



DOWNTOWN AREA
SCHOOL DISTRICT

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ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020



2,185 iPads/Laptops
distributed during
spring closure

21,740 IT tickets resolved since
spring closure

600+ Reopening Task
Force stakeholder
volunteers

110.5 Professional development
hours offered

76 Superintendent update
calls and emails sent to
families & staff

306,826 Free meals served
since March closure

279,145 Masks and
shields ordered

95,911 Square feet of plexiglass
ordered for classrooms

3,188 Gallons of hand sanitizer
ordered for classrooms

11,000+ Devices collected,
updated and redistributed
for new school year

750 Webcams purchased
for instruction

1,852,224 Square feet of building
sanitized each night

COVID-19
BY THE NUMBERS



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SUPERINTENDENT

The 2019-20 school year was certainly not what any of us expected. When the district faced the government-mandate closure back in March, no one could have anticipated that we would be ending the school year online.

From an educational standpoint, though I know there were challenges, there were also amazing things that happened during the closure. While it may not have looked the same, teaching and learning continued. Teachers and aides jumped in to help wherever they were needed. Students demonstrated learning, resilience and growth. Parents and guardians joined us in a hands-on approach to supporting education. Our technology department distributed and serviced thousands of devices. Our custodial staff sanitized our buildings night after night to make sure they were safe for our essential personnel. Our food service department served more than 300,000 meals to community children.

Everyone came together with the united goal of continuing education while protecting the health and safety of our community and I am so grateful to our families, staff, board members and community for supporting our students through these difficult times.

While we had all hoped to begin the school year in person, the district could not resolve to put those desires over protecting the health and safety of our staff, students and school community. With the support and

guidance from the PA Department of Education and the Chester County Health Department, the district continues to monitor local data and we look forward to the day when school can resume full-time, in-person instruction.

In the meantime, school is still in session. Teachers are instructing, students are learning, meals are being served, computers are being repaired, bills are being paid, buildings are being sanitized and phones are being answered. While it might not quite look like business as usual, the thousands of strategically-placed, perfectly-timed pieces that go into making a school district run are engaged and working harder than ever. Our outlook is positive and the future is bright. Together we have endured the closure, together we have risen to the challenge and together we will prevail. Now more than ever, I am DASD proud.

STAFF AND STUDENT WELLNESS

During the 2019-20 school year, Downingtown Area School District (DASD) continued its focus on providing a safe and healthy environment for all students and staff. The DASD Wellness Advisory Council, a team that includes school administrators, human resources, food service, teachers, school nurses, school counselors, board members, parents and community prevention partners, works purposefully toward enhancing the mental, social, emotional and physical health of all staff and students. They do this by aligning health and education to support the whole child and academic achievement.

Meeting monthly, the council strives to achieve higher student academic achievement, increased staff satisfaction, a positive school climate, greater efficiency and the development of a school culture that promotes and enhances student growth.

Using a subcommittee format, the DASD Wellness Advisory Council uses data to create health improvement plans at the district level and K-12 building level. These plans address policies; curricula; partnerships with schools, communities and families; and initiatives to promote healthy behaviors which enhance learning and academic success.

In the 2019-20 school year, the wellness subcommittees included: parent education, professional development, school start time, staffing, staff support, student data tracking, student education/curriculum, technology, vaping and wellness policy.

Together, the subcommittees researched, surveyed and worked with industry experts to create final recommendations to improve student and staff wellness. Details about each committee and its recommendations can be read in detail in the final report at www.dasd.org/wellness.



CULTURAL EQUITY TASK FORCE

As an educational institution, it is imperative that we serve as role models for our students, staff and community with regard to cultural inclusion, equity and education. To that point, DASD has recently hired a Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion who will help the district reach those goals.

The purpose of the DASD Cultural Equity Task Force is to ensure equity for students, staff and families by eliminating bias and inequities in our classrooms and in our schools. We do so by enacting policies, procedures, and practices that are both culturally responsive and culturally sustaining.

