

October 2026



Dolores School District

Newsletter

Superintendent Alesa Reed

Dolores School District RE-4A



Dear Dolores School District Community,

Welcome to October! Fall is in full swing across our campuses, bringing crisp morning air and a focused momentum in our classrooms. As we head into the second half of the semester, I want to take a moment to celebrate our team, keep you updated on key state civic initiatives, and highlight important dates coming up this month.

Building Project

Our building project is on schedule. We will be moving into the new building in December and January. Students will occupy their new spaces in the second semester. We have many building projects going on at the same time; the campus will look magnificent when we are finished. We hope the transition is smooth for all, and we appreciate your flexibility and patience.

If you haven't driven by our new playground, please do so; it has brought tons of happiness to our K-5 students.

Civic Engagement: Upcoming Ballot Initiatives

As public education advocates, staying informed about statewide measures impacting our schools is vital. This November, Colorado voters will consider several state ballot measures that affect public education funding, operations, and governance.

To review election information, verify your registration status, or learn more about ballot measures, visit the [Colorado Secretary of State's Elections Portal](#). In the search bar, type in "November 2026" ballot.

Student Centered Accountability Program (S-CAP)

We want to invite you to participate in our [S-CAP Family Survey](#)! Your feedback is an important part of helping us understand what we are doing well and where we can continue to grow. Students and staff will have their own link to participate in the survey. Students will complete their survey during the school day.

The survey will be open **October 5-22, 2026** and takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Your responses are anonymous and confidential.

Your thoughts, experiences, and ideas matter to us. We value your feedback and use your input to help guide the direction of our school and make decisions that support all of our students.

Superintendent (continued)

Going Above and Beyond: Staff Spotlight

Our schools thrive because of the dedicated individuals who go the extra mile every single day for our students and programs. This month, we want to recognize two outstanding staff members for their exceptional contributions:

- **Vance Millard Maintenance:** Thank you for your extraordinary efforts and dedication to our district. Vance consistently steps up behind the scenes to ensure our operations run smoothly and our school environment remains safe and supportive for everyone. Always willing to do whatever it takes, he never complains; he can be out in the rain with a smile on. He is positive, willing to help others, and a valued member of the Dolores team.
- **Katie Mikkelsen, our Middle School Secretary**
Katie spent several hours this summer helping put together the master schedule and making sure students had their schedules ready to go. She plays such an important role in keeping the middle school running smoothly and helps the principal stay on track with meetings and daily responsibilities. I am so thankful to have Katie on our staff. She does an amazing job helping keep our middle school staff and students organized and on track each day. Katie is now a grandma — Congratulations! Thank you, Katie, for always going Above and Beyond for Dolores Middle School!

Please join me in thanking Vance and Katie for their hard work and dedication to Dolores!

Superintendent (continued)

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and support of Dolores School District RE-4A. Let's make it a fantastic October!

Sincerely,

Alesa Reed

Superintendent, Dolores School District RE-4A

Dolores School District Important Dates

October 5-22: Student Centered Accountability Program (**S-CAP**) survey window opens for families, students, and teachers. We strongly encourage all families, staff, and students to complete their surveys—your feedback directly shapes our district goals and continuous improvement planning.

October 7: Special board meeting - reorganize Board Officers, review and approve a contractor for the track and field. District Office Boardroom, 5:30 p.m.

October 12: Board of Education Meeting, District Office Boardroom, 6:00 p.m.
Agendas are posted on the [website](#) and outside the district office.

October 15: Parent-Teacher Conferences, 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

October 16: Parent-Teacher Conferences, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

October 28: Dolores Secondary Schools Wellness Fair, Main Gym, 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Emergency Closures

Monitor local media and check doloresschools.org for weather-related closure announcements. The district also sends an email and a robocall to parents and staff in the case of a delayed start or school closure.

District Nurse Brandy Dunn Health and Wellness



Dear Dolores Families,

The leaves are falling, pumpkins are popping up, and somehow October is already here!

While you're busy enjoying all things fall, don't forget to check one more thing off your list: your student's vaccine records!

Please make sure updated immunization records are on file with the school. If your student has an immunization exemption, please submit the appropriate exemption documentation as well.

Stay cozy, stay healthy, and enjoy the spooky season!

[Cold vs Flu](#)

— Nurse Brandy

Director Valiena Rosenkrance

Teddy Bear Preschool



Hello Preschool Families!

