



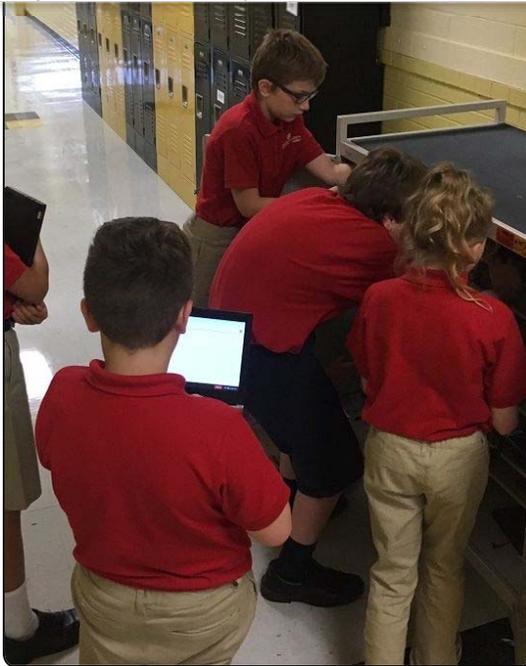
## September News

*Off to a great start ... the new DMCA Honor Code ... growth goals ... creating better learning experiences .... cheers to our maintenance crew ... and more!*



### ***The year is off to a great start!***

Last week, we welcomed students to our DMCA campuses, from our three-year-old preschoolers just starting their DMCA journey to our 7th and 8th graders preparing for high school. They got back to work in our STREAM labs, reacquainted themselves with rhythm and movement in music class, and quickly resumed their Chromebook routines. The year is full of opportunities and we look forward to working with your children to help them reach their potential!



A quick note ... **Mrs. Smitherman** (strings) and **Mr. Albright** (band) were on our campuses this week to talk to students about instrumental lessons. If your child missed it but it interested in music, please contact your child's school and we'll help set things up. Thank you!

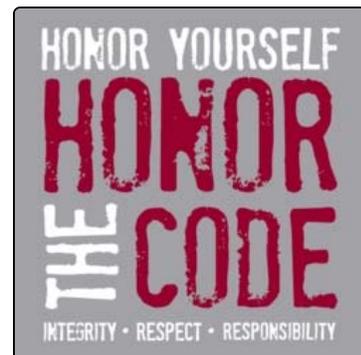
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As part of our mission to develop the whole child, we are happy to introduce the **DMCA Honor Code**, a simple way to remind students to be honest, only take credit for their own work, and respect other people and their property.

Each month, two students from each grade on our East and West campuses will be chosen by teachers and recognized on our Honor Code bulletin boards.

They will also receive small tokens of appreciation such as free dress-down passes and special school supply gifts provided by the **DMCA PTO**. We know our students will rise to meet the Honor Code goals and we look forward to celebrating their successes.

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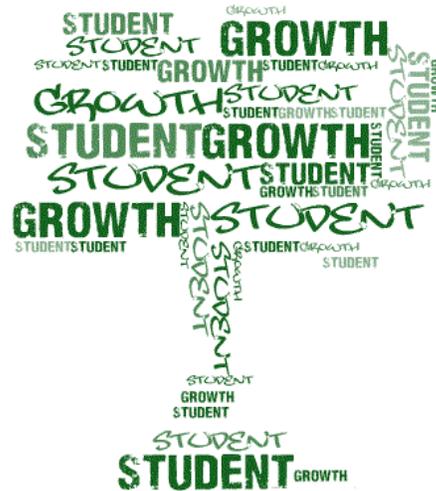


## Understanding Individual Student Growth Goals

## Parent meetings set for Monday, 9/30

Every student learns in a different way. That's why we're introducing **individual Student Growth Goals** this year. Tailored to each student's unique academic strengths and needs, individual Student Growth Goals help teachers, students and their families stay on track so that every child can reach his or her potential.

Please plan to meet with your child's teacher on **Monday, September 30** to talk about your child's specific growth goals for the year. Look for scheduling info in your in-box in the coming days. Many thanks.



thank  
you!

Our faculty and administrative teams weren't the only ones who were busy this summer. Our facilities crew - **Doug Ellenberger** and **Andrew Wolf** at West, **Brennan Wasilisian** and **Shawn Murray** at East, and **William Trabold**, **Chrissy Weyant** and **Dave Lavigne** at our churches - did an outstanding job preparing our East and West campuses for the new school year including:

- **Freshly painted Crimson stripe** in West halls, with East updates coming soon
- **New safety and security mechanisms** on every PreK-6 classroom door that prevent them from opening from the outside during lockdown situation
- **Writable vinyl surface over all chalkboards**, creating cleaner and chalkdust-free classrooms
- **New window blinds** in multiple classrooms

In addition, students, staff and visitors will benefit from **faucet replacements** on our West campus, and **upper parking lot resurfacing** and **brick repointing** on our East campus. East campus improvements will reduce moisture build-up and water infiltration, contributing to the long-term preservation of the building and reducing maintenance costs. We look

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## Creating Better Learning Experiences

Summer vacation ended a few days early for our teachers, all of whom completed interactive professional development seminars in August that focused on:

- **Individual Student Growth Goals**
- **Writing skills, including KidWriting for PreK - 1 students**
- **Classroom behavior management strategies**
- **Google Classroom implementation**



"I'm already using KidWriting strategies to encourage and inspire my students to look at writing in a different way," said **Shannon Stephens**, a Kindergarten teacher on our East campus whose students, pictured here, got an early start on our new KidWriting curriculum last week. "They get so excited to see words on paper developing in front of them."

Ms. Stephens has received training in early primary writing skills before, but nothing like the training she received this summer from **national literacy consultant Mark Weakland**.

"It's tremendous that we have this level of professional development available to us," she said. "I'm really looking forward to the next session so that I can continue to bring my best game to my students and my classroom."

*West parents - mark your calendar for **Tuesday, 9/24** from **6:30 pm - 7:15 pm** for a "**Big Ideas of Reading**" workshop with Mark Weakland. He'll be on campus to share activities that help children become more confident and capable readers. A workshop for East parents will be held **Thursday, 10/24** from **6:30 pm - 7:15 pm**.*

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- 9/5** - Uniform order deadline - [order here](#)
- 9/9** - DMCA Board of Directors meeting\*
- 9/12** - Grandparents Day Mass, 9 am - East/West
- 9/24** - Big Ideas of Reading workshop - West, 6:30 pm - 7:15 pm
- 9/26** - Half-day dismissal - Faculty in-service
- 9/27** - No School - Diocesan/faculty in-service
- 9/30** - No School (East/West only) - Faculty in-service + Student Growth Goals parent meetings

*\*The DMCA Board of Directors September meeting will be at 6 pm at the Pope John Paul II Conference Room on the campus of St. Benedict's Church. Parents are invited to attend the Board's bi-monthly listening session from 6 pm - 6:30 pm to share perspectives but must be registered prior to the meeting to be placed on the agenda. Please email Board Chair [Kathleen Martella-Zucco](#) to register. Also, please see the [DMCA Google calendar](#) (which is currently being updated) for school-wide events and specific happenings at each campus. Our 7th and 8th graders should also review the [Bishop McCort calendar](#) for important dates throughout the year.*

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*The mission of Divine Mercy Catholic Academy is to empower our students through Christ-centered academic excellence within a safe and secure environment that will create a solid foundation of values, leadership, and commitment to self and community.*

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