

Danu CSS Newsletter

For January & February 2026

UPCOMING EVENTS/ DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

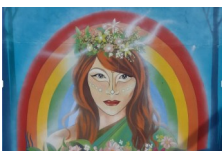
- ♦ 6th March: 4 Students awarded their Junior Cycle Certification at Assembly 9.30am with their Parents and whole school community.
- ♦ 16 & 17 March: Two Day School Closure School Closed for St. Patrick's Day Break.
- ♦ 21st March: Studio 3 Parent Training Day.
- ♦ 26th March at 7pm : Open Night for Modular & Parents Association Meeting for Nominations.
- ♦ 26th March Parents Association Meeting.
- ♦ 27th March: School Closes at 12pm for Easter Break.
- ♦ 13th April: School Reopens at 9am.
- ♦ 22nd April: Next BOM Meeting at 5pm in Danu CSS
- ♦ 13th May: School Closure for Students for NCSE training for Teachers on Primary Curriculum.

Special Mention



We would like to sincerely thank Sinead for her wonderful contribution to Danu CSS during her time with us. Even in just a few months, her warmth, enthusiasm, and dedication to our students made a real and positive impact on our school community.

As Sinead moves on to her next chapter, we wish her every success and happiness. Thank you, Sinead, for your hard work and care you will always be remembered fondly here at Danu CSS



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Message from Principal

Dear Parents, Students and Staff,

Welcome to our Newsletter for January & February 2026. We have lots of good news.

Firstly we are delighted to say that all our new students have settled extremely well into our school. So congratulations to everyone. On 6th February we received correspondence from the Department of Education and Youth to let us know that Danu CSS has been included in the initial cohort of special schools to participate in the first phase of the new Educational Therapy Service (ETS) for the 25/26 Academic Year. The ETS will be delivered by the NCSE and initially will provide Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy supports within our school. The NCSE therapists will work alongside our existing CNDT supports and services. We look forward to this service for our students.

Other good news includes our recent Curriculum Evaluation of Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) that was held on 17th and 18th February 2026. The School Inspector observed the teaching and learning in every classroom and noted that in three out of the four areas evaluated we scored Very Good on the Quality Continuum and Good on the fourth. Provision that is very good is very effective in meeting the needs of learners and is of a very high standard. There is potential to build on existing strengths to achieve an excellent standard. So well done to all the staff and students. We are so proud of you all.

Thank you to Elaine, Denise and Noelle who are rolling out the Studio 3 training for all our Parents during Term 2. On a sad note our Home Economics Teacher Sinead is leaving us. We wish to thank Sinead for her tremendous contribution to our post primary students. She will be dearly missed.

Unfortunately we had to cancel the Parent Night planned in February. Now we would like to have the Open Night for Parents and Stakeholders to see the new Modular Building on Thursday 26th! we Look forward to seeing you on 26th March.

Enjoy the Newsletter. Kindest Regards, Pat.

Quote of the Month

"Be brave enough to start a conversation that matters."

Margaret Wheatley

Parent Association

Dear Parents and Guardians,

All parents who are interested or willing to be active members of the Parents Association (PA) to please come along to the Open Night on Thursday 26th March @7pm. We require a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer to be appointed on the night. Anyone who is currently an active member is of course invited to express your interest to remain. The PA should meet on a monthly basis (or more frequently if and when required) and be a support to the school as well as all Danu parents. An active PA will help develop the Danu CSS community through fundraising and supporting initiatives within the school and the wider community.

Daisy Class News

Over January and February, our class explored two meaningful and engaging themes: Transport and Love and Friendship.

In January, children immersed themselves in the world of transport through songs, stories, movement activities and hands-on learning experiences. Trains quickly became a class favourite, and pupils particularly enjoyed creating their own trains through Arts and Crafts. Construction play, movement circuits and imaginative role-play brought the theme to life, while transport-related activities supported early literacy, counting, sorting and comparing concepts.

A noticeable achievement this month has been the improvement in turn-taking skills. Pupils are becoming more confident in waiting for their turn during games and group activities, which has positively impacted social interactions across the classroom. Our daily routine is now very well established, allowing the children to feel more secure and enjoy the flow of the day with increasing Independence.

