

**Denver Street School
2023-2024
Student Handbook**



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Introduction and History

In 1985 Tom Tillapaugh moved his family from Oklahoma to Denver and began teaching classes in his dining room with five students. He quickly adjusted techniques and procedures from the traditional classroom to meet the special needs of his unique student body. These students were dealing with issues including poverty, addiction, violence, illiteracy, anger, and an utter lack of hope for a meaningful future. A high school diploma and future success were impossible without a holistic approach that included not only academic rigor, but also career, life-skills, and social/emotional development. To this end, the Denver Street School (DSS) began.

Today, we're a 501(c)(3), private, Christian, secondary school serving the Metro Denver, inner-city community. We accept students who have struggled in, dropped out of, or been expelled from other schools and need a more personalized approach to their education. The school is completely privately funded and accredited by Cognia.

We've graduated well over 200 students to date, many who have gone on to college, junior college, vocational schools, the military, and the job market.

DSS is governed by a Board of Directors composed of caring men and women from our community who share in the vision.

Purpose and Mission

The purpose of DSS is bringing hope, a second chance, and the love of Christ to Denver's at-risk youth through quality education in a safe environment and a supportive network of loving, caring adults.

For close to forty years, we've offered struggling students a second chance to earn a high school diploma. We believe that every student—regardless of their past choices or present environment—deserves the opportunity for a high-quality education and the hope of a promising future.

Students will find hope for a bright future by:

- acquiring tools to problem solve and set goals
- identifying and overcoming negative habits
- having a vision for a positive future
- working to develop and maintain healthy relationships
- knowing the Gospel and understanding how to enter into a relationship with Jesus Christ
- finding and ethically using relevant information from multiple sources
- mastering course content
- earning a diploma

Admission Policy

DSS admits students of any race, color, religion, and national and ethnic origin to all of the rights, privileges, and activities generally accorded or made available to the students of this school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, and national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies and school administered programs.

The Principal owns the right to deny enrollment to an applicant.

Enrollment Process

DSS may accept students for enrollment at the beginning of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd quarters of the school year, depending on their current enrollment. Please see the current school calendar for specific start dates for each quarter.

Please fill out the application packet as soon as possible to help ensure enrollment. Because of our commitment to small class sizes, you may be placed on a waiting list for the upcoming quarter. If so, you'll be given priority for the next enrollment period.

1) Get an application packet.

- Download at DenverStreetSchool.org and print.
- Call 303-860-1702 to have one mailed to you.
- Visit West Campus to get one in person.

2) Please return it completed, along with:

- A current copy of your school transcripts showing any high school credit received.
- Your current immunization records.
- If applicable, a copy of your most recent IEP or other Special Education document.

3) Once reviewed, you will be contacted by the principal to schedule an informational interview.

- You will need a parent/guardian present
- A tour and meeting with school counselor will be included
- You will receive additional materials and information about beginning classes at DSS

After discussion between the principal and counselor next steps will be initiated. If the principal deems the applicant is not well suited for attendance at DSS, the parent/guardian of the applicant will be notified of the denial of enrollment.

Students chosen for enrollment will review this handbook in person with the principal/counselor and signatures will be required at the time of meeting.

Tuition and Fees

Did you know that the cost of educating a student at the Denver Street School is approximately \$11,000 each year?

Because we understand that most of our students are unable to pay that amount, funds are raised from a variety of sources to make up the difference.

What will DSS cost me?

Tuition to attend is \$50 per quarter (\$200 per year). The school also charges a \$25 technology fee and a \$25 insurance fee once each school year.

What if I can't afford tuition?

As a student, you have the option of completing 8 hours of community service in exchange for one quarter's tuition. The hours need to be documented and signed by the organization's supervisor and submitted to the principal prior to the end of the quarter to pay that quarter's tuition. The \$25.00 technology and insurance fees must be paid via cash or check.

What if my tuition payment is late?

