



De Soto High School
De Soto, Kansas
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Driving Into a New Year

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PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Sophomores Elsie Heigle and Maddie Oesterreich, Junior Kaden Dupriest, and senior Lane Vaillancourt perform with the band during halftime at the game vs. Topeka West as part of their connections class. "They love it. First thing Monday morning, I get questions from them asking if we have band on Friday. So they look forward to it every day," Connections A teacher Kristen Hoffman said. *Photo by Brooke Wagner*

MEET THE STAFF

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO THE STUDENT BODY? IF SO, YOU CAN TYPE UP 300-500 WORDS OF THOUGHTS AND WE'D LOVE TO PUBLISH IT. JUST DROP IT OFF IN THE TIPS BOX IN MR. RILEY'S ROOM OR EMAIL AN EDITOR. ANONYMOUS CONTENT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. PLEASE UNDERSTAND THE GREEN PRIDE HAS THE RIGHT TO EDIT ALL COPY THAT RUNS IN THIS PUBLICATION.

New Hires, New Talent

De Soto's New Staff

SAMANTHA ESTES
STAFF WRITER

De Soto is welcoming a wave of fresh talent as new staff members who introduce unique expertise and energy into the building. Lainee Graham is the new counselor for students with last names starting with L-Q.

"Starting my career in USD 232 felt like 'coming home,' in a sense. It's a privilege to give back to my community in the same way others gave to me years ago," Graham said.

Graham has always wanted to help serve others, both in psychology and education, so she thought being a counselor would "be the best of both worlds."

Stephen Hudson, who has been the assistant tennis coach for DHS for years, has become a new behavior specialist para this year.

"I was a teacher before I was a para, and so this keeps me working with students, which is what I like to do, and hopefully one day I can be a teacher here as well," Hudson said.

Hudson graduated from De Soto and has children in the district. He said that he loves the community and that he would not want to be anywhere else.

Reagan Lathem is the new chemistry teacher, and though she is not originally from the district, she is excited to be in De Soto.

"I had heard that it was a really supportive district with an incredible community behind it," Lathem said. Lathem originally went to school to become a pharmacist but she ended up switching to education her second year of college.

Similarly to Lathem, the new shop teacher, Christopher Shannon, did not always want to be a teacher.

"I had only considered doing it in the last 10 years. I taught software

engineering to new college-hires at a corporation I worked at previously, but I didn't really think about teaching high school... Really what got me interested was the idea that I could share all of the knowledge I have attained over the years with students that will take it and make something new with it," Shannon said.

Claire Neuberger, the new Integrated Math 2 and IM2 Support teacher, is getting involved and settling in well from her move from Wisconsin.

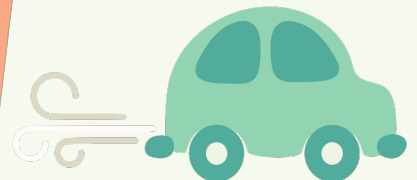
"So far I feel that I have a great group of students, and I am honestly just excited to help them learn some Geometry! I am also coaching volleyball here which has been a fun highlight to my year," Neuberger said.

Not only is Neuberger coaching volleyball, but so is the new English 11 and AP seminar teacher, Ryan Friend.

"Students are what makes this job fun, and so far, I think we have some of the very best! I'm also looking forward to coaching Volleyball and Softball," Friend said.

Harrison Smith, who teaches honors and on level English for 10th graders is also excited for his time at De Soto, a place he had always just driven past on his way to Lawrence.

"[I look forward to] building relationships with students and seeing them grow into adults at some point, and getting to know the staff. I still haven't met probably more than half of the staff, but I'm just trying to see everything they have to offer here," Smith said.



What Happens Next?








KAYLA TOLLY
OPINION EDITOR

With the upcoming 2024 Election, it is important to be informed about candidates.

Why is it important to vote?

“Voting is one of the most fundamental ways we can voice our opinion on the direction we want to see our nation going” says political participation teacher Ryan Robie. “In addition, when our nation votes as a whole, we are making it clear to our leaders that our voices are powerful together and we as citizens are engaged in the process,” Robie adds. “When we fail to speak, we lose our voice.” Finally, “when we vote, we are not only voting our own interest but for many who don’t have a vote including but not limited our children.” said Robie.



★ VIEWS & OPINIONS ★					
 DONALD TRUMP REPUBLICAN		VS		KAMALA HARRIS DEMOCRAT 	
MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN 				KAMALA WORKS FOR YOU 	
OPINION	Trump promises to “end inflation and make America affordable again.” He also promises to deliver lower interest rates and the president does not have control over that.	 ECONOMY	Harris said her top priority would be to try and reduce food and housing costs. She has promised to ban price gouging on groceries.		
	During his first term, Trump rolled back numerous environmental policies and protections.	 CLIMATE	As vice president Harris has helped pass the Inflation Reduction Act, which allocated millions towards climate investment.		
	Trump is a strong defender of the second admendment, “The right to bear arms.” Addressing The National Rifle Association in May, he said he was their best friend.	 GUN RIGHTS	Kamala has made preventing gun violence a key point. She and Tim Walz, both gun owners, often have advocated for tighter laws.		



How to register to vote if/when you're ready

You can register online, by mail, and or in person at your local election office.

Make sure you are registered to vote by October 15th if online, in-person local election office, or by mail.

Advanced mail ballot deadlines are October 29 - November 5.

Voting deadlines are November 5th.

You will need your drivers license or a state issued ID to register.

For more information, visit these resources:

[vote.org](https://www.vote.org)

[vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov)

myvoteinfo.voteks.org/VoterView



BROOKE MERMIS
ASSISTANT EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Seven, Going on Sixteen

Every year comes with new surprises...

As a new school year begins, everything that was once considered an abnormality over the summer falls back into place: football games, dances, rushing to make it to class on time after talking with friends. A big change that occurred over the summer was one that many people did not expect: the growth of the De Soto Diamonds Dance Team.