In February, our focus shifted towards Love and Friendship, with a strong emphasis on kindness, relationships and emotional awareness. Through circle time, role-play, creative activities and lots of heart-themed Arts and Crafts, children explored concepts such as friendship, sharing and using "gentle hands." We placed particular focus on recognising and expressing emotions, especially "happy."

We were delighted to observe beautiful moments of connection emerging within the group. One particularly heart-warming moment was seeing a pupil gently stroking a peer's hair during play — a lovely example of growing social awareness and affection. The class also greatly enjoyed playing with our Daisy Cow puppet. We even celebrated Daisy's "birthday" through fun team-building activities, encouraging cooperation, shared excitement and positive interaction between peers.

Across both months, we have seen encouraging progress in communication and independence. Some pupils have increased their interaction with their AAC device, and choice-making skills have improved significantly, particularly when using the song choice board. The class is becoming more confident in checking their visual schedule, and transitions throughout the day are improving greatly — something that makes us all very proud and contributes to a calmer learning environment.

The overall energy in the classroom over these months has been noticeably calmer and joyful. The group is becoming increasingly connected, sociable and confident with one another. It is wonderful to see the children growing not only academically, but also in their friendships and emotional development within such a nurturing space.

We are incredibly proud of the continued progress our class is making and look forward to building on this strong foundation in the coming months.

Daisy Class Photos



Primrose Class News

January and February have flown by and have been full of activities in the classroom. We've continued putting a strong focus on life skills. The children have been practicing everyday tasks such as making toast, cutting up fruit and preparing simple snacks.

Through the Food Dudes initiative, we've also been encouraging everyone to try new fruits and vegetables. There have been lots of brave tastes and a few surprised faces! Many of the children discovered that they actually enjoy vegetables they hadn't tried before. Carrots have definitely been the most popular choice so far.

We've had many memorable days, but one that really stood out was when one of our students went on her very first trip to the shop. It was such an important moment for her. She picked her item, waited calmly for her turn and paid for it herself. Afterwards, she was absolutely delighted and couldn't stop smiling.

Music remains one of the highlights of our week. The floor piano in the classroom is very much loved, with the children stepping across the keys and experimenting with different sounds. They also look forward to their music sessions on Wednesday.

All in all, the past two months have been full of small achievements and happy moments. We're really pleased with how the children are developing, both in their learning and in their independence.

Primrose Class Photos



Willow Class News

January was a great month for Class Willow as we settled back into school after the Christmas break. Our theme for January was Transport, and the children really enjoyed learning about different ways we travel by land, air, and sea. We explored the topic through a range of art activities, creating buses, trains, cars, and aeroplanes using paint, construction materials, and crafts.

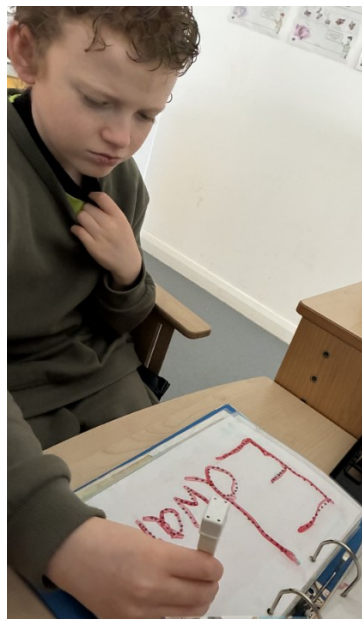
The class also enjoyed music and movement activities inspired by transport, as well as group games and outdoor play which helped to develop cooperation and communication skills. It was lovely to see everyone return to school happy, engaged, and ready for a new term of learning and fun.

February was another busy and enjoyable month in Class Willow, with our theme focusing on Love and Friendship. The children took part in a variety of creative activities celebrating kindness and friendship, including making colourful artwork and cards for people who are special to them. A highlight of the month was celebrating Pancake Tuesday, where everyone had great fun helping to prepare and enjoy pancakes together.

Students in Class Willow also started swimming this month and we had a great time splashing and swimming in the pool. Throughout the month, we also enjoyed baking, music, storytelling, and collaborative classroom activities that encouraged sharing, turn-taking, and positive friendships.

It has been a wonderful two months filled with creativity, laughter, and lots of learning together.

Willow Class Photos



Apple Seed News

We have been very busy in Apple Seed over the past two months, enjoying lots of learning, creativity, and new experiences together.