As we watch the leaves start to change, it's clear that fall is officially here. We are sending a huge thank you to mother nature for all of the much-needed rain we've been getting lately—our playground plants are loving it, and the children have had a blast watching the raindrops from our windows!

Preschool Parent Group

Our **Preschool Parent Group** has met twice now, and boy, have they come in with incredible energy and fresh ideas! We are so fortunate to have such a dedicated group working hard to provide amazing family events for our students.

We would love for you to join us for our next monthly meeting at the preschool on **October 16th at 9:00 AM** to solidify our plans for the upcoming **Fall Festival**. Speaking of the festival, mark your calendars for **October 23rd from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM** and don't forget to **wear your costume**! It's going to be a blast with dinner, games, and activities all provided.

Nursing Home Field Trip

We are absolutely thrilled for our annual field trip to the **Vista Grande Nursing Home on October 29th at 10:00 AM**! This is a heartwarming tradition we have kept alive for the **30-plus years** that I have been here at the preschool, and it is always a highlight of the year.



During our visit, the children will **sing sweet songs** to the elderly residents and hand out **special, handmade gifts** they've been working on in class. After that, the residents will line up with bowls of goodies so our little ones can **Trick-or-Treat** all the way out the door and back to the bus! This beautiful multi-generational event is something both the children and the residents truly cherish every single year. **Please feel free to send your child to school with their costumes** for this fun day. Keep an eye out for a **permission slip** that will go home the week before the event.

Thank you and as always, if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at any time.

Valiena
970-739-4244.

Teddy Bear Preschool (continued)

Teddy Bear Preschool Important Dates

October 12: Board of Education Meeting, District Office Boardroom, 6:00 p.m.
Agendas are posted on the [website](#) and outside the district office.

October 5-22: Student Centered Accountability Program (**S-CAP**) survey window for families, students, and teachers

October 16: Monthly Parent Group Meeting (Fall Festival Planning) 9:00 a.m.

October 23: Annual Fall Festival (Costumes welcome! Dinner and childcare provided) 5:00 p.m. -7:00 p.m.

October 29: Vista Grande Nursing Home Field Trip (Send costumes to school; look for permission slips the week prior)

Emergency Closures

Monitor local media and check doloresschools.org for weather-related closure announcements. The district also sends an email and a robocall to parents and staff in the case of a delayed start or school closure.

Principal Amanda Hill

Dolores Elementary School



Happy Fall, Y'all!

October is here, and there are lots of exciting things happening at DES!

Thank you to all of our families who joined us for the Homecoming Parade last week. We appreciate all of the extra hands from our parents who helped make the event possible.

Our students also enjoyed Spirit Week, and it was wonderful to see so many students participating and showing their school spirit.

Attendance Matters Every Day

It's time for **October Count**, which means the state takes a special attendance count during the first part of the month. Student attendance is one of the factors used in determining school funding, so please make every effort to have your child at school regularly.

Of course, **attendance matters every day**—not just during October Count. Consistent attendance helps students maintain academic progress, stay connected to classroom routines, and build relationships with their teachers and classmates. Being present each day also helps students experience learning as it is intended, without missing important instruction and opportunities to participate.

Thank you for making regular attendance a priority!

Dolores Elementary School (continued)

Parent-Teacher Conferences

This month **Parent-Teacher Conferences will be on October 15-16**. We look forward to meeting with each family and sharing the learning and growth we are seeing in your child.

Conferences are a valuable opportunity for you to share questions, ideas, and things you would like to see happening for your child. This partnership between home and school is an important part of helping each student reach their potential.

Character Assembly

Our first Character Assembly of the year will be held on October 15 at 8:10 a.m. Families are invited to join us as we recognize students for good character, academic achievement, and attendance.

We will also have a special performance from our kindergarten students, so we hope you can join us!

Halloween

We will celebrate Halloween toward the end of the month. Please watch for more information and details as we get closer to the event.

Student Council

I also want to recognize our new Student Council for their work during Homecoming Week. They helped build school spirit by cheering on classrooms and introducing the Spirit Stick competition for the class with the most participation each day.

I am looking forward to seeing what they do next, especially their upcoming food drive, which will begin at the end of October and continue into November. More information will be shared soon.



Dolores Elementary School (continued)

Thank you for your continued partnership and support of DES. We look forward to a wonderful month of learning, connection, and school community!