Whisperings fluttered along the bleachers of the main gym during the back-to-school assembly on Friday, August 16. The murmurs were variations of, "Wow, how did that happen?" or "They're bigger than the cheer team!" So how did this alteration come to be? Head coach Brianne Samuelson explains the thought process behind the decision to add new additions to the team as opposed to the seven-member team last year.

"[Mrs.] Mages and I had a 'Meet the Coach' and informational meeting prior to tryouts," Samuelson said. "One of the questions a parent asked was how many dancers we expected to take on the team...we guessed we would take around twelve. Little did we know how much talent was coming into tryouts!"

In addition to incorporating an assortment of skills through new dancers, freshman Kylie Mall discusses the significance of team chemistry during practice and on the dance floor.

"It's taught me that it's another family to be with," Mall said. "And it's a good place to do team bonding and meet a lot of people."

Having a larger group of dancers can add many benefits to the production and output of performances, but it can also be an adjustment to the

collaboration and choreography required for the team. Junior Diamond Vivian Riss emphasizes her impact on the group in a positive light.

"I would say the growth really pushed me to be a leader with so many underclassmen," Riss said. "I have had to help guide them, so I would say it is really pushing my leadership."

On the flip side, learning to adapt to a sixteen-member team in a short summer has arisen as an unexpected challenge for some. Samuelson comments on these obstacles that have impelled her to make proactive decisions for the Diamonds more often.

"Coming in as a new coach to a program can be difficult by itself," Samuelson said. "Every student is different and unique so navigating a team of sixteen dancers...has helped me learn, reminded me of my tools and knowledge I haven't used recently, and has helped me develop and improve my coaching strategies!"

Despite the difficulties of coaching a dance squad with differing techniques and skill sets, it all amasses to bring about an opportunity for improvement and learning. Senior, and captain of the dance team, Brynlee Carson presents her view on how the team has assisted in her growth and development as a dancer.

"It's kind of made me a better dancer," Carson said. "...I'm now challenged by more people, not even as just a dancer, but being able to lead."

Because dance can never be just about the stress or tribulations relative to modifying to a bigger bunch, a little bit of flare needs to be added to enhance the cooperation of the team as a whole and make the experience of performing

with each other that much sweeter. Junior Tatum Wilson explains what she is excited for the most this season in regards to performing and competing.

"I am looking forward to performing our hip-hop dance at the homecoming assembly and also basketball season performances," Wilson said.

Coach Samuelson also provides her input on her idea of extra dazzle and fun for this upcoming Diamond season.

"I am looking forward to watching the team bond and work together, creating a family and a legacy!" Samuelson said.

Despite the hardships that often come with regulation and accommodation to new people, the dance team for De Soto High School has proven that it has not swayed them and that they will continue to grow stronger together. The muttering and mumbling of the students asking about the growth of the team will no longer have to be questioned. Although there were once seven, nothing shines brighter than sixteen diamonds.



Freshman Melanie Morrison walks in the De Soto Days parade on Saturday, August 31.

Photo by Sadie Clarke

On the Road to Success: The DHS Football Team

SPORTS || THE GREEN PRIDE

RIA HUDSON

ARTS/ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

Football, the beloved sport at De Soto High School, is starting a new season with the addition of brand-new players. Behind the games, there is an entire community of coaches and players that all contribute to the core values of the team.

Within this community, the time commitment is extraordinary. Joel Thaemert, a teacher and assistant football coach at DHS, comments on the extent of preparation.

"The coaches that do the weights in the summer, and practice 4 days a week, for an hour a day. Some coaches are up here a long time in the summer," said Thaemert. "And then during the season, I don't know how many hours, watching film, breaking down film, planning for practice and game planning for the opponent. It's a lot of hours that I'd rather not count."

"They're great guys who pay attention to detail that are going to show up and lead by example, they're going to be disciplined, and accountable. By doing these things right, success is going to become a byproduct," said King.

Although the commitment may be extreme, the coaches are well-versed in their sport. Head football coach and teacher at DHS, Brian King, talks about how long he has coached.

"I coached 20 years, but I've been at De Soto 16 years, and as a head coach [for] 12," said King.

Because the coaches put in such a tremendous effort, they have several favorite moments from last year. For instance, students from the class of 2024 on last year's team made a positive impact on the coaching staff.

"It was just a great senior class. I could go on and on and on, it was a really fun group," said Thaemert.

Some of these good qualities

from the team comes from the leadership of the coaches. Their principles are what makes it so memorable. King explains how he and the other football coaches instruct their athletes to express the morals they have set on and off the field.

"We teach kids to do the little things right. In the community, in the classroom, on the football field, and in the hallways. They're great guys who pay attention to detail that are going to show up and lead by example, they're going to be disciplined, and accountable. By doing these things right, success is going to become a byproduct," said King.

Moving forward, the coaches are optimistic for what's in store for the upcoming season. Todd Hessong, an assistant football coach and teacher, speaks on what he is most excited to see.

"I love Friday nights, getting to play, [and] getting to see the senior group. I started coaching them in basketball [when they were] in 8th grade. So getting to see a lot of those guys play as seniors now, it's fun," said Hessong. "They're all great competitors, and so I'm looking forward to competing."

The coaches aren't the only ones optimistic about this year. Drew Parks, a senior at DHS and quarterback on the football team voices his hopefulness about the upcoming season. "I'm looking forward to seeing what we can do. And I think we've got a lot of good players, and I'm excited to see how good we can be," said Parks.

In light of these beliefs, joining the football team comes highly recommended by the players. Parks speaks on how they exhibit these values and welcome people to join.

"I just want to encourage anyone who even thinks about playing the sport to get out and play the sport. Maybe it's not just football, but anything. It's a great way to meet new people, and make new friends," said Parks.

Ultimately, the football team at DHS has always been about teaching athletes how to be a good player, on and off the field. It is more important now than ever to keep up this long-standing tradition.



