

Dodgeland MS/HS Family Newsletter

JANUARY 2026

Hello Dodgeland Middle/High School Families and Happy December!

And just like that, 2025 is coming to an end! It has been a great year at Dodgeland Middle/High School and I can't wait to see what 2026 brings!

This month's update contains a wide variety of important information for all of our families. I want to highlight a few here before you scroll down to read them in their entirety.



- Please double check the important dates and get them on your calendars. When we return from break, there are a ton of exciting and important events!
- You will see a fairly comprehensive article below regarding vaping that I hope you all get the chance to read. In the last few weeks we have seen a significant uptick in the number of vapes students are bringing to school, both containing nicotine and THC. Health and safety is at the forefront for our students and we need the help of our families to stop this trend!

As we enter into our winter break, I want to take a moment to wish all of you a joyful, safe and meaningful Holiday Season! I hope all of our students take the time to rest up, recharge, and come back in the new year with energy and excitement to finish out the first semester!

See you in 2026!

– Mr. Gischia
#DodgelandProud



Dec 22-Jan 2 ~ Winter Break

Jan 7 @ 4pm-8pm ~ Pizza Ranch Fundraiser/Beaver Dam - MS DC Trip

Jan 12 @ 5pm-8pm ~ Culver's Fundraiser/Beaver Dam - MS DC Trip

Jan 14 @ 7:30 am -2:00 pm ~ NHS Blood Drive

Jan 21 ~ 12:30 Early Release/End of Semester

Jan 26 @ 6:30pm ~ School Board Meeting

Feb 2 @ 5pm-8pm ~ Culver's Fundraiser/Beaver Dam - MS DC Trip

Feb 11 @ 4 pm-7:30 pm ~ Parent/Teacher Conferences

Feb 11 @ 6pm in IMC ~ Junior Planning Conference

Feb 16 ~ No School - Professional Development Day

Feb 23 @ 6:30 pm ~ School Board Meeting

March 20 ~ End of 3rd Quarter

March 23 @ 6:30 pm ~ School Board Meeting

March 30-April 3 ~ Spring Break

March 22 ~ No School - Professional Development Day

April 27 @ 6:30 pm ~ School Board Meeting

May 13 @ 7:30 am -2:00 pm ~ NHS Blood Drive

May 18 @ 6:30 pm ~ School Board Meeting

May 25 ~ Memorial Day

May 28 ~ Early Release/Last Day of School

School Operational Referendum Coming in April

On December 8th, 2025, the Dodgeland School Board approved a resolution to ask voters in April 2026, if they would support \$700,000 in additional operational funding. It's not a secret that the school funding formula in Wisconsin simply does not benefit rural school districts like Dodgeland. For this reason, we surveyed parents and community members earlier this fall to seek feedback on how they would like us to plan for the future to ensure we offer the educational program they expect, and our children deserve. The results of the survey can be found on our website by clicking on this link: [Dodgeland Exchange](#)

Stay tuned for more information in the weeks and months ahead. We want you to have all the information you need before casting your vote, so you can make an informed decision for your child(ren) on April 7, 2026.



**DON'T MISS OUT:
GET ALL THE LATEST UPDATES
AND ACCURATE INFORMATION**



VISIT THE DODGELAND EXCHANGE: [HTTPS://WWW.DODGELAND.K12.WI.US/DISTRICT/DODGELAND-EXCHANGE.CFM](https://www.dodgeland.k12.wi.us/district/dodgeland-exchange.cfm)

Click Here To View The Dodgeland Exchange



2026–2027 Course Selection Planning

It's hard to believe we're already looking ahead to the **2026–2027 school year!** During the months of **January and February**, students will begin the course selection process for the upcoming school year. This is an exciting time to explore interests, set goals, and plan for future success.

Please watch for additional information regarding important dates, deadlines, and next steps more details will be shared soon!

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Junior Planning Conference 2026

What: Junior Planning Conference

When: February 11, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Where: IMC

The annual Junior Planning Conference is designed for juniors and their parents/guardians and focuses on preparing students for what's ahead after high school. During this informative evening, families will learn about upcoming college and career readiness opportunities and important next steps in the planning process.

What to Expect:

- Guidance on college and career planning
- Information about the ACT
- Senior year course planning
- Insights from representatives from both the four-year college system and the technical college system

The presentation will be led by Stephanie Buss, High School Counselor, along with college system representatives, to ensure families have clear, helpful information to support their student's future goals.

If you are unable to attend the event and would like to schedule an individual meeting, please contact Stephanie Buss at buss@dodgeland.k12.wi.us. Families who are unable to attend either the event or an individual meeting can be assured that the school counselor will meet with students in small groups to review the information presented, and the Junior Planning Conference folder will be sent home.

We look forward to partnering with you as we help students plan for a successful future!

Lunch Visits:

January 7th- Michels Corporation

February 18th -US Marine Corp

Seniors! Scholarships!

- Dollars for Scholars Program & Dodgeland Community Scholarships (March-April)
- Check with employers, clubs or organizations you or your family are associated with (ex. Snowmobile club- AWSC)
- Check your email often for scholarship information from Mrs. Buss and the [Scholarship Opportunities Document](#).
- Check the school you are interested in for New Freshmen Scholarships or Scholarship programs
- Never pay to apply for a scholarship

Click for Scholarship Opportunities

Early College Credit Program and Start College Now Program

Wisconsin has two statewide dual enrollment programs: [Early College Credit Program \(ECCP\)](#) and [Start College Now Program \(SCN\)](#).

