

DVCA Grade Realignment FAQs

Why is Da Vinci Charter Academy (DVCA) making these changes?

DVCA wants to continue to grow our program to include all students and families who are interested; however, due to space limitations, DVCA has only been able to accept 100 students in grades 7 & 8, creating a waitlist of around 100 students each year. This grade realignment plan allows DVCA to accept more students in grades 7 & 8 because of the additional classroom spaces created by the departure of 9th graders and because of the new Emerson/Da Vinci Science Lab Classrooms.

The Da Vinci High School (DVHS) staff and campus are well-prepared to educate and support students in grades 9 through 12. The recent bond & CTE-funded facilities project at DVHS, along with the expansion of DVHS into additional classroom and administrative spaces on the Da Vinci High School Campus, provides ample new space to grow the program. Along with our exemplary staff, the new facilities will provide high-quality instruction and space that can accommodate additional students while still maintaining the benefits of being a 'small, personalized school.' DVCA is excited for our 9th graders to have the opportunity to begin their high school experience in a high school environment.

Additionally, for the purposes of high school transcripts and post-secondary planning, the 9th grade school year is high school. The DVHS staff is highly committed to beginning the process of high school and post-secondary preparation in grade 9 in order to maximize opportunities and support for students. DVHS will have an exceptional counselor to student ratio, allowing for personalization and support through all four years of high school and our CTE Pathways provide sequenced courses designed for students to start in grade 9 and build towards college and/or career competency by grade 12.

Enrollment Questions

Will all Da Vinci Junior High School's current 8th graders be accepted to the Da Vinci High School's 9th grade class?

Yes, in the same manner that current DVJH 9th grade students are automatically accepted to DVHS, our 8th grade students will automatically be accepted to DVHS for 9th grade. The new facilities and course offerings at

DVHS will be well suited to accommodate and provide high-quality learning spaces for all existing 8th and 9th grade students for the 2022-23 school year.

Will there be enrollment caps at DVCA?

Overall enrollment will still be constrained by facility space and number of teachers but grade realignment is an avenue to increase the number of students that can enroll in DVCA. We expect the number of seats at DVJH to increase from 100 to between 140-150 in grades 7 & 8. We expect total enrollment at DVHS to be about 400.

Are there plans to move 6th graders to DVJH?

No, there are no plans to expand Da Vinci Charter Academy to grade 6.

Will DVCA recruit for students at all grade levels?

DVCA does not currently actively recruit for students at grades other than 7 & 10; however, many students do enroll at other grades due to a variety of reasons. Based upon enrollment data in recent years, we anticipate being able to continue enrolling students in grades other than 7 & 10, outside of the normal recruitment process.

Will 9th graders at other junior high schools still be able to enroll at DVHS in their 10th grade year?

DVCA will continue to recruit and encourage 9th graders from DJUSD junior high schools to attend beginning in 10th grade. Based upon the level of interest at grade 10 in recent years, we anticipate that there will be ample space for those students.

What are the expected class sizes at each site?

DVCA expects class sizes to remain the same as current levels. We expect each grade level at DVHS to be around 100 students and each grade at DVJH to be around 140 students.

Will there now be enrollment caps at DVHS?

Yes, the Da Vinci High School Campus can accommodate approximately 400 students. We will continue to have around 100 students per grade level. All

students who are enrolled in our junior high school program will be automatically enrolled in our high school program. Seats will be allocated to external applicants via a lottery system.

Course and Program Questions

What type of academic/programmatic changes will be made at Da Vinci Charter Academy?

Project-based learning in an inclusive and supportive community will remain the foundation of the Da Vinci program. As the entry point for the DVCA program, the DVJH team has made social-emotional learning a high priority for students as they make the transition into early adolescence. This focus will support the development of important skills such as relationship building, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and responsible decision making. These skills are essential to prepare students for our high school program and beyond. The DVHS team has made college and career preparation a high priority for students as they ready themselves for the evolving and complex demands of the 21st Century. DVHS will offer access to Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways in Digital Arts and Computer Science, a challenging, relevant selection of college preparatory courses, and opportunities to gain work experience through our Internship Program.

