



Daviess County Public Schools Staff Newsletter
September 28 - October 2, 2020

DCPS Kids First Awards

Congratulations to our 2020 DCPS Kids First Award winners!

These outstanding individuals truly exemplify the highest ideals of our Daviess County Public Schools “Kids First” mission. We are so proud of our teachers and support staff professionals for all they do on behalf of #teamDCPS and the students we serve.

Click [HERE](#) to watch a video in which our winners are announced. Profiles about our Kids First honorees are featured on this and the following pages.

2020 DCPS Kids First Teacher of the Year Awards

The DCPS district has identified the following characteristics of a great teacher: Student centered, shows empathy; develops and maintains positive relationships; growth mindset; communication with all groups; engagement; knowledge of content; team player; prepared; coachable; invested; passionate about teaching and learning.

Nominations were accepted from colleagues, students, parents and administrators, and were reviewed by the DCPS Office of Teaching and Learning. Winners at the elementary, middle and high school levels received beautiful “Kids First” sculptures and will represent the DCPS district as candidates for state-level Teacher of the Year honors.

The following outstanding educators are truly deserving of our recognition for their “Kids First” commitment to providing a high-quality educational experience for every child, every day.



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DCPS Kids First Awards

2020 DCPS Kids First Elementary Teacher of the Year: Nikki Knott – Preschool teacher, Burns Elementary School



Nikki Knott

As a preschool teacher at Burns Elementary School, Nikki Knott is instrumental in guiding a child's first steps along the pathway of lifelong learning. Beginning with that very first day, her primary focus is on helping children learn and grow. She is extremely good at her craft and is so knowledgeable about helping preschool students develop and blossom into their best

selves. She makes the most of every teachable moment in her classroom and is truly building a foundation for early success, which allows children to continue to grow and learn.

An observation shared by a parent says so much about Nikki Knott's commitment to her students: "If one way doesn't work, she will try something new to help all her students be successful."

Through the knowledge gained by experience and caring, Nikki knows how best to respond to all students. She lives to see her students succeed! She goes above and beyond to ensure that the educational experience is a stellar and positive one for every child.

In addition to her dedication to children, Nikki also contributes to the success of her colleagues at Burns Elementary School. She is always so positive and genuine.

BES principal Heather Newman said, "There are five words to describe Nikki Knott: Dedicated, creative, enthusiastic, inspiring and passionate. She plans instruction to meet the needs of all her students, while also maintaining high expectations and teaching rigorous primary lessons in preparing our students for kindergarten and early school readiness. She will not let her students fall behind or be left out. As a faculty member, Nikki is highly respected and always goes above and beyond to help out in all areas of school."

In accepting this award, Nikki said, "Words cannot express how honored I am to have been considered for such an outstanding award. There are so many deserving teachers in DCPS that have helped mentor me along the way. Burns Elementary School has become my second family and I am blessed to work with so many who push me to be a better me. I have learned a great deal from all my fellow colleagues, friends and students. I am also fortunate to have a huge support system in preschool. We have a great team who shares in the silly, fun adventures we encounter each day. Teaching this year has brought a whole new set of challenges, but with those challenges there are new successes. My family is my backbone and without their support, I couldn't do what I love. To everyone who has a hand in my life, I thank you for always pushing me. You make this all possible. Thank you for always supporting me."

Her knowledge of content, combined with her passion for teaching and her love for children, make Nikki Knott a most deserving recipient of our 2020 DCPS Kids First Elementary Teacher of the Year Award.

2020 DCPS Kids First Middle School Teacher of the Year: Judy Trunnell – Family and Consumer Science teacher, College View Middle School

It's always meaningful when nominations for the "Kids First Teacher of the Year" Awards are submitted by kids. Numerous students at College View Middle School nominated Judy Trunnell for this year's award. Their testimonies say it all:

"She cares about us and makes sure we understand what we are learning."

"She is always teaching us new things and surprising us with new facts about everything."

"She communicates with us in small groups."



Judy Trunnell

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“She is always walking around, making sure we understand.”

These tributes speak to Judy Trunnell’s dedication to developing and maintaining positive relationships with her students. She is focused on student-centered teaching and engagement in her classroom. She is the kind of teacher who doesn’t just work for a school district; she works for every kid, every day. Her presence and influence extend far beyond the classroom as she sets an excellent example for students with her positive attitude and determination to find solutions to every challenge.

