



# DMS Newsflash

April 2019

## Deans Mill Named School of Distinction

Dear Parents & Guardians,

The Connecticut State Department of Education recently released 2018 Accountability Index results to school districts across the state. The purpose of the index is to provide a holistic view of schools and districts to ensure they are providing a quality education for children that will prepare them for future success. The system measures academic achievement, especially student growth over time. Other key indicators that Connecticut utilizes for this system include chronic absenteeism, physical fitness, and access to the arts.

We are thrilled to share with you that Deans Mill has been named a School of Distinction in the area of high performing for elementary and middle schools! The State of Connecticut names high performing as the Top 10% to be eligible for this distinction. In order to achieve this distinction, Deans Mill had to perform well on the Smarter Balanced Assessment in English Language Arts and Math performance and growth, had a participation rate over 95%, and did not have an achievement gap between high needs and non-high needs students. In addition, Deans Mill School was given a ranking of a Category 1 School for attaining an accountability index of 95.1. Note: Every school in the state is given a rating ranging from 1 (highest) to 5 (lowest) based off the accountability index.

Being identified as a School of Distinction and Category 1 School is an important recognition for our entire school community. This information indicates that our students are growing, achieving academic success, and performing quite well in comparison to other schools in Connecticut. It served as a confirmation to us of what we already knew— that Deans Mill School is a great place for students to learn and grow and is made up of an outstanding and hard working group of students, parents, and staff members. As pleased as we are with these accomplishments, it is always our goal to continue to improve. Thank you for being a strong stakeholder in your child's education!

Happy Spring!  
Jenn & Tom



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Keep clipping your Box Tops!

Every clip counts!



We have reached our yearly Box Tops collection goal, and it is only April! Great going, Deans Mill School! Our second half of the year Box Tops race has begun and Mrs. Diana's class is in the lead with 715 Box Tops! Great job! Our next collection will be at the end of May. More information to come. If you have any questions, please contact Jessica Lindenmayer at 540-760-2467 or [jslindenmayer@gmail.com](mailto:jslindenmayer@gmail.com).

## Important Dates

### April

- 2 World Autism Day - WEAR BLUE
- 3 Paraprofessional Appreciation Day
- 10 Music & Arts Night • SHS • 5 PM to 8 PM
- 11 Board of Education Meeting • SHS Commons • 7 PM
- 12 Snow Make-up Day • School in Session
- 15-19 Spring Vacation
- 23 PTO Meeting • 6:30 PM
- 24 Secretary's Day



### May

- 6-10 Teacher Appreciation Week
- 6-24 Smarter Balanced Testing, Gr. 3 & 4
- 9 Board of Education Meeting • SHS Commons • 7 PM
- 18 DMS Color Run
- 23 Science & Technology Day
- 27 Memorial Day Observance • No School

## Pawcatuck River Duck Race

The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Pawcatuck River Duck Race will be held on April 27<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 PM, with the festivities kicking off at 11:30 AM. Not only is this a fun family event, but you have a chance to win great prizes and 57% of your purchase will benefit our school!

This is a friendly reminder to DMS families that all duck orders are due Wednesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>. If you have any questions please contact Jennifer Jordan at [kljnglerj@yahoo.com](mailto:kljnglerj@yahoo.com).



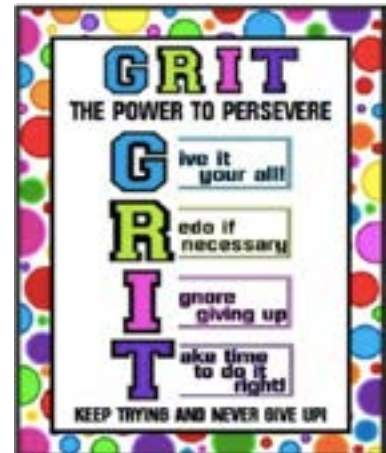
## Learning Through Challenges

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

**How Can Challenges Help Us Learn?**




As we continue to learn about how challenges can help us grow, students are learning more about "Persistence". Students are learning how to continue working when they approach a challenge or face an obstacle. When approaching something challenging, students need to learn strategies to keep on trying.



# persistence

noun

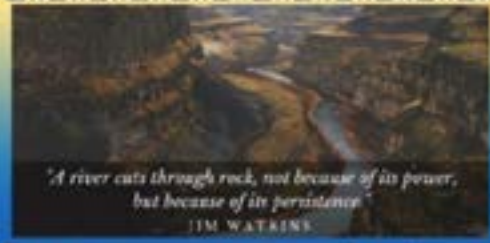
to continue working towards a goal in spite of obstacles;




**How is persistence related to growth mindset?**

When something feels difficult and you're not sure if you'll be able to understand or to complete the task, do you give up or do you take a deep breath and try again? Someone who cultivates a growth mindset is persistent to succeed even when things begin to feel impossible!