— Mrs. Hill

Dolores Elementary School Important Dates

October 5-22: Student Centered Accountability Program (**S-CAP**) survey window for families, students, and teachers

October 7: Special board meeting - reorganize Board Officers, review and approve a contractor for the track and field. District Office Boardroom, 5:30 p.m.

October 12: Board of Education Meeting, District Office Boardroom, 6:00 p.m.
Agendas are posted on the [website](#) and outside the district office.

October 15: Character Assembly, kindergarten performance, 8:10 a.m.

October 15: Parent-Teacher Conferences, 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

October 16: Parent-Teacher Conferences, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Emergency Closures

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Principal Mary Weiss

Dolores Middle School



Showcase / PTC

We are excited to invite you to our upcoming Middle School Showcase taking place on October 15, 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and October 16, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The showcase will be held in conjunction with **Parent-Teacher Conferences!** As you come in to meet with teachers, you will also have the chance to walk through

the middle school and see a variety of student projects on display. This is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the hard work and creativity of our students while connecting with teachers about your child's progress.

Wellness Fair - Healthy Choices

Dolores Secondary Schools will host a Wellness Fair on Wednesday, October 28, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the Main Gym as part of our Healthy Choices / Red Ribbon Week activities.

Students and families are invited to join us for a fun and informative day focused on health, wellness, and making positive choices. The Wellness Fair will feature more than 20 local organizations sharing valuable resources and information with our students and families.

Dolores Middle School (continued)

There will be interactive activities, special surprises, and many opportunities to learn more about healthy choices and wellness.

Parents and families are welcome and encouraged to attend! We hope you will join us and make this a fun and meaningful day for our Dolores Middle School community.

Red Ribbon Week - October 23 - 31

Dolores Middle School is excited to join schools across the nation in celebrating Red Ribbon Week, the largest drug-prevention campaign in the country.

Red Ribbon Week is an important opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of living a drug-free life and to encourage our students to make safe, healthy, and positive choices that will help them reach their goals.

Our Student Council will be helping put together several activities throughout the week, giving our students an opportunity to take an active role in promoting a positive, healthy school community.

Red Ribbon Week is a wonderful opportunity for our entire school community to come together, support our students, and encourage them to make choices that will help them be successful now and in the future.

Thank you for your continued support as we celebrate this important week with our students!

Make a Difference. Be a Hero. Stay Drug Free! Go Bears!

—Mrs. Weiss

Dolores Middle School Important Dates

October 5-22: Student Centered Accountability Program (**S-CAP**) survey window for families, students, and teachers

October 7: Special board meeting - reorganize Board Officers, review and approve a contractor for the track and field. District Office Boardroom, 5:30 p.m.

October 12: Board of Education Meeting, District Office Boardroom, 6:00 p.m.
Agendas are posted on the [website](#) and outside the district office.

October 15: Parent-Teacher Conferences/Middle School Showcase, 4:00-7:00 p.m.

October 16: Parent-Teacher Conferences/Middle School Showcase, 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

October 23-31: Red Ribbon Week

October 28: Wellness Fair, Main Gym, 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Emergency Closures

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MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

BE A HERO.
STAY DRUG FREE™
RED RIBBON WEEK® • OCTOBER 23-31

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Red Ribbon
Theme

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Dolores Middle School (continued)

September Middle School Students Spotlights

Congratulations to our Middle School Students Spotlights

Criteria to be selected for Student of the Month:

Academic Excellence, Positive Attitude, Good Behavior (active participation, responsibility, supportive to peers, personal growth, attendance and Punctuality



This month, we are proud to recognize **Jameson Grounds** as our Student of the Month! Jameson is an outstanding student who consistently works hard, meets expectations, and takes pride in his education. He cares about his grades and puts in the effort to make sure he is doing his best. He is incredibly respectful and has a way of making the people around him feel welcomed and appreciated. Whether he is greeting a teacher with a handshake, sharing a funny joke, or telling a story, Jameson has a natural ability to brighten someone's day. Jameson demonstrates that being a great student is about more than good grades—it is also about character, respect, kindness, and the way you treat others. We are incredibly proud of Jameson and all that he brings to our school. Congratulations, Jameson!



The 7th Grade Teachers would like to recognize **Annalise Cunningham** as our 7th grade Student of the Month. Annalise is an exemplary student in every possible way. She puts the correct amount of focus on her academics and leaves room for leisure activities. Annalise always leads by example in the middle school. More important than her academics is her level of compassion, empathy and kindness. Annalise seems to always have a smile on her face and has no problem sharing her smile to those who need one. Annalise spreads kindness like a morning sunrise spreads light. She is a welcomed presence in the class room.