Our January theme was Transport, and students explored land, water, and air transport through art, sensory play, and fine motor activities using a variety of materials and models.

In Communication, Language, and Literacy, the focus was on making requests and expressing needs. Students practiced the core word "finished" and the Lámh sign "go," enjoyed choosing activities and songs, and shared the story "Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You See?" by Bill Martin Jr/ Eric Carle.

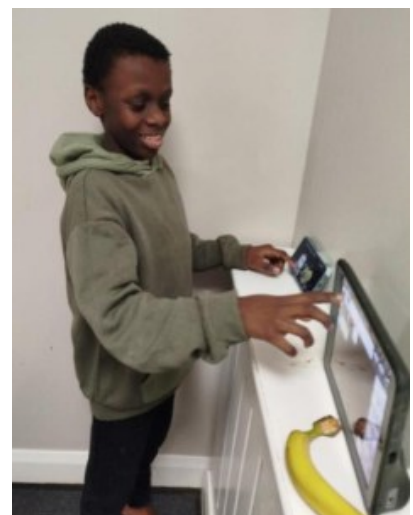
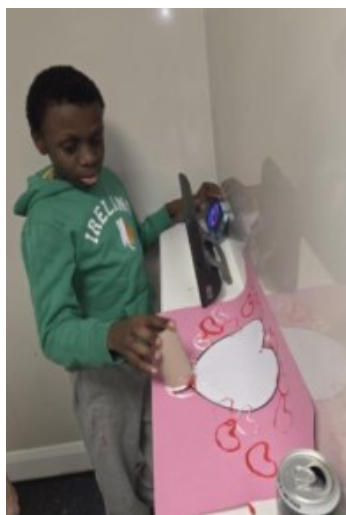
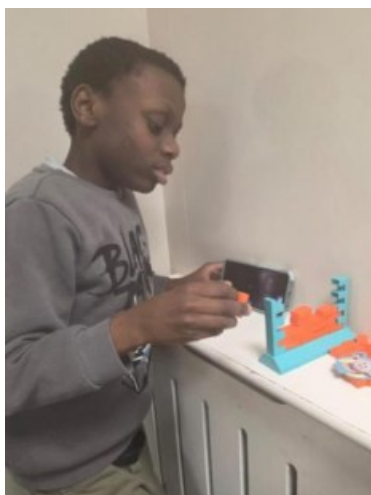
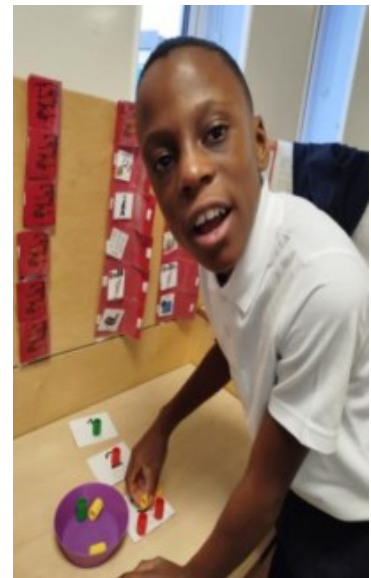
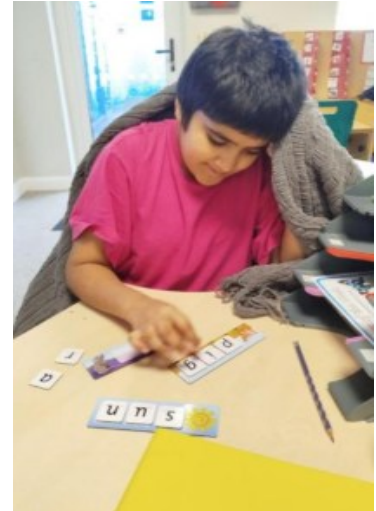
In Numeracy, students developed counting and matching skills using Numicon and transport models (boats, train, aeroplanes).

As part of Personal Care and Wellbeing, they also enjoyed tasting a variety of fruits and vegetables (Food dude programme). In Geography, under the strand unit Change and Continuity, students learned about our school, Danu, then and now.

In February, our theme was Love and Friendship. Students created Valentine hearts and enjoyed baking treats and tasting pancakes for Pancake Tuesday, supporting independence and life skills.