I can persist when I come to challenges in my learning! Giving up is easy and will get me absolutely NO WHERE! Having persistence will pay off and pave the way for the next level of learning!



*"A river cuts through rock, not because of its power, but because of its persistence."*  
JIM WATKINS

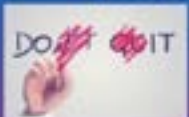


**NEVER GIVE UP**




If plan A fails  
There is 25 more letters left  
in the alphabet

DO IT

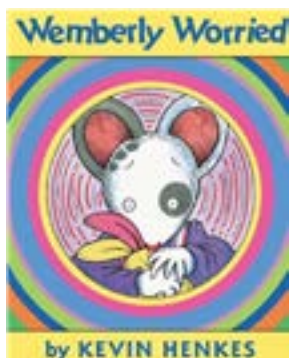


**IMPOSSIBLE**



PERSISTENCE

➔ **Look at what we're reading this month!**



### Grade K - *Wemberly Worried* by Kevin Henkes

Wemberly worried about spilling her juice, about shrinking in the bathtub, even about snakes in the radiator. She worried morning, noon, and night. "Worry, worry, worry," her family said. "Too much worry." And Wemberly worried about one thing most of all: her first day of school. But when she meets a fellow worrywart in her class, Wemberly realizes that school is too much fun to waste time worrying!

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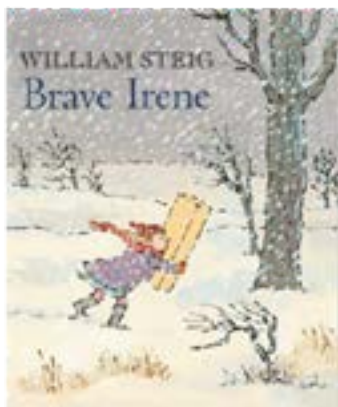
### Grade 1 -*Dream Big Little Pig* by Kristi Yamaguchi

Poppy is a waddling, toddling pig with big dreams. She wants to be a star! But she soon discovers that's not as easy as it sounds. It's only when Poppy feels the magic of gliding and sliding, swirling and twirling on ice that our most persistent pig truly believes in herself: Poppy, star of the rink! Kristi Yamaguchi is an ice-skating Olympic gold medalist and world champion who knows how to make dreams come true.



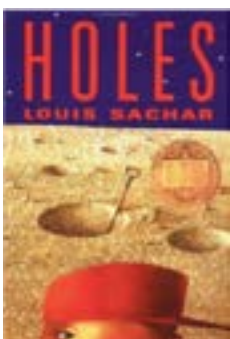
### Grade 2 -*The Most Magnificent Thing* by Ashley Spires

Award-winning author and illustrator Ashley Spires has created a charming picture book about an unnamed girl and her very best friend, who happens to be a dog. The girl has a wonderful idea. "She is going to make the most MAGNIFICENT thing! She knows just how it will look. She knows just how it will work. All she has to do is make it, and she makes things all the time. Easy-peasy!" But making her magnificent thing is anything but easy, and the girl tries and fails, repeatedly. Eventually, the girl gets really, really mad. She is so mad, in fact, that she quits. But after her dog convinces her to take a walk, she comes back to her project with renewed enthusiasm and manages to get it just right.



### Grade 3 -*Brave Irene* by William Steig

Brave Irene is Irene Bobbin, the dressmaker's daughter. Her mother, Mrs. Bobbin, isn't feeling so well and can't possibly deliver the beautiful ball gown she's made for the duchess to wear that very evening. So plucky Irene volunteers to get the gown to the palace on time, in spite of the fierce snowstorm that's brewing—quite an errand for a little girl. But where there's a will, there's a way, as Irene proves in the danger-fraught adventure that follows. She must defy the wiles of the wicked wind, her most formidable opponent, and overcome many obstacles before she completes her mission. Surely, this winning heroine will inspire every child to cheer her on.



### Grade 4 -*Holes* by Louis Sachar

Stanley Yelnats is under a curse. A curse that began with his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather and has since followed generations of Yelnatses. Now Stanley has been unjustly sent to a boys' detention center, Camp Green Lake, where the boys build character by spending all day, every day digging holes exactly five feet wide and five feet deep. There is no lake at Camp Green Lake. But there are an awful lot of holes.