CVMS principal Jennifer Crume said, “CVMS is so thankful to have staff like Judy Trunnell. She is constantly looking for ways to engage the students in real-world learning and application. She works hard, she is flexible, and she is a leader for our staff. Judy is always willing to go above and beyond to help others and she works hard to meet the needs of each student. Her students nominated her for this award and parents compliment her NTI assignments for their practicality. She is definitely a shining example of a teacher of the year, and we are so proud of her!”

Judy said she was touched and honored to receive the award. “I am truly thankful for this special honor,” she said. “It adds a special touch knowing that so many of ‘my kids’ nominated me. I’ve heard it said, ‘It’s not how much you do, but how much love you put into it that counts.’ I truly love teaching and all that it entails. My kids inspire me to be a better teacher daily and I will be forever grateful for each and every one of them.”

We are proud to announce Judy Trunnell as our 2020 DCPS Kids First Middle School Teacher of the Year!

2020 DCPS Kids First High School Teacher of the Year: Julie Ford – English teacher, Daviess County High School

When a colleague was asked to describe Julie Ford, she said, “Her room is never empty. She’s always working with students!”

Each and every day, Julie models what it means to be student-centered and show empathy to students. Her doors are open early in the morning, during lunch and in the afternoon.

One student said Julie makes them feel less alone. She has nurtured the kind of trust relationship that lets students know they can talk to her. She notices if something is

wrong and offers assistance in whatever ways are needed, and communicates with each student in meaningful ways that make the connection that inspires the student to reach his or her greatest potential.

Julie does a great job of incorporating social/emotional learning in her English classroom. She reaches out to students who have never developed a love for reading and writing, and ignites that spark of interest – making a difference that lasts for a lifetime.

DCHS principal Matt Mason said, “Julie Ford is what we would call a phenomenal teacher. Daviess County High School is a better place because of her teaching and relationships with students! Her rigorous classroom involves high expectations of her students and herself. She is constantly looking for ways to connect to students and provide a relevant context for instruction. Finally, she commands the respect of her students by remaining fair and firm but displaying compassion for them as well.”

Julie said the award represents many people beyond herself. “I look at this award, and I see reflected in its surface the faces of those who have helped me on my path,” she said. “I pause with gratitude at the teachers who molded my philosophy – my parents (my first teachers), Mrs. Alice Howard (my favorite teacher), Dr. Dugan-Barrett (my advisor), Steve Rocco (my mentor). I smile at every kid who found a love of words in my classroom – the one who found himself in books, the one who walked with me through punctuation or poetry or parallel structure, the one who published her short story or finished a novel chapter. I am in awe of my amazing colleagues who each love their students and go beyond the expectations to help them and bring their joys to light. I have laughed and cried with them, and I hold all of their life stories in my heart. These are all the keepers of the flame, the story, and it must go on. I am blessed that all these people have come into my life, and I am grateful



Julie Ford

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that my students' families allowed me to be their teacher for a while.”

Julie Ford is passionate about teaching and about students. She exemplifies the highest ideals of outstanding teaching and learning, and it is our privilege to recognize her as our 2020 DCPS Kids First High School Teacher of the Year.

DCPS Kids First Support Professional and Customer Service Awards

The Daviess County Public Schools district has proudly recognized members of our support staff for their outstanding contributions to our mission. Nominees for the 2020 DCPS Kids First Support Professional and Customer Service Awards were evaluated in several areas of criteria: Kindness; active listening; conflict resolution; empathy; dependability; effective communication; friendliness; patience; creativity; making families feel welcome and valued; and supporting families with “Kids First” in mind.

2020 DCPS Kids First Support Professional: Daniel Lyne – Custodian, East View Elementary School



Daniel Lyne

the guy who cleans classrooms; he is a teacher! With his service dog Keeta at his side, Dan sends out emails encouraging students to demonstrate characteristics of good citizenship, teamwork, kindness and gratitude. He challenges kids to set goals and develop a plan to

reach those goals!

His emails provide relatable examples of how kids can put these concepts into action – and before you know it, these “life lessons” become part of the overall culture in each classroom and the school – and beyond. This is how you change the world!

Several teachers teamed up to submit this nomination, and as one of them said, “He goes above the call of duty to make relationships with all of us, but at the same time is teaching life lessons. These children will never forget him! He brings a positive light to our faces every day with his energy and passion for life and kindness. In this environment of isolation, Mr. Daniel is contagious in the best way possible – he brings people together and his genuine kindness leads others to strive to share that example with others!