Rowan Smith is a wonderful example of what it means to be a positive influence in our classroom. She is dependable, kind, and always willing to lend a helping hand to her classmates. Rowan approaches her work with a positive attitude and gives her best effort, even when something is challenging. She shows respect to both her teachers and peers and can be counted on to make good choices. Her willingness to encourage others, stay focused, and lead by example makes a difference in our classroom every day. We are proud of the character and leadership Rowan demonstrates!

Principal Matt Walker

Dolores High School



Homecoming

September was an exciting month at Dolores High School as we celebrated Homecoming Week from September 21-26. Congratulations to **Kaida Barry**, who was crowned Homecoming Queen, and **River Wickstrom**, who was named Homecoming King.

Our students brought tremendous school spirit to the week's competitions and activities. The junior class won the float competition, while the freshmen earned first place in the business-decorating contest. The senior class continued its Peach Fuzz volleyball dynasty, completing a four-year sweep by winning the tournament every year of high school.

The senior boys then eked out a close victory over the faculty team. The faculty made them earn it, with strong performances from Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Dalzell, Coach Hollen, Mrs. Cunningham, Mr. Atwell, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Walker, and Mr. Billman.

We sincerely thank the Dolores businesses that participated in the decorating contest, **along with the families, organizations and community members** who supported our students throughout the week. A big **thanks to the Booster Club** for providing the banners displayed in Flanders celebrating our student body. Homecoming is a special tradition because of the pride and support shown by the entire **Dolores community**.

Athletics and Activities

We want to welcome our new Athletic Director, Alfred Baer, who has stepped in after the departure of Travis Rantz and hit the ground running.

Our fall athletics and activities are having successful seasons:

- Bears football is currently 4-2 and remains in a strong position to qualify for postseason play.
- Knowledge Bowl is underway, with the team already completing two competitions.
- Volleyball earned impressive victories over No. 3-ranked 1A Sargent and No. 6-ranked 2A Ignacio, moving the Bears into the top five in Class 2A.
- The boys cross-country team remains among the top teams in the state.
- Emilyn Hill continues to hold a state-qualifying position in girls cross-country.
- Our Dolores students participating in boys soccer and girls softball in Cortez are also enjoying successful seasons.

Dolores High School (continued)

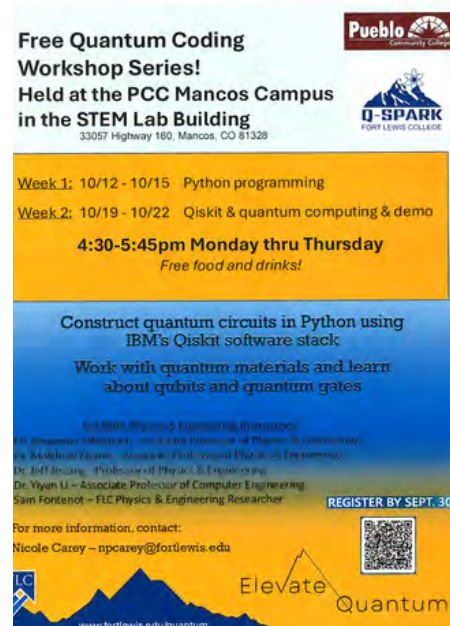
Seniors, College Visits and Applications

Our seniors are beginning the important process of planning for life after graduation. **Colorado's Free Application Days will be held October 20-22**, allowing students to submit applications to participating Colorado colleges and universities without paying an application fee.

Dolores High School will host a **FAFSA Night on Thursday, October 29 at 5:30pm**. A college admissions advisor will also be present in the library to help students and families navigate the college application and financial-aid processes.

Several college visits are scheduled for our seniors through the end of the semester, including trips to Colorado Mesa University, Western Colorado University, Fort Lewis College and Grand Canyon University. Students have been informed of the requirements for participating through their Senior Seminar class. Aurora Everett is the point person for these visits and can provide additional information.

College & Career Flyers of Interest for October:



Dolores High School (continued)

Student Testing

On Tuesday, October 27, participating juniors will take the PSAT/NMSQT for the opportunity to qualify for recognition through the National Merit Scholarship Program. Seniors who still need to demonstrate a Colorado Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness measure will take the ACT WorkKeys assessment that day.