# Nurse's Notes

## Reminders

- Please make sure that your child has a change of clothes to keep in his or her locker. Outside play and spring means potential for mud puddles!
- Wear **sneakers** for PE day.
- Please, no open-toed shoes or flip flops while at school to prevent tripping and falling at recess or on the stairs in the school building.
- Dress appropriately for the weather. Layered clothing works best. Remember that children still go outside in cold weather.
- Report injuries and illness to the nurse and submit any medical paperwork for excused medical absences.

## Hand Washing

Studies have shown that school absenteeism due to illness is reduced when children practice good hand washing. Please teach, model, and encourage your children to wash their hands frequently, and especially after coughing or sneezing, before and after meals, after using the bathroom, and after playing outside. Teach them to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when they cough or sneeze!



### How should you wash your hands?

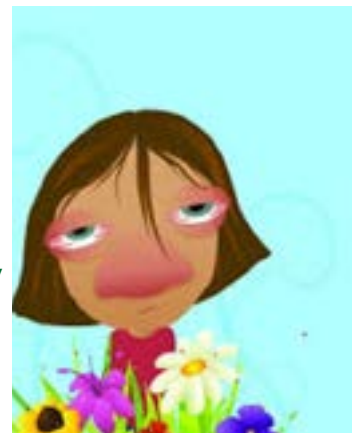
- Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
- Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
- Dry your hands using a clean towel, and use the towel to turn off the water.

## Seasonal Allergies

**Good news— spring is in the air!**

**Bad news— so is airborne pollen from blooming trees, flowers, and grass.**

As many as 40 to 50 million people in the United States are affected by allergies, and up to 40 percent of children in the United States suffer from seasonal allergies, according to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology. The symptoms of seasonal allergies can vary from person to person, but generally include repetitive sneezing, a runny nose with a thin, clear substance, nasal congestion, itchy nose, ears, eyes, throat, watery eyes, post-nasal drip, and occasionally a sore throat. You can help combat allergy symptoms at home by keeping windows closed, increasing your child's water intake throughout the day, having your child use saline nasal spray or a Neti Pot, and frequent hand washing to remove allergens. Not treating allergy symptoms can have a negative impact on your child. Nasal congestion can cause poor sleep at night, which then can lead to fatigue and poor concentration in school. Kids who have allergies are more likely to have ear infections and sinus infections. Also, if your child has asthma, uncontrolled allergies can make the asthma worse. There's even been some evidence that it can lead to nasal polyps in the nose. If you suspect your child suffers from seasonal allergies, it is best to see a doctor for a diagnosis and treatment options.



**Happy Spring!**

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# It's Lyme Time!



## Protect Yourself Against Lyme Disease

**1** Walk in the middle of trails; avoid sitting on logs and leaning on trees.

**6** Consider Deet for skin and permethrin for clothes.

**2** Wear a hat, tuck in hair, if possible.

**7** Wear white or light-colored clothing to make it easier to see ticks.

**3** Wear a long-sleeved shirt fitted at the wrist.

**8** Do tick checks immediately and 3 days after outdoor activity.

**4** Wear shoes, no bare feet or sandals.

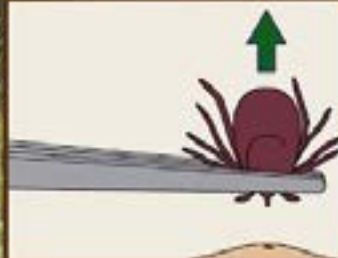
**9** If you find a tick, remove it carefully and save it.

**5** Wear long pants tucked into high socks or duct tape around pants.

**10** Ask your veterinarian about protection for your furry friends.



Lyme Disease is transmitted by a tiny tick, most often the size of a poppy seed.