If you expect to be late with your tuition payment, it's your responsibility to make arrangements with the principal in advance. Should you become more than 2 quarters behind in tuition, you are subject to being dismissed from school.

Official student records may be delayed in release to parents or other institutions if there is an outstanding account balance.

Parental Involvement

At DSS, we believe the involvement of parents plays an important part in a student's success. We invite you to be involved in your child's education and support the school by attending weekly chapels, participating in parent/teacher conferences, and getting involved in any other way that you can.

The principal and advocate will communicate regularly with parents about student success and also patterns of concern. Parents and guardians are welcome and encouraged to call or write at any time concerning their child's academic standing and progress.

By working together, we can help to ensure that each student has a clear path to reach their full potential.

Chapel

Our school-wide chapel is held each week. This is a time of togetherness where we pray and hear a message of truth from God's Word. Attendance is required for all students and a requirement for graduation. While DSS is an accredited high school, it's also a Christian ministry.

We believe an education is incomplete without Jesus and our desire is that all students come to a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Athletics

DSS Denver Street School attempts to offer various sports depending on our students' interests and availability of resources. Should we not be able to offer a sport, every effort is made to connect our students to a program where they can participate. They must meet eligibility in areas of attendance, academics, and behavior. Students with successful involvement in athletic programs will receive ¼ of an elective credit for every 30 hours of program.

If a student signs on with his/her local high school or other athletic program, credit may still be awarded. A signed document must be presented before credit is issued to the principal from the head coach or governing authority of the location of the sport. No exceptions will be made.

Discipline Policy

Our goals as they relate to discipline are to (1) preserve and maintain high academic standards and integrity, (2) protect the learning environment, and (3) create a safe place for students and faculty. If a student causes a problem, they will be asked to fix it, with appropriate support from the school. If a student cannot or will not fix a problem, the school will intervene and take corrective action. What the school does regarding appropriate consequences will depend on each unique situation.

Standards of Conduct

It's the desire of the staff and faculty to treat the students as adults. In return, the students are expected to behave in a mature manner, obeying the rules and expectations of the school. When there is mutual respect, the learning process will be at its best.

Each student is required to read, agree to, and sign the *Standards of Conduct Contract* included in the application packet. No student will remain enrolled without a signed contract on file.

The following choices may result in suspension:

- Cheating or consistent refusal to complete assignments or work in class
- Attending school high or drunk
- Insubordination to a faculty member or administrator
- Damaging school or church property
- Repeated inability to follow school rules
- Threatening anyone at the school
- Refusal to comply with technology policies

The following choices may result in expulsion:

- Failure to take responsibility for an ongoing problem
- Threatening anyone at the school
- Possessing weapons at school or school event
- Possessing, using, selling, or distributing drugs at school or school event
- Physically harming or sexually harassing a student or faculty member
- Gang activity or recruitment at school

1. **Drugs/Alcohol**

If we suspect a student is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, parents will be called and the student will be suspended for the rest of the day. No drug tests will be administered at school. If a student brings certified results of a clean UA taken within 24 hours of the incident at school, the suspension will be revoked and will not count against the student toward dismissal.

Parents are always welcome to meet together with the principal and student if they feel their child is not being treated fairly or appropriately.

In addition to the suspension, the first incident will result in the student being placed on a *drug contract* which will remain in effect for the rest of their time at the school. A second incident will result in another suspension. A third incident will result in dismissal for the rest of the quarter and loss of that quarter's credits. A conference with the student's parents or guardians will be required for readmission the next quarter.

2. **Gang Activity**

DSS is a safe, neutral territory for all students. Our basic policy is that no gang-related activity is allowed. We will give students a written warning the first time anything occurs.

This includes:

- wearing clothing with any sort of gang symbols, colors, or signifiers
- wearing their clothing in a way that signifies a gang affiliation
- writing gang symbols, names, numbers, and the like on anything in the building including their notebooks, papers, etc.
- using fonts, file names, or anything else gang-related on the school computers and/or on any work done on the school computers

A second offense of any kind will result in a probationary contract. A third offense of any kind may result in dismissal from school for the remainder of the quarter and a loss of credit.