Right before the play, the DHS football team gets into position.

Photo by Brooke Wagner.



Joey Meehan, Drew Parks, Ben Parks await the start of the game.

Photo by Brooke Wagner.



The DHS Football team huddles together before the game.

Photo by Brooke Wagner.

Bumper-to-Bumper

Traffic in De Soto peaks during school hours

MADDIE HELLERICH

ONLINE CO-EDITOR

Each year at De Soto High School, many changes are made, just like the addition of parking spots for staff and students, a roundabout, the new Minga system, and more. However, every year, some kind of construction is going on as well.

Not everyone is affected by traffic, like Mrs. Stanton,

"I arrive and leave at different times than the students. I really don't have any traffic issues!" Stanton said.

While staff may not have a difficult time with their drives to and from school, some students

face a bigger issue. Traffic at De Soto High School during school hours has become extremely backed up, potentially leading to accidents and tardiness.

New driver, sophomore Charlotte Daniels encounters other obstacles,

"I have often had to make quick stops and overall quick decisions. Sometimes, the traffic has been so bad I have arrived later than I would've hoped," Daniels said.

Traffic during school hours

presents a difficult challenge due to various factors, particularly if you are new to the system. The amount of vehicles alone during school hours is one crucial contributor, especially considering same time drop-offs, pick ups, and student drivers entering and leaving all at the same time.

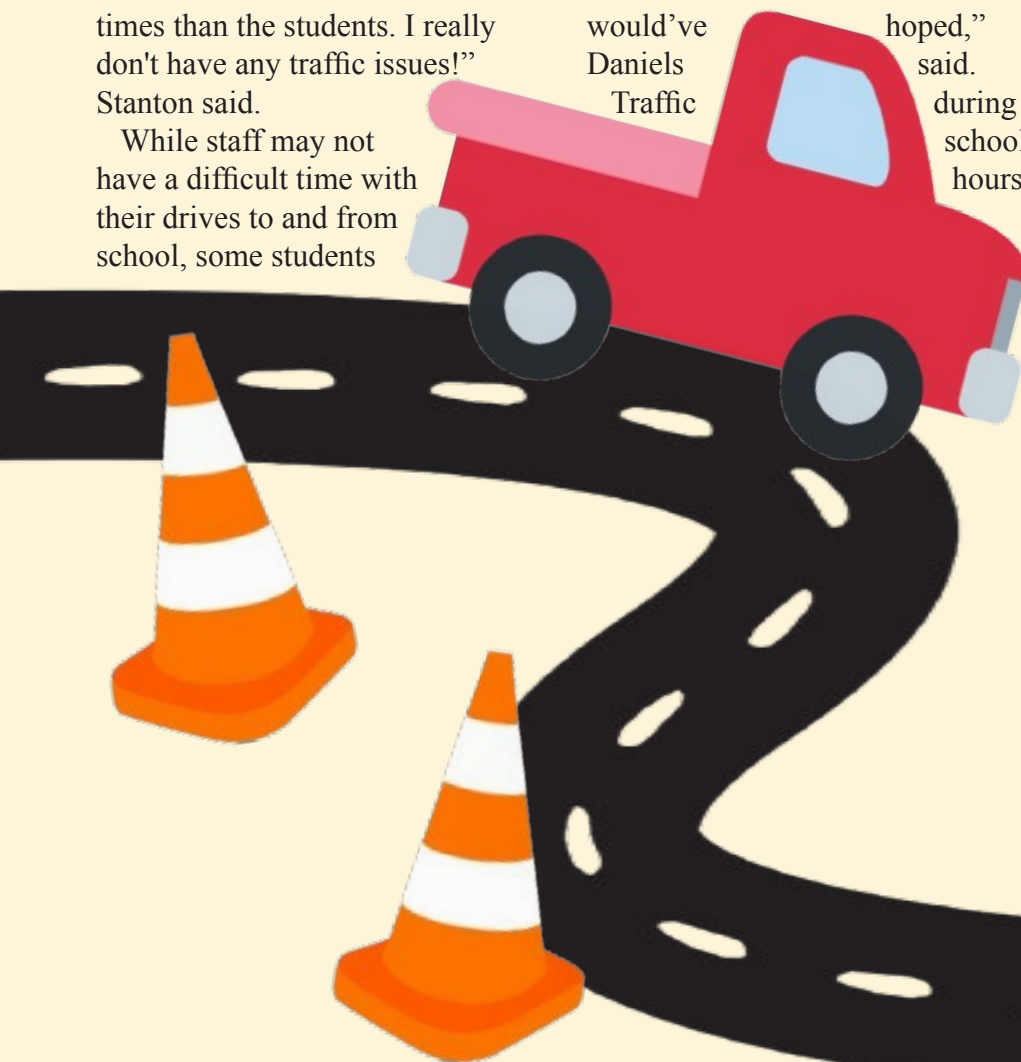
Some students have more experience than others,

"There have been added stoplights and signs and also the new roundabout. There has been a lot of construction changing ways of traffic." Senior Mishayla Guile said.

The dedicated areas around De Soto to accommodate travel needs often leads to extensive backup. While critical for safety, the school zone speed limits and posted pedestrian crossing signs, these factors also contribute to the congestion. Some drivers unwillingly add an extra ten minutes to their trip to the school and back home.

Bussing also slows down other drivers by waiting on students to get on and off, as well as consistent stops.

One of the biggest issues is the behavior of drivers during



I have often had to make quick stops and overall quick decisions.
- Charlotte Daniels

these peak hours that cause complications.

Many drivers become impatient while in a rush to get to specific destinations on time and may disregard traffic rules; this leads to bigger problems. Students of the school are not the only ones facing this, but parents are as well. They are in a rush to get their children to school while continuing with their day, despite work or other planned activities.