And of course, one of the greatest lessons is to go through life with a smile. Mr. Daniel has that covered too, with his daily jokes. (One example: “How do mountains see? They peak! Get it? They peek! Haha!”)

EVES principal Sonya Simpson said Dan is incredibly deserving of this honor. “Mr. Daniel’s interaction with students and his creativity in teaching life lessons demonstrates the joy he brings to students and staff at EVES,” Simpson said. “Not only does he excel at keeping our building clean, but what he does for our students and staff is way beyond our expectations. We are blessed to have Mr. Daniel and his service dog Keeta at East View.”

Dan said he was humbled to be selected for this award. “To be nominated for the 2020 DCPS Kids First Support Service award is a humbling honor,” he said. “DCPS employs prolific and amazing individuals who place great importance on our community, kids and fellow team members. What a joy it truly is to be a part of the DCPS family. When (Supt. Matt) Robbins announced that I had been selected as the 2020 award winner, I was overwhelmed and surprised. I am grateful to receive such a prestigious award; however, the credit should be redirected to my fellow team members. I want to recognize and uplift every member of East View Elementary for being receptive to my thoughts and actions. Without their support, I would not be able to make the impact that led to receiving this award. My team members go out of their way to bring smiles, love, humor and a good dose of community to all who walk through our doors. East View’s mascot is a sun and it is because of this that we choose to shine, we choose to light up, and we

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choose to warm all who visit with us. It is because of this team that I too, have been infected with this contagious spirit that passes through our halls and is exemplified from the cafeteria to the front office. If the sun is shining everywhere, how can something not be seen? I humbly tip my hat to my East View crew and, with a heartfelt bow, I say, 'Thank you.' We shine as a district, no matter the mascot or location. It is all about perspective and choice. Thank you, fellow DCPS team members, for all you do; you are amazing!"

It is our privilege to congratulate Daniel Lyne as the 2020 DCPS Kids First Support Professional Award.

2020 DCPS Kids First Customer Service Award: Tammy Styke – Secretary, Highland Elementary School

Tammy Styke demonstrates all the positive attributes that define our Kids First Awards! She is friendly and professional, making everyone feel special.

She is so pleasant to parents and families and is a wonderful ambassador for Highland Elementary School and the DCPS district. As the school secretary, she is often the first person parents meet, and Tammy is right there to help them with registration, attendance or whatever the questions might be. She always finds a way to make every interaction a positive one.

Tammy is a problem-solver. For teachers who are juggling so many things in the course of a day, there is nothing better than to hear Tammy say, "You don't worry about this anymore; I will take care of it!" – and they know she will.

She is super-organized and can find a file, produce office supplies or answer questions without hesitation. If she doesn't have an immediate answer, she makes it her mission to find out!

But the Kids First Award is all about kids. She is their biggest cheerleader and celebrates their "Hornet Hoorahs" with great enthusiasm.

HES principal Leslie Peveler said, "Tammy Styke is the epitome of customer service. She is one of the first faces or voices our school community comes in contact with, and provides every person with a warm greeting, a sweet smile and an 'I can take care of that' attitude. She does the same for our faculty and staff. We are grateful to have her in our building and we are proud of her for this award. She is so deserving and we celebrate with her!"

Tammy was both honored and humbled the award. "The Daviess County Public Schools Kids First Customer Service Award could have gone to many employees across the district and I am truly humbled to be the one chosen to receive this award for 2020," she said. "To me, customer service is about treating others the way you would want to be treated in every situation. I feel blessed to work with the wonderful students, parents, and staff at Highland Elementary School."

Tammy Style is everything the 2020 DCPS Kids First Customer Service Award is intended to honor, and it is our privilege recognize her outstanding Kids First spirit.



Tammy Styke





Open Enrollment Update

State (KEHP) and DCPS Cafeteria Plan Open Enrollment dates are Oct. 12-28.

If you have not already received it, a letter will soon arrive in the mail from Kentucky Employees' Health Plan with your current enrollments as well as your KHRIS (state enrollment platform) username and password. **Please save this letter! It is important!**

Mini Benefit Selection Guides from the state have been distributed to each location. Click [HERE](#) for a full-length version of the 2021 KEHP Benefit Selection Guide.

More detailed information, along with a final DCPS benefits guide, will be distributed soon. Employees should not expect any changes from the DCPS Cafeteria Plan. The DCPS cafeteria plan elections will roll over if no changes are made.