In SPHE, students learned about safe and unsafe situations in a supportive and accessible way. For Physical Education, students developed their movement skills in the sensory garden and enjoyed taking part in Bizzy Breaks, with the Danny Go "Wiggle Dance" being a particular favourite. We are very proud of the progress being made and look forward to the months ahead.

Apple Seed Photos



Apple Orchard, Harvest and Blossom News

During January, students in Apple Class focused on Food and Nutrition through PLU 3.13: Communicate hunger, thirst and messages such as "more please" or "no more" when being supported to eat and drink. The students worked on expressing needs at snack and mealtimes, using speech, symbols or gestures as appropriate. It was great to see students becoming more confident in letting adults know when they were hungry or thirsty, and when they had had enough.

As the month progressed, some students began preparing parts of their own breakfast and lunch with reduced support. These everyday routines provided valuable opportunities to build independence and practise important life skills in a natural and meaningful way.

We also enjoyed celebrating Pancake Tuesday, which provided a lovely opportunity to link our learning to Communication and Language, Exploring and Using 1.17: Participate in the sharing of a familiar or personal story, activity or event. Students took part by choosing their own toppings and independently added them to their pancakes, making clear choices and expressing preferences.

In February, our learning centred on love, friendship and being part of a community. Students enjoyed drawing pictures of their friends and writing kind words about others.

We also worked on PLU 4.5: Indicate/choose preferred companions for different activities, encouraging students to choose who they would like to work or play with during activities. Supporting students to make these choices helps them to build confidence and develop positive relationships with their others.

Apple Orchard, Harvest and Blossom Photos



Oak Class News

It was wonderful to see everyone back in Class Oak after the Christmas break. The themes for January and February were Transport, Love, and Friendship. In Class Oak, we learned about different types of transport and explored how we can be a good friend.

In PLU Communication, Language & Literacy, our outcomes were to make a request and/or express a need, verbally or non-verbally, and to participate in the sharing of a familiar or personal story, activity, or event. The whole class did an amazing job working towards these outcomes. We used AAC devices to model how to ask for help, and the students loved exploring the devices as an alternative way to communicate. We also supported this target by using visual choice boards, allowing students to select the activities they wanted to take part in. The students also listened to short stories and answered true or false questions about them.

In PLU Numeracy, students focused on understanding the relationship between sets and numbers. Class Oak really enjoyed this learning. We practised linking numbers to the correct quantities, grouping numbers into the correct sets, and ordering numbers in multiples of 2 and 3. In February, the numeracy outcome focused on developing number sense by experimenting with differences in quantity and the language associated with this. Everyone in Class Oak did great work on this, practising ordering numbers and items from smallest to largest. The class also learned about the "less than" and "more than" symbols.

We have had so much fun over January and February in Class Oak. Everyone enjoyed cooking each week with our Home Economics teacher. The whole class also enjoyed getting out on the Garda bus to visit the Carlton Hotel and the Phoenix Park

Oak Class Photos



Birch Class News

Class Birch have had an enjoyable and busy start to the year. The boys have been busy enjoying the themes of the month 'Transport and Love and Friendship'. They made some beautiful artwork for the school display board. Johan celebrated his 13th birthday and enjoyed playing with his balloons and eating chocolate cake.

The boys have also enjoyed their cooking lessons. They have made chocolate muffins, chicken nuggets and chips, waffles and pancakes on Pancake Tuesday.

The boys were introduced to new foods this month as the school took part in the Food Dudes programme. They enjoyed tolerating, tasting or bringing home lots of different types of fruit and vegetables. This was a great way to taste and explore different types of fruit and vegetables.

We have continued to work on making requests and expressing ourselves through visuals, gestures, lamh or words. The boys are doing well at requesting items/activities and letting us know when they need help or a break. We have practiced requesting items from our class shop as a treat on Friday. We will start to practice these skills more in the community as the weather starts to get better.

Birch Class Photos



Juniper Class News

The past two months have been busy, creative, and full of positive learning experiences in our classroom. It has been wonderful to see students settle back into routines, build friendships, and engage so enthusiastically in all activities.

In January, we explored the exciting theme of Transport - by air, land, and sea. Students learned about different forms of transport and how they help us in everyday life. Our art lessons were a particular highlight, with students designing and creating planes, school buses, trains, and boats. These hands-on activities were fun and engaging, and everyone was very proud to see their fantastic work displayed around the classroom.