In the 2019-20 school year, the Cultural Equity Task Force focused on the following areas of improvement: technology, professional development, lunch practices, instructional practices and culture.

We will continue to work to ensure that hate, disrespect and intimidation will never have a place in our schools.

Students, staff and community members are invited to learn with us and be a part of the Task Force. Please visit www.dasd.org/equity to learn more.

ENROLLMENT REPORT

ENROLLMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- DASD has seen a total enrollment ten-year increase of 1,279 students, with 11,813 enrolled in the 2010-11 school year and 13,092 in the 2019-20 school year.
- FutureThink projections indicate an increase of 770 students from the 2019-20 to the 2029-30 school year, for a 2029-30 enrollment of 13,862.
- Current elementary school capacities are already stretched, with four elementary schools over capacity and two just under 100% capacity. In ten years, it is projected that capacity will be exceeded at five of the elementary schools and one will be at just under 100%.

As a close-knit yet diverse community of over 13,000 students, and as the seventh largest in PA, DASD students are challenged, engaged and inspired through a multitude of academic opportunities, passionate educators and innovative teaching methods.

As DASD continues to grow and thrive, the district continually reviews and evaluates the needs of its student population. Part of that evaluation includes reviewing historical, current and projected enrollment numbers. The impact of accurate enrollment data is far reaching. In addition to building capacity, enrollment also affects transportation, food services, class sizes, staffing and more.

This year, DASD hired FutureThink, a national planning firm that specializes in educational demographic analysis to complete an enrollment projection and redistricting study.

FutureThink used historical enrollment, birth data, community demographics and housing information to create a ten-year enrollment projection. This projection will serve as a planning tool for the district's future.

Over the past year, DASD has been investigating the option of adding a 5/6 grade center to the district. Under the current plan, the Marsh Creek Sixth Grade Center would be modified to become a 5/6 center, providing a northern and southern 5/6 grade building for students. The creation of two 5/6 grade centers would:

- Significantly decrease transportation times for students in the southern part of the school district that would attend the Marsh Creek Sixth Grade Center in the current model
- Create space in all elementary schools to allow for the potential of an all-day kindergarten program
- Potentially prevent the need to redistrict in response to building capacities

Currently, DASD is investigating district-owned and non-district-owned land to determine a suitable site for a potential new building. As the plan progresses, details will be discussed at upcoming board meetings. Should the project move forward, more information will be posted on the district website at www.dasd.org.

2019-2020 BUDGET

The Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO) has awarded DASD its Meritorious Budget Award for excellence in budget presentation. The district has received this award each year since 2006 and is one of only ten Pennsylvania school districts to receive this honor.

DASD School Board President Jane Bertone noted that “receiving this award is a true reflection of the district’s commitment to fiscal integrity”.

The Meritorious Budget Awards program, designed by ASBO and school business management professionals, recognizes excellence in preparing and presenting budget information for all budget stakeholders. To earn this award, the school district submitted its budget book for a rigorous review by a team of school business officials who evaluated the budget against a stringent set of criteria. These criteria reflect the highest standards in school budgeting for presenting financial and non-financial information about the district. The award is given only to school systems that have met or exceeded the criteria.

“This award recognizes our commitment to strict standards for good fiscal management and reporting,” said Business Manager David Matyas. “I congratulate the business office staff for continuing to adhere to those standards and receiving this award. It is in thanks to their careful planning that we have been able to avoid a tax increase for the past eight years in a row.”

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

	Instructional	\$143,501,016
	Operations	\$22,316,287
	Instructional Support	\$17,862,744
	Transportation	\$13,397,832
	Administrative Costs	\$12,832,705
	Debt Service - General Fund	\$8,000,000
	Transfer to Capital Fund/ Contingency	\$8,826,120
	Extracurriculars/Athletics	\$4,075,756

TOTAL - \$230,812,460

CONGRATULATIONS!