This instance causes additional delays and an overall hectic traffic environment. The never ending effect of these factors makes traffic during school hours difficult to work with and particularly challenging. This kind of backup heavily affects some students trying to get to school on time,

“With traffic, it can take me anywhere from 25 to 40 minutes to get to school and without traffic generally it’s about 20 minutes,” Junior Nathan McKinney said.

There is a need for efficient traffic management and well designed drop-off and pick-up procedures that

could certainly make everything flow more smoothly. Staggered school start and end times, a plan for working around traffic between schools, and better public transportation are all options to limit the commotion.



With traffic, it can take me anywhere from 25 to 40 minutes to get to school.
- Nathan McKinney

Singing Sensations

Voce Takes the Stage

LIBBY MEYER
NEWS EDITOR

At De Soto High School, a group of audition selected students make up what is known as Voce. This gifted group highlights their talents at many events throughout the school year. As of the 2024-2025 school year, their numbers have nearly doubled.

Mindy Fry, the coach of Voce, attributes their near double in numbers to the chaos that began in 2020 and continues presently.

"There have just been a lot of things that have made it difficult for our program to recover but I feel like we are finally climbing out of that hole," Fry said. "So while Voce did shrink a little bit last year due to some of those factors our program is finally grouping again so I like to call it rightsizing, coming back to normal."

Having a smaller than average group of singers created problems during practices and events. Senior Renee Mitchell firmly believes that the expansion is one, if not the best, thing that could happen for the program.

"I'm really happy that Voce is a larger group this year. Last year, we only had 10 girls, which meant that if one or two people were gone, the entire sound of the choir was off. This year, we're up to 23, which means we can tackle songs with more part splits and more people get to benefit from being in DHS' top choir," Mitchell said.

The hope is that the growth of Voce will lead to an expansion in all aspects of the choir department, benefiting not just Voce, but the department as a whole.

"Voce as the audition group tends to set the standard and set goals for the other younger or less experienced choirs to shoot for. So the stronger that group is it trickles down and the stronger everybody else will be," Fry said.

Even though Voce has gotten bigger, the members of the group



Members of Voce pose for a group photo during class.

Photo by Sadie Clarke



Fry guides her Voce students as they sing during class.

Photo by Sadie Clarke



have still been singing together for a long time. The group's bonds that have formed help them to perform even better on stage.

"They are also really supportive of each other so it's going to be a really tight-knit group, and that's what I'm excited about. We are here to build memories as well as skills," Fry said.

Voce is more than just a singing



group; it is a group of close knit people who all share a common interest. Voce forms a community of like-minded individuals pushing each other to be better, which draws more singers year after year.

"People should join Voce because it's a great way to grow as a musician. Singing with other people who are really serious and passionate about music pushes you to be better in a way that you don't always see in other choirs," Mitchell said.

Not only does Voce foster a great community within the group and it helps everyone get involved in DHS activities at school. Junior Cadence Shrout believes that Voce has improved so many aspects of her high school career.

"It is a great experience to have. It is improving your vocal, your mental, experiences from the school. You are more involved. It's great for resumes and you round out yourself as a student. It is an improvement in so many things and is overall just a good thing to do," Shrout said.

Not only is Voce as a whole an exceptionally amazing group of wonderful, kind, and talented people, the singing that takes place within the class has a myriad of magnificent benefits as well.

"Music is really great for the brain and it releases dopamine just like exercise does. It makes kids feel better. It is stress relief... So I just think it is really important for students to build something into their day, whether that be choir, art, strength and conditioning. Something that allows them to mentally have a break, I just think those things are really important for students," Fry said.

Overall, the expansion of Voce is wonderful for not only current students within the group, but for future students as well.



Band Takes 'Leap of Faith' With New Show

JASON NEUBAUER

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Even before the beginning of the year, the De Soto High School Marching Band has been hard at work preparing their 2024 show, "Leap of Faith."

Band season started back on July 24th, with the beginning of their pre-camp, and training for those in leadership positions a day earlier. Additionally, from the beginning of the official school year, band members have had rehearsals every green day morning on the football field, while also having evening rehearsals on Tuesdays.

While they did have a successful season last year, the band experienced some struggles.

Senior Rose Rulifson has been drum major for two years now and can testify to some of the challenges she specifically faced.

"I was frustrated a lot last year when things didn't go well and I think this year I'm trying to be a little more focused on having fun rather than being perfect all the time," said Rulifson. "I've worked really hard to be perfect, but you can't."

Additionally, there was some internal conflict within the band.

"Last year, we were certainly divided throughout the sections and just in general. It's hard to tell when you're a drum major because you're so caught up in all of your responsibilities in your own world and it's hard to notice what's going on with everything else," said Rulifson. "But, it was even apparent last year that things were not very good and that we were very competitive with each other."

However, senior drum major Claire McGinn describes a number of things that the leadership team has been doing to make things work better.

"Definitely making things less competitive and more family-oriented,"

With the upcoming season, the band has a lot to look forward to.

said McGinn. "Everything is a lot better when we work together and when we're appreciating one another for our skills instead of trying to size one another up."

With the departure of the class of 2024, the band has slightly shrunk in size. However, the new incoming freshmen have been eager to start marching.

Phillip Kaul, the assistant director of bands here at De Soto, felt optimistic about the arrival of new marchers.

"This is a great incoming freshman class. It's a little bit of a smaller class for us, but every single student has contributed and been pulling their weight," said Kaul. "I think that [for] every group of freshmen it's kind of a shock to the system whenever they first start. But, this group has done a really awesome job of taking that challenge and running with it."

There is a lot to be excited about for this year's band season as well. The band will be performing at numerous competitions this year, including one at Blue Springs South on September 21st and another at

Emporia State for the KBA Marching Championships on October 19th.

McGinn and Rulifson shared what they are most excited about, and why they look forward to those events.

"I honestly think [I'm excited for] games and competitions. Like when we performed on Friday, [September 6th,] that was one of the first times I was like 'Wow, this is like really really cool,'" said McGinn. "Practices are fun, but [at] games, you feel like you're a part of something really. When you're all together and working it's one thing, it's really awesome."

