANUARY 7, 5 pm  
FINANCE WORKSHOP

JANUARY 14, 6 pm  
REGULAR MONTHLY  
MEETING

JANUARY 20, 5 pm  
POLICY MEETING

## December Meeting Update

The Dolores School District RE-4A Board met on December 10 for their regular meeting. The meeting began with a 5:30 work session where Superintendent Richard provided an overview of the process the district and specific schools use to analyze student data and achievement. Following the work session, the board was diligent to handle their business. The following was addressed at the meeting:

- In the board member reports, Dr. Kay Phelps reported on items from the San Juan BOCES board meetings in which she is now the board representative. She provided an update on their changes and supports that influence the district. Lenetta Shull gave a brief update of some of the decisions by local officials in regard to COVID-19 and our county,.
- Doreen Jones, Finance Director presented the November finance report. The district had a very healthy month and finished the month well.
- Superintendent Richard presented several items to the board. She emphasized the increase in enrollment since October count and the amazing work of the district staff during this time of flexible learning options. She also addressed one of the strategic goals set by the board and reported on the progress so far.
- The board allocated \$130,000.00 in July for repairs on our facilities. Superintendent Richard gave a monthly report on the many repairs completed.
- Our District Accountability Committee Chairperson, Staci Cost, addressed some of the work of the DAC. They are working to see that district policies are in line with each other and the state laws regarding DAC.
- Director of Curriculum and Assessment, Alesa Reed reported on the the student assessment results for the fall of this year. Results included NWEA Maps, DIBELS reading, and SAT assessment.
- The board approved the resolution to certify the mill levy certification in order to provide it to Montezuma County.
- A highlight of the board meeting was the approval of a bonus for all employees in the district. The board was very gracious and generous to the employees providing equal bonuses to every employee. This was made possible by an additional amount of carryover funds into the general fund. The board used about 30% of the carryover amount and put it to the employees. This was an expression of their gratitude for the extra time, risk, and dedication given to keep our district meeting the needs of the students.

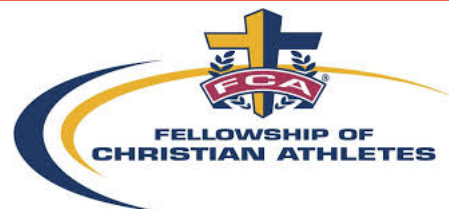




<b>January 1</b>	Happy New Year!
<b>January 4</b>	Staff Returns (Virtual training and meetings) Booster Club Meeting, 5:00 p.m.
<b>January 7</b>	Board Finance Workshop, 5:00 p.m.
<b>January 11</b>	Students in Hybrid Group A return to in-person learning
<b>January 12</b>	Students in Hybrid Group B return to in-person learning
<b>January 14</b>	Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m.
<b>January 15</b>	No School
<b>January 18</b>	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, No School Basketball and Wrestling Practice Begins
<b>January 20</b>	Board Policy Workshop, 5:00 p.m.
<b>January 22</b>	No School (Hybrid Model)
<b>January 23</b>	Knowledge Bowl
<b>January 25</b>	Return to normal in-person learning DAC Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
<b>January 29</b>	No School



- ♦ Monthly meetings - see the *Galloping Goose* for the next date.
- ♦ Celebrating student success
- ♦ Supporting staff needs
- ♦ Supporting student needs
- ♦ Collaborating to make the elementary a great place



**FCA-MS and HS bring your lunch every Monday to the Auxiliary Gym.**

**FREE DESSERT!**

**Come hang out with some friendly people while you eat lunch, do activities, and learn about what the Bible is all about. Anyone is welcome.  
Hope to see you there!**



# 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).



Home of the Bears

Dolores School  
District RE-4  
100 N. 6th Street  
Dolores, CO 81323

District Office  
970-882-7255  
[www.doloresschools.org](http://www.doloresschools.org)



## *From the Counselor's Corner:* **A time to celebrate: 2020 is now over!**

Well, we've made it to another year's end. This past year you may have felt more exhausted than in years past. Before you unplug your laptops for winter break, remove your e-mail application and turn off the District app notifications from your phones, it's important to look back on what you have accomplished. **This is a time for reflection and celebration, and I want to remind you that even if 2020 presented a lot of challenges that required patience and flexibility, you have been doing a stellar job!**

### **YOU ARE RESILIENT!**

During winter break why not take a moment to reflect on the moments worth celebrating and focus on what you are looking forward to in 2021:

- **What are you grateful for this year?**
- **What did you learn about yourself this year?**
- **What did you learn about others?**
- **What do you want to focus on in 2021?**

I hope you enjoy winter break. I hope you enjoy saying good-bye to 2020 and celebrate welcoming 2021. Remember when it's time to return to school in January, I'll be right here for you, whatever 2021 brings!

