



### Dr. Blincoe's Blog



First and Foremost, I want to start by wishing you Happy Holidays! Because of publishing deadlines I'm actually writing this blog prior to the holidays but it will come out in January, so with that said, I hope everyone is enjoying their holiday break and resting and recharging for the Spring Semester.

Dolores School Board members and I just returned from the Colorado School Board Conference in Colorado Springs. There were many good workshops and speakers this year and the conference was clearly the best that I have attended since I began as a superintendent in Colorado. The two main themes at this year's conference seem to center around Mental Health and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education. As far as the Mental Health aspect, our second keynote speaker emphasized that the real pandemic is the ongoing mental health concerns for our students and staff post Covid, and not Covid itself. He strongly believes that school must continue to offer services for students and be aware of what our staff is still going through as well. The AI conversation is interesting to say the least. His suggestion was that we embrace the changes that are coming in AI and to try our best to use it to our advantage.

There is no use in us pretending that it's not going to affect us (head in the sand reaction) because it is going to affect us tremendously. I have now downloaded ChatGPT (I know, late to the game) and I will begin "playing" with it. I am also watching for opportunities for training that we can attend and eventually offer to our staff to help prepare them for this new era in education.

We had about an inch of snow on the ground this morning which made me think it's that time of year when we start worrying about "bad weather days". Colorado law requires schools to provide a minimum number of hours of instruction with 990 hours for elementary and 1080 hours for secondary. As a school district, we follow the secondary hour requirement for building the academic calendar. In addition, schools can reduce those hours up to 24 hours for safety reasons and parent-teacher conferences; however, if a school reduces them below 1056 hours, students must make up for lost instructional time.

# Dr. Blincoe's Blog (continued)

We have built in some extra extra hours in our current calendar, but we still need to be diligent on calling BWD's. Additionally, I wanted to explain our behind-the-scenes process of deciding if we will have a BWD. This process starts the night before with district leadership and regional school superintendents discussing CDOT information, weather forecasts from several platforms, and county emergency management reports and updates. This conversation continues early in the morning, at 4:30 a.m., through text messages and phone calls. The target is to make a decision by 5:15 a.m. to allow parents to make work and childcare decisions. During the early morning hours, our transportation director, facilities director and myself drive the roads to check the conditions as they exist in different areas. Different areas get different amounts of snow, so we have to check many directions.

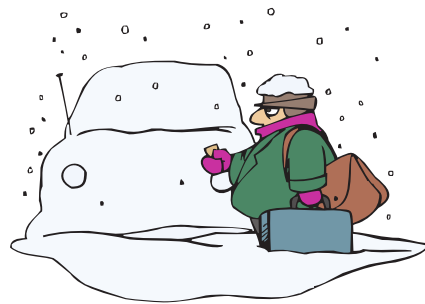
This team maintains continuous communication throughout the early morning, and from this safety feedback, a consensus is reached. If a snow day or two-hour delay is appropriate, a wide-reaching and immediate parent and staff communication is launched, including text, phone, email, website, and Facebook. At this point, all of our Principals are involved as well as our Technology Director and others. These are never easy decisions and a lot goes into them. You may not always agree with the decision made but please know that we gather a lot of information and make the best decision possible for all of our families. Quick shout out to my Superintendent friend in Mancos, Todd Cordrey, who provided some of the above information to me.

Have a great holiday season, see you in January.

## Important Dates

**January 8th** Teacher workday

**January 9th** First day back for all students



Director Rosenkrance  
**Teddy Bear Preschool**

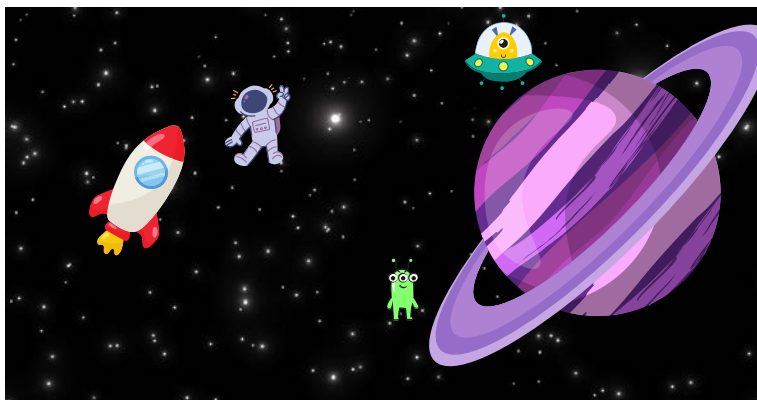


Please send your child with snow pants, coat, boots and gloves-we go outside everyday for 1 hour at a time



