



February 18, 2020

Contact: Kim C. Sneed, Flour Bluff ISD Public Information Officer, at 361-694-9713 or [ksneed@flourbluffschoos.net](mailto:ksneed@flourbluffschoos.net)

Melinda Eddleman or Mike Bratten, DMC College Relations, at 361-698-1247

Online newsroom: [vikingnews@delmar.edu](mailto:vikingnews@delmar.edu)

## ————PHOTO/NEWS OPPORTUNITY————

### **Del Mar College and Flour Bluff ISD announcing Flour Bluff High School Viking Academy on Feb. 20**

*DMC's Valdar the Viking and FBHS Hornets "sealing the deal" with new academy giving students planned path for earning high school and college credits simultaneously*

**WHO:** Mark Escamilla, Ph.D., Del Mar College (DMC) president and chief executive officer; David Freeman, Ed.D., Flour Bluff Independent School District (Flour Bluff ISD) superintendent; James Crenshaw, Flour Bluff High School principal; Valdar the Viking, DMC's mascot, and Buzzy and Buzzette, Flour Bluff High School (FBHS) mascots; and representatives from both the College and ISD, including FBHS students planning to pursue college-level courses or who are already taking DMC dual credit courses

**WHAT:** Celebratory announcement of the Flour Bluff High School Viking Academy, a partnership between Del Mar College and Flour Bluff Independent School District

**WHEN:** 10 a.m., Thursday, Feb. 20

**WHERE:** Teaching Theatre, Flour Bluff High School, 2505 Waldron Road  
(online map/directions: <https://bit.ly/2tNJNa3>)

**VISUALS:** After remarks by DMC and Flour Bluff ISD leadership about the new Flour Bluff High School (FBHS) Viking Academy, Del Mar College's mascot, Valdar, will place traditional Viking helmets on the Flour Bluff mascots' heads and hand them a Viking hammer to "seal the deal" and signify that participating FBHS students will not only be Hornets but also Vikings beginning in fall 2020.

-more-

## **DMC and FBISD/Flour Bluff High School Viking Academy ... Page 2**

**FYI:** The memorandum of understanding is signed, and the articulation agreement has been determined between Del Mar College and Flour Bluff Independent School District. Starting this fall, an inaugural cohort of Flour Bluff ISD high school students will begin their school year as both Vikings and Hornets as part of the Flour Bluff High School Viking Academy.

This Thursday, Feb. 20, DMC and Flour Bluff ISD leadership will announce the new academy during a celebratory meeting of Valdar the Viking and Buzzy and Buzzette, the two FBHS Hornets.

The partnership gives FBHS students the opportunity to earn up to 42 core credit hours toward an associate's degree with coursework also counting toward their high school diploma.

"Del Mar College has offered dual credit courses at high schools throughout the Coastal Bend for many years, and we know the positive impact these programs can have on a student's future," said DMC president and chief executive officer Mark Escamilla, Ph.D. "The Flour Bluff High School Viking Academy is a new, more elaborate approach with a real college experience built into it that we hope to replicate at other high schools."

The FBHS Viking Academy encompasses a required course schedule for ninth- through twelfth-grade participants, including high school preparatory and some DMC courses at the freshman level. The curriculum builds students' attainment of the 42 core credits to earn their associate's degree and is transferable to Texas public institutions.

Ninth and tenth graders will receive instruction at Flour Bluff High School while junior- and senior-level students who meet both FBHS and DMC requirements will be transported to the East Campus to take core courses. Eventually, upper-level academy students will take courses on the College's new southside campus when construction is completed.

"We're excited about this opportunity to enhance our partnership with Del Mar College," said David Freeman, Ed.D., superintendent of Flour Bluff ISD. "Our students can be enrolled in college courses at Del Mar and continue to be part of Flour Bluff High School and the extracurricular programs the school offers. It is a win-win for the student."

This spring, FBHS counselors are identifying academy candidates and will work with DMC staff to advise students about course enrollment, ensuring they are on the right path to earn credits applicable to their associate's degree and beyond. Core courses range in subjects under communications, English, kinesiology, mathematics, natural sciences, social/behavioral sciences and social studies.

The first cohort will include ninth graders with the academy accommodating up to 200 freshman this next academic year. Also, a hybrid version of the FBHS Viking Academy will start this fall and include a cohort of current DMC dual credit students.

## **DMC and FBISD/Flour Bluff High School Viking Academy ... Page 3**

Academy requirements students must meet include:

- taking advanced coursework as freshmen and sophomores,
- taking and passing the Texas Success Initiative exam beginning their freshman year,
- maintaining an 85 average in their core high school classes,
- taking and passing all end-of-course exams,
- maintaining a 95% attendance rate, and
- adhering to the requirements set forth in the FBHS Viking Academy handbook.

For parents, their investment to have their youth get a head start on higher education is less than having their son or daughter wait to start college after high school. Tuition is \$99 per three-hour course or \$33 per credit hour, the same as for area Del Mar dual credit students; and, the school district is covering the costs to transport students to the College's East Campus. Additionally, students who meet academy requirements but have an economic need can access scholarships through Flour Bluff ISD.

So whether students cheer, "Go, Vikings!" or "Go, Hornets!" this fall, everyone can also cheer "Go, Flour Bluff High School Viking Academy!" as the first group of students marks history with a new partnership between Del Mar College and Flour Bluff Independent School District.

**-DMC/FBISD-**