Provided by: Elisa Olson, Secondary School Counselor

# BEAR FACTS

Monthly Blog by Superintendent Lis Richard

## Hindsight is “20-20”

Looking back on the 2020 year certainly changes one's perspective on life. I passed the half-century mark several years ago but I cannot remember a year in my lifetime filled with so many challenges. For all of us, we have faced the pandemic of the century. It has touched nearly all of our lives either directly or indirectly. The pandemic has left many young people disillusioned and discouraged.

My husband and I have faced our challenges this year as well. I never imagined myself dependent on others but yes, in 2020 it happened. I had a bicycle accident and broke my tibia and fibula requiring a major surgery and a rod placement in my leg. My husband had a recent back surgery and we have both been at home recovering and improving daily. My precious mom was such an influence on my life. She took her journey to heaven on the same day we lost a dear friend of the district. With these many challenges and others, we can truly learn from this unforgettable year!

Throughout history, the greatest lessons of time are those learned through trials. Trials are really nothing more than a journey to success. Some would have us believe that trials are due to our own failures or because we are supposed to change direction. On the contrary, we are to use them as a means to examine our course and make adjustments to better the path to success. We must use the hindsight of the year 2020 to grow.

Our nation is now in a very tempestuous time. It is not a time to throw up our hands and declare that everything needs to change or something has failed. It is a time to examine our course, see what

has happened and set ourselves to do what is right for our children and their children.

At the heart of every struggle before our nation is the heart of every child. Even though the media reports on national issues and direction for our state, decisions will trickle down to affect every child. What do we do? In my opinion, we take care of the place we are responsible for and we do what we can to influence everyone that crosses our path. In Dolores School District, we have the wonderful opportunity to touch the lives of over 700 young people every weekday.

We have a true responsibility to give our very best for the young people of our district and community. Young people need adults to demonstrate calm and resolve for absolute truth. An example of absolute truth is character. Demonstrating character in one's life does more to influence a young person than most anything. Another important absolute in influencing young people for their future is showing them that they are loved. Many adults don't understand what love is so they don't know how to show it to others. Love is giving of yourself to meet the needs of another and expecting nothing in return. Can we give of ourselves to meet the needs of our students? It is the mission of our district.

May we resolve in 2021 to do all we can to meet the needs of our young people. Also, may we work together to model absolute truth in an abstract landscape all around us.

Committed to our district,

*Mrs. Lis Richard*  
Superintendent



***Continued from page two, Principal Pen***

to work every day to face these challenges because they care about their students, their school and their community.

Despite the many challenges illustrated above and the fact that teachers in Colorado, especially in rural areas, are extremely underpaid (no, they don't get summers off every year, they work for 10 months and are paid for 10 months) they do this work because they are called to do it; they love what they do and they care for the students they are charged with teaching each year. I am grateful for our teachers, I am grateful to work in a district that values them, and I am thankful to live in a community that supports them.

**Introducing Nathan Witte**

The band and choir program at Dolores Secondary is continuing to move forward. A great foundation has been laid in recent years and I am happy to report that we have hired a new band and choir teacher to take our program to the next level. Mr. Nathan Witte is an energetic and charismatic young teacher who has just graduated from the University of Louisville. He loves music and he loves teaching. I am excited to observe the way in which his energy and enthusiasm will continue to grow and develop our band and choir programs. Mr. Witte comes to Dolores highly recommended for both his ability to teach music and his own skill as a singer and musician.

Prior to the start of this school year, Dolores Secondary lost an outstanding music teacher in Bentley Monk. Mr. Monk made the decision to step away from the position because it was what was best for his family at the time. It is my belief that Mr. Witte possesses many of the skills and traits that made Mr. Monk a great teacher who was well liked by his students.

Since Mr. Monk's departure, our school has been fortunate to have received the support of Maggie Gillette, another former band and choir teacher for Dolores Secondary. Mrs. Gillett settled back into the role as if she had never left. Students and staff love her. She agreed to support our music program in its time of need because she didn't want to see what she helped to build fall apart. She truly made this transition possible by allowing us to continue to provide music programming to our students while we searched for Mr. Monk's replacement.

