DALLAS SCHOOL DISTRICT

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District Updates
Work Session/Regular Meeting
Dr. Thomas J. Duffy, Superintendent
October 12, 2026

Education Updates

Pending affirmative vote of the board, 2026-2027 school calendar updates include:

Changing the half-day days on October 30, January 15, and March 24 to a full day Act 80 Days with no school for students.
The February 12 half day Act 80 day will be utilized for Parent Teacher Conferences.
Changing Tuesday, February 16 to a full day of school. This results in the last student day changing from June 1, 2027 from June 2, 2027.
Changing the half-day Act 80 day on May 28 to a full day of school.

As a result of clarification by PDE, remote instructional days (formerly referred to as Flexible Instructional Days - FIDs) will be announced as Virtual Instructional Days. Procedures for Virtual Instructional Days will be the same as FIDs in past years and updates will be posted on our website. Note that two make up days for traditional snow days are included in April of our existing calendar and the option of scheduling make up days after our current last day of school has been contemplated in our calendar.

In accordance with Act 20 of 2026 the District has initiated procedures to perform Cyber Wellness Checks for all schools participating in Dallas Cyber. Requirements include a weekly level check in session via videoconferencing, documentation, parental follow up in cases of non participation, and home visits when contact can not be made. The Cyber Teachers of Record, Director of Operations, SIMS Administrator, Home and School Visitor are facilitating the procedures.

Firefly Benchmark Assessments are planned for students in grades 3-8 for October 13-23. Firefly assessments are delivered online and in the same platform as PSSAs and Keystones and designed to increase student experience with online assessments, and evaluate progress toward state standardized tests resulting in data that can assist in aligning instructional priorities. Firefly is one measure utilized in this manner.

The first quarter of the school year ends on October 27 with Parent Teacher Conferences scheduled for November 11, 2026. There is no school for students on that day. Parent teacher conference details will be released at the building level over the next two weeks.

Student Activities

Training and Orientation for the Winter Sports Season is planned for administration, coaches, parents, and student athletes. Activities and events include: Administrative preparation meeting 10.22.26; Winter Coaches Meeting 10.28.26; Meet the Coach Event MS 11.04.26 and Meet the Coach Event HS 11.05.26. Winter sports physicals for students will be announced this week.

Halloween Parades are scheduled for October 29 for Wycallis and Dallas Intermediate with detailed information being provided by each building prior.

Policy Updates

In concert with the PSBA, the following policies are under review related to legislative changes prompting updates:

Policy 102. Academic Standards was updated to reflect the requirements of a new section of the PA School Code, 24 P.S. Sec. 15-1556, regarding Social Media Literacy. This law requires that the standards adopted by the State Board of Education in accordance with Chapter 4 regarding academic standards and instruction include instruction to students on the potential health and academic impacts, and safety and security concerns associated with social media use.
The policy was also updated to add the new Chapter 4 requirement for Personal Finance

Policy 204.1. Virtual Attendance and Wellness Checks
The policy has been updated to align with the Act 20 of 2026 provision of Weekly Wellness Checks - to ensure that each student in an online program is visibly seen and communicated with in real time. The wellness checks can consist of the student turning on a webcam during synchronous online instruction, or by virtual or face-to-face instruction in any of the following activities: Health Screenings, Standardized Testing, Academic or Advising Sessions, In-person, school-sponsored activities chaperoned by the district employee/representative.

Policy 209. Health Examinations and Screenings was updated to address the amendments to 24 P.S. Sec. 14-1402 and 14-1408. Height and weight measurements of students are to be conducted by the school nurse or other health care practitioner to track a student's growth pattern, not to calculate the student's weight/height ratio. The student's confidentiality must be maintained and parents/guardians must be provided notification of their right and the procedure to request and exemption from such measurements. A new section of the PA School Code, 24 P.S. Sec. 14-1426, requires the district to make eating disorder awareness and education information and materials available for students in grades six through twelve and posted on the district's website.

Policy 246. School Wellness was updated to address two key elements.
First, the section on Physical Education was updated to comply with amendments to 24 P.S. Sec. 15-1512.1 regarding the requirement to maintain student confidentiality when instruction involves the collection of a student's height and weight measurements. Also use of the measurements to calculate a student's body mass index (BMI) is prohibited. Second is the addition of a section addressing Social Media in compliance with 24 P.S. Sec. 15-1556 Social Media Literacy Education and academic standards. Social media literacy in schools must address the following: Mental, psychological and physical effects of social media and mobile device use; Potential impacts of social media and mobile device use on academic growth and learning; Safe use of social media, including how to recognize suspicious online behavior including, but not limited to: Cyberbullying; Predatory behavior; Potential human trafficking; Personal security and privacy on mobile devices.

249. Bullying/Cyberbullying
The Omnibus Bill amended the PA School Code, 24 P.S. Sec. 13-1303.1-A. Policy Relating to Bullying by adding Cyberbullying to the title. Policy 249 Bullying/Cyberbullying has been updated to include two new definitions from the statute for: Artificial Intelligence-Generated or Modified Media and Cyberbullying. The policy is now required to include "procedures for investigating a report of alleged bullying and cyberbullying".

Additionally, revised draft Policy 707, Facilities Use, is under review. Updates include alignment to a digital application process, clearer delineation of the role of the director of buildings and grounds, and an updated fee schedule for school district use. Fees are being updated for the first time in over 10 years and are reflective of increased facilities costs in the areas of utilities, up-keep, maintenance, and equipment.

339. Uncompensated Leave
The current policy is being updated to the former policy that is less restrictive categorically, allows for a request of 1 year of leave and continues to be via school board approval only.