"I'm looking forward to Olathe [Marching Invitational], for similar reasons," said Rulifson. "We've been going to Olathe all four of years that I've been in high school and so it's familiar and nostalgic and usually it's just a really great time, so I'm excited to see how we do there."

Despite prior struggles, the De Soto High School Marching Band has been eagerly preparing for another successful season, and looking forward to new memories and new members.



Junior Norah Kelly plays during the football game on September 6th.

Photo by Brooke Wagner



A group of trombones play during the De Soto Days parade.

Photo by Sadie Clarke

SAMANTHA ESTES & BROOKE MERMIS
STAFF WRITER & ASSISTANT EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Phone Policy? What's That?

A look into districts' technology policies

The rumors, the gossip, and the whispers are spreading: the phone policy at De Soto High School and in other districts is all too discerning. The talk of the town seems to revolve around the procedures being implemented in school districts such as Olathe, Spring Hill, and of course, De Soto. Currently, students are not allowed to be on their phones during class; they are only to be used during seminar, in the hallways, and at lunch.

The outlooks on this topic vary between pupils, educators, administrators, and families alike. Regarding the harsher limitations on phone usage in Kansas schools, many individuals have opinions on how it should be handled.

DHS Principal Samuel Ruff explains how the phone policy came about and how it is regulated at De Soto High School.

"Our current 'electronic device' policy was actually created several years ago, at least before the 2022-23 school year," Ruff said. "Last year, collaboration on effective management of student phones led to multiple requests by staff for the caddies...the caddies help students make an active choice and commitment to not being on their phones during class."

Despite the administration believing less phone time will benefit classroom environments, students have a different point of view on phone usage within the classroom. Senior Kira Lynch displays her grievances with not being able to use her phone in classes.

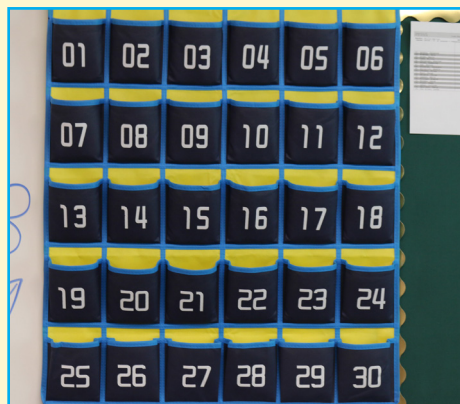
"I feel like the policy is a little strict. Sometimes I need to get on the phone to respond to a text...I feel like if it's brief and not prolonged then being on your phone in class is okay," Lynch said.

Other students, like senior Lucy Brandmeyer, share similar sentiments with those of the administrators that first organized the phone policy.

"I think the phone policy is necessary in classrooms. It could encourage me to get homework done as opposed to just scrolling on my phone," Brandmeyer said.

Many teachers in the school have been adding phone caddies in their classrooms for students to place their phones in their specific slots. The phone caddies have typically been aimed towards extra credit as an incentive for the student body to not be drawn to their devices. AP Language and Composition teacher Phillip Hamilton has implemented this concept into his classroom.

"...90% or more of my students take advantage and put their phone there [in the phone caddy], and it has led to just an incredible peace of mind," Hamilton said.



Phillip Hamilton's phone caddy in his classroom.
Photo by Samantha Estes

Neighboring districts' phone policy approaches have also been a source of conversation around the Johnson County School Districts. Specifically Olathe, numerous schools have decided to tighten their grips on students' phones by executing a similar plan to De Soto's. Olathe West senior Jameson Mangold emphasizes what occurred in her school that could have prompted a

stricter policy.

"I think the switch-up happened mainly because of distractions in the classroom and kids not ever working, and also because of cyberbullying. They [Olathe administration] really don't want videos and pictures being taken anymore," Mangold said.

Similarly to other schools, administrators at DHS have noticed a change in management towards phones outside of the district. Building coordinator Cathryn Monroe compares her past experiences at her previous schools and pupils' behavior to those at De Soto.

"It was really hard. As a teacher, it was disheartening to see kids constantly on their phone while you're trying to teach them," Monroe said. "It was frustrating as an educator as well because you're repeating yourself seven, eight, nine, ten times because seven, eight, nine, ten different kids are on their phone and stopping at different times to ask clarifying questions."

Due to the increase of occasional complaints from certain students, desire for change in regards to this system has elevated. Ruff allows an insight towards the future of the device policy at DHS.

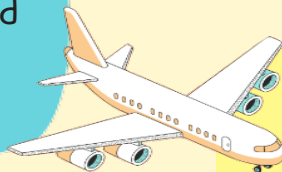
"There are no plans for changes right now. We are fortunate in the number of students that are able to comply with the expectation to stay off the device during class," Ruff said.

The intentions of administrators and teachers of the districts in Kansas are to allow students to expand their academic portfolio while still being able to learn in a classroom environment. Despite varying opinions from students, the phone policy at De Soto High School is here to stay.



"Our current electronic device was actually created several years ago."