What type of academic/programmatic changes will be made at DVHS?

DVHS will experience a significant expansion of the current [CTE Pathways](#) to support innovative learning with industry standard facilities and equipment. There will be increased elective course offerings at DVHS, including a new college preparatory Leadership Class and Modern Music Lab course. Counselors will begin a strategic plan for preparing all students for college and/or career in 9th grade. DVHS will continue to offer high quality Project-Based Learning in all core classes.

Will DVHS add additional counseling staff?

No, DVHS will not increase counseling staff. DVHS already has an exceptional counselor-to-student ratio of 1 counselor per 140 students. The addition of 9th graders will increase this ratio to 1 counselor per 200 students which is well below the ratio of all surrounding secondary schools. DVCA places a high value on the role of counselors during the school experience and will continue to provide a high level of counseling service going forward.

Will 9th graders be offered the same programs at DVHS that they would be offered at the junior high?

Da Vinci 9th grade students will participate in all the same core classes (English, Math, Science, Health, and Social Studies) as they did at Da Vinci Junior High School with slightly different elective course offerings at Da Vinci High School. This transition will offer new elective courses for 9th grade students such as CTE Digital Arts and CTE Computer Science, while still including music and world language options, as well as honors and AP courses.

What technology will be provided to 9th graders? Will 9th graders get laptops?

All DVHS students will have access to high quality technology, including school provided laptops. DVHS is the only DJUSD school to offer this level of technology to each student and it is important that our 9th grade students have access to the devices and software needed to create professional products for their projects.

Will this change allow for DVHS 9th graders to co-enroll at DSHS in the same manner as DVHS 10-12 grade students?

We are not planning for DVHS 9th graders to co-enroll at DSHS in the same manner as DVHS 10-12 grade students. Ninth grade students in DJUSD do not currently co-enroll at DSHS except in the most unique circumstances. The DVCA Administration is currently working with DJUSD Administration to explore various options for co-enrollment for DVCA 9th grade students. The hope of the DVCA Administration is that all DVHS students will have access to a variety of elective courses through co-enrollment and through increased course offerings on the Da Vinci High School Campus.

How will this change impact access to music classes for 7th, 8th and 9th grade students?

We understand and appreciate that many Da Vinci Junior High students participate in the high-quality and robust music program in DJUSD. We want to continue ensuring that these important opportunities are available to all Da Vinci students. For students in 7th and 8th grade, music offerings will remain the same. We are excited that Da Vinci is adding a newly approved music course at Da Vinci High School called Modern Music Lab (see [course catalog](#) for details) which will be available to all 9-12 grade students. We will also continue to explore opportunities for co-enrollment at other DJUSD secondary sites.

How will this change impact access to foreign language classes for 7th, 8th and 9th grade students?

For students in 7th and 8th grade, language offerings will remain the same. 9th grade students will have the opportunity to enroll in Spanish at DVHS and/or enroll in a community college language course. Da Vinci is exploring opportunities for co-enrollment at other DJUSD secondary sites for 9th grade students.

What fine arts electives and world language options are available?

DVHS students will be able to take Spanish 1 through Spanish 5 AP at our campus for world language. Fine art electives include AP Art History, AP Art 2D, Intro to Media Arts, Intermediate Media Arts, and Advanced Media Arts. In grades 10-12, the opportunity to take additional fine arts electives through co-enrollment at DSHS will be available.

Where will Ag students take classes? With Mr. Hess or at one of the middle schools?

Da Vinci's 10th through 12th graders can access Ag classes through DSHS offerings. We are exploring the option of co-enrolling at Holmes and we recognize that Ag classes are of high interest. We are not currently planning to offer Ag courses at Da Vinci High School.