Upcoming Student Events

A score of high school students recently visited Pueblo Community College for a Career in the Trades Day.

We look forward to seeing our families at the **Parent Teacher Conference October 15 & 16.**

The **National Honor Society** will host a **blood drive on Monday, October 26.** Please contact Jessica Kuntz for information about participating.

On **Wednesday, October 28**, Dolores Secondary Schools will host a **Wellness Fair** as part of Red Ribbon Healthy Choices Week. The event will connect students with information and resources that support healthy decision-making and overall wellness. Please contact Kenia Reina for additional information.

We are proud of the way our students represent Dolores High School through their effort, teamwork, service and school pride. We look forward to supporting them throughout the remainder of the fall semester.

Wellness Specialist Kenia Reina

Dolores Secondary Schools



September was a meaningful month in our school community as we focused on **hope, respect, and belonging**. During Suicide Awareness Month, our students participated in our **Wall of Hope** campaign, sharing beautiful messages that reminded us of the power of hope, connection, and supporting one another.

Our **Wellness Lessons** began with **Respect**, focusing on kindness, self-respect, and creating a sense of belonging. We reminded students that **everyone is unique, valued, and an important part of our community.**

We will host our **Wellness Fair on October 28**, it is open to students, families, and community members, with 20+ community organizations, activities, resources, and prizes. During **Red Ribbon Week / Healthy Choices Week**, **Four Corners Youth Clinics** will join us to talk with students about **substance use prevention and healthy choices.**

—Kenia Reina

Dolores Middle School (continued)



WELLNESS FAIR

HEALTHY CHOICES • RED RIBBON WEEK

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28

9:00 AM – 2:30 PM

MAIN GYM

Families and students are invited to our Wellness Fair, part of Healthy Choices / Red Ribbon Week! Enjoy fun activities and resources from **20+ community organizations** focused on health, wellness, fitness, mental health, and healthy choices.

Students can complete a **Healthy Choices Passport** for a chance to win prizes – with fun surprises for families and attendees too!

Our **MS Student Council** will be selling healthy food – bring cash or tap to pay with card! We'll also be hosting a **raffle with amazing prizes**, and kicking off our **Thanksgiving Food Drive** – a voluntary opportunity to bring non-perishable items to our designated drop-off booth. Everyone is invited to join in!

A special thank you to our amazing participants, sponsors, Student Council, and MS Ambassadors for making this event possible – we appreciate your commitment to our students, families, and community!

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

– From the Student Wellness Team and Student Health Team

Athletic Director Alfred Baer

Athletics



Introducing the new Athletic Director -Alfred Baer!

I was born and raised in Cortez, Colorado, and earned my Bachelor of Arts in secondary history education from Colorado State University, along with an endorsement in Physical Education and Health.

This past May, I retired after 25 years of teaching at Shiprock High School in New Mexico. My career included 15 years teaching Physical Education and Health and 10 years teaching Social Studies. I also coached high school varsity baseball for 22 years. I cherish the relationships I built with students and colleagues and have a deep appreciation for the Shiprock community and its culture.

My involvement in athletics extends beyond coaching. I officiated basketball in the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (RMAC) for seven years and have officiated high school basketball for 30 years across New Mexico and Colorado. I continue to officiate in New Mexico.

As an educator and coach, I value strong relationships with students, families, and colleagues. I enjoy helping young people discover their strengths, develop confidence, and prepare for life beyond school.

My wife and I are proud parents of two sons who graduated from Montezuma-Cortez High School and Adams State University. One works as a chemist in northern Colorado, and the other serves as a wildland firefighter for the San Juan National Forest. In my free time, I enjoy attending Denver Broncos football games, going to concerts, and riding my motorcycle.

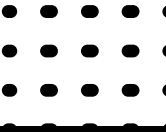
I believe I am well suited to serve as Athletic Director for Dolores Schools for the remainder of the school year. My experiences as a teacher, coach, official, parent, and longtime member of the Southwest Colorado community give me a broad understanding of school athletics. I look forward to supporting our student-athletes, coaches, and families while promoting teamwork, sportsmanship, and school pride.

—Mr. Baer



Contact the Dolores School District

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Dolores School District Calendars

[Events Calendar](#)

[2026-2027 Yearly Calendar](#)

Download the Dolores SD App

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Safe2Tell Colorado Initiative