I also want to thank Riley Kiddoo for her support during this time. Good substitute teachers are hard to find, especially during COVID, and she stepped into the music

classroom and provided some much needed stability during the last month and a half of the school year so that Mrs. Gillett could return to the important job of raising her two young children. Both Mrs. Kiddoo and Mrs. Gillett have been in frequent contact with Mr. Witte in order to provide him with whatever help he needs in transitioning into his new role.

**High School Athletics**

The Governor's office has approved CHSAA's variance request to begin season B athletics, which includes Basketball and Wrestling. This variance approval came a little later than CHSAA had hoped, which is why the start date for season b athletics has kept changing. Originally we were all hoping to begin season b on January 4th, but that was changed to 25th since a decision on the variance had not yet been made. When the decision on the variance was finally made we received word from CHSAA that they were able to move the start of season B up to January 18th. Season B will end the third weekend in March with the basketball state tournament which is scheduled for March 19-20th.

"For months, our office has been laser-focused on students and the safe resumption of high school sports and activities in 2021," said CHSAA commissioner Rhonda Blanford-Green. "The conversations with CDPHE and the Governor's COVID Response Team to resume Season B sports have been intentional and assertive. Though it has taken many late nights and weekends, we are thrilled that our student-athletes, member schools and local school communities have a resolution. Educationally-based athletics are a vital extension of the classroom."

Season C athletics, which include volleyball and football (only for those schools that didn't compete in the fall) will begin in mid-March. Season D athletics, which includes track and field, baseball, and girls soccer will begin the first part of May.

Dolores Secondary will work with Dolores School District leadership and the Montezuma County Public Health Department to outline spectator allowances and guidelines. In addition, all competitions will be live streamed so that those who are unable to come out and support your Dolores Bears in person will be able to support them from home.

Sincerely,  
Justin Schmitt  
Secondary Principal





## Elementary Principal Highlights

Dear Little Bear Families,

As we wrap up 2020, I am reminded that the challenges I faced this year are diminished by the hope of a new year approaching. I have enjoyed wonderful moments for certain, but I feel like I barely survived some devastating ones. I've had a tremendous amount of personal loss lately, but I will choose to keep looking forward and focus on the positives.

One of my best moments this year was accepting the invitation to come to Dolores Elementary School. Schools like this are hard to find and should be treasured. Our halls are full of happiness, laughter, friendship, respect, and love. We don't always agree, and we face challenges to be sure; but we honor each other and work as a united team to serve our community with an excellent academic curriculum. Peace is not common, and it is not easily maintained. I thank everyone who has the courage to pursue it, and I love that our students have a chance to learn in an environment that's infused with it. I hope you and your family enjoy it, too. In closing, many of our students have been working on poems, and a friend shared one that I thought you would enjoy. I'll add it below, and hope you all had a very Merry Christmas and blessed New Year!

Home of the Bears

I am bear.....

I am not just "a" bear

I am the forest.

I am the fragile ecosystem.

I am the running streams,

the canopy of pines,

the whistling winds,

the fertile soil,

and the radiant sun.

I am everything that is

natural,

beautiful,

and mysterious, in this universe.

I am not one of many. (We are not one of many.)

I am all that is one. (We are all that is one.)

I am bear. (We are the LITTLE BEARS.)

~by Jennifer S. Clayburg

Cheers to the New Year  
and may 2020 end with  
much happiness for you  
all,

Principal McCormick



Handmade Angel Art by an Elementary Student

## Dolores Students Sweep the “Voice of Democracy” Essay Competition

The local VFW post director, Robert Valencia came to our campus before the winter break to award three of our students for winning the essay competition. Our students Autumn Steinberger, Oliver Cosner, and Jillian Koerber swept the competition in Montezuma County with the top three places.

In addition, Autumn Steinberger's (first place) recording and paper moved on to the regional level and took first place there as well. Autumn will be moving on to the state level competition.

Our congratulations to all three students!

## Two Students Show Compassion to Those in Need

Braden Boyd and Grayson Hogue used their end-of-unit project in English II class to propose a toy drive for gifts for some students at the elementary school.

They not only wrote and presented about doing it, but they actually did it. They collected donations, collaborated with student council and staff, and also used a good bit of their own money to purchase gifts and wrap them. We are **Dolores Proud** of these young men!



## Classifieds

### *District Classifieds*

#### **Employment:**

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

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

**District Accountability Committee:** Look on the district website under the “About Us” tab for more information on the DAC.

**Booster Club** is seeking volunteers for concessions and other activities. For more information contact: Shelly Purkat 970-759-3101, Brenda Spurlock 970-739-1925

**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.

#### **Is your child struggling?**

We have resources and ideas available for you. Please refer to this link on the website:

[Click Here](#)