Samuel Ruff



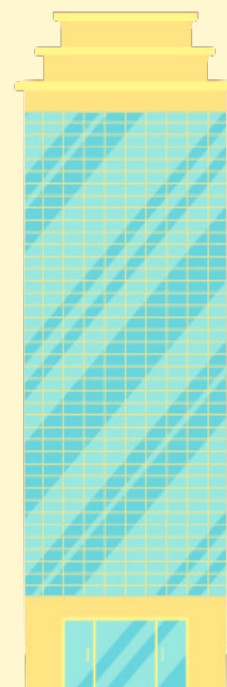
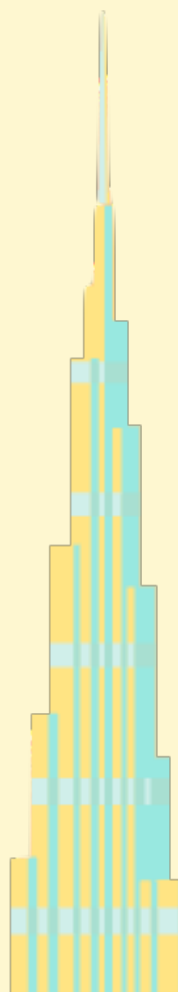
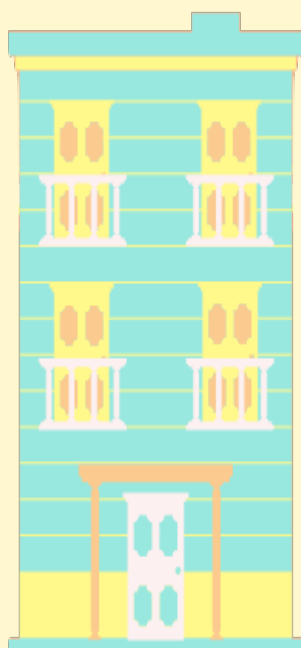
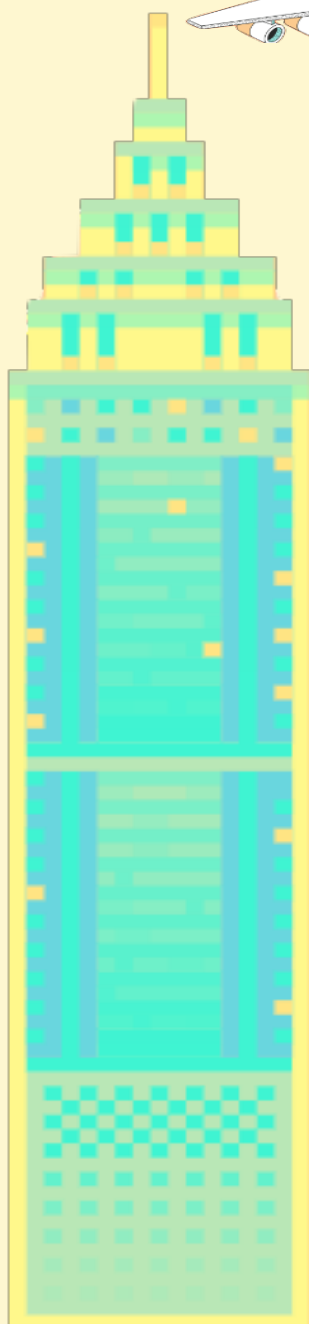
"I think the phone policy is necessary in classrooms."

Lucy Brandmeyer



"There are no plans for changes right now."

Samuel Ruff



All Packed & Ready to Go!

De Soto High School seniors show off their final backpacks of their high school careers



From left to right: backpacks of seniors Elaina Gilliland, Brooke Wagner, and Reagan Sabo. *Photos by Sadie Clarke*



Lydia VanBooven and Emma McCracken smile with their Disney princess and Bluey backpacks. *Photo by Sadie Clarke*



Evan Fleet and Gray Dondzila sport matching Pikachu bags. *Photo by Sadie Clarke*



Swea Bonnstetter strikes a pose with her shark backpack. *Photo by Sadie Clarke*



Blake Englehart carries his Minion bag. *Photo by Sadie Clarke*



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Students who are interested in attending the career panels must register in Minga by searching "Career Panel" in activities.

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Song of The Summer

The results are in! Here are the top songs of summer 2024 as voted by DHS students.

As we settle into the school year, we can look back and reflect on the summer that just passed us by. Often those memories we have of being by the pool, hanging out with friends, or on vacation are closely associated with certain songs.

For example, how songs such as “Dance The Night Away” by Dua Lipa or “Boy’s a Liar Pt. 2” by PinkPantheress and Ice Spice can automatically transport people back to summer 2023. The music might make you think about Barbienheimer, the Grimace shake, record heat waves, and any other significant moments from that period of time.

So that leaves us now with an important question; what is the song of the summer for 2024? What will remind us of the experiences we once had?

A select group of students at DHS were polled regarding what they believed the most popular song of the summer was. The votes are in, and they include a wide variety of music across all genres

Coming in at a tie, three top-charting singles take fourth place.

This includes, “Nights Like This” by Kid Laroï, “I Love You, I’m Sorry” by Gracie Abrams, and “Good Luck, Babe!” by Chappell Roan. Each earned 4% of the total votes.



SUMMER 2024



5.23.24 - 8.14.24

Slightly above its competition, earning 6% of votes in the third place spot is “Please Please Please” by Sabrina Carpenter.

Next up, taking second place is “HOT TO GO!” by Chappell Roan, earning approximately 10% of votes.

Before the reveal of the number one song, let’s cover some honorable mentions that were just short of making the top four.

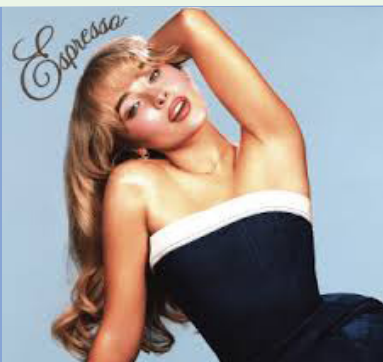
The list includes: “Too Sweet” by Hozier, “28” by Zach Bryan, “We Are The People” by Empire of The Sun, and “Lies Lies Lies” by Morgan Wallen.

The title of “Song of The Summer” goes to a song that has raked in almost double the amount of votes as the number two spot. Survey participants described it as “viral”, “upbeat”, and “very summer-y”.

With about 20% of the votes, “Espresso” by Sabrina Carpenter is officially the De Soto High School student-body appointed song of summer 2024.