Does Da Vinci offer AP and Honors classes?

DVHS offers a range of longstanding and newly added Honors and Advanced Placement courses. Course with an asterisk () are newly approved: AP Calculus AB, AP Statistics, AP Art History, AP 2-D Art and Design, AP Environmental Science*, AP Spanish 5, AP Computer Science Principles, AP Physics, American Lit Honors (junior English class) and World Civilization Honors* (sophomore history class)*

Is Japanese yet offered at either high school and if not, can 9th graders begin dual enrollment already?

Yes, Japanese is offered at DSHS. There may be options for dual-enrollment for 9th grade students in specialized language programs and we encourage you to speak directly to your child's counselor for more information.

Are there any classes revolving around writing or literacy besides standard English classes?

Writing across the curriculum is an important aspect of instruction at DVCA. All courses use our Written Communication School-wide Learning Outcome to some extent. Writing is particularly present and emphasized in our Humanities courses, as the integrated projects often include written products. In addition, other opportunities to develop literacy and writing include: Journalism, American Lit Honors, and the Preschool reading program.

Would using both elective periods for the same CTE pathway mean that the pathway would be finished early (before graduation)?

This is certainly possible, but dependent on the other courses in the student's schedule.

Can students take two CTE pathways through the capstone class?

Yes, it would be fantastic for a student to be a CTE completer in both pathways!

How will students plan their courses?

Throughout the month of February and early March, DVHS counselors will be working with current DVJH 8th and 9th graders on four year plans, learning about course offerings, completing course request sheets and adding courses into Q student login. The four-year plan is a google doc that current DVJH 8th graders will be introduced to and will be something that is reviewed and revised throughout a student's time at Da Vinci High School

With the new 8:30 start time, will a Zero period be offered?

The spirit of the new law ([S.B. 328](#)) that requires a later start time is to allow for students to get a developmentally appropriate amount of sleep. With this in mind, there are no plans for adding a zero period that would occur earlier than the start time of 8:30 am beginning next school year.

Extracurricular activities Questions

How will this change impact access to athletics for 7th, 8th and 9th grade students?

We understand and appreciate that there are many student-athletes at Da Vinci and want to encourage their continued participation in DJUSD athletics. Athletic opportunities will remain the same for all Da Vinci Charter Academy students. Da Vinci Junior High School 7th and 8th grade students will continue to access athletic programs through Emerson Junior High School and 9th grade students through Davis Senior High School.

Can 9th graders still participate in extracurricular activities?

Common extracurricular activities include dances and clubs. Da Vinci High School will be hosting dances for its 9th through 12th grade students starting next year. If there are district-wide 9th grade events, DVCA will ensure that its 9th graders are included in those activities. Da Vinci High School has a robust ASB Leadership Class through which many different clubs are operated and 9th grade students will be welcome and encouraged to participate in those clubs.

Where will 9th grade students attend dances?

With the addition of the Pamela Mari Tech Hub building, DVCA will have the facilities to host its own dances. The DVCA Leadership Class and the DVCA Administration are committed to hosting a variety of social activities, including dances, that will include our 9th grade students.

Will the Tech Hub be available for students to hold club meetings?

Yes, the New Tech Hub is designed with flexibility in mind. We anticipate that students will be able to club meetings in the Tech Hub. Additionally, the space will be used for Homework Club, team meetings, eSports, some P.E. activities, rallies, project demonstrations, rallies and socializing.

Can Da Vinci students be on Citrus Circuits? Do they have their own robotics program?

Yes, DVHS students can be on the Citrus Circuits Robotics Team and there is a longstanding, high-level of participation on the Team. Additionally, for students who are interested in Computer Science, DVHS has its own Computer Science Honors Society and a Girls Who Code Club.

School Culture and Climate Questions

How will DVJH focus on relationship building amongst students and staff with only a two year window?