The ability to return the following quarter will be at the discretion of the principal and will require a conference with the student and their parent/guardian.

3. **Phones and Electronics**

Phones and electronics usage will be at the discretion of the academic staff.

4. **Dress Code**

Students are to wear modest clothing that appropriately covers the body in a Spirit of Christ setting.

Clothing is not permitted that has:

- gang affiliation
- obscene language, symbols, or pictures
- drug or alcohol related symbols or slogans

5. **Attendance and Tardy**

Consistent attendance is expected. If a student indicates, by lack of attendance or tardiness, they are not serious about their education, that student will be subject to dismissal for the remainder of the quarter, resulting in the loss of credit.

Absences

Should a student exceed four (4) absences, excused or unexcused in a class during a quarter, they will be dropped from that class and not receive credit. If there is any absence from ditching or failing to work in class, it may result in an immediate drop on the 5th absence.

Tardy to Class

Because being on time is an important workplace skill, we treat being late as an employer would. Any student exceeding six (6) tardies in a class will be subject to dismissal from that class for the remainder of the quarter.

- Students arriving up to 10 minutes late will be marked as *tardy*
- Students arriving 11-30 minutes late will receive a *half-absence*
- Students arriving more than 30 minutes late will be considered *absent tardy*, counting as a full absence.

Tardy to Advocacy

If a negative pattern occurs in a student's Advocacy attendance, action will be taken.

6. **Ditching**

Ditching class, study hall, detention, advocacy, chapel, or any other required activity is considered serious and will result in an unexcused absence/ditching attendance code. If a pattern of ditching continues, consequences will be determined for the specific student.

Parents will be notified by email, phone, or text message for any consistent attendance issues and/or if a student receives an attendance code regarding any form of unexcused absence.

7. **Study Hall**

Study Hall is a mandatory part of the school day for any student who is not passing classes or has two or more missing or incomplete assignments.

Once a student has turned in all necessary work, they may be excused from Study Hall until the next weekly progress report.

General Information

Campus Contact:

- Principal's phone: 303-847-7582
- School phone: 303-860-1702
- Fax: 303-942-6055

School Hours

- Monday – Thursday
 - 9:00 am to 2:30 pm
 - optional early Study Hall
 - ✓ 8:30 am until 8:55 am
 - ✓ 2:35 pm to 3:00 pm
- Friday
 - 9:00 am to 12:30 pm
 - Friday schedules vary

School Supplies

Each student is requested to bring his or her own paper, pencils, pens, and other school supplies. DSS will provide any student with school supplies if unable to get them on their own.

Lunch

DSS has an open campus during lunch. Students are welcome to eat and drink in designated rooms or outside the building. A refrigerator, freezer, and microwave oven are available. Students may bring a bag lunch or purchase their lunch at local stores. Students are expected to be back on time for the beginning of class after lunch. DSS is not responsible for accidents that may occur to students once they leave the facility.

Field Trips

The permission slip for all field trips is included in each student's application packet. Additional permission slips will not be sent home for each individual field trip. Students will be informed of any upcoming trips and are requested to inform their parents.

Advocates

Each student will have an assigned advocate. The purpose of the advocate is to provide additional support and encouragement for students, and to provide direct and immediate intervention for a student in crisis.

Inclement Weather

School closures and delays will be announced on website and Facebook page. Advocates will also attempt to reach out. See the Bell Schedules for the late start information.

Lost and Found

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Students should pay close attention to their possessions, including books, purses, phones, sunglasses, etc. A lost and found box is located in the principal's office. Items left unclaimed will be donated to charity at the completion of each quarter.

Fire Readiness

Students will be informed as to the fire exits and escape routes for the various rooms. They will be expected to familiarize themselves with these in case of a fire or other emergency. There will be two fire drills (fall and spring) and two active shooter drills (fall and spring) per year.