RESULTS:

ARTS/ENTERTAINMENT || THE GREEN PRIDE



1. Espresso
Sabrina
Carpenter
20%



2. HOT TO GO!
Chappell
Roan
10%



3. Please Please
Please
Sabrina
Carpenter
6%



4. NIGHTS LIKE
THIS
The Kid LAROI
4%



4. I Love You, I'm
Sorry
Gracie
Abrams
4%



4. Good Luck,
Babe
Chappell
Roan
4%

HONORABLE MENTIONS



Exchange Students Pull Into American Life

With a new country comes a variety of new experiences and changes for foreign exchange students.

CLAIRE THOMPSON
STAFF REPORTER

Since the 1950s, millions of foreign exchange students have come to the United States, melding the experience of their home culture with American life. This year, De Soto High School (DHS) has accepted four students for a multicultural education.

Audrey Jacquot is one of these exchange students. Being both French and Swiss, Jacquot has a unique view of the life of an American high schooler.

“Honestly, it’s pretty accurate,” Jacquot said, when asked if DHS matches her idea of an American high school. “What surprised me was the dress code when I saw that on the website. But actually here, they don’t really apply it.”

However, the dress code was not the only thing foreign exchange students were surprised by. German exchange student Daphne Wuensch discovered a key difference in the school day structure.

“It’s different because we stay in one group of people,” Wuensch said.

“And teachers come to us and teach us a specific subject. We don’t get to choose anything...so we have to do everything: math, physics, chemistry, all of that.”

This was a fact shared by a few of the students; back in their home countries they could not pick classes and were instead assigned ones. German exchange student Veronika Gloser noticed this difference.

“It’s easier, mostly. And you can choose your subjects, which is not possible in Germany,” Gloser said. “We can choose, like there are two things and we can choose one of them, but it’s still



Audrey Jacquot



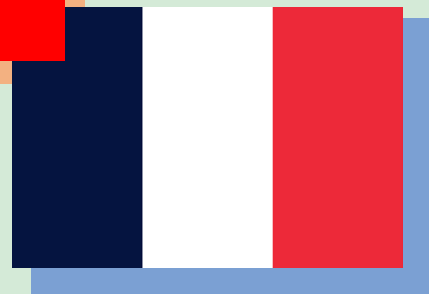
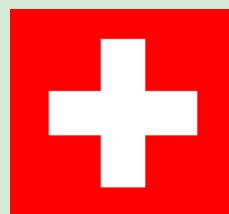
Daphne Wuensch



Veronika Gloser



Lasse Mahler



required.”

Compared to schools in other countries, DHS has a wide variety of art and culture classes to choose from.

“I think you learn a lot of things. It’s not maybe as complicated, you have to work, but still you learn a lot of skills like painting, sculpting, fashion, interior design,” Jacquot said. “I think you’re more focused on culture than we are.”

Classes are not the only way exchange students are getting involved at DHS.

“I’m playing football right now,” German exchange student Lasse Mahler said. “[And in the spring,] I’m going to play tennis because I play tennis in Germany.”

Exchange students bring many different cultural backgrounds to DHS. They bring value to the community with their involvement in extracurricular activities and unique views on the lives of American high school students.



The Rise of Brainrot

FEATURE || THE GREEN PRIDE

How the Humor of Younger Generations is Evolving

RIA HUDSON

ARTS/ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

As social media has become increasingly popular, so has the lingo that comes along with it. Referred to as “brainrot”, the younger generations have been turning their vocabulary into something that the older generations deem unrecognizable.

“Brainrot” is commonly used by people who are known as “chronically online”. In other words, social media significantly contributes to this new language spoken by the younger generations.

As far as why it is called brainrot, it’s pretty easy to guess. Kids who spend their days scrolling through TikTok or Instagram aren’t actually having any critical thought. Not only that, but it makes it harder to get off because the algorithm is designed to keep the consumer on for as long as they can.

According to NBC News interviewee Mitch Prinstein, “the platforms seem to be designed to keep kids engaged for as long as possible, to keep them on there. And kids are just not able to resist those impulses as effectively as adults.”

Spending so much time online is proven to have negative impacts on young, impressionable children. Not only children are impacted by this though; older teenagers and adults also have reported feeling worse after being online.

However, the internet isn’t all bad. Social media is a popular way to stay connected, especially with younger generations that rely on technology to connect more.

Nevertheless, some things such as the evolved humor that comes with social media isn’t always what comes to mind first for most people. New sayings such as “skibidi toilet” and “what the sigma” are becoming mainstream as

accepted forms of humor.

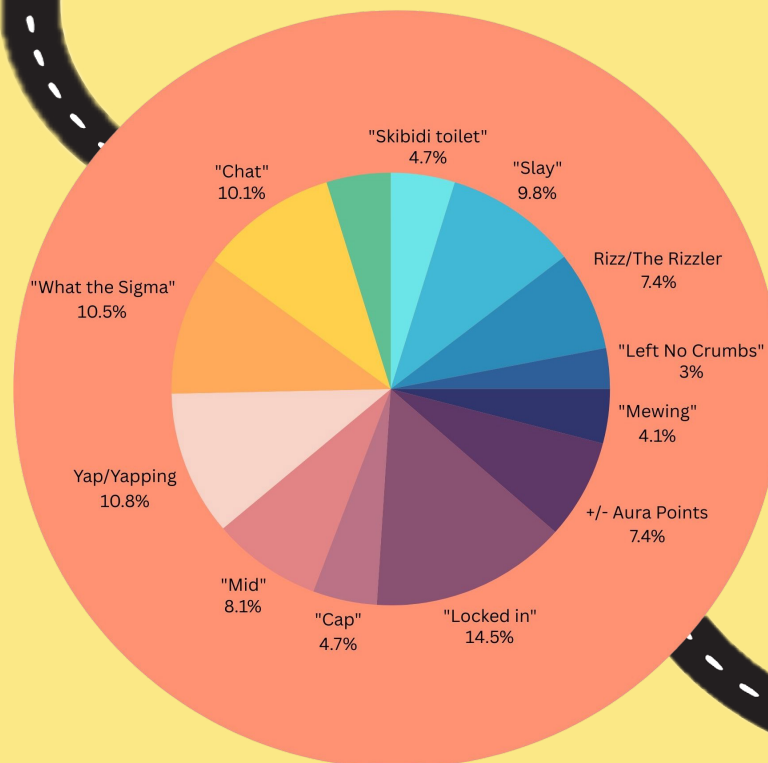
So why is it so popular? What makes these random slang terms so funny?