For KEHP benefits, elections will roll over in most cases if no changes are made. If you want to elect an FSA or Waiver General Purpose HRA for 2021, due to federal rules, you must make the election every year. It is always important to review your elections each year.



Certified Evaluation Appeals Committee

The results are in! First, a word of appreciation to our candidates for their willingness to serve our district in this important role, and thanks to all who took the time to vote.

A total of 373 teachers voted for representatives to serve on the 2020-21 DCPS Certified Evaluation Appeals Committee.

Danielle Ellis (Center for Academic Improvement) and Mason Head (Apollo High School) were elected as your representatives.



Dr. Amy Shutt

Teresa Smith (College View Middle School) and Kaye Fulkerson (Deer Park Elementary School) were selected as alternate representatives.

Again, thank you for your participation in this process.

— **Dr. Amy Shutt**

Assistant superintendent for human services

Our DCPS United Way Campaign is in full swing! This is our opportunity to help the many agencies who receive much-needed support from United Way, like Hospice, American Red Cross, Foster Grandparent Program and the Spouse Abuse Shelter.

Here are just a few things to remember when completing the pledge forms:

- A pledge form must be completed in order for your deduction to continue into 2021. If you are currently giving by payroll deduction, a new form must be completed in order for your deduction to continue.

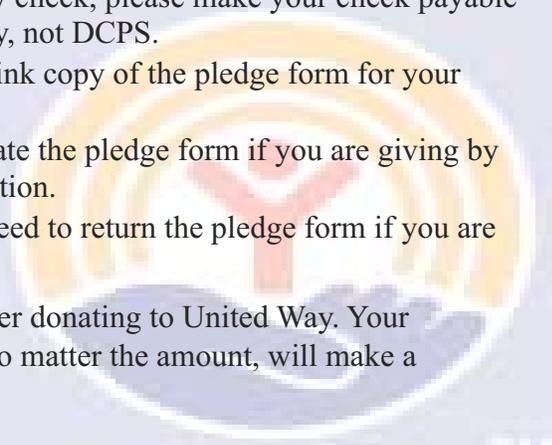
- If giving by check, please make your check payable to United Way, not DCPS.

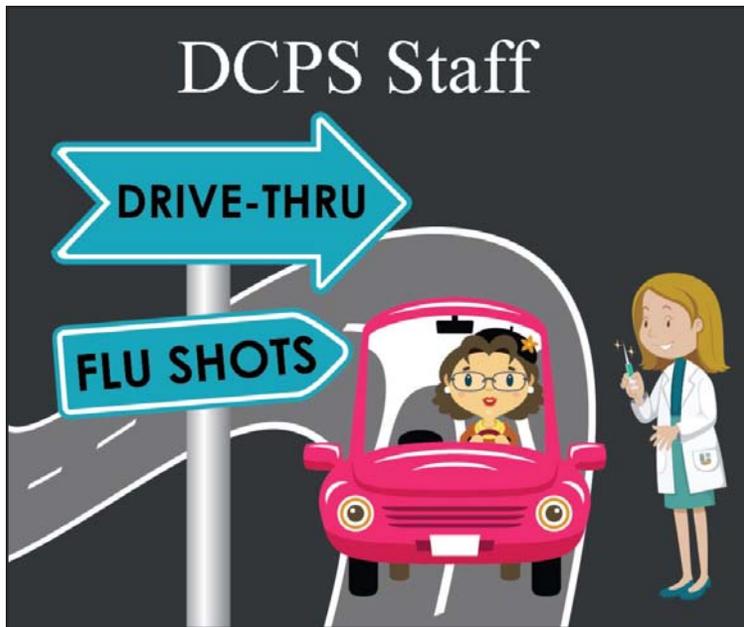
- Keep the pink copy of the pledge form for your records.

- Sign and date the pledge form if you are giving by payroll deduction.

- You only need to return the pledge form if you are donating.

Please consider donating to United Way. Your investment, no matter the amount, will make a difference!





Drive-Through Flu Shots

The Daviess County Public Schools district has partnered with the Green River District Health Department to offer a drive-through flu shot program for DCPS staff.

Take your employee ID badge and insurance card to the locations listed below at the times/dates indicated.

Register in advance by clicking [HERE](#) or visit <https://greenriverdistricthealthdepartment.fullslate.com/>

Follow these directions to reserve your time:
Scroll down to the “Online Scheduling” area and click on Daviess County Public Schools.