Ms. Carisa's Christmas Program Photo December 2023.

**February 9, 2024** Family Night- Preschool Space Dance



Principal Walker

# Dolores Elementary School



Happy New Year!

We are excited to begin the new semester and continue our growth over the 2023-2024 school year. Please see recommendations below as we begin our second semester and the typical winter weather.

- Morning Drop Off/Recess - (Safety)
  - Dress Appropriately - Recess is outside until the “Feels Like” temp drops below 10 degrees
  - Morning Recess and the Staff workday does not begin until 7:30 AM. Please do not leave your scholar unattended.
  - The curb closest to the school is a valet/drop off zone, once the vehicle stops, encourage your scholar to promptly exit the vehicle.
  - Make use of the crosswalk.
- During School - (Maximize Instructional Time)
  - Do communicate with your student’s teacher when you have questions or concerns.
  - Do NOT allow your student to bring toys from home.
- After School - (Safety)
  - Grades K,1,&2 dismiss at 3:45
  - Grades 3,4,&5 dismiss at 3:50
  - The curb closest to the school is valet/pick up. There is no parking in this line.

Principal Weiss

# Dolores Middle School



## **New Semester Schedules and Absences**

- Students will be given their new schedule when we return from Christmas Break.
- Remember to notify the office when your student is absent. We are working on improving attendance, so it helps when a parent calls to verify the absence.



# Dolores Middle School (continued)

Happy Holidays from the Middle School Staff



## Music Concert

Congratulations to Mr. Monk and the Music Department. The students were so excited to show off their talents and shine. What an amazing concert!



# Dolores Middle School (continued)



## Congratulations to our December Middle School Spotlight Students

We look for the following to be chosen for Students Spotlight:

- **Effort** - work hard and is persistent
- **Character** - displays initiative, honesty, respect, responsibility, compassion, optimism
- **Behavior** - no referrals
- **Social Relationships** - leadership, willingness to help peers, show respect
- **Attendance** - good daily attendance and no excessive tardies



The 6th grade team has chosen **Gabby Hollen** as our Student Spotlight. We have been impressed with her ability to lead by example. Gabby is such a caring soul. She treats everyone with respect and kindness. She is strong enough to advocate for herself and others in a compassionate way. In addition to her high quality character, this girl is excelling in her academics as well. Every teacher agrees that she is always focused and puts forth excellent work. We are proud of you Gabby and we are so glad you are a student here at Dolores Middle School.



Congratulations to **Zane Brown**, for being chosen for the 7th Grade Student Spotlight Recipient. Zane is an intelligent young man who works hard to maintain excellent grades. He is always willing to put in whatever time and effort is needed to showcase outstanding work. He is also funny, kind and a pleasure to have in class.



**Branson Lee** - We appreciate his talent, creativity, and work ethic in and out of the classroom. He always shows respect to those around him and puts extreme effort into his endeavors. Branson is a friend to all and an overall joy to be around.

# Principal Schmitt

## Dolores High School



Welcome back and Happy New Year! I hope everyone was able to get some rest and enjoy some quality time with friends and family.

### **Minor Bell Schedule Adjustment**

We have made some minor changes to our bell schedule for the spring semester. Instead of having an advisory class every day of the week, we will only have an advisory class on Wednesdays. For Monday, Tuesday and Thursday we have added a couple of minutes to each class period.

### **New Team Member**

We are excited to welcome our new secondary math teacher, Donna Hobbs, to our team. Donna brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to our team.