According to Vox, “It’s like starting an inside joke with your friends and your entire circle continuing to use it”.

It allows teens to feel more connected through their own language. Even if they don’t run in the same circles, most teens can bond better if they are speaking with the same terms that everyone else is. “Brainrot” allows a sense of secrecy away from the majority of older people not clued into the newest “lingo”.

In addition, it is a fun way to make everyone feel more included. Getting to speak in the same language as each other can make more people feel comforted.

Overall, the evidence points to “brainrot” not really being a bad thing, but instead, being able to allow people feel included in on conversations they weren’t before. So why can’t everybody start to use it?



Featured on the left is a pie chart with the “brainrot” terms most used out of 80 people in De Soto High School.

Fall Sports Fever



Above, Junior Collin Champlain, Freshman Bridger Reimche, and Junior Devin Murrell competing at Rim Rock Farm in Lawrence on September 28.
Photo by Kayla Carroll



Junior Zella Kiewiet sinks the putt on Dubs Dread Golf Course on October 1.
Photo by Sophia Mateo

Senior Captains Keegan Moerike and Brady Lum point teammates down the field to defend another player in a home game against Lawrence High on September 5.
Photo by Jason Neubauer



Junior Cadence Shrout leaps up to get a kill against Eudora in a match at home on September 3. *Photo by Ria Hudson*



Junior Lydia Cross running at Rim Rock Farm in Lawrence on September 28. *Photo by Kayla Carol*

Junior Ellie Gress gets ready to return the ball at the home varsity Wildcat Invitational on September 28. *Photo by Brooke Wagner*



Senior Blake Englehart, Senior Casey Bowlin, Junior Angel Rivera, and Junior Change Zigmant line up on defense against Piper on September 20. *Photo by Emma Stapp*



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Duck, Duck, Goose

The arrival of DHS' new therapy dog

FEATURE || THE GREEN PRIDE

LIBBY MEYER
NEWS EDITOR

Recently, De Soto High School welcomed a new furry member to the staff. Goose, English teacher Kerri Lauxman's dog, is a certified therapy dog. DHS welcomed him into the school the last few months of the 2023-2024 school year and the students have loved having him around.

The first question everybody probably wants to ask is: what exactly is a therapy dog? The American Animal Hospital Association states that "A therapy dog promotes improvement in human physical, social, emotional, or cognitive function."

Therapy dogs bring a multitude of benefits to their given environment. The Alliance of Therapy Dogs has found

that the benefits are glaringly obvious in a classroom environment by, "improving attendance, problem-solving abilities, and improved calmness."

Mrs. Lauxman believes that therapy dogs are essential to her classroom environment. She also knows that her therapy dog helps students succeed in the classroom.

"There is a lot of science behind the benefits of therapy dogs. Being in the presence of a loving animal reduces anxiety and blood pressure and stress and boosts serotonin and those happiness chemicals in our brain," Lauxman said.

Principal Sam Ruff's experience with therapy dogs has helped him embrace therapy dogs within DHS.

"So, maybe two years ago I had my dog, Indy, get trained to be a therapy dog. My wife and I used Indy through a program in Lawrence, where she went different places to provide an opportunity for someone to pet a dog," Ruff said.

The benefits of therapy dogs are overwhelmingly obvious, not only through studies but also within the classroom. Senior Jerry Gutierrez is one of Mrs. Lauxman's seminar students and has observed the benefits Goose provides firsthand.

"I feel like he brought in more of a positivity, and when people see him and they walk in they feel different because there are not any other classes here at De Soto that have a dog in them," Gutierrez said. "I feel like having that is something that is different and brings more joy in this classroom."

Not only has Gutierrez observed the benefits, but Mrs. Lauxman has noticed a change in her students since the introduction of her furry family member.

"I think they have embraced kindness and compassion and just some levity. Having an animal in the room



Goose sits calmly with junior Maria Hudson during class.

Photo by Keri Lauxman



just makes the learning environment just more fun," Lauxman said. "You don't have to take everything so seriously. He just reminds us of what really matters."

The introduction of Goose into the DHS community has been fiercely positive. However, there have been a few concerns regarding his introduction.

"We did have to think through what happens if you have a student that is allergic. Nobody has really complained about it but there is some concern that we might have a student that might be allergic to pet hair, and so we always have to think through that. So far we have been lucky," Ruff said.

However, overall Goose has been a wonderful addition to the environment of DHS and has adjusted wonderfully to his new working life.

"I love his personality, that he is just always looking to have fun. He loves everybody here and he loves meeting new people and just being a part of the workday," Lauxman said.



Tangled Up at Homecoming



Homecoming king and queen, Pierce Kreihbel and Brynlee Carson pose after the 2024 crowning at the Homecoming football game. *Photo by Amy Riley*



Junior Lily Sphar dances with sophomore L.C. at the Homecoming dance. *Photo by Amy Riley*



Senior Carli Miller prepares for a jump during the halftime performance at the Homecoming game. *Photo by Amy Riley*



Wildcat quarterback Drew Parks takes the snap while the offensive line moves into position for the play. *Photo by Amy Riley*



De Soto Diamonds Dance team performs their hip-hop routine during halftime at the Homecoming football game. *Photo by Amy Riley*



Senior Homecoming candidates Brooke Gipson, Blake Englehart, Lydia VanBovven, Drew Parks, Gray Dondzila, Sydney Coffman, Brynlee Carson, and Pierce Kreihbel at the Homecoming dance. *Photo by Amy Riley*



Students partake in a congo line at the Homecoming dance. *Photo by Amy Riley*