



# **Dodge City Middle School**

2000 Sixth Ave · Dodge City, KS 67801-8425

(620) 227-1610 TELEPHONE / (620) 227-1731 FACSIMILE

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**"Opening New Worlds for Personalized and Purposeful Learning"**

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National Breaking Ranks NASSP Showcase School 2013  
KAMSA Middle School of the Year Finalist 2012

July 12, 2013

## **Back to School Letter**

A new school year presents opportunities for various beginnings i.e. new classes, new faces and renewed opportunities for professional growth. Summer and vacation can be great healers as we approach August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013 as the opening day of a new school year. With these statements I would like to welcome to the DCMS family the following new teachers:

- Ms. Sherry Polkinghorn .....Special Education
- Ms. Mallory Weidner .....English Language Arts 8
- Ms. Michelle Wells.....ESL Newcomers
- Ms. HollyAnn Sewell .....Director of DCMS Bands

Newness alone, however, cannot produce transformation. As a school, we must be willing to be caught up in the rebirth that is possible with each new school year. Starting a new year gives us the opportunity to make new plans, design new strategies and implement new ideas. There is a special kind of joy and satisfaction in planning lessons and activities for a new class, although the subject or grade level is the same, the students are new and they appreciate the planning that is done for them. Whether it is one's responsibility in administrating, supervising, teaching, preparing lunches, maintaining a building or managing an office, there is always room for improvement and new ways to do a good job even better.

We were rewarded last year when all our dedicated efforts brought us distinguished honors in being recognized as a Regional Breaking Ranks Showcase School. This and other awards have placed our school in the forefront of achieving academic excellence and distinction that both our school and community accept with pride. We can be proud of what we have achieved academically in the awards that we have earned. These are great accomplishments that can only be contributed to effective instruction and the commitment to a better education for our students and community.

We can also be proud of what we have achieved, in our offices and on our playing fields and stages, but our achievements are not due to complacency and satisfaction with the status quo. Our school is what it is because a staff of dedicated, aspiring men and women have established a common goal to do what is best for students and are always looking for ways to continue to achieve that goal. What we must always remember when approaching each school year is that it is not about programs, it is about people like you who make this school a place of enjoyment for students to learn and teachers to teach. It truly is about climate and trust. The past five years have provided evidence that we have met our target goals in academic gains which have been recognizable in all of our academic endeavors. With these accomplishments, a new year and a new set of challenges begin.

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**Mike King**, Principal · king.michael@usd443.org

Pam Algrim and Faye Wells, Assistant Principals

**Dodge City Public Schools** · Unified School District 443 · Dodge City, Kansas





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This year we will begin with the transitioning of a new strategic plan that focuses on district instructional goals, student advocacy and school wide literacy. Our strategic plan has been constructed around our new vision which will include a clear description and direction for integration and implementation of all goals at all levels. This approach will provide us with avenues to change in a gradual and organized fashion. This year we will also maintain our focus on student centered instructional practices. To accomplish this purpose we will need to focus on establishing a means by which we understand individual learning needs through differentiated instruction and formative assessments. We will also need to continually provide avenues to help students establish and reach success in individual goal accomplishments through an advocacy process of monitoring goal obtainment through student led conferencing and summative assessments. This will mean that teachers and teams will need to frequently focus on the individual child as we communicate different levels of needs.

With enrollment verification scheduled for Thursday, August 1, 2013, we anticipate small classroom sizes, especially as we approach ideas that support differentiated instruction. With smaller class sizes and new approaches to teaching and learning in mind, we will need to prepare for ways to ensure that we strengthen our commitment to student centered learning.

This year we will continue our district's mission that every student has the necessary skills to achieve academically and socially at the next level of their education. Our goals will be to help each student learn how to learn through a building wide literacy plan, have a clear expectation of learning through posted objectives with high degrees of checking for understanding and be able to help students set and accomplish individual goals in their advisory class. To accomplish these objectives, we must continue the foundations we have constructed for success that are built around this year's theme of "Opening New Worlds for Personalized and Purposeful Learning". These foundations are constructed around our Professional Learning Communities, formative and summative principles of assessment, effective teaching practices for English Language Learners and our devoted attention to exemplary middle level practices.

Attached you will find a tentative schedule of back to school events.

Let us make the 2013 – 2014 school year our best year yet!

Sincerely,  
Michael D. King, Principal  
Dodge City Middle School



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**Mike King**, Principal · [king.michael@usd443.org](mailto:king.michael@usd443.org)

Pam Algrim and Faye Wells, Assistant Principals

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