A strong focus throughout January was on developing communication and turn-taking skills. Students were encouraged and supported to share materials, take turns during structured activities, and communicate their ideas with peers and staff in a positive and supportive environment. This links with our learning goal JC 1.4 Demonstrate turn-taking with a communicative partner.

We also participated in the Food Dudes campaign, giving students the opportunity to try a variety of fruits and vegetables. It was fantastic to see such bravery and positivity as students explored new tastes in a supportive setting.

In February, our theme changed to Love & Friendship. Throughout the month, we explored what it means to be a kind and caring friend. Through stories, role-play, art activities, and group tasks, students practised using kind words, giving compliments, sharing, and recognising the feelings of others. Our classroom was brightened with beautiful heart-themed art and friendship displays created by the students.

We continued to focus on communication and positive social interactions, encouraging students to participate in paired and group work, take turns in conversations, and build meaningful connections with their classmates. It has been a joy to see friendships grow and to witness the kindness, patience, and co-operation shown each day.

We are incredibly proud of the effort, enthusiasm, and creativity demonstrated by all students over the past two months. Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to exciting months ahead!

Juniper Class Photos



Ash Class News

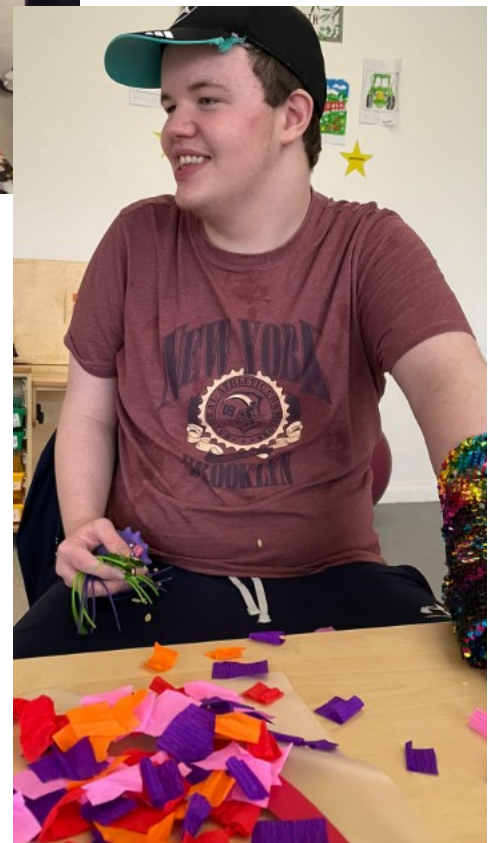
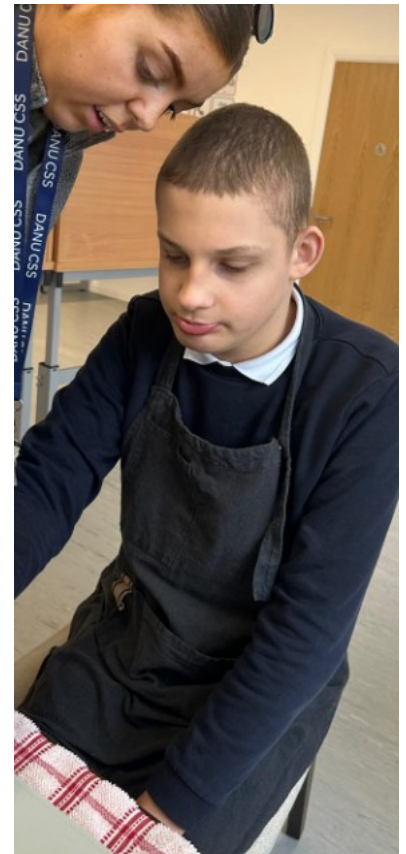
Class Ash have had a busy and exciting start back to school. We celebrated the new year with two birthdays—Alan turning 16 and Bogdan turning 15. The senior classes joined together to mark the occasion, making it a truly lovely party for the two boys. We were also delighted to welcome Eoghan back from Music Generation, brightening up our Wednesday mornings with great music and lots of energy.