### **Donna Hobbs**

Born and raised on a dairy/horse farm in North Central Kansas called Morrowville “almost to Nebraska” and not close to much of anything else. I received my bachelor’s degree in Math from Benedictine College in Atchison KS and Masters Degree in Library Media Admin from Fort Hays State. While I’ve always taught, I’ve held several “fun” part time jobs to round out my experience including working as a Radio DJ, Antique store owner, Brewery assistant, Waitress and Custom Combine Harvest crew. I’ve been teaching High School and College math for 34 years. My three kids, 2 girls and a boy, gave me gray hair, but they also gave me 3 amazing grandkids, 2 boys and a girl that facetime with me almost every day. They are the best!

In my spare time, you can find me outside in the garden, planting flowers, or hanging out with my Australian Shepherd, Omi. If it’s nice, you might see me riding my Harley Davidson Trike, kayaking or fishing, all of which are reasons why Dolores is a great fit. In Kansas, I need to carry around two bottles of bug spray to ward off mosquitoes for almost half the year. Rumor has it, the bugs aren’t so bad here so I’m really looking forward to summer.

My ideas for math classes are to focus on the process or multiple processes in order to get us to the end result. It might not be the same for every person. I’m excited to work in a new environment and meet the students in Dolores.



Dear Dolores District Parents and Guardians,

I hope this message finds you well. We are pleased to acknowledge initiatives to increase our instructional capacity as part of our commitment to providing your children with the best possible learning environment.

## 1. Welcoming New Educators:

Several experienced educators have joined our school community. We welcome them to our staff and hope they feel warmly received and embraced by our school. These professionals have been highlighted by their building principals in previous newsletters; please take a moment and familiarize yourself with them.

## 2. Professional Development Opportunities:

Our staff members are actively engaging in ongoing professional development opportunities. These sessions are designed to keep our educators abreast of the latest teaching methodologies, technological advancements, and educational research. By investing in continuous learning, we ensure that our teachers are equipped to provide the highest quality education to your children and receive the tools they need to teach in this rapidly changing educational environment.

We have partnered with the Get Better Faster trainers for the last two years to bring high-quality instructional practices to our staff and incorporate observation feedback cycles for sustainability. Peter Wise joined us in November to bring Math strategies and expertise to strengthen the staff's teaching ability. We have Karen Finch coming in December to support staff in trauma-informed teaching.





# Director of Curriculum (Continued)

## 3. Small Group Instruction and Support:

Recognizing the importance of personalized learning, we provide small-group instruction across various subjects. This approach allows teachers to tailor their teaching methods to individual student needs, providing targeted support where needed most. You may see this in action during your visits to our school. Differentiated instruction is an educational must in today's classrooms.

## 4. Technology Integration:

To further enhance the educational experience, we are integrating technologies into our classrooms. This includes interactive learning tools, online resources, and collaboration and engagement platforms. These advancements aim to create a dynamic and modern learning environment for our students. 1:1 Chromebooks for students were acquired several years ago so that we could provide our students with this needed technology.

## 5. Parent-Teacher Collaboration:

Your involvement is crucial to the success of our students. We encourage open communication and collaboration between parents and teachers. We have hosted various opportunities for parents to partner with the school, showcased your students, and created time and space for collaboration and communication with your child's teacher. This Newsletter is just one of the ways we are working to be responsive to our parents' feedback.

These efforts will significantly contribute to our students' overall growth and development. As partners in your child's education, your support and feedback are invaluable to us. We look forward to working together to create an enriching and inspiring educational experience.

Sincerely,

Alesa Reed  
Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction

# Cheri Walker

## Academic Advisor



Please check out the new Academic Advising site for resources related to scheduling, concurrent enrollment, scholarships, college planning, and more!

### Academic Advising



## Contact the Dolores School District

Dolores School District RE-4A  
100 N. 6th Street / PO Box 727  
Dolores, CO 81323  
Phone: (970) 882-7255  
Fax: (970) 882-7685

## Dolores School District Calendars

Events Calendar  
2023-2024 Yearly Calendar

## Download the Dolores SD App

Download the updated Dolores SD App, available for free on both Android and iOS platforms. Allow push notifications!