Building a strong community through positive relationships will remain a top priority at Da Vinci Junior High School. We will continue to focus on relationship building through Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Restorative Practices, implementation of the DVJH Pledge, community activities and events, Whoo Hoo Awards, and peer collaboration.

What supports will be put in place to help 9th graders adjust to High School?

Da Vinci High School has an exceptional student to counselor ratio that will serve to support all students at DVHS, including the new 9th grade students. It has always been our time-honored tradition and core belief to value student voices at DVCA. The DVHS and DVJH Administration will be conducting student focus groups to gain student input on the supports needed for success in high school and beyond. The DVHS Teaching Staff will collaborate to thoughtfully plan for this transition, which will include a freshman student orientation before school begins and various activities with our student mentorship program, Dino Pack, throughout the school year.

Will there be a student orientation for both incoming 9th and 10th graders?

Yes, the Da Vinci Dino Pack, which is a group of juniors and seniors that mentor incoming students, will be leading an orientation prior to the start of the school year. This typically takes place on the Monday before school starts and more information will be sent out to students and families in August.

Will the DVCA bell schedules change?

The bell schedule at the DVJH and Emerson Campus is not expected to change next year. All DJUSD Junior High Programs are currently part of a DJUSD schedule review committee that will continue through next year. The intention is for that committee to have an approved Junior High Schedule in place for the start of the 2023-24 school year. To meet the legal requirements of S.B. 328, DJUSD high schools will implement a new bell schedule for the 2022-23 school year that starts no earlier than 8:30 am. In December, The DJUSD Board of Education approved the [new bell schedule for the 2022-23 school year](#). The Bell Schedule will be consistent between Da Vinci High School and Davis Senior High School.

How will school culture be impacted at DVHS?

DVHS and DVJH make community and culture building a high priority at the start of each year and continue promoting school culture through the Dino Pack mentorship program, ASB led activities, and developing strong relationships. While the addition of 9th graders will create some shifts, the DVCA staff and students look forward to welcoming them into our already-strong school culture. The core values of innovation, inclusivity, and collaboration will allow us to maintain a positive and engaging learning environment for all students.

Will 9th graders have open campus lunch?

DVHS 9th grade students will have access to open campus lunch. There are several options within walking distance from DVHS for students to go for lunch and all students are also welcome to remain on campus during lunch and will have access to lunch provided by DJUSD Student Nutrition Services. When there are behavior concerns regarding open campus lunch, DVCA staff always retains the right to require closed campus lunch for a student.

What differences can incoming 10th graders this year expect compared to prior incoming 10th graders? Aside from there being an additional 9th grade class joining them.

New course offerings including Modern Music Lab, AP Environmental Science and Environmental Chemistry and there will be a greatly improved campus that includes the Pamela Mari Tech Hub.

Questions about the DVCA Staff

Will the DVCA teaching staff change?

This transition will cause a small amount of teacher movement within the DVCA program dependent on enrollment numbers at each site for the 2022-23 school year. It is also possible that some teachers will be 'split-site' meaning they teach at both sites. Overall, the majority of DVCA staff will remain at their current sites. These decisions are not known until much later in the school year and may also be impacted by staff who transition to other positions.

How many teachers will move from the JH to the HS?

Teacher assignments will be determined by overall enrollment numbers at each site and by student's course requests. This information will not be known until April of 2022 and will be followed by discussions with staff about which

positions need to shift within Da Vinci Charter Academy. Most likely, teaching assignments would be settled by the end of this school year before summer break.

Will the student-to-teacher ratio change at the JH?

The current student to teacher ratio at DVJH is about 28 students per teacher. With the departure of 9th graders and an increase in the number of 7th and 8th graders, we expect that DVJH enrollment will be approximately 280 students. Ultimately, we anticipate that student to teacher ratios will be similar or slightly improved (fewer students per teacher) after the transition.