Transport was our theme for January, and the students learned about different forms of travel. We practiced using traffic lights through songs in the classroom and tested our skills in real life during walks to the shop. A highlight of the month was our fantastic trip on the Garda bus around Phoenix Park. The boys loved spotting the deer and were very observant, watching out for other buses, cars, bikes, and even horses being used as forms of transport.

The boys also took part in Food Dudes, enjoying the challenge of tasting different fruits and vegetables. This programme has been a wonderful way to introduce new healthy snacks, supported by Sinead, our Home Economics teacher, who has been teaching the class simple, nutritious recipes. On top of this, we have recently introduced a breakfast club into our daily routine, made possible by generous donations from St. Vincent de Paul. It has been a brilliant addition, helping us to focus on healthy bodies and healthy minds.

As we moved into February, our new theme became Love and Friendship. The students had a wonderful time exploring what friendship means, practicing kindness, and working together to build strong classroom relationships. Valentine's art was a big hit. Class Ash created beautiful cards, heart themed crafts, and collaborative artwork to decorate the room. The month was filled with laughter, teamwork, and plenty of opportunities to celebrate the friendships we are continuing to grow each day.

Ash Class Photos



Hawthorn Class

This month in Class Hawthorn, we explored two exciting themes.

In January, our theme was Transport, supporting the Senior cycle outcome focus on Communication and Social Skills. Students learned about different ways we travel and the importance of safety and awareness in everyday journeys.

In February, our theme shifted to Love and Friendship, where students explored positive relationships, kindness, and how we show care for the people around us.

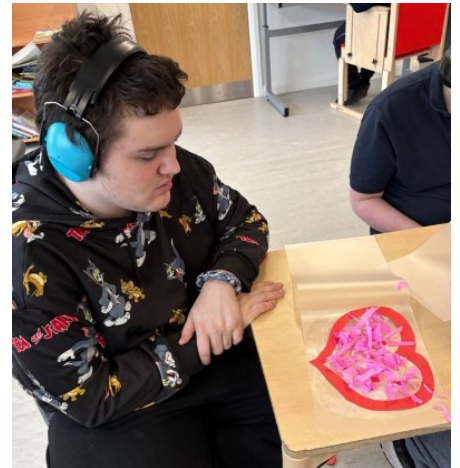
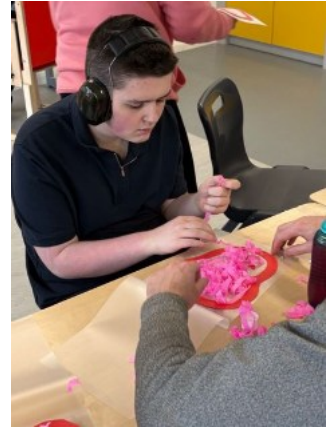
In the Curriculum area (Communication, Language & Literacy), students continued developing their ability to respond consistently to familiar people through greetings, short conversations, and shared activities. They practiced using verbal and non-verbal communication to express their needs, make choices, and build meaningful connections with staff and classmates.

In the Curriculum area (Being Part of the Community), January's activities focused on how transport supports community life, including safe travel routines and understanding different roles within the school.

In February, students worked on teamwork, turn-taking, helping others, and recognising how friendships grow. Through collaborative tasks, classroom activities, and interactions around the school, they developed confidence and independence when engaging with people they know.

It has been a wonderful start to the year in Class Hawthorn. The students have shown great progress in their communication, confidence, and teamwork. We are very proud of their efforts and the strong sense of community they continue to build each day.

Hawthorn Class Photos



Fundraising



Furthermore, we would like to thank Vincent De Paul and Lorna for their donation for our new morning Breakfast Club providing us with cereals, sugar, and milk.

BCIL who continue to provide us with access to a wheelchair 6-seater minivan on Monday's for class outing.

Blanchardstown Garda bus for Trips out when available on Wednesday's.
Music Generation sponsored by DDLETB is now on Wednesday's.

Happy New Year, Team Danu!

January and February have been a fantastic start to the year, filled with energy, learning, and teamwork. Students settled back into routines with enthusiasm, and February's theme of love and friendship brought plenty of kindness, creativity, and connection throughout the school.

Thank you to all staff for your hard work and dedication as we begin another year of growth and shared success. Here's to keeping the momentum going in the months ahead!

Warm regards,
Team Danu