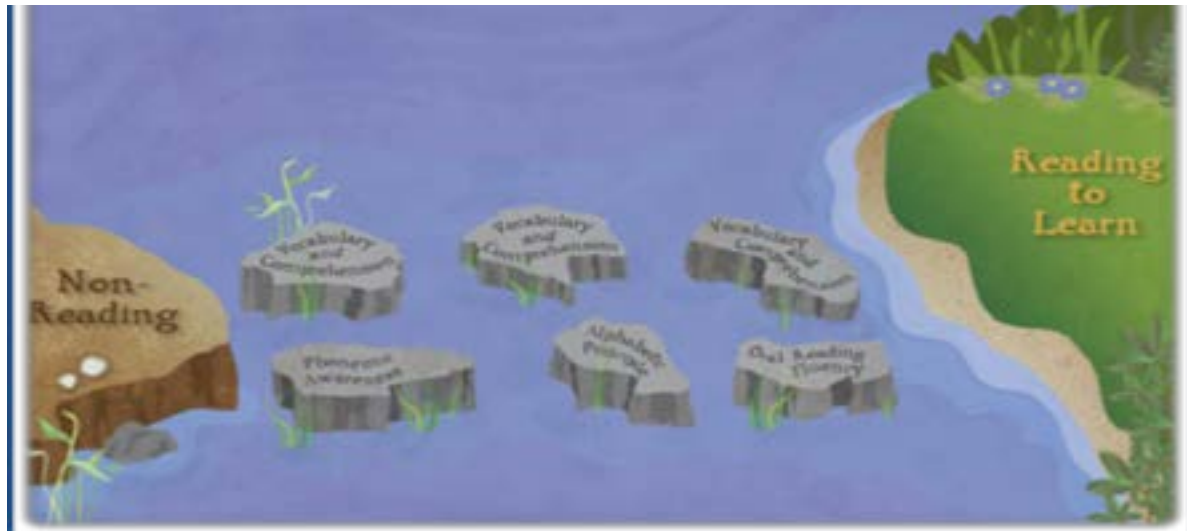


Remove tick with tweezers. Pull straight out as close to the skin as possible. Save tick in container and call doctor.



*COMPREHENSION IS OFTEN VIEWED as “the essence of reading” (Durkin 1993).*

## Basic Early Literacy Skills: Stepping Stones



### Reading to Learn

One of our literacy goals at DMS this year is focusing on best practices in teaching reading foundational skills. The end result of comprehension cannot be reached without a child first accomplishing decoding, word-identification, accuracy, automaticity, and fluency. All of these areas are integrated and taught as a layered approach. Every day at DMS, teachers are guiding students toward the ultimate goal of understanding grade-level text through both listening comprehension tasks and developing independent skills through interactive lessons and silent reading.

Listening comprehension is a key component in the foundation of reading comprehension. When students utilize their background knowledge, vocabulary, and visualization skills, they have a greater understanding of the text and can then predict what will happen by using intended clues laid out for them by the author. DMS teachers are effectively equipping all students with a wide range of strategies to apply before, during, and after reading. Students actively interact with narrative and informational text, use intentional reading strategies, and self-monitor while reading in order to construct meaning.

Further Reading: <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/how-parents-can-support-common-core-reading-standards>.

Thank you for your continued support,

Mrs. Chimento & Mrs. Bowman  
DMS Reading Support Team

Our goal for the year is to keep families informed about grade level curriculum in Music, Art, Library, and Physical Education and how they can support their children at home.

## Music



*Mrs. McMinn*

Students in grades 1-4 are looking forward to performing at the DMS Music and Arts night on Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. In class the students shared and explored their creative ideas with regards to instrument choice, musical form, movement, etc. for each concert. Not only have they developed their musicianship, but their creativity as well.

If you're looking for musical things to do over spring break, why not have a jam session at home with any instruments you've got! There are also some cool apps such as **Sketch a Song** (composing music), **Staff Wars** (identifying notes on the treble clef), **Rhythm Cat** (reading and playing along with rhythms) and websites [www.sfskids.org](http://www.sfskids.org) (Listen to and discover instruments and more!), <http://listeningadventures.carnegiehall.org/index.aspx> (Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra with a fun adventure game) to listen to and make music with. Have a relaxing break!

## Art



*Miss Biernacki*

Student in grades 1-4 are looking forward to presenting their works of art to family and friends at the DMS Music and Arts night on Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. This year, students have been learning about the elements of art (line, color, shape, space, form, texture and value) and applying these elements to their masterpieces. The elements of art are the core of the art world, it is how artists create, discuss, and critique art. Each student will have two works of art on display.

To keep art skills sharp over spring break, you can try out a few guided drawing videos with your children. The site <https://www.artforkidshub.com> posts guided drawing videos featuring a father, who is a professional artist, and his child. He picks a huge variety of things to draw, so there is something to satisfy every interest and hobby! There are videos geared toward different age groups too. I highly recommend taking a look!

## Physical Education



*Mrs. Castodio*

When our calendars turn to April we have a lot to look forward to: sunnier skies (we can only hope), warmer temperatures (again, fingers crossed), flowers blooming, birds singing, and oh yes~**April Vacation!** It will be here before we know it.

Many DMS families may be heading for fun in the sun out of state. Some may be visiting family or friends just a short drive away. Wherever you may be going I would like to present you with a challenge for your spring break. The challenge is this: Can you find time during your vacation to exercise each day?