These programs are written into state law that prescribes very specific deadlines for students to notify their school that they intend to enroll:

- October 1st - notification for spring courses
- February 1st - notification for summer courses (**ECCP only**)
- March 1st - notification for fall courses

Inspire WI Events - Career Clusters

Inspire WI Events - Monthly

Protecting Our Students: A Guide to Navigating the Rise in Vaping

As we move through the school year, we want to share some important information regarding a trend we've noticed both locally and nationally: a significant rise in student vaping. At Dodgeland, our priority is the health and well-being of your children. We believe that by working together, we can provide students with the facts and support they need to make healthy choices.



Why the Concern?

Many students believe that vapes (or "e-cigarettes") are just flavored water vapor. However, the reality is more complex:

- **Highly Addictive:** Most vapes contain nicotine, which is more addictive to the developing teen brain than the adult brain.
- **Hidden Chemicals:** Beyond nicotine, vape aerosol can contain harmful substances like heavy metals (lead), volatile organic compounds, and cancer-causing chemicals.
- **Mental Health:** While some teens vape to "cope" with stress, nicotine is a stimulant that can actually increase anxiety and symptoms of depression over time.

What to Look For

Vaping devices are designed to be discreet. They often look like USB drives, highlighters, or even pens. Look out for:

- **Unexplained Scents:** Faint, sweet, or fruity smells (like bubblegum or mint) that seem out of place.
- **Changes in Behavior:** Increased irritability, mood swings, or a sudden drop in academic or athletic performance.
- **Physical Signs:** Increased thirst (vaping causes dry mouth), frequent nosebleeds, or a persistent "vaper's cough."

How to Start the Conversation

The most effective way to prevent vaping is through open, non-judgmental communication.

1. **Ask, Don't Lecture:** Start with open-ended questions like, *"I've been hearing a lot about vaping in the news lately. What are kids at school saying about it?"*
2. **Focus on "Big Tobacco":** Teens often value independence. Frame the conversation around how tobacco companies use flavors and "stealth" designs to target and hook young people for profit.
3. **Find "Teachable Moments":** If you see someone vaping in a movie or pass a vape shop, use it as a low-pressure way to bring up the topic.
4. **Practice Refusal Skills:** Help your child brainstorm what to say if offered a vape, such as: *"No thanks, I'm trying to stay in shape for soccer,"* or simply, *"Nah, not my thing."*

Resources for Support

If you suspect your child is already vaping, please know that we are here to help, not just to discipline. Quitting nicotine is difficult, and support is available:

- **This Is Quitting (Truth Initiative):** A free, anonymous text-to-quit service. Text **DITCHVAPE** to **88709**.
- **The American Lung Association:** Offers a "Vaping Conversation Guide" for parents at Lung.org.
- **Our School Counselor:** Reach out to **[Counselor Name]** at **[Email/Phone]** for confidential guidance.

Together, we can help our students breathe easier and stay focused on their bright futures.

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As winter approaches, please remember our school's dress code policy

Encourage your child to dress in layers, wear a warm coat, and bring hats, gloves, and scarves. Appropriate footwear is also important for safety and comfort during colder months.

Please note that blankets are not allowed, and coats should not be worn during class time to help maintain a focused learning environment. While staying warm is essential, clothing choices should continue to align with our school guidelines.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us create a safe, comfortable, and distraction-free environment for all students.

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Inclement Weather and School Closing Information

With the change of seasons comes the possibility of weather impacting our school days. The safety of our students and staff is always our top priority.



In the event of a school closure due to weather, families will be notified by **email and phone** using the contact information listed in **PowerSchool**. If your phone number or email address has changed, please update it as soon as possible to ensure you receive timely notifications.

In addition to direct communication, our district will share closure information with **local news stations** and on our **district social media pages** to help spread the message as quickly and thoroughly as possible.



As the holiday season approaches, many students are looking forward to unwrapping new devices, from tablets and gaming consoles to their very first smartphones. While these gifts offer incredible opportunities for learning and connection, they also bring new responsibilities for families.



To help navigate this digital landscape, we recommend exploring **Common Sense Media's Family Tech Planners**. These customizable tools are designed to help families of all ages—from pre-kindergarten through high school—establish healthy boundaries and clear expectations for technology use.

Why Plan Now?

The winter break is the perfect time to sit down as a family and discuss how new and existing devices will be used. By creating a plan before the "new gadget excitement" takes over, you can:

- **Set Clear Expectations:** Define where, when, and how long devices can be used.
- **Balance Screen Time:** Ensure that digital play doesn't replace sleep, physical activity, or quality family time during the holidays.
- **Promote Safety:** Discuss privacy settings, social media etiquette, and what to do if they encounter something uncomfortable online.
- **Foster Open Communication:** Use the planner as a conversation starter rather than a list of rules, building trust between you and your student.

Common Sense Media offers age-specific templates that grow with your child, ensuring that your family's digital habits stay healthy, safe, and balanced.

Get started today by visiting: [Common Sense Media Family Tech Planners](#)

Common Sense Media Family Tech Planners ~ Click Here