Top Schools in PA

DHS East, DHS West and STEM were all ranked in the top 100 high schools in PA by US News

National Merit Semifinalists

Soham Digambar, Ria Kulkarni, Ninaad Lakshman, Cristina Micale, Gokul Murugadoss, Simran Rajpal, Margaret Shaheen, Nora Wan - DHS East
Claudia Harper, Miriam Roeder - DHS West
Sean Collier, Rohan Epur, Deedra Fu, Jared Garthwait, Shreya Iyer, Gaurav Kruthiventi, Grace Mucha, Saurav Padhye, Lasya Ravulapati, Anisha Sonti, Aditi Vishwanath, Sean Wang, Eric Yu - STEM

Nationally-Ranked

STEM is ranked #2 in PA and #20 in the nation by US News

AP Capstone Award

Jack Bassick, Julia Berutti, Sabrina Burkey, Michael Caggiano, Deidre Deischer-Eddy, Soham Digambar, Steven Egnaczyk, Bryan Flaharty, Ella Hennessey, Winfield Horning, April Komal, Jordan Lambe, Cristina Micale, Shreya Mitra, Elizabeth Park, William Qi, Nand Vommi - DHS East
Tristan Peat - DHS West

National Hispanic Recognition

Sean Collier - STEM, Cristina Micale - DHS East

PASBO Gold Award of Excellence in School Purchasing Operations

Laurie Peiffer

School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports - Tier 2

Lionville Elementary School

PAEA Outstanding Visual Arts Community

DASD Art Department

NAMM Best Communities for Music Education Award

DASD

Brandywine Red Clay Alliance Watershed Teacher of the Year

Dottie Graham, BH

PAEA Outstanding Middle Level Art Educator

Laura Roth, MC

What's So Cool About Manufacturing Outstanding Creativity STEM

Philadelphia Future City Competition

LMS - 1st Place, DMS - 2nd Place

All-State Performing Ensemble

DHS East Choir

2020 CCIU Middle School Knowledge Bowl Champions

LMS

Scripps Spelling Bee Winner

Soham Katdare, DMS

Ches-Mont Champions

DHS East Football (shared league title), Girls Soccer, Boys Golf, Boys Cross Country, Girls Basketball, Boys Swimming
DHS West Football (shared league title), Field Hockey, Girls Tennis

District 1 Champions

DHS West Football, Field Hockey, Boys Cross Country, Girls Cross Country, Cheerleading

Southeast Regional Champions

Matt Romanelli, Keanu Manuel - DE Wrestling
Maximus Hale, Chase Mielnik - DW Wrestling
DE Unified Bocce Team - Regional Champions

PIAA State Champions

DHS West Boys Cross Country
DHS West Varsity Cheerleaders

Prudential Spirit of Community Award

Aparna Vagvala, STEM, Youth Volunteer of the Year

YoungArts Finalist in Hip-Hop

Deven Ayambem, STEM

Published Author

Jeta Kalakheti, MC

PA Miss US Agriculture

Margaret Jarvie, UH



Citadel Heart of Learning Grand Prize Winner in Elementary

Andrew Kreider, BW



Tournament of Roses Parade

DHS East & West Marching Bands will perform in 2021-22

UN Youth Ambassador

Lauren Haegele, DHS West

US Taekwondo National Champion

Claire Wesolowski, SM

US Men's Junior National Indoor Field Hockey Team

Toby Peck, DHS West

U.S. Kids Golf World Championship

Nicholas Gross, DMS



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SENIOR STATS - CLASS OF 2020

✦ TOTAL NUMBER OF GRADUATES	1,042
✦ SENIORS CONTINUING EDUCATION	969
4 YEAR	882
2 YEAR/TECHNICAL	87
✦ STUDENTS JOINING THE MILITARY	13
✦ STUDENTS WHO TOOK ONE OR MORE AP/IB COURSE	769