Click on “Adult Flu Vaccine (Drive-thru)”
(NOTE: COVID-19 testing is NOT available at this time.)

Click on the calendar and use the arrows to find the time/date you wish to reserve. Click on the TIME you want and fill in the requested information at lower/right (name, email address etc.).

The locations for these dates/times are listed below:

- Thursday, Oct. 1 – 8:30 a.m. to noon – DCPS Bus Garage
- Thursday, Oct. 1 – 2:30 to 5 p.m. – Tamarack Elementary
- Thursday, Oct. 15 – 8:30 a.m. to noon – College View
- Thursday, Oct. 15 – 2:30 to 5 p.m. – Daviess County High
- Thursday, Oct. 22 – 8:30 a.m. to noon – Country Heights
- Thursday, Oct. 22 – 2:30 to 5 p.m. – Daviess Co. Middle
- Thursday, Oct. 29 – 2:30 to 5 p.m. – Sorgho Elementary

The drive-thru flu shots are available for DCPS staff members ONLY. Take your employee ID and insurance card.

See a Penny – Pick It Up

“See a penny.
Pick it up. Then,
all day, you’ll
have good luck.”
I don’t remember
where I first
heard that jingle,
but I still sing it
in my head each
time I see a
penny on the
ground that’s
heads up. If I see
a penny on tails,
I mentally sing,
“See a penny.
Pick it up. Then,
all day, you’ll
have a penny.”



By Aaron Yeiser
Instructional Technology Coordinator

Either way, I just earned a penny.

Recently my youngest daughter, Hadli, found a new 2020 penny on heads, but instead of feeling lucky, she quickly got rid of it, saying, “There’s no way anything from 2020 is lucky.” Although I laughed with her about the disaster 2020 has been, we also got to talk about some of the positives of 2020. I think there are silver linings each of us can acknowledge.

Psychology professor and author Carol S. Dweck said, “In a growth mindset, challenges are exciting rather than threatening. So rather than thinking, ‘Oh, I’m going to reveal my weakness,’ you say, ‘Wow, here’s a chance to grow.’”

In the past 200 or so days since we were told to cancel in-person school, each of us has grown tremendously. As the person in this district tasked with leading instructional technology, I can’t tell you how impressed I am with where we are today. We learned from NTI in the spring, made adjustments for August, and are demonstrating great flexibility going into October. Do we have room for improvement? Absolutely! Don’t let that reality steal from the pride we can have in our growth. I am impressed with yours.

What about you? I challenge each of you to share your own “heads or tails” by answering just two simple questions [HERE](#), or go to <http://bit.ly/dcps-growth> You can see what others answer after you submit your own.



By Steve Burton Computer Operations Manager

Reminder: Take Out the Trash!

Just a reminder to anyone who uses their computer trash cans or recycle bins for long-term storage: Starting Tuesday, Oct. 13, Google Drive will start automatically deleting any files placed into the “My Drive” trash after 30 days.

This is the Tuesday after Fall Break, so don't let that date sneak up on you!

Starting Oct. 13, any file already in a user's trash will stay there for 30 days. After that, any files in the trash for 30 days will be automatically deleted. This includes items trashed from any device or any platform. Files deleted from Drive File Stream will be purged from the system trash after 30 days. There is no impact on Backup and Sync behavior.



Is Your School Doing Something
New, Exciting, Interesting?
Let Us Know!

Send photos and information to
grapevine@dcps.org



New Phone System

Great news! As part of our continued commitment to excellence and keeping our staff connected with one another and our community, the DCPS district is replacing our 25-year-old phone system with a single districtwide state-of-the-art phone system called GoToConnect (formally Jive). Every office and classroom will be getting a new phone in the next two weeks. These phones work over the computer network. Current phones should stay in place until the changeover is complete.

The new system comes with lots of cool features, including:

- Voicemail for every user.
- Option to send voicemail recordings to email.
- Option to make and answer school calls from your computer or cell phone, even when you are away from school. (*This feature will be turned on after Fall Break)
- Districtwide phone extension directory.
- 5-digit dialing of any extension in the district.
- Option to transfer calls between buildings or even to a cell phone.

Learn more at www.dcps.org/VOIP

You can start using many of these features as soon as your new phone is delivered. To configure your new phone and/or download phone software for your computer, just go to my.jive.com and enter your district email address, then click the “Forgot password” link.

School/building phone lines (published phone numbers) will be moved to the new system over Fall Break. At that time, incoming calls will start ringing to the new phone system and outgoing calls will start coming from the school's number. Until the lines are moved, you will need to use the old phones for making and receiving outside calls.

