



Danbury High School PTO
Public Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 28, 2025 @ 7:00 pm

1. Welcome

PTO Board President Gretchen Mullin opened the meeting at 7:04pm

- a. Reviewed the mission and purpose of the PTO
- b. Introduced the 2024-2025 PTO Board members:
 - i. Gretchen Mullin (President)
 - ii. Gina Alladin (Vice President)
 - iii. Liz Magnottal (Digital Secretary)
 - iv. Michelle Rivera (Recording Secretary).
 - v. Amy Sturdevant (Treasurer)
- c. Put in motion to have 9/23/24 meeting minutes approved- Motion was seconded and approved.

2. PTO Treasurer Report

- a. Amy reviewed the information outlined on the slide presentation

3. Upcoming Key Dates

- a. 5/6/25 Staff Appreciation
- b. 5/2/25 Junior Prom
- c. 5/23/25 School Closed
- d. 5/26/25 School Closed
- e. 5/9-5/15 Prom Ticket Sale
- f. 5/23 Senior Prom
- g. 6/2/25 Senior Awards Invitation Only
- h. 6/4/25 Senior Trip
- i. 6/5/25 Senior BBQ
- j. 6/11/25 Senior Graduation
- k. 6/12/25 Last Day of School

4. Class dues -

- a. \$100
- b. Can pay by year or all at once (no discount for full payment in advance)
- c. Pay via School Bucks account or contact your class advisor to pay by cash or check
- d. Take a screenshot of your account or a picture of your check as proof of payment.
- e. Juniors must be paid up in order to attend junior prom
- f. Seniors must be paid up in order to attend senior prom or to graduate

5. Class Advisors

- a. Seniors (2025) – Ms. Caramo - room C434 & Ms. Reutzel -room C539
- b. Juniors (2026) – Mr. Farrell & Ms. Beal room D462
- c. Sophomores (2027) – Ms. Gurney & Ms. Mesanovic
- d. Freshman (2028) - TBD

6. PTO Fundraising

- a. **Teacher Appreciation** -Collected \$1160 toward a breakfast being held at Hatters Cafe
- b. **Donation for Seniors will open soon**
- c. Restaurant Night- Dates Coming Soon
- d. Matching Fundraiser
-2 Scholarships given for \$350 each

7. DHS Apps & Communication Channels

- a. **Parent Apps** - PowerSchool, Parent Square, Bus Tracking
 - i. **Parent Square**
 - ii. **Power School**
 - iii. **My Ride- Bus Tracker**
- b. **Athletics**
 - i. **Sports You**
 - ii. **Reach out to coach for additional ways of contact**

8. PTO Communication

- a. Facebook - [DHS PTO FaceBook Page](#)
- b. Website - [DHS PTO Webpage](#)
- c. Email – dhspto@danbury.k12.ct.us



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED CELEBRATE & SUPPORT OUR SENIORS!



Lots of exciting events coming up and DHS needs your help.
Please check your schedule and let us know where you can lend a hand to make these moments special for the Class of 2025!

Email Eileen at eileenmkline@gmail.com to sign up.

Volunteer Opportunities:

-  **Prom Ticket Sales (4-6 people/day)**
 - May 12, 13, 14, 15 | 10 AM – 1 PM
-  **NEW EVENT ADDED! ESL Award Ceremony**
 - May 22 | DHS Auditorium | 5:45-7:45 PM (5 people)
-  **Senior Prom Check-In**
 - May 23 | Amber Room | 7-9 PM
-  **Senior Movie Night**
 - May 30 | Hatters Park | 6:30 PM
-  **Senior BBQ**
 - June 5 | DHS Stadium | 2 PM (need 6-8 people)
-  **Graduation - Diploma Distribution**
 - June 11 | 6 PM (need 12 people)



Minutes Taken by Recording Secretary, Michelle Rivera

College Information-Presentation

- College 101 - Parent-to-Parent panel discussion -SEE PRESENTATION ON SITE
- How early is too early?
 - Freshman/Sophomore
 - Start a conversation with your child
 - Consider taking a Career Survey
 - Is college, CC, or trade school the direction for you?
 - What type of school / size / location
 - Suggestion: Look at various schools throughout CT (Private & Public)
 - Fall Junior / Spring Junior
 - Open Houses
 - Book up fast / Usually early fall around school breaks
 - College Fairs
 - Summer Senior Year
 - Finalize potential school list

Freshman/Sophomore

PSATs

- October at DHS (grades 9,10,11)
- School activities clubs/sports
- Graduation Progress/Career Pathway
- Look into summer programs
 - Locally ie: WestConn
 - Week long resident summer programs ie: Syracuse & journalism
 - EF travel through Team Danbury Travel with Mr. Darraugh (Instagram page)

Junior Year

SATs

- FREE to all DHS Juniors in March
 - Additional SAT test available throughout the year at a cost at various locations
 - Registration is via College Board (<https://www.collegeboard.org/>)
 - Good time to talk about creating a separate email to use for college, & do not list schools to send scores to
- Teacher Recommendations
 - Request before the summer or very early in the year
- College Essay
 - Work on over the summer so that you can have it edited and revised early in the year
 - AP Lang & English 4 will work on it with the students

Senior Summer

- SATs & ACTs
 - Additional SAT test available throughout the year at a cost at various locations

- Registration for SAT is via College Board (<https://www.collegeboard.org/>)
 - Be sure to use a unique email just for college & do not list schools to send scores to
 - Registration for ACT via (<https://www.act.org/>)
- College Essay
 - Work on over the summer so that you can have it edited and revised early in the year
 - AP Lang & English 4 will work on it with the students
- Student Resume/Activity Sheet
- Schedule tours/open houses of schools.
 - Visit surrounding area