Exercise comes in various forms. Selecting one that works best for you for where you'll be is key. Here are a few challenges to choose from:

Can you fit as little as thirty minutes into your vacation plans to



go for a walk, a jog or a bike ride each day? Can you bring along a jump rope on your trip and jump for 10 minutes each day? Can you do 10 push-ups and 10 crunches each day? Can you play a game that has running in it with your friends or relatives for 30 minutes? Can you dance to fast music for 15 minutes? Can you do some SQUAD exercises each day? If you're traveling to somewhere warm, can you swim laps in the pool or ocean for 10 minutes?

Pick one of these challenges to do each day or mix it up with a combination of any of the challenges to try out on your spring break. You'll not only have so much fun but you'll return to school healthy, strong and ready to finish out the school year in tip-top shape. Good luck, and enjoy your vacation!

### Library

We are so lucky to have three public libraries that serve our community! During April vacation is a great time to check out a new library! For more information visit [www.stoningtonfreelibrary.org](http://www.stoningtonfreelibrary.org) for events they will have during April break. The Westerly Public Library will be hosting events throughout the week! For more information on these events, and to register, visit [www.westerlylibrary.com](http://www.westerlylibrary.com). The Mystic Noank Library will have Lego Fun Days happening every Friday and Saturday during the month of April all day long from 10:00A.M. to 5:00P.M.! In addition, they will be having many programs during vacation. Visit [www.mysticnoanklibrary.org](http://www.mysticnoanklibrary.org) for more information. If you participate in any of these events, show or tell Ms. Anderson about it at school!



Mrs. Anderson-Halbert

## Mrs. Castodio

### Physical Education Teacher

*Favorite thing about DMS: "The students, staff and families are my favorite things about DMS. I have taught thousands of students throughout my career in Stonington, and living in town often allows me to run into former students and catch up on what is going on in their lives. It's fun hearing their stories and plans for the future. Following their high school sports careers is another favorite of mine. I have been at DMS long enough to have had students whose parents were former students of mine! It's exciting to see things come full circle and watch the DMS community continue to grow."*

*Years at Deans Mill School: "32." Years Teaching in Stonington: "36."*

*I have also taught at West Vine, West Broad and Stonington High School. "*

*Hobbies: "Exercising, reading (I love mysteries the most) and cooking are my favorite pastimes."*

*Little-known fact about me: "Two things come to mind... believe it or not, I was a pretty decent seamstress in my day. I often made my own clothes as well as some for my husband and children when they were little. I still have the same Singer sewing machine I got for Christmas when I was twelve, and it works like a charm. I hope to get back to sewing again when I have more time. The second thing is that my husband and I are about to become first-time grandparents! Our daughter and her husband are expecting a little girl at the end of April and we are so excited and looking forward to creating lots of family memories with her. I guess I'll have to sew her a little dress or two!"*



**SHERRY CASTODIO**  
FROM NARRAGANSETT, RI

## PTO News & Announcements

Dear DMS Parents and families,

Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, your student received an envelope asking for your support in our upcoming **Color-A-Thon** to be held on Saturday, **May 18, 2019**. We are very excited about this event.

This is a fun community-building event that will not only raise money for our school, but will provide a healthy opportunity for our students, faculty, and their families. We encourage you to register online by simply following the instructions on the student envelope.



First, register your student. By registering you will build your student's own Personal Donation Website. You will be able to upload a message, picture and will receive an email link to the site to send to family and friends.

Here is the link for you to register your student. <http://register.schoolathon.org>. We have 3 weeks to fundraise, with our donations due on Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup>.

Good luck, and **have fun!**

The DMS PTO

## Art and Music Night

Dear DMS Families,

Our Annual DMS **Art and Music Night** is almost here! Join us at SHS on Wednesday, **April 10, 2019**, for this awesome night for our children. Give yourself the night off from making dinner for the family, because the PTO will be selling carnations, food, drinks, and baked goods. All of the money raised will be going to Field Day, (transportation costs to/from high school, new equipment and games).

Please consider donating some food and/or some time on either side of your child's performance, or in the days before, to hang artwork at the high school.

### **ART Show**                      **5:00 PM - 8:00 PM in the Commons**

- Grade 1 Concert • 5:30 PM - 6:00 PM
- Grade 2 Concert • 6:15 PM - 6:45 PM
- Grade 3 Concert • 7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
- Grade 4 Concert • 7:45 PM - 8:15 PM

### **To donate food**

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0e45a8aa29a75-dinner>

### **To sign up to help**

To sign up to help staff the table(s) or to help with hanging the artwork:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0E45A8AA29A75-volunteer>

Any questions, please contact Suzy de Labry at [suzydelabry@hotmail.com](mailto:suzydelabry@hotmail.com) ~ 860.449.2023

Thank you!

Suzy de Labry and Field Day Committee