College and Career Readiness Update

The College and Career Readiness team of the Daviess County Public Schools district remains committed to



Amanda Jerome

providing access to resources, opportunities and information that provide support and guidance for high school students as they develop plans to attend college.

DCPS high schools have traditionally hosted college admissions representatives to meet directly with students to talk about their application processes. Because of restrictions currently in place with the COVID-19 virus, these visits have been transitioned to a virtual format. A schedule of “CCR Lunch and Learn” visits is included here. Students are encouraged to sign up for these virtual information meetings through Google Forms sent out to juniors and seniors via student email.

“This is a demonstration of our team’s commitment to our students and our district’s commitment to College and Career Readiness,” said Trey Pippin, who serves as CCR coach at Daviess County High School.

DCPS College and Career Readiness coordinator Amanda Jerome said, “We strongly feel that our current students deserve the same opportunities that we have made available to students who have previously graduated. We pride ourselves on offering a wide range of college and

career options to our students to aid them in their decision making process and knew this year things would have to look a little different. We think it is extremely important for students to continue planning for their futures. Though we are in the midst of a pandemic, it is still important for all of us to ‘move forward’ and know that the future is bright on the other side!”

Amanda said there is no limit to the number of sessions a student may attend. “Admissions counselors from each college will be joining us for an admissions presentation and will then host a question and answer session,” she said. “Students will have the opportunity to ask specific questions during the presentation and will depart with contact information for the admission counselor, as well as a general knowledge of the admissions process, including financial aid information.”

All virtual admissions visits were/are scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to noon on the dates listed below.

- Kentucky Wesleyan College – Tuesday, Sept. 15
- University of Southern Indiana – Thursday, Sept. 17
- University of Kentucky – Tuesday, Sept. 22
- Western Kentucky University – Thursday, Sept. 24
- Owensboro Community and Technical College – Wednesday, Sept. 30
- University of Louisville – Thursday, Oct. 1
- Murray State University – Wednesday, Oct. 14
- Brescia University – Thursday, Oct. 22
- Spalding University and Transylvania University – Wednesday, Oct. 28



Election Day Reminder

All Daviess County Public Schools employees who work 240 or 261 contract days are reminded that Presidential Election Days are treated like holidays for payroll purposes. You are not required to work on those days. All DCPS schools and support offices will be closed Nov. 3. Everyone is encouraged to exercise your right to VOTE!



Highland Elementary School third-grade teachers Sharee Best, Jenna Hagan and Melissa Meyer encouraged the entire school to participate in “Rock Your School,” a challenge to make the day awesome in new and exciting ways! Thanks for “rocking it out,” ladies!

Eagle Lunch Bunch



The Apollo High School Eagle Family came through to help their amazing cafeteria staff serve curbside pickup lunches recently. It takes everyone and we are truly “Better Together!” Pictured from left are Greg “Boomer” Fountain, Lamar Owen (front), Bobby Ewing (back), Beth Ewing, Alex Howard, Courtney Johns and Doug Denton. Curbside meals will resume service following Fall Break. Click [HERE](#) to view locations and schedule.

Healthy Lifestyle Tip of the Week



These weekly fitness reminders are brought to you by the DCPS Food Services Department. We care about you! Learn more at www.moveitmonday.org



Out of State Travel Advisory

If you go to a high-risk state, you must quarantine for a full 14 calendar days OR produce a negative test result after one week of return AND a clearance from local health department or your primary physician will clear you to return while wearing a SURGICAL mask at ALL times for the remainder of the 14 days while in district buildings. If you leave Kentucky to go to a destination state at a time it is considered high risk, you must use your own sick days. If the travel destination moves into the high risk category while you are there, you will be allowed to use federal paid sick leave.

Tracker – <https://govstatus.egov.com/kycovid19>
Look for the “Travel Advisory” section about halfway down the home page at this website.

DCPS COVID REPORTING DASHBOARD

A COVID-19 reporting dashboard is now posted on our district website. This page is updated twice weekly with information about active COVID-19 numbers for staff and students, recoveries and other information. Click [HERE](#) or go to www.dcps.org and scroll down to the “DCPS COVID Reporting Dashboard” header to view the spreadsheet, which shows numbers per DCPS school/site and district totals.

This information is shared as part of our commitment to transparency and keeping you informed. For more information, write to contact@dcps.org