

Diamond Digest

Diamond Valley Elementary School



Important Dates

January 1	HAPPY NEW YEAR!
January 3	1st Day of School After Winter Break
January 12	Board Meeting—4:30pm—Administrative Annex
January 16	Martin Luther King Day—NO SCHOOL
January 19	Last Day of the 2nd Quarter
January 20	MINIMUM DAY Grading Day Students Released at 12:15pm
January 25	MINIMUM DAY Professional Development Students Released at 12:15pm
January 31	Early Childhood Literacy Group—1:30pm—Diamond Valley Elementary School
February 9	Board Meeting—4:30pm—Administrative Annex
February 14	Happy Valentines Day!
February 17	MINIMUM DAY Prior to February Break Students Released at 12:15pm
February 20	Presidents' Day—NO SCHOOL
February 20-24	February Break—NO SCHOOL

Nurse's Notes

Hello Diamond Valley Families!

I hope some of us were actually able to enjoy the weather over break!

As we trudge on through this exceptionally wet winter, please remain weather aware. Check the forecast often especially if you have to drive/travel. It's a great idea to keep extra coats or blankets, footwear for the snow, and food and water in your car in case you get stuck. Kingsbury and Mt. Rose took longer to reopen after our last storm due to the number of cars that were abandoned in the road. Be prepared for the worst, it can happen to you!

I'd like to take this opportunity to again apologize for the required closure of Diamond Valley before our winter break. I understand how disruptive school closures are to our families and the students' education. Closing any of our schools is not something we take lightly and again I'm sorry it came to that.

Two weeks before break, Dr. Johnson and I were noticing our increasing numbers of illness in the community and our school. He and I worked together to come up with policies and procedures attempting to stop or at least slow the spread of this year's flu at Diamond Valley. Going into the weekend before break we were hopeful that anyone exposed would have the weekend to start showing symptoms and would stay home sick that following Monday. Unfortunately, while some students were kept home sick, enough were sent to school and the process of sending home sick children resumed. By the time Dr. Johnson and myself made the call to close the school, we only had 40% attendance and many of our staff were out with the flu as well. On the bright side, we had very few cases of COVID.

I want to assure you that this is not going to be the new norm. We will not be shutting down just because it's flu or cold season. Our school and community were hit exceptionally hard this year. Renown's pediatric ICU had no available beds with many of those pediatric patients on ventilators.

PLEASE, if your children are showing signs of illness, KEEP THEM HOME! This is the most powerful tool we have to keep our schools healthy and it actually leads to higher attendance. I understand children aren't always honest and that sometimes symptoms can develop while at school. If I'm calling to send your child home it's because I've observed objective symptoms that indicate illness.

Let's continue to work together to keep our school and community healthy!



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Alpine County Unified will be deploying a new student information system, Alma, in the next few weeks to improve attendance tracking, parent communication, and record keeping. Data migration will naturally result in several errors that will need to be corrected. A test notification message will be sent out to all families soon so we can identify errors. More information will be sent home later.

Get our new app! Search the app stores for Alpine Schools and download our new app that includes push notifications of school alerts (registration required).

School Psychologist, Casey Donahue

Diamond Valley students are participating in the The Zones of Regulation™ curriculum (or “The Zones” for short), which are lessons and activities designed to help them gain skills in the area of self-regulation. Self-regulation is defined as the best state of alertness of both the body and emotions for the specific situation. For example, when a student plays on the playground or in a competitive game, it is beneficial to have a higher state of alertness. However, that same state would not be appropriate in the library. The lessons and learning activities are designed to help the students recognize when they are in the different Zones as well as learn how to use strategies to change or stay in the Zone they are in. In addition to addressing self-regulation, the students will gain an increased vocabulary of emotional terms, skills in reading other people’s facial expressions, perspective about how others see and react to their behavior, insight into events that trigger their behavior, calming and alerting strategies, and problem solving skills. You may find it helpful to review the attached information about the language of the Zones of Regulation. You can support your student by doing the following:

- Use the language and talk about the concepts of The Zones as they apply to you in a variety of environments. Make comments aloud so that your child understands it is natural that we all experience the different Zones and use strategies to control (or regulate) ourselves. For example, “This is really frustrating me and making me go into the Yellow Zone. I need to use a tool to calm down. I will take some deep breaths.”
- Validate what Zone your students are in and help them brainstorm expected ways to self-regulate so their behavior is expected for the context.
- Help your child become comfortable using the language to communicate his or her feelings and needs by encouraging the student to share his or her Zone with you.
- Show interest in learning about your child’s triggers and Zones tools.
- Make sure to positively reinforce students for recognizing their Zone and managing their behaviors while in it, rather than only pointing out when students are demonstrating unexpected behaviors while in a Zone. It is important to note that everyone experiences all of the Zones—the Red and Yellow Zones are not the “bad” or “naughty” Zones. All of the Zones are expected at one time or another. The Zones of Regulation is intended to be neutral and not communicate judgment.

Please email me at cdonahue@alpinestudents.org or call or text (530) 721-9328 if you have questions or have additional questions about the Zones of Regulation.

Casey Donahue
School Psychologist

The ZONES of Regulation™ Glossary

Self-regulation: The ability to achieve the preferred state of alertness for the given situation. This includes regulating one's body's needs as well as one's emotions.

The Zones: A concept used to help students learn how to self-regulate. The Zones of Regulation creates a system to categorize how the body feels and emotions into four colored Zones with which the students can easily identify.

Blue Zone: Used to describe a low state of alertness. The Blue Zone is used to describe when one feels sad, tired, sick, or bored.

Green Zone: Used to describe the ideal state of alertness. A person may be described as calm, happy, focused, or content when he or she is in the Green Zone. The student feels a strong sense of internal control when in the Green Zone.

Yellow Zone: Used to describe a heightened state of alertness. A person may be experiencing stress, frustration, anxiety, excitement, silliness, or fear when in the Yellow Zone. The student's energy is elevated yet he or she feels some sense of internal control in the Yellow Zone.

Red Zone: Used to describe an extremely heightened state of alertness. A person may be experiencing anger, rage, explosive behavior, panic, extreme grief, terror, or elation when in the Red Zone and feels a loss of control.

Toolbox: A collection of calming and alerting strategies a student can pull from depending on the present need.

Tools or strategies: Used interchangeably to refer to a calming or alerting technique that aids the student in self-regulation.

Trigger: An irritant that causes a student to become less regulated and increases the likelihood of going into the Yellow or Red Zone.

Stop, Opt, and Go: A concept used to aid students in controlling impulses and problem solving better solutions. This phrase is paired with a stoplight to provide additional cues for students.

Expected behaviors¹: Behaviors that give people around you **good or comfortable thoughts** about you.

Unexpected behaviors¹: Behaviors that give people **uncomfortable thoughts** about you.

Doer: The person or persons doing the expected or unexpected behavior in a situation.

What is the size of the problem? and Is this a Big or Little Problem?²: Questions posed to help students measure the size of the problem they are experiencing (Big Problem, Medium Problem, or Little Problem).

Big Problems: Problems that many people share and that have no easy, quick, or pleasant solution.

Medium Problems: Problems some people share that are able to be resolved in an hour to a couple of days.

Little Problems: Problems that only affect one to two people and can be ignored or solved in a matter of minutes.

Inner critic: Used to describe negative, self-defeating thoughts.

Inner coach: Used to describe positive thoughts.

Superflex thinking²: A flexible thinking pattern in which a person is able to consider different points of view or ways to do something.

Rock Brain thinking²: A rigid thinking pattern in which a person gets stuck on an idea and has difficulty considering other options or ways to do something.

¹ Social Thinking vocabulary developed by Michelle Garcia Winner, *Thinking About YOU Thinking About ME* (2007)

² Social Thinking vocabulary developed by Stephanie Madrigal and Michelle Garcia Winner, *Superflex: A Superhero Social Thinking Curriculum* (2008)

Alpine County School District
Vision Statement

***"Students are
prepared and inspired
citizens making
positive choices."***

We Need You!!

Parent Committee

The Parent, Budget, Safety and Facilities Committee are merging into one committee. Future meeting agendas will be focused on one - to - two topics.

Your Voice
Matters

Bring your
ideas!

email scarmona@alpinestudents.org to
join

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