Senior Year

Fall

- SATs/ACTs - Register for November and December
- SchoolLinks- Review your college list and move the colleges you plan on applying to from the “Colleges I am thinking about” list to the “Colleges I am Applying to” list
- Common Application - Set up and link to SchoolLinks
 - <https://www.commonapp.org/>
 - Research your schools and find out when their application deadlines are
 - Understanding Application Terminology
 - Rolling Admission – Accept students throughout the year and review applications as they come in
 - Early Decision – Binding, you must go to this school if you’re accepted. You can only apply to one school Early Decision.
 - Early Action – Not binding, just an earlier date and will receive a response from the college earlier. Deadlines usually around November.
 - Regular Admission – Not early or binding, research the college’s specific deadlines. All deadlines are different.
- Request Transcripts - 10 Free
- Request Letters of Recommendation if you haven’t already done
- Fall
 - Financial Aid
 - Attend a DHS Financial Aid night to learn more about the process
 - FAFSA – For federal financial aid, application becomes available October 1st and should be completed ASAP (each school has a different priority deadline.)
 - <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>
 - Some schools will require the CSS Profile that can be completed through College Board
 - These deadlines vary by school and some are as early as October
 - <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>

- Calendar
 - Create one with important dates
 - Spreadsheet
 - Track data important to your student's and family's priority (COA, distance, degree, size, location, sports, intramurals, clubs, culture, merit, FA, scholarships, state, private, public)
 - Winter/Early Spring
 - Update your admission decisions in SchoolLinks
 - Request mid-year transcripts for colleges as needed
 - Check the Career Center and/or SchoolLinks for scholarships
 - Check email regularly. You will be instructed to set up portals for schools you receive acceptance to. Check those portals regularly
 - May 1st is National Decision Day
 - End of Senior Year
 - Request Final Transcript
 - Advanced Placement (AP) Tests
 - Request AP scores to be sent directly to the college you will be attending
 - You can pay a fee to College Board to have AP scores that you do not want reported, removed (Note there is a deadline)
 - Transfer any College Credits to college you are attending in the Fall
- College Fairs, Finances, Visits, etc.
- Attend a College Fair 
- Attend Financial Aid night - Usually in the fall FAFSA typically opens October 1
 - Visit colleges
 - Visit locally or when on vacation or visiting distant family
 - Look for different size campus, student pop., city vs rural
 - Begin to explore scholarship opportunities
 - August 1, before Senior year, the Common App will open and the process begins!
- Parent Tips
- Let the student drive the process (with some parameters)
 - Have an honest discussion about affordable colleges & debt & potential job (ROI)
 - Set up a separate college email account
 - Make sure your student checks their College Portal Account once Application has been submitted
 - Research
 - Join various Facebook page such as [Paying for College 101](#) or College Bound
 - Look at [Niche.com](#) or [Myfuture.com](#)
 - Join college Instagram pages
 - Important Dates
 - Common App. - Opens on 8/1
 - Don't apply ED (Early Decision) (unless you are 100% sure about the school).
 - Do apply EA (Early Action)

- Keep the list of schools fairly short.
- Identify multiple "safety" schools the student would be happy to attend and include them in the list.
- Build a list that is more tilted toward targets than reaches.
- Don't push the message that getting into a certain selectivity of school is super important.
- Do actively work against the above message, since the student is likely hearing it from others.
- Be organized; help student manage deadlines, and strongly encourage him/her to submit applications 2 weeks before they're actually due so that there's a "buffer" in case something goes wrong.

Parent Tips/Resources

[Hidden Gems](#)

Great schools that are not as well known as they should be.

[Colleges That Offer Good Merit Aid.](#)

Merit aid is offered by colleges when the quality of applicants' grades, test scores and activities can lead to offers that have nothing to do with how much money their parents make.

Colleges that offer good [Learning Disabilities \(LD\) programs](#)

Many colleges offer support for students with LD. These ones do a particularly good job. Most have of these have specific, LD support programs (which often cost extra, but are very good).

Breaking down the different admissions plans such as ED, EA, RD, EDII, etc..; essays; Test Optional

SchoolLinks & Other Tools

SchoolLinks - College Application Management Tool - [How-to Overview](#)

- Online platform for students & parent
 - DHS students have an account / suggest using child account vs. parent
 - Application Dashboard
 - Search for College, College Match, Compare my Scores
 - Research Careers
 - Inventories & Surveys/Interests
 - Scholarships
- College Board (<https://www.collegeboard.org/>)
 - Online platform for students & parents
 - DHS students should have an account
 - College Search function
- [School Counselors - Danbury High School](#)
- [College Visits](#)
- Use a personal email for college stuff
 - Avoid using your school email- create a dedicated personal email just for college applications, scholarships, and communication. It keeps everything organized and ensures you do not lose access after graduation!

Top 10 Tips: Planning & Preparing for College

✓ **Start Early:**

Talk about goals, interests, and possible college types early—even freshman year.

✓ **Use a Personal Email:**

Create a dedicated email account for college communications to stay organized.

✓ **Keep Options Open:**

Explore a mix of in-state, out-of-state, public, private, large, small, near, and far.

✓ **Balance the College List:**

Include a mix of reach, match, and safety schools.

✓ **Plan College Visits Thoughtfully:**

Visit a variety of schools; don't judge by reputation alone.

✓ **Focus on "Fit" Over "Name":**

Find the right environment where your student will thrive.

✓ **Understand Finances Early:**

Research scholarships, FAFSA, merit aid, and out-of-state costs ahead of time.

✓ **Stay Organized:**

Deadlines for applications, financial aid, housing, and scholarships come fast and furious.

✓ **Support the Transition:**

Freshman year can be tough. Encourage resilience, patience, and time management.

✓ **Trust the Process:**

It's your student's journey. Let them lead with your support behind them.