Volunteers

Denver Street School is honored and privileged to enlist a number of part-time volunteers to help carry out our mission of providing a quality education to our students. These volunteers serve as tutors, nursery workers, secretaries, food providers, as well as in other capacities. Students are expected to treat volunteers with consideration and respect and utilize the time spent with the volunteers. All volunteers are screened by the Resource Manager before having any student contact.

Visitors

There are to be no visitors in the building at any time. Friends may meet students at the door following the end of school, provided they do not create a problem for you or anyone else at school.

Building Security

North and south doors will be locked at all times. No unannounced visitors will be allowed into the school property or allowed to pick up students.

Daily Bell Schedule

<u>DSS Normal Day Schedule</u>			
<u>Monday/Wednesday</u>		<u>Tuesday/Thursday</u>	
8:30 - 8:55	Study Hall a.m.	8:30 - 8:55	Study Hall a.m.
9:00 - 10:20	A Block	9:00 - 10:20	D Block
10:20 - 10:30	10-minute break	10:20 - 10:30	10-minute break
10:30 - 11:50	B Block	10:30 - 11:50	E Block
11:50 - 12:30	Lunch	11:50 - 12:30	Lunch
12:30 - 1:07	Advocacy	12:30 - 1:07	Advocacy
1:10 - 2:30	C Block	1:10 - 2:30	F Block
2:35 - 3:00	Study Hall #2	2:35 - 3:00	Study Hall #2

Service Project Friday Schedule*

8:30 - 8:55	Study Hall #1 (Optional)
9:00 - 10:00	Block I
10:00 - 10:15	15-minute break
10:15 - 11:15	Block II
11:15 - 11:30	15-minute break
11:30 - 12:30	Block III
12:30	Dismissal

Late Start Schedule

10:00 - 11:10	A/D Block
11:20 - 12:40	B/E Block
12:40 - 1:10	Lunch
1:10 - 2:30	C/F Block

If a holiday falls on Monday, the normal schedule will be followed starting with Tuesday and ending with Friday. Service Project Friday Schedule will be announced by teachers at the beginning of that week.

Academic Requirements and Procedures

Graduation requirements

For a student to graduate from the Denver Street School, they must have earned at least 23 credits. Following is a list of required credits.

<u>Subject</u>	<u># Credits Needed</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>#Credits Needed</u>
English	4	Social Sciences	3
Math	3	Bible	1
Science	3	Electives	9

Grading system

A system of letter grades and conferences is used to inform parents of student progress. The letter grades are based on the following percentage groupings:

- A** = 90-100%
- B** = 80-89%
- C** = 70-79%
- F** = Below 70%

All class work must receive a 70% or above to receive credit. Revision is required for any assignment failing to meet that standard.

Missing and incomplete class work may only appear once on a missing assignment list. If it is not completed and resubmitted for grading by the next list deadline, it may receive a zero for a grade.

All tests and major assignments must receive a 70% or above to receive credit. Revision and retesting are required for any test or assignment failing to meet that standard. Students who fail to satisfactorily complete any tests or major assignments by the end of the quarter will not receive credit for that class.

Last week of quarter / final exams

- The last 2 days of each quarter will be for final exams only in each class.
- All other tests, quizzes, and make-up work must be done by 3:30 on the Friday before finals. Students must have a 60% or higher in the class to take the final.
- Only major concepts will be tested on final exams. Teachers will provide students with a review sheet. Students are strongly encouraged to keep all class work, tests, etc. to use for review.



To be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to principal or counselor:

I, _____, have read the Denver Street School's Student Handbook in its entirety and understand the expectations and policies for students enrolled at DSS.

Parent/Guardian signature _____ Date _____

To be signed by the student and returned to principal or counselor:

I, _____, have read the Denver Street School Student Handbook in its entirety and understand the expectations and policies for students enrolled at DSS.

Student signature _____ Date _____